

EDUCATING ADULTS THROUGH DISTINCTIVE PUBLIC SPEAKING:

LUCRETIA MOTT, QUAKER MINISTER

by

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Elizabeth A. Roslewicz

## ABSTRACT

Lucretia Coffin Mott, in an era filled with events the significance of which reverberates today, spoke publicly about issues of societal and ethical concern. This study focuses on her work as a nineteenth-century female Quaker minister who through public speaking educated adults about the following: abolition of slavery, rights of women, and peaceful ways to address injustice. Separate chapters explore each of these three vital issues.

Lucretia Mott ranks as a pioneer female public speaker. At a time that barred women's speaking in public, she spoke about significant issues. Her speaking admitted her to the company of American women who pioneered in speaking publicly. These endeavors to speak to “promiscuous” audiences, those comprised of adult males and females, also admitted her to the company of women who endured criticism, insults, and peril. Through a process of education, these women changed history and shaped culture.

Lucretia Mott's Quaker perspective, her way with spoken words, and her womanhood distinguished her work as an educator in public forums and settings that ranged from religious meetings to the lyceum and conventions called to consider issues of national import. What could have prepared this Quaker minister--active in public domains for more than fifty years--for a place among the pioneers who advocated and practiced the right of women to speak purposefully in public forums?

Lucretia Mott's commitment to the Society of Friends enabled her to be a pathfinder both in education and on important issues. Therefore, Chapter Two presents an exploration of Quaker history, spirituality, and practices to inform for purposes of historic educational analysis and interpretation. References in historical works to noteworthy innovations that originated from efforts by Quakers in American society and to successes in business sparked this inquiry.

This study examined her speeches to see how they reflected Quaker principles and practices and her work as a pioneer public speaker who educated about societal and ethical issues. The study concludes that her work was energized because she knew her history, she questioned her world and she lived her faith.

With love and joy I dedicate this work

to my dear children,

Jason Rafferty Roslewicz and Elizabeth Regina Roslewicz,

to my lovable daughter-in-law Brenda Vaden Roslewicz

and to my grandson, the delightful, inquisitive and endearing Dylan Rafferty Roslewicz.

I thank each of you--in your own distinctive ways--for teaching me to keep on learning.

May your lives continue to be energized by love, by learning, and by humor.

May you treasure your ancestors for their adventuresome, faithful spirits.

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Beverly Wilson Palmer graciously provided transcribed copies of letters from Lucretia Mott  
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### A Note to Readers

The Society of Friends, Quakers, employed unique linguistic constructs and behavioral patterns to demonstrate and signify the complex, multifaceted religious dynamic through which they practiced and expressed their spirituality. Friends developed many idioms and gave common words distinctive meanings. Sufficient grasp of Friends' terminology seems essential. Accordingly, a glossary of Quaker terms and idioms acquired from multiple, reliable sources, accompanies this study.

Glossary terminology appears within the text in a different color tone, and underlined in the printed text and is hyper-linked for on-line, Internet users. In each chapter, the first use of a glossary word will appear in the different color tone. Readers are encouraged to consult the glossary for clarification of Friends' representations of certain concepts expressed in words familiar to today's reader but used differently by Friends. For instance, as opportunities occurred, Lucretia Mott presented Quaker-based beliefs and practices to educate adults through sermons and speeches delivered extemporaneously in public arenas. The Quaker expression for such opportunities is "as the way opens." The word concern introduces another example. For Friends, a concern characterizes a call to do something in answer to insight from the Light within. The glossary contains sufficiently full explications of words and phrases used in distinct ways by Friends to ensure that non-Friends understand the intended meaning.



## A Friendly Way to Speak

In accord with the Friends' practice, in this study Mott will be referred to simply as Lucretia Coffin or Lucretia Mott, as appropriate. The reasons for this are twofold. First, for clarity, because members of her marriage family are mentioned in this study. Secondly, to demonstrate Friends' practice of respect for each individual and in accord with "plain spoken" simplicity in language, only full names are used. In 1884, Lucretia Mott's granddaughter acknowledged that the Quaker usage of "full proper names can be monotonous... [but] must be ascribed to the usage among Friends, from which it was thought best not to deviate."<sup>1</sup> Thus, as the story unfolds, the researcher cites the principal person under investigation by her given name along with the appropriate surname, e.g. Lucretia Coffin or Lucretia Mott. Also in accord with Friends' belief in equality of persons and refusal to honor, through titles, one person over another, Friends will receive this form of Quaker address.

### Quakers' Language Bespeaks Certain Perspectives

Quaker linguistic differences, moreover, suggest even greater distinctions. Notably, only the Society of Friends remains extant among the numerous religious sects founded in the turmoil of seventeenth-century England. English historian J. F. McGregor characterizes the Friends' continuation, which he credits to their organizational structure, as a "unique"<sup>2</sup> accomplishment.

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<sup>1</sup> James and Lucretia Mott: Life and Letters. Edited by Their Granddaughter, Anna Davis Hallowell. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin and Company, 1884.

<sup>2</sup> McGregor, J. F., "Seekers and Ranters" in *Radical Religion in the English Revolution*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1984, 122.

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## PREFACE

### Catalysts for My Intellectual Curiosity about Lucretia Mott

Noteworthy innovations that originated from efforts by Quakers in American society<sup>3</sup> and successes in business<sup>4</sup> referenced in historical works sparked this inquiry. These references stirred interest in light of their minor population status--at their most numerous, Friends constituted only 1% of the population in Colonial America<sup>5</sup>--compared to their seemingly disproportionate influence on society. Dialogues with two historians of Quaker education<sup>6</sup> led to study about educational aspects of Quaker history and spirituality<sup>7</sup> and particularly the history of American Quaker women.<sup>8</sup> Finally, from reading Margaret Hope Bacon's biography of Lucretia Coffin Mott<sup>9</sup> a fascination emerged. Bacon once suggested that today many Quakers walk "in the lengthened shadow" of Lucretia Mott<sup>10</sup>. Seemingly, her shadow fell upon the researcher, a non-Friend, and awakened intellectual curiosity about the context and content of her early learning, the educational experiences that prepared her to act, and her work as a woman who pioneered in the right to educate about societal issues by speaking in public forums. That curiosity resulted in this research endeavor.

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<sup>3</sup> For instance see Stubblefield, Harold W. and Patrick Keane, *Adult Education in the American Experience: From the Colonial Period to the Present* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1994), 14-15, 71-72.

<sup>4</sup> See Hatton, Helen E.. *The Largest Amount of Good: Quaker Relief in Ireland 1654-1921*. (Kingston & Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press 1993) 20-22.

<sup>5</sup> Carol Stoneburner, "Introduction," in *The Influence of Quaker Women on American History: Biographical Studies*, ed. Carol and John Stoneburner (Lewiston: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1986), xv.

<sup>6</sup> Personal telephone conversation with William Kashatus, III about nineteenth-century Quaker education and Lucretia Coffin Mott (Philadelphia, 7/ 3, 1995); e-mail exchange with Alson D. VanWagner about historical records of Nine-Partners Boarding School and Quaker education (11/9, 1997).

<sup>7</sup> See Appendix A Researcher's Early Interest in the Friends for section headed Influential Literature.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> Margaret Hope Bacon, *Valiant Friend: The Life of Lucretia Mott* (New York, NY: Walker, 1980), 37.

<sup>10</sup> Margaret Hope Bacon, *The Lengthening Shadow of Lucretia Mott* (Greensboro, NC) 1992: 4.

## CHAPTER ONE

### AS IT WAS IN THE BEGINNING, IS NOW, AND DOESN'T HAVE TO BE: HOPE IN EDUCATING ADULTS THROUGH DISTINCTIVE PUBLIC SPEAKING

The Quaker<sup>1</sup> minister Lucretia Coffin Mott, in an era filled with events whose significance reverberates today, spoke publicly to educate about issues of societal and ethical [concern](#). A pioneer in women's right to speak about vital issues, she encouraged greater participation by all in arenas of public deliberation. Her eighty-seven years of life began in 1793, near the end of President George Washington's first term. That year, Eli Whitney also filed the cotton gin patent, a Federal fugitive slaves law was enacted, Noah Webster founded the first daily newspaper, and John Woolman wrote the new republic's first call for abolition of slavery.<sup>2</sup> At her death in 1880, the United States' territory had more than doubled and its population--slave and free, native-born and immigrant--had increased greatly. Commercial, transit and scientific advances had moved a primarily agrarian society into an industrialized, urban nation--one that endured several national economic calamities. In her lifetime, she saw dueling abolished, benefited from invention of the sewing machine that revolutionized women's work, witnessed the Civil and other wars and the end of legal sanctions for slavery. This study focuses on the work of Lucretia Mott as a nineteenth-century female Quaker minister who through public speaking educated adults about the following: abolition of slavery, rights of women, and peaceful ways to address injustice.

Lucretia Mott's speeches and sermons give evidence of her work as an educator of the public. Her Quaker perspective, her way with spoken words, and her womanhood--in a nation that privileged some citizens above others--made Lucretia Mott's public speaking distinctive. She taught "in the name of justice and humanity,"<sup>3</sup> advocated for "more moral courage,"<sup>4</sup> argued

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<sup>1</sup> This study interchangeably uses the terms Friend(s), Quaker(s), Society, and Society of Friends. The names Quaker/Friend/Society of Friends perplexed non-Friends over the centuries. Mott herself spoke to this question, "I know that a large part of this audience [has] no affinity particularly with the Quakers, with the Friends, so called. Some of us are very tenacious of our words. I believe if the words be enumerated, then the phenomena to which they refer will be comprehended. If it be better understood to use the term 'Quaker,' let it be used, although the term 'Friend' is better, is our choice, and shows our nature precisely" Lucretia Mott, "There is a Principle in the Human Mind (1869)," in *Lucretia Mott: Her Complete Speeches and Sermons/Edited [with an Introduction] by Dana Greene. Studies in Women and Religion, Vol. 4* (New York: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1980), 336.

<sup>2</sup> See *A Word of Remembrance and Caution to the Rich*, John Woolman, *The Journal and Major Essays of John Woolman/ Edited [with Introductions] by Phillips P. Moulton*, A Library of Protestant Thought (Richmond, IN: Friends United Press 1971-- Copyright Phillips P. Moulton, 1989), 238-72.

<sup>3</sup> Lucretia Mott, "Righteousness Gives Respect to Its Possessor (1/15/1843)," in *Lucretia Mott: Her Complete Speeches and Sermons/Edited [with an Introduction] by Dana Greene. Studies in Women and Religion, Vol. 4* (New York: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1980), 47.

<sup>4</sup> Lucretia Mott, "The Truth of God . . . The Righteousness of God ( 9/23/1841)," in *Lucretia Mott: Her Complete Speeches and Sermons/Edited [with an Introduction] by Dana Greene. Studies in Women and Religion, Vol. 4* (New York: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1980), 37.

that "the importance of free thinking and honest speech cannot be over-estimated,"<sup>5</sup> and educated with the hope of an increase in the "enquiring state of the public mind."<sup>6</sup>

To spark that "enquiring state" Lucretia Mott spoke with what one bright younger woman, Elizabeth Cady Stanton (1815-1902), described as "enkindling enthusiasm."<sup>7</sup> She held out a vision of hope in the face of societal injustices: "Let the true principle of justice be ever exalted in our midst; and let us be desirous to be armed with such a power . . . as will enable us . . . in bringing about a better state of things."<sup>8</sup> For Lucretia Mott "a better state of things" incorporated the hope of peace and justice.

The first chapter provides the organizational structure of this dissertation about Lucretia Mott's work to educate adults through public speaking. After a brief introduction, the chapter explicates the multifaceted background of the problem that led to this study. The chapter then details the purpose of the study, articulates the questions that guide the inquiry, elucidates the study's significance, explains the research method, and concludes with a description of the study's organization.

### **The Multi-faceted Background of This Study of Lucretia Mott's Educating Adults**

Three overarching components converge to form the background of the problem. The components are each multi-faceted and necessitate a rather lengthy treatment. The background is organized according to these three components.

The first component is the educational needs in the early republic. These educational needs arose both from the U. S. Constitution's proclaimed ideals and from its unspoken limitations. The second component is the development of popular education in the early national era. Popular education responded to the new nation's societal needs. The third component is a review of relevant literature about Lucretia Mott, a Quaker minister whose work spanned much of this early national era. Both her sex and her religious faith are crucial in relation to her educational endeavors. Thus, the multi-faceted components that form the background of this study are organized in the following manner:

- I. Educational needs in the new republic:
  - (A) Republican ideas, ideals, and unspoken limitations:
    - (1) Schooling for children of the new republic
    - (2) Education for public speaking limited to males.

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<sup>5</sup> Lucretia Mott, "To Speak Out the Truth (10/ 20/1846)," in *Lucretia Mott: Her Complete Speeches and Sermons/Edited [with an Introduction] by Dana Greene. Studies in Women and Religion, Vol. 4* (New York: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1980), 54.

<sup>6</sup> Mott, "The Truth of God . . . The Righteousness of God ( 9/23/1841)," 31.

<sup>7</sup> Elizabeth Cady Stanton, "Lucretia Mott Eulogy," in *History of Woman Suffrage, Vol. 1*, ed. Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Susan B. Anthony and Matilda Joslyn Gage (Rochester NY: Charles Mann, 1889), 409.

<sup>8</sup> Lucretia Mott, "We Have Food While Others Starve (3/31/1850)," in *Lucretia Mott: Her Complete Speeches and Sermons/Edited [with an Introduction] by Dana Greene. Studies in Women and Religion, Vol. 4* (New York: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1980), 185.

- II. Development of popular education in early national era:
  - (A) Popular education to address injustice:
    - (1) A way to think about adult education
    - (2) The rose and the thorn in nineteenth-century popular education
  - (B) Popular education in the lyceum:
    - (1) The educational history of lyceum speakers incomplete
    - (2) An example for a more inclusive lyceum history.
  - (C) Pioneers in women's public speaking:
    - (1) Brief spans in public speaking for several pioneering women: Deborah Sampson Gannett, Maria Stewart, Frances Wright, Angelina Grimke and Sarah Grimke.
    - (2) Lifelong work speaking publicly for Lucretia Mott:
      - (a) Overview of Lucretia Mott's outspoken concern for justice.
      - (b) Lifelong member of Society with a mission to educate.
      - (c) An impression of Quaker influence attributed to Lucretia Mott.
      - (d) Quaker convictions with enormous implications.

### III. Review of relevant literature about Lucretia Mott.

#### I. Educational Needs in the New Republic

#### II.

Colonial ideology at the time of the American Revolution flowed from the writings of John Milton and other seventeenth-century thinkers who reinvigorated ideas of the Roman republic--republicanism. For these eighteenth-century leaders, republicanism meant more than independence from the English monarchy and the formation of an elected government. Republicanism meant that ordinary people, discontent with matters in the public realm, could offer criticism. These critics were citizens with a goal to live in a land guided by the moral practice of virtue. This republican vision portrayed "disinterested umpires"<sup>9</sup> who would decide for the good of all the people about public, political, and economic issues. In comparison, in a more democratic vision of society, contested decisions are themselves argued by all the people. The 1828 election of Andrew Jackson, the seventh American president, symbolized the American spirit of democracy. Nevertheless, the path carved out at the inception of the republic began with the ideals espoused in the republican vision.<sup>10</sup>

#### (A) Republican Ideas, Ideals and Unspoken Limitations

#### (B)

Gordon Wood says, "republicanism in 1776 meant . . . independent, property-holding citizens who were willing to sacrifice many of their private, selfish interests for . . . the good of the whole community."<sup>11</sup> Judith Wellman illuminates some practical implications of that 1776 meaning of republicanism:

<sup>9</sup> Gordon S. Wood, "Republicanism," in *The Reader's Companion to American History*, ed. Eric Foner and John A. Garraty (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1991), 931.

<sup>10</sup> Wood, "Republicanism," 930-31.

<sup>11</sup> Wood, "Republicanism," 931.



Those without property could not be independent . . . autonomous, virtuous citizens. Most Americans believed that such a tie between economic and moral independence, between property and citizenship, eliminated women from any participation in the body politic. Legally, married women had little access to property ownership.<sup>12</sup>

While the Declaration of Independence expresses republican ideals, Wellman emphasizes that its language is “flexible. Such terms as 'liberty,' 'equality,' 'civic virtue,' and 'natural rights' could be defined in different ways.”<sup>13</sup> Two problematic principles carried ramifications that both heightened inspiration and lacked precision – “just powers from the consent of the governed” and “all men are created equal.”<sup>14</sup> By the early 1800s, according to Wellman, attempts to put the Declaration’s republican vision into action resulted in the emergence of “one basic response:

Again and again Americans drew boundaries of legal equality and political power along the lines of gender and race. Increasingly, they granted legal and political equality to all adult white males, regardless of wealth. At the same time, . . . they excluded all slaves and women (along with infants and children, idiots, and felons) from full citizenship.<sup>15</sup>

At final ratification in 1789, the United States Constitution for “we the people” sanctioned slavery and contained no mention of women.

Clearly, for the founding fathers, white propertied males counted as the citizens to be “politically active.”<sup>16</sup> Significant for America’s future, the Constitution allocated to the individual States power to decide the qualifications for the rights of full citizenship emblematic in the right to vote.<sup>17</sup> Drawn from the classic work by Linda K. Kerber, Wellman’s synopsis illustrates that:

Public opinion eventually coalesced around a vision of republican motherhood . . . . This ideal allowed women to play a role both private and public . . . . As moral preceptors, women could share in civic virtue by sacrificing their own personal interests for the larger good of their children [and] . . . create a future generation of virtuous citizens . . . . [As such], she was a citizen but not really a constituent.<sup>18</sup>

Notwithstanding such limitations, for most white women in America under the ideals of the republican vision an aim emerged that was considered indispensable: education.

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<sup>12</sup> Judith Wellman, “Women’s Rights, Republicanism, and Revolutionary Rhetoric in Antebellum New York State,” *New York History: Quarterly Journal of the New York State Historical Association* 69, no. 3 (1988): 356.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, 355.

<sup>14</sup> Wellman, “Women’s Rights, Republicanism, and Revolutionary Rhetoric,” 353.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, 361.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, 360-62.

<sup>18</sup> Kerber, Linda K., *Women of the Republic: Intellect and Ideology in Revolutionary America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1980), as quoted in Wellman, “Women’s Rights, Republicanism, and Revolutionary Rhetoric,” 360.

In the earliest decades leaders believed that this new nation's vast size and diverse interests mandated an educated citizenry to learn republican ideals. Writing of this period, Lawrence A. Cremin says, "No theme was so universally articulated . . . as the need of a self-governing people for universal education."<sup>19</sup> Thus, to depict the historical context into which Lucretia Coffin Mott was born necessitates a brief consideration of early American formal education for boys and for girls.

### **(1) Schooling for Children of the New Republic**

Under the colonial regime, meager access to schooling for girls contributed to limited education for females in literate skills. Yet, even in 1804--the only year eleven-year old Lucretia Coffin was not schooled in Quaker education--boys attended public schools "year-round" while girls' attendance was limited to the period "from the 20<sup>th</sup> of April to the 20<sup>th</sup> of October."<sup>20</sup> Girls were permitted education for half the time devoted to boys. To understand such conditions helps one to grasp the implications significant to the futures of females as citizens in the new republic. Useful in this effort is Kerber's recent examination of the educational prerequisites needed to partake in advanced scholarly endeavors and to participate in public matters.

Kerber prioritized the educational prerequisites by skills: reading, writing, and public speaking. Jennifer Monaghan's study of colonial New England literacy served as the basis for Kerber's analysis. Monaghan's study revealed that the one skill deemed suitable for learning by both boys and girls was the ability to read. In comparison, boys also learned to write. Kerber points to Monaghan's explanation that "writing was considered a craft, . . . a job-related skill [reserved to] males in preparation for professional occupations that ranged from clerk to minister."<sup>21</sup> To gain skill in the ability to write, however, girls had to await the later eighteenth-century. Kerber explains that, "the republican ideology of the revolutionary years made literacy a moral obligation [and] the diffusion of knowledge was the responsibility of a republican society."<sup>22</sup> This ideology, fostered through education, spread the ability to read and to write "to an unprecedented extent" and made white New England females possibly the "most literate in the Western world."<sup>23</sup>

### **(2) Education for Public Speaking Limited to Males**

To partake in advanced intellectual enterprises and to participate in public matters carried not only the required literacy but also the elemental educational prerequisite skill of speaking publicly. That component, public speaking, was limited to education for the professions and those professions were restricted to males. Barbara M. Solomon emphasizes that "being an

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<sup>19</sup> Lawrence A. Cremin, *American Education: The National Experience, 1783-1876* (New York, NY: Harper & Row Publishers, 1980), 103.

<sup>20</sup> Penny Fankhouser Pagliaro, "The Education and Radical Thought of Lucretia Mott: A Partial Biography," Thesis, Master of Education in Educational Foundations (Hawaii: University of Hawaii, 1976), 33.

<sup>21</sup> Linda K. Kerber, "'Why Should Girls Be Learn'd and Wise?': The Unfinished Work of Alice Mary Baldwin," in *Visible Women: New Essays on American Activism*, ed. Nancy A. Hewitt and Suzanne Lebsack (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1993), 357.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, 358.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*

orator was an important expression of masculinity."<sup>24</sup> To speak about issues of grave concern in a public forum, Kerber explains, had been reserved to members of “the ‘learned’ professions – the ministry, law, and the professoriate.”<sup>25</sup> These professions, Kerber notes, “involved not only reason and argument but also forceful public speaking.”<sup>26</sup> Thus, most women's education precluded or disadvantaged their participation in professions and public deliberation.

## II. Development of Popular Education in the Early National Era

Without fail, the republican ideals that fostered popular education for children and adults and the increase in literacy converged with other advances to give learning opportunities to broader segments of the American citizenry. These advances in educational prospects were assured liberty by the 1791 ratification of the first amendment to the U.S. Constitution that guaranteed freedom of the press, of speech, to assemble, and to petition. To illustrate, educational possibilities increased when advances in printing technology enabled easier production of newspapers--with their serialized literary works--and reproduction of “classics” from Europe, and by the establishment of organized libraries, scholarly and popular journals, magazines, and books.<sup>27</sup> Learning also spread through voluntary and religious organizations often by means of public speaking.

### (A) Popular Education to Address Injustice

The nineteenth century with its profound changes constituted a crucial and formative time in the history of American society and of American adult education. As the new republic developed, American society faced dilemmas with far-reaching consequences. During this time of change in public life, the continuing education of adults was critical. Lucretia Mott's contemporary, William Henry Channing (1780-1842), an influential Unitarian minister and public speaker suggested to adults that for societal problems “the remedy lies, not in the ballot box, not in the exercise of your political powers, but in the faithful education of yourselves and your children.”<sup>28</sup> Harold W. Stubblefield & John R. Rachal identified that to describe “the idea of education for a larger audience than the elite world of university students” Channing, in 1835, used the term “popular education.”<sup>29</sup> A paramount contribution of such popular or adult education<sup>30</sup> focuses on efforts to educate the public about various subjects, including a culture's dominant values. One important facet of adult education, as applied in this study, deals with issues of justice regarding abolition of slavery, rights of women, and peaceful ways to address injustice.

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<sup>24</sup> Barbara Miller Solomon, *In the Company of Educated Women: A History of Women and Higher Education in America* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985), 28-29.

<sup>25</sup> Kerber, “Why Should Girls Be Learn'd and Wise?” 351.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

<sup>27</sup> Stubblefield, Harold W. and Patrick Keane, *Adult Education in the American Experience: From the Colonial Period to the Present* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1994), 62-79.

<sup>28</sup> Channing, William Ellery, “Self-Culture,” 1838, quoted in Cremin, *American Education: The National Experience, 1783-1876*, 258.

<sup>29</sup> Stubblefield, Harold W. and John R. Rachal, “On the Origins of the Term and Meanings of ‘Adult Education’ in the United States,” *Adult Education Quarterly* 42, no. 2 (Winter 1992): 108.

<sup>30</sup> Throughout, the terms popular education and adult education are used interchangeably and apply to the public.

## **(1) A Way to Think about Adult Education**

Various definitions describe adult education as a field of study and as a practice.<sup>31</sup> British historian Richard Johnson goes to a historic, though less frequently mentioned adult education root in Christianity. Johnson defines adult education as grounded in alternatives to develop a social order founded on the Christian ethic seen as a “morality of cooperation among equals.”<sup>32</sup> Eduard C. Lindeman is said by Stephen Brookfield to be “the major philosopher of adult education in the United States.”<sup>33</sup> Lindeman’s description of adult learning expresses well the researcher’s view of popular education for purposes of this inquiry:

a co-operative venture in non-authoritarian, informal learning the chief purpose of which is to discover the meaning of experience; a quest of the mind which digs down to the roots of the preconceptions which formulate our conduct; a technique of learning for adults which makes education coterminous with life, and hence elevates living itself to the level of an experiment.<sup>34</sup>

Adult education, viewed broadly by the researcher, consists of the complexity of educational experiences beyond those to prepare for an occupation or vocation. Adult education includes multiple aspects such as intellectual, religious, political, social and personal dimensions across formal, non-formal, and informal settings. These aspects and settings of education receive different emphases throughout history. Furthermore, a society's dominant values determine both who has access to education and who qualifies to educate. A brief look at this history will set the stage for appreciation of the significance of Lucretia Mott's educational contribution to counter society's dominant values and the significance of her experience as a woman pioneering in the right of women to speak publicly.

## **(2) The Rose and the Thorn in Nineteenth-Century Popular Education**

As popular education blossomed in the nineteenth century, contradictions in adult education's aims and purposes arose. Such contradictions Stubblefield and Keane characterize as “paradoxes.”<sup>35</sup> The apparent aims of adult education in the new republic stressed the intellectual and cultural growth of its citizens while the hidden and yet intrinsic aims promoted the dominant social patterns. These patterns gave privilege to some people and disadvantaged others. Stubblefield and Keane analyze this paradox as, “an explicit commitment to progress and creativity . . . often matched by an implicit commitment to social control and the avoidance of controversial issues.”<sup>36</sup> The men and women who chose to educate for justice toward the

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<sup>31</sup> For instance see Stubblefield, Harold W. and Patrick Keane, "The History of Adult and Continuing Education," in *Handbook of Adult and Continuing Education*, ed. Sharan B. Merriam and Phyllis M. Cunningham (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1991), 2-4; Stephen Brookfield, *Learning Democracy: Eduard Lindeman on Adult Education and Social Change* (Wolfeboro, NH: Croom Helm, 1987), 1; Malcolm Knowles, *The Modern Practice of Adult Education* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall Regents, 1980), 25; Eduard C. Lindeman, *The Meaning of Adult Education* (New York: New Republic, Inc., 1926), 6,7,38,47.

<sup>32</sup> Richard Johnson, "'Really Useful Knowledge' 1790-1850: Memories for Education in the 1980s," in *Radical Approaches to Adult Education: A Reader*, ed. Tom Lovett (London: Routledge, 1988), 5.

<sup>33</sup> Brookfield, *Learning Democracy*, 1.

<sup>34</sup> Lindeman, Eduard C., "What is Adult Education?" 1925, 3, quoted in Brookfield, *Learning Democracy*, 4.

<sup>35</sup> Stubblefield, Harold W. and Patrick Keane, *Adult Education in the American Experience*, 54.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, 54.

disadvantaged qualified as dissenters or reformers. As Joseph F. Kett writes, "Not infrequently . . . [nineteenth-century] 'founders' [of adult education] were deeply distressed by dominant trends or currents of their societies [that] . . . they saw as fundamentally flawed because they embodied the values of elites."<sup>37</sup> Among what Stubblefield & Keane call "elaborate experiments . . . in diffusion of knowledge to the general population" in early national or antebellum nineteenth-century America ranks the lyceum.<sup>38</sup>

## (B) Popular Education in the Lyceum

The lyceum flourished as a vital forum of nineteenth-century popular education from Josiah Holbrook's establishment of the first lyceum at Millbury (Worcester County, Massachusetts) in November 1826.<sup>39</sup> The lyceum at Millbury began the development of Holbrook's proposal "for the organization of an educational society which should reach and affect every part of the Nation."<sup>40</sup> By 1835, over three thousand town lyceums were organized from the Atlantic seaboard to St. Louis.<sup>41</sup> According to Henry Barnard, the name "lyceum" stems from the name of the grove, near the temple of Apollo Lyceus, where Aristotle instructed and from which it derives its fame.<sup>42</sup> Thus, Holbrook's design for a "systematic form [of education] . . . for all classes of persons and interests" reflects a similar purpose.<sup>43</sup> Clearly, the public lectures delivered in the lyceum framed, as Robert J. Greef says, "a cultural index of the times"<sup>44</sup> and its speakers represent significant figures in nineteenth-century history. Thus, the historic record--the speakers and topics included or excluded--create for succeeding generations the remembered "cultural index."<sup>45</sup>

### (1) Educational Histories of the Lyceum Speakers Incomplete

The most recent scholarly history of the lyceum, Carl Bode's *The American Lyceum: Town Meeting of the Mind*<sup>46</sup> largely omits from the record the women who lectured from this public platform. In Bode's history, two chapters report the Lyceum speakers representative of the period through the early 1860's. Yet, Bode chose only one woman:

Fanny Wright: The Gadfly of Reform: Frances Wright represented the fringe--sometimes but not always lunatic--of extreme individualists who also stepped on the lecture platform

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<sup>37</sup> Joseph F. Kett, "The Dissenter in the History of Adult Education," VI International Conference on the History of Adult Education: Personality and Biography (Jenna, Germany, 1-5/9, 1996), 1.

<sup>38</sup> Stubblefield, Harold W. and Patrick Keane, *Adult Education in the American Experience*, 80.

<sup>39</sup> "Holbrook, Josiah," in *American Reformers: An H. W. Wilson Biographical Dictionary*, ed. Alden Whitman (New York: 1985), 440-42.

<sup>40</sup> Cecil B. Hayes, *The American Lyceum: Its History and Contribution to Education* (Washington: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1932), 1.

<sup>41</sup> Robert J. Greef, *Public Lectures in New York 1851-1878: A Cultural Index of the Times* (Chicago: The University of Chicago, 1945), 3.

<sup>42</sup> Henry Barnard, "Lyceum Origin of Name; Progress," *The American Journal of Education* VIII (1860): 249-52.

<sup>43</sup> Hayes, *American Lyceum*

<sup>44</sup> Greef, *Public Lectures in New York 1851-1878: A Cultural Index of the Times*.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid.

<sup>46</sup> Carl Bode, *The American Lyceum: Town Meeting of the Mind* (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1956, 1968).

. . . . But there was only one Fanny Wright. The Lyceum idea could not have survived many like her.<sup>47</sup>

Bode did not offer as representative any of the many historic women speakers who worked in the Lyceum circuit before and after the 1860s, though earlier histories, and primary sources document women's public speaking.

Donald M. Scott's article provided a broad look at the popular lecture as a means of nineteenth-century popular education. Scott elucidated the qualifications needed by lecturers: "some oratorical experience, some confidence in their ability to perform orally."<sup>48</sup> He cited, "law and clergy . . . [as] professions with firm oratorical traditions."<sup>49</sup> As reviewed previously, Kerber accented the limitations placed on women's public speaking by means of their being barred from education for law and clergy.<sup>50</sup> Scott's well researched article could serve as excellent background to new scholarship again exploring the history of the lyceum to include women who spoke publicly with "oratorical experience."<sup>51</sup>

## **(2) An Example for a More Inclusive Lyceum History**

A study of the pioneer women public speakers in the lyceum could broaden the knowledge of nineteenth-century popular education. For example, an exposition of the 1849 lyceum speeches delivered in Philadelphia by Richard Dana<sup>52</sup> and Lucretia Mott,<sup>53</sup> could illuminate the intellectual vitality and the educational force of the lyceum. While the record of women's public speaking can be found through the academic disciplines of women's history and speech communication, the educational aspects of these efforts are not the focus of available scholarship. Thus, the study now turns to oratorical scholarship to find the record of women's public speaking.

### **(C) Pioneers in Women's Public Speaking**

For public oration and deliberation in early nineteenth-century American culture, one standard accepted as normal for the traditionally prescribed roles for women required their silence. The expectation ruled that a woman would not speak, women's speech being blocked by what Eleanor Flexner calls a "curtain of silence."<sup>54</sup> Caroline Field Levander claims, "Friends, family, and academic institutions actively discouraged women who wanted to speak publicly and

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<sup>47</sup> Bode, *American Lyceum*, 126-27.

<sup>48</sup> Donald M. Scott, "The Popular Lecture and the Creation of a Public in Mid-Nineteenth-Century America," *The Journal of American History* 66, no. 4 (March 1980): 794.

<sup>49</sup> Scott, "The Popular Lecture," 794.

<sup>50</sup> Kerber, "Why Should Girls Be Learn'd and Wise?" 351.

<sup>51</sup> Scott, "The Popular Lecture," 794.

<sup>52</sup> *History of Woman Suffrage, Vol. 1*, 2nd, ed. Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Susan B. Anthony and Matilda Joselyn Gage (Rochester NY: Anthony, Susan B., 1889), 367.

<sup>53</sup> Lucretia Mott, "Discourse on Woman (12/17/1849)," in *Lucretia Mott: Her Complete Speeches and Sermons/Edited [with an Introduction] by Dana Greene. Studies in Women and Religion, Vol. 4* (New York: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1980), 143-62.

<sup>54</sup> Eleanor Flexner, *Century of Struggle: The Woman's Rights Movement in the United States, Revised Edition* (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1959, 1975), 44.

shunned those who actually dared to address the public from the podium."<sup>55</sup> Yet, some women did speak.

Karlyn Kohrs Campbell describes as "unique" in the history of public address the place of women public speakers in nineteenth-century America.<sup>56</sup> For the first time in history, American women exercised, as their legitimate due, a new practice: speaking in public. As Suzanne Schnittman argues, women "assumed a right they never had held--the right to speak in public before a mixed audience."<sup>57</sup> During these decades, Mott began to educate on many public issues especially abolition of slavery, rights of women, and peaceful ways to address injustice.

Mott's efforts to educate the public about matters of justice admitted her to the company of American women who pioneered in the practice of public speaking. These same endeavors also admitted her to the company of women who endured criticism, insults, and peril in response to their speaking to "promiscuous" audiences, those comprised of adult males and females. Sara M. Evans says these women "met with ridicule and even violence."<sup>58</sup> Through a process of education, these women changed history and shaped culture.

This historic change provoked opposition. For example, Mott experienced antagonism because she spoke publicly to educate about the injustice of slavery. While acknowledging the antagonism, she spoke of her steadfast resolve: "the misrepresentation, ridicule, and abuse, heaped upon this, as well as other reforms, do not in the least deter me from my duty."<sup>59</sup> Lucretia Mott, by her efforts to educate the public, ranks as a pioneer female public speaker. Hence, this study explores the history of women's public speaking.

## **(1) Brief Spans in Public Speaking for Several Pioneering Women**

Doris G. Yoakam called the early nineteenth century an "age of experimentation," and claimed that "almost anything could happen--even public speaking by women."<sup>60</sup> In fact, that is precisely what happened. Among the females "who initiated" women's public speaking in the United States, Campbell includes Deborah Sampson Gannett who served in the Revolutionary War "disguised as a male" and later defended her army service by lecturing.<sup>61</sup> According to Jovita Ross-Gordon and William D. Dowling, Maria Stewart, the first African-American woman to speak publicly, informed her audience that "knowledge is power." In 1821, Stewart addressed Boston's "Afri-American Female Intelligence Society" established by participants "to associate

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<sup>55</sup> Caroline Field Levander, *Voices of the Nation: Women and Public Speech in Nineteenth-Century American Literature and Culture* (Cambridge: Press Syndicate of the University of Cambridge, 1998), 3.

<sup>56</sup> Karlyn Kohrs Campbell, *Man Cannot Speak for Her: A Critical Study in Early Feminist Rhetoric* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1989), 9.

<sup>57</sup> Suzanne Schnittman, "Address Before the New York Historical Society," *New York State Historical Society Meeting* (Brockport NY, June, 1995), 1.

<sup>58</sup> Sara M. Evans, "Afterword," in *Talking Gender: Public Images, Personal Journeys, and Political Critiques*, ed. Nancy Hewitt, Jean O'Barr and Nancy Rosebaugh (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1996), 193.

<sup>59</sup> Lucretia Mott, "Notes on the Life of Lucretia Mott as Given to Sarah J. Hale," *MOTT MSS.*, 1 (Friends Historical Library, Swarthmore College, Swarthmore, PA, 1834-40).

<sup>60</sup> Doris G. Yoakam, "Women's Introduction to the American Platform," in *History and Criticism of American Public Address* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1943), 153.

<sup>61</sup> Anderson, Judith, *Outspoken Women: Speeches by American Women Reformers, 1635-1935* (Dubuque, IA: Kendall/Hunt, 1984) cited in Campbell, *Man Cannot Speak for Her*, 17.

for the diffusion of knowledge, the suppression of vice and immorality, and for cherishing such values as will render us happy and useful to society."<sup>62</sup> However, Frances Wright (1795-1852), a white woman, often mistakenly receives credit for giving the first public speech by a woman in the United States on July 4, 1828.<sup>63</sup> Histories mark Angelina Grimke (1805 - 1879) as the first woman to address publicly an audience with men, specifically the first woman to address a "legislative body,"<sup>64</sup> a committee of the Massachusetts Legislature in a February 1838, appearance. In a letter to her husband, Grimke describes the fear she experienced:

I was so near fainting under the tremendous pressure of feeling, my heart almost died within me. The novelty of the scene, the weight of responsibility, the ceaseless exercise of mind . . . I well nigh despaired, but our Lord and Master gave me his arm to lean upon, and in great weakness, my limbs trembling under me, I stood up and spoke for nearly two hours.<sup>65</sup>

Both Angelina Grimke and her sister Sarah entered early the public speaking arena, but also withdrew early from that arena, as did Stewart and Wright. As can be gleaned from a study of their notable endeavors, these pioneering women did not persist in their public speaking.

### **(3) Lifelong Work Speaking Publicly to Educate Adults for Lucretia Mott**

Acknowledging the significant pioneering steps of these women public speakers, Campbell claimed for Lucretia Mott a place of merit in the history of women's rhetoric. Campbell said Quaker minister Lucretia Mott was a "skilled speaker" whose work "preceded both the abolitionist and woman's rights movements."<sup>66</sup> According to Yoakam, this skill eventually earned Lucretia Mott recognition as "the diplomat among pioneer women orators."<sup>67</sup> Her speaking publicly in meetings for worship began in 1818<sup>68</sup> and influenced her recognition in 1821 as a minister of the Society of Friends.<sup>69</sup> In 1878, Lucretia Mott delivered her last public address.<sup>70</sup> Undoubtedly, she was a pathfinder over the first half-century of women's public speaking to educate adult men and women in gatherings of the American populace.

#### **(a) Overview of Lucretia Mott's Outspoken Concern for Justice**

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<sup>62</sup> L. Perkins, *Black Women and Racial 'Uplift' Prior to Emancipation* in F. Steady, *The Black Woman Cross-Culturally* (Cambridge MA: Schenkman) 317-333 cited by Jovita M. Ross-Gordon and William D. Dowling, "Adult Learning in the Context of African-American Women's Voluntary Organizations," *International Journal of Lifelong Education* 14, no. 4 (July-August 1995): 236. See also Solomon, *In the Company of Educated Women: A History of Women and Higher Education in America*, 29.

<sup>63</sup> For instance see Yoakam, "Women's Introduction to the American Platform," 157; Robert T. Oliver, *History of Public Speaking in America* (Boston: Ally and Bacon, 1965), 438.

<sup>64</sup> Jean V. Matthews, "Consciousness of Self and Consciousness of Sex in Antebellum Feminism," *Journal of Women's History* 5, no. 1 (Spring 1993): 67.

<sup>65</sup> Flexner, *Century of Struggle*, 344.

<sup>66</sup> Campbell, *Man Cannot Speak for Her*, 38.

<sup>67</sup> Yoakam, "Women's Introduction to the American Platform," 169.

<sup>68</sup> Oliver, *History of Public Speaking in America*, 441.

<sup>69</sup> Margaret Hope Bacon, *Valiant Friend: The Life of Lucretia Mott* (New York, NY: Walker, 1980), 37.

<sup>70</sup> Lucretia Mott, "Place Women in Equal Power (July, 1878)," *Lucretia Mott: Her Complete Speeches and Sermons/edited [with an introduction] by Dana Greene. Studies in Women and Religion, vol. 4* (New York: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1980).



Near the end of a well-rounded and eventful life, Lucretia Mott, a lifelong learner, teacher, wife, and mother of six, received tribute as “a prophesy of the future of woman.”<sup>71</sup> Histories link her most often to anti-slavery and women’s suffrage activity.<sup>72</sup> Yet, she thought of herself and contemporaries recognized her as a Quaker minister, a woman active in many domains of public concern.<sup>73</sup> Within these domains--moral, social, economic, and political--established standards generally prevail: those who dominate a culture, the elite, set established cultural standards. While these cultural customs often are characterized as normal or traditional, some people saw in various accepted nineteenth-century social standards a lack of justice. In response to public injustice Lucretia Mott declared, “I have no idea . . . of submitting tamely to injustice . . . . I will oppose it with all the moral powers with which I am endowed. I am no advocate of passivity.”<sup>74</sup> Societal injustices moved her to speak about justice related to abolition of slavery, rights of women, and peaceful ways to address injustice.

Animated with the moral power of her religious beliefs, Lucretia Mott taught adults in multiple ways but primarily through public address. For over fifty years, she educated others in public forums and settings that ranged from religious meetings to the lyceum and conventions called to consider issues of national import, for instance abolition of slavery and the rights of women. What could have prepared this Quaker minister, this women who sought to educate the public, for a place among the pioneers who advocated and practiced the right of women to speak purposefully in public forums?

### **(b) Lifelong Member of Society with a Mission to Educate**

Central to the foundation of Mott’s convictions and actions as an educator of the public was her lifelong membership in the Society of Friends. Quaker historian Edwin B. Bronner recounts that George Fox (1624–1691), the first Friend to preach, believed he had a “message--the Word of God--to share.”<sup>75</sup> Bronner says Friends had a mission and “felt impelled to move among their fellow human beings to share the Good News which had been revealed to them” through the preaching of George Fox and “by the Light within.”<sup>76</sup>

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<sup>71</sup> Lucy Stone to Lucretia Mott, 11-1-1880. Mott Manuscript Collection, Friends Historical Library, Swarthmore College, as cited in Bacon, *Valiant Friend*, 228.

<sup>72</sup> For instance, see Samuel Eliot Morison, Henry Steele Commager and William E. Leuchtenburg, *The Growth of the American Republic*, Sixth Edition (New York: Oxford University Press, 1969), 487, 502; Stubblefield, Harold W. and Keane, *Adult Education in the American Experience*, 118.

<sup>73</sup> Frederick B. Tolles, “Lucretia Coffin Mott,” in *Notable American Women: A Biographical Dictionary*, ed. Edward T. James, Janet Wilson James, et al. (Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1971), 592-95; Margaret Hope Bacon, “In Souls There Is No Sex: Pioneers in Antislavery and Women’s Rights,” in *Pendle Hill Lecture Series*, Pendle Hill Monday Evening Lectures (Wallingford, PA: Pendle Hill, 4 November, 1985).

<sup>74</sup> Lucretia Mott, “I Am No Advocate of Passivity (10/25-26/1860),” in *Lucretia Mott: Her Complete Speeches and Sermons/Edited [with an Introduction] by Dana Greene. Studies in Women and Religion, Vol. 4* (New York: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1980), 262.

<sup>75</sup> Edwin B. Bronner, “Quaker Discipline and Order, 1680-1720: Philadelphia Yearly Meeting and London Yearly Meeting,” in *The Worlds of William Penn*, ed. Richard S. Dunn and Mary Maples Dunn (Philadelphia PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1986), 323.

<sup>76</sup> Bronner, “Quaker Discipline and Order,” 323.

From the Society's inception in England and its introduction in America in the 1650s, Quaker worshippers exercised what John Ferguson calls "liberty of speech."<sup>77</sup> Ever since the Friends embarked on their mission to reclaim early Christianity's "apostolic faith"<sup>78</sup> women participated in Quaker meetings not only as worshippers, but also as ministers and Public Friends. A [Public Friend](#) signifies one who expresses religious beliefs as a preacher.<sup>79</sup> Public Friends traveled among groups of Quakers, and interacted "with the larger society"<sup>80</sup> to educate and speak about societal concerns. Lucretia Coffin Mott ministered as a Public Friend.

For a Public Friend, the sectarian and secular roles converge through the practice of speaking. Richard Bauman's classic scholarly study of speaking and silence in early Quakerism explains the importance of this central practice. To clarify this vocal role Bauman says "the religious speaking of the ministers represented a link between the spiritual mission of the Quakers out in the world and their own collective worship in the famous Quaker 'silent meeting'."<sup>81</sup> In the role of Quaker minister, Lucretia Mott not only connected the Society of Friends and its beliefs and practices to non-Quakers, that is, the public, she also entered the sphere of nineteenth-century public culture. Dana Greene, an eminent Mott scholar, asserts that "In the person of Mott, the long-standing [Quaker] belief in female spiritual equality was transformed into a full-blown claim for the secular equality of women."<sup>82</sup>

### **(c) An Impression of Quaker Influence Attributed to Lucretia Mott**

Highlighted in a letter attributed to Lucretia Mott is the weighty influence of the ideas and practices of the Society of Friends on many Quakers' actions. Excerpts from this letter appear below. Her most recent biographer, Margaret Hope Bacon,<sup>83</sup> says the letter, which originally appeared in a book introduction published in England in 1869, was not published again until now.<sup>84</sup> In the letter, Lucretia Mott relates convictions of the Society of Friends to particular actions:

<sup>77</sup> John H. Ferguson, *Politics Quaker Style: A History of the Quakers from 1624 to 1718*, Stokvis Studies in Historical Chronology and Thought, vol. 15 (San Bernardino, CA: The Borgo Press, 1995), 56.

<sup>78</sup> Dean Freiday, "Apostolicity and Orthochristianity: Church of God - Methodists - Quakers - Baptists-Mennonites," in *Apostolic Faith in America*, ed. Thaddeus D. Horgan (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1988), 34-49.

<sup>79</sup> Carol Stoneburner, "Introduction," in *The Influence of Quaker Women on American History: Biographical Studies*, ed. Carol and John Stoneburner (Lewiston: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1986), xiv.

<sup>80</sup> Stoneburner, "Introduction," 1.

<sup>81</sup> Richard Bauman, *Let Your Words Be Few: Symbolism of Speaking and Silence Among Seventeenth-Century Quakers*, Cambridge Studies in Oral and Literate Culture, vol. 8 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 16.

<sup>82</sup> Dana Greene, "Introduction," in *Lucretia Mott: Her Complete Speeches and Sermons/Edited [with an Introduction] by Dana Greene. Studies in Women and Religion, Vol. 4* (New York: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1980), 10.

<sup>83</sup> Margaret Hope Bacon, Personal conversation at her home in Philadelphia (03/14, 1996).

<sup>84</sup> Margaret Hope Bacon gave this researcher a photocopy of a letter attributed to Lucretia Mott and published in the Introduction to *Woman's Work and Woman's Culture*, ed. Josephine Butler (London: MacMillan, 1869). The researcher later examined Butler's book to verify its publication source. In the process to determine if this letter is both genuine and authentic the researcher contacted Beverly Wilson Palmer, at Pomona College, Claremont, CA, the editor of the projected year 2000 publication of a one-volume edition of selected letters of Lucretia Mott. Historians serving on the Lucretia Coffin Mott Papers Project are Janet Farrell Brodie, Ann D. Gordon, Dana Greene, Thomas Hamm, Nancy Hewitt and Kathryn Kish Sklar. Professor Palmer e-mailed the researcher: "I have the Josephine

The stand taken by George Fox, the founder of our Society, against authority as opposed to the immediate teachings of the 'Light within,' gave independence of character to women as well as men. Their ministry recognised, . . . they went forth among the nations 'preaching the Word,' and spreading their principles. Adopting no theological creed, their faith was shown by their works in the everyday duties of life, 'minding the Light' in little things as well as in the greater . . . .

The [Testimonies](#) of the Society against war, slavery, the forced maintenance of the ministry, and the extravagant and luxurious indulgences of the age . . . have prepared our members to unite in many reformatory movements of the day.<sup>85</sup>

Lucretia Mott sees the complex of beliefs, actions, and practices as important.

#### **(d) Quaker Convictions with Enormous Implications**

Clearly, Lucretia Mott assumes the influence of some tenets and practices of the Society of Friends on Quaker actions, specifically “‘preaching the Word’ and “‘spreading their principles.” These efforts relate to education of the public, popular education.

Mott’s activities arose from the foundation of convictions and conduct shaped by a lifetime spent as a Quaker. A reader must be conversant with the Friends’ ideas and practices to grasp adequately the enormous implications inherent in a person’s being a committed member of the Society of Friends, a Quaker. Even as she preached that, "the standard of creeds and forms must be lowered, while that of justice, peace, and love one to another must be raised higher and higher"<sup>86</sup> her perspective, nevertheless, was rooted in Quakerism. Mott’s grounding in both Quaker philosophy and experience are reflected and embedded in the content of her speeches and sermons, in the persistent practice of her Quaker ministry, and in the perspectives through which she endeavored to educate the public, as this study will demonstrate.

The ideas, practices, and methods to conduct meetings for worship and meetings for business are singular in Quakerism and unfamiliar to non-Quakers. Penny Fankhouser Pagliaro's master's thesis about Lucretia Coffin Mott's early formal education raised the problem of a researcher's being unfamiliar with Quaker ways. Pagliaro points to "great . . . rewards for mastering the cultural differences" and suggests that possibly "modern scholars are put off by the 'peculiar' aspects of the Quaker culture, its language, theology, and customs."<sup>87</sup> Thus, the

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Butler you mention, also supplied to me by Margaret Bacon. Unfortunately I don't have an original, and fear it may never surface because I visited the Fawcett Library in London where all Butler's papers are housed. All I found there was a fragment of another letter from LCM (which does show at least, that the two probably communicated with each other). I will use the letter in my forthcoming edition . . . unless I find evidence to indicate that LCM didn't write it, but it sounds authentic to me (e.g. she always misspelled Wollstonecraft) and it is a wonderful letter!"

<sup>85</sup> Lucretia Mott, "Letter in Introduction," in *Woman's Work and Woman's Culture*, ed. Josephine Butler (London: MacMillan, 1869), xlv-xlvii.

<sup>86</sup> Lucretia Mott, "Progress of the Religious World (3/23-24/1848)," in *Lucretia Mott: Her Complete Speeches and Sermons/Edited [with an Introduction] by Dana Greene. Studies in Women and Religion, Vol. 4* (New York: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1980), 67.

<sup>87</sup> Pagliaro, "Education and Radical Thought of Lucretia Mott," 167.

uniqueness of the ideas and practices of the Society of Friends and general unfamiliarity with Quakerism necessitated a review of scholarly and denominational literature.

To grasp what enabled Lucretia Coffin Mott to be a pathfinder among women who spoke publicly to educate, her Quaker foundation must be understood. Therefore, Chapter Two seeks to present an exploration of Quaker history, spirituality, and practices to inform for purposes of historic educational analysis and interpretation. The [meeting for worship](#) and [meeting for business](#) are most uniquely Quaker and are their primary educational structures. Thus, they are examined in most detail. Chapter Two also presents a review of the literature and pertinent primary documents to help illumine the context of Lucretia Coffin Mott's formative education.

### III. Review of Relevant Literature about Lucretia Coffin Mott and Her Theory of Knowing

Adult education literature associated with the early history of adult education as a field of study and related to Lucretia Mott consists of two works. Mary Ritter Beard's<sup>88</sup> monograph simply mentions that Lucretia Mott was a Quaker.<sup>89</sup> Mary L. Ely and Eve Chappell's work, as part of the series *Studies in the Social Significance of Adult Education in the United States*, failed even to note Lucretia Mott's religious foundation.<sup>90</sup> This omission seemingly contradicted Ely's own assertion in the Foreword: "it is only against the background of women's past that any fair estimate of the significance of their present work can be made."<sup>91</sup> No more recent adult education literature focused on Lucretia Mott.

Of the two recent broad histories of American adult education,<sup>92</sup> only *Adult Education in the American Experience* introduced Mott--and other Quakers noted for their educational innovations--into this historical record.<sup>93</sup> Joseph F. Kett's major work on the history of adult education failed to mention Lucretia Mott or other educators who dissented from dominant values.<sup>94</sup> Yet, in "The Dissenter in the History of Adult Education," a 1996 address,<sup>95</sup> Kett described research into the work of nineteenth-century dissenters or reformers as an opportunity "to reflect back on the age of the founders, on a time when adult education had yet to experience bureaucratization . . . when its leading lights set themselves resolutely against the mainstream values of their cultures."<sup>96</sup> Kett chose not to include Quaker "founders" when he considered the nineteenth century in his major work on adult education history.

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<sup>88</sup> While historians of adult education have focused more on Mary Ritter Beard's husband, Charles, a reader interested in the educative and historical interests of Mary Ritter Beard can consult Mary Ritter Beard, *A Woman Making History: Mary Ritter Beard Through Her Letters*, Edited with an Introduction by Nancy F. Cott, ed. Nancy F. Cott (New Haven: Yale University Press 1991).

<sup>89</sup> Mary R. Beard, "Lucretia Mott," *The American Scholar* 2, no. 1 (January 1933): 5-12.

<sup>90</sup> Mary L. Ely and Eve Chappell, *Women in Two Worlds*, *Studies in the Social Significance of Adult Education in the United States* (New York: American Association for Adult Education, 1938), 81-82.

<sup>91</sup> Mary L. Ely, "Forward," in *Women in Two Worlds*, ed. Mary L. Ely and Eve Chappell (New York: American Association for Adult Education, 1938), viii.

<sup>92</sup> Joseph F. Kett, *The Pursuit of Knowledge Under Difficulties: From Self-Improvement to Adult Education in America*. (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1994); Stubblefield Harold W. and Keane, *Adult Education in the American Experience*.

<sup>93</sup> Stubblefield, Harold W. and Patrick Keane, *Adult Education in the American Experience*, 118.

<sup>94</sup> Kett, "Dissenter in History of Adult Education."

<sup>95</sup> Ibid.

<sup>96</sup> Ibid., 21.

Again, one must look to the discipline of Rhetoric or Speech Communication to consider what Karlyn Kohrs Campbell called Lucretia Mott's "theory of knowing."<sup>97</sup> Campbell ascribed to "Lucretia Mott's experience as a Quaker [the resources that] enabled her to hold a theory of knowing that valued reasoning, intuition, and personal experience equally."<sup>98</sup> The academic discipline of Speech Communication professionalization began during the era of the nineteenth-century lyceum, from which Adult Education also gained some roots.

Published rhetorical analysis of Lucretia Mott's various speeches begins with Yoakam's 1943 article.<sup>99</sup> Yoakam mentioned several qualifications related to Quakerism and briefly considered two of the forty-nine speeches that were included in Dana Greene's anthology<sup>100</sup> in 1980. The two speeches Yoakam considered are "Reforms of the Age," in which, she says, Lucretia Mott "skillfully wove together discussion of theology, slavery, peace, capital punishment, and temperance"<sup>101</sup> and her most frequently cited work "Discourse on Woman."<sup>102</sup> The next exploration of Lucretia Mott's public speaking appeared in 1989 in Campbell's study of women's early rhetoric.<sup>103</sup> This analysis clearly related the speech content to some aspects of Quakerism. Lucretia Mott's other forty-eight speeches were not considered in the analysis. In 1993, a scholarly rhetorical analysis of this same speech by Lester C. Olson and Trudy Bayer cites her ability "to connect spiritual insights to contemporaneous contexts."<sup>104</sup> The analysis failed, however, to explain what these insights might be. In 1994, A. Cheree Carlson again analyzed "Discourse on Woman."<sup>105</sup> Carlson considered several aspects of Quakerism. In particular, Carlson claimed that Lucretia Mott "uses the Quaker concept of the 'inner light' to balance the tension between her conservative cultural milieu and her radical goals."<sup>106</sup> None of these works presented a sufficiently broad explication of Quaker ideas and practices for a fuller analysis of Lucretia Mott's many speeches and sermons. Nor do any of these articles examine Lucretia Mott's work as a pioneer who educated the public through speaking about a broad range of societal issues.

## Primary Reports and Biographies of Lucretia Mott

Lucretia Mott's published diary of her trip to attend the 1840 World's Anti-Slavery Convention held in London, England, records her experience of being denied participation as an official delegate because she was a woman. The diary also included events such as her initial

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<sup>97</sup> *Women Public Speakers in the United States, 1800-1925: A Bio-Critical Sourcebook*, ed. Karlyn Kohrs Campbell (Westport, CN: Greenwood Press, 1993), 128.

<sup>98</sup> Ibid.

<sup>99</sup> Yoakam, "Women's Introduction to the American Platform."

<sup>100</sup> *Lucretia Mott: Her Complete Speeches and Sermons/Edited [with an Introduction] by Dana Greene*, Studies in Women and Religion, vol. 4 (New York: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1980).

<sup>101</sup> Yoakam, "Women's Introduction to the American Platform," 170.

<sup>102</sup> Mott, "Discourse on Woman (12/17/1849)," 143-62.

<sup>103</sup> Campbell, *Man Cannot Speak for Her*, 37-48.

<sup>104</sup> Lester C. Olson, and Trudy Bayer, "Lucretia Coffin Mott (1793-1880), Religious Reformer and Advocate of the Oppressed," in *Women Public Speakers in the United States, 1800-1925*, ed. Karlyn Kohrs Campbell (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1993), 139.

<sup>105</sup> A. Cheree Carlson, "Defining Womanhood: Lucretia Coffin Mott and the Transformation of Femininity," *Western Journal of Communication* 58, no.2 (Spring 1994): 85-97.

<sup>106</sup> Carlson, "Defining Womanhood: Lucretia Coffin Mott and the Transformation of Femininity," 85.

meeting with Elizabeth Cady Stanton, visits with Harriet Martineau, and encounters with many others. Regrettably, the diary covers a short, albeit, historic period, a three month trip to England.<sup>107</sup> This diary--and "Notes"<sup>108</sup> given to Sarah J. Hale--are the only known autobiographical efforts Lucretia Mott penned.

The eulogy that Elizabeth Cady Stanton delivered two months after Lucretia Mott's death is the first published biographical sketch. This contemporaneous reflection praised her character, ascribed influence to her Quaker foundation, notes her anti-slavery work and reports primarily on Lucretia Mott's efforts related to the rights of women.<sup>109</sup>

Publications of full-length or major works on Lucretia Mott, while few in number, stretch the century from 1884 to 1980. To appreciate the connection of these works with their times, book reviews are considered as part of this review of literature.

The first full length biography of Lucretia Mott, *James and Lucretia Mott: Life and Letters*, edited by their granddaughter, Anna Davis Hallowell, was published sixteen years after the death of James Mott and just four years following the death of Lucretia in 1880. A contemporaneous *New York Times Book Review*<sup>110</sup> while admitting of the possibilities common when a family member writes biography, portrayed an account "not abound[ing] in adulation . . . not o'erflowing full of minor details, and . . . is not wanting in appreciation of the subjects' public careers, nor in fair judgment of the residuary value of those careers."<sup>111</sup> The reviewer admitted, however, "any life of Lucretia Mott, even if told by the merest tyro [novice] would be interesting."<sup>112</sup> Suggesting that the book could have been shorter, the review pointed out that the work "could not have been more lucid."<sup>113</sup> A great contribution and marked strength of this work is publication of many Lucretia Mott letters. Yet, the volume and selected letters focused primarily on the Motts' anti-slavery work.

A half-century elapsed before Lloyd C. M. Hare wrote the next full-length popular biography, first published in serial form in the magazine *Americana* [Somerville, 1936, volumes 30 and 31].<sup>114</sup> Written in 1937, this book is titled simply *Lucretia Mott*. Carter G. Woodson, educator, historian, and now renowned for his efforts to reclaim the history of American blacks and hailed as the Father of African-American History, reviewed Hare's popular biography. Woodson's review appeared in the *Journal of Negro History*, founded by Woodson 1916.

Woodson begins the review of Hare's book on a cautionary note:

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<sup>107</sup> Lucretia Mott, *Slavery and "The Woman Question": Lucretia Mott's Diary of Her Visit to Great Britain*, ed. Frederick B. Tolles, Ph. D., Journal of the Friends' Historical Society, no. Supplement No. 23 (Haverford, PA: Friends' Historical Association and Friends' Historical Society, 1952, 1840).

<sup>108</sup> Mott, "Notes on the Life of Lucretia Mott as Given to Sarah J. Hale,."

<sup>109</sup> Stanton, "Lucretia Mott Eulogy," 407-31.

<sup>110</sup> "Motts," *New York Times Book Review*, 28/September 1884.

<sup>111</sup> Ibid.

<sup>112</sup> Ibid.

<sup>113</sup> Ibid.

<sup>114</sup> *Dictionary Catalog of The Research Libraries of The New York Public Libraries* (New York, 1979), 335.

We are too close to the most dramatic period of American history. We retain so many of our prejudices and predilections that few of us can dispassionately write concerning the makers of American history . . . . The author . . . summarized . . . the characterization of the subject as the flower of Quakerism, the soul of the woman's movement and the black man's goddess . . . . The book is . . . an interesting and valuable biography<sup>115</sup>

*The New York Times Book Review* concluded,

Her power as a speaker lay in the quiet force of her personality which appealed to reason rather than emotion, never temporizing, yet seldom antagonizing even those who differed with her . . . . Emerson said, 'No mob could remain a mob where she went.'<sup>116</sup>

In 1970, Hare's book was re-published by The Negro Universities Press under the title *The Greatest American Woman, Lucretia Mott*.<sup>117</sup>

Of interest to this research, the book's introduction by Roberta Campbell Lawson, President of the General Federation of Women's Clubs--historically a locus for women's adult education--applauded Lucretia Mott. Lawson depicted her as, "a woman of rare refinement, yet she was not afraid . . . to speak upon the public platform, an act then considered unwomanly and indecent."<sup>118</sup>

In 1958, Otelia Cromwell wrote the first major scholarly Mott biography. Contemporary reviews presented the subject as, "a pioneer and the leading figure . . . of the Woman's Rights Movement, which included the higher education of American women as well as the general elevation of women economically, socially, and politically to a position equal to that held by men . . . ." <sup>119</sup> Historian M. H. Rice, in reviewing Cromwell's work, cited the "treatment of Mrs. Mott's religious views and activities" as the least effective aspect of this biography.

Margaret Hope Bacon wrote two books, in addition to several shorter monographs, which focused more light on the subject: *Valiant Friend: The Life of Lucretia Mott*<sup>120</sup> and *Mothers of Feminism: The Story of Quaker Women in America*.<sup>121</sup> Acknowledged by a reviewer as "an experienced popular writer on Quaker history,"<sup>122</sup> Margaret Bacon grounded her Lucretia Mott biography in primary documents. One book reviewer cited Bacon's "skillful evocation of Mott's personality and the physical, social, and intellectual environment in which [she] lived."<sup>123</sup> Another sensed that the full depth and understanding of Lucretia Mott has not been plumbed,

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<sup>115</sup> C. G. Woodson, "Book Review of Lucretia Mott," *Journal of Negro History* 23 (1938): 372-74.

<sup>116</sup> Anita Moffett, *Lucretia Mott and Her Crusades: The Story of a Personality Which Left a Far-Reaching Influence on Her Time and on Our Own*. *The New York Times Book Review*. 1 August, 1937,.

<sup>117</sup> Lloyd C. M. Hare, *The Greatest American Woman, Lucretia Mott*. New York: Negro Universities Press, 1970, c1937.

<sup>118</sup> Roberta Campbell Lawson, "Preface," to Lloyd Custer Mayhew Hare, *Lucretia Mott* (New York: The American Historical Society, Inc., 1937), 13.

<sup>119</sup> Lorenzo D. Turner, review of *Lucretia Mott* by Otelia Cromwell *Journal of Negro History* 44:1 (January, 1959): 186-187.

<sup>120</sup> Bacon, *Valiant Friend*.

<sup>121</sup> Margaret Hope Bacon, *Mothers of Feminism: The Story of Quaker Women in America*, 1st ed. (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1986).

<sup>122</sup> *Choice* 18, 1 (September 1980): 310.

<sup>123</sup> *Ibid.*, 310.

since, "The full complement of Lucretia Mott's political positions is only hinted at, such as her analysis of the relationship between economic exploitation and war."<sup>124</sup> The *New York Times Book Review* of *Valiant Friend* affirmed the already reported view that "Quakerism was the cornerstone of . . . [Lucretia Mott's] activism."<sup>125</sup> While Bacon masterfully wove into this biography various aspects of Quakerism, still broader knowledge of Quaker ideas and methods is required to explore Lucretia Mott's spiritual foundation and her efforts to educate adults through public speaking.

Dana Greene's scholarship contributed incalculably to the study of Lucretia Mott's work by compiling her speeches and sermons.<sup>126</sup> In her clear-sighted and thought-provoking introduction, Greene confirms that, "it was from her religious experience in the Society of Friends that [Lucretia Mott] fashioned her critique of society and her vision of its restructuring."<sup>127</sup> Another review pointed out that "This Quaker preacher served also as a model for younger feminists such as Lucy Stone and Susan B. Anthony."<sup>128</sup> This invaluable publication, with its insightful analysis of Mott's pivotal position in the development of women's less restricted position in society, made available text transcripts.

Greene's compilation permits readers--and researchers--to consider Lucretia Mott's thoughts as she addressed societal issues. Greene's compilation will be used as the primary source of published speeches and sermons for this study. The book was reviewed in only two library journals and two religious journals. As Quaker writer and historian J. William Frost observed in his review, ". . . these surviving speeches provide the base for an evaluation of her significance."<sup>129</sup> Understandably, this compilation does not elucidate the work of Lucretia Mott as a public speaker.

The two more scholarly full-length biographies,<sup>130</sup> presented comprehensively researched and thought-provoking elucidations of the life of Lucretia Mott. While, the literature on Lucretia Mott is invaluable to research focused on particular aspects, nonetheless, these books present necessarily brief and confined views of Quaker tenets and practices. In particular, the

<sup>124</sup> Wendy Schwartz, review of *Valiant Friend: The Life of Lucretia Mott*. *The Progressive* 44: 60-61.

<sup>125</sup> Book Review. *Valiant Friend: The Life of Lucretia Mott*. *New York Times Book Review*. 29 June, 1980, 15. The *New York Times Book Review* begins, "If Margaret Hope Bacon's bibliography is accurate, this full-length, well-documented life of the revered 19th-century Quaker reformer Lucretia Mott . . . is the first." However, Bacon's bibliography lists the manuscript collections, minutes and proceedings, diaries and 19th century periodicals consulted. While the chapter Notes include the Hallowell biography<sup>125</sup> and Lucretia Mott's diary Mott, *Slavery and "The Woman Question": Lucretia Mott's Diary of Her Visit to Great Britain*. The Hare and Cromwell books do appear in the bibliography of Bacon's 1980 pamphlet, written for a Quaker audience. That publication Margaret Hope Bacon, *Lucretia Mott Speaking: Excerpts from the Sermons & Speeches of a Famous Nineteenth Century Quaker Minister & Reformer*, Pendle Hill Pamphlet 234 (Wallingford, PA: Pendle Hill Publications, 1980), is considered later in this section.

<sup>126</sup> Greene, "Introduction."

<sup>127</sup> Greene, "Introduction" 3.

<sup>128</sup> Martha T. Mooney, Robert E. Klaum, Eds. *The Book Review Digest Seventy-Seventh Annual Cumulation* (March 1981 to February 1982 inclusive): 1019.

<sup>129</sup> J. William Frost, "Book Review of Lucretia Mott: Her Complete Speeches and Sermons," *Church History* 52, no. 2 (June 1983): 278.

<sup>130</sup> Otelia Cromwell, *Lucretia Mott* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1958, reissued, 1971); Bacon, *Valiant Friend*.



educational aspects of the meeting for worship and the meeting for business are essentially unexamined.

### **Lucretia Mott's Foundation in Quaker Ways to Learn and to Educate**

Two articles,<sup>131</sup> each written in 1980, the centennial year of Lucretia Mott's death, most closely resonate with an observation developed in this dissertation: Lucretia Mott's Quaker foundation is formative for her activity in life. The scholarship in these works served to increase curiosity.

Greene's article presented the moral, philosophical, and religious stance of Lucretia Mott as clearly linked first to her Quaker foundation and then to the context of the times.<sup>132</sup> Greene concluded that her "religious experience as a Friend"<sup>133</sup> was foundational for all Lucretia Mott's activities. Greene succinctly described some Friends' principles, compactly pointed to some Quaker structures and practices, and asserted that Lucretia Mott's Quaker education was "seminal for her future development."<sup>134</sup> Nonetheless, the brevity of this discriminating article precluded explication of the Friends' ideas and practices that set the context for Lucretia Mott's learning and future efforts to educate. Greene's knowledge of Quakerism obviously comes from prior scholarly exploration since no references or sources for Friends' tenets or ways are cited.

The other work, *Lucretia Mott Speaking*,<sup>135</sup> drew almost exclusively on primary sources--speeches, sermons, letters, newspaper articles--to let Lucretia speak to the intended audience for Bacon's pamphlet: Quakers. Bacon suggested that as historical interest and research develops, the most important factor about Lucretia would be:

Her role as a nineteenth-century Quaker minister, blessed with a deep spiritual insight, and a keen analytic mind.<sup>136</sup>

Speaking to other Friends, Bacon urged that:

For reform-minded Friends, it is important to rediscover the Christian basis for this tradition. For those who fear and question the role of reform in religion, it is equally important to investigate the spiritual basis from which Lucretia Mott drew her strength.<sup>137</sup>

These foundations, of course, were beyond the limits of that extraordinary 31-page pamphlet.

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<sup>131</sup> Dana Greene, "Quaker Feminism: The Case of Lucretia Mott," *Pennsylvania History* 48 (April 1981): 143-54; Bacon, *Lucretia Mott Speaking*.

<sup>132</sup> Greene, "Quaker Feminism."

<sup>133</sup> Ibid., 148-49.

<sup>134</sup> Ibid., 144.

<sup>135</sup> Bacon, *Lucretia Mott Speaking*.

<sup>136</sup> Ibid. 3.

<sup>137</sup> Bacon, *Lucretia Mott Speaking*, 3.

The message, however, is clear: one needs to understand her spirituality to understand Lucretia Mott's efforts to educate through public speaking. Not only "reform-minded Friends"<sup>138</sup> but historians of American history, women's history, and the history of American adult education require knowledge of her spirituality to describe and interpret her work in educating through public address. This study will explore some of the particulars of Lucretia Mott's spiritual foundation in relation to her speeches and to her work in educating adults by speaking publicly.

To illustrate the need to know about the Friends' ideas and customs, consider Anna M. Speicher's 1996 dissertation that explored the anti-slavery work of five women, including Lucretia Mott.<sup>139</sup> Speicher's informative study concluded that for these women "religion [was] an essentially personal phenomenon, existing independent from affiliation with religious organizations, grassroots movements, or folk practices."<sup>140</sup> Speicher's analysis lacks an in-depth exploration of the beliefs and practices of the Society of Friends. Further, Speicher does not explore Lucretia Mott's childhood education in Quaker schools nor Lucretia's lifelong learning as an intellectually inquisitive woman actively living her religious faith. Such an exploration might have altered Speicher's conclusion about the source of Lucretia Mott's expressive spirituality.

Another biographical effort, Penny Fankouser Pagliaro's Master of Education thesis,<sup>141</sup> was focused on the years ending in 1840. She suggested further study in Lucretia Mott's "special interest in women's education."<sup>142</sup> This work especially aided in the identification of works included in Quaker pedagogy during Lucretia's schooling. However, while Pagliaro identified the texts, she did not explain the ramifications related to Quaker faith and practice. Neither did Pagliaro relate some of Lucretia's expressed beliefs to her Quaker foundation nor clarify the perspectives of Friends' spirituality.

Certainly, the literature about Lucretia Mott to date is significant in the development of scholarship about this important nineteenth-century woman. They have provided broad biographical explorations as well as the texts of addresses and some letters. These works provide the background from which to pursue further scholarly inquiry. Currently, scholars are transcribing and annotating all known Lucretia Mott correspondence. This project, under the direction of Beverly Wilson Palmer, will culminate in the year 2,000 publication of one volume of selected letters of Lucretia Mott.

These exemplary works, the major biographies and compilation of speeches, make this research practical. They also bolster its rationale: adequate explication of Quaker tenets and practices and the influence of membership in the Society of Friends on Lucretia Mott, as a lifelong learner and educator of adults, is required. A recent dissertation in the history of adult education explores the educational work of another Quaker and Lucretia Mott contemporary,

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<sup>138</sup> Ibid., 3.

<sup>139</sup> Anna M. Speicher, "'Faith Which Worketh By Love': The Religious World of Female Antislavery Lecturers," diss (Washington, DC: George Washington University, 1996).

<sup>140</sup> Speicher, "'Faith Which Worketh By Love,'" 229.

<sup>141</sup> Penny Frankouser Pagliaro. "The Education and Radical Thought of Lucretia Mott: A Partial Biography." Master of Education in Educational Foundations Thesis, University of Hawaii, 1976.

<sup>142</sup> Pagliaro. *Education of Lucretia Mott*, (1976): 158.

Benjamin Hallowell.<sup>143</sup> This study examines well Friend Benjamin Hallowell's exemplary work in education. Yet, the study points to only one of the four critical beliefs (explored in Chapter Two), explores very briefly the Quaker meeting and organization as a structure for problem solving, and mentions Quaker testimonies by name without regard to corporate or individual instructive aspects. Nonetheless, to further plumb Quaker ways to know, to teach, and to live instructively requires a broader and deeper examination.

To date, no work in the history of adult education has sufficiently explicated aspects of Quakerism to enable historical analysis of Lucretia Mott's sermons and speeches. Further, no work has sufficiently explored her experience in educating through public speaking about societal issues related to abolition of slavery, rights of women, and peaceful ways to address injustice. Moreover, both contemporary social issues and Quakerism provide the context for an exploration of one whose work can be included among nineteenth-century practitioners of popular education. Thus, Lucretia Mott's educational activities especially through public speaking and considered in sufficient connection to a Quaker foundation remain largely unexamined.

### **Purpose of this Inquiry into Popular Education Voiced by Lucretia Mott**

This investigation aims to elucidate two components of the instructive work of Public Friend Lucretia Mott, a lifelong learner and educator of the public. First, her public addresses will be examined to illuminate how they reflected Quaker principles and practices. Second, the study explores the work of Lucretia Mott, a nineteenth-century female Quaker minister who through public speaking educated adults. Three selected nineteenth-century social and ethical concerns help to illuminate the Quaker principles and practices reflected in Lucretia Mott's sermons and speeches as well as her work in public speaking to educate adults: abolition of slavery, rights of women, and peaceful ways to address injustice.

In addition, through a review of literature, this dissertation aims to elucidate salient theological convictions and related practices of the Society of Friends. Adequate comprehension of the weighty ramifications intrinsic in a person's being a committed Friend necessitates a review of Quaker literature, particularly sources related to meetings for worship and for business.

As Sharan B. Merriam and Edwin L. Simpson emphasize, consideration of the historical context of educational applications and the consequences of such education can contribute to a field's sensitivity to present practice.<sup>144</sup> This study of Quaker minister Lucretia Mott's work to educate the American populace through public speaking provides just such an opportunity.

### **The Questions that Guide this Research about Educating the Public**

The following two questions guide this research:

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<sup>143</sup> Winston, Lewis E. Jr., "Benjamin Hallowell: Educational Leader of Virginia, Maryland, and Pennsylvania 1799-1877," diss (Blacksburg, Virginia: Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, 1998).

<sup>144</sup> Sharan B. Merriam and Edwin L. Simpson, *A Guide to Research for Educators and Trainers of Adults*, Second (Malabar, Florida: Krieger Publishing Company, 1995), 75-76.

- (1) How did her public addresses to educate others about societal and ethical concerns reflect Quaker principles and practices?
- (2) What did Lucretia Mott encounter in her work as a nineteenth-century female Quaker minister who educated adults about societal and ethical concerns through speaking in public forums?

Though Lucretia Mott sought to educate the public about many important nineteenth-century social and ethical concerns, the following significant issues served as the focus for this exploration: the abolition of slavery, rights of women, and peaceful ways to address injustice. Each topic is explored in a chapter and covers that topic over a period that is pertinent, appropriate, and sufficient to allow for historic analysis and interpretation of the guiding questions.

To comprehend the experience and context from which Lucretia Mott educated and acted, understanding certain salient aspects of her religious foundation is necessary. Therefore, Chapter Two presents a review of appropriate literature and seeks to answer the following supportive questions:

- (A) What teachings--central theological convictions--guide Friends?
- (B) How do Friends exemplify their religious beliefs?
- (C) What engages adult Friends both as learners and as teachers?
- (D) Before recognition as a recorded minister of the Society of Friends at age 28, how did her Quaker upbringing help to shape Lucretia Coffin Mott's perspective?

### **The Significance of the History Remembered in the Study of Adult Education**

The presentations and interpretations of history--historiography--shape individual and collective worldviews; the historiography of adult education is significant and carries consequences of great magnitude for today's adult education scholars and practitioners. Distinguished historian Gerda Lerner portrays such consequences:

Our self-representation, the way we define who we are, . . . what we remember, what we stress as significant, and what we omit of our past defines our present. And since the boundaries of our self-definition also delimit our hopes and aspirations, . . . that history affects our future.<sup>145</sup>

Awareness of adult education's past is vital to its future. Ignorance of its past is detrimental to its future.

Merriam and Simpson underscore the importance of historical research. Consideration of an event's "context," an examination of "assumptions" and an exploration of the "impact on the lives of participants"--taken together--hold "potential" to add significantly to the body of knowledge in a field like adult education.<sup>146</sup> Historians agree numerous gaps remain in the

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<sup>145</sup> Gerda Lerner, *Why History Matters: Life and Thought of Gerda Lerner* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, Inc., 1997), 199.

<sup>146</sup> Merriam and Simpson, *Guide to Research*, 77.

historical record about efforts to educate adults. Many adult education scholars have called for historical exploration that considers various conceptual frameworks, such as gender and economic theory.<sup>147</sup> Thus, examination of the work of Lucretia Mott presents an opportunity to fill a gap in the historical record of American adult education. This exploration can provide increased knowledge of the practice of popular education both in the nineteenth century and, more significantly, from a spiritual or ethical standpoint.

### Popular Education Grounded in a Christian Religious Ethic

Lucretia Mott's lifetime of education provides an opportunity to examine a form of adult education grounded in a religious perspective based on the broad belief of "that of God" in everyone. This foundational tenet of the spiritual equality of all humans armed this Quaker minister's anti-slavery efforts, call for woman's rights<sup>148</sup>, and sustained movement towards peaceful ways to address injustice.

The educational activities of Lucretia Mott are particularly well suited for such research. Lucretia Mott drew on two centuries of Anglo-American Quaker practice as her Christian religious ethic. She activated that Quaker religious ethic to educate, that is, to speak, preach and act in opposition to unjust privileges inherent in many cultural customs and social standards of the day. Accordingly, this inquiry hopes to advance knowledge of Quaker ideas and ways to contribute to the historical tradition of spiritually rooted adult education about public social issues.

### Values Cultivated Through Adult Education

As noted before, the historiography of adult education influences the enterprises stressed in the field of adult education today. The recounted history influences the purposes and philosophy of the field. Some of adult education's untapped historic roots may be found in the Friends' ideas and practices and in Lucretia Mott as one of the pioneer female advocates of women's public speaking about significant societal issues.

Lerner bolsters John Dewey's assertion that, "We learn from our construction of the past what possibilities and choices once existed . . . . This in turn enables us to project a vision of the future."<sup>149</sup> Lerner represents the importance of historical interpretation: "It is through history-making that the present is freed from necessity and the past becomes usable."<sup>150</sup> Research into Lucretia Mott's thoughts and her influence upon popular education can be a vital contribution. It may contribute to the practice of adult education what the distinguished nineteenth-century

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<sup>147</sup> Kathleen Rockhill, "The Past as Prologue: Toward an Expanded View of Adult Education," *Adult Education* 26, no. 4 (1978): 196-207; Phyllis M. Cunningham, "Making a More Significant Impact on Society," in *New Directions for Continuing Education*, ed. B. Allan Quigley, New Directions for Continuing Education, no. No. 44 (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, Inc., Winter, 1989), 33-45; Jane Hugo, "Adult Education History and the Issue of Gender: Toward a Different History of Adult Education in America," *Adult Education Quarterly* 41, no. 1 (1990); Fred M. Schied, *Learning in Social Context: Workers and Adult Education in Nineteenth Century Chicago* (DeKalb, IL: LEPS Press, Northern Illinois University, 1993).

<sup>148</sup> "Woman's Rights" was the term used in the nineteenth-century.

<sup>149</sup> Lerner, *Why History Matters*, 217.

<sup>150</sup> *Ibid.*, 117.

British historian, Lord Acton, says is one of the most important warrants for the study of history:

History must be our deliverer not only from the undue influence of other times but from the undue influence of our own, from the tyranny of environment . . . [and] contemporary surroundings by familiarity with other ages and other orbits of thought.<sup>151</sup>

With the press of technology, the speed of communication, historic grounding increases in importance.

This research offers the opportunity to deepen analysis of the historical record and to examine the aims and purposes of adult education in relation to the field and practice today. Thus, examination of the educational activities of Public Friend Lucretia Mott may shed new light on the controversies inherent in, as well as the values cultivated through, adult education in the current critical time. As an agency in the movement toward a more just society, this exploration offers a vision of popular education.

### Adult Education History Revisited

Scholars of adult education's past have revisited this history, often with new questions to clarify or expand knowledge. To clarify the past, to include factors previously considered as being insignificant, presents a two-fold challenge: first, to portray exemplars who can serve as role models or historic mentors; second, to represent a critical analysis of that history.<sup>152</sup> Vital for such a critical re-analysis of history is the interpretative framework used by the researcher. Arthur L. Wilson<sup>153</sup> in his commentary on the historiography of adult education questioned the conceptual framework traditionally used to interpret the history of adult education. According to Wilson, the conceptual framework that forms a theoretical basis for analysis of our past remains "central to the social practice of adult education."<sup>154</sup>

The stories of some have been blurred or entirely omitted--sometimes because of the questions guiding research--in the history of adult education. A study of history by issues, such as gender, class or race or in disjointed times, Wilson asserts, is insufficient. Wilson underscores the work of Raymond Williams who calls for analysis of the "complex interaction"<sup>155</sup> of various critical aspects of our past. Williams includes in the "complex interaction" three concepts. These concepts are the democratic revolution (which is connected to the use of power), the industrial revolution (which is connected to economic matters) and the cultural revolution (which is connected to the extension of "the active process of learning" to all groups). This process of interactive change over time, Williams calls "the long revolution."<sup>156</sup> Though begun over three hundred years ago, Williams sees the democratic, industrial and cultural revolutions as still in

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<sup>151</sup> Theodore S Hamerow, *Reflections on History and Historians* (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1987), 209.

<sup>152</sup> Joyce Antler and Sari Knopp Biklen, "Introduction," in *Changing Education: Women as Radicals and Conservators*, ed. Joyce Antler and Sari Knopp Biklen (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1990), xxvii.

<sup>153</sup> Arthur L. Wilson, "Telling Tales Out of School--Whose Story Needs Telling?" *Adult Education Quarterly* 45, no. 4 (Summer 1995): 240-44.

<sup>154</sup> Wilson, "Telling Tales," 240.

<sup>155</sup> Raymond Williams, *The Long Revolution* (Westport, CN: Greenwood Press, 1961, 1975), xi.

<sup>156</sup> Williams, *The Long Revolution*, xi.

process. Williams' analysis resonates with that of historian Christopher Hill's, who places the start of this "long revolution" in England during the seventeenth century.<sup>157</sup> During the mid-1600s, a time of social, political, economic, and religious turmoil in England, the Society of Friends arose and was brought to Colonial America.<sup>158</sup>

### Popular Education, Experiential Learning, and The Society of Friends

The Friends' revolutionary influence reflects what Cremin identified as the "essentially educational character of Christianity, as a movement, as a complex of institutions and as an ideology."<sup>159</sup> Cremin concludes that Henry VIII's command to have an English language translation of the Bible placed into every church had "irrevocable" consequences in the lives of clergy and laity alike in what today would be called "popular education."<sup>160</sup> From this bedrock spawned various transformations and reformations including the Puritan movement. Yet, as historian Jack Marietta suggested, the Quakers may be regarded as "the fullest expression of the Reformation."<sup>161</sup> According to Quaker theologian Howard H. Brinton, the Society of Friends "arose not from theory but from experience."<sup>162</sup> Friends' experiential learning served as the model for their educational structures: the meeting for worship and the meeting for business.

As cited earlier, Johnson sees a locus of education as grounded in alternatives to develop a social order founded on the Christian ethic seen as a "morality of cooperation among equals."<sup>163</sup> Adult educator Michael Law also links one of the roots of Anglo-American adult education to the "theological precept of equality in the sight of God."<sup>164</sup> Law cites Edward Thompson's work that relates this historic root of adult education to the "dynamics, the informality and systematic character . . . of the inherently educational practice"<sup>165</sup> of seventeenth-century Anglo-American Christians. An example of such Christians would be the Society of Friends. An exemplar of the Society of Friends would be the Quaker minister, Lucretia Mott.

### Historical Research Methods in the Study of Lucretia Mott's Work

The design of this research uses the historical method of inquiry to consider the work of Lucretia Mott, a Quaker minister, in her endeavors to educate the American populace through

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<sup>157</sup> Christopher Hill, *The World Turned Upside Down: Radical Ideas During the English Revolution* (England: Penguin Books, 1972), 384.

<sup>158</sup> H. Larry Ingle, "From Mysticism to Radicalism: Recent Historiography of Quaker Beginnings," *Quaker History* 76, no. 2 (Fall 1987): 79-94; Howard H. Brinton, *Guide to Quaker Practice* (Wallingford, PA: Pendle Hill, 1955), 14.

<sup>159</sup> Lawrence A. Cremin, *American Education: The Colonial Experience 1607-1783* (New York: Harper & Row, 1963), 139.

<sup>160</sup> Cremin, *The Colonial Experience*, 141-43.

<sup>161</sup> Jack D. Marietta, "Quakers," in *The Reader's Companion to American History*, ed. Eric Foner and John A. Garraty (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1991), 894.

<sup>162</sup> Brinton, *Quaker Practice*, 14.

<sup>163</sup> Johnson, "Really Useful Knowledge," 5.

<sup>164</sup> Michael Law, "Rediscovering Hope in a New Era: Possibilities for the Radical Tradition of Adult Education," in *Proceedings, 37th Annual Adult Education Research Conference* (Tampa, Florida: University of South Florida, 16-19, May, 1996), 208.

<sup>165</sup> Law, "Rediscovering Hope in a New Era: Possibilities for the Radical Tradition of Adult Education," 208.

public speeches and sermons. These orations speak about significant societal issues to adult participants in the realm of civic life. Cremin highlights the importance of historical knowledge about education. He says, "Whatever history teaches, it helps set the stage on which [people] act. And that has always been its power in human affairs."<sup>166</sup> The arenas selected for inquiry--abolition of slavery, rights of women, and peaceful ways to address injustice--provide particularly rich avenues for investigating intersections of important and divergent directions conspicuous in the nineteenth century.

The historical method of inquiry guides this study about Public Friend Lucretia Mott and consists of typical historical components that Krathwohl lists as "discovery, selection, organization, and interpretation of evidence."<sup>167</sup> This limited and focused biographical study explores the work of Lucretia Mott as an educator of the public. Education historian Ellen Lagemann argued that there are "compelling historiographical reasons" to employ a biographical approach to any historical consideration of education, broadly defined. Lagemann suggested the use of biography allows the researcher "to analyze the personal and social factors that define the educative meaning of a wide range of experiences, and to trace the effects of these experiences over time."<sup>168</sup>

A biographical approach as a constituent component of the historical method of inquiry, according to Geraldine Jonchic Clifford, supports exploration "of teaching and learning in actual lives."<sup>169</sup> Clifford notes that when a subject "shaped events" or when such an exploration can serve to "bring neglected groups forward," that research has particular significance.<sup>170</sup> The design of this focused biographical study combines a thematic organization of three arenas--abolition of slavery, rights of women, and peaceful ways to address injustice--through which to examine Lucretia Mott's popular education activities. Each of the three thematic arrangements considers a specific time to allow for historic analysis. This organization of themes over specific times allows for development of what Jacque Barzun and Henry F. Graff call a "historical pattern."<sup>171</sup> Such a pattern accommodates the human need for order.<sup>172</sup> These groupings allowed a sufficiently full consideration of each topic presented in a way a reader can comprehend.<sup>173</sup> Barzun and Graff characterize this kind of configuration as one that allows a topic to be dealt with "completely as far as that subject goes."<sup>174</sup>

In order to interpret Friends' ideas and practices, one must be vigilant about "presentism," or what Lerner calls "present-mindedness." This, Lerner defines as "a shallow attention to

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<sup>166</sup> Cremin, *The Colonial Experience*, ix.

<sup>167</sup> David R. Krathwohl, *Methods of Educational and Social Science Research: An Integrated Approach* (New York: Longman, 1993), 501; see also Merriam and Simpson, *Guide to Research*, 9-11.

<sup>168</sup> Ellen Condliffe Lagemann, *A Generation of Women: Education in the Lives of Progressive Reformers* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1979), 4.

<sup>169</sup> Geraldine Jonchic Clifford, "The Life Story: Biographic Study," in *Historical Inquiry in Education: A Research Agenda*, ed. John Hardin Best (Washington DC: American Educational Research Association, 1983), 69.

<sup>170</sup> *Ibid.*, 66-67.

<sup>171</sup> Jacque Barzun and Henry F. Graff, *The Modern Researcher*, Fifth (Fort Worth: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich College Publishers, 1977, 1992), 183.

<sup>172</sup> *Ibid.*, 181.

<sup>173</sup> *Ibid.*, 185.

<sup>174</sup> *Ibid.*, 206.



meaning, and contempt for the value of precise definition and critical reasoning."<sup>175</sup> Eisenstadt notes that because historians must inevitably write from the present while they look at the past, each age "writes a different history."<sup>176</sup> To guard against this bias requires that researchers, according to Lerner, make a "meaningful connection to the past."<sup>177</sup> Such a connection, according to Lerner, presents several challenges:

[Historical interpretation] demands imagination and empathy, so that we can fathom worlds unlike our own, contexts far from those we know, ways of thinking and feeling that are alien to us. We must enter past worlds with curiosity and with respect.<sup>178</sup>

To enter the Friends' world with both curiosity and respect, sufficient comprehension of the linguistic constructs Friends employ was essential to this inquiry. For, as David R. Krathwohl emphasizes, historic analysis requires comprehension of "constructs in the culture and at the time studied."<sup>179</sup> Consequently, an exploration of these constructs, the focus of Chapter Two, and development of a glossary constituted essential components of this study.

A vast number of primary documents and scholarly secondary sources exist about this study's three areas of public interest--abolition of slavery, rights of women, and peaceful ways to address injustice--in the nineteenth century. This documentation resides in archival collections of national, state, educational, and private institutions. What is more important, these arenas of interest are documented sufficiently to provide the breadth and depth of analysis required for an historical interpretation of the educational efforts of Lucretia Coffin Mott. Krathwohl's discussion of historical methods cites the importance of historical interpretation as an attempt "to throw light on a corner of history not yet illuminated from that angle."<sup>180</sup> The historical method of research, which guided the study of the subject and issues under investigation, provided the opportunity to make just such a contribution to the history of the field of adult education.

### Historic Quaker and Nineteenth-Century Primary Documents

The Friends Historical Library (FHL) is the principle repository for the collection of primary source materials and manuscripts of Lucretia Coffin Mott. FHL is located outside Philadelphia, Pennsylvania at Swarthmore College, an educational institution that Lucretia Mott helped to found. The Mott Manuscript Collection holds Lucretia Mott's only known diary that records an account of Lucretia Mott's trip to England as a delegate to the World's Antislavery Convention of 1840. Frederick B. Tolles' published transcription of her diary will be used as a primary source for this research. Another folder, titled Notes on the life of Lucretia Mott as given to Sarah J. Hale, contains several undated sheets of paper with handwritten reminiscences. The researcher transcribed these notes and used them in this dissertation to convey Lucretia's thinking. These two items constitute the only known autobiographical works outside of her letters.

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<sup>175</sup> Lerner, *Why History Matters*, 123.

<sup>176</sup> Abraham Eisenstadt, "History and Historians," in *The Reader's Companion to American History*, ed. Eric Foner and John A. Garrity (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1991), 499.

<sup>177</sup> Lerner, *Why History Matters*, 201.

<sup>178</sup> Ibid.

<sup>179</sup> Krathwohl, *Methods of Educational and Social Science Research*, 511.

<sup>180</sup> Ibid., 504.

Also in the FHL collection are “photostats” of other Lucretia Mott letters and documents. The originals of these letters are located at Smith College Library, Cornell University, Harvard College Library, Syracuse University, Atwater Kent Museum, and the Historical Society of Pennsylvania,--both located in Philadelphia--and the National Archives, Washington DC. The complete collection of both original and photostatted materials, arranged chronologically, dates from 1831 to within a year of Lucretia Mott’s death.

The Mott Manuscript Collection contains published primary copies of stenographers’ transcriptions of some sermons and speeches Lucretia Mott delivered extemporaneously, in accord with Friends’ practice. These works are included in the now classic 1980 publication of Lucretia Mott’s sermons and speeches that, as mentioned before, Dana Greene compiled, edited and introduced.<sup>181</sup> With permission of the publisher, Greene’s work served as the researcher’s source for published sermons and speeches. The researcher also read a copy of the only master’s thesis, also archived at FHL, written about the education of Lucretia Mott.

Also at FHL are minutes of the Monthly Meetings to which Lucretia Mott belonged. These minutes cover from the time Lucretia Mott became a recorded minister in 1821 to her death in 1880,<sup>182</sup> and include the years she served as clerk of the Women’s Meeting. The researcher examined the microfilms of these minutes. During 1998, FHL became the repository for the historic records of the New York Yearly Meeting. This collection contains primary data from the Nine Partners School, a Quaker secondary school she attended. The researcher examined and reported on some of these materials.

The Nantucket Historical Society archives several primary documents of interest. Included among the letters and other pertinent documents held by that institution are minutes from the Quaker Meeting. The Historical Society allowed the researcher to obtain photocopies of all her letters and some minutes in their archives. Lucretia Mott lived on Nantucket Island for the first eleven years of her life. The local libraries and bookstores have a wealth of secondary sources related to the history of Nantucket and its Quaker past.

In or near Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, three repositories exist for extensive primary and secondary sources related to the Society of Friends. One repository is the already mentioned Friends Historical Library (FHL). The other two repositories are the Quaker Collection (QC) at the Magill Library of Haverford College and the Henry J. Cadbury Library (CL) of the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, Religious Society of Friends. The original printings of revisions of the *Book of Discipline* effective during the life of Lucretia Mott were examined at CL.

The Library of Congress (LOC) in Washington, DC holds among its periodical collection the few publications in which articles appeared with a Lucretia Mott by-line. Collections at the LOC, located within easy access of the researcher, included the published history of the woman’s suffrage movement, a primary document that treats Lucretia Mott at length. The LOC also has microfilms of newspapers and periodicals that report the circumstances experienced by Lucretia Mott as a public speaker. Newspapers containing contemporaneous accounts served as primary

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<sup>181</sup> Greene, "Introduction."

<sup>182</sup> Bacon, *Valiant Friend*, 37.

evidence to document, from the view of the reporter and editor, the experiences women confronted upon entry onto the public platform. Of particular importance among the secondary sources available at LOC are microfilmed dissertations that were read. These count Lucretia Mott among their principals, though none has focused exclusively on her. Other dissertations read related to the Society of Friends. In addition, the LOC has a vast array of both primary and secondary sources that were consulted and that inform about the context of the time and scholarship related to the research topics.

### Technology Aids in Collection of Data

Essentially, the researcher collected data for this dissertation through extensive reading of sources previously enumerated and by note taking. Notes were recorded on both laptop and desktop computers through the use of academic software known as Citation 7 which is a “textual database manager designed especially for academic . . . and research writers.”<sup>183</sup>

Collection of data from primary sources began in July 1995 during the first of the researcher’s many visits to CL and FHL. These two libraries provided access to ample primary documents needed for analysis of this subject. Each of these libraries also has an immense collection of secondary sources that allowed for reading and note taking both for background and for inclusion in this research.

The researcher also visited Nantucket Island in July 1996 and August 1997 to examine data located at The Nantucket Historical Society. The archivist at this facility photocopied for the researcher all the Lucretia Mott letters in that collection. Subsequently, the researcher read these letters and made notes. Other pertinent documents, for instance the records of visits of Public Friends to the Nantucket Quaker Meeting, were photocopied or reviewed on site and notes taken.

Lucretia Mott’s archived handwritten documents, contemporaneously published articles written by Lucretia Mott, and posthumously published letters, speeches and sermons provided important data which the researcher read and recorded notes for development of this study. Thus, these materials, together with pertinent data from the Society of Friends, such as school texts and minutes, provided diverse primary materials to examine.

The researcher read excerpts from an extensive number of published books and journal articles that include but do not exclusively treat the work of Lucretia Mott. These works were available at the LOC and FHL and CL. Some books and dissertations were obtained from libraries of local universities. The Northern Virginia Center Library of the Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University Library provided access to an almost limitless variety of secondary sources either from Newman Library, on the main campus, or from other public and private institutions through inter-library loan.

Many recent, scholarly, pertinent works were readily available at the sources previously detailed and were consulted. These works included scholarship on the Quakers, American women, and public speaking and popular education in the nineteenth-century. The social,

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<sup>183</sup> *Citation 7* (New York: Oberon Resources, 1995), 2.

political, and historical conditions that formed the environment for popular education and the work of Lucretia Mott in the nineteenth century also have been subjects of extensive study. Examination of such works, accompanied by adequate note taking, enabled a broad contextual comparison with primary texts of Lucretia Mott, the Society of Friends, and records of various organizations. The extensive collection of contemporaneous microfilmed newspapers and periodicals at LOC provided additional contextual sources from which data were gathered for analysis of the activities of Lucretia Mott. Taken together, these sources provided resources for historic analysis and interpretation.

### Analysis of the Collected Historical Data

For analytical purposes, the researcher categorized the collected data into three principal areas. These areas--abolition of slavery, rights of women, and peaceful ways to address injustice--commanded the attention of Americans through much of the examined period. These issues were of concern to and addressed by Lucretia Mott as an adult learner and lecturer in popular education. Data analysis and interpretation sought to ascertain and elucidate the work of Public Friend Lucretia Mott as a pioneer advocate of women's right to speak in public about societal concerns. Analysis of the data identified the Quaker influence reflected in her addresses. Both contemporaneous sources, such as news accounts, and respected scholarly interpretations of events provided a broader context for analysis and interpretation.

### Exploring Popular Education through the Work of Lucretia Mott

Organized around three thematic areas of interest--abolition of slavery, rights of women, and peaceful ways to address injustice--this dissertation explored popular education in the work of Lucretia Mott, a Quaker minister. Public Friend Lucretia Mott undertook much of this popular education through speaking that placed her among the pioneers who advanced women's right to address social and ethical concerns in the public realm. Within each theme, a chronological approach was used. The time spans for the three areas of investigation sometimes overlap.

This chapter presented the study's organizational structure, introduced Lucretia Mott and furnished the background of the problem that led to exploration of her work as a nineteenth-century Quaker minister who educated the public about societal concerns. At a time when tradition barred women's speaking publicly, she advocated and practiced women's right to educate men and women through public speaking in gatherings of adults. This chapter also explored the purpose of the study, presented the questions that guided the study, illuminated the significance of the study, articulated the research method, rationale, and organization of this study.

Chapter Two explores literature related to the Society of Friends' teachings and practices that are salient to this study. This inquiry focuses on the two primary Quaker educational structures: the meeting for worship and the meeting for business. While this literature review consists principally of scholarly secondary sources, pertinent primary Quaker sources are included. Most important, Chapter Two explores the formative experiences and influences, rooted in the Society of Friends, that helped to shape the perspective from which Lucretia Coffin Mott educated adults. This survey covers the twenty-five years from birth to just before she

spoke publicly in the meeting for worship in 1818. Reviewed also is literature about a [guarded education](#) common in Quaker schools of her time.

The organization of Chapters Three through Five, later described individually, is similar. Each chapter begins with a review of the dominant themes related to that subject. Then, building on Chapter Two's review of Quaker principles and practices, the chapter reviews what the Society of Friends learned and taught about the chapter's topic. Then, the chapter examines what the young Lucretia Coffin Mott learned about the chapter's topic. Next, Lucretia Mott's speeches and sermons about that topic, within the time considered, will be explored for evidence of Quaker ideas and practices reflected in them. Following the exploration of speeches and sermons each chapter examines Lucretia Mott's work as a nineteenth-century female Quaker minister who educated adults about societal issues by speaking in public forums. Primary documents provided the principle sources of evidence for this study. Finally, each of these chapters concludes with a summary.

#### Organized Themes to Present, Analyze and Interpret

Chapter Three examines initial efforts when Lucretia Mott first spoke out as a teacher of adults in anti-slavery efforts both within the Society of Friends and in the culture at large, the public realm. Examination of her work in enlightening the public mind about slavery covered the quarter century between 1822 and 1846.

Chapter Four examines the development of the women's rights effort from 1833 to 1856. Lucretia Mott's work in publicly speaking about women's rights to educate through public speaking is studied. This chapter includes an examination of her 1849 Discourse on Woman lyceum speech.

Chapter Five examined Lucretia Mott's activities from 1833 to 1880. The chapter describes and analyzes Lucretia Mott's work in educating through speaking publicly about viewpoints that encouraged peaceful ways to address injustice.

Chapter Six presents the conclusions and provides an interpretation of the findings. The appendix, a glossary, and the reference list then follow Chapter Six.

## CHAPTER TWO

### PEOPLE MEETING AS LEARNERS AND EDUCATORS: THE SOCIETY OF FRIENDS

Recall that adult or popular education, Lindeman depicts as “a co-operative venture in non-authoritarian, informal learning the chief purpose of which is to discover the meaning of experience”<sup>184</sup> and that, Johnson defines as a “morality of cooperation among equals.”<sup>185</sup> Adult education, nevertheless, might better be illustrated and understood through exploration of an example. For, as David E. Shi asserts, “ideas and practices . . . in the abstract are inert . . . . Analysis of ideas and ideals requires the context of human activity, the context of lives lived in the struggle bringing abstract ideas into daily life.”<sup>186</sup> To illustrate, a study of the work of Quaker minister Lucretia Mott to educate adults through public speaking can serve as an example of nineteenth-century popular education.

#### **Prologue to a Society with a Mission to Educate**

This dissertation explores the instructive work of Lucretia Mott through her speeches and her public speaking. For, at a time when tradition barred women's speaking in public assemblies of men and women, this female Quaker minister spoke publicly to educate about important social and ethical concerns. Lucretia Mott's perspective rested on a foundation of Quaker ideas and practices experienced in the context of the nineteenth century. Speaking freely from one's knowledge or experience has been a remarkable component of Quaker spirituality. One is reminded of the critical questions posed by the first Friend to preach, George Fox: “What *canst* thou say? . . . and what thou speakest is it *inwardly* from God?”<sup>187</sup> More importantly, however, guiding Friends was another Quaker maxim: “Let your lives speak.” The Society had a mission to learn and to teach what amounted to a “morality of cooperation among equals.”<sup>188</sup>

#### An Exploration of Quaker Ideas and Ideals

To explore Quaker “ideas and ideals”<sup>189</sup> in the context of a half-century of human activity in the public life of Lucretia Mott obviously requires sufficient comprehension of Friends' ideas, ideals, customs, and practices. Thus, Chapter Two first explores the educational aspects of Quaker history and spirituality in order to adequately inform this research for analysis and interpretation. The [meeting for worship](#) and [meeting for business](#) are most uniquely Quaker; more importantly, they are the Society of Friends' primary educational structures. Hence, centrally this chapter focuses on aspects of the meeting for worship and the meeting for business.

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<sup>184</sup> Lindeman, Eduard C., “What is Adult Education?” 1925, 3, quoted in Brookfield, *Learning Democracy*, 4.

<sup>185</sup> Johnson, “Really Useful Knowledge,” 5.

<sup>186</sup> David E. Shi, *The Simple Life: Plain Living and High Thinking in American Culture* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), 9.

<sup>187</sup> The Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in Britain, *Quaker Faith and Practice: The Book of Christian Discipline of the Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in Britain* (London: The Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in Britain), 1995).

<sup>188</sup> Johnson, “Really Useful Knowledge,” 5.

<sup>189</sup> Shi, *Simple Life*, 9.

These relate particularly to the experiential learning--formal, non-formal and informal--in which adults are involved. For instance, the Friends' process of decision-making in a meeting for business that seeks resolution through arrival at a point of "unity"<sup>190</sup> rather than by "majority rule"<sup>191</sup> is explored.

### The Significance of a Child's Early Guidance and Education

Secondly, the chapter explores the formal schooling and some non-formal and informal childhood learning experienced by the young Lucretia. The significance of learning related to early influences was suggested by Jack Mezirow. His study of transformative learning in adulthood explains that childhood perspectives, examined and reflected upon after childhood, present the opportunity for change in adulthood.<sup>192</sup> Mezirow emphasizes that "uncritically acquired"<sup>193</sup> perspectives from childhood form a person's initial frame of reference. The importance of acquired perspectives that can also lead to questioning the perspectives accepted by most Americans, warrants a review of the literature and pertinent primary documents related to Lucretia Coffin Mott's schooling.

Chapter Two, therefore, investigates the formative experiences and influences, rooted in the Society of Friends that helped to shape Lucretia Mott's perspective. Following a review of literature about Friends' tenets, ways and customs, this chapter responds to a critically important question for this study: What experiences helped to shape Lucretia Coffin Mott's perspective before she became a recorded minister of the Society of Friends at age twenty-eight? This chapter explores the first twenty-five years of her life. The chapter surveys literature about the [guarded education](#) then common in Friends' schools. Other chapters address specific aspects of Lucretia Coffin Mott's Quaker education related to abolition of slavery, rights of women, and peaceful ways to address injustice.

### Exploring Facets of the Society of Friends

This exploration of important components of Quakerism illuminates the Friends' beliefs, perspectives, and customs--"ideas and ideals"<sup>194</sup>--common during the first twenty-five years of Lucretia Mott's life. This time span begins with Lucretia Coffin's birth in 1793, continues through her formal schooling, and concludes in 1818, just before Lucretia Mott first spoke publicly.

During this time, Lucretia Mott was absorbed in Friends' culture as a learner, not as an educator or agent of change. Therefore, the following segment--exploration of the overarching questions about Quakers--focuses solely on the Society of Friends in order to learn and understand Quakerism itself. One purpose of the researcher's design is to examine the Friends

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<sup>190</sup> Michael John Sheeran, "Friendly Persuasion: Voteless Decisions in the Religious Society of Friends," diss (New Jersey: Princeton University, 1977), 2.

<sup>191</sup> Sheeran, "Friendly Persuasion," 1.

<sup>192</sup> Jack Mezirow, "How Critical Reflection Triggers Transformative Learning," in *Fostering Critical Reflection in Adulthood: A Guide to Transformative and Emancipatory Learning*, ed. Jack Mezirow and Associates (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1991), 1-20.

<sup>193</sup> Ibid., 3.

<sup>194</sup> Shi, *Simple Life*, 9.

without any influence by Lucretia Mott. Another purpose, more significant to this study, is to examine the activities of Lucretia Mott from 1818 to her death in 1880, for evidence of the Quakerism absorbed during her first twenty-five years. That inquiry will take place over the course of Chapters Three, Four, and Five. While Lucretia Mott may seem strangely absent from the following study of Friends' ways, she could be considered present much as she was: as a learner. With that understanding, the study turns to the Friends' beliefs and customs.

To analyze and interpret the Friends as a Society with a mission to educate requires knowledge to satisfy three overarching questions about the Society of Friends:

- (A) What teachings--central theological convictions--do Friends learn?
- (B) How do Friends exemplify their religious beliefs?
- (C) What engages adult Friends both as learners and as educators?

Before the study tries to understand what ought to be known, consider first the broad-brimmed hats and the quaint bonnets--or maybe conscientious objectors or social justice activists--that often come to mind with the words Friend or Quaker or Society of Friends. These single aspects are like silhouettes. This study suggests a silhouette--an anecdote to bear in mind--as the Friends are considered: "swimming upstream."<sup>195</sup>

### **(A) The Society of Friends' Central Theological Convictions**

The distinguished historian of Quakerism and a former Hollis Professor of Divinity at Harvard University, the late Henry J. Cadbury, conveyed the idea of a Friend in the following emblematic anecdote. A person "swimming in the river can be identified at a distance by a bystander as a Quaker because the [person] was swimming *upstream*."<sup>196</sup> To understand better the Quaker impetus for swimming upstream--a Quaker silhouette--requires analysis of the educational environment and the pervasive political and religious domination endured by seventeenth-century English people. The interests of early Friends, as Quaker historians explain, converged not on "subtleties of theology" but on application of their beliefs "to the exacting requirements of daily life in whatever sphere they found themselves."<sup>197</sup> The Friends sought to form a society founded on a faith focused on everyday life. What milieu provided the fertile ground from which Quakerism arose? The study now considers that milieu.

### **The Educational Context That Gave Rise to Friends' Learning for Everyday Life**

First, to guard against "present mindedness . . . [that is] a shallow attention to meaning"<sup>198</sup> on subjects such as religion and politics, one must consider historical perspectives.<sup>199</sup> As historians stress, what B.R. White aptly calls a "deep sense"<sup>200</sup> pervaded

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<sup>195</sup> Henry J. Cadbury, *The Character of a Quaker* (Wallingford PA: Pendle Hill, 1959), 29.

<sup>196</sup> Cadbury, *Character of a Quaker*, 29.

<sup>197</sup> William Wistar Comfort, Revised and Reissued with additions by Edwin B. Bronner, *The Quakers: A Brief Account of Their Influence on Pennsylvania, The Quakers: A Brief Account*, Ed. Frederick B. Tolles, Pennsylvania History Studies: No. 2, Second Printing, July, 1989 (University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania Historical Association, 1986), 7.

<sup>198</sup> Lerner, *Why History Matters*, 123.

<sup>199</sup> Krathwohl, *Methods of Educational and Social Science Research*, 511.



seventeenth-century Europe that the church, the “one true church, . . . [the] legitimate church,” held society together.<sup>201</sup> Olwen Hufton maintains the decisive factors of the principal “intellectual debates” were scriptural interpretations and religious faithfulness.<sup>202</sup> B. Reay emphasizes that “everyone thought in religious terms . . . [and] religion and politics were inseparable.”<sup>203</sup> Reay contends that religion acted as “the legitimizing ideology” for rulers at the same time religion acted as “the revolutionary idiom” for the ruled.<sup>204</sup>

Seventeenth century England, particularly the two decades between 1640–1660, witnessed the English Civil Wars, the execution of King Charles I, establishment of the Commonwealth headed by Oliver Cromwell and finally the Restoration of the Monarchy under King Charles II in 1660. Mark Goldie characterizes England’s state following the Restoration of the Monarchy as a “persecuting society.”<sup>205</sup> According to Goldie, this era marks the last attempt in English history “when the ecclesiastical and civil powers endeavored systematically to secure religious uniformity by coercive means.”<sup>206</sup> Historians portray this troubled period's critical element as the outgrowth of numerous independent religious groups beyond the ken of the national Church of England and the reformative Puritan movement.<sup>207</sup>

## Learned Truths and their Sources

During this turbulent time, dissension clearly splintered church and state, sources of what Merriam and Simpson call “authoritative knowledge.”<sup>208</sup> From authoritative knowledge, derived from “sources of truth” such as institutional officials and the documents and decrees of Church and State, individuals accept as personal beliefs what they interpret as “truth and reality.”<sup>209</sup> At this time of change in the religious, political, social, and economic structures of England, historians and theologians agree, early Friends founded their Society.<sup>210</sup> The Society of Friends questioned the “truths,” the authoritative knowledge presented by Church and State.

What “truths?” To illuminate the educational setting into which the Society of Friends emerged, the researcher draws on the work of Margaret Heathfield. She presents examples of

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<sup>200</sup> B.R White, “The Twilight of Puritanism in the Years Before and After 1688,” in *From Persecution to Toleration: The Glorious Revolution and Religion in England*, ed. Ole Peter Grell, Jonathan I. Israel and Nicholas Tyacke (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), 309.

<sup>201</sup> White, “Twilight of Puritanism,” 309.

<sup>202</sup> Olwen Hufton, *The Prospect Before Her: A History of Women in Western Europe, 1500-1800*, vol. 1 (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1996), 417.

<sup>203</sup> B. Reay, “Radicalism and Religion in the English Revolution: An Introduction,” in *Radical Religion in the English Revolution*, ed. J. F. McGregor and B. Reay (New York: Oxford University Press, 1984), 3.

<sup>204</sup> Reay, “Radicalism and Religion,” 3.

<sup>205</sup> Mark Goldie, “The Theory of Religious Intolerance in Restoration England,” in *From Persecution to Toleration: The Glorious Revolution and Religion in England*, ed. Ole Peter Grell, Jonathan I. Israel and Nicholas Tyacke (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), 331.

<sup>206</sup> Goldie, “Theory of Religious Intolerance,” 331.

<sup>207</sup> Reay, “Radicalism and Religion,” 9-10; Sheeran, “Friendly Persuasion,” 12.

<sup>208</sup> Merriam and Simpson, *Guide to Research*, 3.

<sup>209</sup> Merriam and Simpson, *Guide to Research*, 3.

<sup>210</sup> Ingle, “From Mysticism to Radicalism,” 79-94; Brinton, *Quaker Practice*, 14.

"Catholic Counter-Reformation thought and Presbyterian (Calvin/Puritan) thought."<sup>211</sup> First, Catholic thought that Margaret Heathfield quotes:

From *Jesuit Rules for Thinking with the Church*:

That we may be altogether of the same mind and in conformity with the Church herself, if she shall have defined anything to be black which to our eyes appears to be white, we ought in like manner to pronounce it to be black. For we must undoubtingly believe, that the Spirit of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the Spirit of the Church . . . is the same.<sup>212</sup>

Second, Heathfield illustrates:

from the Presbyterian [Calvin/Puritan thought]:

The authority of the Holy Scripture . . . is in its infallible truth and divine authority . . . . Nothing is at any time to be added, whether by new revelations of the Spirit or traditions of men . . . . The infallible rule of interpretation of Scripture is the Scripture itself.<sup>213</sup>

Such truths gave birth to questioning and learning among early Friends.

### **Adult Education Rooted in Christianity**

Friends, as noted before, reflect what Cremin identifies as the “essentially educational character of Christianity, as a movement, as a complex of institutions and as an ideology.”<sup>214</sup> Cremin claims that Henry VIII’s command to have an English language Bible translation placed into every church had “irrevocable” consequences in the lives of clergy and laity alike in what today would be called “popular education.”<sup>215</sup> Remember Johnson traces the history of adult education to a historic root in Christianity. Johnson sees this locus of education as grounded in alternatives to develop a social order founded on the Christian ethic seen as a “morality of cooperation among equals.”<sup>216</sup> Adult educator Michael Law also links one of the roots of Anglo-American adult education to the “theological precept of equality in the sight of God.”<sup>217</sup> Law cites Edward Thompson’s work that relates this historic root of adult education to the “dynamics, the informality and systematic character . . . of the inherently educational practice”<sup>218</sup> of seventeenth-century Anglo-American Christians. An example of such Christians would be the Society of Friends.

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<sup>211</sup> Margaret Heathfield, *Being Together: Our Corporate Life in the Religious Society of Friends*, Swarthmore Lecture 1994 (London: Quaker Home Service and Woodbrooke College for the Swarthmore Lecture Committee, 1994), 20.

<sup>212</sup> "Jesuit Rules for Thinking with the Church," in *Documents of the Christian Church*, ed. Bettenson (London: Oxford University Press, 1750s), 363-364 quoted in Heathfield, *Being Together*, 20-21.

<sup>213</sup> "Authority of the Holy Scripture," in *Documents of the Christian Church*, ed. Bettenson (London: Oxford University Press, 1750s), 344-345 quoted in Heathfield, *Being Together*, 20-21.

<sup>214</sup> Cremin, *The Colonial Experience*, 139.

<sup>215</sup> *Ibid.*, 141-43.

<sup>216</sup> Johnson, "Really Useful Knowledge," 5.

<sup>217</sup> Law, "Rediscovering Hope in a New Era: Possibilities for the Radical Tradition of Adult Education," 208.

<sup>218</sup> *Ibid.*

The principle English controversies of the time, J. F. McGregor says, centered on the “true model of church government.”<sup>219</sup> Harder to categorize than larger denominations were the “independent” groups.<sup>220</sup> McGregor asserts that George Fox fitted belief in the guidance of the Inner Light “to accommodate a particularly effective model of congregational order” and distinguishes George Fox’s accomplishment as “unique.”<sup>221</sup> This model, the primary focus of the third overarching question in the current chapter, encompassed the distinctly extraordinary structures, practices, and operations of the Friends’ meetings for worship and business. The study now begins to introduce the principles and practices behind the Quaker silhouette: swimming upstream.

### Learning the Friends’ Beliefs

During their formative years, four theological perspectives evolved that distinguish Quaker convictions.<sup>222</sup> The Society’s principles and practices, established then, continue as Quakerism’s “essential core.”<sup>223</sup> Quaker historians say that Friends stressed those four “distinguishing convictions” with such “continuous intensity” that they came to be regarded as a “peculiar people.”<sup>224</sup> Frost might consider these convictions as the “intellectual component” of the Friends Christianity.<sup>225</sup> The question naturally arises: what distinguishes Friends’ teachings?

### Four Teachings That Distinguish Friends

Four convictions inform Quakers’ perspectives and distinctly characterize the Society of Friends. Summarily, these convictions include belief in:

- (a) the Inner Light--that of God--in every human being as a guide for living
- (b) the universal endowment of grace in all humans ,
- (c) a universal call to Christians to examine society for ways to move in the direction of "moral perfection,"<sup>226</sup> and
- (d) the enduring disclosure of God’s will beyond the written contents of the Bible.<sup>227</sup>

<sup>219</sup> J. F. McGregor, "Seekers and Ranters," in *Radical Religion in the English Revolution*, ed. J. F. McGregor and B. Reay (New York: Oxford University Press, 1984), 121.

<sup>220</sup> Independent groups embraced what J. F. McGregor calls a “disparate range of enthusiastic doctrines [that] . . . created . . . problems of interpretation.” McGregor defines enthusiasm as “immediate guidance of the Holy Spirit superseding any worldly or scriptural authority.” McGregor, "Seekers and Ranters," 121. Though three enthusiastic groups, Seekers, Ranters, and Quakers, are identified by McGregor, only “Quaker enthusiasm, the doctrine of the indwelling light” can be associated and identified from its beginnings with an “informal evangelical movement” McGregor, "Seekers and Ranters," 122.

<sup>221</sup> McGregor, "Seekers and Ranters," 121-22.

<sup>222</sup> Comfort, *The Quakers: A Brief Account*, 9; Sheeran, "Friendly Persuasion," 17.

<sup>223</sup> *Witnesses for Change: Quaker Women Over Three Centuries*, ed. Elisabeth Potts Brown and Susan Mosher Stuard (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1989), 15.

<sup>224</sup> Comfort, *The Quakers: A Brief Account*, 7.

<sup>225</sup> J. William Frost, "Secularization in Colonial Pennsylvania," in *Seeking the Light: Essays in Honor of Edwin B. Bronner* (Wallingford & Haverford PA: Pendle Hill Publications & Friends Historical Association, 1986), 106.

<sup>226</sup> Sheeran, "Friendly Persuasion," 17; Comfort, *The Quakers: A Brief Account*, 9.

<sup>227</sup> Ibid., 7-10.

This study now considers briefly each of these four convictions. The topics are germane to examination of the speeches and work of Lucretia Mott as an educator of adults.

## Friends' Preeminent Belief

According to Quaker historians who draw on William Penn's 1672 declaration, the "most eminent article of the faith of Friends," is the belief in the Inner Light.<sup>228</sup> William Penn (1644 - 1618) described the Inner Light as that "which lighteth every man that cometh into the world." William Penn defined the Inner Light as a "divine principle revealed to humans by God."<sup>229</sup> The Inner Light must not be confused with the "natural light of conscience."<sup>230</sup> The Inner Light -- what George Fox called "that of God" in everyone -- was "a divine Light planted by God in every person for his or her guidance if one chooses to use it."<sup>231</sup> For Friends, this first distinguishing teaching counts as the "central and seminal theological belief."<sup>232</sup> According to Friends, George Fox set this Inner Light of Christ as "the ultimate authority for the individual and for the Church."<sup>233</sup> Thus, the spark that ignites learning, distinguishes Quakers, and provides the rationale that upholds the essence of Quaker principles and practices, as noted earlier, is belief in and the experience of the Inner Light of Christ as a primary guide. George Fox relates his experience of this revelation as:

The Lord God opened to me by His invisible power that every man was enlightened by the divine Light of Christ, and I saw it shine through all; and they that believed in it came out of condemnation to the Light of life.

George Fox, *The Journal of George Fox*.<sup>234</sup>

"That every man was enlightened by the divine Light of Christ," according to Rufus Jones, is George Foxes' "central teaching."<sup>235</sup>

That enlightenment emanates from "a meeting place of the human spirit with the Divine Spirit" within each person.<sup>236</sup> Howard Brinton attributes to the Light three paramount capacities. First, the Light conveys "religious truth and moral values."<sup>237</sup> Second, it empowers action on that truth. Third, the Light enables Friends "to achieve cooperation and unity among themselves."<sup>238</sup> From that experienced conviction flows the logic of the worship, discernment, organization, practice, methods and social testimonies of the Society of Friends.<sup>239</sup>

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<sup>228</sup> Comfort, *The Quakers: A Brief Account*, 7.

<sup>229</sup> Ibid.

<sup>230</sup> Ibid., 8.

<sup>231</sup> Ibid.

<sup>232</sup> Stoneburner, "Introduction," 4.

<sup>233</sup> Comfort, *The Quakers: A Brief Account*, 8.

<sup>234</sup> George Fox, *The Journal of George Fox*, A Revised Edition by John L. Nickalls with an Epilogue by Henry J. Cadbury and an Introduction by Geoffrey F. Nuttall (Philadelphia: Religious Society of Friends, 1985), 33.

<sup>235</sup> Rufus M. Jones, "Introduction," in *Journal of George Fox*, ed. Rufus M. Jones, with an introduction and notes (New York: Capricorn Books, 1963), 32.

<sup>236</sup> Jones, "Introduction," 101

<sup>237</sup> Brinton, *Quaker Practice*, 15.

<sup>238</sup> Ibid.

<sup>239</sup> Jones, "Introduction," 31-47.

## The Golden Rule for Friends

The second conviction Quakers describe as a belief in “universal grace.”<sup>240</sup> This belief holds that every human being is “endowed with the ability freely granted by God to resist evil and do good”<sup>241</sup> providing they will to do so. This fundamental principle for Quakers expresses itself in daily life as “a religious expression of the Golden Rule” that is, if humans receive just and kind treatment they will respond with similar behavior.<sup>242</sup>

## Social Obligation as a Moral Commitment

The third “distinguishing conviction”<sup>243</sup> Sheeran describes as “a universal call to moral perfection and religious union with God.”<sup>244</sup> Quakers believe that all Christian people and societies are obligated to move toward “perfection.”<sup>245</sup> This belief sets the viewpoint from which a Quaker looks at human culture. The emphasis is not on the attainment of “perfection” but on the examination of society for “improvements which can be made and which ought to be made.”<sup>246</sup> This important conviction undergirds Quaker efforts to effect “social betterment,”<sup>247</sup> what some look at as reform efforts.

## Spiritual Truths Revealed Gives Opportunity for Learning

The fourth conviction is ongoing revelation of God's will. Sheeran calls this “a continuing progressive revelation of God’s will through the ages.”<sup>248</sup> Friends stipulate that this “continuing revelation” is available “to those who inquire and seek for it.”<sup>249</sup> As Dean Freiday pictures the Friends, “The central christological image for Friends was Christ as Prophet...in the role of Teacher by his living presence.”<sup>250</sup> This belief moves beyond centuries’ old “Christian ideals held up”<sup>251</sup> into what Quakers describe as “new ways of righteousness.”<sup>252</sup> One writer concludes that “Quakerism...discouraged finite answers to infinite questions” and, therefore, demanded “a sturdy inner faith in a continuing revelation.”<sup>253</sup> Comfort describes such Quakers as follows:

Those who believe in a continuing revelation . . . look for new revelations of spiritual [Truth](#). For them the Bible was not an unchanging blueprint permanently prescribing a church-controlled state and human society. To the Quakers it has seemed that God has

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<sup>240</sup> Comfort, *The Quakers: A Brief Account*, 9.

<sup>241</sup> Ibid.

<sup>242</sup> Ibid.

<sup>243</sup> Comfort, *The Quakers: A Brief Account*, 7.

<sup>244</sup> Sheeran, “Friendly Persuasion,” 17.

<sup>245</sup> Comfort, *The Quakers: A Brief Account*, 9.

<sup>246</sup> Ibid.

<sup>247</sup> Ibid.

<sup>248</sup> Sheeran, “Friendly Persuasion,” 17.

<sup>249</sup> Comfort, *The Quakers: A Brief Account*, 10.

<sup>250</sup> Freiday, “Apostolicity and Orthochristianity,” 44.

<sup>251</sup> Comfort, *The Quakers: A Brief Account*, 10.

<sup>252</sup> Ibid.

<sup>253</sup> Nancy Reid Gibbs, *Children of Light: Friends Seminary, 1786-1986* (New York: Friends Seminary, 1986), 12.

promised to be eternally with his people and to lead them into new ways of righteousness as they were capable of entering upon them.<sup>254</sup>

The conviction of continuing revelation positions Friends to ask questions and to listen for a spiritual response to secular or civil problems.

Thus, with its distinguishing convictions, this Quaker faith for daily living has been described as “a way of life.”<sup>255</sup> In Rufus Jones' appraisal: Quakers' bold experiment “endeavored to carry the consciousness and inspiration of God into all the activities of life and to raise the tasks of daily work and business and to turn them into avenues of ministry and service.”<sup>256</sup> The idea of the Quakers' bold experiment entailed continuous, lifelong learning and the challenge to exemplify the convictions they believed equipped them for the tasks and ethics of a new world. The question that then arises asks: how do Friends exemplify their religious beliefs?

### **(B) Friends Teach Their Religious Beliefs by Example**

Early Friends envisioned the beliefs and practices of Friends' meetings as a model of what George Fox believed would be, in time, the “government of Christ”<sup>257</sup> for “all nations,” for society. Sandra Cronk writes that George Fox spoke of [gospel order](#) to describe the relationship among the “practices of worship, decision-making, and daily living” for Friends.<sup>258</sup> George Fox clearly speaks of this “gospel order,” established and practiced among Friends, as a model for “all . . . people” in whatever society, when he says:

This order of the gospel, which is not of man nor by man, but from Christ . . . The everlasting gospel was preached . . . that all nations might . . . come into the order of it, so now the everlasting gospel is to be . . . preached again . . . to all nations, kindreds, tongues, and people.<sup>259</sup>

### **Early Friends organized for a new world.**

God's “order” is the order to be practiced by Friends for social betterment and the eventual “perfection” of all society “ordered” to the glory of God.<sup>260</sup> In their nature, the practice of gospel order and the betterment of society are educational. Cronk emphasizes that gospel order meant not just a “personal relationship” with Jesus. Cronk describes the all encompassing aspects of gospel order, for a group, a community, a society, as a “people who lived the way of

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<sup>254</sup> Comfort, *The Quakers: A Brief Account*, 10.

<sup>255</sup> Lyn Cope-Robinson, *The Little Quaker Sociology Book: With Glossary* (Melbourne, FL: Canmore Press, 1995), 192.

<sup>256</sup> Rufus M. Jones, *An Interpretation of Quakerism* (Philadelphia: Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, 1930, 1995).

<sup>257</sup> George Fox, *The Journal of George Fox, Edited with an Introduction and Notes by Rufus M. Jones, With an Essay on the Influence of the Journal by Henry J. Cadbury*, ed. Rufus M. Jones (New York: Capricorn Books), 462.

<sup>258</sup> Sandra L. Cronk, *Gospel Order: A Quaker Understanding of Faithful Church Community* (Wallingford PA: Pendle Hill Publications, 1991), 3.

<sup>259</sup> George Fox, *The Journal of George Fox, Edited with an Introduction and Notes by Rufus M. Jones, With an Essay on the Influence of the Journal by Henry J. Cadbury*, 462-63.

<sup>260</sup> Comfort, *The Quakers: A Brief Account*, 9; Sheeran, “Friendly Persuasion,” 17.

faithfulness together” who shunned values and practices in the dominant “social order” if perceived to be opposed to “God’s will.”<sup>261</sup> The term “order” included all aspects of personal daily life lived in the “power” of God in such a way as to both sustain and increase the meeting’s or society’s relationship with God. According to Cronk, Friends interpreted “order” to mean “the characteristics of daily living.”<sup>262</sup> The essence of “gospel order” remains Friends’ belief that “one cannot live God’s new order alone.”<sup>263</sup> Thus, gospel order requires a social context, that is, a society.

Early Friends became immersed in a mission that envisioned the creation of a new world organized to God’s order. Friends developed and practiced a way of living by God’s order in preparation for the eventual “perfection” of all society “ordered” to the glory of God.<sup>264</sup> Friends’ mission evoked a hunger to learn and a vision of an educated world.

Quakers exemplify their religious beliefs through “testimonies” considered to be the ethical or “practical component”<sup>265</sup> of Quakerism. A [testimony](#) effectively demonstrates Quaker efforts to address needed changes in society. Ched Myers defines a testimony as the “standard of faith” through which “a group of people covenants together to observe...gospel order.”<sup>266</sup> These testimonies, described as “ancient” in relation to the Society’s history, evolved in response to Quaker convictions about the “universal call to moral perfection”<sup>267</sup> and “continuing revelation . . . available . . . to those who inquire and seek for it.”<sup>268</sup> The intent of testimonies is to examine society for states capable of movement closer to “perfection”<sup>269</sup> through the betterment of social structures and conditions under which people live. The social testimonies of the Society of Friends are what Howard Brinton calls “definite patterns of behavior.”<sup>270</sup> According to Sandra Cronk, testimonies represent that aspect of gospel order,<sup>271</sup> through which the “corporate prophetic symbols” become embodied in daily living.<sup>272</sup>

This corporate symbolism represents the living presence of “Christ as Prophet . . . in the role of Teacher,”<sup>273</sup> a central image for Friends. To illustrate this prophetic function, the conviction that revelation is ongoing situates Friends to question current problematic situations--e.g. racial prejudice--and the conviction that the moral perfection, the social betterment, of the world is possible, poises Friends to listen for guidance to work at solutions--e.g., preferential provision of education--for problems.<sup>274</sup> What “testimonies” have Friends embraced? The social testimonies of the Society of Friends, Brinton gathers under four broad categories:

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<sup>261</sup> Cronk, *Gospel Order*, 4.

<sup>262</sup> Ibid., 5.

<sup>263</sup> Ibid., 7.

<sup>264</sup> Comfort, *The Quakers: A Brief Account*, 9; Sheeran, “Friendly Persuasion,” 17.

<sup>265</sup> Frost, “Secularization in Colonial Pennsylvania,” 106.

<sup>266</sup> Ched Myers, *The Witness* 77, 6 (1994): 6.

<sup>267</sup> Sheeran, “Friendly Persuasion,” 17.

<sup>268</sup> Comfort, *The Quakers: A Brief Account*, 10.

<sup>269</sup> Sheeran, “Friendly Persuasion,” 17; Comfort, *The Quakers: A Brief Account*, 7-10.

<sup>270</sup> Howard H. Brinton, *Quaker Education In Theory and Practice* (Wallingford, PA: Pendle Hill Press, 1967), 12.

<sup>271</sup> Cronk, *Gospel Order*, 3.

<sup>272</sup> Ibid., 19.

<sup>273</sup> Freiday, “Apostolicity and Orthochristianity,” 44.

<sup>274</sup> Sheeran, “Friendly Persuasion,” 17; Comfort, *The Quakers: A Brief Account*, 10.

equality, simplicity, community, and peace.<sup>275</sup> The various testimonies are meant to give witness to transformed perspectives that early Quakers developed as part of their education for living a “New Creation.”<sup>276</sup> Thus, the behavior of the individual and the community materially demonstrates, that is, testifies to intellectually and spiritually embraced beliefs.

### **To Think of all as Equal**

Brinton identifies equality as the “earliest social testimony” based on the practice of the belief of “that of God” in every human.<sup>277</sup> Geoffrey Nuttall says the testimony to equality reflects “the essence of the Quaker message . . . [that gives Friends an] egalitarian attitude toward society’.”<sup>278</sup> As Howard Brinton makes clear, this equality relates to “worth in the sight of God” not to various abilities. This testimony respects every individual. It rejects the valuation of humans by category such as sex, race, country of origin, or economic status. Implicit in this testimony is the refusal to either “flatter or humiliate” because of distinctions or privileges among people.<sup>279</sup>

Early Friends practiced equality in the exercise of ministry in Friends' meeting for worship and meetings for business. Women and men acknowledged the possibility of being channels for God’s message for the group. Brinton suggests that under the testimony of equality could rest freedom of religious expression for which Friends struggled.<sup>280</sup> Because of a lack of the freedom of religious expression, early Friends were persecuted in England and in some American colonies.

### **To Learn to Live Simply**

Simplicity in all aspects of life was crucial for George Fox and for all Friends since the foundation of their society. Rufus Jones suggests that “simplicity of life” represents the “real principle” expressed in the first years of ministry of George Fox. Fox said:

Moreover, when the Lord sent me forth into the world, He forbade me to put off my hat to any, high or low; and I was required to Thee and Thou all men and women, without any respect to rich or poor, great or small.<sup>281</sup>

Many forms have given expression to this testimony: dress, speech, language, behavior, to include “the one-price system in selling goods” first introduced by Quaker shopkeepers to establish fair prices and eradicate preferential pricing privileged by barter or prestige.<sup>282</sup>

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<sup>275</sup> Brinton, *Quaker Education*, 12.

<sup>276</sup> *The Influence of Quaker Women on American History: Biographical Studies*, ed. Carol and John Stoneburner, Studies in Women and Religion, vol. 21 (Lewiston/Queenston: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1986), 10.

<sup>277</sup> Brinton, *Quaker Practice*, 71.

<sup>278</sup> Peter Brock, *The Quaker Peace Testimony 1660 to 1914* (York, England: Sessions Book Trust, 1990), 10.

<sup>279</sup> Brinton, *Quaker Practice*, 70.

<sup>280</sup> Brinton, *Quaker Practice*, 70.

<sup>281</sup> Fox, *The Journal of George Fox, Edited with an Introduction and Notes by Rufus M. Jones, With an Essay on the Influence of the Journal by Henry J. Cadbury*, 105.

<sup>282</sup> Brinton, *Quaker Practice*, 72.



## **To Teach Non-Violence by Example**

Perhaps the most well known aspect of Quakerism is the peace testimony, which dates from 1660. An early Friend, William Penn, in 1693, spoke about his belief in this testimony. He admonished that, "a good end cannot sanctify evil means.... It is as great a presumption to send our passions upon God's errands, as it is to palliate them with God's name." This testimony is examined in more depth in Chapter Five.

## **To Educate for Humanity's Living as One Society**

Community can be thought of as the corporate life, that is, the inter-dependence among individuals gathered in a society.<sup>283</sup> The Quakers at the start of their movement envisioned the whole world joined in one society of friends, all children of Light. Richard Bauman calls this first intention as being "based on common divine leadings to proclaim a particular spiritual vision for the conviction of all mankind."<sup>284</sup> This community testimony "becomes manifest" within a Quaker meeting as members share their resources which Brinton enumerates as "spiritually, intellectually, socially, and economically."<sup>285</sup> Community is built through the furtherance of "inter-dependence" and the reduction of "self-centeredness and conflict."<sup>286</sup> This testimony of community relates also to the religious responsibility for the ministerial, pastoral and administrative aspects of the monthly, quarterly, and yearly meetings of the Society of Friends. Outside the context of the meeting, community is encouraged in social services where the work is done "*with* rather than *for*" those who have experienced distress, such as victims of war.<sup>287</sup>

## **Education Immersed in Social Change**

Friends' testimonies address "structural changes in society"<sup>288</sup> required for gospel order to become universal. Brinton stresses the "educational effect"<sup>289</sup> produced in the individual engaged in an effort to address "structural changes in society."<sup>290</sup> In precisely such efforts, as this research will demonstrate in future chapters, Lucretia Coffin Mott worked to educate adults and continued her lifelong learning. Meanwhile, recall that this review of literature focuses only on the Friends in order to learn and understand Quakerism itself before examination of her sermons and work. Therefore, the study now reviews literature related to the third question: What engages adult Friends both as learners and as teachers?

### **(C) Education the Essence of Unique Meetings**

Friends' search for an experience of early Christianity evoked a hunger to learn and a vision of a world educated to live by God's order. In thinking about Friends' meetings,

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<sup>283</sup> Brinton, *Quaker Practice*, 66.

<sup>284</sup> Bauman, *Let Your Words Be Few*, 138.

<sup>285</sup> Brinton, *Quaker Practice*, 66.

<sup>286</sup> Ibid.

<sup>287</sup> Ibid., 66-67.

<sup>288</sup> Ibid., 64.

<sup>289</sup> Ibid.

<sup>290</sup> Ibid.

remember that Friends' actions flow from their beliefs. Douglas V. Steere, who writes about Quaker spirituality and especially the meeting for business, asks readers to be mindful of Friends' convictions pictured as a "frail web of the Quakers' presuppositions."<sup>291</sup> He says,

There is the faith in a guide. There is a faith in a continuous revelation that is always open for fresh disclosures. And there is the respect and affection for each other that assumes each one's openness and each one's concern for the right clue to the resolution of the problem, a resolution that may with patience carry the group to a sense of clearness.<sup>292</sup>

With these presuppositions as a basis for understanding, the study now considers what the concept of 'meeting' means to Friends.

### The Ideas of Meeting and Covenant for Friends

The etymology of the word "meet" derives from the idea "to encounter, find, assemble."<sup>293</sup> For Friends, the consummate encounter is the meeting of the "human spirit with the Divine Spirit,"<sup>294</sup> which takes place within the one who seeks the presence of the Divine. To find companions and surroundings to experience this encounter, not to build a religious structure or ritual, became the Friends' reason for meeting. Friends in a locale formed a meeting as a society that seeks to experience "a meeting of the human spirit with the Divine Spirit."<sup>295</sup>

### Learning to Live in Covenant not by Contract

Early Friends saw themselves, Douglas Gwyn argues in his recent scholarly study, as living the promise of Christianity. He describes this view as a covenantal relationship. He claims that "covenant--faithful, promise-keeping relationship--is the hidden, binding force in society."<sup>296</sup> Gwyn compares covenants to contracts. The covenant's "religious or moral" basis for a public "open-ended" way of relating Gwyn differentiates from the "secular and value-free," stringently defined and circumscribed "private" obligation of a contract.<sup>297</sup> He describes his historical study from a theological perspective as "both a study in historical theology and a theology of history."<sup>298</sup> He claims Friends' importance stems from their living prophetically. He describes that significance, as follows:

Historic *significance* lies in their gathering into a witnessing community, a covenantal sign to the world. They understood their worship and their way of life as forming a

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<sup>291</sup> Douglas V. Steere, "The Quaker Meeting for Business," The 19th Annual J. Barnard Walton Memorial Lecture, Southeastern Yearly Meeting, (Avon Park, FL: Southeastern Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends, 1995, 10/4, 1982), 2.

<sup>292</sup> Steere, "The Quaker Meeting for Business," 2-3.

<sup>293</sup> Walter W. Skeat, *An Etymological Dictionary of the English Language*, This Impression (New York: Oxford University Press, inc., 1879-1882), 370.

<sup>294</sup> Jones, "Introduction," 32.

<sup>295</sup> Jones, "Introduction," 32.

<sup>296</sup> Douglas Gwyn, *The Covenant Crucified: Quakers and the Rise of Capitalism* (Wallingford, PA: Pendle Hill Publications, 1995), 1.

<sup>297</sup> Gwyn, *The Covenant Crucified*, 1-3.

<sup>298</sup> *Ibid.*, x.

covenantal sign 'answering that of God in every one.' Calling men and women universally to repent of their faithless ways and come to the 'covenant of life, light, and peace'."<sup>299</sup>

Friends, as "a witnessing community"<sup>300</sup> that meets and works corporately, create challenges and tasks that involve learning and education. Now to learn about the environment in which such a community can develop.

## **Housing the Meetings for Learning**

When George Fox and early Friends said "church" they meant "the community of spiritual believers."<sup>301</sup> What others called churches, Quakers called "steeple-houses."<sup>302</sup> From the eighteenth-century, Friends gathered for worship in meeting houses described as plain.<sup>303</sup> Meeting houses are devoid of any accoutrements: no altars, no pulpits, no icons. There are no reminders of ordained hierarchy to inhibit the speech of worshipers.

The meeting house was generally rectangular and the "seating arrangements . . . consisted of two or three rows of raised benches along the longer sides of the room facing the other benches. The raised seats are called 'facing benches' or 'the gallery' and were occupied by older and more experienced Friends." This arrangement afforded beginning worshipers the opportunity to observe others who can serve as examples.<sup>304</sup> Having considered the physical environment for Friends' meetings, how do adults become Friends?

## **Beginning to Learn as a Friend**

Women and men, were "taught to participate actively in the sacramental qualities of all life."<sup>305</sup> Friends have no outward sacramental rituals, not even one to signal Quaker conversion or initiation. Friends refer to initial participation in the Society as a "two-stage" process of change called "convincement."<sup>306</sup> In the first stage, one becomes "convinced of the [Truth](#)" often through education by Friends' preaching or by the example of Friends' living. Convincement was followed by what Sheeran describes as "a long slow struggle worked out in the silence of the Meeting for Worship."<sup>307</sup> Through convincing, a reflective process known as the "wrestle with conscience"<sup>308</sup> in the nineteenth century, Quakers experienced empowerment.

Quakers use many names to refer to knowledge of God in one's inner being.<sup>309</sup> Carol Stoneburner names some of Friends' descriptions of the presence of God within: "indwelling

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<sup>299</sup> Ibid., 20.

<sup>300</sup> Ibid., 20.

<sup>301</sup> Jones, "Introduction," 93.

<sup>302</sup> Ibid.

<sup>303</sup> Brinton, *Quaker Practice*, 27.

<sup>304</sup> Ibid., 27-29.

<sup>305</sup> *The Influence of Quaker Women*, 9.

<sup>306</sup> Sheeran, "Friendly Persuasion," 18.

<sup>307</sup> Sheeran, "Friendly Persuasion," 18.

<sup>308</sup> *The Influence of Quaker Women*, 9.

<sup>309</sup> Stoneburner, "Introduction," 4.

Christ,' 'Inner Light,' 'Teacher within,' '[Truth](#),' and 'the Seed'."<sup>310</sup> The inner struggle and divine Presence, Stoneburner says, set a pattern of receptivity and action. Being receptive--open to The Light, The Seed of God--developed into human energy and power to affect the world and make a "New Creation."<sup>311</sup> This pattern of receptivity and action in the Divine-human relationship empowered the "convinced" person for activity in the world<sup>312</sup> and energized a Society with a mission to educate.

## Friends' Conception of the Self as Knower

Historian Phyllis Mack says that Friends' attitude in relation to the self "differed radically" from the attitude that dominated western culture. Mack's claim that "Quakers trusted . . . action and behavior more than words to demonstrate authenticity" expresses the material demonstration of testimonies to witness--as individuals and a society--to spiritual beliefs. Mack says:

Quakers . . . believed that the deepest, most hidden, most authentic aspect of the self was divine love and knowledge of both nature and ethics, a knowledge of which our own conscience . . . is a pale shadow . . . . Quakers aimed for nothing less than the experience of God's presence . . . . They also wanted friendship and spiritual unity with the entire community of Quakers. Quakers trusted the language of the body (action/behavior) more than that of words to demonstrate the authenticity of this spiritual rebirth.<sup>313</sup>

Friends accepted that each human being could directly communicate with God. Quakers believed that God created each person with both an ability to experience God's presence and an ability to live in accord with the continuing revelation of God's will.

Each Friend listens to learn God's guidance in a specific moment and about a particular concern. Consideration of an individual's learning takes place within the meeting for business, which this chapter explores. Thus, Friends believe that every person is capable of knowing God's guidance and that a person, as knower, demonstrates a relationship with God, not through espousal of doctrinal beliefs, but through ethical actions in everyday circumstances.<sup>314</sup> "Personal religious experience,"<sup>315</sup> according to Carol Stoneburner, instructs Friends as knowers.

## Organized to Learn

George Fox was central among early Friends. One of his great [openings](#) was that "the Lord would teach His people Himself."<sup>316</sup> Thus, for Friends, the central image of Christ is in the "role of Teacher by his living presence."<sup>317</sup> The genius of George Fox and early Friends is the

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<sup>310</sup> Ibid.

<sup>311</sup> *The Influence of Quaker Women*, 10.

<sup>312</sup> Ibid.

<sup>313</sup> *Witnesses for Change*, 36-41.

<sup>314</sup> Stoneburner, "Introduction," 2.

<sup>315</sup> Ibid., 5.

<sup>316</sup> Fox, *The Journal of George Fox, Edited with an Introduction and Notes by Rufus M. Jones, With an Essay on the Influence of the Journal by Henry J. Cadbury*, 75.

<sup>317</sup> Freiday, "Apostolicity and Orthochristianity," 44.

establishment of structures to allow for the educational experience of being taught by the Lord through the inner knowledge of personal experience and through others similarly taught.

## **Organized From the Bottom Up**

The Society of Friends' organization builds from the monthly meetings. From its earliest days, neither an individual nor a Quaker family but the members--the group--gathered as the monthly meeting<sup>318</sup> form the Society's basic and "smallest unit" of Quakerism.<sup>319</sup> The preparative meeting consists of persons joined voluntarily in worship who are represented by any or all of the worshipers at the monthly meeting for business. A monthly meeting consists of one meeting for business in a geographic area and one or several preparative meetings for worship, again geographically related.

Only at the monthly meeting level may an individual enter into relationship and become a part of the Society of Friends.<sup>320</sup> Meeting level entrance, as Sheeran says, assured that the local Friends could "judge the quality of candidates" for membership and "Friends found in that local assembly the religious experience which was the touchstone of their lives and basis of guidance in their actions."<sup>321</sup> Early Friends, Edwin Bronner says, knew who belonged to "the fellowship of believers" even though they did not keep lists of the worshipers at meetings."<sup>322</sup>

## **Representative Governance Guides Pyramidal Structure**

Some or all members of that monthly meeting may then represent the monthly meeting at the quarterly meeting for business, and likewise for the yearly meeting for business. The quarterly meeting is "representative of monthly meetings" geographically related, much as the [yearly meeting](#) is "representative" of various quarterly meetings, geographically related.<sup>323</sup> The Friends meetings structure is described as being "organized . . . by a pyramid of meetings differentiated by how frequently they met; the higher the level, the less frequent the meeting "<sup>324</sup>: preparative, monthly, quarterly and yearly. The practices involved in the meeting for worship and the meeting for business are the same at each level.

## **Organizational Structure Promotes Education**

Thomas Woody's classic work on Anglo-American Quaker schools points clearly to the relationship between the Friends' seventeenth-century organizational structure and the Friend's unprecedented ability to place as a central focus education. Woody concludes that the "organization and interrelation of the meetings"<sup>325</sup> supports the activity of education throughout

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<sup>318</sup> Brinton, *Quaker Practice*, 33.

<sup>319</sup> Thomas Woody, *Early Quaker Education in Pennsylvania* (New York: Teachers College, Columbia University, 1920), 17.

<sup>320</sup> Brinton, *Quaker Practice*, 33.

<sup>321</sup> Sheeran, "Friendly Persuasion," 25.

<sup>322</sup> Bronner, "Quaker Discipline and Order," 327.

<sup>323</sup> Woody, *Early Quaker Education*, 15-19.

<sup>324</sup> "Guide to Genealogical Resources at Friends Historical Library of Swarthmore College" (Swarthmore, PA., N.D.).

<sup>325</sup> Woody, *Early Quaker Education*, 20.

the Society of Friends. These meetings operate by representative governance through a method whereby “unity” in decisions, not uniformity of decision-making, is practiced. Woody asserts that it was “by virtue of this organization (that) schools were set up.”<sup>326</sup>

This organizational structure, viewed through the lens of adult education, can also be seen to have fostered the non-vocational education of adults, as learners and educators, in multiple ways. Instances include the epistles sent from yearly meetings, traveling ministers or Public Friends who went from meeting to meeting, and representatives of one meeting to another level of meeting. Today, scholars might see such activities as components of adult education, for instance, reflection and collaborative learning. The study turns now to the context in which Friends' experiential learning primarily occurs.

### The Unique Meetings of the Society of Friends

The [meeting for worship](#) and [meeting for business](#), according to Howard Brinton, are exclusive to the Society of Friends. Only in these Friends' meetings “is Quakerism unique and clearly distinguished from all other sects and opinions.”<sup>327</sup> Some other religious bodies may, as he says, “share with Quakers belief in what can be called “distinguishing convictions.”<sup>328</sup> Further, other groups of believers might practice ethical behaviors to testify and give witness to their faith. These Friends' meetings for worship and meetings for business, Brinton asserts, “constitute definitive types of community life.”<sup>329</sup> The meetings for worship and for business provide the context in which Friends practice their convictions and exercise their beliefs. This distinctly extraordinary meeting structure with its constituent practices and operations are educational in nature. Moreover, Brinton identifies these meetings as the Friends' “chief religious educational agencies.”<sup>330</sup> Among Quakers, Parker Palmer says, the “image of ‘meeting’ [is] central, concrete, and spacious,”<sup>331</sup> and permeates all the meetings starting first with the meeting for worship.

### The Context of Friends' Experiential Learning in the Meeting for Worship

Friends characterize their worship as “the search for communion with God and the offering of ourselves—body and soul—for the doing of God’s will.”<sup>332</sup> Brinton suggests that the “divine-human bonds” fostered in meetings for worship “produce inter-human bonds.”<sup>333</sup> Friends describe the meeting for worship as the “heart” of their Society.<sup>334</sup>

### A Nineteenth-Century Study of Friends' Meeting

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<sup>326</sup> Ibid., 14.

<sup>327</sup> Brinton, *Quaker Education*, 11-12.

<sup>328</sup> Comfort, *The Quakers: A Brief Account*, 7.

<sup>329</sup> Brinton, *Quaker Education*, 11-12.

<sup>330</sup> Ibid., 58.

<sup>331</sup> Parker J. Palmer, *Meeting for Learning: Education in a Quaker Context*, The Pendle Hill Bulletin No. 284 (Wallingford, PA: Pendle Hill Publications, 1976), 1.

<sup>332</sup> Philadelphia Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends, *Faith and Practice: A Book of Christian Discipline* (Philadelphia: Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, 1997), 17.

<sup>333</sup> Brinton, *Quaker Practice*, 64.

<sup>334</sup> Philadelphia Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends, *Faith and Practice*, 17.

To learn as much as possible about Quakerism when Lucretia Mott lived, Thomas Clarkson's study is helpful. Brinton describes Clarkson's three-volume work, *Portraiture of Quakerism*,<sup>335</sup> as "the most complete description of the Quaker cultural pattern."<sup>336</sup> Trained in history at the University of Cambridge in England, Clarkson's classic work on the slave trade will be discussed in Chapter Three. Clarkson, a non-Quaker, was motivated to write the Friends' "moral history," he says, "to exhibit to the rest of the world many excellent customs of which they were ignorant, but which it might be useful to them to know."<sup>337</sup> Clarkson's narrative most closely portrays the Quakerism that was prevalent during Lucretia's earlier years. Brinton says "the Quaker way of life as developed in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries survived in many places through much of the nineteenth century."<sup>338</sup> Brinton admonishes, however, that "a living culture cannot be transmitted by description, however exact. To be really understood, it must be felt and lived."<sup>339</sup> Clarkson's richly detailed account, nevertheless, allows us to imagine peering in the window of a Quaker meetinghouse of the last century.<sup>340</sup>

### Friends Listen for Guidance to Obey

In the meeting for worship, Friends wait in silent "communal sitting."<sup>341</sup> Roman Catholic "centering prayer" authority Father Basil Pennington compares Roman Catholic with Quaker practice. Pennington notes that Friends' "waiting in silence" is focused not only on meditation or in praise and thanksgiving to God but on "obedience" to the Inner Teacher, Christ.<sup>342</sup> Pennington, who draws on the work of Douglas Steere,<sup>343</sup> distinguishes the difference in silent Quaker worship: Friends "wait for a word of guidance, for themselves personally and for the community."<sup>344</sup> Thomas Clarkson clarifies this basis of the Friends' religion, he says,

The Spirit of God . . . the Quakers usually distinguish by the epithets of Primary and Infallible. But they have made another distinction with respect to the character of this Spirit; for they have pronounced it to be the only infallible guide to men in the spiritual concerns . . . . This conclusion has indeed been adopted as . . . a doctrine of the Society

<sup>335</sup> Thomas Clarkson, *A Portraiture of Quakerism, as Taken from a View of the Moral Education, Discipline Peculiar Custom, Religious Principles, Political and Civil Economy, And Character of the Society of Friends*. (London: Longman, Hurst, Rees, and Orme, 1806).

<sup>336</sup> Howard H. Brinton, *Friends for 300 Years: The History and Beliefs of the Society of Friends Since George Fox Started the Quaker Movement* (Wallingford, PA: Pendle Hill Publications and Philadelphia Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends, 1952, 1964), 187.

<sup>337</sup> Thomas Clarkson, *A Portraiture of Quakerism As Taken from a View of the Moral Education, Discipline, Peculiar Customs, Religious Principles, Political and Civil Oeconomy, and Character, of the Society of Friends, Vol. 1* (London: Longman, Hurst, Rees, and Orme, 1806), ii.

<sup>338</sup> Brinton, *Friends for 300 Years*, 187.

<sup>339</sup> Ibid.

<sup>340</sup> Clarkson's descriptions closely depict what the researcher observed during the meetings for worship and business at the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting held March, 1998. As noted in appendix A, the Philadelphia Quakers purposefully emulate and nurture their seventeenth-century roots.

<sup>341</sup> Basil Pennington, O.C.S.O., "Centering Prayer and the Friends," in *Spirituality in Ecumenical Perspective*, ed. E. Glenn Hinson (Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1993), 134.

<sup>342</sup> Pennington, "Centering Prayer," 135.

<sup>343</sup> Douglas V. Steere, "Introduction," in *Quaker Spirituality: Selected Writings*, ed. Douglas V. Steere, Preface by Elizabeth Gray Vining (New York: Paulist Press, 1984), 3-53.

<sup>344</sup> Pennington, "Centering Prayer," 135.

. . . . that the Spirit of God is the primary and only infallible, and the Scriptures but a subordinate or secondary, guide."<sup>345</sup> They sit therefore in silence, and worship in silence.<sup>346</sup> . . . . A man does not depend at these times on the words of a minister, or of any other person present; but his own soul, worked upon the divine influence, pleads in silence with the Almighty its own cause.<sup>347</sup>

Clarkson says the silence also prevents worshippers from transgressing "by pretending to worship...or by uttering language that is inconsistent with the feelings of the heart."<sup>348</sup> Friends wait to learn and then speak to educate others about Divine guidance for action. Specifically, how do friends learn during meeting for worship?

### **The Ways Friends' Learn in Meeting for Worship**

In a meeting for worship, components of the complete silence--what Friends consider the "living silence"<sup>349</sup>--are "vocal ministry" and the "spoken word."<sup>350</sup> These utterances rise out of, rather than interrupt, the silence and are intended for the "gathering as a whole."<sup>351</sup> Vocal ministry gives voice for the whole meeting in "expression of adoration, thanksgiving, penitence and petition"<sup>352</sup> aspects typical of prayer. On the other hand a spoken word speaks, not for an individual, but to the meeting as a whole.

How does the "spoken word" happen? A worshiper, gathered into the silent meeting, becomes aware of a message for the meeting. Often, the messenger stands and speaks the message. According to Howard Brinton, the message commonly has certain qualities. The spoken word carries a message that

- (a) sees the subject as God would . . . [that is] religious.<sup>353</sup>
- (b) speaks a specific message not previously prepared; it is "spontaneous" or extemporaneous.<sup>354</sup>
- (c) the messenger communicates as an "instrument through which the Spirit speaks . . . [that is] non-personal."<sup>355</sup>
- (d) is stated "simply and directly . . . [and] . . . recognized as true by its very character [that is] non-argumentative."<sup>356</sup>
- (e) states the gospel message in a way that can be "fully grasped [by anyone, that is it is]

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<sup>345</sup> Thomas Clarkson, *A Portraiture of Quakerism As Taken from a View of the Moral Education, Discipline, Peculiar Customs, Religious Principles, Political and Civil Oeconomy, and Character, of the Society of Friends*, Vol. 2 (London: Longman, Hurst, Rees, and Orme, 1806), 152.

<sup>346</sup> Clarkson, *A Portraiture of Quakerism*, Vol. 2, 293.

<sup>347</sup> Ibid., Vol. 2, 300.

<sup>348</sup> Ibid.

<sup>349</sup> Brinton, *Quaker Practice*, 22.

<sup>350</sup> Ibid.

<sup>351</sup> Ibid., 23.

<sup>352</sup> Brinton, *Quaker Practice*, 27.

<sup>353</sup> Ibid., 23-24.

<sup>354</sup> Ibid., 24.

<sup>355</sup> Ibid.

<sup>356</sup> Ibid., 24-25.



- ...simple,"<sup>357</sup> and  
(e) preserves the most silence, "brief."<sup>358</sup>

Significantly, the content of the spoken word gathers worshipers into a "spirit of unity [that is] unified with itself and other utterances."<sup>359</sup> Clarkson explores how a person might first speak and then become a Quaker minister.

## Quaker Ministers

The person who would speak in a meeting for worship relies on an internal sense and motivation. Except for examples of other Friends, there was no formal training or apprenticeship, no rite of ordination. Any Quaker, man or woman, is free to speak. If a person feels a call to be a minister, the act of speaking in meeting affirms that person's call to ministry. From Clarkson's description one infers the exercise of agency related to ministry, that is, the person must first choose to speak and the minister must decide when to speak publicly. Also in Clarkson's description is seen the mutuality of interaction between individual initiative and group discernment, reminding one of the covenantal relationship of a community. He cites "men or women" as being eligible for Quaker ministry, though he conforms to the linguistic custom of using the masculine. Clarkson found:

The way in which Quakers, whether men or women, who conceive themselves to be called to the office of the ministry, are admitted into it . . . is simply as follows:

Any member has a right to rise up in the meetings for worship, and to speak publicly. If any one therefore should rise up and preach, who has never done so before, he is heard. The congregation are all witnesses of this doctrine . . . . If after repeated attempts in the office of the ministry the new preacher should have given satisfactory proof of his gift, he is reported to the monthly meeting to which he belongs. And this meeting, if satisfied with his ministry, acknowledges him as a minister, and then recommends him to the meeting of ministers and elders belonging to the same. No other act than this is requisite. He receives no verbal or written appointment, or power, for the execution of the sacerdotal office. It may be observed also, that he neither gains any authority, nor loses any privilege, by thus becoming a minister of the Gospel. Except while in the immediate exercise of his calling, he is only a common member . . . . When ministers are thus approved and acknowledged, they exercise the sacred office in public assemblies, as they immediately feel themselves influenced to that work.<sup>360</sup>

The ministers never prepare to speak or write a message or sermon beforehand. All ministry rises out of the prayerful silence.<sup>361</sup> Before uttering a word or preaching, a person would first rise from the position of their meetinghouse seat and stand before they spoke.<sup>362</sup>

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<sup>357</sup> Ibid., 25.

<sup>358</sup> Ibid.

<sup>359</sup> Brinton, *Quaker Practice*, 25-26.

<sup>360</sup> Clarkson, *A Portraiture of Quakerism*, Vol. 2, 263-65.

<sup>361</sup> Clarkson, *A Portraiture of Quakerism*, Vol. 2, 278-78.

<sup>362</sup> Ibid., 280.

## Public Friends

A minister can feel a [concern](#) to visit or preach in a distant meeting. Both men and women ministered as [Public Friends](#) and both travelled in the ministry. Often two ministers, e.g. two women, would travel together. The minister would present that concern to the monthly meeting for business and, if the meeting agrees, it gives a "certificate" or [minute](#) for the minister's proposed purpose. The minute is recorded in the meeting record. Clarkson's account reveals that Friends developed relationships over great distances. He says often a minister may not be known at the meeting the minister proposes to visit. The minute confirms the meeting's [unity](#) with the visit.<sup>363</sup> Clarkson says:

Such as thus travel in the work of the ministry, or Public Friends as they are called, seldom or never go to an inn at any town or village where Quakers live. They go to the houses of the latter. While at these, they attend the weekly, monthly, and quarterly meetings of the district as they happen on their route. They call also extraordinary meetings of worship.<sup>364</sup>

These Public Friends strengthened the trans-Atlantic bonds among Friends.

## The Good Order of Quaker Meetings for Worship and the Work of Elders

From early Quakerism, more gifted and practiced Friends were "qualified to have more responsibility . . . for the good order"<sup>365</sup> of meetings for worship. Called "elders"<sup>366</sup> these Friends bore responsibility for the "spiritual vitality"<sup>367</sup> of the meeting for worship. Elders encouraged the spoken and vocal ministries and discouraged "long and burdensome discourse" in the meeting for worship.<sup>368</sup>

Clarkson describes the relationship between the monthly meeting and the quarterly meeting and the function of those who are elders:

It is one part of the duty of the elders, when appointed, to watch over the doctrine of young ministers, and also to watch over the doctrine and conduct of ministers generally.<sup>369</sup> To every . . . meeting four elders, two men and two women, . . . are appointed. These are nominated by a committee appointed by the monthly meeting, in conjunction with a committee appointed by the quarterly meeting. And as the office annexed to the name of elder is considered peculiarly important by the Quakers, particular care is taken that persons of clear discernment, and such as excel in the spiritual ear and such as are blameless in their lives are appointed to it. It is recommended, that neither wealth nor age be allowed to operate as inducements in the choice of them. Indeed, so much care is required to be taken with respect to the filling up

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<sup>363</sup> Ibid., 267.

<sup>364</sup> Ibid., 267.

<sup>365</sup> Brinton, *Quaker Practice*, 31.

<sup>366</sup> Ibid.

<sup>367</sup> Brinton, *Quaker Practice*, 31.

<sup>368</sup> Ibid., 31-32.

<sup>369</sup> Clarkson, *A Portraiture of Quakerism*, Vol. 2, 271.

of this office, that, if persons perfectly suitable are not to be found, the meetings are to be left without them.<sup>370</sup>

Important as elders are, they are limited in their function which is to see that all preaching is for "exhortation of one another for good."<sup>371</sup> Clarkson enumerates the significant limitations on the elders, as follows:

They can make no laws, like the antient synods and other convocations of the clergy, nor dictate any article of faith. Neither can they meddle with the government of the church. The Quakers allow neither ministers nor elders, by virtue of their office, to interfere with their [discipline](#). Every proposition of this sort must be determined upon by the yearly meeting or by the body at large.<sup>372</sup>

The interplay of the individuals' freedom to speak and the community's assurance that the elders protect the peace of the meeting for worship from repeated offenses through unsound speech shows the relationship between individuality and mutuality among Friends.

### Decision-Making in the Business Meeting

Within a meeting for business are made what Sheeran describes as "decisions by mutual consent."<sup>373</sup> Douglas Steere says the meetings for business function for Friends as the "corporate method of arriving at decisions."<sup>374</sup> This process differs from value-free consensus, defined in the dictionary as "mutual agreement or harmony." Friends' decision-making process is rooted in worship with the expectation of "divine guidance manifesting itself through the unity of decisions."<sup>375</sup> Thus, the meetings' less familiar but accurate title is 'the meeting for worship for business'.

Sheeran's seminal scholarship about the development of the meeting for business focuses on the "process of reaching decisions by mutual consent of all present without resort to a voting arrangement based upon some form of majority rule."<sup>376</sup> Sheeran emphasizes the "extraordinary authority" that intensifies the "legitimacy" of decisions when they are believed to be "divinely guaranteed."<sup>377</sup> Quaker belief in continuing revelation allows for "fresh divine guidance for new circumstances" through this same process.<sup>378</sup> These practices demonstrate the interaction between belief (the distinguishing conviction of ongoing revelation of God's will) and the organizational structure.

### Important Lessons Missed by Non-Quaker Decision Making

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<sup>370</sup> Ibid., 270-71.

<sup>371</sup> Ibid., 277.

<sup>372</sup> Ibid.

<sup>373</sup> Sheeran, "Friendly Persuasion," 4.

<sup>374</sup> Steere, "The Quaker Meeting for Business," 2-3.

<sup>375</sup> Sheeran, "Friendly Persuasion," 2.

<sup>376</sup> Ibid., 1.

<sup>377</sup> Ibid., 24.

<sup>378</sup> Ibid.

A negative picture of customary decision-making in the seventeenth century appeared in a 1662 document that Sheeran found as he researched the inception of Friends' business meetings.<sup>379</sup> The document shows what seems to have not worked in the seventeenth-century. One questions if such methods have improved or succeeded over the last three centuries. By inference, the strident methods identified in the description suggest how seventeenth-century Friends resolved that their decisions ought not to be made:

. . . not by contests, by seeking to outspoke and overreach one another in discourse, as if it were controversy between party and party of men, or two sides violently striving for dominion, in the way of carrying on some worldly interests for self-advantage; not deciding affairs by the greater vote, or the number of men, as the world, who have not the wisdom and power of God.<sup>380</sup>

Friends abandoned such customary decision-making.

### **Friends' Exceptional Learning about Decision-Making**

The kernel of Quaker thought that grew into the Friends remarkable practice of decision-making by "general mutual concord" Sheeran found in that same 1662 document.<sup>381</sup> The document offers a new way of decision making. Sheeran distinguishes the early Friends' "deliberations" and decision "to determine" things "by a general mutual concord" as "singular."<sup>382</sup> The document says:

In the wisdom, love and fellowship of God, In gravity, patience, meekness, in unity and concord, . . . and in the holy Spirit of [Truth](#) . . . In love, coolness, . . . as one only party, . . . to determine of things by a general mutual concord, in assenting together as one man in the spirit of Truth and equity, and by the authority thereof.<sup>383</sup>

Since the seventeenth century, Friends have practiced decision meeting by arriving at "unity."

### **Three Lessons Leading to the Development of the Meeting for Business**

Three points illuminate the context from which the remarkable meetings for business developed.<sup>384</sup> First, the Friends' believe that "God guides individuals and groups"<sup>385</sup> that seek Divine guidance. Often that guidance comes through an individual who receives a [leading](#)--a call arising from a [concern](#)--toward "a particular action."<sup>386</sup> However, what happens if, as Sheeran ponders, a leading might prove "embarrassing."<sup>387</sup> Just such a situation introduces the second point.

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<sup>379</sup> Sheeran, "Friendly Persuasion, 20.

<sup>380</sup> Ibid.

<sup>381</sup> Ibid.

<sup>382</sup> Ibid.

<sup>383</sup> Ibid.

<sup>384</sup> Sheeran, "Friendly Persuasion," 18-19.

<sup>385</sup> Ibid., 5.

<sup>386</sup> Ibid., 24.

<sup>387</sup> Ibid., 24.

Second, internal discord among Friends arose from two situations. One problem relates to James Nayler, whom Sheeran says, "vied with Fox himself"<sup>388</sup> for early leadership but who was led astray and imprisoned for his actions--though he later repented and returned to the Friends.<sup>389</sup> The other problem involves, as Sheeran says, John Perrot's "hat controversy" arising from a leading that "he should not remove his hat when he (or anyone else) prayed aloud in meeting for worship."<sup>390</sup> The contention, according to Sheeran, centered on "the idea that the individual Friend should act according to his own leadings no matter what others may hold, even if one's leadings are exactly the opposite of the agreement of Friends."<sup>391</sup> This insight, Perrot claimed, came as an "express commandment from the Lord."<sup>392</sup> George Fox considered both Nayler's and Perrot's actions as one's "that gave bad example amongst Friends."<sup>393</sup> Third, the increased sufferings among Friends that resulted from increased persecution of Quakers after the 1660 Restoration of the Monarchy required a systematic way to address the needs.<sup>394</sup>

George Fox responded to these crises, Sheeran says, by "initiating a regular, if minimal, superstructure above the local units . . . to communicate and advise in a consistent way."<sup>395</sup> Over the first fifty years of Friends' meetings, this process of Quaker decision-making was developed.<sup>396</sup> Quaker historian Margaret Hope Bacon cites the inception of the meeting for business as "the birth of that delicate balance between individual freedom and group authority, which has lain ever since at the heart of Quakerism."<sup>397</sup>

### **A Sense of the Meeting for Business**

The meetings for business embody the "Quaker method of governance, rooted in the silent Meeting for Worship."<sup>398</sup> The meeting for business is the arena in which the practices, which have been emulated in such endeavors as conflict resolution, emerged and were refined over the centuries. In a meeting for business the sense of the meeting describes the unity reached. A summary description of meeting of business practices follows:

Quaker business procedure is decision-making by a whole group . . . which is called a '[sense of the meeting](#)'--an agreement with which everyone feels comfortable--is arrived at through the expression of disparate views within which a commonality emerges and is discerned as the answer. Friends . . . in their concern to avoid rending the social fabric of the community . . . recognize that a small group or even one person can have a deeper, more fruitful insight than the majority . . . . [Thus] there is no building of coalitions, no

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<sup>388</sup> Ibid., 26.

<sup>389</sup> Geoffrey F. Nuttall, *James Nayler: A Fresh Approach* (London: Friends' Historical Society, 1954), 20.

<sup>390</sup> Sheeran, "Friendly Persuasion," 34.

<sup>391</sup> Ibid., 34-35.

<sup>392</sup> Ibid.

<sup>393</sup> Ibid.

<sup>394</sup> Sheeran, "Friendly Persuasion," 29.

<sup>395</sup> Ibid.

<sup>396</sup> Ibid., 5.

<sup>397</sup> Margaret Hope Bacon, *Mothers of Feminism: The Story of Quaker Women in America*. (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1969): 20.

<sup>398</sup> Elizabeth B. Keiser and R. Melvin Keiser, *Quaker Principles in the Crucible of Practice*. Cross Currents 43, (Winter 1993-94): 477.

amassing of votes, no victory by the majority . . . . The responsibility to participate, whether orally or not, in the discovery of the fitting answer calls upon one's creative capacities more than does registering one's vote.<sup>399</sup>

Clarkson describes the types of subjects Friends addressed when they gathered at the meeting house for business. Friends, however, first have a meeting for worship, which he says,

All persons, both men and women, attend together. But when this meeting is over, they separate into different apartments for the purposes of the discipline . . . . The [minutes](#) of the last monthly meeting are then generally read; by which it is seen if any business of the Society was left unfinished. Should any thing of this sort occur, it becomes the first object to be considered and dispatched.

The new business in which the deputies were said to have been previously instructed by the congregations which they represented comes in. This business may be of various sorts. One part of it uniformly relates to the poor. The wants of these are provided for, and the education of their children taken care of, at this meeting.

Presentations of marriages are received; and births, marriages, and funerals are registered. If disorderly members, after long and repeated . . . Admonitions, would have given no hopes of amendment, their case is first publicly cognizable in this court. Committees are appointed to visit, advise, and try to reclaim them . . . .

The fitness of persons applying for membership from other Societies is examined here. Answers also are prepared to the [queries](#) at the proper time. Instructions also are given, if necessary, to particular meetings belonging to it, suited to the exigencies of their cases; and certificates are granted to members on various occasions.<sup>400</sup>

More important, perhaps, than the freedom of subject that prevails within the meetings for business is the emphasis, according to Clarkson's history, the Friends place on the freedom of speech. One of Clarkson's reports about speech concerns a poor person:

In transacting this and other business of the Society, all members present [at any of the Levels] are allowed to speak. The poorest man in the meetinghouse, though he may be receiving charitable contributions at the time, is entitled to deliver his sentiments upon any point. He may bring forward a new matter. He may approve or object to what others have proposed before him. No person may interrupt him while he speaks.<sup>401</sup>

This emphasis on speech--freedom of, responsibility and respect for speech--is educational for the youth that also attend these meetings for business. Clarkson continues talking about the meetings for business or what he proposes could be "schools for virtue" He enumerates the educational opportunities that are available:

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<sup>399</sup> Keiser and Keiser, *Crucible of Practice*. (1993-94): 478-481.

<sup>400</sup> Clarkson, *A Portraiture of Quakerism*, Vol. 1, 219-20.

<sup>401</sup> Clarkson, *A Portraiture of Quakerism*, Vol. 1, 219.

it has since been agreed that young persons should have the privilege of attending them; and this, I believe . . . that while these meetings would qualify them for transacting the business of the Society, they might operate as schools for virtue.<sup>402</sup>

The youth who are sitting by, are gaining a knowledge of the affairs and discipline of the Society, and are gradually acquiring sentiments and habits that are to mark their character for life. They learn, in the first place, the duty of a benevolent and respectful consideration for the poor. In hearing the different cases argued and discussed, they learn in some measure the rudiments of justice, and imbibe opinions of the necessity of moral conduct. In these courts, they learn to reason. They learn also to hear others patiently, and without interruption, and to transact any business that may come before them in maturer years, with regularity and order.<sup>403</sup>

The youths' learning "to hear others patiently without interruption" reflects the Friends' insistence on respect for the individual and freedom of speech. Lastly, Clarkson provides a rich--and rare--description of the process by which Friends conducted their meeting for business to reach unity:

I cannot omit to mention here the orderly manner in which the Quakers conduct their business on these occasions. When a subject is brought before them it is canvassed, to the exclusion of all extraneous matter, till some conclusion results. The [clerk](#) of the monthly meeting then draws up a [minute](#) containing, as nearly as he can collect, the substance of this conclusion. This minute is then read aloud to the auditory, and either stands, or undergoes an alteration, as appears by the silence or discussion upon it to be the sense of the meeting. When fully agreed upon, it stands ready to be recorded. When a second subject comes on, it is canvassed, and a minute is made of it, to be recorded in the same manner. Before a third is allowed to be introduced. Thus each point is settled, till the whole business of the meeting is concluded.<sup>404</sup>

Among all the meetings and processes of the Society, one important aspect concerning ways adult Friends learned as a Society is by means of the [Queries](#) published in the Discipline.

### **The *Book of Discipline***

The *Book of Discipline* summarizes the faith and practice to which Quakers are "committed."<sup>405</sup> For the Friends, the [Discipline](#) draws from the Latin root "to learn" and serves as a guide.<sup>406</sup> Each of the several autonomous Friends' Yearly Meetings periodically revises and issues the *Discipline*, however, there were few variations among the *Disciplines*.<sup>407</sup> The Discipline is revised and issued periodically by each particular [Yearly Meeting](#). Two principle

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<sup>402</sup> Ibid., 186.

<sup>403</sup> Ibid., 219.

<sup>404</sup> Ibid.

<sup>405</sup> John Punshon, *Portrait in Grey: A Short History of the Quakers* (London: Quaker Home Service, 1984), 138.

<sup>406</sup> Warren Sylvester Smith, *One Explorer's Glossary of Quaker Terms* (Philadelphia: Friends General Conference, 1992), 3.

<sup>407</sup> Thomas D. Hamm, "Hicksite Quakers and the Antebellum Nonresistance Movement," *Church History* 63, Dec. (1994): 568n.



aspects are included; first, internal matters, and, second, the testimonies and the "moral conduct of individuals."<sup>408</sup>

One important aspect decided at the yearly meeting level, and printed up in the *Discipline* itself are the [Queries](#). Through Queries the Society maintains a questioning attitude.

### A Practice of Asking

Queries are related to the Society's testimonies. Queries help adults assess how they are keeping the covenants to which they have agreed. Henry Cadbury describes "Queries" as "one of the most important historical clues" to understanding Quakerism. He says Queries are a "distinctive feature" of the Society of Friends. To provide an initial idea about Queries, a part of every revision of the *Book of Discipline*, Cadbury notes that while they began "as a technique of collecting from all localities information that would permit a Yearly Meeting as a whole to know the condition of the parts," later development had other consequences. Cadbury describes the consequences of Queries, as follows:

The Queries became a prod to the authorities of the local meeting with respect to their duty of keeping the whole membership in line . . . . Hearing them (the Queries) read and answered at least once a year in Yearly, Quarterly, Monthly and even Preparative Meetings, the ordinary member had brought home . . . clearly enough . . . what was expected . . . . Definite written answers were required at each state . . . . The conscientious member would know . . . if . . . guilty or not guilty in the matter.<sup>409</sup>

Friends gave men and women the opportunity to assess for themselves their participation in the mission of the Society.

Nine Queries from the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting 1831 *Rules of Discipline*, ask for responses to questions, examples of which follow:

First Query. Are all our religious meetings for worship and discipline duly attended...?

Second Query. Is love and [unity](#) maintained amongst you?

Are tale-bearing and detraction discouraged?

And where differences arise, are endeavours used speedily to end them?

Third Query. Are Friends careful to bring up those under their direction, in plainness of speech, behaviour, and apparel; in frequent reading the holy scriptures . . . .<sup>410</sup>

Queries to assess their individual responsibility and meeting conditions offers the opportunity for regular examination.

Ched Myers' analysis pinpoints the two-edged sword of the Query:

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<sup>408</sup> Clarkson, *A Portraiture of Quakerism*, Vol. I, 180.

<sup>409</sup> Cadbury, *Character of a Quaker*, 17.

<sup>410</sup> Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, *Rules of Discipline* (Philadelphia: Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, John Richards Printer, 1831), 75.



A “Query” is a sharply focused question designed to challenge persons or a group to live up to a corporately adopted standard of faith and behavior . . . .<sup>411</sup> As a vehicle for community self-assessment, this discourse tries to preserve a delicate balance. It presents questions to the common life, not accusations, yet they are *hard* questions, not merely rhetorical ones. It is by definition open to constant rearticulation.<sup>412</sup>

### Asking Replaces Telling

Ched Myers has asked if, “it is possible for people of strong conviction to learn to speak more interrogatively and less declaratively. Myers cites the Friends as examples of people who have, he says, “sought to replace declarative with interrogatory theology.”<sup>413</sup>

Myers suggests that an adult education theorist who has also used this approach is Paulo Freire as part of “conscientization” (Myers 1994). Myers quotes Freire as saying, “The educator’s role is to propose problems about the codified existential situation in order to help the learners arrive at a more and more critical view of their reality.” The key to “empowerment and liberation” becomes evident “more from posing the right question than by insisting upon the right answer.”<sup>414</sup> Myers put forth the idea that “perhaps if we learn to share questions with each other and the world . . . dialogue will come more easily.”<sup>415</sup>

### Teaching and Learning from Questions

An attitude of inquiry, of questioning--in particular, the Queries--flows through the entire meeting structure of the Society of Friends. Before the flow of Queries is considered, recall the representative structure of the meetings: preparative or meetings for worship send representatives (with no upper limit on their number) to the monthly meetings for business; then, the monthly meetings send representatives to the quarterly meetings; finally, representatives are sent from quarterly meetings to the yearly meeting.

Texts of the *Disciplines* are archived and available for examination. What is very much more difficult to find is a description of the process through which the Queries have become such an important part of the Society. Clarkson's historical methods preserved and made available a detailed account of this process. The following presents Clarkson's description of this process: (Notice the interplay of questioning--silence to allow a response to emerge--freedom to speak any response--assurance that the response is receiving complete attention--item possibly referred for advice to be agreed to by the group before being offered--with the assurance that each item is treated completely before any new item is addressed.) Clarkson reports:

At the yearly meeting level, Queries are crafted to inquire about the state of the Society as a whole. The Queries come from the yearly meeting level. The Queries are first

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<sup>411</sup> Ched Myers, *The Witness* 77, 6 (1994): 6.

<sup>412</sup> Ibid., 6.

<sup>413</sup> Ched Myers, *The Witness* 77, 6 (1994): 6.

<sup>414</sup> Ibid.

<sup>415</sup> Ibid.

responded to at the monthly meeting level, the smallest unit in the structure. The monthly meetings' answers are reported at the quarterly meeting levels. The quarterly meetings' reports are then reported on at the yearly meeting level. A committee at that level summarizes the responses to the Queries. The committee's report is read to the yearly meeting and when the process is complete the report is approved line by line or word by word, if necessary, before it is sent out as a report.<sup>416</sup>

At the monthly and the quarterly meeting levels, the identical process is followed to ascertain the most complete answers to the questions. The following excerpt accurately describes the how-to of this process:

The clerk of the quarterly meeting . . . reads the first of the appointed queries to the members present, and is then silent . . . a deputy from one of the monthly meetings comes forward, and producing the written documents or answers to the queries, all of which were prepared at the meeting where he was chosen, reads that document which contains a reply to the first query in behalf of the meeting he represents . . . from the second monthly meeting . . . from a third . . . till all the deputies from each of the monthly meetings in the county [quarterly meeting boundary] have answered the first query. When the first query has been thus fully answered, silence is observed through the whole.<sup>417</sup>

Again, the significant place of verbal exchange among Friends appears in Clarkson's narrative:

members present now have an opportunity of making any observations they may think proper. If it should appear by any of the answers to this first query that there is any departure from principles on the subject it contains, in any of the monthly meetings which the deputies represent it is noticed by any one present. The observations made by one, frequently give rise to observations from another. Advice is sometimes ordered to be given, adapted to the nature of this departure from principles; and this advice is occasionally circulated through the medium of the different monthly meetings to the particular congregation where the deviation has taken place.<sup>418</sup>

The Queries are an integral part of the Society of Friends and, as such, are also considered in the women's meetings for business. The innovation of women's meeting began very early among Friends. George Fox and Margaret Fell were both instrumental in establishing the precedent of women's meetings and activities.

### **Margaret Fell and the Women's Meeting for Business**

Among those who early became convinced of the message of George Fox, Margaret Fell became a “co-leader.”<sup>419</sup> Bonnelyn Young Kunze says that “Fell’s role in establishing the

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<sup>416</sup> Clarkson, *A Portraiture of Quakerism*, Vol. 1, 230-31.

<sup>417</sup> Ibid.

<sup>418</sup> Ibid.

<sup>419</sup> Bonnelyn Young Kunze, *Margaret Fell and the Rise of Quakerism*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, (1994):

earliest Quaker women's meeting . . . was pivotal in offering a model of sectarian female leadership and a model for subsequent Quaker women's meetings."<sup>420</sup> Writing in 1666, Fell became the first of Quaker women who wrote favoring "a female public ministry." Fell wrote a book titled *Womens Speaking Justified, Proved and Allowed by the Scriptures, all such as speak by the Spirit and Power of the Lord Jesus*.<sup>421</sup>

## Revolution of "Nearly Equal" Share for Women

Clarkson recounts repeatedly the remarkable "justice" exhibited by the early Friends regarding participation for women. Note that the ability to set the "laws" that is, the authoritative knowledge for what Friends believed, was reserved to men. He writes that George Fox:

introduced, also, into his system of discipline, privileges in favour of women, which marked his sense of justice, and the strength and liberality of his mind. The men he considered undoubtedly as the heads of the church, and from whom all laws concerning it ought to issue . . . But he did not deny women on that account any power . . . . He believed them to be capable of great usefulness, and therefore admitted them to the honour of being, in his own society, of nearly equal importance with the men . . . . He laid it upon the women to be particularly careful in observing the morals of those of their own sex . . . . He gave them meetings for discipline of their own, with the power of recording their own transactions so that women were to act among courts or meetings of women, as men among those of men . . . . By the new and impartial step he raised the women of his community beyond the level of women in others and laid the foundation of that improved strength of intellect, dignity of mind, capability of business, and habit of humane offices, which are so conspicuous among female Quakers at the present day.<sup>422</sup>

Over the years from the inception of women's active participation in the Society of Friends in the mid 1600s to the time of Clarkson's writing, Quaker women as group, rather than extraordinary individuals, exhibited "dignity of mind." Here is Clarkson's recounting of a monthly meeting for business:

I may now mention that . . . the women proceed in their own . . . meeting also. There are women-deputies and women-clerks. They enter down the names of these deputies, read the minutes of the last monthly meeting, bring forward the new matter, and deliberate and argue on the affairs of their own sex. They record their proceedings equally.<sup>423</sup>

Young women--like Lucretia Coffin Mott--had the opportunity to attend what Clarkson called the "schools for virtue" of the monthly meetings for business:<sup>424</sup>

The young females, also, are present, and have similar opportunities of gaining knowledge, of improving their judgments, and of acquiring useful and moral habits, as

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<sup>420</sup> Kunze, *Margaret Fell*. (1994): 5.

<sup>421</sup> Margaret Hope Bacon, *Mothers of Feminism*, (1980): 16.

<sup>422</sup> Clarkson, *A Portraiture of Quakerism*, Vol. 1, 184-85.

<sup>423</sup> Clarkson, *A Portraiture of Quakerism*, Vol. 1, 220.

<sup>424</sup> *Ibid.*, 186.

the young men. It is usual, when women have finished the business of their own meeting, to send one of their members to the apartment of the men, to know if they have anything to communicate. This messenger having returned, and every thing having been settled and recorded in both meetings the monthly meeting is over, and men, women, and youth of both sexes return to their respective homes.<sup>425</sup>

Clarkson's invaluable historic descriptions bring to life Brinton's claim that the meeting for worship and the meeting for business are the Society of Friends main educational agencies.

## Other Opportunities for Learning

What other “historical” meetings are in the practice of Friends? First, the “retired meeting” described as held “in the pure silence of all flesh” at which no spoken or vocal ministry was expected. Other instances of Friends' meetings include meetings for learning, for marriage, in memorial of a dead Friend, to name just a few “meetings.”<sup>426</sup> Also, Friends met in an informal meeting called an opportunity which arose unexpectedly in worship often amid people gathered for social or other reasons. A visiting Friend, often a Public Friend, might ask for such an “opportunity” for a “family visit” when traveling. This practice was a “highly important element” among early Friends and during the lifetime of Lucretia Mott.<sup>427</sup>

Another meeting, the [threshing meeting](#) was first addressed by “Public Friends who, often with Bible in hand, used all their powers of utterance to convince their hearers of Truth. The name arose from the purpose of the preacher to “separate the wheat from the chaff.” This type of meeting was later used to “try and seek [unity](#) on a controversial issue.”<sup>428</sup> Threshing meetings do not often appear in Quaker literature. Interest in this aspect is engendered by the need to understand forums in which issues can be examined and considered and yet no “decision” is required until “unity” or a more unified way to address an issue can be agreed upon.

## Friends Learn from Epistles and Advices

[Epistles](#) serve as another means by which Friends were educated over large geographical areas, both within and between Yearly Meetings. An [Advice](#) is friendly counsel from the group on what it means to live by a commonly accepted testimony.<sup>429</sup> The London Yearly Meeting and the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting exchanged epistles on an annual basis, according to Bronner, and they “contained a summary of conditions as well as fraternal greetings.”<sup>430</sup> Another expression of this learning is contained in a Minute--a minute records the Friends' corporate decisions. It documents the summary statement of agreement, the unity--not uniformity--expressive of the [sense of the meeting](#) arrived at during a meeting for business.<sup>431</sup>

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<sup>425</sup> Ibid., 220.

<sup>426</sup> Palmer, *Meeting for Learning: Education in a Quaker Context*, 1.

<sup>427</sup> Brinton, *Quaker Practice*, 30-31.

<sup>428</sup> Ibid.

<sup>429</sup> Ched Myers, *The Witness* 77, 6 (1994): 6.

<sup>430</sup> Bronner, “Quaker Discipline and Order,” 332.

<sup>431</sup> Cope-Robinson, *Little Quaker Sociology Book*, 188.

To some notable degree, Quakers moved away from the dichotomies of clergy/laity in the church, male/female roles for responsibility and nurturance, and public/domestic as opposite spheres of human activity, all widespread nineteenth-century American ideas. Friends, therefore, taught by presentation of alternative models in order to educate the public about values dominant in American culture. The introduction of the Society of Friends' four distinctive convictions, the Friends' testimonies, and the unique concept of meeting for worship and meeting for business, begins to frame awareness of the magnitude of differences between Quaker spirituality and other faiths. Out of that religious experience, Public Friend Lucretia Mott spoke to educate the public about issues of civic interest.

This exploration of important components of Quakerism illuminates the Friends' beliefs, perspectives, and customs--ideas and ideals<sup>432</sup>--then common. The study now responds to a critically important question for this study of popular education practiced by a lifelong learner. What experiences helped to shape Lucretia Coffin Mott's perspective? This period, which begins with Lucretia Coffin's birth in 1793, includes her formal schooling.

### Quaker Education and The Formative Years of Lucretia Coffin Mott

Education has been integral to the Society of Friends from its inception especially in the absence of a professionally trained ministry. When George Fox saw that education at Oxford and Cambridge did not necessarily fit men to be ministers, he also saw, as Rufus Jones says, "that it is not safe to call all people to obey the voice and follow the light without broad-basing them at the same time in the established facts of history and nature."<sup>433</sup> Jones finds evidence of George Fox's concern for education in his direction to establish for males' and for females' education "in whatsoever things were civil and useful in the creation"<sup>434</sup> further documented in George Foxes' 1667 recommendation for the establishment of boarding schools "one at Waltham for boys and one at Shacklewell for girls."<sup>435</sup>

On his 1681 visit to the American Provinces, George Fox received William Penn's gift of land in Philadelphia. In turn, George Fox deeded sixteen of those acres to the Philadelphia Friends with the stipulations for acreage, as follows: "ten . . . to put Friends' horses when they came to the meeting . . . [some land for] a garden . . . with all sorts of physical plants, for the lads and lasses to learn . . . to convert them to distilled waters, oils, ointments, etc. [and] . . . six acres for a meeting house and a school house and a burying place."<sup>436</sup> Two hundred years after the beginning of William Penn's Holy Experiment, this ground became the "burying place" for Lucretia Mott.

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<sup>432</sup> Shi, *Simple Life*, 9.

<sup>433</sup> Jones, "Introduction," 39.

<sup>434</sup> Fox, *The Journal of George Fox, Edited with an Introduction and Notes by Rufus M. Jones, With an Essay on the Influence of the Journal by Henry J. Cadbury*, 461.

<sup>435</sup> Zora Klain, *Educational Activities of New England Quakers: A Source Book*, (Philadelphia: Westbrook Publishing Company, 1928), 6.

<sup>436</sup> Henry J. Cadbury, "Quaker Education--Then and Now," *The Friend* 113, no. 9 & 10 (1939): 8 *Friends' Council on Education, Anniversary Meeting*, vol. 113, *Two-and-A-Half Centuries of Quaker Education* (Philadelphia: Philadelphia Yearly Meeting).

A major Quaker legacy--conveyed through William Penn--is the goal of a useful education for every child. Penn's *Frame of Government* directed, "All children, within the province, of the age of twelve years, shall be taught some useful trade or skill, to the end none may be idle, but the poor may work to live, and the rich, if they become poor, may not want."<sup>437</sup> Since the seventeenth century, Quakers continued George Fox's expressed concern for useful educations for boys and for girls. Lucretia Mott benefited from Quaker emphasis on education.

### Friends' Education in New England

To trace the record of Quaker education in New England, especially on Nantucket Island where Lucretia began to learn, the principal secondary source is Zora Klain's seminal study that published critical minutes from the "voluminous" Monthly and Yearly Meeting minutes of New England Friends.<sup>438</sup> American Friends continued English Friends' belief "in a careful elementary education for all their children, and the mastery, even by the wealthy, of some trade."<sup>439</sup> Klain quotes from the advice<sup>440</sup> sent by the London Yearly Meeting to the New England Friends as follows:

And Dear Friends, it is our Christian and Earnest [Advice](#) and Counsel to all friends concerned . . . to provide School-Masters and Mistresses, who are Faithful Friends, to teach and instruct their Children, and not to send them to Such Schools where they are taught the Corrupt Ways, Manners, Fashions and Language of the World.<sup>441</sup>

Klain says that evidence of New England Quakers' concern comes from a review of meeting minutes in which appear, " . . . recurring [queries](#) asking if they had arranged 'to teach their Children and not to Send them to such Schools where they are Taught ye Currup ways, manners, fashions and Tongue of ye world'."<sup>442</sup>

Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, in 1788, sent an advice to the New England Yearly Meeting (NEYM) that, Klain says, "was of paramount importance to education and the establishing of Quaker schools in New England."<sup>443</sup> The advice urged " . . . the settlement of schools . . . throughout the whole extent of the Yearly Meeting'."<sup>444</sup> In 1790, NEYM sent an advice to subordinate meetings saying,

. . . we cannot omit mentioning a concern that has spread amongst us for the increase of domestick Education throughout our Yearly Meeting . . . that we who make a high Profession may not seem negligent in inculcating useful learning with a good Education,

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<sup>437</sup> Comfort, *The Quakers: A Brief Account*, 27.

<sup>438</sup> Klain, *Educational Activities of New England Quakers*, xi.

<sup>439</sup> Ibid., 7.

<sup>440</sup> London Yearly Meeting. Minutes for 1-IV-1691; 13-III-1695 as quoted in Klain, *Educational Activities of New England Quakers*, 8.

<sup>441</sup> Klain, *Educational Activities of New England Quakers*, 8.

<sup>442</sup> Ibid.

<sup>443</sup> Ibid., 13.

<sup>444</sup> Ibid.

as an Act to Morality and Virtue and which hath often been found to be a Guard to both.<sup>445</sup>

In 1794 the NEYM sent an advice " . . . to take into consideration the situation of Education in General . . . [and] to recommend to the Several Monthly meetings to set up at least one school in each Meeting under the direction and at the expence of the same."<sup>446</sup>

In summary, while the Friends' elementary curriculum included reading, writing, and arithmetic, the emphasis centered on religion.<sup>447</sup> By mid-eighteenth century, they endorsed "instruction in modern foreign languages"<sup>448</sup> and later shared the educational focus of other Americans. According to Klain, Friends "set out to educate their children in a manner commensurate with . . . the rapid growth of a young and virile nation of which they were a part."<sup>449</sup> Klain notes that Quakers schooled their youth most often with "literature produced by Quakers themselves . . . ."<sup>450</sup>

Henry Cadbury describes some of the elements of Quaker education:

They substituted their own Latin textbooks for the usual books with stories of pagan gods, just as they avoided "January" and "Saturday" in their calendars. They long excluded fiction, drama and music from the curriculum for similar Quaker scruples. Their religious interest in education was largely negative, that it should not be harmful to religion. They laid stress, too, on the example of the teacher's own life."<sup>451</sup>

Cadbury noted the "disciplined character, the unselfish leadership, and the intelligent social interest" that Quaker teachers have exhibited.<sup>452</sup> Among Quaker teachers are many fine examples of people--including Lucretia Mott--who worked in accord with the maxim to: "Let your lives speak."

### **Adult Learning Widespread among the Friends**

In the United States formal Quaker education proceeded from elementary to secondary schools,<sup>453</sup> though the earliest Quakers in 1656, had brought across the Atlantic "books and pamphlets" to distribute to adult Puritans in New England.<sup>454</sup> Cadbury says,

There was much adult education, as for example, through Friends' libraries and reading circles. There was also much self-education. Especially in the field of natural science, self-made scholars in unacademic life have been a striking phenomenon of [Friends].<sup>455</sup>

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<sup>445</sup> Ibid., 17-18.

<sup>446</sup> Ibid., 18.

<sup>447</sup> Woody, *Early Quaker Education*; Klain, *Educational Activities of New England Quakers*, 9.

<sup>448</sup> Klain, *Educational Activities of New England Quakers*, 9.

<sup>449</sup> Ibid., 10.

<sup>450</sup> Ibid., 7.

<sup>451</sup> Cadbury, "Quaker Education--Then and Now," 15-16.

<sup>452</sup> Ibid., 18.

<sup>453</sup> Klain, *Educational Activities of New England Quakers*, 7; Brinton, *Quaker Education*, 39.

<sup>454</sup> Ibid., 4.

Quaker adult education, similarly, has been a de facto part of the Meeting for Business since its inception.

### The Purpose of Education for Quakers

Quaker scholar Howard H. Brinton poses the question most relevant to the education of both children and adults: What is the purpose of education? Brinton suggests that a “complete philosophy of life” must undergird the purpose of education.<sup>456</sup> Accordingly, Brinton describes Quaker educational thought, as follows:

Education . . . must minister to the needs of body, mind, and spirit, it must be both for time and for eternity, it must partake of both the human and the divine . . . . Standards of behavior, according to the Quaker view, ought not to be derived from society as it is at the moment, but from society as it ought to be.<sup>457</sup>

This perspective reflects Friends' conviction about the possibility of working toward the moral perfection of society. Knowing for what purpose any educational effort is made continues to be a critical component demanding the attention of those who educate adults.

### Background for Consideration of Lucretia's Learning

Consideration of particular aspects of Lucretia Coffin Mott's Quaker education appears in the appropriate chapters related to abolition of slavery, rights of women, and peaceful ways to address injustice. What follows establishes the background for consideration of the Friends' overarching principles and customs to which Lucretia refers or exemplifies without specific mention of a Quaker tenet. Contemporaneous manuscripts served as the references for required religious curricular content presented to students in the elementary and secondary schools.

#### A [Guarded Education](#) in Lucretia Mott's Time

For Quaker children education beyond primary schooling had to occur in a school free from contamination with “the world’s people”: non-Quakers. In the Revolutionary War, the “neutral position” of Quakers, with their peace testimony, had stirred opposition from non-Quakers and that intensified Friends' need to strengthen education of young Friends.<sup>458</sup> “Survival [not] dogmatic delicacy”<sup>459</sup> of the faith was uppermost; the children must receive “a religiously guarded education.”<sup>460</sup> For Quakers, “divine revelation was a gift, its application a skill.”<sup>461</sup> William Kashatus, historian of Quaker education, described “‘a religiously guarded education’ as an idiosyncratic education. By the late eighteenth or the beginning of the nineteenth century, a ‘religiously guarded education’ would have required every Quaker child’s

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<sup>455</sup> Cadbury, “Quaker Education--Then and Now,” 16.

<sup>456</sup> Brinton, *Quaker Education*, 1.

<sup>457</sup> Ibid., 6.

<sup>458</sup> William C. Kashatus, *A Virtuous Education: Penn's Vision for Philadelphia Schools* (Wallingford, PA: Pendle Hill Publications, 1997), 81.

<sup>459</sup> Gibbs, *Children of Light: Friends Seminary, 1786-1986*, 15.

<sup>460</sup> Bacon, *Valiant Friend*, 20-21.

<sup>461</sup> Gibbs, *Children of Light: Friends Seminary, 1786-1986*, 11.



reading the works of William Penn, Robert Barclay, and George Fox."<sup>462</sup> Examples of their writings are interspersed in this and other chapters.

### Lucretia Coffin's Learning Environment

The many Quaker inhabitants as well as its being the center of the whaling industry distinguished Nantucket, the island off the continental United States' coast and twenty-four miles south of Cape Cod.<sup>463</sup> While Quakerism came to Nantucket in 1659, records of the Nantucket Monthly Meeting date from 1708.<sup>464</sup> Into the Coffin family on Nantucket Island, Lucretia was born January 3, 1793, and counted among her relatives two of Nantucket's original settlers and, as cousins, Maria Mitchell--the nation's first woman astronomer--and Benjamin Franklin. Lucretia was second of the seven children born to Anna and Thomas Coffin. Her mother sustained the family as a dry goods merchant during Thomas Coffin's extended voyages as a whaling ship's captain.<sup>465</sup> In the Quaker family, as Kashatus says, a child would learn "by example and practice the basic tenets of the Quaker faith."<sup>466</sup> From her earliest years, according to biographer Otelia Cromwell, Lucretia saw women "shouldering the burdens of housework, bearing and rearing children, mastering the details of business, and teaching school."<sup>467</sup> In Lucretia Coffin's childhood, Quaker culture with its peculiar beliefs, practices, and ways, and women Friends active in the worlds of religion, education, and commerce were the norm.

### Lucretia Coffin's Early Schooling

Lucretia's mother, Anna Coffin, taught her the alphabet and numbers before she before she began school at the age of four.<sup>468</sup> She began her formal education at the Friends school attached to the Meetinghouse, which Nantucket Quakers built in 1797.<sup>469</sup> Lucretia spent five hours each day<sup>470</sup> "every day, throughout the Year."<sup>471</sup>

The "Rules . . . for the Government of the School," drawn up by a Committee at the direction of the Monthly Meeting<sup>472</sup> include such items as: "on Fifth day, the Children . . . proceed with the Master and Mistress from thence to Meeting, and seated where one of the Committee

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<sup>462</sup> William C. Kashatus, Personal telephone conversation, Nineteenth-Century Quaker Education and Lucretia Coffin Mott (Philadelphia, July 3, 1995).

<sup>463</sup> Bacon, *Valiant Friend*, 8-9; Robert J. Leach and Peter Gow, *Quaker Nantucket: The Religious Community Behind the Whaling Empire* (Nantucket, MA: Mill Hill Press, 1997), 9-12.

<sup>464</sup> Klain, *Educational Activities of New England Quakers*, 115.

<sup>465</sup> Bacon, *Valiant Friend*, 9-12.

<sup>466</sup> Kashatus, *A Virtuous Education*, 83.

<sup>467</sup> Cromwell, *Lucretia Mott*, 20.

<sup>468</sup> Bacon, *Valiant Friend*, 13.

<sup>469</sup> Ibid.

<sup>470</sup> Ibid.

<sup>471</sup> Nantucket Monthly Meeting Minutes 2-III-1797, as cited in Klain, *Educational Activities of New England Quakers*, 119.

<sup>472</sup> Nantucket Monthly Meeting Minutes 29-XII-1796, as cited in Klain, *Educational Activities of New England Quakers*, 118.

with the tutors may have the Oversight of their orderly behavior therein."<sup>473</sup> The "Rules of Conduct" that aimed toward development of "a modest civil manner to all" further state:

. . . . Be always silent in your Studies, so that your voices shall not be heard, unless you are saying your lessons, . . . hold no discussion with your School fellows during the hours of Study . . . . Behave yourselves always in an humble and obliging manner to your School fellows, never provoking one another, contending or complaining about frivolous matters, but courteously use the word *please* . . . never returning Injuries, but learning to forgive . . . . Never tell a lie knowingly, nor defraud any person by word or deed, Swear not at all . . . . Mock not the aged, Blind, Lame, Deformed, or Idiotic, play not in the Streets, or ever for gain, throw no sticks, Stones, Dirt, Snow Balls, or anything at any person . . . utter no indecent Expression . . . but according to the best of your knowledge demean yourselves in a modest civil manner to all. Let your Language be the plain Language, and spoken with propriety everywhere . . . . Be not forward . . . to mock or Jear your School fellows for being Corrected, lest it should happen to be your own case.<sup>474</sup>

Clearly, Friends intended schoolchildren to be concerned with behavior and speech.

### Primers for Quaker Children

The Nantucket Friends Meeting records indicate that in the eighteenth century they had twice purchased "both sorts of George Fox's Primers for Quaker children."<sup>475</sup> The 120-page primer<sup>476</sup> begins with alphabet cases, followed by alphabetized sections of undefined "Words of many syllables divided - A. A-bo-li-shed, a-bo-mi-na-ti-on, ab-sence, ab-sti-nence, . . . and mid-way gives "Directions to Read and Spell truly"<sup>477</sup> and concludes with Roman numerals, and "Almanack" with directions for its use. Central to this book is a "Catechism" in interrogative form where the student poses a question and the teacher presents to young scholars Quaker beliefs about knowing God:

Sch. [Scholar] What is it that gives Knowledge of God, and where is it?"<sup>478</sup>  
Mast. [Master] The Light which shines in the Heart, it gives the Knowledge of the Glory of God in the Face of Christ Jesus, 2 Cor. 4"<sup>479</sup> ....  
Sch. Is the Light Sufficient for Salvation?  
Mast. Yes, by believing in the Light, thou shalt be a Child of Light.<sup>480</sup>  
Sch. Who are the true Christians called Quakers in this Age?

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<sup>473</sup> Nantucket Monthly Meeting Minutes 29-XII-1796, as cited in Klain, *Educational Activities of New England Quakers*, 118.

<sup>474</sup> Ibid., 120-121.

<sup>475</sup> Klain, *Educational Activities of New England Quakers*, 115.

<sup>476</sup> George Fox, *Instructions for Right Spelling, and Plain Directions for Reading and Writing True English. With Several Delightful Things, Very Useful and Necessary, Both for Young and Old, to Read and Learn by*. (Boston: Printed by Rogers & Fowle, Reprinted 1743).

<sup>477</sup> Fox, *Instructions for Right Spelling*, 70.

<sup>478</sup> Fox, *Instructions for Right Spelling*, 47.

<sup>479</sup> Ibid.

<sup>480</sup> Ibid., 56.

Mast. It is in Scorn and Derision that they are so called, to render them and the [Truth](#) obvious to the People, that so they might not receive the Truth and be saved; Yet Quaking and Trembling is no new Thing; for thou mayst read of Quakers in the Scriptures, as in Heb. 12.21 . . . . Hab. 3.16..<sup>481</sup>

The Catechism also explains additional peculiarities in Quaker language and attributes the names of days to the idolatry of "Pagan Saxons."<sup>482</sup>

Sch. How did the primitive Saints call Their Days and Months?

God made the World in six days . . . .

Sch. Who invented these Names of Sunday, Monday, Etc. and Calling the months March, Apr, etc.

Mast. The old Pagan Saxons in their idolatry were the first that brought in the Names of the Days after that manner; and these called Christians, have retained them to this day.

The first Day of the week they worshipped the Idol of the sun, from whence came Sunday, the second Day of the week they worshiped the Moon, from whence came Moonday or Monday, the third day of the week the Idol of the Planets, which they called Tuisoc, from whence came Tuesday . . . .<sup>483</sup>

The Catechism then tells young Quakers the "marks" by which they will know "Ministers . . . and false Prophets"--the hireling Ministry to which Lucretia Mott refers so frequently in speeches:

Sch. Who have been the Ministers and Instructors of these People that they are erred so from Scripture Example? Let me have some Marks and signs by which I may know the Deceivers and false Prophets?

Mast. The Marks the scriptures give of deceivers and false prophets are these: I shall set them down in short, that thou mayst remember them better.

1. They are such as bear rule by their Means. Jef. 30.31, Mat. 10. 19.20
2. They are such as seek for their Gain from their Quarters. Isa 56
3. They seek for the Fleece and make a prey upon the People
4. They are such as preach for Hire and Divine for Money, Mic. 2. II . . . .<sup>484</sup>

Another primer prepared in 1673, by Robert Barclay--described as the Quaker's systematic theologian--was re-printed in 1752.<sup>485</sup>

In that Catechism "composed for Children"<sup>486</sup> young Friends learned this message: "God is Light, and in him is no Darkness at all."<sup>487</sup> The Catechism describes the Light as an:

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<sup>481</sup> Ibid., 56-57.

<sup>482</sup> Ibid., 60-61.

<sup>483</sup> Ibid.

<sup>484</sup> Fox, *Instructions for Right Spelling*, 62.

<sup>485</sup> Robert Barclay, *Catechism and Confession of Faith, Approved of, and Agreed Unto* (Urie, Scotland: James Franklin at Newport, RI, 1752, 1673).

<sup>486</sup> Barclay, *Catechism and Confession*, Introduction.

<sup>487</sup> Ibid., 3.

Inward Principle then, that is be the guide and Rule of Christians . . . . By the Anointing which ye have received of him, abideth in you, and ye need not that any Man teach you, but as the same Anointing Teacheth you of all Things, and is Truth, and is no Lie; and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him.<sup>488</sup>

Young Lucretia would have learned that the Inner Light is the guide for her life--not a church minister, not even a written text, even if it is the Bible. Her Quaker education continued even after her family moved from Nantucket.

### **Advanced Quaker Schooling with Curriculum Identical for Boys and Girls**

The Coffin family moved from Nantucket when Lucretia was eleven. Brief enrollments in Boston schools preceded the arrival of the Coffin sisters, Lucretia and Eliza, at Nine Partners Boarding School in 1804.<sup>489</sup> From Lucretia's advanced schooling At Nine Partners, established in 1799, near Poughkeepsie, New York, Lucretia Coffin continued to receive benefit of a "a religiously guarded" education.<sup>490</sup>

For the boys and the girls at Nine Partners, the curriculum was identical; however, the young people received instruction and all other amenities separately in single sex arrangements.<sup>491</sup> According to Margaret Bacon, the regimen at Nine Partners also included classes year round. Pupils studied "reading, writing, accounts, English grammar, geography, and memorized large amounts of poetry."<sup>492</sup> The pupils all attended Quaker meeting for worship at least twice a week.<sup>493</sup>

About the meeting for worship Lucretia learned the following response to the question,

"What reason is given for our worshiping in silence?"<sup>494</sup>:

As God is a spirit, so the soul of man proceeding immediately from him, is likewise a spirit; therefore the intercourse or communion between the soul and its Creator, must be inward and spiritual; hence we conceive that true and acceptable worship may be performed in silence, according to the declaration of our Saviour, 'God is a spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth'.<sup>495</sup>

Following the lesson that "God is a spirit, an Almighty Being, who inhabits eternity, without beginning and without end"<sup>496</sup> the text presented a synoptic view of "principle professions of

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<sup>488</sup> Ibid., 3-4.

<sup>489</sup> Bacon, *Valiant Friend*, 20-21.

<sup>490</sup> Ibid.

<sup>491</sup> Bacon, *Valiant Friend*, 21.

<sup>492</sup> Ibid.

<sup>493</sup> Ibid.

<sup>494</sup> The Teachers in the Nine Partners Boarding School, "The Following Questions Were Offered by The Teachers in the Nine-Partners Boarding School, to Their Pupils, and the Answers Given in by Them.: The Scholars Had the Liberty of Recurring to Books for Aid, When They Found Themselves Unable to Give Proper Answers Without Such Assistance," (1815), 5.

<sup>495</sup> Ibid., 2.

<sup>496</sup> Ibid.

religion: Paganism, Judaism, Mahometanism, and Christianity."<sup>497</sup> This school text enumerated the "fundamentals of Christianity [as follows]:

A belief in Jesus Christ the Son of God, his personal appearance on earth, his miracles, death, being made a propitiation for our sins, and in the doctrines and precepts of the New Testament<sup>498</sup>

Then after ascribing Friends' agreement "with other christians in these particulars"<sup>499</sup> the text moved to the distinguishing factors in response to the answer where Friends' "principally differ" from other christians.<sup>500</sup> The text made the following identifications:

We decline the use of the ordinances, viz. Baptism and the sacrament, believing that worship can be acceptably performed in silence; that war and oaths are unlawful: that no human appointment can qualify a person to preach the gospel; and our ministers receive no pay for preaching.<sup>501</sup>

This primer also addressed specifics for what counted as "unprofitable employment of the time."<sup>502</sup> Specifically, the text asked, "are singing, music, dancing, cards and theatrical entertainments proper amusements?"<sup>503</sup> The answer, which shed light on the Quaker educational emphasis, explained,

when we view man as a reasonable being, we think his amusements should be improving and rational: and when we consider him as a professor of the christian religion, we expect him to be manly, serious and dignified; but as these diversions are trifling, we conceive them to be unworthy his attention, beneath the dignity of his character, and an unprofitable employment of the time bestowed upon him for nobler purposes.<sup>504 505</sup>

The text then asked, "Why do we not with other professing Christians, ascribe more holiness to the first day of the week than to any other?"<sup>506</sup> The students were reminded,

We believe all days alike holy in the sight of our creator, and that we are under equal obligations every day to walk in fear and reverence before him; yet we consider the setting apart some time for cessation from labor, attending on public worship, and other religious exercises not only a reasonable duty but a profitable practice; and the law of the land, and the general consent of other societies appropriating the first day of the week to

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<sup>497</sup> Ibid., 4.

<sup>498</sup> Ibid.

<sup>499</sup> Ibid.

<sup>500</sup> The Teachers in the Nine Partners Boarding School, "The Following Questions," 4.

<sup>501</sup> Ibid., 8.

<sup>502</sup> Ibid., 7.

<sup>503</sup> Ibid.

<sup>504</sup> Ibid.

<sup>505</sup> Clearly Quaker concern with their non-preferential language, nonetheless, assumed the single-male-sex-reference to which the general population was accustomed and subject at this time in history.

<sup>506</sup> The Teachers in the Nine Partners Boarding School, "The Following Questions," 8.

that purpose, we cheerfully unite in its observance, without attributing any inherent holiness to it<sup>507</sup>

The children received lessons in history and etymology while they were educated about the calling of "the days and months according to their numerical order."<sup>508</sup> Their Quaker textbook expanded on the elementary lessons about names for days of the week with a moralistic overlay,

Because the other names were derived from heathen idolatry, and if the Jews were commanded 'in all things to be circumspect and make no mention of the name of other Gods, nor let them be heard out of their mouth,' surely christians ought not to be less careful.<sup>509</sup>

This Quaker reference book for young scholars at Nine Partners then set out George Fox as the society's founder, and established his birth in England in the early seventeenth century.<sup>510</sup>

Importantly, the text sets forth Fox's experience as "exemplary" in the face of "much opposition and many persecutions."<sup>511</sup> Therefore, students learned the expectation that to be a model Friend would entail personal suffering. The text praises his moral choices not his words or even his deeds. The text taught that Fox "suffered long and severe imprisonments, was cruelly beaten, to the great injury of his health; all which he bore with exemplary patience and fortitude."<sup>512</sup> From that beginning the text traces through the "leading divisions of christianity."<sup>513</sup> The text recited the Roman Catholic and Protestant divisions' "principal tenets."<sup>514</sup> From Martin Luther's "publicly and zealously" opposing the sale of indulgences "to raise a sum of money to finish St. Peter's church"<sup>515</sup> and the Pope's "granting indulgences, that is, the liberty to do what the rules of their church forbid."<sup>516</sup> John Calvin was then described as differing from Luther in that he, "did not admit . . . of any subordination amongst the clergy . . . . He believed God had chosen a certain number unto everlasting glory . . . <sup>517</sup> and, finally, that "Jesus Christ by his death and sufferings made an atonement for the elect only."<sup>518</sup>

Many years later, Lucretia wrote of her Quaker education and its effect, "I however always loved the good - often in childhood desired to do the right and being trained in the Religious Society of Friends had no faith in human depravity."<sup>519</sup> By the time Lucretia Coffin completed her studies at Nine Partners, she was thoroughly schooled in Quaker spirituality. She had a finely honed sense of justice. She was poised and motivated to respond.

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<sup>507</sup> Ibid.

<sup>508</sup> Ibid. 7.

<sup>509</sup> The Teachers in the Nine Partners Boarding School, "The Following Questions," 7.

<sup>510</sup> Ibid. 9.

<sup>511</sup> Ibid.

<sup>512</sup> Ibid.

<sup>513</sup> Ibid.

<sup>514</sup> Ibid.

<sup>515</sup> Ibid., 10.

<sup>516</sup> Ibid.

<sup>517</sup> Ibid., 11.

<sup>518</sup> Ibid., 12.

<sup>519</sup> Mott, "Notes on the Life of Lucretia Mott as Given to Sarah J. Hale."

## Summary

The remembered history of adult education, as considered in Chapter One, influences the on-going philosophy and purposes of the field and its practitioners. This study aims to find some of the field's less explored roots through study of the work of Lucretia Mott who educated adults through public speaking. Societal injustices moved her to speak in public arenas to educate adults about justice related to abolition of slavery, rights of women, and peaceful ways to address injustice.

Lucretia Mott's perspectives rested on a foundation in the Society of Friends. The ideas, practices, and methods to conduct meetings for worship and meetings for business, however, are singular in Quakerism and unfamiliar to non-Quakers. Hence, this chapter reviewed the Friends' history, principles and practices in order to facilitate the illumination of her work as a nineteenth-century female Quaker minister.

The Friends arose in the educational context of seventeenth-century England when the social turmoil of dissension splintered church and state who, traditionally, serve as the sources of "authoritative knowledge."<sup>520</sup> In this social turbulence, Friends founded a society with the characteristics of an "inherently educational practice"<sup>521</sup> that Michael Law found among some Christians of that era. The first question that guided this review was what teachings--central theological convictions--do Friends learn? A review of scholarly and denominational literature revealed four convictions that distinguish Friends. Briefly, those convictions include: every person's ability to be in communion with the Divine because of the Light within; the ability of all humans to live by the Golden Rule; the call of all Christians to work for social betterment through moral improvement; and, ongoing revelation of God's will that enabled social betterment.

A second question, asking "how do Friends exemplify their religious beliefs?," guided a review of denominational works. That exploration found that what Friends call 'testimonies' exemplify the embodied ethics through which Quakers attest to a transformed perspective for moral ways to live as individuals and as a community. The testimonies--with certain revised components responsive to changing societal problems--are grouped under the broad concepts of equality, simplicity, community, and peace. The behavior of the individual and the community materially demonstrates, that is, gives witness to intellectually and spiritually embraced beliefs.

From a review of historic and denominational works, the third question, "what engages adult Friends both as learners and as educators?," was explored. From this endeavor came an exposition of the Friends' vision of their Society as a new order for the world to live by, and knowledge of the Friends' structural organization. This literature reviewed works that increased understanding of the concept of 'meeting,' the organization of the Society's meeting structures, and the practices that apply at each of the organization levels. These meetings have an educational milieu in which adults learn and teach and young adults begin to learn practices that Quakers value highly.

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<sup>520</sup> Merriam and Simpson, *Guide to Research*, 3.

<sup>521</sup> Law, "Rediscovering Hope in a New Era: Possibilities for the Radical Tradition of Adult Education," 208.

Lastly, Chapter Two explored Lucretia Coffin's education through which she gained intellectual, practical, and most importantly, spiritual grounding in the principles and practices of the Society of Friends. The reflection of this foundation will be explored first in Chapter Three which examines Lucretia Mott's sermons and speeches and her work as a public speaker related to slavery and its abolition.



## CHAPTER THREE

### ENLIGHTENING OF THE PUBLIC MIND ABOUT SLAVERY (1822-1846)

Regarding contributions to buy [slaves'] freedom: If the sums, raised for this object, were appropriated to the enlightening of the public mind on the enormity of the whole system, how much more effective would it be!

Lucretia Mott, *What is Anti-Slavery Work?* 1846

The abolition of slavery was a significant societal and ethical concern Lucretia Mott addressed publicly. Chapter Three focuses on her work to educate adults during the years 1822 through 1846, about slavery and its abolition. This chapter, divided into four sections

- (A) presents the historical context in which Lucretia Mott worked.
- (B) furnishes the background of perspectives by
  - (1) reviewing what the Friends learned and taught about slavery and its abolition.
  - (2) Exploring what young Lucretia learned about slavery.
- (C) examines ways Lucretia Mott's sermons and speeches<sup>522</sup> through 1846, reflected the Friends' principles and practices related to slavery.
- (D) illuminates her work as a female Quaker minister who educated adults about the abolition of slavery through public speaking.

Chapter Three spans twenty-four years of Lucretia Mott's life from age twenty-nine to fifty-three years.

#### **(A) The Historical Context of Lucretia Mott's Pioneering Public Speaking about Slavery**

Slavery was not the foremost theme to capture the attention of the general population in the American republic. Instead, in this early national period Americans focused more on the development of their new nation, the spread of evangelical Christianity in the Second Great Awakening, the rise of Transcendentalist influence, and the extension of democracy under Andrew Jackson by broader electoral privileges for white males. The nation's demands to educate adults in towns throughout the land--met partially through the lyceum--coupled with widespread literacy and establishment of libraries, fostered adult learning. Advances in printing allowed the production of greater numbers but less costly books, weekly and monthly magazines, and newspapers, all of which served adults as lifelong learners.<sup>523</sup>

The Erie Canal's completion in 1825 and expansion in railroads advanced the forces changing America. The north continued to become industrial and urban. The 1803 Louisiana Purchase brought vast lands with favorable climate that magnified the potential for growing cotton. Tobacco fields, plantations with rice and indigo crops were worked increasingly by

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<sup>522</sup> Mott, *Lucretia Mott: Her Complete Speeches and Sermons*/edited [with an introduction] by Dana Greene.

<sup>523</sup> Stubblefield, Harold W. and Patrick Keane, *Adult Education in the American Experience*, 62-96; Stoneburner, "Introduction," 32.

slaves.<sup>524</sup> The nexus of such factors increased demand for agricultural products--the cotton/sugar/rice/tobacco grown with slave labor. At last, slavery--owning human beings: people and livestock counted together as chattel--began to grip the attention of more Americans. Yet, while evangelicals in the North deplored slavery, Lawrence Goodheart & Hugh Hawkins said, "they accepted white supremacy as inevitable."<sup>525</sup>

Innovations in printing enabled many newspapers to be founded. Newspapers provided a great source of learning for adults, especially considering the common practice of the 1830s to 1850s that newspaper editors would send three copies of their papers to every other newspaper editor.<sup>526</sup> Examination of *The Liberator*, for instance, reveals that its editor did print many articles, including those with opposing views, from competing newspapers. By 1817, blacks in the North had begun to organize and in 1827, the first of many black newspapers "*Freedom's Journal*"<sup>527</sup> was founded. Quaker Benjamin Lundy in 1821 founded the first antislavery newspaper, *The Genius of Universal Emancipation*, which advocated "immediate emancipation" for slaves.<sup>528</sup> In 1831, William Lloyd Garrison founded *The Liberator* abolitionist "I will be heard" newspaper; and Nat Turner lead this country's "bloodiest slave rebellion."<sup>529</sup>

Adults responded to these societal changes and developments through educational endeavors: newspapers were established; lectures increased; and anti-slavery societies formed. Of those who responded to the slave question, often they were Christians, many of whom were Quakers.<sup>530</sup> The expectation for women, however, was public silence.

Open lectures, free discussion, people--men and women--speaking publicly about slavery stirred a whirlpool of proponents and opponents not about slavery but about the right of free speech. Recall from Chapter One that public speaking was a function controlled by the professions of the elite: clergy, lawyers, professors--all degreed, all men. The 1820s saw that social control challenged through public speaking. During this critical time Lucretia Mott advocated for justice and educated about the abolition of slavery as a pioneer public speaker.

## **(B) Background of Perspectives about Slavery**

### **(1) Friends' Gradual Learning about Slavery Evolves to Popular Education in the Revolution**

In a comprehensive exposition of the Friends' continuing revelation about slavery, J. William Frost<sup>531</sup> used "the most crucial Quaker sources relating to slavery for over a century before the American Revolution"<sup>532</sup> to investigate the evolution of the Quaker consideration of

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<sup>524</sup> Lawrence B. Goodheart and Hugh Hawkins, "Introduction," in *The Abolitionists: Means, Ends, and Motivations*, Third, ed. Lawrence B. Goodheart and Hugh Hawkins (Lexington, MA: D. C. Heath and Company, 1995), XV.

<sup>525</sup> Goodheart and Hawkins, "Introduction," XVIII.

<sup>526</sup> Lecture, Mayer 1999

<sup>527</sup> Goodheart and Hawkins, "Introduction," xix.

<sup>528</sup> *The Quaker Origins of Antislavery Edited with an Introduction by J. William Frost*, The Quaker Impact on America (Norwood, PA: Norwood Editions, 1980), 26-27.

<sup>529</sup> Goodheart and Hawkins, "Introduction," XIX.

<sup>530</sup> Stoneburner, "Introduction," 33.

<sup>531</sup> A distinguished Quaker scholar, Frost currently serves as director of Friends Historical Library located at Swarthmore College outside Philadelphia.

<sup>532</sup> *The Quaker Origins of Antislavery Edited with an Introduction by J. William Frost*, Preface.

slavery. Frost's seminal scholarly work<sup>533</sup> that resulted in publication of facsimiles of original documents (and transcripts of meeting minutes) affords the opportunity to study these primary sources. The facsimiles begin with George Fox's 1671 "discourse"<sup>534</sup> when, as Frost notes, "Quakers first encountered the wide spread use of slave labor in the West Indies."<sup>535</sup> The last document is a transcript of a 1796 Philadelphia Yearly Meeting minute<sup>536</sup> reporting the [unity](#) of Friends in the decision that the reception by monthly meetings of "persons into membership . . . [is] not limited with respect to Nation or Colour."<sup>537</sup> As Frost notes, while some colonial Quakers owned slaves unity was maintained [in the Society of Friends] by adopting partial measures"<sup>538</sup> amounting to over a century of gradual steps toward freeing all their slaves and, eventually, opposition to the system of slavery itself.

Frost's scholarly exposition of this documentary history, with his thorough presentation of the Quaker and historical context, permitted the researcher to rely, almost exclusively, on this work as the main source for Friends' learning about slavery. Frost's work begins with the claim that, "In world history a primary significance of the Society of Friends is that they were the first collectively to endorse the idea that slavery was wrong and the first to move to free themselves from the taint of owning men."<sup>539</sup>

Frost explores the steps of Friends' gradual progress toward an antislavery [testimony](#). These steps start with Quakers' initial encounter with slavery in the West Indies in 1676 and continue through their "first time"<sup>540</sup> questioning of compatibility between Christianity and slavery, to the 1688 protest against slavery made by the Germantown [Pennsylvania] Friends,<sup>541</sup> and the 1692 issuance at Philadelphia of the "first antislavery pamphlet published anywhere."<sup>542</sup> A highpoint in this uninterrupted history related to slavery is what Frost calls the "revolutionary conclusion"<sup>543</sup> published in a 1754 epistle by the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, that "not just the slave trade but slavery itself was evil."<sup>544</sup> Other Yearly Meetings of Friends--New England, North Carolina, Maryland and London--received the 1754 epistle from the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, learned from it, and by 1776 disowned members who owned slaves."<sup>545</sup>

The record of adults learning from one another, sometimes over long distances, fits a Society of Friends with a mission to educate. Over the years, adult Friends learned about the moral issue of slavery from personal experience in silent worship, reflection on biblical passages,

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<sup>533</sup> *The Quaker Origins of Antislavery Edited with an Introduction by J. William Frost.*

<sup>534</sup> George Fox, "Gospel Family-Order," (1671) in *The Quaker Origins of Antislavery, Edited with an Introduction by J. William Frost* (Norwood PA: Norwood Editions, 1980), 36-52.

<sup>535</sup> J. William Frost, "Initial Responses to Slavery," in *The Quaker Origins of Antislavery, Edited with an Introduction by J. William Frost* (Norwood PA: Norwood Editions, 1980), 31.

<sup>536</sup> *The Quaker Origins of Antislavery Edited with an Introduction by J. William Frost*, 252.

<sup>537</sup> Society of Friends, "Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, Minutes, (1796)" in *The Quaker Origins of Antislavery, Edited with an Introduction by J. William Frost* (Norwood PA: Norwood Editions, 1980), 300.

<sup>538</sup> *The Quaker Origins of Antislavery Edited with an Introduction by J. William Frost*, 17.

<sup>539</sup> *Ibid.*, 1.

<sup>540</sup> *The Quaker Origins of Antislavery Edited with an Introduction by J. William Frost*, 31.

<sup>541</sup> *Ibid.*; Mekeel, "The Founding Years, 1681-1789," 1981: 18.

<sup>542</sup> *The Quaker Origins of Antislavery Edited with an Introduction by J. William Frost*, 31.

<sup>543</sup> *Ibid.*, 23.

<sup>544</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>545</sup> *Ibid.*, 24.

and from peers. Friends educated others about justice and slavery through various methods. For example, Friends spoke in Quaker meetings, received religious visits from Public Friends, and published and read epistles, pamphlets, and journals, such as the spiritual classic from the eighteenth-century: John Woolman's *Journal*.<sup>546</sup>

## Friends' Beliefs Foundational to Education against Slavery

Frost relates the "particular concatenations of beliefs and practices" that brought Quakerism into existence<sup>547</sup> directly to Friends' antislavery stance. These concatenations were previously referred to as "distinguishing convictions."<sup>548</sup> For instance, Friends' belief that all persons could "experience God directly"<sup>549</sup> was at odds with "alleged natural inferiority of Blacks."<sup>550</sup> Friends' belief in the Golden Rule<sup>551</sup> --that God's grace was available universally and evident in behavior--brought into question the treatment of slaves by slaveholders. Frost argues that Friends' belief in the "ever present possibility of a new revelation"<sup>552</sup> allowed for both the first Christian opposition to slavery and continued unity with the scriptural admonition in "Genesis 3:20 that all nations were of one blood."<sup>553</sup> "That all nations were of one blood," Frost says, was the Friends' ultimate "proof-text."<sup>554</sup> As Lawrence B. Goodheart and Hugh Hawkins note, Friends' testimony against "the evil of physical coercion" also created opposition to slavery.<sup>555</sup>

Friend Anthony Benezet, an "exemplar" of eighteenth-century benevolent ventures related to slavery,<sup>556</sup> merits the distinction of widening antislavery beyond the confines of Quakerism. Anthony Benezet, Frost says, moved antislavery from "an essentially Quaker-oriented perspective by linking it with the rhetoric of the Revolution"<sup>557</sup> through broad distribution of his antislavery publications. Frederick Tolles claims that Thomas Clarkson--who wrote a book that greatly influenced Lucretia Mott--was himself "originally drawn . . . to the anti-slavery position "by one of Anthony Benezet's books."<sup>558</sup> Ultimately, Frost finds that "most of the issues faced by abolitionists after 1831 were first raised and dealt with by Friends"<sup>559</sup> before the American Revolution.

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<sup>546</sup> Woolman, *The Journal and Major Essays of John Woolman/ edited [with introductions] by Phillips P. Moulton*.

<sup>547</sup> *The Quaker Origins of Antislavery Edited with an Introduction by J. William Frost*, 2.

<sup>548</sup> Comfort, *The Quakers: A Brief Account*, 9; Sheeran, "Friendly Persuasion," 17.

<sup>549</sup> *The Quaker Origins of Antislavery Edited with an Introduction by J. William Frost*, 2.

<sup>550</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>551</sup> *Ibid.*, 5.

<sup>552</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>553</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>554</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>555</sup> Goodheart and Hawkins, "Introduction," XVI.

<sup>556</sup> *The Quaker Origins of Antislavery Edited with an Introduction by J. William Frost*, 172.

<sup>557</sup> *Ibid.*, 173.

<sup>558</sup> Frederick B. Tolles, "Introduction," in *Slavery and "The Woman Question": Lucretia Mott's Diary of Her Visit to Great Britain*, ed. Frederick B. Tolles, Ph. D., *Journal of the Friends' Historical Society*, no. Supplement No. 23 (Haverford, PA: Friends' Historical Association and Friends' Historical Society, 1952), 22n.

<sup>559</sup> *The Quaker Origins of Antislavery Edited with an Introduction by J. William Frost*, 24.

Frost's research concluded that, "while external ideas shaped the form of the later Quaker protest, the origins of antislavery lie embedded in Quaker religious practices and ideas."<sup>560</sup> Through a careful exposition of historic events and documents, Frost establishes the primacy of Friends' education about slavery. Frost compared the inception of various philosophies, cultural, social, and literary developments, legal and political change to the historic record of Friends' questioning and eventual opposition to slavery. In particular, in relation to Friends' actions and documents, Frost enumerates and explores, in their historical context, multiple factors outside of and within the Society of Friends such as:

rationalism, benevolence, cult of the primitive, sentimentalization of the family, the Great Awakening<sup>561</sup> . . . natural law, the rights of Englishmen, the noble Black, disrupted family . . . . Enlightenment thinkers, Thomas Jefferson, William Blackstone<sup>562</sup> and various wars.<sup>563</sup> [Frost claims that] the antislavery Germantown Friends in 1688 and the Chester County [Pennsylvania] farmers in the early 18th century were steeped in the language of the Bible and Quaker apologetic writings, but show no awareness of Enlightenment thought or estrangement from the religious culture of colonial Pennsylvania.<sup>564</sup>

The Society of Friends' experience of learning about slavery led Quakers to educate for the abolition of slavery. Now, the study moves to the young Lucretia Coffin's educational experiences that related to slavery.

## (2) Tales of Lucretia as a Child who Learns About Slavery

Earlier writers<sup>565</sup> seemingly succumbed to the temptation--perhaps because of a desire that the significance of Lucretia Mott's life's work be recognized--to portray her personality worthy to record in hagiographic literature--among the saints of old. Yet, Lucretia herself reports that, according to her mother, even in her early years on Nantucket, she had been "called 'a spitfire'<sup>566</sup> by her sisters."<sup>567</sup>

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<sup>560</sup> Ibid., 18.

<sup>561</sup> Ibid.

<sup>562</sup> Item., 19.

<sup>563</sup> Item., 18-23.

<sup>564</sup> Item., 19.

<sup>565</sup> For example see Hare, *Lucretia Mott*, and innumerable encyclopedic biographers. A closer scholarly examination of biographical writing might begin with the recent work of Jill Ker Conway who ponders the way women write their lives in juxtaposition to the way women experience their lives as "cultural history" in Jill Ker Conway, *When Memory Speaks: Reflections on Autobiography* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1998), 4. Conway concluded the value of the rich texture of the personal past as "knowledge which changes the emotional and moral climate of . . . childhood, a personal evidence of how much history matters" Conway, *When Memory Speaks*, 184. Conway herself called Lucretia "the renowned Quaker preacher" Conway, *When Memory Speaks*, 92.

<sup>566</sup> Spitfire the dictionary describes as a girl or woman of fiery temper or prone to outbursts, while etymologically "spit" derives from a pointed piece of wood.

<sup>567</sup> Mott, "Notes on the Life of Lucretia Mott as Given to Sarah J. Hale."

This "spitfire"<sup>568</sup> recalled that Elizabeth Coggeshall--a model Quaker minister--"on a religious visit in a family setting addressed the children on the importance of heeding the inner monitor and of praying for strength."<sup>569</sup> The Nantucket Monthly Meeting Records show that Public Friend Elizabeth Coggeshall from Newport visited Nantucket for two weeks in 1801, and for two weeks in 1803.<sup>570</sup> During those visits, Lucretia would have been at the usually impressionable ages of eight and ten. Of these early years on Nantucket, Bacon says, "The history, geography, and customs" of Quaker Nantucket gave Lucretia a "sense of herself that she carried with her all her life."<sup>571</sup>

The economy of Lucretia Coffin's island birthplace, Nantucket,<sup>572</sup> was not supported by slavery. In fact, Nantucket Quakers in 1716, according to Robert J. Leach and Peter Gow, took one of the steps toward the Friends' testimony against slavery when they became the first monthly meeting "to avow the immorality of slavery."<sup>573</sup> The horrors of slavery were first learned by the young Lucretia, not from observation, but during the years 1806-1809,<sup>574</sup> from her formal Quaker [guarded education](#) at Nine Partners Boarding School.

### **Lucretia Coffin Mott Learned about Slavery**

At Nine Partners, Lucretia learned about slavery. She learned by observation of the actions of another Public Friend, Elias Hicks. He provided example--another model--for Lucretia. She volunteered that, "The ministry of Elias Hicks and others on this subject [slavery] as well as their example in refusing all [products made by slave labor] had their effect in awakening a strong feeling on behalf [of slaves]."<sup>575</sup>

#### **Formation of Early Frame of Reference Through Models, Exemplars and School Texts**

As Lucretia Mott began her brief, but telling, autobiographical sketch she noted two authors who wrote about the slave trade: Priscilla Wakefield and Thomas Clarkson. Their works were used by Nine Partners students as school readers.<sup>576</sup> Later, biographers<sup>577</sup> also reported the influence of these readers used at Nine Partners. These books Lucretia read on the very brink of active adulthood considering that she first taught school, then married at the age of eighteen. Reading as an effective act to facilitate transformative learning is cited in adult education literature. Adult educator Kathleen A. Loughlin<sup>578</sup> studied women who become activists and found that perspective transformation was facilitated effectively through three actions: reading

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<sup>568</sup> Ibid.

<sup>569</sup> Ibid.

<sup>570</sup> Nantucket Monthly Meeting, "Register of the Names of the Public Friends That Visited Nantucket," Nantucket Historical Society, no. 13 (Nantucket, MA).

<sup>571</sup> Bacon, *Valiant Friend*, 8.

<sup>572</sup> Bacon, *Valiant Friend*, 13.

<sup>573</sup> Leach and Gow, *Quaker Nantucket*, 40.

<sup>574</sup> Bacon, *Valiant Friend*, 20-21.

<sup>575</sup> Mott, "Notes on the Life of Lucretia Mott as Given to Sarah J. Hale."

<sup>576</sup> Ibid.

<sup>577</sup> See Bacon, *Valiant Friend*, 13; Cromwell, *Lucretia Mott*, 16; Pagliaro, "Education and Radical Thought of Lucretia Mott," 52.

<sup>578</sup> Kathleen A. Loughlin, *Women's Perceptions of Transformative Learning Experiences Within Consciousness-Raising* (San Francisco: Mellen Research University Press, 1993).

books--described as "eye-openers"<sup>579</sup> --listening and speaking.<sup>580</sup> Loughlin's research bolsters the rationale for a closer examination of the reading material to which Lucretia was exposed as a youthful and receptive learner about to step into adulthood.

### **To Listen and To Speak As Acts for Mental Improvement**

One text, Priscilla B. Wakefield's 264-page book *Mental Improvement*,<sup>581</sup> used "the form of dialogue . . . [to] excite the curiosity of young persons."<sup>582</sup> These dialogues or "instructive conversations"<sup>583</sup> took place among seven participants: Mr. and Mrs. Harcourt, and five young persons, three girls and two boys ranging in age from nine to sixteen.<sup>584</sup> The writing has the ring of authenticity reflected in its conversational style, the subjects range from "a description of the whale"<sup>585</sup> to "Children disgusted with books and learning, by too laborious tasks being imposed upon them."<sup>586</sup> Dialogue and conversation, words chosen to indicate the verbal exchanges, subtly exhibited the Quaker concern for the use of language.<sup>587</sup>

### **A School Reader Teaches Values and Norms**

Lucretia Mott herself, decades later testified to the effect of one of the school-reader dialogues: "Description of the Sugar-Cane and Of the Slave-Trade."<sup>588</sup> She wrote, "after a recital of some of the horrors of the middle passage & the daughter exclaims 'Humanity shudders at your account.' The impression made by this was lasting."<sup>589</sup> That instructive dialogue continued:

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<sup>579</sup> Loughlin, *Women's Perceptions of Transformative Learning Experiences within Consciousness-Raising*, 223.

<sup>580</sup> Ibid., 223-25.

<sup>581</sup> Priscilla Bell Wakefield, *Mental Improvement: Of the Beauties and Wonders of Nature and Arts in a Series of Instructive Conversations by Priscilla Wakefield, Author of Leisure Hours*, First American, from the Third London Edition (New-Bedford: Calab Greene & Son, Printed by Abraham Shearman, Jun., 1799), 7.

<sup>582</sup> Ibid., VI.

<sup>583</sup> Ibid., 7.

<sup>584</sup> Ibid.

<sup>585</sup> Ibid., 9.

<sup>586</sup> Ibid., 121.

<sup>587</sup> Consider the etymological source of dialogue--*dialectos*--derived from the Latin for "a manner of speaking" and from the Greek for "I pick out, choose between, to speak" Skeat, *An Etymological Dictionary of the English Language*, 167, also related to discourse--from the Latin for "running about." (Ibid., 172) . To contrast, the rather different source of "discussion," which derives from the Latin--*discutere*--"to strike or shake asunder" (Ibid., 172) and is closely related to "quassare" meaning "to shatter . . . crush . . . annihilate" (Ibid., 491). The word "discussion" does appear in a subordinate position in the etymological definition for dialogue. Here a matter of intent or motivation is important to discern the linguistic intent of a verbal exchange: to speak out or to crush.

<sup>588</sup> Wakefield, *Mental Improvement*, 76.

<sup>589</sup> Mott, "Notes on the Life of Lucretia Mott as Given to Sarah J. Hale." The reference is to nine year old Augusta's response to Mrs. Harcourt's account of slaves that reads: "Mrs. Harcourt: [slaves were] put on board the ships . . . crowded together in the hold, where many die from want of air and room . . . Those who . . . survive . . . seldom attain the full period of human life. Augusta: Humanity shudders at your account . . ." in Wakefield, *Mental Improvement*, 78.

Cecilia [aged twelve<sup>590</sup>]. *I think no riches could tempt me to have any share in the slave-trade.* I could never enjoy peace of mind, whilst I thought I contributed to the woes of my fellow-creatures.

Mr. Harcourt. *But Cecilia, to put your compassion to the proof, are you willing to deny yourself of the many indulgences that we enjoy, that are the fruit of their labour?* Sugar, coffee, rice, calico, rum, and many other things, are procured by the sweat of their brow Cecilia. *I would forego any indulgence to alleviate their sufferings.*

The Rest of the Children Together. *We are all of the same mind*<sup>591</sup> [italics added for emphasis].

This dialogue could evoke a reader's compassion, could summon courage in a youthful reader to forego pleasure reaped in the face of cruelty.

### Reading as a Way to Engage the Will of the Learner

Lucretia Mott later said, "My sympathy was early enlisted for the poor slave by the class books read in our schools--and the pictures of the slave ship . . . Clarkson presented to view . . . the unrequited bondsman labor."<sup>592</sup> As Margaret Hope Bacon said, "During this impressionable period [Lucretia] read for the first time *An Essay on Slavery*<sup>593</sup> by Thomas Clarkson, a British abolitionist."<sup>594</sup> This was no everyday essay, however; this essay was Clarkson's translation from Latin into English of his prize-winning dissertation from the University of Cambridge in England on the history of slavery.<sup>595</sup> In the *Essay*, Clarkson began with the historic note that a fifteenth-century Catholic Bishop first wanted "to suppress the abject personal slavery . . . . But his intreaties, by the opposition of avarice, were rendered ineffectual."<sup>596</sup>

Clarkson's study anticipated the findings of Frost's previously cited analysis. Clarkson found and Lucretia learned that,

Till this time it does not appear, that any bodies of men had collectively interested themselves in endeavouring to remedy the evil. But in the year 1754, the religious society, called Quakers, publicly testified their sentiments upon the subject, declaring, that 'to live in ease and plenty by the toil of those, whom fraud and violence had put into their power, was neither consistent with Christianity nor common justice' . . . . Should slavery be abolished there (in North America) . . . let it be remembered, that the Quakers will have had the merit of its abolition.<sup>597</sup>

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<sup>590</sup> Wakefield, *Mental Improvement: Of the Beauties and Wonders of Nature and Arts in a Series of Instructive Conversations by Priscilla Wakefield, author of Leisure Hours*, 7.

<sup>591</sup> Wakefield, *Mental Improvement*, 80.

<sup>592</sup> Mott, "Notes on the Life of Lucretia Mott as Given to Sarah J. Hale."

<sup>593</sup> Thomas Clarkson, *An Essay on the Slavery and Commerce of the Human Species, Particularly The African; Translated from a Latin Dissertation, Which Was Honoured with The First Prize in the University of Cambridge, for the Year 1785*, The Second Edition, Revised and Considerably Enlarged. (London: J. Phillips, 1778).

<sup>594</sup> Bacon, *Valiant Friend*, 23.

<sup>595</sup> Clarkson, *An Essay on the Slavery and Commerce of the Human Species, Particularly The African*;

<sup>596</sup> Ibid., V.

<sup>597</sup> Ibid., vii.



Clarkson himself suggested that a reader, "must experience considerable pain . . . [when told that] since the slave-trade began, nine millions of men have been torn from their dearest connections, and sold into slavery."<sup>598</sup> Clarkson's biographer claimed for him the accolade of being the lone person in the anti-slavery movement who made his career "fact-finding, pamphleteering and organising the inhabitants of towns,"<sup>599</sup> that is, learning and teaching. With this examination of two texts about slavery that Lucretia read, the topic now turns to examination of a text Nine Partners scholars consulted for "proper answers" about religion, in general, and the Society of Friends, in particular.<sup>600</sup>

### **Rationale for Examination of School Text about a Simple Faith and Slavery**

This exploration was warranted in order, first, to study how Lucretia Mott's sermons and speeches reflect Friends' perspectives and; second, to explore her work as a woman who pioneered in educating about the abolition of slavery through public speaking. To review what she was taught as a Quaker foundation is essential.

To begin, Lucretia Mott's own words gave her estimation of her formative years. In the upcoming quotation, a parenthesis indicates that the words enclosed within the parenthesis appear on the original manuscript but the handwriting was crossed out in favor of the other words which follow the parenthesis. To capture to the fullest extent possible her understanding, her thinking process, the crossed out--though legible--script in the archival text was transcribed and, herein, presented. Lucretia Mott described herself as:

being trained to (according to the principles of <sup>601</sup>) in the Religious Society of Friends . . . . (I was accustomed) had no faith in . . . . 'The popular doctrine of human depravity' . . . . I 'seakest the scriptures daily' and often found a wholly different construction of the script from that which was pressed upon our acceptance . . . . The (simple faith) religion of my education--that the obedience of faith to manifested duty ensured salvation commended itself to my understanding--conscience--the doctrine of human depravity was not taught as an essential of the Christian's creed. The free agency of man was indicated and any departure from the right was ascribed to (the a) willful, disobedience of the teachngs of the light within us. The numerous evils that existed in society (I was accustomed to hear) were traced to this source.<sup>602</sup>

"Human depravity" is mentioned three times in her entire, though brief autobiographical account.

This "doctrine of human depravity"<sup>603</sup> refers to the more familiar concept of original sin, a doctrine held by Roman Catholic and most Protestant denominations. This belief in the flawed or stained condition originating with Adam and Eve and passed down to each child from birth differed sharply from Friends' understanding. According to Jerry W. Frost, Friends considered

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<sup>598</sup> Ibid., 77.

<sup>599</sup> Ellen Gibson Wilson, *Thomas Clarkson: A Biography*, Second (facsimile) edition (York, England: William Sessions Limited, 1989, 1996), 1.

<sup>600</sup> The Teachers in the Nine Partners Boarding School, "The Following Questions,."

<sup>601</sup> A parenthesis indicates the enclosed script was crossed out on the original manuscript sheets.

<sup>602</sup> Mott, "Notes on the Life of Lucretia Mott as Given to Sarah J. Hale."

<sup>603</sup> Ibid.

children to be "innocent at birth."<sup>604</sup> Frost cites the premier systematizer of early Quaker belief, Robert Barclay's "syllogism"<sup>605</sup> about the spiritual state of infants: "Sin is imputed to none, where there is no law. But to infants, there is no law: Therefore sin is not imputed to them"<sup>606</sup>. Briefly, between the dominant Christian denominations and Quakers, there existed a corollary theological difference related to original sin: the need for atonement for the original sin of the first parents. Friends believed that if there is no original sin, there is nothing for which to atone. These two ideas, human depravity and atonement, are expressed in Lucretia Mott's sermons at least five times between 1843<sup>607</sup> and 1876.<sup>608</sup> Friends believed that each child was born with the ability to communicate with God directly, that is, without a mediator.

Perhaps, Lucretia most clearly articulated what she understood about these subjects in this address:

It needs not that I should go on stating many particulars in which the Bible has been prostituted. You know how ingeniously isolated passages have been brought together and a creed interwoven and a system based upon the false and wicked assumptions of innate or transmitted depravity of original sin[,] of human depravity[,] in whatever way it may be defined. This scheme of salvation and plan of redemption as it has been called has been pressed upon the people for their acceptance and how many are there who look further than this interwoven belief? They are not examining for themselves, and do not take the trouble to compare text with context, and discover what a very different and opposite creed might be, interwoven and drawn from the very same records. [Truth](#) is so in the world that we are not to be dependent upon any record for our belief. Our Christianity must draw from the very truth of God manifested to the souls of the children of men. There must be our faith and it must be an operative one, a faith acted out in life one unto another, in an effort to remove the mighty evils which are crushing humanity. Let our creed be that faith in God which shall inspire us with love one unto another, and having this love let us show our devotion and our worship by our every day duties. Let our daily life be a prayer and our every day actions be worship.<sup>609</sup>

The importance of these doctrines she expressed near the end of her life.

As the mother of six children, who taught primary school for several years, and served on education committees at her monthly meeting, children's thinking was important to her. She argued:

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<sup>604</sup> Jerry W. Frost, "As the Twig Is Bent: Quaker Ideas of Childhood," *Quaker History* 60, no. 2 (Autumn 1971): 68.

<sup>605</sup> Frost, "As the Twig is Bent," 69.

<sup>606</sup> Robert Barclay, *An Apology for the True Christian Divinity*, 13<sup>th</sup> ed. (Manchester, England, 1869), Prop. IV, Par. IV (p.59), cited in "Frost, 'As the Twig is Bent,'" 69.

<sup>607</sup> Mott, "Righteousness Gives Respect to Its Possessor (1/15/1843)," 36.

<sup>608</sup> Lucretia Mott, "A Warlike Spirit (6/2/1876)," in *Lucretia Mott: Her Complete Speeches and Sermons/Edited [with an Introduction] by Dana Greene. Studies in Women and Religion, Vol. 4* (New York: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1980), 381-82.

<sup>609</sup> Lucretia Mott, "Keep Yourselves from Idols (3/17/1850)," in *Lucretia Mott: Her Complete Speeches and Sermons/Edited [with an Introduction] by Dana Greene. Studies in Women and Religion, Vol. 4* (New York: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1980), 177-78.

We should never teach children that they have wicked hearts, or try to give them an idea of total depravity, or that it is easier to do wrong than right, they will soon learn that it is easier to do right than wrong. Children love Peace. The little child knows when it says, mother, I love everybody. There is a Divine instinct in them which prompts to this feeling.<sup>610</sup>

Again, the rationale for a somewhat extensive examination of Lucretia Coffin's learning on the brink of adulthood rested on the requirement for evidence of her education as foundational for her expressed and demonstrated beliefs. This examination established, partially, the context in which this young woman might first have learned the morality and perspectives she espoused in her sermons, speeches, and actions. In turn, they--the sermons, speeches, and actions--provide the background in which to examine her work, founded on a "simple faith"<sup>611</sup> as a nineteenth-century female Quaker minister who educated about societal issues--a pioneer public speaker.

### Frame of Reference for Adulthood Formed on Quaker Primers

Chapter Two explored the primer for students at Nine Partners Boarding School<sup>612</sup> for general or overarching Quaker education about the Society of Friends' beliefs and practices.

This chapter now explores what that primer taught about slavery and its abolition. On page twenty of that document's twenty-four pages, the text completes a summary interpretation of the old and new Bible testaments. Then, with no transition--in language seemingly marked with early republican and nineteenth-century thought<sup>613</sup>--the primer abruptly poses a contemporaneous inquiry about whether mankind is "becoming more enlightened and improved or not."<sup>614</sup> The text responded in the affirmative. Evidence for that affirmative response was given as "advances made in civilization, the diffusion of learning, and the benevolence which distinguishes the present times, joined to the increasing attention to read and spread the sacred writings."<sup>615</sup> The subsequent question that might appear as a disjointed entry asked, "What gave rise to the long, unwearied, and at last successful exertions of Thomas Clarkson in the abolition of the slave trade?"<sup>616</sup> and recounted Thomas Clarkson's story as a Cambridge student intrigued by a scholarly pursuit of the history of slavery. The uncovering of the history of the "African slave trade turned his attention to that dreadful traffic . . . [and] induced him to dedicate his time and talents, in assisting to put an end to this barbarous commerce."<sup>617</sup> Again, another exemplar's life experience is presented to the students: "Did he not meet with many difficulties in effecting this desirable purpose? Yes; for he had custom, interest, avarice and prejudice to contend with . . . added to these, all his prospects of worldly advantage were cut off by his devoting himself to this pursuit."<sup>618</sup> Clearly the students received assurance that to follow such a path would produce

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<sup>610</sup> Mott, "A Warlike Spirit (6/2/1876)," 381-82.

<sup>611</sup> Mott, "Notes on the Life of Lucretia Mott as Given to Sarah J. Hale."

<sup>612</sup> The Teachers in the Nine Partners Boarding School, "The Following Questions,,"

<sup>613</sup> See Chapter One, background of this study.

<sup>614</sup> The Teachers in the Nine Partners Boarding School, "The Following Questions,," 20.

<sup>615</sup> Ibid.,

<sup>616</sup> Ibid.,

<sup>617</sup> Ibid., 21.

<sup>618</sup> Ibid.,

hardship. Then, the scholars are further treated to Quaker education by being asked in the present moment, "What do you learn from the example of Thomas Clarkson?"<sup>619</sup>

Then, if the students "found themselves unable to give proper answer."<sup>620</sup> Students learned the following:

That zeal and perseverance, in a right cause seldom fail of success: that 'no virtuous effort is ultimately lost;' great good frequently arises from small beginnings; and that the faithfulness of individuals to manifested duty, is a means that Providence often uses to effect his gracious designs.<sup>621</sup>

The text recounted the territories where "all mankind" are considered "free and equal:" New England; the middle states have provided for their gradual emancipation: but in the southern part of the Union, this dreadful evil, and all its baneful effects, prevails to an alarming degree."<sup>622</sup>

The text presented the Friends' position: "at present there are none" who hold slaves,<sup>623</sup> and yet reflected the "difference of opinion"--the inability to reach unity-- that prevented the universal acceptance of refusal to use "articles . . . produced by the labor of slaves"<sup>624</sup> as a testimony of the Society of Friends. Significantly, the statement indicates that the Society of Friends was still in a deliberative state--still threshing this issue--and had not yet reached unity. Thus, young Quakers learned an important lesson: continue to dialogue until unity can be reached.

Young Friends were presented with the perspective that it takes time and involves uncertainty in a process where "a difference of opinion in a matter of so much importance" exists. The text said, "No great revolution can be suddenly effected, it requiring time to wear away the bias of custom, and the prejudice of education."<sup>625</sup> Thus ends consideration of these three Quaker textbooks. Through such youthful schooling, Mezirow suggested, childhood perspectives are "uncritically acquired."<sup>626</sup>

## **Reflection on Childhood Perspectives and Adult Learning**

Mezirow argues that examination of such childhood perspectives<sup>627</sup> can enable transformative learning in adulthood.<sup>628</sup> Presumably, the learning--through a process of examination and reflection--would allow the early acquired perspective to be transformed. Yet, if these "uncritically acquired"<sup>629</sup> perspectives differed from a culture or society's dominant

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<sup>619</sup> Ibid., 22.

<sup>620</sup> The Teachers in the Nine Partners Boarding School, "The Following Questions,."

<sup>621</sup> Ibid., 22.

<sup>622</sup> Ibid.

<sup>623</sup> Ibid.

<sup>624</sup> Ibid., 23.

<sup>625</sup> Ibid.

<sup>626</sup> Mezirow, "How Critical Reflection Triggers Transformative Learning," 3.

<sup>627</sup> Ibid., 3.

<sup>628</sup> Mezirow, "How Critical Reflection Triggers Transformative Learning."

<sup>629</sup> Ibid., 3.

perspectives, they might have provided the opportunity--in adulthood--to examine and reflect on a culture or nation's dominant perspectives. Contrasting values give opportunity for reflection and could result in motivation for change--becoming active in the pursuit of transformation of the learning that dominates a society. To understand the values and perspectives learned by Lucretia Mott through her Quaker education--values and perspectives that contrasted with those that dominated the general culture--is essential to understand her actions in adulthood as she continued to learn and to educate the American populace.

Having established the context of her early life and education, the study moves to consider how Lucretia Mott's extemporaneously delivered sermons and speeches--recorded by stenographers and transcribed through 1846--reflected Friends' perspectives.

### **(C) Examination of Lucretia Mott's Extant Sermons and Speeches to 1846**

Lucretia Mott, in accord with the Friends' practice of speaking only when moved by the Spirit, delivered her sermons and speeches extemporaneously.<sup>630</sup> Therefore, she had no prepared texts and--on some occasions--stenographers recorded and transcribed these addresses. This record of transcribed speeches, compiled and edited by Dana Greene,<sup>631</sup> serves as the source of published primary documents for analysis. About those sermons and speeches, this study seeks to answer the question: How did her public speaking to educate others about the abolition of slavery reflect Friends' principles and practices?

At an early mention in Lucretia's orations of a specific principle or practice, it will receive a sufficiently fully explanation to clarify its significance and distinctiveness in Quaker meaning. Friends' idioms will also be explored. Thereafter, since she repeated some items, for instance her opposition to belief in "human depravity," that item will be explored only once.

### **Lucretia Mott's Speeches Teach about Slavery**

Chapter Three includes twenty-four years of Lucretia Mott's life from age twenty-nine to fifty-three (1822 to 1846). Over these years, no doubt, she spoke in numerous meetings and assemblies. The extant record of her public speaking for this period, however, consists of only three orations delivered extemporaneously. These two sermons and one speech, recorded between 1841 and 1846, nonetheless, provide an excellent opportunity to begin analysis of how her public speaking to educate others about the abolition of slavery reflect Quaker principles and practices.

### **The First Record of What Lucretia Mott Taught**

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<sup>630</sup> As noted in Chapter Two, a characteristic of vocal ministry for Friends is that it is spontaneous and extemporaneously delivered.

<sup>631</sup> Dana Greene compiled and edited the sermons and speeches that stenographers recorded and transcribed. Mott, *Lucretia Mott: Her Complete Speeches and Sermons/edited [with an introduction] by Dana Greene*, serves as the source of published primary documents for analysis.

In Boston, Massachusetts, on September 23, 1841, Lucretia Mott delivered extemporaneously the first of her sermons recorded and transcribed by a stenographer.<sup>632</sup> She was living out one Quaker maxim that urges "Let your life speak." A speaker had to be well known before a stenographer would be engaged to transcribe the talk. The spontaneous delivery of this sermon itself reflected Quaker principles and practices. Friends speak when they feel they have a message to speak, and not before. Lucretia Mott, herself, reflects a Quaker perspective in three ways: a) the minister is a woman in an age dominated by an all-male ministry in non-Quaker denominations; b) this sermon was delivered seven years before the first Woman's Right Convention held in Seneca Falls, New York, in 1848, in an age when most women were barred from speaking publicly in any setting; and c) this woman is speaking authoritatively about matters of consequence to individuals and to society in a culture that barred women's speaking authoritatively by enforced restrictions on educational opportunities. Friends, as we have seen, believed in at least the spiritual equality of all individuals--regardless of sex or race--and in the need for useful education for all.

### **Themes that Teach A Quaker Story**

The principal theme of her first transcribed sermon rests on the scripture that "those who 'fear God, and work righteousness, are accepted of him'."<sup>633</sup> Lucretia Mott considered "the principles and working of righteousness--the willing and the doing good"--<sup>634</sup> to be principles "common to all, and are understood by all."<sup>635</sup> Though she acknowledged "the various creeds and forms,"<sup>636</sup> yet, she urged,

let us not place these above the pure and practical fruits of righteousness. Is not this the reason why these fruits are so few in the world? Look at the low state of public morals; look at the prevalence and the general justification of war, and slavery.<sup>637</sup>

Her alarm is evident when she considered "how the greatest abundance of creeds, and the utmost exactitude in forms, co-exist with them all, and judge ye, whether these are not held up, rather than doing justice and loving mercy."<sup>638</sup> Lucretia Mott's belief in the Friends' practice of practical righteousness, "doing justice" instead of reciting creeds or rituals: action not words.

She reminded her audience that, "'he that doeth righteous is righteous,' of whatever sect or clime."<sup>639</sup> She acknowledged that in Boston, "appeal has often been made to you in behalf of the suffering slave."<sup>640</sup> She then called into view her "practical" righteousness by telling the listeners that "the time has come for you, not merely to listen to them, but to seek the means of aiding in the working of this righteousness."<sup>641</sup> She assured all within listening that, "we all have

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<sup>632</sup> Mott, "The Truth of God . . . The Righteousness of God ( 9/23/1841)."

<sup>633</sup> Mott, "The Truth of God . . . The Righteousness of God ( 9/23/1841)," 25.

<sup>634</sup> Ibid., 26.

<sup>635</sup> Mott, "The Truth of God . . . The Righteousness of God ( 9/23/1841)," 30.

<sup>636</sup> Ibid.

<sup>637</sup> Ibid.

<sup>638</sup> Ibid.

<sup>639</sup> Ibid., 31.

<sup>640</sup> Ibid.

<sup>641</sup> Ibid.

a part of the work to perform, for we are all implicated in the transgression."<sup>642</sup> Then in the tradition of the eighteenth-century Quaker John Woolman, she issued this challenge to see if in their personal lives the listeners weren't benefiting from slave labor and trade, that is, "the transgression."<sup>643</sup>

Let us examine our own clothing--the furniture of our houses--the conducting of trade--the affairs of commerce--and then ask ourselves, whether we have not each, as individuals, a duty which, in some way or other, we are bound to perform."<sup>644</sup>

She asked,

Are there not men and women here, whom these things shall yet constrain to exertion, that they may be remedied? You have pens and voices to commend their cause to others, and to portray their miseries so as to gain sympathy. To how many towns you might go, and awaken their inhabitants to the relief of these sufferings!"<sup>645</sup>

She, in essence, urged others to teach and to be doers of the word, not just hearers.

Lucretia Mott's call for righteousness, that is, "the willing and the doing good" in the process of every day living related to partaking in the fruits of slave labor drew, on long-standing Quaker principles. In particular, the Friends' belief in "that of God" in everyone that precludes valuing one individual--regardless of race or sex--over another and eventually led to the testimony against slavery. As Frost noted, Friends' belief that all persons could "experience God directly"<sup>646</sup> was at odds with "alleged natural inferiority of Blacks."<sup>647</sup> The Friends' testimony of simplicity was reflected in her suggestion to "examine our own clothing--the furniture of our houses"<sup>648</sup> to see if our desires for extravagant luxuries or inexpensive commodities benefited from slave labor provided evidence of Friends' ideas and practices related to the abolition of slavery.

Lucretia Mott suggested that her listeners consider if "forms and ordinances" have taken on more importance than "the inner sense which all possess." The Friends' central tenet is belief in the Light Within each person, "that of God" in everyone. As documented in Chapter Two, Friends believed that the ultimate authority for each person is the guidance of the Inner Light--that of God--in each person. Lucretia suggested,

It becomes us to inquire, whether the plain precepts and principles, which find a response in the soul of every human being, are confirmed by the inner sense which all possess, and which have not their origin in any sect, or body, or division, have not thereby been thought of less importance than forms and ordinances."<sup>649</sup>

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<sup>642</sup> Ibid.

<sup>643</sup> Ibid.

<sup>644</sup> Mott, "The Truth of God . . . The Righteousness of God ( 9/23/1841)," 31-32.

<sup>645</sup> Ibid., 32.

<sup>646</sup> *The Quaker Origins of Antislavery Edited with an Introduction by J. William Frost*, 2.

<sup>647</sup> Ibid.

<sup>648</sup> Mott, "The Truth of God . . . The Righteousness of God ( 9/23/1841)," 31.

<sup>649</sup> Mott, "The Truth of God . . . The Righteousness of God ( 9/23/1841)," 26.

She summarized her belief, her hope, and her message: "the principles of righteousness can be carried out through the land, and that we show our reverence for God by the respect we pay his children,"<sup>650</sup> the practical Quaker religious faith.

### **An Opportunity to Learn**

The relationship between the consequences of "educational prejudices," which Lucretia Mott introduced in this sermon, gave listeners an opportunity to reflect on their own beliefs and actions--and to learn. The concern about "educational prejudices" is reminiscent of her Nine Partners school text that taught, "No great revolution can be suddenly effected, it requiring time to wear away the bias of custom, and the prejudice of education."<sup>651</sup>

This Quaker preacher through a series of questions--a very Quaker practice, as seen in Chapter Two-- in her sermon offered the hearers an opportunity to compare and contrast systems of belief that she said may require the setting aside of "educational prejudices and sectarian predilections."<sup>652</sup> She asked,

What is it to work righteousness? What is the situation of most sects? What is their standard of righteousness? What evidence do they require of the fear of God? Is it not a confession of some creed, or a joining of some denomination? And have not many thus blended the fear of God and the working of righteousness with outward and ceremonial rites.<sup>653</sup>

Lucretia Mott asked listeners to consider if the substitution of religious words and ceremonies for righteous actions resulted in "a lowering of the standard of peace and righteousness, and of common honesty?"<sup>654</sup>

### **Educating Adults about Learning by Public Discussion**

Lucretia Mott, at the Unitarian Convention in Washington, D.C. in 1843, presented listeners with the idea that "It is considered a delicate subject to speak of the slaveholder . . . . [She asks] Is there not a fear as regards the question of slavery, a fear to permit it to be examined? She set forth her belief that "more mouths should be opened upon this subject . . . . [In the Nation's Capital she urged: Oh ye statesmen! . . . fear not to speak aloud, fear not to discuss this subject in your public councils."<sup>655</sup> At a time when the "gag rule" enabled Congress to table--without discussion--all citizen petitions that favored abolition of slavery, Lucretia advocated for public discussion. The idea of talking and expressing thought until unity is reached is a Quaker way.

### **Teaching A Different Idea about Slavery as an Endorsed Institution**

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<sup>650</sup> Ibid., 34.

<sup>651</sup> The Teachers in the Nine Partners Boarding School, "The Following Questions,," 23.

<sup>652</sup> Mott, "The Truth of God . . . The Righteousness of God ( 9/23/1841)," 25.

<sup>653</sup> Ibid., 26.

<sup>654</sup> Mott, "The Truth of God . . . The Righteousness of God ( 9/23/1841)," 26.

<sup>655</sup> Mott, "Righteousness Gives Respect to Its Possessor (1/15/1843)," 44-46.



In 1846, at a Unitarian Convention in Philadelphia, this Quaker minister's speech drew on the Friends' belief in ongoing Revelation--beyond the text of the Bible--that allowed the Friends' to develop a testimony against slavery while other Christian ministers were still "quoting texts of Scripture to prove slavery a patriarchal institution!"<sup>656</sup>

As Frost noted, Friends' belief that all persons could "experience God directly"<sup>657</sup> was at odds with "alleged natural inferiority of Blacks"<sup>658</sup> as was the "popular doctrine of human depravity"<sup>659</sup> espoused by other religious denominations--particularly in the Second Great Awakening's spread of evangelical Christianity. This theme of disbelief in human depravity threaded through many of Lucretia Mott's sermons and speeches.<sup>660</sup>

These three extemporaneous addresses provided the opportunity for this study's initial analysis of Lucretia's extant remarks for evidence of how her public speaking to educate adults about the abolition of slavery reflected Quaker principles and practices. Therefore, the study now turns to the examination of another research question: What did Lucretia Mott encounter in her work as a nineteenth-century female Quaker minister who educated adults about societal and ethical concerns through speaking in public forums?

#### **(D) Quaker Minister Lucretia Mott Educates Through Speaking Publicly about the Abolition of Slavery**

In 1818, during a [meeting for worship](#) at Philadelphia's 12th Street Meeting of the Society of Friends, Lucretia Coffin Mott first spoke publicly. She prayed:

As all our efforts to resist temptation and overcome the world prove fruitless unless aided by thy Holy Spirit, enable us to approach thy throne, to ask of Thee the blessing of thy preservation from all evil, that we may be wholly devoted to Thee, and thy glorious cause.<sup>661</sup>

Six decades later, among thousands gathered to bury Lucretia Mott, one mourner asked, "Will no one say anything?" Another replied, "Who can speak? The preacher is dead!"<sup>662</sup> This section illuminates Quaker minister Lucretia Mott's work from 1822 to 1846 as she sought to educate the public about the abolition of slavery.

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<sup>656</sup> Mott, "To Speak Out the Truth (10/20/1846)," 55.

<sup>657</sup> *The Quaker Origins of Antislavery Edited with an Introduction by J. William Frost*, 2.

<sup>658</sup> Ibid.

<sup>659</sup> Mott, "Notes on the Life of Lucretia Mott as Given to Sarah J. Hale."

<sup>660</sup> For instance, see Lucretia Mott, "Unity of Spirit in the Bond of Peace [9/2/1849]," in *Lucretia Mott: Her Complete Speeches and Sermons/Edited [with an Introduction] by Dana Greene. Studies in Women and Religion, Vol. 4* (New York: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1980), 97,99; Mott, "Keep Yourselves from Idols (3/17/1850)," 177; Lucretia Mott, "Religious Aspects of the Age (1/3/1869)," in *Lucretia Mott: Her Complete Speeches and Sermons/Edited [with an Introduction] by Dana Greene. Studies in Women and Religion, Vol. 4* (New York: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1980), 318; Mott, "A Warlike Spirit (6/2/1876)," 381-82.

<sup>661</sup> *James and Lucretia Mott: Life and Letters. Edited by Their Granddaughter, Anna Davis Hallowell.* (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin and Company, 1884), 62.

<sup>662</sup> *James and Lucretia Mott: Life and Letters. Edited by their Granddaughter, Anna Davis Hallowell.*, 466.

Lucretia Mott recalled her entrance into ministry:

In 1818, at 25 years of age surrounded with a little family and many cares, I still felt called to a more public life of devotion to duty . . . & engaged in the ministry in our Society. My convictions led me to adhere to the sufficiency of the light within us resting on [Truth](#) as authority--rather than "taking authority for truth."<sup>663</sup>

She continued to speak over the years. And, in January 1821, at the age of 28, she was recorded by the Society of Friends as a minister,<sup>664</sup> a lifetime-recognition of her calling, spiritual wisdom, and vocal gifts. To understand Lucretia Mott, one biographer said, "It must be remembered, that deeply interested as she was in every cause that could better humanity, she was, before all, a Friend."<sup>665</sup>

### Learning on Many Levels

In the five years from 1823 to 1828, James and Lucretia Mott had three more children.<sup>666</sup> In her biographical sketch, Lucretia told how she managed her time to do the reading she loved:

My life in the domestic sphere has passed much as that of other wives and mothers in this country. I have had 6 children. One son died at 3 years of age. Not accustomed to consigning them to the care of a nurse, I was much confined to them, during their infancy & childhood. Being fond of reading, I omitted much unnecessary stitching and ornamental work in the sewing for my family, so that I might have more time for this indulgence, and for the improvement of the mind. For novels & light reading, I never had much taste. The Ladies Department in the Periodicals of the day had no attraction for me.<sup>667</sup>

Threaded through her letters are references to books: read, recommended, loaned, delivered, and requested.<sup>668</sup> Reading across various subjects of interest remained a lifelong source of learning for Lucretia. In a letter to her husband's grandfather, James Mott, Sr. she recounts some of her reading material:

Phila. 6<sup>th</sup> mo. 29<sup>th</sup>, 1822. I have re-perused thy book on Education since our return, and hope its instructive contents will be usefully remembered by me. We are now engaged in reading 'Southey's Life of Wesley, with the Rise and Progress of Methodism'.<sup>669</sup>

James Mott, Sr., who was also a Public Friend, had served as headmaster at Nine Partners during Lucretia's schooling. His book<sup>670</sup> advocated against the use of corporal punishment for children,

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<sup>663</sup> Mott, "Notes on the Life of Lucretia Mott as Given to Sarah J. Hale."

<sup>664</sup> Bacon, *Valiant Friend*, 37.

<sup>665</sup> *James and Lucretia Mott: Life and Letters. Edited by their Granddaughter, Anna Davis Hallowell.*, 110.

<sup>666</sup> *Ibid.*, 91.

<sup>667</sup> Mott, "Notes on the Life of Lucretia Mott as Given to Sarah J. Hale."

<sup>668</sup> A project beyond the scope of this study, but one of merit for the future, would be an annotated bibliography-- a "virtual library"--of Lucretia Mott's reading catalogued from her letters. What might women, anyone, concerned for adult education and for social justice learn? For an initial survey see Cromwell, *Lucretia Mott*, 28.

<sup>669</sup> *James and Lucretia Mott: Life and Letters. Edited by their Granddaughter, Anna Davis Hallowell.*, 78.

supported the education of women, and recommended that students be motivated to learn by reliance on example and a high degree of expectation.

### Learning from Reading Useful in Speaking Publicly

During these child-rearing/early ministry years, Lucretia absorbed William Penn's writings of which she had a "folio copy."<sup>671</sup> According to her granddaughter, "... with her baby on her lap, she would study the passages that had especially attracted her attention, till she had them stored in her retentive memory."<sup>672</sup> In her preaching, Lucretia used Penn's Quaker classics, according to her granddaughter, "to illustrate, or confirm, the views she advanced. This familiarity with venerated authorities often served her in good stead in the contests drawn upon her by fault-finding critics."<sup>673</sup> For example, consider this story her granddaughter relayed about Lucretia:<sup>674</sup>

She was visited by two Elders (women) . . . who said that 'Friends' had sometimes been unable to unite fully with the views she advanced, . . . particularly . . . with an expression used by her . . . in Meeting on the previous First-day; they could not exactly remember the sentence, but it was something about 'notions of Christ.' She repeated the entire sentence, 'Men are to be judged by their likeness to Christ, rather than by their notions of Christ,' asking if that was the one they had objected to. On their saying it was, she quietly informed them that it was a quotation from their honored William Penn. The Friends again sat in silence a few minutes, then arose and went their way.<sup>675</sup>

Reading, children, and the Separation of 1827<sup>676</sup> among Friends overlay Lucretia Mott's concerns in the next years. In light of the later discussions about the right of free speech, it is interesting to note here that Margaret Bacon says, the Separation developed over Elias Hicks' "right to speak" in Quaker meetings.<sup>677</sup>

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<sup>670</sup> Sr. Mott, James, *Observations on Education* (1797).

<sup>671</sup> *James and Lucretia Mott: Life and Letters. Edited by their Granddaughter, Anna Davis Hallowell.*, 91.

<sup>672</sup> *Ibid.*,

<sup>673</sup> *James and Lucretia Mott: Life and Letters. Edited by their Granddaughter, Anna Davis Hallowell.*, 91.

<sup>674</sup> See also Bacon, *Valiant Friend*, 37.

<sup>675</sup> *James and Lucretia Mott: Life and Letters. Edited by their Granddaughter, Anna Davis Hallowell.*, 91.

<sup>676</sup> This subject--also beyond the scope of this study--in Hallowell's treatment notes that "It will only be necessary to state that what is known as the liberal party [Hicksites] was that with which James and Lucretia Mott sympathized, as the one whose sentiments and principles accorded more with their own, and, in their opinion, with those of George Fox, William Penn, and other 'early Friends' ", *James and Lucretia Mott: Life and Letters. Edited by their Granddaughter, Anna Davis Hallowell.*, 98. Thomas D. Hamm provides a helpful and brief synopsis of historical perspective, "Taking their name from the Long Island minister Elias Hicks, their best-known leader, they tended to de-emphasize the authority of Scripture and the divinity of Christ, emphasizing instead the traditional Quaker doctrine of the Inward Light of Christ. Some historians have argued that Hicksite Friends were generally less prosperous and less successful in adapting to the emerging market economy than their Orthodox opponents. Others have emphasized questions of power and authority, with the Hicksites as traditional Friends resisting the encroachments of evangelical religious culture" cited in Hamm, "Hicksite Quakers and the Antebellum Nonresistance Movement," 557. For a full treatment see H. Larry Ingle, *Quakers in Conflict: The Hicksite Reformation* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1986); Hugh Barbour and J. William Frost, *The Quakers* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1988).

<sup>677</sup> Bacon, *Valiant Friend*, 44.

## Living Out the Lessons of Justice

From the early 1820s to about 1830, the Motts were busy with their young family and with living out their Quaker beliefs. James earned the family's livelihood during this period from a business that included "the sale of cotton."<sup>678</sup> Their family's livelihood and "Elias Hicks' powerful preaching against any voluntary participation with slavery" brought a disquieting dilemma to the young couple.

Margaret Bacon well described the process through which these two deeply spiritual young Friends--James and Lucretia--might feel called to different actions as a result of their earnest prayer. Bacon says, "By minding the Light within--the Inward Light that illuminated their consciences--one could learn where one's duty lay. Then it was just a matter of obedience."<sup>679</sup> In a letter, Lucretia described her decision to renounce use of slave-produced products :

About the year 1825, feeling called to the gospel of Christ, and submitting to this call, and feeling all the peace attendant on submission, I strove to live in obedience to manifest duty. Going one day to our meeting, in a disposition to do that to which I might feel myself called, most unexpectedly to myself the duty was impressed upon my mind to abstain from the products of slave labor, knowing that Elias Hicks long, long before had done this . . . . It was like parting with the right hand, or the right eye, but when I left the meeting I yielded to the obligation, and then, for nearly forty years whatever I did was under the conviction, that it was wrong to partake of the products of slave labor.<sup>680</sup>

James, on the other hand, wrestled with renouncing slave-labor products. For him, that would include giving up his cotton-selling business from which his family derived support. By 1830, James was no longer dealing in cotton but sold woolen goods.<sup>681</sup> During this time, also, James and Lucretia Mott joined the Philadelphia Monthly Meeting in the newly built Meetinghouse on Cherry Street under the "reorganized Yearly Meeting"<sup>682</sup> of what came to be called the Hicksite Quakers.

## The Learning Context of Yearly Meeting for Lucretia Mott

The [Yearly Meeting](#) of Women Friends to which Lucretia Mott belonged after the Separation convened in Philadelphia from the "15<sup>th</sup> of the 10<sup>th</sup> Month, 1827."<sup>683</sup> The Yearly Meeting's [minutes](#) suggest many educational components integral to the organization and methods of the Society of Friends.<sup>684</sup> This is one important--in fact, foundational--context in which Lucretia Mott continued to learn and to educate during this period of her adult life.

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<sup>678</sup> *James and Lucretia Mott: Life and Letters. Edited by their Granddaughter, Anna Davis Hallowell.*, 86.

<sup>679</sup> Bacon, *Valiant Friend*, 14.

<sup>680</sup> *James and Lucretia Mott: Life and Letters. Edited by their Granddaughter, Anna Davis Hallowell.*, 86-87.

<sup>681</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>682</sup> *Ibid.*, 98.

<sup>683</sup> Women's Meeting Philadelphia Yearly Meeting (Hicksite), (Friends Historical Library, 1827-1842), 1.

<sup>684</sup> Remember, an individual joins with other Friends in a monthly meeting, the smallest unit of Quaker membership. From a number of Monthly Meetings representatives meet Quarterly for business of the several meetings. Then, Friends represent the several Quarterly Meetings at the Yearly Meeting level. Each level is representative and those

Minutes record the opportunities for women ministers and elders to meet together with men ministers and elders for deliberation about the care of the Yearly Meeting--such opportunities to meet with men as ministerial equals were not available to women outside the Society of Friends.<sup>685</sup> Philadelphia Women Friends composed--and sent to distant Yearly Meetings in New York, Ohio, Indiana, and Baltimore--Epistles that informed other Friends across large distances about their condition. The procedure for such Epistles suggests some of the ways this exercise can be educational.

The Epistles would be composed by a Committee and reported to the assembled Representatives in the Yearly Meeting, and would "have been read, and with some alterations united with by the meeting and directed to be signed by the Clerk on behalf thereof."<sup>686</sup> The opportunity to collaboratively compose and shape the Epistles provided experiential learning and skill development. Epistles, at times, received wide circulation: "six thousand copies of the Epistles, and five hundred of the Extracts of last year, printed and distributed."<sup>687</sup> Philadelphia Friends met with visiting Friends from distant Yearly Meetings.<sup>688</sup>

The women also accounted for the funds, what they referred to as their "stock." For example, the minutes record, "Contributions to the Yearly Meeting Stock have been received from all the Quarterly Meetings, amounting to one hundred sixty seven dollars, fourteen and a half. Cts..<sup>689</sup> On another occasion, "The committee to collect the Annual Subscription, and on account of Sufferings in support of our Testimony against War, reported having collected and paid to our Treasurer, 1037 Dollars 25 cents; and that no cases of Sufferings had come to their knowledge."<sup>690</sup>

The Yearly Meeting of Women Friends in March 1830 further recognized Lucretia Mott's abilities. After deliberating, Quarterly Meeting Representatives reported to the Yearly Meeting that,

they agreed to propose the name of Lucretia Mott for [clerk](#) and Lydia L. Lundy for assistant clerk, with which this meeting expressing unity they are appointed to those stations for the present year.<sup>691</sup>

And, in 1832, she was appointed Assistant Clerk.<sup>692</sup>

For three of the following four years,<sup>693</sup> the Yearly Meeting of Women Friends appointed Lucretia as Clerk. In 1835, Lucretia visited Nantucket. According to Leach and Gow, she

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who represent the Quarterly Meetings conduct the business of Friends in a large geographic area in the Yearly Meeting. The methods for Meeting for Business are identical at each level.

<sup>685</sup> Women's Meeting Philadelphia Yearly Meeting (Hicksite).

<sup>686</sup> Ibid.

<sup>687</sup> Women's Meeting Philadelphia Yearly Meeting (Hicksite).

<sup>688</sup> Visitors such as Friend Edward Stabler from Alexandria, Virginia as recorded in Women's Meeting Philadelphia Yearly Meeting (Hicksite).

<sup>689</sup> Women's Meeting Philadelphia Yearly Meeting (Hicksite).

<sup>690</sup> Monthly Meeting of Friends of Philadelphia, "Minutes" (Friends Historical Library, 12th 18/33 to 12/22/1841, 1833-1841), 431.

<sup>691</sup> Women's Meeting Philadelphia Yearly Meeting (Hicksite).

<sup>692</sup> Ibid.

"filled four appointed meetings and two meetings for worship--including one to which she specifically invited all African-American islanders."<sup>694</sup> This extended service as Clerk occurred while other developments gained the nation's attention. For example, women--as evidenced by Maria Stewart's 1821 address,<sup>695</sup> Frances Wright's 1828 speech,<sup>696</sup> and Angelina Grimke's 1838 legislative testimony<sup>697</sup>--began to claim the right to speak on matters of importance in the public domain. In the 1830s, slavery and its abolition rose as significant matters in the public domain.

### Transformed Learning about Slavery at the Outset of Ministry

Hallowell, the granddaughter and editor of the first published letters of Lucretia Mott,<sup>698</sup> suggested a transformation or heightening of Lucretia's consciousness of slavery and the resolve of her will to act against it:

the question of slavery had engaged her attention . . . only so far as Quaker tradition imposed that duty upon all conscientious minds. But in the severe mental discipline of the Separation . . . Her whole spiritual vision widened, and she beheld directly before her extended fields of labor . . . . To see, with her, was to do.<sup>699</sup>

According to Hallowell, Lucretia Mott accompanied Quaker minister Sarah Zane "in a religious visit to Virginia. They travelled in Sarah Zane's private carriage, and together attended many meetings."<sup>700</sup> Lucretia wrote of that trip during which she began to learn experientially about slavery as she witnessed for the first time its horrors:

12<sup>th</sup> mo. 15<sup>th</sup> 1819. I have not many fine traveller's stories to relate. We took the direct road . . . . We met with many clever Friends in and near Winchester . . . . It was the time for their Quarterly Mg at Hopewell . . . which we attended, and there met Edward Stabler<sup>701</sup> and wife . . . . We lodged at the same house, and sat up very late to hear him talk. The sight of the poor slaves was indeed affecting; though in that neighborhood, we were told their situation was rendered less deplorable, by kind treatment from their masters.<sup>702</sup>

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<sup>693</sup> Lucretia Mott also served as Clerk in 1833 Women's Meeting Philadelphia Yearly Meeting (Hicksite), in 1834 Women's Meeting Philadelphia Yearly Meeting (Hicksite), and in 1836 Women's Meeting Philadelphia Yearly Meeting (Hicksite).

<sup>694</sup> Leach and Gow, *Quaker Nantucket*, 171.

<sup>695</sup> L. Perkins, *Black Women and Racial 'Uplift' Prior to Emancipation* in F. Steady, *The Black Woman Cross-Culturally* (Cambridge MA: Schenkman) 317-333 cited by Ross-Gordon and Dowling, "Adult Learning in the Context of African-American Women's Voluntary Organizations," 236.

<sup>696</sup> For instance see Yoakam, "Women's Introduction to the American Platform," 157; Oliver, *History of Public Speaking in America*, 438.

<sup>697</sup> Matthews, "Consciousness of Self and Consciousness of Sex in Antebellum Feminism," 67.

<sup>698</sup> *James and Lucretia Mott: Life and Letters. Edited by their Granddaughter, Anna Davis Hallowell.*

<sup>699</sup> *Ibid.*, 110.

<sup>700</sup> *Ibid.*, 69.

<sup>701</sup> Lucretia would again meet Edward Stabler while he visited the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting when she was Clerk of the Women's Meeting.

<sup>702</sup> *James and Lucretia Mott: Life and Letters. Edited by their Granddaughter, Anna Davis Hallowell.*, 69.

Unimaginable as it seems, by 1830, one sixth of the total population of the United States was enslaved: two million individuals. Only about 320,000 black Americans were free.<sup>703</sup> Countless other Americans were involved or benefited--jobs, a sense of superiority or blessing, cheap goods, lower-cost foods--from the slave system. Slavery seemed to be a tendon holding together the nation or its economy. Despite this, the 1830s saw individuals and organizations arise to work in myriad ways for the abolition of slavery.

### Adults Educate and Learn about Slavery and its Abolition from Newspapers

Lucretia Mott, beginning in the early years of her ministry, shared a source of much learning with other adults:<sup>704</sup> the newspapers of the times. For instance, she learned abolition news from another Quaker, Benjamin Lundy, the editor of the first antislavery newspaper, *The Genius of Universal Emancipation*, advocating "immediate emancipation" for slaves.<sup>705</sup> 1828 saw the initiation of William Lloyd Garrison as *The Genius'* co-editor. In 1831, Garrison founded *The Liberator*<sup>706</sup> that, as previously mentioned, frequently published differing views submitted by publishers of other newspapers. In addition, as her correspondence makes clear, both Benjamin Lundy and William Lloyd Garrison were personal friends of the Motts. Thus, it is significant that the printing innovations made newspaper publishing easier and information more accessible to adults. Among the abolition papers was *Freedom's Journal*, the first black newspaper founded by Samuel Cornish and John Russworm in 1827 in New York City. Lucretia Mott recognized the educational work of such newspapers:

The labors of the devoted Benjm. Lundy and his "Genius of Universal Emancipation" published in Baltimore, added to the uniting exertions of Clarkson, Wilberforce, and others in England, and of William Lloyd Garrison in Boston, prepared the way for a Convention in this City in 1833--to take the ground of immediate not gradual emancipation, and to impress the duty of unconditional liberty without expatriation the following year, the Philad Female Anti-slavery Society was formed.<sup>707</sup>

During this first part of the 1830s the Motts corresponded with Benjamin Lundy who assured them of his "strong hopes of ultimate success . . . ."<sup>708</sup> In context, it would be another quarter-century before the first appearance in 1851-52, of the first serially published installments of Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. The printed word, however, was but one of the way adults learned about slavery and educated about its abolition. Freedom of expression was one of the republican ideals in the American Constitution.

### Learning to Practice Republican Ideals and Religious Beliefs

Civilly, the efforts of those opposed to slavery rested on the Bill of Rights, the Constitution's first amendment that included as rights freedom of the press, the right to petition

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<sup>703</sup> Goodheart and Hawkins, "Introduction," XXXI.

<sup>704</sup> For further information see Stubblefield Harold W. and Patrick Keane, *Adult Education in the American Experience*, 63.

<sup>705</sup> *The Quaker Origins of Antislavery Edited with an Introduction by J. William Frost*, 27.

<sup>706</sup> Ibid., 26-27.

<sup>707</sup> Mott, "Notes on the Life of Lucretia Mott as Given to Sarah J. Hale."

<sup>708</sup> *James and Lucretia Mott: Life and Letters. Edited by their Granddaughter, Anna Davis Hallowell.*, 119.

Congress, and freedom of speech. The practice of these rights was challenged in this decade. Efforts centered not on advocating the system of slavery but on silencing all who would speak of any way to abolish--gradually or immediately--the entrenched system of slavery. According to Aileen S. Kraditor,

abolitionists had had to fight constantly for the freedom to advocate their cause, and in the course of the battle had learned, and proclaimed, that free speech and slavery could not coexist for long in any society; the spirit that would cut off free speech was the spirit of slavery.<sup>709</sup>

Civil rights motivated some. Nevertheless, many were motivated, as were the Quakers, by religious beliefs.

Speaking freely from one's knowledge or experience has been, from its beginning, an essential component of Quaker spirituality. One is reminded of the critical questions posed by the first Friend to preach, George Fox: "What canst thou say? . . . and what thou speakest is it inwardly from God?"<sup>710</sup> In these struggles to be heard about the abolition of slavery, many Friends responded to *The Liberator* newspaper editor William Lloyd Garrison's call to assemble in convention at Philadelphia in December 1833, "for the purpose of forming a National Anti-Slavery Society."<sup>711</sup> Though attentive to abolition efforts, Lucretia Mott did not attend the first day's assembly. Why? As was customary, only men were expected to answer Garrison's call. On the horizon, however, was an historic moment: women received an invitation from the convention. Lucretia Mott was among the few women who responded to the invitation.

## **Educating in a Receptive Environment**

Lucretia Mott recalled that first American Anti-Slavery Society's second day of Convention when a delegate went to the Mott home "with an invitation to women to come there as spectators or as listeners."<sup>712</sup> <sup>713</sup> She accepted the invitation and during the Convention, as Carolyn L. Williams' notes, "Lucretia Mott was the first woman to speak out"<sup>714</sup> though Esther Moore and Lydia White also participated in the proceedings.<sup>715</sup> Lucretia recollected the event:

When I rose to speak, with the knowledge that we were there by sufferance, and it would be only a liberty granted that I should attempt to express myself, such was the readiness with which that freedom was granted, that it inspired me with a little more boldness to speak on other subjects.<sup>716</sup>

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<sup>709</sup> Aileen S. Kraditor, *Means and Ends in American Abolitionism: Garrison and His Critics on Strategy and Tactics, 1834-1850* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1967, 1969), 62.

<sup>710</sup> The Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in Britain, *Quaker Faith and Practice*, 19.07.

<sup>711</sup> American Anti-Slavery Society, "Proceedings," American Anti-Slavery Society, at Its Third Decade (New York: American Anti-Slavery Society, 3rd and 4th/December, 1863).

<sup>712</sup> The status of women at the founding Convention of the American Anti-Slavery Society will be discussed in Chapter Four.

<sup>713</sup> American Anti-Slavery Society, "Proceedings," 42.

<sup>714</sup> Carolyn L. Williams, "Religion, Race and Gender in Antebellum American Radicalism: The Philadelphia Female Anti-Slavery Society, 1833-1870," diss (University of California, Los Angeles, 1991), 180.

<sup>715</sup> Ibid.

<sup>716</sup> American Anti-Slavery Society, "Proceedings," 42.



During deliberations of the draft of the Convention's Declaration of Sentiments, Lucretia Mott, by then forty years old, and--from the Friends' meetings-- well practiced at speaking publicly and participating in deliberations, offered what could be considered a point of grammar but, more importantly, a point of principle. She recalled that:

When . . . we were considering our principles and our intended measures of action; when our friends felt that they were planting themselves on the truths of Divine Revelation, and on the Declaration of Independence, as an Everlasting Rock, it seemed to me, as I heard it read, that the climax would be better to transpose the sentence, and place the Declaration of Independence first, and the truths of Divine Revelation last, as the Everlasting Rock; and I proposed it<sup>717</sup>

As she recalled this incident thirty years later, the audience's delight and amusement registered in laughter, as noted in the Proceedings, no doubt in recognition of the changes in American culture that had occurred over the three decades since that incident. For, as Lucretia recalled, when she spoke at the 1833 Convention one young delegate turned "to see what woman there was there who knew what the word 'transpose,' meant."<sup>718</sup>

J. Miller McKim, by his own account distinctive only by "being the youngest member of the body"<sup>719</sup> also recalled that first meeting. He said, "There were some sixty or seventy delegates present, and a few spectators, who had been especially invited."<sup>720</sup> The sixty or seventy were all men and the spectators were "Lucretia Mott, Esther Moore, Lydia White, [and] Sidney Ann Lewis."<sup>721</sup> McKim commenting on Lucretia's remarks said, "I had never before heard a woman speak at a public meeting."<sup>722</sup>

This Convention adopted resolutions urging, "That the cause of Abolition eminently deserves the countenance and support of American women . . . [and] that we hail the establishment of Ladies' Anti-Slavery Societies as the harbinger of a brighter day."<sup>723</sup> Within a week, Lucretia Mott and over one hundred women met and on December 9, 1833, formed the Philadelphia Female Anti-Slavery Society (PFASS).<sup>724</sup>

### Lucretia Mott Begins to Learn another Way to Meet for Business

In recalling that initial meeting, Lucretia Mott--who served as PFASS President<sup>725</sup> for most of its thirty-six years<sup>726</sup> --mused on the differences between Quaker and non-Quaker ways. She said, "I had no idea of the meaning of preambles, and resolutions, and votings. Women had

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<sup>717</sup> Ibid.

<sup>718</sup> Ibid.

<sup>719</sup> Ibid., 37.

<sup>720</sup> Ibid., 34.

<sup>721</sup> American Anti-Slavery Society, "Proceedings," 40.

<sup>722</sup> Ibid., 36.

<sup>723</sup> Ibid., 41.

<sup>724</sup> Williams, "Religion, Race and Gender," 184-86.

<sup>725</sup> *James and Lucretia Mott: Life and Letters. Edited by their Granddaughter, Anna Davis Hallowell.*, 127.

<sup>726</sup> Ibid., 121.

never been in any assemblies of the kind . . . . I had attended only one convention . . . and that was the first time in my life I had ever heard a vote taken . . . being accustomed to our Quaker way of getting the prevailing sentiment of the meeting."<sup>727</sup> Carolyn L. Williams' dissertation<sup>728</sup> "entails a detailed investigation" for the entire period of PFASS's existence, 1833-1870, and is the only extensive, scholarly study undertaken to date of a female anti-slavery society. Public speaking by women in the 1830s was but one aspect that arose regarding free expression in consideration of issues. Challenges to the right to speak freely and publicly involved both men and women.

## **Learning from the Elimination of Public Discussion**

Instances of challenges to public discussion abound in the history of the 1830s. For instance, the history of how Lyceum lecturer<sup>729</sup> and abolitionist speaker Wendell Phillips left a career in the law to advocate the exercise of free speech appeared in *Harper's Weekly* at Phillips' death:

When the Boston 'Broadcloth Mob'--so called because it was instigated and led by men of high social position--broke up an antislavery meeting in October, 1835, and dragged WILLIAM LLOYD GARRISON through the street with a rope round his waist, the disgraceful scene was witnessed by WENDELL PHILLIPS, then a young graduate of Harvard, and recently admitted to the bar . . . . The sight of this dastardly outrage upon the right of free speech so stirred his blood that he determined to devote his life to the great cause of human liberty.<sup>730</sup>

The issue of who could speak publicly and what could be discussed in the meeting divided many anti-slavery organizations in this decade.<sup>731</sup> More than members of abolition groups sought restraints on free discussion--even at a time when the Lyceum was flourishing. Another instance, the history of The Pennsylvania Hall in Philadelphia, provides an opportunity to examine more closely an episode that was significant in the life of Lucretia Mott.

## **Educating the Public in Philadelphia**

Opposition to the public discussion of slavery and its abolition became so widespread that, in Philadelphia, no space--church or Quaker Meetinghouse--could be secured for that purpose. So came the proposal to construct a building where discussion could take place. The Mott's were among those "raising money"<sup>732</sup> for Pennsylvania Hall. In the Spring of 1838--between May 14<sup>th</sup> and May 17<sup>th</sup>--the building was first dedicated with a large crowd and, then, destroyed by a mob. Histories seem to record that the mob raged only against abolitionists. The documents of the building's management make clear, however, that this building was intended and used for more than abolition.

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<sup>727</sup> Ibid.

<sup>728</sup> Williams, "Religion, Race and Gender."

<sup>729</sup> See Stubblefield Harold W. and Patrick Keane, *Adult Education in the American Experience*, 88, 92.

<sup>730</sup> "Wendell Phillips," *Harper's Weekly*, Vol. XXVIII, No. 1416, 9/2 1884, 97.

<sup>731</sup> To gain an appreciation of these factors see Kraditor, *Means and Ends in American Abolitionism*; Goodheart and Hawkins, "Introduction."

<sup>732</sup> Bacon, *Valiant Friend*, 75.

## The Pennsylvania Hall Dedicated to Free Discussion

The Hall's dedication began with the following announcement:

A number of individuals of all sects, and those of no sect--of all parties, and those of no party--being desirous that the citizens of Philadelphia should possess a room, wherein the principles of Liberty, and Equality of Civil Rights, could be freely discussed, and the evils of slavery fearlessly portrayed, have erected this building, which are now about to dedicate to Liberty and the Rights of Man . . . . The building is not to be used for Anti-Slavery purposes alone. It will be rented from time to time, in such portions as shall best suit applicants, for any purpose not of an immoral character. It is called 'Pennsylvania Hall,' in reference to the principles of Pennsylvania; and our motto like that of the commonwealth is 'Virtue, Liberty, and Independence'.<sup>733</sup>

Some of the speeches of the three-day celebration of the Hall's dedication reflect the Hall's directors' intention to foster, beyond the topic of abolition, free discussion. For example, an address on Temperance was delivered, Lewis C. Gunn, of Philadelphia, extemporaneously addressed the audience on the "Right of Free Discussion," and Charles C. Burleigh spoke on the subject of "Indian wrongs."<sup>734</sup> Furthermore, The Philadelphia Lyceum held exercises over a two-day period.

## The Philadelphia Lyceum Educates in Pennsylvania Hall

The Minutes of the Pennsylvania Hall Association, the group dedicated to raising funds and constructing the Hall, record the interest of the Philadelphia Lyceum:

A communication was laid before The board . . . from James Bryan, M.D. President, P.T. of The Philadelphia Lyceum<sup>735</sup> requesting to know whether there would be an apartment in the proposed Pennsylvania Hall to lease permanently and if the grand Saloon could be obtained for the use of The Lyceum on ea. 7<sup>th</sup> day afternoon throughout the year.<sup>736</sup> [Another entry inquired about the Lyceum's renting] the Lecture room for every Second Seventh Day in the month excepting the eighth month from three o'clock until Sundown -

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<sup>733</sup> Samuel Webb, *History of Pennsylvania Hall, Which Was Destroyed by a Mob, on the 17th of May, 1838*. (Philadelphia: Merrihew and Gunn, 1838), 6.

<sup>734</sup> Webb, *History of Pennsylvania Hall*.

<sup>735</sup> Laura E. Beardsley, of The Historical Society of Pennsylvania wrote to advise the researcher, "The Minute Book of the Board of Managers of the Pennsylvania Hall Association include several mentions of the Lyceum [photocopies enclosed] . . . . Unfortunately, I was less successful locating information on the Philadelphia Lyceum. I found no references to the organization in any of our card catalogs, including both library and manuscript materials. I found a few brief references in secondary sources . . . . I have also searched the holdings of the Library Company of Philadelphia for . . . the Lyceum, without result." The Historical Society's building is in restoration and closed to outside researchers until July, 1999. Data may be accessed only through requesting paid research from the Historical Society itself. The information supplied was in response to researcher's request for information on The Philadelphia Lyceum. The Historical Society of Pennsylvania, Letter from Laura E. Beardsley (Philadelphia, PA, Jan. 4, 1999).

<sup>736</sup> Board of Managers, "Minute Book," AM.3125, Pennsylvania Hall Association (Philadelphia: The Historical Society of Pennsylvania, 1837-1838), 2.

- and of the east committee room one day in every week throughout the year.<sup>737</sup> The Board authorized these rentals for Eighty Dollars per annum.<sup>738</sup>

Another group, "The German Congregation of Evangelical Christians, requesting to know upon what terms per annum The Saloon would be rented for on Sabbath mornings"<sup>739</sup> also expressed interest in using this grand new building:

During the opening days, the Lyceum exercises<sup>740</sup> consisted of an extended lecture on

The Physical Education of Children by J. L. Peirce, M. D.,<sup>741</sup> and two other essays written by females, were read by the Secretary - one on 'Female Decision of Character,' and the other on 'Rhetoric'.<sup>742</sup>

Further activities of the Lyceum, as printed, included:

Answers to questions proposed at a previous meeting were then read as follows:

1. What is the cause of Earthquakes?-- Referred to Lydia Gillingham. Answer.
2. What is the origin of those Meteoric Stones which have fallen to the earth, at various periods of time since the creation? -- Referred to Mary R. Wetherald.
3. What is the cause of the fog, which sometimes overspreads London,... why are its returns periodical, and why is London the radiating point? Do clouds, rain, mist, dew frost, snow, and hail, proceed from the same cause? -- Referred to Samuel Webb.<sup>743</sup>

The newspaper article announcing the Philadelphia Lyceum's three-day agenda included educational components that helped to develop an individual's ability to discuss issues. The first and second days closed with a discussion of the following questions, respectively:

Which is the greater influence, *Wealth* or *Knowledge*? The debate will be opened by two members of the Lyceum; after which any member or visitor may participate.

Which is the greater proof of a man's merit, the opposition, or the approbation, of his fellow men?<sup>744</sup>

The schedule called for at least one hour for question discussion before the days' Lyceum adjournment. However, in light of the upcoming destruction of the hall, the last question about the "proof of merit" is ironic.

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<sup>737</sup> Board of Managers, "Minute Book,"

<sup>738</sup> Ibid.

<sup>739</sup> Ibid.

<sup>740</sup> Most references in secondary sources to The Pennsylvania Hall omit the issue of "free discussion" and fail to mention The Philadelphia Lyceum. The Lyceum exercises are presented in detail to highlight its presence in the historical record of American adult education. That information, presented here, appears in Webb, *History of Pennsylvania Hall*.

<sup>741</sup> Webb, *History of Pennsylvania Hall*, 156-64.

<sup>742</sup> Ibid., 156-64.

<sup>743</sup> Webb, *History of Pennsylvania Hall*, 164-66.

<sup>744</sup> *The Liberator*, 11/5 1838, 82.

## The Paradox Evident in the History of Adult Education

The documentation of the Lyceum's resolutions about the printing of these exercises<sup>745</sup> reflects the paradox that Stubblefield and Keane say was inherent in adult education at the time. For example, the Lyceum's initial refusal to allow its proceedings to be printed with the *History of Pennsylvania Hall* necessitated the Lyceum's activities being added at the end of the publication. The Lyceum did not want to be associated with the abolition issue. The Lyceum wanted to focus on its contributions as a literary institution.

In addition to the Lyceum and other speeches, however, the Hall's records also indicate that it rented "The Lecture Room to the Female Anti-Slavery Society the Second 5<sup>th</sup> day in each month alternating afternoon and evening for thirty dollars per annum."<sup>746</sup>

## Lessons in Public Deliberations by Women

The Hall's managers made clear that, with the Dedication celebration ended, any meetings that followed were the responsibility of their sponsoring organization.<sup>747</sup> Excerpts from the *History* succinctly tell the story of the evening meeting held on the may 17<sup>th</sup>:

During the day, application was made to the Managers by a gentleman, who was one of a committee of arrangements, for the use of the Saloon this evening 'for a public meeting, to be addressed by Angelina E. G. Weld, Maria W. Chapman, and others'.<sup>748</sup>

The managers make clear their understanding about who sponsored the meeting:

At the time, we understood the meeting was to be one of the anti-slavery Convention of American Women, then in session in this city; and in our communications to the Mayor and Sheriff we so stated it.<sup>749</sup>

The conflict over who rented the Hall also reflected the conflict about the propriety of "public addresses of women to promiscuous assemblies"<sup>750</sup> that reigned among the female abolitionists themselves. The managers corrected their understanding of sponsorship in one of the latter pages of the history:

But we have since ascertained that many of the members of that Convention disapproved of the public addresses of women to promiscuous assemblies, and that, therefore, the meeting was not called or managed by them as a Convention, but by a number of individuals whose views were different, and who were anxious that such a meeting should be held.<sup>751</sup>

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<sup>745</sup> See Appendix C.

<sup>746</sup> Board of Managers, "Minute Book,,"

<sup>747</sup> Webb, *History of Pennsylvania Hall*, 101.

<sup>748</sup> Ibid., 117.

<sup>749</sup> Ibid.

<sup>750</sup> Ibid.

<sup>751</sup> Ibid.

Lucretia Mott later explained that the gathering was not a meeting of the anti-Slavery Convention of American Women, as was supposed by some. She explained:

the reason why their meetings were confined to females--to wit, that many of the members of the Convention considered it improper for women to address promiscuous assemblies.<sup>752</sup>

She expressed the "hope that such false notions of delicacy and propriety would not long obtain in this enlightened country."<sup>753</sup> Lucretia also "made some impressive remarks respecting the riot of the preceding evening, and exhorted the members of the Convention to be steadfast and solemn in the prosecution of the business for which they were assembled."<sup>754</sup>

First William Lloyd Garrison spoke, though some opponents hissed and shouted at him. While "rioters within the building made great efforts to create confusion and break up the meeting,"<sup>755</sup> women began to speak. Initially Mary W. Chapman, then Angelina E. Grimke Weld, and finally Abby Kelly stood and spoke. Abby Kelly for the first time "addressed a promiscuous assembly"<sup>756</sup> and said

I ask permission to say a few words. I have never before addressed a promiscuous assembly; nor is it now the maddening rush of those voices which is the indication of a moral whirlwind, nor is it the crashing of those windows, which is the indication of a moral earthquake, that calls me before you. No, not these . . . . But it is the still small voice within, which may be not withstood, that bids me open my mouth for the dumb . . . Is there one in this Hall who sees nothing for himself to do?<sup>757</sup>

This was the last meeting held in Pennsylvania Hall!

The Convention adjourned late in the afternoon, when the mob which destroyed the building had already begun to assemble. But these "American Women passed through the whole without manifesting any sign of fear, as if conscious of their own greatness and of the protecting care of the God of the oppressed."<sup>758</sup> The managers reported that Pennsylvania Hall "was attacked by an infuriated mob . . . . They attacked and destroyed our building with a demoniacal fury, only equaled by the savage delight with which they enjoyed the down fall of this Temple of Liberty."<sup>759</sup> Chapter Four considers newspaper reports about the perspectives of both the mob and the convention participants.

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<sup>752</sup> Webb, *History of Pennsylvania Hall*, 127.

<sup>753</sup> Ibid.

<sup>754</sup> Ibid., 130.

<sup>755</sup> Ibid., 117-22.

<sup>756</sup> Ibid., 126.

<sup>757</sup> Ibid.

<sup>758</sup> Webb, *History of Pennsylvania Hall*, 135.

<sup>759</sup> Board of Managers, "Extracts from Report to the Stockholders of Pennsylvania Hall Association," AM.31250 (The Historical Society of Pennsylvania, 5/30, 1838).

Lucretia Mott wrote about the burning of Pennsylvania Hall and this historic women's anti-slavery meeting which she said, "was not seriously interrupted even by the burning of the Hall."<sup>760</sup> Her letter continues,

Our proceedings tho' not yet published have greatly aroused our pseudo-Abolitionists, as well as alarmed such timid ones . . . [who] . . . left no means untried to induce us to expunge from our minutes a resolution relating to social intercourse with our colored brethren,--in vain we urged the great departure from order & propriety in such a procedure after the Convention has separated . . . . [Dr. Parish] and Charles Townsend were willing to take the responsibility if the publishing Committee would consent to have it withdrawn--and when he failed in this effort, he called some of the respectable part of the colored people together at Robert Douglas's and advised them not to accept such intercourse as was proffered them--& to issue a disclaimer of any such wish--This they have not yet done--but it has caused no little excitement among us.<sup>761</sup>

Two newspaper accounts reflects the dominant perspective:

A description from *The Philadelphia Gazette*, reprinted in *The Liberator*:

The crowd around the Pennsylvania Hall at the time of the destruction of the building, must have comprised from twenty-five to thirty thousand men, generally respectable and well dressed, and determined almost to a man, to protect interruption of immediate agents in the destruction of the building. The whole affair took place without unnecessary violence or noise. The firemen seemed fully to participate in the feelings of the assembled populace, and though the surrounding houses were completely protected, not a drop of water fell upon the building devoted to destruction.<sup>762</sup>

*Boston Courier*: We cannot, on reading the accounts, see that the course of the Abolitionists could result in anything else. If people insist upon outraging all decency and the proper courtesies of life, they cannot expect anything else than to create a riot. .<sup>763</sup>

The outrage in this case is the exercise of free speech, a freedom dear to Lucretia Mott.

### **Lucretia Mott Educates about the Wisdom of Discussion**

Lucretia Mott steadily advocated for the right of free discussion. For example, not withstanding all the challenges to free discussion, in 1839, Lucretia Mott clarified a committee's meaning in a resolution that "the only basis upon which a reformatory Society can stand and effect its work in the hearts of men, is a sacred respect for the right of opinion"<sup>764</sup>

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<sup>760</sup> Lucretia Mott, "Letter to Edward M. Davis" (18/6, 1838).

<sup>761</sup> Mott, "Letter to Edward M. Davis,."

<sup>762</sup> *The Liberator*, 18/5 1838, 82.

<sup>763</sup> *The Liberator*, 18/5 1838, 82.

<sup>764</sup> "First Annual Meeting of the New-England Non-Resistance Society," *The Liberator*, 11/10 1839, 164.

After some discussion, Lucretia further clarified the resolution referred not to opinions, but to the right of opinion. The right we cannot deny, and ought to respect, though the opinion may be such as we disapprove . . . . This resolution, if heartily adopted, will bring good out of all our discussions. It will, like the philosopher's stone, transmute base metal into gold . . .<sup>765</sup>

In response to a concern for a resolution's being passed by an overwhelming majority, she added:

I think my brother again confuses opinion with the right of opinion. The ninety-nine hundredths can adopt such resolutions as they choose, in this spirit of love and freedom. But it forbids them to require of the one in the minority to adopt them, under penalty of disgrace.<sup>766</sup>

Just before the resolution was unanimously adopted, Lucretia expressed her opinion that the resolution "expresses . . . distrust of ourselves."<sup>767</sup> Perhaps years of Friends' meeting for business reaching unity based on trust provided the perspective from which to suggest that a resolution pledging "respect for the right of opinion" expressed distrust.<sup>768</sup>

### **Preaching Against Slavery Brings Opposition within the Society of Friends**

By the late 1830s, anti-slavery was opposed both by many in the public and by many within the Society of Friends. The Mott's grand-daughter records the growing disposition:

The popular opposition to the Anti-Slavery cause was growing more bitter . . . . The South . . . combined with the large cities of the North, where the mercantile interest preponderated, to demand that the abolitionists should be crushed at any cost. This feeling found large sympathy among Friends in New York, Philadelphia, and Baltimore. Much indignation was shown that any member of the Society--and especially a woman, an approved minister--should be an active co-worker with those who were constantly agitating the question of slavery; a question which threatened the peace of the whole country, and endangered the fortunes of those engaged in the cotton business . . .<sup>769</sup>

This contention within the Society of Friends is considered in Chapter Four.

### **Transformed Learning from Denied Participation**

Lucretia Mott was elected a representative to the World's Anti-Slavery Convention in London in 1840. Yet, the convention dedicated to the abolition of slavery refused to honor the

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<sup>765</sup> Ibid.

<sup>766</sup> Ibid.

<sup>766</sup> *The Liberator*, 18/5 1838, 82.

<sup>766</sup> Ibid.

<sup>766</sup> "First Annual Meeting of the New-England Non-Resistance Society," *The Liberator*, 11/10 1839, 164.

<sup>767</sup> Ibid.

<sup>768</sup> Ibid.

<sup>769</sup> *James and Lucretia Mott: Life and Letters. Edited by their Granddaughter, Anna Davis Hallowell.*, 201.



credentials or seat her or any of the other women who had been delegated to attend the Convention. The women were denied participation because of their sex. This affront is the well-known incident that sparked the idea to hold a convention to discuss the rights of women. The young, honeymooning Elizabeth Cady Stanton and the experienced Quaker minister Lucretia Mott, who had met during the 1840 Convention, determined that upon their return to the United States they would call a convention dedicated to the rights of women. The new bride reported,

The question of woman's right to speak, vote, and serve on committees, not only precipitated the division in the ranks of the American Anti-Slavery Society, in 1840, but it disturbed the peace of the World's Anti-Slavery convention, held that same year in London.<sup>770</sup>

That subject--the rights of women--is the focus of Chapter Four.

### **Summary**

This chapter examined the speeches and sermons that Lucretia Mott delivered to 1846, and found evidence of how these public addresses reflected the Friends' principles and practices. In addition, this chapter described some of the highlights in her work as a skilled nineteenth-century female Quaker minister who through public speaking educated adults about the abolition of slavery. It traced the events and circumstances, beginning in 1818, when Lucretia Mott first spoke publicly, to 1840. Educational efforts to read, to listen, to speak, were important in the work of Lucretia Mott as an educator of the American populace in the first half of the nineteenth century. The right to speak, to discuss freely, to express opinions, to converse openly, to educate from your point of view, to learn and teach till unity of understanding can be reached can be difficult to describe for its cumulative effect. Opportunities to practice and defend free speech offer the possibility to find, through mere words, meaning. Lucretia Mott left us with a metaphor for the action and outcome of respectful verbal exchange and public deliberation. True conversation offers the possibility to "transmute base metal into gold."<sup>771</sup>

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<sup>770</sup> *History of Woman Suffrage*, vol. 1, 52.

<sup>771</sup> "First Annual Meeting of the New England Non-Resistance Society," *The Liberator*, 11/10. 1839, 164.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### EDUCATING ABOUT THE RIGHTS OF WOMEN (1833-1856)

Woman has been so long circumscribed in her influence by the perverted application of [Scripture] . . . rendering it improper for her to speak in the assemblies of the people, 'to edification, to exhortion, and to comfort.'

A new generation of women is now upon the stage, improving the increased opportunities furnished for the acquirement of knowledge . . . . The intellectual Lyceum and instructive lectures room are becoming, to many, more attractive than the theatre and the ball room.

Lucretia Mott, *Discourse on Woman*, 1849

The rights of women, the focus of Chapter Four, developed into a significant nineteenth-century societal [concern](#) addressed by Quaker minister Lucretia Mott. This chapter, divided into four sections,

- (A) presents the context of the rights of women in the period studied, 1833 to 1856;
- (B) furnishes the background of Friends' perspectives by:
  - (1) reviewing Friends' early principles and the practice of women's speaking, and
  - (2) exploring what the young Lucretia Coffin Mott learned about women's rights;
- (C) examines Lucretia Mott's sermons and speeches<sup>772</sup> through 1856 -- to explore how her speeches reflected Friends' principles and practices; and
- (C) illuminates the work of Lucretia Mott as a nineteenth-century female Quaker minister who through public speaking educated adults about the rights of women.

Chapter Four spans twenty-three years of Lucretia Mott's life from age forty to sixty-three years.

#### **(A) Context of the Rights of Women, 1833 to 1856**

In 1833, the first year considered in this chapter, speaking authoritatively--from the pulpit, in the courtroom, at the college lectern--was limited to professions from which women were barred. Moreover, the 1833 opening of Oberlin, the first college "for the joint education of the sexes,"<sup>773</sup> as Barbara M. Solomon says, made apparent "an educational dilemma."<sup>774</sup> By then, rhetoric was required for male college students because they were "expected to declaim as preparation for public life."<sup>775</sup> Solomon explains, however, that "religious precepts held that women should remain silent in church and in mixed company."<sup>776</sup> In fact, according to Solomon "for most women in this period, the restriction was so ingrained that they were uncomfortable speaking in the presence" of males.<sup>777</sup> Although such religious precepts were dominant in

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<sup>772</sup> Mott, *Lucretia Mott: Her Complete Speeches and Sermons*/edited [with an introduction] by Dana Greene.

<sup>773</sup> Solomon, *In the Company of Educated Women: A History of Women and Higher Education in America*, 21.

<sup>774</sup> *Ibid.*, 28.

<sup>775</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>776</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>777</sup> *Ibid.*

society, that is, accepted by most men and women, such religious precepts were not held by Quakers.

In the 1830s, another societal aspect inscribed in law and generally accepted was that married women's legal abilities--to hold property, to inherit an estate, to control earned monies, for instance--were controlled by their husbands. No woman could serve on a jury, work in the legal profession, or vote. Of women's limited position, another pioneer Elizabeth Cady Stanton (1815 -1902) contemplated and suggested the need of "some transformation into nobler thought"<sup>778</sup> for American women:

How completely demoralized by her subjection must she be, who does not feel her personal dignity assailed when all women are ranked in every State constitution with idiots, lunatics, criminals, and minors; when in the name of Justice man holds one scale for woman, another for himself; when by the spirit and letter of the laws she is made responsible for crimes committed against her, while the male criminal goes free; when from altars where she worships no woman may preach; when in the courts . . . she may not plead for the most miserable of her sex; when colleges she is taxed to build and endow, deny her the right to share in their advantages; when she finds that which should be her glory--her possible motherhood--treated everywhere by man as a disability and a crime! A woman insensible to such indignities needs some transformation into nobler thought, some purer atmosphere to breathe, some higher stand-point from which to study human rights.<sup>779</sup>

By 1856, the last year this chapter considers, women had begun to partake in some of the new republic's promises: married women had property rights, some entered medical school, others trained for the ministry, and more gained advanced education.

Most significantly, however, women had entered public deliberation and popular education about societal and ethical issues through a previously proscribed means: public speaking. Women's entrance into public speaking--in anti-slavery societies, in various efforts to educate adults through the lecture platform--unleashed a torrent of opposition from the pulpit, from the papers, and from the public. In contrast, women's efforts to speak publicly also tapped a spring of hope from women and men who saw both the possibility of society's advancement through the addition of more perspectives and the injustice of the imposed silence. Today, all-embracing silence imposed on women's voices and opinions in public is almost beyond our comprehension or imagination.

Similarly, in the mid-nineteenth-century, for men to imagine all-embracing silence imposed on their voices and opinions in public circumstances would have been beyond imagination. As an indication of how significant public speaking was to one group of women, consider the speaking ban they imposed on Ohio men in the 1850s. Specifically, the women assembled for Ohio's first Women's Right Convention,<sup>780</sup> contemporary women reported just such an occasion. *The History of Woman Suffrage*, with a tone of satisfaction, reports that "for

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<sup>778</sup> *History of Woman Suffrage*, vol. 1, 18.

<sup>779</sup> *History of Woman Suffrage*, vol. 1, 18.

<sup>780</sup> April 19 and 20, 1850, in Salem, Ohio.

the first time in the world's history, men learned how it felt to sit in silence when questions in which they were interested were under discussion."<sup>781</sup> At this first Convention to be "officered entirely by women; not a man was allowed to sit on the platform, to speak, or vote. . . . No man should be heard. If one meekly arose to make a suggestion, he was at once ruled out of order."<sup>782</sup> To be banned from verbal participation was not unknown to women.

Just such a silencing was experienced by Lucretia Mott who had been delegated by the American Anti-Slavery Society to participate in the 1840 World's Anti-Slavery Convention, held in London. She recalled this pivotal moment:

In 1840, . . . women from Boston, New York, & Philadelphia were delegates to that Convention. I was one of the number. But on our arrival in England, our credentials were not accepted, because we were women. We were however treated with great courtesy and . . . were admitted to chosen seats as spectators and listeners; while our right of membership was denied; we were voted out. This brought the 'woman question' more into view and an increase of interest in the subject has been the result.<sup>783</sup>

Lucretia Mott led much of the pathfinding in the quest for the rights of women in the early years of the American republic.

## **(B) Background of Friends' Perspectives**

### **(1) Friends' Early Principles and the Practice of Women's Speaking**

What the Society of Friends learned and taught about women over the two centuries before Lucretia Mott was born into a Quaker family and culture grew from the first Friends' seventeenth-century spiritual understandings and religious practices. Olwen Hufton points to the importance of their experience. She says, "Of all the religious affiliations which attracted women in the second half of the seventeenth century, that of the Quakers stands out."<sup>784</sup>

### **Scriptural Basis for Women's Speaking**

Hufton describes as "unequivocal" the declaration of George Fox that women had the right "to preach and predict."<sup>785</sup> He rooted his "assertion" "<sup>786</sup> on a close examination of the scripture. As Hufton says,

George Fox . . . based his claims on Scripture, and in so doing exposed many of the contradictions in that random compilation and showed that by comparing alternative quotations it was possible to see that the ancient assertion of women's inferiority and alleged need to keep silence was a purely arbitrary decision on the part of churchmen.<sup>787</sup>

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<sup>781</sup> *History of Woman Suffrage*, vol. 1, 110.

<sup>782</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>783</sup> Mott, "Notes on the Life of Lucretia Mott as Given to Sarah J. Hale."

<sup>784</sup> Hufton, *The Prospect Before Her: A History of Women in Western Europe*, 417.

<sup>785</sup> Hufton, *The Prospect Before Her: A History of Women in Western Europe*, 417.

<sup>786</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>787</sup> *Ibid.*

Through his preaching, George Fox gained many followers.

### **Spreading the Word through Travel**

George Fox by 1654, according to Sheeran, had assembled many “full-time itinerant preachers who, like himself, spread the Quaker good news about the Inner Light of Christ within, establishing and fortifying little groups of fellow-believers wherever they traveled.”<sup>788</sup> The Quaker historical record calls these the “Valiant Sixty” or the “First Publishers of Truth,” who included eleven women<sup>789</sup> all of whom taught the “convictions” that came to distinguish Friends.<sup>790</sup> The movement of these “itinerant preachers,” women and men, occasioned “long absences from home spent in preaching and imprisonment.”<sup>791</sup>

The idea and word “movement,” according to Quaker historian Edwin B. Bronner, accurately embodies the activities of the early Friends. They had a mission. Bronner says men and women who joined the Friends “felt impelled to move among their fellow human beings to share the Good News which had been revealed to them” through the preaching of George Fox and “by the Light within.” George Fox truly believed he had a “message--the Word of God--to share.” This movement involved travel through England and various foreign lands.

### **Margaret Fell Is Convinced by the Travelling George Fox**

Olwen Hufton says that “Margaret Fell, the 38-year-old wife of a member of the Long Parliament, mother of seven daughters of whom three became preachers, was to be Fox's most noteworthy” women<sup>792</sup> to become convinced.<sup>793</sup> Margaret Fell described her experience as she responded to George Fox's preaching, as follows:

[George Fox] opened the Scriptures, and said, 'You will say, Christ saith this, and the apostles say this; but what canst thou say? Art thou a child of Light and hast walked in the Light, and what thou speakest is it inwardly from God.’<sup>794</sup>

“What canst thou say”--what is your experience: a singular--and emblematic--experience that a woman would be asked her spiritual encounter with the Divine as authority for knowledge.

### **Margaret Fell Sets the Example for Women's Learning and Activism**

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<sup>788</sup> Sheeran, “Friendly Persuasion,” 16-17.

<sup>789</sup> Ernest E. Taylor, *The Valiant Sixty*, (London, 1951), pp. 40-42, as cited in Pagliaro, “Education and Radical Thought of Lucretia Mott,” 8.

<sup>790</sup> For a history of women among the Valiant Sixty and other female traveling ministers see “Traveling Women Ministers, 1650-1800.”

<sup>791</sup> Sheeran, “Friendly Persuasion,” 16.

<sup>792</sup> Hufton notes that several other women who also became convinced by George Fox were those who “brought Quaker doctrines to New England in 1656” and included “Jane Waugh, Ann Clayton and Mary Fisher [and] Mary Dyer, [who was] later hanged in Boston” cited in Hufton, *The Prospect Before Her: A History of Women in Western Europe*, 417.

<sup>793</sup> Ibid.

<sup>794</sup> The Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in Britain, *Quaker Faith and Practice*, 19.07.

The itinerant preachers met their material needs from their own resources but “in distress turned to a common fund of free-will offerings.”<sup>795</sup> Such needs resulted in the establishment of one of the few and very early “formal creations” of the Friends: the Kendal Fund.<sup>796</sup> That Fund “existed to collect money and disperse it to traveling Friends.”<sup>797</sup> Margaret Fell administered the Kendal Fund “centrally” from Swarthmore Hall.<sup>798</sup> Margaret Fell has received acclaim as the Mother of Quakerism, a foremost leader of early Quakerism.<sup>799</sup>

### The Meetings for Business Established Friends' Educational Structure

The inspiration for another practice that enabled women's active participation in the Society of Friends and provided the practice so important to women was recorded in George Fox's *Journal*. He recorded that a “general meeting of men Friends . . . [that took place] in 1659,” . . . and that meeting generally is considered to be the original yearly meeting.<sup>800</sup> From there, Quarterly meetings were established by 1665. The *Journal* continued to record the insight that the educative organizational structures--[meeting for worship](#) and [meeting for business](#)--ought to meet every month. George Fox recorded that in 1667:

I was moved of the Lord to recommend the setting up of five monthly meetings of men and women in the city of London (besides the women's meetings and the quarterly meetings), to take care of God's glory, and to admonish and exhort such as walked disorderly or carelessly, and not according to Truth. For whereas Friends . . . were grown more numerous, I was moved to recommend the setting up of monthly meetings throughout the nation. And the Lord opened to me what I must do, and how the men's and women's monthly and quarterly meetings should be ordered and established in this and in other nations; and that I should write to those where I did not come, to do the same.<sup>801</sup>

These monthly meetings, as explored in Chapter Two, included a meeting for business.

As noted previously, women conducted meetings for business with the same practices that Sheeran said distinguished men's monthly meeting “deliberations” and that established them as “singular.”<sup>802</sup> Therefore, women practiced a way that was “not by contests, by seeking to outspoke and overreach one another in discourse . . . in the way of carrying on some worldly interests for self-advantage; not deciding affairs by the greater vote, . . . as the world, who have not the wisdom and power of God.”<sup>803</sup> Sheeran says the “Quaker procedure is just the opposite.”<sup>804</sup> These early Friends set about, “In gravity, patience, meekness, in unity and

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<sup>795</sup> Sheeran, “Friendly Persuasion,” 16-17.

<sup>796</sup> Ibid., 16-17.

<sup>797</sup> Bronner, “Quaker Discipline and Order,” 323.

<sup>798</sup> Sheeran, “Friendly Persuasion,” 17.

<sup>799</sup> For an extensive scholarly study of Margaret Fell see: Bonnelyn Young Kunze, *Margaret Fell and the Rise of Quakerism* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994).

<sup>800</sup> George Fox, *Journal of George Fox* (New York: Capricorn Books, 1963), 340.

<sup>801</sup> Fox, *Journal*, 459-60.

<sup>802</sup> Sheeran, “Friendly Persuasion,” 20.

<sup>803</sup> Sheeran, “Friendly Persuasion,” 20.

<sup>804</sup> Ibid.

concord . . . to determine of things by a general mutual concord, in assenting together as one."<sup>805</sup> This determining "of things by a general mutual concord" was the practice with which Lucretia Mott, in the nineteenth century, was familiar.

Though she was very knowledgeable and practiced in Quaker methods--as opposed to the non-Quaker meeting protocols--Lucretia Mott was unfamiliar with decisions reached by majority vote. Being unaccustomed to voting procedures Lucretia and other Quaker women required assistance from men to participate in public meetings such as anti-slavery and women's rights conventions early in her public activism.

### **Early Friends Wrote Documents to Teach about Women's Preaching**

George Fox wrote two epistles defining women's right to preach. And, as noted in Chapter Two, Margaret Fell's 1666 tract, "Women's Speaking Justified, Proved and Allowed of by the Scriptures. . . "<sup>806</sup> was one of the earliest defenses of women's right to preach. Clearly, these earliest Friends had a vision about women different from the dominant Christian denominations.

### **Friends' Environment Aids Learning for Women**

Hufton attributes to George Fox some practical differences in religious expression that fostered the development of a religious society in which women could speak authoritatively. She says,

[George Fox] claimed that the true church was a living organ and not an ancient building and hence took religion out of an environment, 'the steeple house,' in which women had been trained to feel at a disadvantage, and placed it in a simple room or 'meeting house.' It became at once domestic and familiar. Stripped of the trappings of a formal church service, the meeting became an event in which people sat in silent contemplation until an inner prompt caused them to share their inspirations. Knowledge and learning outside the Bible were not vital.<sup>807</sup>

### **Learning over Great Distances Sets an Early Practice**

Quaker communities received a letter from Margaret Fell's Lancashire Meeting around 1680. That letter provided "instructions for women's meetings, theological justification for women speaking and action, and a most moving call to battle as 'valliant Souldiers of Jesus Christ.' Quaker women followed Fell's practice of exchanging letters and visits through the following years."<sup>808</sup> Hufton notes that the first Women's Meeting took place in London "in the 1670s...to direct their efforts towards philanthropy."<sup>809</sup>

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<sup>805</sup> Ibid.

<sup>806</sup> Stoneburner, "Introduction," 14.

<sup>807</sup> Hufton, *The Prospect Before Her: A History of Women in Western Europe*, 417.

<sup>808</sup> *Witnesses for Change*, 15.

<sup>809</sup> Hufton, *The Prospect Before Her: A History of Women in Western Europe*, 417.

## Friends' Disagree, Sustain, and Foster Learning Through Women's Participation

Among early Quakers, however, a range of viewpoints and some disagreement about the roles of women existed. For example, the Wilkinson-Story schism of 1673 related, in part, to women's empowerment through the establishment of women's meetings for business. Nevertheless, from the seventeenth-century well into the twentieth-century, the Society of Friends maintained separate women's meetings for business. That for these hundreds of years the Society of Friends has maintained its stance on the place and preaching of women has been called "heroic."<sup>810</sup> In contrast, the historic experience of women in many contexts is that they are included at the start of something new or demanding, perhaps like Christianity itself, and excluded as the stress of the new effort is relieved in time.

Clearly, Friends' principles were foundational for women's experiential learning. On Friends principles and through Friends practices, especially participation in the meeting for worship and the meeting for business, Quaker women learned and educated others. By Quaker emphasis on experiential learning and practical education women Friends continue to respond to George Fox's prophetic question "What canst thou say?"<sup>811</sup>

### (2) Lucretia Coffin Learns about Quaker Women

Biographers write of the influence that a Nantucket upbringing had on Lucretia Mott. She herself spoke of it at Cleveland's 1853 Women's Rights Convention. She said,

On the island of Nantucket . . . I can remember how our mothers were employed while our fathers were at sea. The mothers with their children around . . . kept small groceries and sold provisions that they might make something in the absence of their husbands. At that time, it required some money and some courage to get to Boston. They were obliged to go to that city, make their trades, exchange their oils and candles for dry goods, and all the varieties of a country store, set their own price, keep their own accounts . . . Those women, they can mingle with men; they are not triflers; they have intelligent subjects of conversation.<sup>812</sup>

In 1870, Lucretia made clear her view that, "Among Quakers there had never been any talk of woman's rights--it was simply human rights; and in Nantucket, which was founded by the Quakers, the women had always transacted business."<sup>813</sup> Lucretia saw women active and decisive in business.

### Lucretia's Experiential Learning on Nantucket

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<sup>810</sup> *Witnesses for Change*, 13.

<sup>811</sup> The Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in Britain, *Quaker Faith and Practice*, 19.07.

<sup>812</sup> *Proceedings, Woman's Rights Convention, October 5, 6, 7, 1853 (Cleveland, 1853)*, pp. 169, 170, as cited in *Cromwell, Lucretia Mott*, 5; Pagliaro, "Education and Radical Thought of Lucretia Mott," 14.

<sup>813</sup> *A History of the National Woman's Rights Movement, for Twenty Years, From, 1850 To 1870, with the Proceedings of the Decade Meeting Held at Apollo Hall, October 20, 1870*, Unabridged republication of the 1871 New York edition: First printing 1970, ed. Compiled by Paulina W. Davis (New York: Journeymen Printers' Co-Operative Association. Reprinted by Source Book Press, 1970), 31.



As a child, Lucretia also would have seen that both women and men spoke from their experiential learning. She would have seen that both women and men ministered spiritually, travelled as Public Friends, and spoke authoritatively. Lucretia Mott mentioned in her autobiographical sketch,<sup>814</sup> Elizabeth Coggeshall, the Public Friend cited in Chapter Three, who spoke to the Coffin children about "the importance of heeding the inner monitor and of praying for strength."<sup>815</sup> Elizabeth Coggeshall, however, was but one of the female ministers listed in the Register of Public Friends who visited Nantucket Meeting during Lucretia's childhood.<sup>816</sup>

While she learned from these Quaker models and mentors, she also learned from Quaker school texts. Chapter Three's explication of the concept of human depravity resonates with Pagliaro's assessment of Lucretia's early education that makes clear that "philosophically Quakerism challenged the Calvinist [as well as Catholic] doctrine of original sin."<sup>817</sup>

In George Fox's *Journal* that challenge to the concept of original sin appears in his often quoted and essential exhortation to "Friends in the ministry,"<sup>818</sup>

This is the word of the Lord God to you all . . . be patterns, be examples in all countries, places, islands, nations, wherever you come; that your carriage and life may preach among all sorts of people, and to them. Then you will come to walk cheerfully over the world, answering that of God in every one.<sup>819</sup>

"That of God in every one" is a core belief that all Lucretia's childhood education--formal and informal--stressed. Friends believe in each child's potential to respond to this seed of God with which they are implanted and their innate capacity to grow this seed. Friends' belief about each child's potential differs radically from the dominant belief in original sin as the marred condition or state of each newborn. Friends believe nurturance and individual will affect the neutral--neither good nor bad--infant state from which humans begin to develop toward adulthood.

### **Lucretia's Experiential Learning at Nine Partners**

Significantly, "That of God" in each individual is the basis for the Friends testimony of equality: no privilege for any sex, race, lineage, title, or degree. However, what educators might call a "teachable moment" or an "eye-opener" came in 1808 as fifteen-year-old Lucretia was completing her formal education at Nine Partners Boarding School.

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<sup>814</sup> Mott, "Notes on the Life of Lucretia Mott as Given to Sarah J. Hale."

<sup>815</sup> Ibid.

<sup>816</sup> For example these female Public Friends visited Nantucket: 1797: Martha Routh, Lydia Rotch, Charity Cook, Sarah Cortland, Mary Prior, Elizabeth Foulk; 1798: Rebecca Jones, Jane Snowden, Ruth Ann Rutter, Sarah Cresson; 1800: Ruth Hallock; 1801: Mary Gilbert, Anne Mifflin; 1802: Betsey Purrington; 1803: Martha Simpson, Elizabeth Bird, Lydia Rotch, Martha Routh, Elizabeth Rotch. In each of these years, several male Public Friends also visited Nantucket. Nantucket Monthly Meeting, "Register of the Names of the Public Friends That Visited Nantucket,."

<sup>817</sup> Pagliaro, "Education and Radical Thought of Lucretia Mott," 7.

<sup>818</sup> Fox, *The Journal of George Fox, Edited with an Introduction and Notes by Rufus M. Jones, With an Essay on the Influence of the Journal by Henry J. Cadbury*, 262.

<sup>819</sup> Fox, *The Journal of George Fox, Edited with an Introduction and Notes by Rufus M. Jones, With an Essay on the Influence of the Journal by Henry J. Cadbury*, 263.

At that time, the Friends' testimony of equality came face to face with the Friends' practice at Nine Partners. Having been an outstanding "scholar"<sup>820</sup> Lucretia was offered and took the post of "assistant to the girls' head teacher, Deborah Rodgers . . . [a] skilled" grammarian,<sup>821</sup> who had taught Lucretia.

Somehow, Lucretia, in the transition from student to faculty, saw the schools' ledger that disclosed the pay received by each teacher. What she found was that Deborah Rodgers--a skilled and experienced teacher-- received only 40% of what a brand-new teacher, James Mott (whom Lucretia would later marry) earned. Since their duties were the same and their students--she taught the girls, he taught the boys--paid the exact same tuition, Margaret Bacon concluded that Lucretia decided there was but one explanation for the pay difference: "because she was a woman."<sup>822</sup> This revealing incident was among those recorded by Lucretia herself. She said,

the unequal condition of woman in society also early impressed my mind learning while at school that the charge for the education of girls was the same as that for boys, & that when they became teachers woman only received half as much as men for their services--the injustice of this distinction was so apparent that I early resolved to claim for my sex all that (crossed out: God)<sup>823</sup> an impartial creator had bestowed.<sup>824</sup>

Lucretia worked a lifetime in pursuit of the claim she believed "an impartial creator had bestowed"<sup>825</sup> on members of her sex.

In notes on her life, Lucretia described a significant aspect of her early education. She said, "The (crossed out: simple faith) religion of my education - that the obedience of faith to manifested duty ensured salvation commended itself to my understanding - conscience."<sup>826</sup> The importance of "manifested duty" in the education of this young Quaker as reflected in her later ministry will be investigated in a following section that reviews Lucretia Mott's sermons and speeches.

From these early years, Lucretia Coffin Mott took bedrock Quaker lessons: a sure belief of "that of God" in every person--thus rejecting the "doctrine of human depravity"<sup>827</sup> as taught by creeds of other Christians--and an unshakable confidence in the importance of living according to "manifested duty." These lessons will thread through Lucretia Mott's sermons and speeches as she pursues the rights of women which she believed "an impartial creator had bestowed"<sup>828</sup> on

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<sup>820</sup> Bacon, *Valiant Friend*, 25.

<sup>821</sup> Bacon, *Valiant Friend*, 25.

<sup>822</sup> Ibid.

<sup>823</sup> As indicated in Chapter Three, a parenthesis indicates the handwriting enclosed within the parenthesis was crossed out on the original manuscript. To capture to the fullest extent possible her understanding, her thinking process, the crossed out--though legible--script in the archival text was transcribed and, herein, presented

<sup>824</sup> Mott, "Notes on the Life of Lucretia Mott as Given to Sarah J. Hale."

<sup>825</sup> Ibid.

<sup>826</sup> Ibid.

<sup>827</sup> Ibid.

<sup>828</sup> Mott, "Notes on the Life of Lucretia Mott as Given to Sarah J. Hale."

members of her sex. Next, this study examines Lucretia Mott's remarks that reflect Quaker principles and practices as related to women's rights.

### **(C) Lucretia Mott's Speeches Teach about the Rights of Women (1833-1856)**

Lucretia Mott, in accord with the Friends' practice, delivered her sermons and speeches<sup>829</sup> extemporaneously. The first surviving speech transcription dates from 1841. Between 1841 and 1856, she delivered twenty-three orations that have survived in the historic record. These addresses will be studied for evidence to explore the research question: How did Lucretia Mott's public speaking to educate others about women's rights reflect Quaker principles and practices?

In this section, Lucretia's public addresses are examined to elucidate how they reflect Friends' principles and practices. Quaker elements in Lucretia's public speaking, may be inconspicuous today because such viewpoints--for instance, women speaking publicly in a religious capacity--might now be commonplace. However, to assess carefully the significance of Lucretia Mott's work as an educator of adults, it is necessary to see the relationship of those elements to her Quaker foundation.

This exploratory examination of her sermons looks for Friends' perspectives that differed from beliefs that were dominant at the time she spoke. Today's adult educators might say that, because she presented perspectives that differed from prevailing viewpoints, her presentation of alternative ways afforded her listeners an opportunity to think critically.

### **Teaching about Accepted Ideas and the Rights of Women**

In the first of these addresses Lucretia Mott identifies a problem, the course of action she proposes to remedy the problem, and the subsequent difficulty that arises from the problem: the reception of teaching articulated by women. She says,

I have seen that there is an objection, which seems reasonable to many minds, against Woman's stepping forth to advocate what is right. Let me endeavor to remove those prejudices and those objections: for I have often been made sensibly to feel how hard it is to 'do the work of the Lord' where there is unbelief.<sup>830</sup>

Lucretia Mott's very being--as a female--and her activity--speaking publicly and with authority to teach adults--reflect principles and practices of the Society of Friends. Friends' long-standing belief in the equality of all individuals stems from their belief in the universal presence of "that of God" in all humans and every human's ability to approach God without benefit of a ministering mediator. From that belief springs the reasoning that any individual--regardless of sex, race, education--can be gifted by God with the capacity to minister spiritually. This belief is demonstrated through the Friends' earliest testimony: equality. As explored in Chapter Two, the

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<sup>829</sup> Dana Greene compiled and edited the sermons and speeches that stenographers recorded and transcribed. Mott, *Lucretia Mott: Her Complete Speeches and Sermons/edited [with an introduction] by Dana Greene*, serves as the source of published primary documents for analysis.

<sup>830</sup> Mott, "The Truth of God . . . The Righteousness of God (9/23/1841)," 26.

Quaker Testimony of Equality rests on the core belief of the seed of God in every person and is its practical expression.

From her half-century as a Quaker and two decades as a preaching minister, Lucretia would have accepted female preachers and would, herself, have been accepted as a preacher. Her sex would have been no deterrent for her to "do the work of the Lord." Therefore, outside her Quaker world when she was rebuffed because of her sex, as in the London Convention, she would have been quite sensible of the difference. She would know when her message was received or not--as when she would speak of the abolition of slavery as an imperative for Christians.

### **The Bible and Arguments Related to Women's Speaking Publicly**

A telling phrase in this excerpt refers to the Bible: "as its paramount authority is so generally acknowledged among you."<sup>831</sup> Lucretia suggested that:

This evening's opportunity would be far too short to present the Bible argument, and I therefore refer you to this volume itself, as its paramount authority is so generally acknowledged among you, to see whether there is not far more plentiful testimony to the rightfulness of woman's directly laboring for the gospel, than you had supposed from perusing it without reference to this question.<sup>832</sup>

At a time when the principle religious denominations--Protestant churches--held the Bible to be unchangeable and unerring, or as Lucretia said, of "paramount authority," she challenged her listeners to go directly to the Bible to investigate for themselves what it actually says about women and women's place in the church.

Before she clarified her understanding of the "Bible argument"<sup>833</sup> about women, Lucretia Mott referred her listeners directly to the Bible to investigate for themselves what is actually said about women. She made that suggestion because for her listeners the Bible's "paramount authority is so generally acknowledged among you."<sup>834</sup> In contrast, as explained in Chapter Two, Friends rely--not on the Bible and not on an orthodox scriptural interpretation by an ordained minister--but, Friends rely on the Inner Light to guide their lives and actions. While the Bible is not the paramount authority for Lucretia Mott, elsewhere she said, "I 'seakest the scriptures daily'. "<sup>835</sup> Her remarks demonstrate a thorough knowledge of both the old and new testaments. For instance, in this sermon, she asserted that in the Bible there is "far more plentiful testimony to the rightfulness of woman's directly laboring for the gospel "than listeners might have "supposed."<sup>836</sup> Friends believe that--if properly understood--scriptural teaching will not contradict the guidance of the Inner Light.

### **Free Discussion and Other Quaker Lessons in a Discourse on Woman**

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<sup>831</sup> Mott, "The Truth of God . . . The Righteousness of God ( 9/23/1841)," 27.

<sup>832</sup> Ibid.,

<sup>833</sup> Ibid., 28.

<sup>834</sup> Ibid.

<sup>835</sup> Mott, "Notes on the Life of Lucretia Mott as Given to Sarah J. Hale."

<sup>836</sup> Mott, "The Truth of God. . . . The Righteousness of God (9/23/1841)," 28.

Without a doubt, this Lyceum speech,<sup>837</sup> delivered in Philadelphia in December, 1849, is the best known of Lucretia Mott's public addresses.<sup>838</sup> Within the first few paragraphs, Lucretia again vocalized her practiced belief in the benefits of talking over issues, no matter how much prevailing customs are threatened or accepted ideas are challenged, within the bounds of morality--ethical practice--of course. Her assurance about such openness of speech comes from years of experience in Quaker meetings. From that culture, she confidently assures her Lyceum listeners that "free discussion upon this, as upon all other subjects, is never to be feared."<sup>839</sup> She also makes clear that her remarks this day are not predetermined and committed to paper. Surely, however, while her speech was not prepared, the speaker was prepared from her own learning as a female Quaker minister in the nineteenth-century. Moreover, the history of this speaking records that, "She delivered the following discourse in the Assembly buildings in Philadelphia. After giving the Bible view of woman's position as an equal, LUCRETIA MOTT said:."<sup>840</sup> (The speech is then reprinted.) The occasion for this extemporaneous speech was scheduled. In the speech, she herself said she spoke though she had "no prepared address to deliver...being unaccustomed to speak in that way."<sup>841</sup> Several of her speeches contain a similar thought, which relates to Friends' belief that the Spirit of God will move a speaker at the appropriate time. Obviously, she had faith that the Spirit would move her at the appointed time, since it was known she would speak on that date.

She makes clear that she had "long wished to see woman occupying a more elevated position than that which custom for ages has allotted to her."<sup>842</sup> Lucretia addresses several of the biblical arguments to clarify that "if these scriptures were read intelligently"<sup>843</sup> women would not be banned from speaking. She reviews many of the conditions of women. She first presents an inquiry:

The question is often asked, 'What does woman want, more than she enjoys?' What is she seeking to obtain? Of what rights is she deprived? What privileges are withheld from her? I answer, she asks nothing as favor, but as right, she wants to be acknowledged a moral, responsible being. She is seeking not to be governed by laws, in the making of which she has no voice. She is deprived of almost every right in civil society, and is a cypher in the nation except in the right of presenting a petition. In religious society her disabilities, as already pointed out, have greatly retarded her progress. Her exclusion from the pulpit or ministry--her duties marked out for her by her equal brother man, subject to creeds, rules, and disciplines made for her by him--this is unworthy her true dignity. In marriage, there is assumed superiority, on the part of the husband, and admitted inferiority, with a promise of obedience on the part of the wife. This subject calls loudly for examination, in order that the wrong may be redressed. Custom suited to darker ages in Eastern countries, are not binding upon enlightened

<sup>837</sup> Mott, "Discourse on Woman (12/17/1849)."

<sup>838</sup> For rhetorical analyses of *Discourse on Woman* see Lester C. Olson and Trudy Bayer, "Lucretia Coffin Mott."; A. Cheree Carlson, "Defining Womanhood: Lucretia Coffin Mott and the Transformation of Femininity."

<sup>839</sup> Mott, "Discourse on Woman (12/17/1849)," 144.

<sup>840</sup> *History of Woman Suffrage*, vol. 1, 36.

<sup>841</sup> Mott, "Discourse on Woman (12/17/1849)," 144.

<sup>842</sup> Mott, "Discourse on Woman (12/17/1849)," 143.

<sup>843</sup> *Ibid.*, 146.

society. The solemn covenant of marriage may be entered into without these lordly assumptions, and humiliating concessions and promises.<sup>844</sup>

At that point, having reviewed the general social conditions, Lucretia--though she uses the term "large Christian denominations"--described the Quaker way, applicable to both Hicksite and Orthodox Friends. Since the mid-1600s, Friends have married each other--without benefit of a minister--as two equals in the sight of God. The confidence she has in the equality of partners again comes from personal experience--being married almost thirty years at that point--and the evidence she finds among other Quakers.

There are large Christian denominations who do not recognise such degrading relations of husband and wife. They ask no magisterial or ministerial aid to legalize or to sanctify this union. But acknowledging themselves in the presence of the Highest, and invoking his assistance, they come under reciprocal obligations of fidelity and affection before suitable witnesses. Experience and observation go to prove, that there may be as much harmony, to say the least in such a union and as great purity and permanency of affection, as can exist where the more common custom or form is observed. The distinctive relations of husband and wife, father and mother of a family are sacredly preserved, without the assumption of authority on the one part, or the promise of obedience on the other. There is nothing in such a marriage degrading to woman. She does not compromise her dignity or self-respect; but enters married life upon equal ground, by the side of her husband. By proper education, she understands her duties, physical, intellectual and moral; and fulfilling these, she is a help meet, in the true sense of the word.<sup>845</sup>

Her presentation of alternative perspectives on women's place in marriage, she hoped would lead her listeners "to reflect upon this subject."<sup>846</sup>

She also hoped to call "public attention"<sup>847</sup> toward the subject of access to "more profitable employment" for women.<sup>848</sup> She concluded this oration with the suggestion that women "strive to occupy such walks in society as will befit her true dignity in all the relations of life."<sup>849</sup>

### **Great Steps towards Friends Practice of Human Equality**

During the 1853 Women's Rights Convention in Cleveland, Lucretia made the most complete exposition to this point of Friends' principles as they concern women in marriage and in the ministry. Her mention of early influential Quaker founders and writers, William Penn and George Fox, suggested her knowledge of Quaker history and her understanding of the "universal veneration for power" pervasive in that English culture. The realms of power in seventeenth-

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<sup>844</sup> Ibid., 152.

<sup>845</sup> Mott, "Discourse on Woman (12/17/1849)," 154-55.

<sup>846</sup> Ibid., 158.

<sup>847</sup> Ibid., 159.

<sup>848</sup> Ibid.

<sup>849</sup> Ibid.

century England, as explored in Chapter Two, included English royalty, Church hierarchical authority, and university monopoly on formal education. She said,

I alluded to my own society making no difference between man and woman in the ministry and the duties of the marriage covenant. It seemed to be a great step for those early reformers, William Penn and George Fox, moving as they did in fashionable society, amid the universal veneration for power in that country. It was a great step for them to take--making the marriage relation entirely reciprocal--asking no priest to legalize their union, but declaring their own marriage, and themselves invoking the Divine aid.<sup>850</sup>

She alluded to the "degrading" legal insignificance and religious inferiority current at the time. Her assurance that proper training and development would equip women to participate in a "different" marriage relationship stems from her own life and marriage, "When woman shall be properly trained, and her spiritual powers developed, she will find in entering the marriage union nothing necessarily degrading to her."<sup>851</sup> Her assurance about the future of women in marriage could well come from the Quaker emphasis on useful education and spiritual development for every person.

She continued her speech and conveyed what became customary for her when she attended Friends' weddings, not in the capacity of the official who marries the couple, but as a friend. Her well known wish for any young couple was then followed by her estimation of a woman's position in the church and under the law, as follows:

The independence of the husband and wife should be equal, and the dependence reciprocal. But Oh! how different now! The so-called church, and the state together, have made her a perfect slave. Talk of the barbarous ages! Why the barbarous are now.<sup>852</sup>

Lucretia saw much work to be done before her vision of marriage would be possible.

At the 1853 Cleveland convention she also reviewed some American history about the early republic (also reviewed in Chapter One) and some of the perhaps unexpected changes

The young man who spoke here this morning asked whether it was not a new idea this claim of equality for women, this claim in her behalf of the inalienable right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. Strange as it may appear, the great statesmen and politicians of the age do not seem to be aware of the application of the principles they are constantly upholding. The very men who signed the Declaration of Independence, many of them educated under English aristocratic institutions, did not seem to know how far those principles would carry them. Some of them at that time were very much opposed

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<sup>850</sup> Lucretia Mott, "The Laws in Relation to Women (10/5-7/1853)," in *Lucretia Mott: Her Complete Speeches and Sermons/Edited [with an Introduction] by Dana Greene. Studies in Women and Religion, Vol. 4* (New York: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1980), 219.

<sup>851</sup> Ibid.

<sup>852</sup> Ibid.

to educating the working-classes, for fear it would raise them above their proper level. And more recently, many who professed so great a reverence for these republican principles, were strongly opposed to a universal popular education, in place of the charity schools that disgraced the age.<sup>853</sup>

Her reporting reflects a traditional Quaker concern about the "great advance" in women's education from the colonial days of circumscribed education:

There has been a great advance as regards the education of women. Many of our grandmothers did not know how to write their own names, it being then regarded as unnecessary for woman to learn to write. Now she has so far come up to the level of the intelligence of society as to rise above the mere drudgery of life, and demand something more.<sup>854</sup>

The women at this convention doubtless knew the experiences of Lucretia as she pioneered in speaking publicly to educate about societal concerns. Hence, they would most likely have enjoyed her narrative about the "advancement of public opinion" as well as the change in Catharine Beecher's perspective regarding women's public speaking:

Catharine Beecher in her first public work expressed the belief that time was coming when woman would not be satisfied with her present low aims; and when she returned from the precincts of education, she would no longer be satisfied with seeking a little reading, and working devices on muslin and lace, but, her powers being called out, she would be seeking immortal minds, wherever she could fasten impressions that should never be effaced. She did not anticipate the fastening of impressions on immortal minds in public conventions. No; she revolted at such an idea, because she had been educated by her father to believe that the pulpit and the public platform was no place for woman. But a few months ago I received a note from her, inviting me to attend at a large public school, where she was going to deliver an address to men and women; showing that her own mind has undergone a change upon the subject, in the general advancement of public opinion.<sup>855</sup>

This Quaker minister, remember, was not for valuing women above men. Some nineteenth-century adults espoused women's moral superiority. In that regard, Lucretia warned:

But we ought, I think, to claim no more for woman than for man; we ought to put woman on a par with man not invest her with power, or claim for her superiority over her brother. If we do, she is just as likely to become a tyrant as man is; as with Catherine the Second. It is always unsafe to invest man with power over his fellow being "Call no man master" --that is the true doctrine.<sup>856</sup>

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<sup>853</sup> Lucretia Mott, "An Encouraging View as to What Has Already Been Effected (11/25-26/1856)," in *Lucretia Mott: Her Complete Speeches and Sermons/Edited [with an Introduction] by Dana Greene. Studies in Women and Religion, Vol. 4* (New York: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1980), 231.

<sup>854</sup> Ibid.

<sup>855</sup> Mott, "An Encouraging View as to What Has Already Been Effected (11/25-26/1856)," 231.

<sup>856</sup> Mott, "The Laws in Relation to Women (10/5-7/1853)," 218.



Quaker belief in equal valuing of each human being was foundational for Lucretia's work to educate the public through speaking to adult audiences about the rights of women. With this illustrative exploration of Lucretia's public speaking, the study now considers her work to educate the public about women's rights.

#### **(D) Lucretia Mott Speaks Publicly and Educates about Women's Rights (1833-1856)**

This section illuminates the work of Lucretia Mott as she educated about the rights of women and explores some of the key events and milestones in this regard.

In a letter to her son-in-law,<sup>857</sup> then on a European trip, she discussed slavery and then wrote that, "In Boston the bone of contention has been the admission of another proscribed class--women--to equal participation in the doings of the convention."<sup>858</sup> Lucretia refers to the 1838 meeting of the New England Anti-Slavery Society in Boston at which, as Kraditor says, "women were given permission to participate in its proceedings."<sup>859</sup> This innovative and as Kraditor says "unprecedented" action resulted in men and women working together in the same arenas and the same organizations in the public domain.<sup>860</sup> Not endorsed by all, this unparalleled situation precipitated some "to have their names expunged" from the convention roster.<sup>861</sup> This withdrawal was the first of many splits within the abolition movement. Lucretia certainly experienced being part of that "proscribed class." For instance, in response to the women's anti-slavery meeting when Pennsylvania Hall was burned, newspapers published reports giving their appraisal of these women.

#### **Public Reports of the Meetings**

*The Liberator* published columns from several newspapers, as was the custom among newspaper editors of the time, about the women who met at Pennsylvania Hall:

*The New York Commercial Advertiser*: We are glad the meeting was prevented by peaceable means. The females who so far forget the province of their sex, as to perambulate the country, and assemble for such purposes, should be gently restrained from their convocations, and sent to the best insane hospitals to be found. Meantime, the husbands and parents of these modern Amazons, should be arrayed in caps and aprons, and installed in their respective kitchens.<sup>862</sup>

From the *National Gazette* of Friday, May, 1838

. . . And we think, too, that never do female graces and talents appear so misplaced, so at variance with sound opinion and sure experience, as when displayed on the broad arena of public disputation."<sup>863</sup>

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<sup>857</sup> Edward M. Davis married the Mott's daughter Maria in 1836. According to Margaret Bacon, he was a "a merchant, abolitionist, and Hicksite," Bacon, *Valiant Friend*, 67.

<sup>858</sup> Mott, "Letter to Edward M. Davis,."

<sup>859</sup> Kraditor, *Means and Ends in American Abolitionism*, 67.

<sup>860</sup> *Ibid.*, 42.

<sup>861</sup> *Ibid.*, 49.

<sup>862</sup> *The Liberator*, 11/5 1838, 82.

<sup>863</sup> *Ibid.*

From the *Philadelphia Gazette*: TEMPERANCE HALL -- A number of females, delegates to the abolition convention which assembled in the Pennsylvania Hall, assembled this morning at the Temperance Hall in the North Liberties. They were, however, denied admission by the proprietors of the Hall. One of the ladies then addressed the assemblage, but the energetic police of the district dispersed the crowd, and thus prevented any disturbance. The Temperance Hall will not be open for the use of the abolitionists.<sup>864</sup>

From the *Boston Centinel and Gazette*:

Whatever may be the public sentiment in regard to the institution of slavery, and however much it may be opposed to mobs and lawless violence of any sort, the conduct of the members of the convention appears to meet the general disapprobation of intelligent men. There is no sort of propriety in women wandering about from State to State preaching up abolition. Their cuties are circumscribed by the domestic circle, and they appear to the best advantage at home, or under the protection of their husbands, fathers, or guardians, when abroad.<sup>865</sup>

But, Lucretia also experienced with other female anti-slavery workers--notwithstanding the Philadelphia mob activity--what she expressed in a letter about the second annual women's anti-slavery convention, "The papers . . . cannot impart to thee, nor is it in my power to portray the deep interest manifested by those in attendance of these occasions, suffice it to say that even Maria could leave her babe, scarce four weeks old, and risk her own health, to participate in the rich feast we had here and which was not seriously interrupted even by the burning of the Hall."<sup>866</sup>

### Lessons about Unwelcome Teaching

Early in 1840, Lucretia Mott came face to face with physical danger--as she had in 1838 in Pennsylvania Hall--this time near Smyrna, Delaware.<sup>867</sup> According to Margaret Bacon, "stones were thrown" at the carriage in which she, Daniel, and Rebecca Neall had travelled to the home of a Delaware Friend. Daniel was forcefully taken from that home, his coat smeared with tar and feathers and he was given "a token ride on a rail."<sup>868</sup> About the same incident, Frederick B. Tolles reports, that the mob accused Daniel Neall of "preaching 'disorganizing doctrines' on the subject of slavery."<sup>869</sup> All the while, Lucretia objected. As she later wrote in a letter to Maria Chapman, "'I pled hard with them to take me as I was the offender if offense had been committed and give him up to his wife--but they declining said 'you are a woman and we have nothing to say to you'--to which I answered 'I ask no courtesy at your hands on account of my sex' ".<sup>870</sup> This Public Friend seemed to know her preaching was unwelcome.

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<sup>864</sup> Ibid.

<sup>865</sup> *The Liberator*, 11/5 1838, 82.

<sup>866</sup> Mott, "Letter to Edward M. Davis,."

<sup>867</sup> Bacon, *Valiant Friend*, 84.

<sup>868</sup> Ibid.

<sup>869</sup> Tolles, "Introduction," 26.

<sup>870</sup> Bacon, *Valiant Friend*, 84.

### Three-Month Diary of Lessons about Women's Speaking in Public, 1840

In May 1840, James and Lucretia Mott and other abolitionists<sup>871</sup> headed for London, each of them a delegate to the World's Anti-Slavery Convention. Lucretia kept a diary--the only time in her life--of activities on this three-month sojourn. Historian Frederick B. Tolles, who edited and annotated this "verbatim"<sup>872</sup> diary, described Lucretia's writing style as "terse and telegraphic."<sup>873</sup> He also found in this diary that "the traits which now seem most characteristic and engaging in Lucretia Mott . . . reflected in her diary, all derive . . . from the Quaker background."<sup>874</sup> To demonstrate, Tolles described as "quintessentially Quaker" Lucretia's reaction to a religious service at Windsor Chapel of which she recorded that the minister was an "indistinct speaker" (as opposed to the gifted Quaker ministers) and that from the walls hung "banners [signaling] war & the church united" (contradicting the Friends Peace testimony).<sup>875</sup>

She arrived in London to take her place as one of the American delegates to the World Anti-Slavery Convention. She not only "had credentials from the American Anti-Slavery Society, the Pennsylvania Anti-Slavery Society, the Philadelphia Female Anti-Slavery Society, and the Association of Friends for Promoting the Abolition of Slavery," she also had a [Minute](#) from her monthly meeting.<sup>876</sup> Notwithstanding these credentials, Tolles maintained that Lucretia Mott was on the "wrong side"<sup>877</sup> of two questions. On one question, she championed Garrisonian abolitionism: immediate emancipation, non-resistance, moral suasion not political action, and equal participation for women. On a second question, she believed in the "'Inward Christ' . . . ysticism and freedom from doctrinal preoccupation"<sup>878</sup>--articulated by Elias Hicks--as the essence of her Quaker faith.<sup>879</sup> The majority of convention delegates leaned toward more gradual abolition of slavery and isolation of "woman's rights" from emancipation efforts; the dominant Quakers--influenced by Evangelicals--affirmed "orthodox Protestant doctrine."<sup>880</sup>

### Chances to Learn: Good Conversation and A Sense of Humor

In Lucretia's account, "tea" the first night in England centered on conversational topics that proved to be themes throughout the diary. She jots topics, for example: "Much conversation on Unitarian faith--Factory system--Woman's duties & responsibilities--education of the poor."<sup>881</sup>

The diary also suggests her sense of humor in her recording of a man's question about forty seven year old Lucretia, asking "if that *old* lady crossed the Atlantic."<sup>882</sup> In visiting

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<sup>871</sup> Mott, *Slavery and "The Woman Question": Lucretia Mott's Diary of Her Visit to Great Britain*, 2.

<sup>872</sup> Tolles, "Introduction," 11.

<sup>873</sup> Ibid., 7.

<sup>874</sup> Ibid., 6.

<sup>875</sup> Ibid.

<sup>876</sup> Ibid., 9.

<sup>877</sup> Tolles, "Introduction," 8.

<sup>878</sup> Ibid., 5.

<sup>879</sup> Ibid., 4.

<sup>880</sup> Ibid., 5.

<sup>881</sup> Mott, *Slavery and "The Woman Question": Lucretia Mott's Diary of Her Visit to Great Britain*, 15.

<sup>882</sup> Ibid.

Stratford-on-Avon, Lucretia's diary could suggest the Friends' old lack of admiration for fiction in any form. She wrote, ". . . saw the house in which Shakespeare was born, much to the gratification of our company . . . visited his grave--forgot to weep over it."<sup>883</sup>

Another journal entry implies her recognition about the state of women's education in the arts, "From Woodstock to Oxford . . . Colleges & Churches *galore*. Many paintings, statues, models, etc. one beautiful piece of sculpture, by a woman . . . . So much for woman's encouragement in the Arts,"<sup>884</sup> she observed.

### Concerns for Social Justice

Lucretia salted her diary with commentary about social justice that suggests her ability to reflect on the privileges from which some people benefit. A sampling of such entries follows:

Eaton Hall--seat of the Marquis of Westminster . . . the poor robbed to supply the luxuries.<sup>885</sup> . . . Visited . . . Hospital of the Twelve Brethren--a bequest of long standing Dudley, Earl of Leicester--formerly for tradesmen now for soldiers--uniform--well-dressed gentlemen, living in idleness on the labor of others robbery of the poor mis-called charity. . . .<sup>886</sup> Georgia planter in company tried to convince us the slave was better off than the working man in England & Ireland--not succeeding--begged off--as he did not want the pleasure of his day's ride destroyed . . . talking on that subject.<sup>887</sup>

Lucretia was asked to recount the two instances, previously cited, where her safety had been endangered because of her concern for social justice. She wrote, "Gave account of Delaware Mob at the suggestion of G. Thompson--answered some questions relative to Pennsylvania Hall."<sup>888</sup>

### A Concern for Lifelong Education

Obvious throughout the diary is Lucretia's concern for education. Here are some of her entries about elementary and adult education:

William Nield called, provided a guide to the Cotton Factories. The women & children looked better than we expected to find them . . . better than our slaves . . . . Some attention paid to the education of their children; abundant sabbath schools.<sup>889</sup> Visited Mechanics Institute--Jubilee scholars there.<sup>890</sup> Went thro' Eton school . . . children of 'the great' educated there preparatory to Oxford & Cambridge.<sup>891</sup> Went to Mechanics

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<sup>883</sup> Ibid., 19.

<sup>884</sup> Mott, *Slavery and "The Woman Question": Lucretia Mott's Diary of Her Visit to Great Britain*, 19.

<sup>885</sup> Ibid., 16.

<sup>886</sup> Ibid., 18.

<sup>887</sup> Ibid., 72.

<sup>888</sup> Ibid., 26.

<sup>889</sup> Ibid., 17.

<sup>890</sup> Ibid., 18.

<sup>891</sup> Ibid., 21.

Institute--one room devoted to Phrenology & Anatomy. . . .<sup>892</sup> Visited Thomas Irwin's school--commented on girls' education--his boys forward in arithmetic--girls sampler work--stitching & other nonsense--no black board--drawings & problems for them--rod dispensed with--trying to give up all punishments since our talk at R. Webbs.<sup>893</sup>

### **A Catalyst to Learn and Educate about Women's Right to Speak**

The issue of whether or not women should participate--speak publicly and enter deliberations--in anti-slavery associations had already split the major American abolition group. This issue continued as the London proceedings convened. Shortly after they arrived in London, the Motts met with a representative of the London sponsors of the convention. As Lucretia recorded, they "endeavored to shew him the inconsistency of excluding Women Delegates--but soon found he had prejudged & made up his mind."<sup>894</sup> Then, as the convention was about to open, according to her diary, two men "came with official information that Women were to be rejected."<sup>895</sup>

The women delegates, only allowed to observe the convention as visitors, joined together to prepare a response to their exclusion from the convention. Lucretia recorded this meeting in her diary, as follows:

Met again about our exclusion. . . . [They] agreed on the following Protest: The American Women delegates from Pennsylvania . . . would present to the Committee of the British & Foreign Anti-Slavery Society their grateful acknowledgments for the kind attentions received by them since their arrival in London. But while as individuals they return thanks, . . . as delegates from the bodies appointing them, they deeply regret to learn by a series of resolutions passed at a Meeting of your Committee, bearing reference to credentials from the Mass. Society, that it is contemplated to exclude women from a seat in the convention, as co-equals in the advocacy of Universal Liberty. The Delegates will duly communicate to their constituents, the intimation which these resolutions convey.<sup>896</sup>

Lucretia Mott tried to reason with a representative of one devalued and excluded group as a member of another such group--but to no avail. Some male delegate intermediaries came to dissuade the women from further efforts to participate in the convention. This meeting was recorded in her diary: "Several sent to us to persuade us not to offer ourselves to the Convention--Colver rather bold in his suggestions--answered & of course offended him."<sup>897</sup>

Another delegate, Mr. Prescod, Lucretia tried to reason with--again using what would today be called critical thinking--since members of his race had so often been excluded from public proceedings. Her diary records the exchange: "Prescod of Jamaica (colored) thought it would lower the dignity of the Convention and bring ridicule on the whole thing if ladies were

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<sup>892</sup> Mott, *Slavery and "The Woman Question": Lucretia Mott's Diary of Her Visit to Great Britain*, 62.

<sup>893</sup> Ibid., 64.

<sup>894</sup> Ibid., 22.

<sup>895</sup> Ibid., 27.

<sup>896</sup> Ibid., 28.

<sup>897</sup> Mott, *Slavery and "The Woman Question": Lucretia Mott's Diary of Her Visit to Great Britain*, 29.

admitted--he was told that similar reasons were urged in Pennsylvania for the exclusion of colored people from our meetings--but had we yielded on such flimsy arguments, we might as well have abandoned our enterprise."<sup>898</sup> Another delegate who participated in this conversation offered his belief that "Women [were] constitutionally unfit for public or business meetings--he was told that the colored man too was said to be constitutionally unfit to mingle with the white man. He left the room angry."<sup>899</sup> Again, Lucretia was capable of responding verbally to charges she believed were untrue. Or, as Elizabeth Cady Stanton said, Lucretia was a "woman who had sufficient confidence in herself to have and hold an opinion in the face of opposition."<sup>900</sup>

Perhaps the most poignant entry about this London experience was her record of the actual proceedings on the Convention's first day when she could not speak for herself. She recorded these events:

Prescod . . . was the first however to bring ridicule on himself and to throw the meeting into confusion by improper mention of the 'Goddess Delegates.' Friends present--nearly all opposed to women's admission which was well introduced by Wendell Phillips. . . . William Ashurst pointed them to the inconsistency of calling a "World's Convention" to abolish Slavery--and at its threshold depriving half the world their liberty--discussion very animated--rather noisy--the result cheered, unworthily--were told it was common in England.<sup>901</sup>

### **James Mott Records His Understanding**

James Mott wrote also of the "subject of admitting women as delegates to the Convention."<sup>902</sup> He said, "the circumstance, they alleged, would be mentioned in the newspapers, and the Convention might be the subject of ridicule. On such flimsy reasons and excuses, the right was assumed to exclude women as delegates, and only admit them as visitors."<sup>903</sup>

### **Two Women Learn Together and then Begin to Educate Others**

At the London Convention a friendship began that would spark the development of the revolutionary first woman's rights movement. The growing bond between Lucretia and Elizabeth Cady Stanton is captured in diary entries which begin with a simple introduction and end with the recounting of two days spent together in London. These entries follow:

India Museum in company with E.C. Stanton--not much to admire--thence to Ludgate Hill--to fancy shop--purchased boxes & a few articles. . . .<sup>904</sup> Visited Infant School with E. C. Stanton--not equal to our expectation & hopes--felt much for the poor little children in Spitalfields--E. Stanton would like to remove them in Omnibuses to Hyde Park to

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<sup>898</sup> Ibid.

<sup>899</sup> Ibid.

<sup>900</sup> *History of Woman Suffrage*, vol. 1, 419.

<sup>901</sup> Mott, *Slavery and "The Woman Question": Lucretia Mott's Diary of Her Visit to Great Britain*, 31.

<sup>902</sup> *James and Lucretia Mott: Life and Letters*. Edited by their Granddaughter, Anna Davis Hallowell., 198.

<sup>903</sup> Ibid.

<sup>904</sup> Mott, *Slavery and "The Woman Question": Lucretia Mott's Diary of Her Visit to Great Britain*, 75.

romp and play--talk with her on increase of poor etc.--from there to British Museum--lunch in Gladiator's room--company there--found ourselves among curiosities--then to Hayden's--went to Fleet.<sup>905</sup>

Elizabeth Cady Stanton--a generation younger than Lucretia and from a Presbyterian/Calvinist background--later recollected this initial time together when these two women first met. Stanton's recollection represents the lack of articulate women who could speak authoritatively on important issues. She recalls her experience when she was a twenty-five year old bride:

Thus came Lucretia Mott to me, at a period in my young days when all life's problems seemed inextricably tangled . . . . I often longed to meet some woman who had sufficient confidence in herself to have and hold an opinion in the face of opposition, a woman who understood the deep significance of life to whom I could talk freely; my longings were answered at last.<sup>906</sup>

This relationship between Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Lucretia Mott centered on belief in women's abilities and rights for the betterment of society. In time, Stanton shared another concern: motherhood; she had five children.

### **Experiential and Collaborative Learning about Women's Rights (1840-1848)**

During the eight years between their introduction in London and the Woman's Rights Convention at Seneca Falls, New York, how did the efforts of Lucretia Mott contribute to the development of the Seneca Falls Convention? Margaret Bacon during a lecture connected slavery with woman's rights, and suggested some of the ways Quaker women cultivated interest in women's securing the rights of the republic:

From the time of the London Convention to the time of the Seneca Falls Convention sometimes--in the history books--one gets the impression that nothing much happened . . . . But, in fact. . . it really was Quaker women criss-crossing the country, during that period, speaking in Ohio, Indiana, New York, in New England, in the South, speaking on women's rights and slavery, combining the two issues, that really kind of got the field fertile for Seneca Falls. And, part of it was because they saw themselves to be traveling ministers. I mean, many people saw Lucretia Mott as some great radical reformer but she perceived herself as in the tradition of the traveling Quaker minister. Whenever she could, she took a Traveling Minute. She appointed Meetings, she met with families, she reported back to her Meeting, she had religious occasions . . . . She definitely saw herself as a [Traveling Minister](#).<sup>907</sup>

Lucretia herself spoke of "travelling through New York and Ohio" in 1848.<sup>908</sup>

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<sup>905</sup> Mott, *Slavery and "The Woman Question": Lucretia Mott's Diary of Her Visit to Great Britain*, 75.

<sup>906</sup> *History of Woman Suffrage*, vol. 1, 419.

<sup>907</sup> Bacon, "In Souls There Is No Sex: Pioneers in Antislavery and Women's Rights."

<sup>908</sup> Mott, "Progress of the Religious World (3/23-24/1848)," 69.

She also wrote about such travel. After expressing sympathy for friends who had recently lost a young child that Lucretia calls "my little namesake,"<sup>909</sup> she then quotes a letter from another Friend who was grateful for the hospitality he had received in travelling through New York state. Lucretia then gave news of her own experience:

I felt the truth of some of the above remarks, while on my late journey thro' 19 counties of this State. In some, yes many places an entire stranger--yet we ever met with kindness and hospitality--and in repeated instances a wish expressed that we should prolong our stay and have another meeting. And this too where Orthodox influence had been exerted against us.<sup>910</sup>

Lucretia travelled often in this period and frequently with a [minute](#) from her Monthly Meeting. Two minutes, representative examples, issued to Lucretia Mott follow:

Our friend Lucretia Mott informed us that she had for some time had a prospect of attending the Genesee [Yearly Meeting](#) of Friends, to attend some of the Meetings within the vicinity of that Meeting and to appoint some Meetings, going and returning [as way may open](#). On deliberate attention to the subject there was a free expression of [unity](#) with her and her [concern](#) and she encouraged to engage in the service as best Wisdom may direct being a Minister approved by us. The Clerks are directed to furnish her with a copy of this Minute and sign it on our behalf.<sup>911</sup>

Our Friend Lucretia Mott an approved Minister spread before this Meeting her prospect of attending the Quarterly Meeting of Nine Partners and Sanford in the State of New York, and the Meetings Constituting them. And to support some Religious opportunities going and returning [as way may open](#). Her [concern](#) claiming deliberate attention was freely united with and she encouraged to pursue it as [Truth](#) may direct. The [clerks](#) are directed to furnish her with a copy of this [Minute](#).<sup>912</sup>

Each minute was returned to the Monthly meeting, duly recorded, usually with a notation such as "Lucretia Mott returned the Minute granted in 7<sup>th</sup> month last with information that she felt the reward of peace in having attended to the service. An endorsement from Sanford Quarterly Meeting held at Hudson was read which informs she had acceptably attended among them."<sup>913</sup> Quakers learned from one another and built a history of their activities through their minute books and records. Frequently Lucretia was accompanied by James Mott or by another woman, as shown in the recorded return of a minute,

the minute granted to Lucretia Mott 10th month 16 Last was now returned with information that she has performed the service to the peace and satisfaction of her own

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<sup>909</sup> Lucretia Mott, "Letter to William and Mary Johnson, Buckingham, Bucks County, Pennsylvania," PS CHI LM 756 (17/1, 1842).

<sup>910</sup> Lucretia Mott, "Letter to William and Mary Johnson, Buckingham, Bucks County, Pennsylvania,."

<sup>911</sup> "Minutes of the Monthly Meeting of Friends of Philadelphia" (1833-1841).

<sup>912</sup> Ibid.

<sup>913</sup> "Minutes of the Monthly Meeting of Friends of Philadelphia,."



mind. And also the minute granted to Mary S. Grew 4th month of the last with information that the service has been preformed to the peace of her mind.<sup>914</sup>

The idea that a woman in the 1830s or 1840s could speak authoritatively, that a woman's mission was fulfilled "to the peace and satisfaction of her own mind" (even if the phrase is stylistically common in Quaker minute books) would be shocking to non-Quaker women and men.

### **Women Uncertain about New Learning**

From the events related to that 1840 Anti-Slavery Convention in London, eight years later in 1848, Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Lucretia would call the Woman's Rights Convention at Seneca Falls, New York, and set in motion the first women's rights movement. Lucretia was visiting her sister and Quaker meetings around Seneca Falls, New York. These two women and three others, including Lucretia's sister, wrote a notice published in the July 14, 1848, Seneca County Courier:

WOMAN'S RIGHTS CONVENTION. - A Convention to discuss the social, civil, and religious condition and rights of women, will be held in the Wesleyan Chapel, at Seneca Falls, N. Y. on Wednesday and Thursday, the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> of July, current, commencing at 10 o'clock A.M. During the first day, the meeting will be exclusively for women, who are earnestly invited to attend. The public generally are invited to be present on the second day, when Lucretia Mott, of Philadelphia, and other ladies and gentlemen, will address the Convention.<sup>915</sup>

Having done that, the women met on a Sunday morning "to write their declaration, resolutions, and to consider subjects for speeches."<sup>916</sup> This turned into a challenging learning experience which was later described as trying "to crowd a complete thought, clearly and concisely" and feeling "as if they had been suddenly asked to construct a steam engine."<sup>917</sup> This historic meeting was called just a decade after women's public speaking about abolition had sparked the Pennsylvania Hall fire.

### **The Text for Educating about the Rights of Women**

After asserting their complaints in a *Declaration of Sentiments* modeled after the *Declaration of Independence*,<sup>918</sup> the men and women convened in the Woman's Rights Convention discussed and adopted ten resolutions. They set forth assertions of "equality of human rights," the need to balance the moral codes so that those "required of woman . . . should also be required of man," and the "sacred right of the elective franchise."<sup>919</sup> In time, seeking the elective franchise circumscribed women's energies for seventy-two years. All the resolutions, nonetheless, pointed to an "enlarged sphere" for women.

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<sup>914</sup> Minutes of the Monthly Meeting of Friends of Philadelphia" (1833-1841).

<sup>915</sup> *James and Lucretia Mott: Life and Letters. Edited by their Granddaughter, Anna Davis Hallowell.*, 299.

<sup>916</sup> *History of Woman Suffrage*, vol. 1, 68.

<sup>917</sup> Ibid.

<sup>918</sup> Ibid.

<sup>919</sup> Ibid., 72.

Of the ten resolutions, three focus on women's speaking. One resolution that mentioned women's right to speak made public their judgment that

the objection of indelicacy and impropriety, which is so often brought against woman when she addresses a public audience comes with a very ill-grace from those who encourage, by their attendance, her appearance on the stage, in the concert, or in feats of the circus.<sup>920</sup>

Clearly, these women were able to look at some assumptions about codes for women's public roles and question the reasoning behind the standards.

Another resolution also specified that since "man . . . does accord to woman moral superiority, it is pre-eminently his duty to encourage her to speak and teach . . . in all religious assemblies."<sup>921</sup> The third and summary prepared resolution incorporated and focused on women's participation in the work of setting cultural standards. That final revolutionary resolution follows:

*Resolved, therefore, That, being invested by the Creator with the same capabilities, and the same consciousness of responsibility for there exercise, it is demonstrably the right and duty of woman, equally with man, to promote every righteous cause by every righteous means; and especially in regard to the great subject of morals and religion, it is self-evidently her right to participate with her brother in teaching them, both in private and in public, by writing and by speaking, by any instrumentalities proper to be used, and in any assemblies proper to be held. . . .*<sup>922</sup>

Of the ten adopted resolutions, nine of the resolutions had been prepared in advance of the Convention. The one resolution not prepared before the Convention was proposed and advocated by Lucretia Mott and reflected her practical focus on justice for women.

### **Practical Resolution to Reduce Women's Economic Dependence**

This watershed event in the history of American culture gives evidence of Lucretia's concern for economic justice and resulted in her proposing, and the convention's subsequently adopting unanimously the following resolution:

*Resolved That the speedy success of our cause depends upon the zealous and untiring efforts of both men and women, for the overthrow of the monopoly of the pulpit, and for the securing to woman an equal participation with men in the various trades, professions, and commerce.*<sup>923</sup>

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<sup>920</sup> Ibid.

<sup>921</sup> *History of Woman Suffrage*, vol. 1, 72.

<sup>921</sup> Ibid.

<sup>922</sup> Ibid.

<sup>923</sup> Ibid.

Her proposal recognized that to realize "speedy success" required the participation of both men and women.

She accurately forecast that adults would have to work with "zealous and untiring efforts . . . for the securing to woman an equal participation with men in the various trades, professions, and commerce."<sup>924</sup> Lucretia recognized not just that control of the pulpit and professions governed individual lives. She also recognized the importance of trades and commerce--the useful ends of education for a Quaker.

## **Gaining Knowledge and Learning Lessons**

Lucretia's granddaughter commented on the insightful and astute work done by this initial convention on woman's rights. She said, "It is interesting to find that . . . in its Declaration and Resolutions [these pioneer women demanded] all that the most radical friends of the movement have since claimed."<sup>925</sup> This convention, says Hallowell, "brought upon its brave members a storm of denunciation from the pulpit, and unsparing ridicule from the press; but it also called forth a cheering response from women in all parts of the country who had needed only the encouragement of a beginning, to find the spirit to step forward themselves."<sup>926</sup>

## **Building On Experiential Learning**

Two weeks later in Rochester, New York, a second Woman's Rights Convention<sup>927</sup> convened. To gain a sense of the revolutionary character of these times, consider that this convention witnessed agreement among "Mrs. Mott, Mrs. Stanton, and Mrs. McClintock [who] thought it a most hazardous experiment to have a woman President and stoutly opposed it."<sup>928</sup> Other Women, however, argued that, 'if they would but make the experiment [then with] the same power by which they had resolved, declared, discussed, debated, they could also preside at a public meeting."<sup>929</sup>

At the Rochester convention "several gentlemen" debated some of the claims contained in the Resolutions and the Declaration of Sentiments.<sup>930</sup> Again, the issue of women's public speaking arose, especially in relation to women's "occupying the pulpit."<sup>931</sup> Lucretia Mott responded with the thought that, "we had all got our notions too much from the clergy, instead of the Bible."<sup>932</sup> She suggested the person who objected should "read his Bible over again, and see if there was anything to prohibit woman from being a religious teacher."<sup>933</sup> Lucretia recalled for the convention that just "a few years ago, the Female Moral Reform Society of Philadelphia

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<sup>924</sup> *History of Woman Suffrage*, vol. 1, 72.

<sup>925</sup> *James and Lucretia Mott: Life and Letters*. Edited by their Granddaughter, Anna Davis Hallowell., 300.

<sup>926</sup> *Ibid.*,

<sup>927</sup> August 2, 1848.

<sup>928</sup> *History of Woman Suffrage*, vol. 1, 75.

<sup>929</sup> *History of Woman Suffrage*, vol. 1, 75.

<sup>930</sup> *Ibid.*, 76.

<sup>931</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>932</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>933</sup> *Ibid.*

applied for the use of a church in that city, in which to hold one of their meetings; they were only allowed the use of the basement, and on the condition that none of the women should speak at the meeting."<sup>934</sup> The women agreed, and Lucretia reported, "a D.D. was called upon to preside, and another to read the ladies' report of the Society."<sup>935</sup>

Another man reported that he was "disturbed as to the effect of equality in the family." The *History of Woman Suffrage*<sup>936</sup> records that,

Lucretia Mott replied that in the Society of Friends she had never known any difficulty to arise on account of the wife's not having promised *obedience* in the marriage contract. She had never known any mode of decision except an appeal to reason; and, although in some of the meetings of this Society, women are placed on an equality, none of the results so much dreaded had occurred.<sup>937</sup>

The record of this Convention notes that in response to a gentleman's "too flattering" but well-written speech Lucretia Mott suggested that "woman is now sufficiently developed to prefer justice to compliment."<sup>938</sup> Lucretia's training in "plain speech" of the simplicity testimony would alert her to be watchful for flattery.

### **Others Learn from the Mott's Marriage**

The family life of James and Lucretia is outside the scope of this study. Nevertheless, of interest to this study is what two non-Quakers, Lucy Stone and Antoinette Brown Blackwell, contemporaries of the younger Elizabeth Cady Stanton, learned from observing the Mott's marriage. According to Barbara Miller Solomon, these notable, formally educated, contemporary activists were inspired by the Mott's relationship. Solomon reports that they found instructive that Lucretia "preached while bringing up the family, being in perfect amity with her husband who aided her in the care of the children."<sup>939</sup> Quaker couples, families, meetings, and communities helped support each other, particularly in relation to sustaining someone's call to minister as a [Public Friend](#).

### **Practical Lessons for Women's Lives and Health**

Exhibitions provided nineteenth-century citizens with educational opportunities.<sup>940</sup> Lucretia celebrated the "sewing machine" popularized in the 1850s. This invention revolutionized the daily life of American women who previously sewed all seams by hand.

Indeed, so greatly is Discovery progressing, that machines are already doing a large portion of this work. A woman in the Crystal Palace sits by a sewing machine to show

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<sup>934</sup> Ibid., 76-77.

<sup>935</sup> Ibid., 77.

<sup>936</sup> Ibid.

<sup>937</sup> Ibid. 79.

<sup>938</sup> *History of Woman Suffrage*, vol. 1, 80.

<sup>939</sup> Solomon, *In the Company of Educated Women: A History of Women and Higher Education in America*, 220, n25.

<sup>940</sup> For a brief exploration see Stubblefield, Harold W. and Patrick Keane, *Adult Education in the American Experience*, 144 -145.

the visitors how one woman, in a day, can perform the work of thirty or forty women in the same time!"<sup>941</sup>

Another area which in which women's lives were progressing related to their health.

For that improvement, Lucretia also had praise: "But blessed be the advance of the age, for it is teaching woman in principles of physiology. Many are going forth teaching this science to ears anointed to hear, and finding eyes skillful to see, and souls wise to so observe the laws of health, that they may not be subject to disease."<sup>942</sup>

She herself enabled some of this education to take place. Challenged by the male members of the American Medical Association, the women graduates of the Female Medical College of Pennsylvania were unable to secure a practice among the women of Philadelphia. Therefore, according to Margaret Bacon, Lucretia early in 1852, with her growing reputation agreed to preside at public assemblies to attract an audience for Dr. Hannah Longshore's<sup>943</sup> lectures to educate adult women about their health.<sup>944</sup>

Elizabeth Blackwell, the first woman physician, in addressing the difficulty of obtaining patients wrote of the lectures that helped obtain patients for women's medical practice. She reported that "societies have been formed . . . for popular instruction to women in physiology and hygiene--these have all come into existence within the last ten years."<sup>945</sup> Elizabeth Cady Stanton, the mother of five, described the position of women, "Forbidden the medical profession, who has at the most sacred times of her life been left to the ignorant supervision of male physicians, and seen her young children die by thousands."<sup>946</sup> According to a reprinted newspaper report, Lucretia Mott herself on February 2, 1853, delivered a lecture entitled "Medical Education of Woman."<sup>947</sup> This practical concern for useful knowledge--again reflecting a Quaker concern from the days of George Fox and William Penn--this time the useful knowledge related to women's health, was typical for Lucretia Mott.

### Summary

This chapter examined the speeches and sermons that Lucretia Mott delivered to 1856, for evidence of how they reflected the Friends' principles and practices. In addition, this chapter

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<sup>941</sup> Mott, "The Laws in Relation to Women (10/5-7/1853)," 221.

<sup>942</sup> Ibid., 220.

<sup>943</sup> Laura E. Beardsley, of The Historical Society of Pennsylvania on January 4, 1999, wrote to advise the researcher, "I found no references to Dr. Hannah Longshore in any of our card catalogs, including both library and manuscript materials. I have also searched the holdings of the Library Company of Philadelphia . . . without result." As noted in relation to Chapter Three research on the Philadelphia Lyceum, The Historical Society's building is in restoration and closed to outside researchers until July, 1999. Data may be accessed only through requesting paid research from the Historical Society itself. The information supplied was in response to researcher's request for information on lectures delivered by Dr. Hannah Longshore or moderated by Lucretia Mott. The Historical Society of Pennsylvania, Letter from Laura E. Beardsley.

<sup>944</sup> Bacon, *Valiant Friend*, 136.

<sup>945</sup> Elizabeth and Emily Blackwell, *Address on the Medical Education of Women* (New York: Baptist and Tayler, Book Printers, 1863), 6.

<sup>946</sup> *History of Woman Suffrage*, vol. 1, 28.

<sup>947</sup> Ibid., 389.

described some of the highlights of her work as a female pioneer public speaker who sought to educate adults about the rights of women. Central to this chapter's research are the learning and education that Lucretia Mott and other women experienced in relation to their efforts to speak publicly and authoritatively. Often the history of women has examined the elective franchise or entrance into various fields of work. However, this chapter recognizes and explores Lucretia Mott's pioneering work to bring women to the practice of speaking authoritatively from the pulpit, from the courtroom bar, and in the classroom. In 1833, the first year considered in this chapter, speaking authoritatively--from the pulpit, in the courtroom, at the college lectern--was limited to professions from which women were barred. Lucretia Mott, who spoke publicly since 1818, made clear the large purpose of her activities, her broad motivation in working for the rights of women. She said, "There is nothing of greater importance to the wellbeing of society at large--of man as well as woman--than the true and proper position of woman."<sup>948</sup>

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<sup>948</sup> Mott, "Discourse on Woman (12/17/1849)," 143.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### TEACHING PEACEFUL WAYS TO ADDRESS INJUSTICE (1838 – 1880)

Mind acting upon mind is of much greater power than brute force contending against brute force.

Lucretia Mott, *One Standard of Goodness and Truth*, 1860

This chapter, by exploring Lucretia Mott's work, considers some of the American roots in the history of educating adults about peaceful ways to address injustice. In speaking to promote peaceful solutions to societal discord and injustice, Lucretia Mott educated the public. The focus in this chapter is the education of adults about the ethic and practice of peace--not on the issues addressed non-violently. Various societal issues call forth responses from the public. Possible responses can range on a continuum from violent or passive. Lucretia Mott, however, suggests alternatives that go to neither extreme. Her work as a public speaker demonstrates that the education of adults ranks high among the possible peaceful responses. Adult education is a traditional response to societal issues. Lucretia Mott's decades of personal experience within the meeting for business and her knowledge of Quaker history about such efforts have instilled confidence that adults can learn various ways to address discord or injustice without employing violence or engaging in war. To secure just solutions in the face of societal injustices was a concern for Lucretia Mott during most of her years of teaching adults.

Such studies relate to one of the newer focal points of historical scholarship gathered under the rubric of "peace history."<sup>949</sup> For this study, *peace* means freedom from war and violence through the attainment of more just conditions. Chapter Five illuminates the work of Lucretia Mott who spoke publicly to educate about peaceful ways to address injustice. This chapter is divided into four sections which

- (A) present the historical context in which Lucretia Mott, through her speeches and work, educated adults about peaceful ways to address societal injustices.
- (B) provide the background of perspectives about peace, as follows:
  - (3) review what the Friends learned and taught about the principles of peace.
  - (4) consider what young Lucretia learned about the Friends' peace principle.
- (C) examine Lucretia Mott's transcribed sermons and speeches<sup>950</sup> to explore how they reflected the Friends' peace testimony.
- (D) illuminate the work of Lucretia Mott as a public speaker through five episodes that exemplify ways she educated about peaceful methods to address injustice in the period that spans the last forty-two years of Lucretia's life from 1838 to 1880.

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<sup>949</sup> Harvey L. Dyck, "Introduction to Part II: Christian Traditions of Pacifism and Non-Resistance," in *The Pacifist Impulse in Historical Perspective*, ed. Harvey L. Dyck (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996), ix.

<sup>950</sup> Mott, *Lucretia Mott: Her Complete Speeches and Sermons/edited [with an introduction] by Dana Greene*.

### (A) The Context in which Lucretia Mott Exemplified the Peace Principle

In the advocacy of peace, Lucretia Mott worked for justice. Energized with moral power, she opposed injustice with courage, not violence. "Non-violent" alternatives to war and violence, Gerda Lerner says, is an idea deeply rooted in American history.<sup>951</sup> Yet in what Learner calls "the public mind" these kinds of ideas and actions are associated with twentieth-century practitioners such as Gandhi and Martin Luther King.<sup>952</sup> For over four decades in the nineteenth-century, however, Lucretia Mott taught that justice can be secured through ways that are both non-violent and not passive. This study considers some of the issues society faced over this era.

In 1838, when the period under consideration begins, wars were common and dueling with swords and guns continued to be acceptable practices to settle disputes. When the period ends in 1880, a Civil War had been fought, black American males were extended rights under the Constitution, racial prejudice was widespread, and the struggle to obtain various rights for women--called the most peaceful revolution in history--was continuing.

In 1838, slavery continued to fuel the agricultural economy of the South and, therefore, much of the manufacturing economy of the North. Generally, Americans opposed even the discussion of slavery. An indicator of this desire to silence such a discussion, for example, is the 1836 measure passed by the U. S. House of Representatives--dubbed the gag rule--to table all petitions regarding slavery and its abolition. Former President John Quincy Adams, then serving in the House, led the opposition to the gag rule's challenge to First Amendment rights. The gag rule remained in place until 1844.

As Chapter Three revealed, Pennsylvania Hall was burned by a mob that opposed discussion of slavery. By 1838, the Philadelphia Female Anti-Slavery Society celebrated its fifth anniversary of abolition work. In Boston, Lucretia Mott's fellow abolitionist, William Lloyd Garrison, founded the New England Non-Resistance Society.<sup>953</sup> As a Quaker, Lucretia believed she had a moral obligation to be a peacemaker, to live out the Sermon on the Mount in her own life.<sup>954</sup> The non-resistants and this Quaker minister shared a belief in moral suasion--educating adults--rather than coercive political strategies forcing solutions for societal issues.

Lucretia clarified in a speech that the Friends' peace testimony meant more than opposing armed combat. She said, "this is no isolated Quaker doctrine against war, because for two hundred years we have settled our differences peacefully, without even going to law one with another, by reference, by arbitration."<sup>955</sup> By arbitrating their differences or referring differences to others for reconciliation, Friends had learned to unite in a resolution. Lucretia Mott saw an educational value in the Quaker peace testimony. She said, "And thus we have interested the serious, thinking public to advocate peace; and it is beginning now to be advocated beyond the

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<sup>951</sup> Lerner, *Why History Matters*, 73.

<sup>952</sup> *Ibid.*, 59.

<sup>953</sup> Goodheart and Hawkins, "Introduction," XXI.

<sup>954</sup> *The Quaker Origins of Antislavery Edited with an Introduction by J. William Frost*, 3.

<sup>955</sup> Lucretia Mott, "When the Heart is Attuned to Prayer (11/24/1867)," in *Lucretia Mott: Her Complete Speeches and Sermons/Edited [with an Introduction] by Dana Greene. Studies in Women and Religion, Vol. 4* (New York: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1980), 307.



pale of our religious society or of any other.<sup>956</sup> Lucretia worked, in particular, to educate adults about peaceful but not passive ways to address concerns such as the abolition of slavery and the rights of women.

Lucretia Mott pioneered--as a woman--in speaking publicly and over this time became more devoted to the cause of peace. She worked to settle disputes peacefully--as she said by arbitration or referral, as does the Society of Friends. She rejected passivity in the ongoing search for justice and educated adults to seek peaceful settlement of disputes.

## **(B) Background of Friends' Perspectives about Peace**

### **(1) Friend's Education on Early Principles about Peace and Its Practice**

Friends' have a strong commitment to peaceful settlement of conflict. In fact, as Frost notes, "Quakers are best known for their peace testimony."<sup>957</sup> From their beginning early in the 1650s, Friends agreed on the belief in "that of God" in everyone--the equality of humans before God. They also agreed on their organizational structure. Yet, according to Peter Brock<sup>958</sup> before 1661, the Friends did not agree on a universal militaristic or pacifist Quaker ethic.<sup>959</sup> While pacifist, Quakers were not "the first to espouse pacifism in the British Isles."<sup>960</sup> Brock concludes that the Friends' "peace testimony was woven from . . . many different strands."<sup>961</sup> He clarifies that "pacifism . . . was an evolving witness borne from the first by the sect's founder George Fox."<sup>962</sup> The author admits that research into when "pacifism" became a "consistent viewpoint" is "admittedly a complex issue."<sup>963</sup> Brock identifies a struggle between competing virtues that George Fox and many subsequent Friends experienced. That struggle manifested itself in "a tension between peace and justice."<sup>964</sup>

Englishmen, after the English Civil Wars and years of cultural turmoil in the mid-seventeenth century, leaned toward the restoration of the monarchy.<sup>965</sup> The Quakers, a growing sect, were suspected by authorities of "planning violence."<sup>966</sup> According to Brock, by the end of 1659, George Fox was advising all the Friends,<sup>967</sup> "'keep out of plots and bustling and the arm of the flesh.' Theirs was the path of peace and not the way of war . . . . 'Therefore fighters are not

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<sup>956</sup> Mott, "When the Heart is Attuned to Prayer (11/24/1867)," 307.

<sup>957</sup> *The Quaker Origins of Antislavery Edited with an Introduction by J. William Frost*, 2.

<sup>958</sup> Much of the work in this review relies on the seminal work of Peter Brock the "pre-eminent historian of pacifism."<sup>958</sup> The editor of the compilation of papers presented at the 1991 "international conference, 'The Pacifist Impulse in Historical Perspective'" cited in Dyck, "Christian Traditions of Pacifism," ix. praises Brock's "unmatched scholarly attainments" in the field of peace history.

<sup>959</sup> Brock's extensive scholarship "represents the first attempt" to reexamine the Quaker pacifism since the work of Margaret Hirst--seventy years before--who pioneered in studying this aspect of Quakerism. For a review of knowledge about this early period of Quakerism and the peace testimony, see Brock, *Quaker Peace Testimony*, 9-23.

<sup>960</sup> Brock, *Quaker Peace Testimony*, 1.

<sup>961</sup> *Ibid.*, 7.

<sup>962</sup> *Ibid.*, 10.

<sup>963</sup> *Ibid.*, 13.

<sup>964</sup> *Ibid.*, 17.

<sup>965</sup> *Ibid.*, 22.

<sup>966</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>967</sup> *Ibid.*

of Christ's kingdom, but without Christ's kingdom'.<sup>968</sup> Then, as Brock says, George Fox took "the decisive step and denied the compatibility of military service, even in an army of the Saints, with membership of the Quaker community. 'All that pretend to fight for Christ, are deceived; for his kingdom is not of this world, therefore his servants do not fight.'"<sup>969</sup>

## A Lesson of Peace for the Future

With the restoration of the Stuart monarchy in 1660 under King Charles II, the Quakers lost a vision fueled by what Brock calls "the utopian millenarian hopes."<sup>970</sup> That same year, the Friends established their peace testimony as "an official tenet of the sect."<sup>971</sup> From that time, he says, began "a new period in the history of Quakerism."<sup>972</sup> The Friends have since participated in a "collective witness . . . enforced by a series of sanctions [including] expulsion" for anyone not faithful to the testimony.<sup>973</sup> Brock concludes that, "the loosely knit Quaker movement now became a Society of Friends bound together not only by a common religious faith but by an efficient organisation and a discipline enforced against those who overstepped the limits of allowable behaviour."<sup>974</sup>

The Friends peace testimony, according to Brock's analysis, "Became in fact 'an important means of disarming the old order,' political and social as well as ecclesiastical, which had been re-established" with the 1660 Restoration of the monarchy.<sup>975</sup> In January 1661, Brock reports, George Fox made a formal Declaration "'against all plotters and fighters in the world . . . in behalf of the whole body of the Elect People of God who are called Quakers.'"<sup>976</sup> The Declaration of 1661 proved to be a definitive event in Quaker spirituality and history. From that event, as Brock says, Quakers have practiced and borne their peace testimony as a "hallmark" of their Society of Friends.<sup>977</sup>

## New Thinking Added to Quakerism

Robert Barclay's<sup>978</sup> *Apology* details the Friends' peace principle that Brock says emphasizes "the spirit of Jesus' message rather than the letter of the text. For him the Sermon on the Mount--'Matt. V. from verse 38 to the end of the chapter'-- is all important."<sup>979</sup> Moreover, says Brock, Barclay added "something new in Quaker thinking."<sup>980</sup> Brock credits the Quaker scholar Geoffrey Nuttall with suggesting "'the Renaissance strain in Quakerism,' a humanist

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<sup>968</sup> Ibid.

<sup>969</sup> *Journal of George Fox*, ed. John L. Nickalls, Cambridge, 1952, p. 237 as cited in Brock, *Quaker Peace Testimony*, 23.

<sup>970</sup> Brock, *Quaker Peace Testimony*, 23.

<sup>971</sup> Ibid.

<sup>972</sup> Ibid.

<sup>973</sup> Ibid.

<sup>974</sup> Ibid., 24.

<sup>975</sup> Ibid.

<sup>976</sup> *Journal of George Fox*, ed. John L. Nickalls, Cambridge, 1952, pp. 398-404. The Declaration was dated 21 January 1661 as cited in Brock, *Quaker Peace Testimony*, 25.

<sup>977</sup> Brock, *Quaker Peace Testimony*, 25.

<sup>978</sup> See Chapter Two for a discussion of the significance of Robert Barclay and his writings.

<sup>979</sup> Brock, *Quaker Peace Testimony*, 27.

<sup>980</sup> Ibid., 29.

strand in their thinking on war and society that eventually blossomed out into the humanitarian relief activity that has become so closely associated with the Quaker name."<sup>981</sup> This component of Quakerism is apparent in much of "pacifist writing" in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.<sup>982</sup> This "humanist strand," Brock says, is "largely absent in the exponents of Anabaptist-Mennonite nonresistance or in the very first proponents of Quaker pacifism."<sup>983</sup> These two--the Declaration of 1661 and Barclay's *Apology*--Brock says, "laid a foundation on which Quakers erected a firm structure of war resistance. In addition to a personally nonviolent stance, conscientious objection to military and naval service . . . now became the established practice of the Society of Friends."<sup>984</sup>

## George Fox Taught the Covenant of Peace

George Fox records in his *Journal* that he "knew from whence all wars did rise, from the lust according to James' doctrine; and that [he] lived in the virtue of that life and power that took away the occasion of all wars."<sup>985</sup> "James' doctrine" refers to the biblical Letter of James. Rufus Jones' footnote in Fox's *Journal* identifies that the "true ground of opposition to war" resides in a life lived in a way "that does away with the occasion for war."<sup>986</sup> George Fox calls this the "covenant of peace which was before wars and strifes were."<sup>987</sup> Friends carried this testimony as they settled in the American provinces.

## The American Test of the Peace Testimony

During the War of Independence--the American Revolution--the Friends' peace testimony was "severely tested."<sup>988</sup> The struggle for American Friends in the 1770s is one that earlier Quakers also had experienced. The difficulty arose from the "tension" between Friends' commitment to justice and their covenant of peace.<sup>989</sup>

As the strife began, some Friends inclined toward one and some toward the other of the opposing sides. However, no matter which side they favored politically, the Friends witnessed to a greater value. As Brock says, Friends "stood wholeheartedly behind the peace testimony and were prepared to make considerable sacrifices to maintain it intact."<sup>990</sup> Brock describes the Quakers as going through "a period of slow adjustment to the new political circumstances"<sup>991</sup> at the beginning of American republic. Within five years of that inauguration, Lucretia Coffin was born into the Coffin Quaker family and the Nantucket Quaker community.

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<sup>981</sup> Ibid., 29.

<sup>982</sup> Ibid.,

<sup>983</sup> Ibid.,

<sup>984</sup> Ibid., 31.

<sup>985</sup> Fox, *The Journal of George Fox, Edited with an Introduction and Notes by Rufus M. Jones, With an Essay on the Influence of the Journal by Henry J. Cadbury*, 65.

<sup>986</sup> Jones, "Introduction," 128.

<sup>987</sup> Fox, *The Journal of George Fox, Edited with an Introduction and Notes by Rufus M. Jones, With an Essay on the Influence of the Journal by Henry J. Cadbury*, 65.

<sup>988</sup> Brock, *Quaker Peace Testimony*, 145.

<sup>989</sup> Ibid., 17.

<sup>990</sup> Ibid., 153-54.

<sup>991</sup> Ibid., 155.

## (B) (2) Young Lucretia and the Peace Testimony

Unquestionably, from her primary schooling on Nantucket and her [guarded education](#) at the New York Friends' Nine Partners Boarding School, Lucretia learned about the beliefs and practices of the Society of Friends. As explored in earlier chapters, that education included certain texts. Lucretia and her classmates studied Barclay's *Catechism*,<sup>992</sup> Woolman's *Journal*,<sup>993</sup> and the writings of Fox. Of particular interest, however, at Nine Partners from the "Answers for Scholars" primer in response to an inquiry, these young Friends learned that one of the ways Friends "principally differ from" other religions is that Friends believe "that war and oaths are unlawful"<sup>994</sup>

Lucretia learned the principles and history that undergirds the reason why Friends "refuse to bear arms or contribute to the support of war."<sup>995</sup> These young adults learned,

The words of our Saviour are, 'It hath been said to you of old time, love your friends, and hate your enemies; but I say unto you, love your enemies; do good to them who hate you, and pray for them who despitefully use you, and persecute you.' Believing this command obligatory on christians, and that war is a direct violation of it, we can neither render personal services, nor pay any fine or tax in lieu thereof.<sup>996</sup>

The superintendent of Nine Partners--and grandfather of Lucretia's future husband--James Mott, Sr. published *The Lawfulness of War for Christians, examined*,<sup>997</sup> a book about Quaker pacifism.

At the age of twenty-four before she spoke in the ministry, she later recalled, she worked to educate adults through a practical and common means: by use of an almanac. She assisted her brother-in-law, "in stitching small Peace pamphlets to the almanacs of that year."<sup>998</sup> Her family, her schooling, her monthly meetings, and her personal experience of "that of God" within all supported Lucretia's learning of this notable Quaker peace testimony. These experiences helped her to develop voice for responding to George Fox's prophetic and searching question "What canst thou say?"<sup>999</sup> Speaking for Lucretia Mott was a gift and a skill. Through her gifted orations she also responded to the Quaker maxim to "Let your life speak." The study now explores these speeches in response to the research question: How did Lucretia Mott's public speaking to educate others about peace principles reflect Friends' principles and practices?

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<sup>992</sup> Barclay, *Catechism and Confession*.

<sup>993</sup> Woolman, *The Journal and Major Essays of John Woolman/ edited [with introductions] by Phillips P. Moulton*.

<sup>994</sup> The Teachers in the Nine Partners Boarding School, "The Following Questions,."

<sup>995</sup> Ibid.

<sup>996</sup> Ibid.

<sup>997</sup> Brock, *Quaker Peace Testimony*, 158.

<sup>998</sup> Lucretia Mott, "The Spirit of Peace Must Be Cultivated in Our Own Hearts (6/2/1875)," in *Lucretia Mott: Her Complete Speeches and Sermons/Edited [with an Introduction] by Dana Greene. Studies in Women and Religion, Vol. 4* (New York: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1980), 372.

<sup>999</sup> The Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in Britain, *Quaker Faith and Practice*, 19:07.

### (C) Lucretia Mott's Speeches Teach about the Peace Principle

In her addresses, spoken extemporaneously and recorded and transcribed from 1841 to 1878, educating about the peace principle remained a growing concern over her lifetime. As noted previously, for this study, peace is defined simply as freedom from war and violence through the attainment of more just conditions. Lucretia's speeches make evident that several aspects were involved. To examine Lucretia's meanings, peace will be looked at as if it were a prism or kaleidoscope presenting different ways to see various representations and images in the pursuit of peace.

This study examines first, the purposes, second, the uses, and thirdly, the prospects Lucretia sees related to the principles of peace. Bringing these perspectives to the attention of a public accustomed to wars from their study of history and from events in their own times, she offers another alternative to settling disputes.

First, some of the purposes she saw in the practice of peace include "to arrest the progress of war,"<sup>1000</sup> to "no longer indulge the spirit of retaliation,"<sup>1001</sup> to help "the intelligent mind

... behold the enormity of the crime of war,"<sup>1002</sup> to settle our individual differences,<sup>1003</sup> and to "have a concern not to contribute towards the support of war in any way."<sup>1004</sup>

Second, some of the uses Lucretia saw in the practice of peace include, "best mode of settling international disputes,"<sup>1005</sup> "measures to which nations may resort for a pacific adjudication of national difficulties,"<sup>1006</sup> and "to settle individual differences."<sup>1007</sup>

Thirdly, some of the prospects she saw in the practice of peace include that "the time may come when violence and war will cease to crimson the land"<sup>1008</sup> and that "men will discover the principle of forgiveness."<sup>1009</sup> Nevertheless, in relation to humanity, she confidently suggested: "I believe Peace is the natural condition, and war the unnatural."<sup>1010</sup> Her "hope that the good will ever prevail"<sup>1011</sup> rested on her Quaker foundational belief in "that of God" in all individuals and a dedication to the possibility of the perfection of society, and the ongoing revelation of God's will.

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<sup>1000</sup> Mott, "The Truth of God. . . The Righteousness of God ( 9/23/1841)," 30.

<sup>1001</sup> Ibid., 31.

<sup>1002</sup> Mott, "Progress of the Religious World (3/23-24/1848)," 49.

<sup>1003</sup> Lucretia Mott, "Going to the Root of the Matter (11/19-20/1868)," in *Lucretia Mott: Her Complete Speeches and Sermons/Edited [with an Introduction] by Dana Greene. Studies in Women and Religion, Vol. 4* (New York: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1980), 314.

<sup>1004</sup> Lucretia Mott, "A Faithful Testimony Against Bearing Arms (9/19/1875)," in *Lucretia Mott: Her Complete Speeches and Sermons/Edited [with an Introduction] by Dana Greene. Studies in Women and Religion, Vol. 4* (New York: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1980), 376.

<sup>1005</sup> Mott, "The Truth of God . . . The Righteousness of God ( 9/23/1841)," 30.

<sup>1006</sup> Mott, "Progress of the Religious World (3/23-24/1848)," 49.

<sup>1007</sup> Mott, "Going to the Root of the Matter (11/19-20/1868)," 314.

<sup>1008</sup> Mott, "Progress of the Religious World (3/23-24/1848)," 49.

<sup>1009</sup> Mott, "The Truth of God. . . The Righteousness of God ( 9/23/1841)," 31.

<sup>1010</sup> Lucretia Mott, "The Natural Instincts of Man Are For Peace (9/16/1877)," in *Lucretia Mott: Her Complete Speeches and Sermons/Edited [with an Introduction] by Dana Greene. Studies in Women and Religion, Vol. 4* (New York: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1980), 390.

<sup>1011</sup> Mott, "Going to the Root of the Matter (11/19-20/1868)," 314.

Recognizing that change and conversion are slow processes, she nevertheless advocated that the work begin. She said, "We are not to wait until all are converted to pure non-resistants, any more than we had to wait for all to be made anti-slavery in heart. We are not to wait until there shall be no disposition to take revenge, but to declare that revenge shall not be acted out in the barbarous ways of the present."<sup>1012</sup>

Almost at the end of her life, Lucretia reflected on the need to educate about peace even though there were so many "professed Christians." The Peace testimony, Quakers believed, rested on the New Testament teachings. She commented,

The natural instincts of man are for Peace, and this has ever been the case. It seems strange that in all Christendom there should be any war, considering that He whom they all have delighted to honor as the Prince of Peace, and rightly so, because His advocacy of Peace was beyond almost any other subject which He treated. Yet we find it necessary to bring this subject up among these professed Christians.<sup>1013</sup>

The gap between what the Prince of Peace preached and what professed Christians practiced becomes evident in Lucretia Mott's words and the catalyst for more education about the subject of peace.

In addition to the peace principle opposing war, the peace principle also confronts the practice of capital punishment. About opposition to capital punishment, she resonates with the efforts of the Peace Society:

I was glad to hear how this peace principle was progressing. If we can once do away with the practice of taking life, it will be a great advance in the world. I have been glad that in the Peace Society a strong protest has been made against capital punishment. That we have petitioned to remove the death penalty on the ground of right. Let us never be afraid to take hold of the right, however error and wrong may be sanctioned by usage, and by some quotations from Scripture.<sup>1014</sup>

Perhaps the greatest challenge for each individual--man or woman--begins with the self. Lucretia again takes the opportunity to express her belief that neither man nor woman is inherently superior in the realm of morality. She says,

It is true, as our friend has well remarked, that the spirit of Peace must be cultivated in our own hearts, and the spirit of war eradicated before we can expect to make much progress . . . . I have often resisted the impression that woman differs so widely from man, and I think we have not the facts to substantiate it. I cannot believe that if woman had her just rights, which I desire she should have, that all these evils will cease."<sup>1015</sup>

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<sup>1012</sup> Mott, "There is a Principle in the Human Mind (1869)," 341.

<sup>1013</sup> Mott, "The Natural Instincts of Man Are For Peace (9/16/1877)," 389.

<sup>1014</sup> Lucretia Mott, "The Subject of Peace is Taking a Deep Hold (9/19/1869)," in *Lucretia Mott: Her Complete Speeches and Sermons/Edited [with an Introduction] by Dana Greene. Studies in Women and Religion, Vol. 4* (New York: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1980), 348.

<sup>1015</sup> Mott, "The Spirit of Peace Must Be Cultivated in Our Own Hearts (6/2/1875)," 371.

With that Quaker perspective reflecting the equality of humans and each individual's need to arrive at communion with the Divine spirit, this study turns to examine the work of Lucretia Mott as she educated adults through application of the peace principle in various situations.

#### **(D) Lucretia Mott Educates to Peacefully Address Injustices (1838-1880)**

This section presents various episodes to explore the work of Lucretia Mott as she educated adults about peace. The kind of peace she envisioned is built on justice. Moreover, she worked toward the realization of justice through moral suasion--educating adults about societal issues. Justice related to slavery continued to concern reformers and Friends, including Lucretia Mott. The abolition of slavery, however, was itself an issue not supported by a majority of Americans.

Lucretia Mott's endeavors to educate adults in peaceful--non-violent--ways is called forth by the societal issue of slavery. In particular, this section elucidates five episodes.

The context of the first episode concerns public meetings held in Pennsylvania Hall. The second episode illustrates her life experience in relation to the practice of non-resistance and a Quaker response to her involvement with non-resistance organizations. The third episode considers some qualifications Lucretia sees as necessary to teach about justice peacefully. The fourth episode briefly explores a personal response to a dilemma Friends faced at the time of the Civil War. Finally, this section illustrates Lucretia Mott's view about the importance of newspapers to help adults learn from one another as they consider societal issues peacefully.

##### **Episode 1: Pennsylvania Hall and a Peaceful Demonstration**

This first episode explores primarily through the columns of newspapers Lucretia Mott's response to violence at the time Pennsylvania Hall was destroyed through fire by mob action and governmental inaction. First, a Philadelphia newspaper column reprinted in *The Liberator*<sup>1016</sup> describes the scene and places Lucretia Mott among the most prominent women. The quoted newspaper was not part of the abolition press. It reported:

*Philadelphia National Gazette*: Riot and Arson in Philadelphia

We have received an account of a riot which took place last evening outside of the large, new building called the 'Pennsylvania Hall,' lately opened in this city for scientific and political discussions and lectures, including the discussion of the question of ABOLITIONISM . . . Last evening the hall was crowded with about three thousand persons, to hear a lecture by Mr. Garrison and others. Of the audience, about one half were females. It was promiscuously composed of white and black people. At the close of Mr. Garrison's address, a mob outside was very noisy. Mrs. Maria W. Chapman, of Boston, then addressed the meeting for several minutes. She was followed by Mrs.

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<sup>1016</sup> At this time, newspaper editors sent three copies of their newspapers to all other newspaper editors. *The Liberator* regularly reprinted such columns if they considered issues of societal concern.

Angelina E. Grimke Weld, Lucretia Mott, of this city, and Abby Kelley. In the meantime, the mob increased and became more unruly. . . .<sup>1017</sup>

This newspaper portrays that Philadelphians--or at a minimum the reporter--recognized Pennsylvania Hall as dedicated to public discussion and education, even if one of the discussion questions concerned abolitionism. The capitalization within the column certainly must have caught the eyes of readers.

This column reports that the crowd inside numbered about three thousand people. According to other accounts, the mob outside numbered around thirty thousand men. Imagine what the people leaving the hall, especially the women, faced. The column reported:

At a quarter before ten, the company retired amid the cries and groans of the mob who blocked up the street on every side. One black man was knocked down with a club.<sup>1018</sup>

What that column fails to say, another newspaper column reports:

*Post*: We learn from passengers just arrived from Philadelphia, that after the destruction of the Hall . . . the stories respecting the white and colored abolitionists promenading the streets, it is said, arose from the colored women retiring from the hall, when first attacked, under the escort of the white ladies belonging to the convention.<sup>1019</sup>

These women showed that they could peacefully face a potentially dangerous situation without recourse to brut force in any way, including a demand for a police escort. Before they faced this dangerous mob, Margaret Bacon reports, Lucretia "arranged for the women to leave the hall two by two, a white woman in arm with a black one."<sup>1020</sup>

### **Newspapers Teach the Public View of Abolition Women**

The Boston public learned that while the riot was a "violation of law" that warranted "punishment," the true horror was the behavior of abolitionists.

*Boston Morning Post* . . . heart-sickening violation of law, for which the perpetrators deserve severe punishment . . . Yet we have not language to express our disgust at the course of the abolitionists . . . by provoking a persecution which we believe they *desire* for the sake of the notoriety it confers . . .<sup>1021</sup>

The behavior that warranted the mob's actions, the newspaper described this way:

If it be true, as stated, that after the addresses in the Hall by men and women, parties of them intermingled with the blacks, and promenaded the streets, we are not astonished at

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<sup>1017</sup> *The Liberator*, 11/5 1838, 82.

<sup>1018</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1019</sup> *The Liberator*, 11/5 1838, 82.

<sup>1020</sup> Bacon, *Valiant Friend*, 77.

<sup>1021</sup> *The Liberator*, 82.



the excitement produced in the public mind at this unbecoming defiance of the opinion of nine-tenths of the inhabitants of Philadelphia.<sup>1022</sup>

The "public mind" learned--perhaps for the first time--an alternative to its accustomed perception of relations between black and white and women and men. Peaceful determination, not undue force, enabled these women to present this lesson.

Another Boston paper evaluates as being less decent the actions of white women walking "cheek by jowl" with black women than the actions of the mob. The women, not the mob, are judged to be the "violators of the public peace."

*Boston Centinel and Gazette*--There is still less of decency and modesty in white women perambulating public streets, cheek by jowl, with blacks, or in addressing popular meetings anywhere. Even under such circumstances, however, we would discountenance mobs, and all sorts of violence, preferring to leave the offenders against propriety, to the gratification of their own vicious tastes and propensities. Nevertheless, inasmuch as it is well known, that such exhibitions are calculated to rouse the angry passions of the mob, those who thus attempt to browbeat public opinion should be discountenanced, as violators of the public peace.<sup>1023</sup>

Without opposing the crowd in any way except peacefully demonstrating different behavior based on moral values, these women helped to educate about non-violent ways. Thus, they presented alternatives to accepted practices in relation to race relations, alternatives to activities acceptable for women, and alternatives to methods for activating moral stances non-violently.

## Episode 2: Non-Resistance Emerges as a Way to Teach

This second illustrative episode explores Lucretia Mott's work as she educated for peace. As explained in Chapter Two, from initial efforts to abolish slavery gradually arose the call to abolish slavery immediately. Then, from the immediate abolitionists between 1831 and 1838, non-resistance--as a moral stance--"gradually emerged."<sup>1024</sup> In 1838, William Lloyd Garrison<sup>1025</sup> and others provided a structure for nonresistance thinking by organizing the "New England Non-Resistance Society."<sup>1026</sup> The establishment of a non-resistance organization and the Hicksite Quakers<sup>1027</sup> response to non-resistance presented challenges for Lucretia Mott as she sought to peacefully but courageously oppose slavery. Those challenges will be the focus of this episode. Significantly, Hamm says, Garrisonian non-resistance for Hicksite Friends presented, "the greatest internal conflict" since the Separation of 1827.<sup>1028</sup> Among both the Orthodox and the

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<sup>1022</sup> *The Liberator*, 82.

<sup>1023</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1024</sup> Hamm, "Hicksite Quakers and the Antebellum Nonresistance Movement," 558.

<sup>1025</sup> Founder of *The Liberator* abolition newspaper in 1831 and the American Anti-Slavery Society in 1833.

<sup>1026</sup> Hamm, "Hicksite Quakers and the Antebellum Nonresistance Movement," 558.

<sup>1027</sup> Since the 1827 Separation in the Society of Friends, both branches--the Hicksite and the Orthodox--simply referred to themselves as the Society of Friends. Though these branches reunited in the twentieth century, historians refer to the nineteenth-century branches as Hicksite or Orthodox for clarity. As mentioned in Chapter Two, the Motts joined with the Hicksites and held to the older Quaker beliefs and practices.

<sup>1028</sup> Hamm, "Hicksite Quakers and the Antebellum Nonresistance Movement," 557.

Hicksite Quakers, those who endorsed non-resistance constituted what Hamm calls a "distinct minority."<sup>1029</sup> Furthermore, many Hicksites actively opposed participation in non-resistance societies.<sup>1030</sup>

Non-resistants favored moral suasion--as opposed to political solutions--to address societal issues such as slavery. They favored peaceful but not passive means to social change. A key conclusion that non-resistants reached was that "the use of coercive force was a sin."<sup>1031</sup> Non-resistants extended their thinking to governments and embraced the idea that a government structured on armed force opposed God's law and the scriptural example of Jesus.<sup>1032</sup>

The non-resistants' call for a "government of God" as opposed to the government already in place differed from traditional Quaker thinking. Hamm called this view a "radical extension of traditional Quaker pacifism"<sup>1033</sup> and a radical extension of the "traditional" understanding of the peace testimony.<sup>1034</sup> According to Hamm, most Hicksites would not accept the logic of a government of God.

However, some Hicksite Quakers--Lucretia Mott among them--endorsed certain demands of the non-resistants. For instance, they endorsed immediate abolition of slavery and expansion of woman's rights. According to Hamm, Quakers that were both Hicksites and non-resistants hoped for reforms that were "dramatic and fundamental."<sup>1035</sup> Furthermore, these Hicksites as Hamm says, "challenged the traditionalism still strong among Hicksite Friends, particularly among ministers and elders."<sup>1036</sup> Therefore, between the reformers and the traditionalists discord was almost unavoidable.<sup>1037</sup>

Not all demands of the non-resistants could be endorsed. Part of Friends' peace testimony is the ethic to accept the existing governmental authority. Frost says that as a Quaker, Lucretia believed that "The Sermon on the Mount was an obligatory ethical command as was the statement by Paul that Christians were to be subject to whatever power existed."<sup>1038</sup>

Non-resistants believed that under a government of God slavery would see its end and violence--including the oppression of women--would stop. Being committed to the rights of women, Hamm says, was "central" for Hicksite non-resistants.<sup>1039</sup> Both male and female non-resistants asserted and defended the right of women to speak publicly about societal and ethical issues.<sup>1040</sup> This vision of women's rights, however, evolved toward the sentiments and the resolutions declared at the 1848 Woman's Rights Convention at Seneca Falls, New York, in

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<sup>1029</sup> Ibid., 559.

<sup>1030</sup> Ibid., 557.

<sup>1031</sup> Ibid., 558.

<sup>1032</sup> Ibid., 560.

<sup>1033</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1034</sup> *The Quaker Origins of Antislavery Edited with an Introduction by J. William Frost*, 3.

<sup>1035</sup> Hamm, "Hicksite Quakers and the Antebellum Nonresistance Movement," 558.

<sup>1036</sup> Hamm, "Hicksite Quakers and the Antebellum Nonresistance Movement," 558.

<sup>1037</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1038</sup> *The Quaker Origins of Antislavery Edited with an Introduction by J. William Frost*, 3.

<sup>1039</sup> Hamm, "Hicksite Quakers and the Antebellum Nonresistance Movement," 562.

<sup>1040</sup> Ibid., 562.

support of equality for women.<sup>1041</sup> As Nancy Hewitt,<sup>1042</sup> Margaret Bacon and others, including Hamm say, Lucretia Mott and other Hicksite non-resistants led women's rights efforts in the early days.<sup>1043</sup>

New York Friends stirred up discord about other Hicksite Friends' participating with non-Friends in reforms. Rachel Barker, one New York Quaker minister accused non-resistants of "going into the mixture" and "disturbing the quiet."<sup>1044</sup> According to Margaret Bacon, however, the New York Quaker minister, George White, headed an effort to "prevent all members of the Society [of Friends] from taking part in antislavery activities."<sup>1045</sup>

In fact, according to Hamm, George White maintained zealously the worth of "the peculiarities of Friends, especially in warning against "popular associations."<sup>1046</sup> He even complained to Lucretia's monthly meeting about her and actually came to Philadelphia Monthly Meeting at Cherry Street to preach in opposition to "reform movements."<sup>1047</sup> Lucretia wrote to Nathaniel Barney on Nantucket,<sup>1048</sup> and advised him that, "New York Friends took umbrage at my going to a Non-Resistance meeting and talked themselves into an idea that it was almost a wicked step."<sup>1049</sup> She then described the New York Quaker Minister George F. White's visit to her meeting. In typically fragmented written style, she said,

He came here had the members of our 3 Mgs. collected at Cherry St. house with many others not of our fold. His text was 'He who will resist God will resist man.' He went on to shew how the hirelings of the day were resisting God as that class ever had done--how preposterous then for such to profess the principles of non-resistance. . . .<sup>1050</sup>

She continued in her letter to describe the conflict of Public Friends, as follows:

It is distressing to honest minds to see two or more public friends travellg around, both professing to be led by unerring light and yet their doctrines diverging to the widest extremes-- His attack upon Non-Resistants was most unexpected --I almost shuddered as he heaped his denunciations upon them.<sup>1051</sup>

Public Friend White's message Lucretia says she recalls "nearly verbatim" and continued to report:

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<sup>1041</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1042</sup> See Nancy Ann Hewitt, "Women's Activism and Social Change: The Case of Rochester, New York, 1822-1872," diss (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania, 1981), 360; Nancy A. Hewitt, *Women's Activism and Social Change: Rochester, New York, 1822 -1872* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1984).

<sup>1043</sup> Hamm, "Hicksite Quakers and the Antebellum Nonresistance Movement," 563.

<sup>1044</sup> Ibid., 565.

<sup>1045</sup> Bacon, *Valiant Friend*, 101.

<sup>1046</sup> Hamm, "Hicksite Quakers and the Antebellum Nonresistance Movement," 567.

<sup>1047</sup> Bacon, *Valiant Friend*, 101-06.

<sup>1048</sup> Beverly Wilson Palmer graciously provided a transcribed copy of this letter from Lucretia Mott prepared for *Selected Letters of Lucretia Coffin Mott* Beverly Wilson Palmer, editor; Holly Byers Ochoa, assistant editor. University of Illinois Press, Urbana, IL. In Press. 2000

<sup>1049</sup> Lucretia Mott, "Letter to N. & E. Barney" (Nantucket Historical Association, 8/11, 1839).

<sup>1050</sup> Mott, "Letter to N. & E. Barney,."

<sup>1051</sup> Ibid.

Again with Women's Rights . . . . What did woman want in the name of rights, but liberty to roam over the country from Dan to Beersheba, spurning the protection of man--to traverse the streets & lanes of the City--to travel in stages and steamboats by day Lines & night Lines without a male protector--for himself, before he would submit to the dictation of an imperious woman, he would traverse the earth while there was a foot of ground to tread upon & swim the rivers while there was water to swim in--that an elder in Socy said at his table that she did not intend to marry until she found a man to whose judgment she could surrender her own--these were the sentiments that would win the hearts of men--to such as these a man would bring his treasures & pour into her lap & kneel at her feet Etc. All this in the name of the Gospel of Jesus Christ!<sup>1052</sup>

Lucretia might well have experienced this pronouncement as violence from another Quaker minister, delivered in the context of her own meeting.

Brock confirms that for George White, Lucretia was "among those who became the special targets of his wrath."<sup>1053</sup> Lucretia was very aware of this attack on her. About these New York Friends--including George White--Lucretia wrote, "The elders and others, have been quite desirous to make me an offender for joining with those not in membership with us."<sup>1054</sup> Lucretia found support, however, in her monthly meeting and, as Brock says, "she escaped disownment, a fate which overtook some others among the Garrisonians' Quaker collaborators."<sup>1055</sup>

Brock reflected on Lucretia Mott whom he described as "a formidable antagonist, a woman who enjoyed widespread respect within the Society and outside its ranks."<sup>1056</sup> Lucretia, in fact, did admire the work of Non-Resistants and attended some of their meetings. However, she never actually became a member of their Society.<sup>1057</sup> To do so would have opened her to more attacks from Friends' fearful of her prophetic stance. In the end, as Brock says, "she was not afraid of gaining a reputation for stirring up trouble; she knew such a charge had been levelled against early Friends, too."<sup>1058</sup> She continued to educate for justice while opposing violence and embracing the Quakers' beloved peace principle.

### Episode 3: Lucretia Mott as Teacher Is "No Advocate of Passivity"

This third episode elucidates some of the qualifications needed to press the case "against wrong."<sup>1059</sup> At an Anti-Slavery Meeting, Quaker minister Lucretia Mott speaks with what Brock calls "the prophetic voice."<sup>1060</sup> Brock says, "The presence within Quakerdom of persons like Lucretia Mott . . . signified that Quaker pacifism was not dead."<sup>1061</sup> Dyck, in introducing a

<sup>1052</sup> Mott, "Letter to N. & E. Barney,."

<sup>1053</sup> Brock, *Quaker Peace Testimony*, 164.

<sup>1054</sup> Ibid., 158.

<sup>1055</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1056</sup> Ibid., 164.

<sup>1057</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1058</sup> Brock, *Quaker Peace Testimony*, 164.

<sup>1059</sup> Mott, "I Am No Advocate of Passivity (10/25-26/1860)," 262.

<sup>1060</sup> Brock, *Quaker Peace Testimony*, 164.

<sup>1061</sup> Ibid., .

chapter on the "Christian Tradition of Pacifism and Non-resistance"<sup>1062</sup> cites Lucretia Mott as one of three notable women who "shaped their religious community in ways rarely found among other denominations."<sup>1063</sup> After almost three decades of working against slavery, she said:

Our weapons were drawn only from the armory of [Truth](#); they were those of faith and hope and love. They were those of moral indignation strongly expressed against wrong. Robert Purvis has said that I was 'the most belligerent Non-Resistant he ever saw.' I accept the character he gives me; and I glory in it. I have no idea, because I am a Non-Resistant, of submitting tamely to injustice inflicted either on me or on the slave. I will oppose it with all the moral powers with which I am endowed. I am no advocate of passivity. Quakerism, as I understand it, does not mean quietism. The early Friends were agitators; disturbers of the peace; and were more obnoxious in their day to charges which are now so freely made than we are.<sup>1064</sup>

Moral power--as opposed to political or armed power--energized her response to injustice.

#### Episode 4: The Lessons in Friends' Tension between Justice and Peace

This episode, the fourth, allows a brief look at what Brock calls the "tension between peace and justice"<sup>1065</sup> that has been present among the Friends since they established their peace testimony. This time, however, the struggle is in the Mott family. The Mott's son-in-law, Edmund M. Davis, had enrolled in the Union Army. According to Brock, Quakers faced a choice between seemingly worthwhile moral principles. In particular, Brock notes that many Friends were "torn between the ideals of peace and freedom."<sup>1066</sup> Friends believed about the Society's peace testimony much as they believed about their other "distinguishing convictions."<sup>1067</sup> They hoped that one day the whole world would recognize the Truth, in their beliefs through the Inner Light, "that of God" in each person and join in their peace testimony.<sup>1068</sup>

Lucretia wrote a letter to her son-in-law's sister. The irony of Edmund's spending years making "converts to peace principles" and then ending up among "the active officers in this war" grips Lucretia's attention. She asked rhetorically,

Who would have thought, when Edmund was exerting himself--spreading Adin Ballou's works [on nonresistance]--to make converts to peace principles, that he would be among the active officers in this war? He flatters himself that the abolition of slavery--end, justifies the means.<sup>1069</sup>

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<sup>1062</sup> Dyck, "Christian Traditions of Pacifism," 73.

<sup>1063</sup> Ibid., 77.

<sup>1064</sup> Mott, "I Am No Advocate of Passivity (10/25-26/1860)," 261-62.

<sup>1065</sup> Brock, *Quaker Peace Testimony*, 17.

<sup>1066</sup> Ibid., 168.

<sup>1067</sup> See Chapter Two for a description of these "distinguishing convictions."

<sup>1068</sup> Brock, *Quaker Peace Testimony*, 168.

<sup>1069</sup> Ibid., 180.

Evident is a difference of opinion between the judgments of these two who are not only relatives but long-time abolitionists. Again, one sees reflected the pain of choosing between two goods: justice and peace. Here again, Lucretia makes a response that peacefully gets her point across without accusing or condemning Edward.

Lucretia also felt the stress of any prospect that the ideal of complete abolition of all slavery would be compromised by political agreement. Brock reports that Lucretia wrote, "Regarding the present calamity, . . . terrible as war must ever be, let us hope it will not be stayed by any compromise' that would leave slavery in existence in the South, for slavery was itself a still more ruthless form of war."<sup>1070</sup>

Friends endured what Brock describes as a "mental agony" as they grappled to choose between ideals long cherished but now diverging: justice and peace.<sup>1071</sup> Now, this section concludes with a view of Lucretia's estimation of newspapers in the lifelong learning of adults about the peace principle.

#### Peaceful Abolition of Slavery Taught through Newspapers Hailed by Lucretia Mott

A portion of the ongoing education of adult Quakers continued--as with other Americans --through newspapers. Non-resistants and other abolitionists, for instance, valued newspapers as ways to educate about their ideas. In the two decades from 1827 through 1847, the branches of Quakerism founded papers that flourished. In particular, articles advocating peaceful ways to abolish slavery filled the pages of the Friends' press. These three papers, as Brock says, "put the Quaker case against war and slavery" clearly in the view of readers.<sup>1072</sup> Lucretia Mott saw the value of newspapers in the continuing education about the need to settle the slavery issue without either using force or compromising with injustice.

In a letter from a contributor to the newspapers, Lucretia expressed her whole-hearted support of such publications: "I entirely accord with thy remarks on the importance of the paper, as well as other Abolition periodicals."<sup>1073</sup> She warned, however, against being averted from educating about their abolition ideas "to assail one another."<sup>1074</sup> In writing of the strife that caused the Society of Friends to form two branches, and the anti-slavery societies to split over matters not central to abolition as happened in Boston and London, she said, "There has been too much of it." She continued, "I never . . . read with any satisfaction the criminations and recriminations which sometimes mar our pages."<sup>1075</sup> Again, this letter provides evidence of another way Lucretia Mott applied the peace principle in popular education.

According to Brock, in newspapers adults "threshed out" issues concerned with dilemmas. As noted in Chapter Two, threshing is a Quaker way to sift out the wheat from the chafe of an issue before Friends are ready to bring a particular issue to a meeting for business to

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<sup>1070</sup> Brock, *Quaker Peace Testimony*, 167.

<sup>1071</sup> Ibid., 163.

<sup>1072</sup> Ibid., 158.

<sup>1073</sup> Lucretia Mott, "Letter to A. S. Lippincott," *Bulletin of Friends' Historical Society of Philadelphia*, 1922, no. 1 (Spring 1840): 32.

<sup>1074</sup> Mott, "Letter to A. S. Lippincott," 32.

<sup>1075</sup> Mott, "Letter to A. S. Lippincott," 32.

search for [unity](#) on that subject. In newspapers, adults could use articles, letters to the editor for the same purpose: sifting through various ideas and views to find Truth peacefully.

### Summary

Chapter Five examined speeches and sermons that Lucretia Mott delivered over the four decades in which some of her orations were transcribed. This exploratory analysis searched for evidence of how the addresses reflected the Friends' principles and practices. In addition, this chapter described some of the highlights of her work and life experience as a female pioneer public speaker who sought to educate adults about peaceful means to seek justice. In particular, this chapter explored six episodes in which Lucretia Mott educated adults about peace. She took hope in the work of her life and spoke of the progress made "to enlighten the people" about peace. She said,

We know . . . the peace principles have spread considerably, and as far as we have gone we have become more nearly sound in the principles of peace, and now we look at war in its true light, and it is well to do all we can to enlighten the people on this great subject, so that they shall come to look at the possibilities of peace.<sup>1076</sup>

Perhaps the best summary of the research into Lucretia Mott's efforts to educate adults about the peace principle is expressed in her words about her experience in the Society of Friends:

We may hope to influence the public mind and, also the nations, that they may be lead to appeal less to the force of arms, and look for the reasonable mode-of arbitration. We have long been accustomed to settle our individual differences in this way. We should look at human beings as accessible to the truth, as easily prevailed upon to accept the truth if we only go to work in the right way.<sup>1077</sup>

Through her speeches and the history of her work, Lucretia Mott continues to educate the "public mind" and continues to challenge educators to find "the right way" to teach how peace and justice can prevail.

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<sup>1076</sup> Mott, "Going to the Root of the Matter (11/19-20/1868)," 312.

<sup>1077</sup> Ibid., 313-14.

## CHAPTER SIX

AS IT WAS IN THE BEGINNING, IS NOW, AND DOESN'T HAVE TO BE  
WHY? BECAUSE  
LUCRETIA MOTT KNEW HER HISTORY,  
QUESTIONED HER WORLD, AND LIVED HER FAITH:  
SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, AND FUTURE RESEARCH

This is my idea of this work, that it is much nearer at hand than many suppose, and I am sure our faith should be firm now, that prayers were manifestly answered in regard to the great crime of Slavery. So it seems to me that war should be presented to the people in a way that shall lead them to examine it carefully. Why we know how it was with the practice of dueling only a short time ago and this has been held up to view in such a light that it is no longer considered admissible--so we have had the barbarism of Slavery presented, and we must do the same on the question of war and we may hope to influence the public mind and present the great principles of Christianity, of right, of justice, of peace and love.

Lucretia Mott, *Going to the Root of the Matter*, 1868

Lucretia Mott knew her history. She was well schooled in the trials, accomplishments, methods, principles, as well as the story of the valiant Friends of early Quakerism and contemporary role models of the Society of Friends. She understood the dreams of the new republic whose people she worked to educate so all could share justly in its freedoms and privileges. She knew of exemplars, such as Mary Dyer and John Woolman, past Quakers who faced opposition and persecution for their actions. She knew they acted out of a Love greater than the oppression they endured. She was fully aware that, "Any great change must expect opposition because it shakes the very foundation of privilege." She had learned a similar sentiment at Nine Partners. The way to justice takes time and involves learning.

She questioned her world. She had ability to question unceasingly perspectives that unjustly privileged some people at the expense of others. That ability to question grew from her deep knowledge of the Friends' testimony of equality and from her personal experience of finding that her beloved Friends had themselves unjustly privileged by paying a novice male teacher more than an experienced female teacher. Her historic knowledge and personal experience built on one another.

Finally, she lived her faith. Her ability to put her faith into action grew from a spirituality fed by hours and hours spent silently with an Impartial Creator, a loving God who loved not one more than the other, from deep spiritual experience, and an unshakable faith that Truth and justice were meant to rule this world. The practical certainty of her faith grew from extensive experiential knowledge of Friends' ideas and methods in their essentially educational [meeting for worship](#) and [meeting for business](#). Now, this chapter presents the summary and conclusions of this study as well as suggestions for future research.



## Summary

Two core questions guided this research:

- (1) How did Lucretia Mott's public addresses reflect Quaker principles and practices?
- (2) What did she encounter in her work as a nineteenth-century female Quaker minister who educated adults about societal and ethical concerns through speaking in public forums?

Through the organization of the Quaker meetings that is essentially educational, Friends learned and taught the spirituality by which they endeavored to live.

As the transcripts of public addresses,<sup>1078</sup> letters, minutes of Friends' Meetings,<sup>1079</sup> and autobiographical writings<sup>1080</sup> indicate, Lucretia Mott was concerned with many issues including the societal toll from intemperate consumption of alcoholic beverages, the treatment of Native Americans, and education of boys and girls, to name a few. Selection of the following significant nineteenth-century issues, however, was made as the focus for this exploration: the abolition of slavery, rights of women, and peaceful ways to address injustice.

### Literature Review Indispensable to Research

To understand the context in which Lucretia Mott educated and acted, scholarly secondary literature and pertinent primary sources explored important aspects of her religious foundation as a committed member of the Society of Friends. That exploration was guided by three supportive questions:

- (A) What teachings--central theological convictions--guide Friends?
- (B) How do Friends exemplify their religious beliefs?
- (D) What engages adult Friends both as learners and as teachers?

Another review of literature, both secondary and primary, considered one additional question related to her upbringing, as follows:

Before recognition as a recorded minister of the Society of Friends at age 28, how did her Quaker upbringing help to shape Lucretia Coffin Mott's perspective?

The review of literature revealed the educational context in which the Society of Friends arose. That context consisted of a seventeenth-century England disturbed by change in all its social structures: religious, political, cultural, and economic.<sup>1081</sup> These Friends set a pattern of questioning official dogmas and the status quo that was reinforced by proclamations. This

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<sup>1078</sup> Mott, *Lucretia Mott: Her Complete Speeches and Sermons*/edited [with an introduction] by Dana Greene.

<sup>1079</sup> Minutes of the Monthly Meeting of Friends of Philadelphia; Women's Meeting Philadelphia Yearly Meeting (Hicksite).

<sup>1080</sup> Mott, *Slavery and "The Woman Question": Lucretia Mott's Diary of Her Visit to Great Britain*; Mott, "Notes on the Life of Lucretia Mott as Given to Sarah J. Hale."

<sup>1081</sup> Ingle, "From Mysticism to Radicalism," 79-94; Brinton, *Quaker Practice*, 14.

fearless questioning of the "authoritative knowledge"<sup>1082</sup> of institutional officials and documents and decrees of Church and State reflected Friends' practical faith--a faith expressed in action for justice.

### **Friends' Convictions, Testimonies, and Meetings**

Friends stressed four "distinguishing convictions" with such "continuous intensity" that they came to be regarded as a "peculiar people."<sup>1083</sup> These four convictions are summarized as (a) every person's ability to be in communion with the Divine because of the Light within, (b) every human has grace to follow the Golden Rule, (c) Christians' universal call to examine society's structures and work for social betterment built on morality, and (d) continuing revelation of God's will beyond--but not opposing--Scriptural texts that enabled the betterment of society.<sup>1084</sup>

Testimonies are the ethical component through which Friends exemplify their religious beliefs.<sup>1085</sup> Through testimonies, Quakers--as a Society of Friends--embodied in their everyday lives behaviors that portrayed the "corporate prophetic"<sup>1086</sup> call for society to address needed changes. Testimonies are the practical ways that Friends developed and practiced to examine society and work for moral betterment.<sup>1087</sup> Briefly, many behaviors and practices Friends incorporated under four broad categories of testimony: equality, simplicity, community, and peace.<sup>1088</sup> The Friends' testimony of equality was explored in relation to slavery in Chapter Three and to women's rights in Chapter Four. The best known is the peace testimony, on which Chapter Five focused.

As was shown, the meeting for worship and meeting for business are the Friends' "unique" structures<sup>1089</sup> in which to practice their convictions and testimonies as a covenantal "witnessing community."<sup>1090</sup> These meetings are essentially educational in nature and are the Friends' primary "educational agencies."<sup>1091</sup> Recall that, as noted before, the Friends consider the prophetic image of Christ in the "role of Teacher by his living presence"<sup>1092</sup> to be central. This view moves Friends to live in "new ways of righteousness,"<sup>1093</sup> that respond to societal problems and the continuing revelation of God's will. The learning and education needed to respond to Divine revelation takes place within the Friends' meetings. This search of the

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<sup>1082</sup> According to Merriam and Simpson, as noted before, from authoritative knowledge, derived from "sources of truth" such as institutional officials' and the documents and decrees of Church and State, individuals accept as personal beliefs what the institutions interpret and teach as "truth and reality" Merriam and Simpson, *Guide to Research*, 3.

<sup>1083</sup> Comfort, *The Quakers: A Brief Account*, 7.

<sup>1084</sup> Sheeran, "Friendly Persuasion," 17; Comfort, *The Quakers: A Brief Account*, 7-10; , *The Quaker Origins of Antislavery Edited with an Introduction by J. William Frost*, 2-5.

<sup>1085</sup> Frost, "Secularization in Colonial Pennsylvania," 106.

<sup>1086</sup> Cronk, *Gospel Order*, 19.

<sup>1087</sup> Brinton, *Quaker Education*, 12; Cronk, *Gospel Order*, 3.

<sup>1088</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1089</sup> Brinton, *Quaker Education*, 11-12.

<sup>1090</sup> Gwyn, *The Covenant Crucified*, 20.

<sup>1091</sup> Brinton, *Quaker Practice*, 58.

<sup>1092</sup> Freiday, "Apostolicity and Orthochristianity," 44.

<sup>1093</sup> Comfort, *The Quakers: A Brief Account*, 10.

literature, reported primarily in Chapter Two, proved to be wholly indispensable for understanding various principles and practices of the Society of Friends. Lucretia Mott's speeches and sermons reflected elements of Quakerism as she educated adults through public speaking.

## Conclusions

This exploratory examination of her forty-nine transcribed public addresses found that Lucretia Mott's sermons and speeches consistently reflected both the Friends' principles and their practices. Quaker ideas and ways differed remarkably from customs and perspectives that were dominant in American culture for much of the nineteenth-century. Chapter Two, through a review of scholarly secondary literature and some primary documents, articulated the salient aspects of the Society of Friends' beliefs and practices. Presenting some of the historic context in which Friends' developed their insights and embodied their practices enables adults at the last breath of the twentieth-century to understand the seemingly unalterable atmosphere--the circumstances--in which seventeenth-century adults allowed themselves to be receptive to new insight and open to their own experience. Thus, her life spoke to the American public in a way that presented alternatives: Lucretia Mott was well informed about historic and current events, skilled at public speaking, and purposeful in her exposition and demonstration of ethical perspectives. Her presentation of alternative ways afforded Lucretia's listeners an opportunity to think critically--as today's adult educators would say--because she presented perspectives that differed from governing viewpoints.

Her Quaker perspective set her on a path to envision and work for "a better state of things."<sup>1094</sup> In particular, her understanding of what she called "manifested duty"<sup>1095</sup> was made evident to her by the Light Within--that of God--which she encountered in the reverent covenantal silence of the Friends' meetings for worship. This experiential knowledge gave her a surety of faith and a freedom of speech from which to address 'the state of things' over her lifetime. Admittedly, her prodigious knowledge of the Bible--artfully portrayed in almost every public address--often gave her the words she used to meet her hearers on common ground, but it was not the source of her knowing. Undoubtedly, the Society of Friends' tenets and practices were foundational to the work of Lucretia Mott as one who educated adults through public speaking. However, more needs to be considered to understand sufficiently her perspective, the frame of reference from which she perceived the world.

First, consider for a moment the "silence" in which Lucretia Coffin Mott listened. As a child, she learned no creeds, was given no formulaic words with which to speak, to address, to meet the Divine presence. She learned to listen in the meeting for worship for guidance for action needed to address societal wrongs. The term "unprogrammed," which is used today to describe Friends' silent meetings for worship, may help to depict the mental state of persons for whom their religion provided no rote prayers. To be expressive it would have been necessary for her to answer the question posed originally by George Fox: "What canst thou say?" of the Christ.<sup>1096</sup>

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<sup>1094</sup> Mott, "We Have Food," 185.

<sup>1095</sup> Mott, "Notes on the Life of Lucretia Mott as Given to Sarah J. Hale."

<sup>1096</sup> The Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in Britain, *Quaker Faith and Practice*, 19.07.

Lucretia Mott, from the Friends' testimony of equality, had a vision unlimited by a hierarchical ranking of individuals by sex, ordination, crowning, counting, or color. She had a vision uncluttered by an assumption of human predisposition to evil. She had a vision trained to look at life and people for evidence of the golden rule's operating in their lives. She was dedicated to her life's purpose, which she saw as a duty to work toward social betterment through the peaceful attainment of justice.

### Recognizing the Tangled Web that Injustice Weaves

One opportunity to learn that she presented, for example, related to listening to the poetic words of Isaac Watts in the well-known hymn that praised God for blessings received. She demonstrated how one can engage in questioning even classic hymns to become more alert to the tangled-webs that injustice weaves. Watts' hymn thanks God that "I have food while others starve or beg from door to door."<sup>1097</sup> To which she said,

I remarked that I did not know that we need pause long for the spirit of thanksgiving and praise for blessings and enjoyments; but that I could not feel that it would be right to return thanks for anything like peculiar blessings of special favors.<sup>1098</sup>

She takes note of what is implied in this hymn: some people are starving and some people have more than enough--which they attribute to God's "blessings." She came to realize that her own prosperity was not completely isolated from the situation. She continued,

For indeed, my heart at times smote me with the feelings that there belonged to us at least our share of the reproach and condemnation that things are as they are. That there was a broad distinction in society as so truly portrayed by this simple yet sublime poet that 'we have food while others starve or beg from door to door.'<sup>1099</sup>

Then she suggests a possible course of action:

I often feel it to be a profitable reflection to dwell on this subject because it may lead to the laying of the axe at the root of the corrupt tree, rather than leading to a blind dependence upon an imagined providence to bring about a different state of things without man's agency.<sup>1100</sup>

Lucretia Mott's spiritual training as a Quaker armed her with values that gave her a perspective from which to question the ethics of privileging one person above another and the practice from which to speak publicly for justice.

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<sup>1097</sup> Mott, "We Have Food," 182.

<sup>1098</sup> Ibid.,

<sup>1099</sup> Mott, "We Have Food," 182.

<sup>1100</sup> Ibid.,

*Harper's Weekly*, at her death, recalled that from her youth Lucretia Mott had "a taste for oratory" and was a "profound student of Scriptures."<sup>1101</sup> She participated in revolutionary changes in society through public speaking to educate adults. She educated across a broad range of subjects and merits a place in the history of American adult education as well as further study. Her words and her actions, so purposeful in their motivation, present a question for today's scholars of adult learning and human resource development, if asked about the philosophy and purposes of this field: "What canst thou say?"

## **Speaking Freely As An Issue**

Women's speaking in public was expected to be an issue for this research. Unexpectedly, during research for this dissertation, a surprise social concern became apparent: who gets to speak in a public way was a central question for decades beginning in the 1820s. By 1848, the women of Seneca Falls in their Declaration were well aware of the irony in women's being disparaged for endeavoring to address "a public audience" all the while being encouraged to appear publicly to entertain--even in the circus.<sup>1102</sup> However, the issue was not limited to only women's speaking. Wendell Phillips was so concerned about controls on public deliberation that he gave up his legal career to work for freedom of speech and abolition. In the Hicksite Friends' meetings, Elias Hicks' speaking, not his publications, brought great objections.

Who controls the topics of public discussion and public speaking might be related not to women's presence in public but women's speaking authoritatively. Interestingly, as noted in Chapter One, officials of the religious, legal, and educational professions--and the documents and decrees of church and state institutions--serve, for the public, as sources of what Sharan B. Merriam and Edwin L. Simpson call "authoritative knowledge."<sup>1103</sup> They suggest that individuals accept as personal beliefs, for them "truth and reality," what is preached or taught to them through the profession of elites empowered to speak publicly.<sup>1104</sup> Exclusion from participation in the promulgation of authoritative knowledge created a great challenge to women's access to full citizenship in the republic. Is control of collective conversations and public discussions an issue today? What can help adults practice speaking publicly and learning to exchange views in a conversational format about societal and ethical issues? Can we learn to exchange views civilly and to listen to learn from another's experience? How can adults be empowered and encouraged to dialogue about issues that are indispensable to the ethics practiced through public policy and commercial trade?

## **Gradual Development Leads to Long Lasting Agreement: An Observation of Interest for Adult Education and Fostering of Civil Discourse**

Lucretia Mott continued to call the Society of Friends to live up to its own testimonies. As a young woman, she recognized injustice in earnings received by male and female teachers in a Quaker school and promised to work for justice. As an elderly woman, she headed a committee that saw justice expanded in the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting: [unity](#) was reached "that

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<sup>1101</sup> "Personal Reminiscences of Lucretia Mott," *Harper's Weekly*, December 2 1880, 779.

<sup>1102</sup> *History of Woman Suffrage*, vol. 1, 72.

<sup>1103</sup> Merriam and Simpson, *Guide to Research*, 3.

<sup>1104</sup> Merriam and Simpson, *Guide to Research*, 3.

the women Friends shall have the same voice as men in all business meetings of the Society."<sup>1105</sup> Clarkson's history noted that a "distinction is made as to the powers of usefulness between the men and the women" only as "correspondents, arbitrators, legislators, or on committees of appeal."<sup>1106</sup> Lucretia Mott's dedication to the work of justice for women helped to bring the Society of Friends' ideal of equality into alignment with its disciplined practice of the idea of equality.

The Friends' principles seem to be ideals brought to fruition through gradual steps, as in the full participation of women in all the business meetings. So too with the peace testimony that evolved from 1652 to 1660, and the antislavery testimony that took a century to go from an idea to a testimony. Perhaps gradual--but agreed upon--steps ought to be considered as a way of advancing peace in civil society. For instance, adults could deliberate what small steps could most people agree to before the next step is considered?

### **Future Research**

A brief examination of Lucretia Mott's letters reveals that she regularly recommended and loaned books to many of her friends and associates. An annotated bibliography--a "virtual library"--could be developed from Lucretia's reading catalogued from her letters. A study of her informal and self-directed learning through reading could illuminate additional aspects of this remarkable woman's interests and adult education as a lifelong learner.<sup>1107</sup> What might today's women and men concerned for adult education and for social justice learn?

### **The Lyceum's Work**

A more complete and accurate history is required for analysis of women's participation and educational influence in the lyceum. A review of the literature on the lyceum revealed that a comprehensive history of this notable and influential popular education forum awaits future scholarship. Indication of this needed historical study comes from a brief review of available literature. An informative article by Waldo W. Braden, "The Lecture Movement: 1840 - 1860" adds to Pond's roster the names of more female speakers to include the Grimke sisters, Lucretia Mott, and Anna Dickinson.<sup>1108</sup> Yet, most recent literature eclipses the female speakers.

In addition, no current exploration of the educational history of the lyceum exists related to the nineteenth-century populace. Often speakers went from locale to locale delivering the same speech. However, nineteenth-century newspapers indicate that lyceums proposed questions that were then debated after the scheduled address by those who attended the lectures. Some potential research questions include: What questions were being considered by lyceum participants? Were the same questions debated in Lyceums in different locals? Or, did each lyceum develop its own questions for debate following the programmed lectures?

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<sup>1105</sup> Bacon, 219-21.

<sup>1106</sup> Thomas Clarkson, *A Portraiture of Quakerism As Taken from a View of the Moral Education, Discipline, Peculiar Customs, Religious Principles, Political and Civil Oeconomy, and Character, of the Society of Friends*, Vol. 3 (London: Longman, Hurst, Rees, and Orme, 1806), 295.

<sup>1107</sup> For an initial survey, one might consult Cromwell, *Lucretia Mott*, 28. See also Bacon, *Valiant Friend*, 37.

<sup>1108</sup> Waldo W. Braden, "The Lecture Movement: 1840-1860," *The Quarterly Journal of Speech* 34 (1943): 206-12.

## Adult Education Theories and Practices to Study in the Friends' Society

The ability to question was fostered through Friends' practice of questioning--[queries](#)--the current state of their own lives and their own Society. This questioning stance merits study related to the process of perspective transformation through which, according to Jack Mezirow, adults can question the uncritically accepted but dominant "power and social relationships."<sup>1109</sup>

Exploration of different components of adult learning--collaborative, small group, self-directed, and experiential education, both non-formal and informal--could be compared and contrasted to Friends' practices for future learning.

Of additional interest is consideration of the research interests of Marcie Boucouvalas related to levels of consciousness,<sup>1110</sup> since silence as a part of learning, individual and group, is practiced by Quakers. Various epistemologies also offer areas for future research since, as has been cited, "Lucretia Mott's experience as a Quaker enabled her to hold a theory of knowing that valued reasoning, intuition, and personal experience equally."<sup>1111</sup> Women's ways of knowing for Friends included the history of women's influence and their activism. What lesson might be drawn for consideration of the development of adult women today?

## Commercial Ethics a Topic of Concern

Lucretia Mott had an interest in commercial ethics. An indication of her interest is seen in her comment about "fluctuations in the commercial world."<sup>1112</sup> Investigation of her ethics considered in the context how she worked to educate adults about economic calamities and commercial ethics could serve to inform the history of adult education. Economic calamities occurred numerous times in the nineteenth century and materially influenced Lucretia Mott's life and experiential learning.

## Reflection on the Research

The research for each chapter presented the researcher with surprises. But, clearly, they built toward the conclusion that--what Merriam and Simpson say comes from officials and documents of the institutions that are dominant in society and form "truth and reality" for vast numbers of adults--that is, those that control "authoritative knowledge" and who gets to speak and teach in public is a vital issue. One can delight at the insight and the wisdom of the women of Seneca Falls who recognized the importance of this truth through their resolution that emphasized that while women were shunned for the inappropriateness of speaking publicly, their appearance "on the stage, in the concert, or in feats of the circus" was praised and applauded. Certainly, their resolution showed they could analyze their experience, and question the purpose of that particular social constraint.

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<sup>1109</sup> Mezirow, "How Critical Reflection Triggers Transformative Learning," 15.

<sup>1110</sup> Marcie Boucouvalas, "Consciousness and Learning: New and Renewed Approaches," in *New Directions in Continuing Education*, ed. Sharon Merriam (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1993).

<sup>1111</sup> Karlyn Kohrs Campbell, Ed. *Women Public Speakers in the United States, 1800-1925*. 1993, Westport, CN: Greenwood Press, p. 128.

<sup>1112</sup> Mott, "Notes on the Life of Lucretia Mott as Given to Sarah J. Hale."

Lucretia Mott literally embodied the Friends' testimony of equality as she spoke publicly for the abolition of slavery, and in time, for the rights of women. She enlivened the peace testimony as she escorted black women on the streets of Philadelphia in the face of a destructive mob of thirty thousand men that burned Pennsylvania Hall. As this research shows, there is no doubt that her words, her life reflected Quaker principles and practices. However, perhaps the most instructive lessons for adult education as a field of study, rest on her demonstration of the sure-footedness that knowledge of your history can give one in the practice of adult education. Lucretia Mott knew why she was educating the public and why she continued to learn throughout her life: to work towards a more peaceful world through the securing of justice for human beings.

To my initial and continuing surprise, the research demonstrated repeatedly the necessity, the importance, the privilege, of verbal exchange of ideas in a public setting. The research showed--in a negative sense--the magnitude of the value of free speech through the very opposition by classes who claimed privilege and power to control public speaking and public deliberation of societal issues. Recall Lucretia's 1839 declaration that "the only basis upon which a reformatory Society can stand and effect its work in the hearts of men, is a sacred respect for the right of opinion."<sup>1113</sup> In a sense, if we live and work in a world--be it economic, academic, or religious--where injustice, war, and coercion prevail, then we are all in a reformatory society if we face injustice. For many fields, for instance adult education and learning, public administration, social justice, this research shows that Lucretia Mott provides an exemplar of one who respected and practiced the idea of questioning our world, and asking questions that truly seek--and listen to--an opinion, and the public deliberation of values and issues.

Found in Lucretia Mott's life and work is "a pearl of great price:" the importance and value, the treasure we have in the right of free speech and the responsibility we have in our professional lives to foster and protect that gift. She is an exemplar of one who advocates speaking publicly for justice and one who educates adults in ways of peaceful, respectful deliberation when opinions differ. Lucretia Mott worked toward "a better state of things." Her legacy asks for what do we work?

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<sup>1113</sup> "First Annual Meeting of the New-England Non-Resistance Society," *The Liberator*, 11/10 1839, 164.



## APPENDIX A

### GLOSSARY

**Advices:** "Extracts from minutes and epistles of early Friends intended to supply guidance, caution and counsel to monthly meetings and their members on various aspects of daily life."<sup>1114</sup>

**As way may open or As the way opens:** "Proceeding with a proposed project 'as way opens' means taking one step at a time (prayerfully), so as to become clear what to do."<sup>1115</sup>

**Clerk:** A clerk functions as one "responsible for the administration of a Friends meeting for business [to include] preparation, leadership, and follow up of" of matters considered.<sup>1116</sup>

**Concern:** "A course of action taken under deep religious conviction."<sup>1117</sup> A concern "is felt to be a direct intimation of God's will."<sup>1118</sup>

**Discipline:** The *Book of Discipline* summarizes the faith and practice to which Quakers are "committed."<sup>1119</sup> For instance, the Book of Discipline for the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting and the Yearly Meeting in England describes "a yearly meeting's history, structures, and procedures, including advices, queries, and often quotations...from the experience of Friends. . . . The word discipline comes from the root word disciple."<sup>1120</sup>

**Epistles:** "A public letter [sent among] Friends groups to supply information, spiritual insight, and encouragement."<sup>1121</sup>

**Gospel order:** Phraseology used by George Fox and other early Friends "to describe the new covenant order of the church under the headship of Christ."<sup>1122</sup> Sandra Cronk writes that George Fox spoke of gospel order to describe the relationship among the "practices of worship, decision-making, and daily living" for Friends.<sup>1123</sup>

**Guarded Education:** For Quakers, "divine revelation was a gift, its application a skill."<sup>1124</sup> William Kashatus, historian of Quaker education, described "'a religiously guarded education' as

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<sup>1114</sup> Philadelphia Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends, *Faith and Practice: A Book of Christian Discipline* (Philadelphia: Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, 1997), 215.

<sup>1115</sup> Lyn Cope-Robinson, *The Little Quaker Sociology Book: With Glossary* (Melbourne, FL: Canmore Press, 1995), 180.

<sup>1116</sup> Philadelphia Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends, *Faith and Practice*, 216.

<sup>1117</sup> Trevett, Christine, *Women in the 17th Century*, Ebor Press, York, England, 1991: 5 as quoted in Cope-Robinson 1995: 198

<sup>1118</sup> Philadelphia Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends, *Faith and Practice*, 216.

<sup>1119</sup> John Punshon, *Portrait in Grey: A Short History of the Quakers* (London: Quaker Home Service, 1984), 138.

<sup>1120</sup> Philadelphia Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends, *Faith and Practice*, 215.

<sup>1121</sup> *Ibid.*, 216.

<sup>1122</sup> *Ibid.*, 217.

<sup>1123</sup> Sandra L. Cronk, *Gospel Order: A Quaker Understanding of Faithful Church Community* (Wallingford PA: Pendle Hill Publications, 1991), 3.

<sup>1124</sup> Nancy Reid Gibbs, *Children of Light: Friends Seminary, 1786-1986* (New York: Friends Seminary, 1986), 11.

an idiosyncratic education that would have required every Quaker child's reading the works of William Penn, Robert Barclay, and George Fox."<sup>1125</sup>

**Leading:** Sheeran defines "leadings," an ongoing part of the Quaker experience from their founding, as "inner religious movements which 'lead' one to believe . . . that God is calling one to a particular action."<sup>1126</sup> A sense of being called by God to undertake a specific course of action. A leading often arises from a concern.<sup>1127</sup>

**Meeting for business:** These meetings are essentially educational in nature and are the Friends' primary "educational agencies."<sup>1128</sup> Within a meeting for business are made what Sheeran describes as "decisions by mutual consent."<sup>1129</sup> Douglas Steere says the meetings for business function for Friends as the "corporate method of arriving at decisions."<sup>1130</sup> This process differs from value-free consensus, defined in the dictionary as "mutual agreement or harmony." Friends' decision-making process is rooted in worship with the expectation of "divine guidance manifesting itself through the unity of decisions."<sup>1131</sup> The meeting for worship and meeting for business are the Friends' "unique" structures<sup>1132</sup> in which to practice their convictions and testimonies as a covenantal "witnessing community."<sup>1133</sup> This exclusive Quaker process is identical for a meeting for business at the monthly, quarterly and yearly meeting levels.

**Meeting for worship:** "A gathering of individuals in quiet waiting upon the enlightening and empowering presence of the Divine; the central focus of the corporate life of the Society of Friends."<sup>1134</sup>

**Minute:** "The record of a corporate decision reached during a meeting . . . for business."<sup>1135</sup> Official records of proceedings kept for all Quaker business meetings (preparative, monthly, quarterly, and yearly meetings), along with their committees."<sup>1136</sup>

**Openings:** What early Friends experienced as being "directly revealed in [the] soul so that [a person] assuredly knew it to be true"<sup>1137</sup> or "a spiritual opportunity or leading."<sup>1138</sup>

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<sup>1125</sup> William C. Kashatus, Personal telephone conversation, Nineteenth-Century Quaker Education and Lucretia Coffin Mott (Philadelphia, July 3, 1995).

<sup>1126</sup> Michael John Sheeran, "Friendly Persuasion: Voteless Decisions in the Religious Society of Friends," diss (New Jersey: Princeton University, 1977), 24.

<sup>1127</sup> Philadelphia Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends, *Faith and Practice*, 218.

<sup>1128</sup> Howard H. Brinton, *Guide to Quaker Practice* (Wallingford, PA: Pendle Hill, 1955), 58.

<sup>1129</sup> Sheeran, "Friendly Persuasion," 4.

<sup>1130</sup> Douglas V. Steere, "The Quaker Meeting for Business," The 19th Annual J. Barnard Walton Memorial Lecture, Southeastern Yearly Meeting, (Avon Park, FL: Southeastern Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends, 1995, 10/4, 1982), 2-3.

<sup>1131</sup> Sheeran, "Friendly Persuasion," 2.

<sup>1132</sup> Howard H. Brinton, *Quaker Education In Theory and Practice* (Wallingford, PA: Pendle Hill Press, 1967), 11-12.

<sup>1133</sup> Douglas Gwyn, *The Covenant Crucified: Quakers and the Rise of Capitalism* (Wallingford, PA: Pendle Hill Publications, 1995), 20.

<sup>1134</sup> Philadelphia Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends, *Faith and Practice*, 218.

<sup>1135</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1136</sup> "Guide to Genealogical Resources at Friends Historical Library of Swarthmore College" (Swarthmore, PA, n.d.), D-3.

**Preparative Meeting:** "An organized group of members of an established monthly meeting which ordinarily gathers for worship at another place."<sup>1139</sup>

**Public Friend:** A Public Friend signifies one who expresses religious beliefs as a preacher.<sup>1140</sup> Public Friends traveled among groups of Quakers, and interacted "with the larger society"<sup>1141</sup> to educate and speak about societal concerns. Lucretia Coffin Mott ministered as a Public Friend. For a Public Friend, the sectarian and secular roles converge through the practice of speaking.

**Queries:** "A set of questions, based on Friends' practices and testimonies, which are considered by Meetings and individuals as a way of both guiding and examining individual and corporate lives and actions."<sup>1142</sup>

**Sense of the meeting:** "An expression of the unity of a meeting for business on some . . . concern."<sup>1143</sup>

**Testimony:** "Friends testimonies (religious and social) are an outward expression of inward spiritual leadings and discernments of truth and the will of God. Testimonies are the application of Friend's beliefs to situations and problems of individuals and society ."<sup>1144</sup>

**Threshing Meeting:** "A meeting held to discuss a controversial issue. At such a meeting all points of view are heard, but no decision is made."<sup>1145</sup>

**Traveling Minister:** "Friends recognized both women and men ministers who felt called . . . to speak to a specific group or person."<sup>1146</sup>

**Truth:** "The revealed will of God, as experienced in communion with the Inner Light or Inward Christ."<sup>1147</sup>

**Unity:** "The spiritual oneness and harmony whose realization is a primary objective of a meeting for worship or a meeting for business."<sup>1148</sup>

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<sup>1137</sup> Rufus M. Jones, "Introduction," in *Journal of George Fox*, ed. Rufus M. Jones, with an introduction and notes (New York: Capricorn Books, 1963), 74-75.

<sup>1138</sup> Philadelphia Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends, *Faith and Practice*, 219.

<sup>1139</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1140</sup> Carol Stoneburner, "Introduction," in *The Influence of Quaker Women on American History: Biographical Studies*, ed. Carol and John Stoneburner (Lewiston: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1986), xiv.

<sup>1141</sup> Stoneburner, "Introduction," 1.

<sup>1142</sup> Philadelphia Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends, *Faith and Practice*, 219-20.

<sup>1143</sup> Ibid., 220.

<sup>1144</sup> Cope-Robinson, *Little Quaker Sociology Book*, 195.

<sup>1145</sup> *Faith and Practice*, North Pacific Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends, 1993, quoted in Cope-Robinson, *Little Quaker Sociology Book*, 195.

<sup>1146</sup> Cope-Robinson, *Little Quaker Sociology Book*, 195-96.

<sup>1147</sup> Philadelphia Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends, *Faith and Practice*, 221.

<sup>1148</sup> Ibid.

**Yearly Meeting:** "Those Friends from a geographically extended area who gather in annual session to worship and conduct business together . . . [and] denotes the total membership of the constituent monthly meetings."<sup>1149</sup> The Yearly Meeting meets for "several days...annually to conduct business, formulate the discipline, receive reports and concerns from its constituent meetings, review the state of the Society, and communicate with other yearly meetings and non-Quaker organizations."<sup>1150</sup>

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<sup>1149</sup> Philadelphia Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends, *Faith and Practice*, 221.

<sup>1150</sup> "Guide to Genealogical Resources," D-7.

## APPENDIX B

### Researcher's Early Interest in the Friends.

Evidence that many innovations in American life originated from efforts led by Friends--some committed lifelong members of the Society of Friends and some past members with a Quaker perspective--intrigued the researcher. Professor Harold Stubblefield's directed study in issues of American Women's Adult Education spawned my interest in women's history and Professor Marcie Boucouvalas' course in adult learning led to a focused interest in Quaker practices. With many Quaker innovations aimed at a more just and broader participation in the privileges of American society, the first question on this path arose: what inspired and energized Quakers?

### Finding the Ideas and Practices of the Society of Friends

Initial interest led to an investigation of the ideas and practices of the Society of Friends. This investigation turned into an extended quest, begun in 1995, and included the previously cited dialogues with two historians of Quaker education and several meetings with Quaker librarians in and around Philadelphia. Through reading recommendations, the librarians patiently guided my quest for non-formal learning about the Friends.

Attendance at the 11<sup>th</sup> Conference of Quaker Historians and Archivists, Oakwood Friends School, Poughkeepsie, New York, June 21-23, 1996, sparked further interest in the Friends' history. Oakwood is located on the site where formerly stood Nine Partners Boarding School. Lucretia Coffin received much of her guarded education at Nine Partners.

### Influential Literature

For this research to consider educational aspects of adult members of the Society of Friends, several noted works of Quaker history and spirituality for background were read.<sup>1151</sup> A more focused study led to reading literature particularly about the history of American Quaker women<sup>1152</sup>. The significant works about Lucretia Mott were reviewed in Chapter One.

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<sup>1151</sup> Among these works were Barbour and Frost, *The Quakers*; Sheeran, "Friendly Persuasion."; Punshon, *Portrait in Grey: A Short History of the Quakers*; Steere, "Introduction: Quaker Spirituality."; Balwant Nevaskar, *Capitalists Without Capitalism; The Jains of India and the Quakers of the West*, Contributions in Sociology, No. 6 (Westport, Conn., Greenwood Pub. Co., 1971); Margaret Hope Bacon, *The Quiet Rebels: The Story of the Quakers in America* (New York: Basic Books, 1969); Barry Levy, "Quakers, the Delaware Valley, and North Midlands Emigration to America," *William and Mary Quarterly, Third Series* XLVIII, no. No. 2 (1991): 246-52; Jones, *Interpretation of Quakerism*; Shi, *Simple Life*; Brinton, *Quaker Practice*.

<sup>1152</sup> The more influential works included Bacon, *Margaret Hope Bacon.*; , *The Influence of Quaker Women*; , *Witnesses for Change*; Nancy A. Hewitt, "The Fragmentation of Friends: The Consequences for Quaker Women in Antebellum America," in *Witnesses for Change: Quaker Women Over Three Centuries*, ed. Elisabeth Potts Brown and Susan Mosher Stuard (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1989), 93-119; Hewitt, *Women's activism and social change*; Cristine M. Levenduski, *Peculiar Power: A Quaker Woman Preacher in Eighteenth-Century America* (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1996); Phyllis Mack, *Visionary Women: Ecstatic Prophecy in Seventeenth-Century England* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992); Joyce L. Irwin,

One difficulty along the path to this research is that histories of Quakers and their activities are readily available and prominent. Literature about Quaker spirituality was more difficult to find. Quaker practices, however, were the most difficult to locate. The three types of Friends literature, however, present pictures that did not immediately lead to the sources of other information, nor did they point to other components of the Society of Friends.

### Travels to Trace Lucretia Coffin Mott's History

The researcher visited Nantucket, Poughkeepsie, and Philadelphia, to conduct research about Lucretia Mott. While in Philadelphia, the researcher personally interviewed Margaret Hope Bacon,<sup>1153</sup> author of numerous articles and the most recent full-length popular, based on primary documents, biography about Lucretia Mott.

Margaret Bacon, during the March 13, 1996, interview conducted at the Bacon home in Philadelphia, suggested the researcher examine particularly the minutes of the Women's Business Meetings for the Friends Meetings of which Lucretia Mott was a member. These suggestions lead to further study of Quaker practices.

The researcher attended meetings for worship in the Washington, D.C. and in Philadelphia, in the meetinghouse where Lucretia Mott worshiped in the nineteenth century. The significance of the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting in relation to this study rests on the rationale that Friends' meetings under the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting still practice early Quaker ideas and methods. In this regard, the researcher's rationale is similar to the rationale on which Jesuit Priest Michael J. Sheeran based the choice of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting for his dissertation.<sup>1154</sup> For his comprehensive study of Friends' decision-making process, Sheeran selected Philadelphia Yearly Meeting [PYM] because of "its self-conscious effort to be consistent with traditional Quaker styles of worship and decision [and] its historical continuity with earliest Friends' origins in America."<sup>1155</sup> The researcher also concludes the today's PYM Friends can help illustrate Quaker practices.

Reading Quaker history gave the researcher confidence that observing today's Philadelphia Quakers in their Yearly Meeting could broaden understanding of Friends' practices. Added to this focus on Philadelphia Quakers is the researcher's overriding interest in Lucretia Mott who spent all but the first eighteen of her eighty-seven year life as a Philadelphia Quaker.

### Learning About the Meeting for Business

The researcher observed meetings for business held by two groups of Friends in the Washington area. Following the time spent at the Washington meetings for business, observing the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting (PYM) of the Religious Society of Friends was especially instructive. The PYM session was held March 26-29, 1998, at the Fourth and Arch Street Meetinghouse in Philadelphia and marked the 318th Annual Session of PYM first held in 1680. The methods and practices observed by the researcher, rooted in basic Quaker belief and practices, are essentially the same methods and practices employed during the life of Lucretia

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*Womanhood in Radical Protestantism 1525-1675*, Studies in Women and Religion (Lewiston NY: Edwin Mellen Press, 1979); Alma Lutz, *Susan B. Anthony: Rebel, Crusader, Humanitarian* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1959).

<sup>1153</sup> Bacon, Personal conversation at her home in Philadelphia.

<sup>1154</sup> Sheeran, "Friendly Persuasion."

<sup>1155</sup> Ibid., 6.

Mott. The researcher observed the interplay of silence and speaking in a Quaker meeting to understand better the practice of public speaking open to all members of the Society, in general, and to ministers, in particular. This experience enabled the researcher to understand better the educational and decision-making process at the Yearly Meeting level.

This exclusive Quaker process is identical for a meeting for business at the monthly, quarterly and yearly meeting levels. Beginning in 1830,<sup>1156</sup> Lucretia Mott served as Clerk of the Women's Meeting Philadelphia Yearly Meeting (Hicksite).

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<sup>1156</sup> , "Minutes of the Monthly Meeting of Friends of Philadelphia,."

## APPENDIX C

Facsimile of Letter Signed Lucretia Mott  
From *Woman's Work and Woman's Culture: A Series of Essays*  
Edited by Josephine E. Butler,  
Published by MacMillan and Co., London, England, 1869  
Pages xlv-xlvii.

Roadside, near Philadelphia,  
4 mo. 20th, 1869.

My Dear Friend,

Thy letter of Feb. 1st I would have answered immediately, as thou requested, if only to say that, unaccustomed to write for the press, I must decline, as I have done when urged to furnish articles for the Anti-Slavery or Woman's Rights' papers, to prepare an Essay on either of the subjects proposed, worthy such a work as your publisher, Macmillan, designs.

Still, on further reflection, my age and experience enabling me to state facts connected with the Society of Friends, and the Woman's Rights' movements, and desiring to give all the aid in my power, I venture to make some statements from which some one of your writers may produce an Essay.

The stand taken by George Fox, the founder of our Society, against authority as opposed to the immediate teachings of the "Light within," gave independence of character to women as well as men. Their ministry recognised, as a free gospel' message, they went forth among the nations "preaching the Word," and spreading their principles. Adopting no theological creed, their faith was shown by their works in the everyday duties of life, "minding the Light" in little things as well as in the greater; thus keeping a conscience void of offense toward God and toward men.

In the executive department of the Society, the right conceded to woman to act conjointly with man has had its influence, not only in making her familiar with the routine of business relating to our "Discipline," but in giving her self-reliance in mingling with the various reformatory societies in the great movements of the age.

In the marriage union, no ministerial or other official aid is required to consecrate or legalise the bond. After due care in making known their intentions, the parties, in presence of their friends, announce their covenant, with pledge of fidelity and affection, invoking Divine aid for its faithful fulfillment. There is no assumed authority or admitted inferiority; no *promise* of *obedience*. Their independence is equal, their dependence mutual, and their obligations reciprocal. This of course has had its influence on married life and the welfare of families. The permanence and happiness of the conjugal relation among us have ever borne a favourable comparison with those of other denominations.

The "Testimonies" of the Society against war, slavery, the forced maintenance of the ministry, and the extravagant and luxurious indulgences of the age, intoxicating drinks, &c., which are revived yearly and quarterly in our meetings of discipline, have prepared our members to units in many reformatory movements of the day, demanding a "righteousness exceeding that



of the Scribes and Pharisees." The restraint placed on the young from light and unprofitable reading has had a good effect also on the character in after-life.

Do not understand, however, that the Society is free from surrounding injurious influences. By birthright membership, without judicious training, and from other causes, many have "gone halting," as regards these testimonies, and our women themselves have much to learn from the more enlightened, as to their equal place in the community. [See Clarkson's Portraiture of Quakerism.] But not to dwell too long on our own Society,--The co-operation of women of all classes with men in anti-slavery, temperance, and other moral reform societies, has prepared woman to act more decidedly in her own behalf. In 1840, when the World's Anti-Slavery Convention was called in London, the American Society sent delegates of women with men (the greater number Friends). Our English abolitionists, afraid of the "ridicule of the morning papers," ruled us out, extending at the same time courtesy and flattery in lieu of right. Daniel O'Connell, William Howitt, Dr. Bowring, and others, pleaded our cause ably-in vain. Their appeals were published. If not easily obtained, I can furnish a copy. I might go on with a history of woman's advancement, from Mary Woolstonecraft, Frances Wright, and your own *Westminster Review*, down to our more recent efforts,--woman's journals, parliamentary action, and in this country woman's conventions, petitions, and appeals to our legislatures, reform in our state laws, public lectures, women entering the professions, schools of design, telegraph operations, &c. &c. Our woman's conventions originated with Elizabeth Cady Stanton, twenty years ago. They attracted much notice and no little opposition and misrepresentation; nevertheless, women were greatly encouraged to persevere in their work. Numbers travelled over our country, holding meetings, delivering lectures, inviting discussion on the Bible arguments, the laws, &c., maintaining that the time had come for woman to move in her proper sphere, no longer resting satisfied in the circumscribed limits with which corrupt custom and a perverted application of the Scriptures had encircled her. Thus has she been prepared intelligently to make application for her rights, until at last the ballot is demanded as a legitimate claim. We have several periodicals specially advocating woman's rights, some of them edited by women.

In the Social relations, the sacred duties of wife and mother are fulfilled with no less assiduity than where woman is kept in a subordinate position. The most refined of our sex are among its most able advocates. I hope to enlist one of these to write for you, Dr. Ann Preston, who, with many other women practitioners, is gaining recognition and respect every year. Thirty-five students were kindly welcomed this winter to the clinical lectures, delivered in Philadelphia by leading medical teachers. In the Educational department also, woman holds her place. In some of our public schools her salary is equal to those of our best male teachers.

These mere facts are about all I feel able to write in compliance with thy request. It is with great reluctance I take the pen for more than family letters. Make such use of the foregoing as may be of any avail. If I can further aid in any way, save in a clever essay, my poor services shall be freely rendered.

Thine, for woman's elevation,  
Lucretia Mott.

## APPENDIX D

From *The History of Pennsylvania Hall, which was Destroyed by a Mob on the 17<sup>th</sup> of May, 1838.*<sup>1157</sup>

### AFTERNOON SESSION

The afternoon was appropriate to the Philadelphia Lyceum, and the exercises were of a scientific and literary character. It was expected that the proceedings of this and of the subsequent meeting of the Lyceum would be published at length in this work, but the following communication will sufficiently explain why they are omitted.

To the Managers of the Pennsylvania Hall Association:

Esteemed Friends: - It becomes my duty to forward to you the enclosed resolution of the Philadelphia Lyceum, to whom you kindly granted the use of your Hall, on the afternoon of the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> inst.

Lyceum, which is a literary institution, should not appear to be in any way connected with the benevolent institution known by the name of the Anti-Slavery Society, which met in your Hall on that same week.

How your publishing the proceedings of the Lyceum would prove any such connection, I am entirely at a loss to perceive. Respectfully, I remain Your friend, Samuel Webb, President.

At a meeting of the Philadelphia Lyceum, held Fifth month 26<sup>th</sup>, 1838, the following preamble and resolution were adopted:

Whereas, the Managers of the Pennsylvania Hall have resolved to publish a book, containing an account of the proceedings held therein, during its dedication; and whereas, this Lyceum is not in any way connected with the abolition question, therefore,

*Resolved*, That the Managers of the Pennsylvania Hall be respectfully requested not to publish in said book the proceedings of this Lyceum, at their meetings held in said hall. Extracted from the Minutes. Haworth Wetherald, Secretary.<sup>1158</sup>

The Philadelphia Lyceum subsequently rescinded their resolution found on page thirty-six of the original *History of Pennsylvania Hall*; but not in time to allow their proceedings to be inserted in the order of time in which they occurred.

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<sup>1157</sup> Webb, *History of Pennsylvania Hall*.

<sup>1158</sup> *Ibid.*, 46.

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