

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 speeches¹ 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,"² as Barbara M. Solomon says, made apparent "an educational dilemma."³ By then, rhetoric was required for male college students because they were "expected to declaim as preparation for public life."⁴ Solomon explains, however, that "religious precepts held that women should remain silent in church and in mixed company."⁵ In fact, according to Solomon "for most women in this period, the restriction was so ingrained that they were uncomfortable

¹ Mott, *Lucretia Mott: Her Complete Speeches and Sermons*/edited [with an introduction] by Dana Greene.

² Solomon, *In the Company of Educated Women: A History of Women and Higher Education in America*, 21.

³ *Ibid.*, 28.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 28.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 28.

speaking in the presence" of males.⁶ Although such religious precepts were dominant in 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"⁷ 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.⁸

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 Convention⁹, contemporary women reported just such

⁶ Solomon, *In the Company of Educated Women: A History of Women and Higher Education in America*, 28.

⁷ *History of Woman Suffrage*, vol. 1, 18.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 18.

⁹ April 19 and 20, 1850, in Salem, Ohio.

an occasion. *The History of Woman Suffrage*, with a tone of satisfaction, reports that "for 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."¹⁰ 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."¹¹ 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.¹²

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."¹³

Scriptural Basis for Women's Speaking

Hufton describes as "unequivocal" the declaration of George Fox that women had the right "to preach and predict."¹⁴ He rooted his "assertion" "¹⁵ 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.¹⁶

¹⁰ *History of Woman Suffrage*, vol. 1, 110.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 110.

¹² Mott, "Notes on the Life of Lucretia Mott as Given to Sarah J. Hale,."

¹³ Hufton, *The Prospect Before Her: A History of Women in Western Europe*, 417.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 417.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 417.

¹⁶ Hufton, *The Prospect Before Her: A History of Women in Western Europe*, 417.

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.”¹⁷ The Quaker historical record calls these the “Valiant Sixty” or the “First Publishers of Truth,” who included eleven women¹⁸ all of whom taught the “convictions” that came to distinguish Friends.¹⁹ The movement of these “itinerant preachers,” women and men, occasioned “long absences from home spent in preaching and imprisonment.”²⁰

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” women²¹ to become convinced.²² 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.’²³

“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.

¹⁷ Sheeran, “Friendly Persuasion,” 16-17.

¹⁸ Ernest E. Taylor, *The Valiant Sixty*, (London, 1951), pp. 40-42, as cited in Pagliaro, “Education and Radical Thought of Lucretia Mott,” 8.

¹⁹ For a history of women among the Valiant Sixty and other female traveling ministers see “Traveling Women Ministers, 1650-1800” in Bacon, *Margaret Hope Bacon.*, 24-41.

²⁰ Sheeran, “Friendly Persuasion,” 16.

²¹ 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.

²² Hufton, *The Prospect Before Her: A History of Women in Western Europe*, 417.

²³ The Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in Britain, *Quaker Faith and Practice*, 19.07.

Margaret Fell Sets the Example for Women's Learning and Activism

The itinerant preachers met their material needs from their own resources but “in distress turned to a common fund of free-will offerings.”²⁴ Such needs resulted in the establishment of one of the few and very early “formal creations” of the Friends: the Kendal Fund.²⁵ That Fund “existed to collect money and disperse it to traveling Friends.”²⁶ Margaret Fell administered the Kendal Fund “centrally” from Swarthmore Hall.²⁷ Margaret Fell has received acclaim as the Mother of Quakerism, a foremost leader of early Quakerism.²⁸

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.²⁹ 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.³⁰

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.”³¹ 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.”³² Sheeran says the “Quaker procedure is just the opposite.”³³

²⁴ Sheeran, “Friendly Persuasion,” 16-17.

²⁵ Ibid., 16-17.

²⁶ Bronner, “Quaker Discipline and Order,” 323.

²⁷ Sheeran, “Friendly Persuasion,” 17.

²⁸ For an extensive scholarly study of Margaret Fell see: Bonnelyn Young Kunze, *Margaret Fell and the Rise of Quakerism* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994).

²⁹ George Fox, *Journal of George Fox* (New York: Capricorn Books, 1667-1668), 340.

³⁰ Fox, *Journal*, 459-60.

³¹ Sheeran, “Friendly Persuasion,” 20.

³² Sheeran, “Friendly Persuasion,” 20.

These early Friends set about, "In gravity, patience, meekness, in unity and concord . . . to determine of things by a general mutual concord, in assenting together as one."³⁴ 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..."³⁵ 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.³⁶

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."³⁷ Hufton notes that the first Women's Meeting took place in London "in the 1670s...to direct their efforts towards philanthropy."³⁸

³³ Ibid.,

³⁴ Ibid.,

³⁵ Stoneburner, "Introduction," 14.

³⁶ Hufton, *The Prospect Before Her: A History of Women in Western Europe*, 417.

³⁷ *Witnesses for Change*, 15.

³⁸ 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."³⁹ 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?"⁴⁰

(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.⁴¹

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."⁴² Lucretia saw women active and decisive in business.

³⁹ *Witnesses for Change*, 13.

⁴⁰ The Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in Britain, *Quaker Faith and Practice*, 19.07.

⁴¹ *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.

⁴² *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, 1871), 31.

Lucretia's Experiential Learning on Nantucket

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,⁴³ 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."⁴⁴ 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.⁴⁵

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."⁴⁶

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,"⁴⁷

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.⁴⁸

"That of God in every one" is a core belief that all Lucretia's childhood education--formal and informal--stressed. Friends' belief 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.

⁴³ Mott, "Notes on the Life of Lucretia Mott as Given to Sarah J. Hale,"

⁴⁴ Ibid.,

⁴⁵ 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,."

⁴⁶ Pagliaro, "Education and Radical Thought of Lucretia Mott," 7.

⁴⁷ 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.

⁴⁸ Ibid., 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"⁴⁹ Lucretia was offered and took the post of "assistant to the girls' head teacher, Deborah Rodgers . . . [a] skilled" grammarian,⁵⁰ 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."⁵¹ 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)⁵² an impartial creator had bestowed.⁵³

Lucretia worked a lifetime in pursuit of the claim she believe "an impartial creator had bestowed"⁵⁴ 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."⁵⁵ 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"⁵⁶ 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"⁵⁷ on members of her sex. Next, this study examines Lucretia Mott's remarks that reflect Quaker principles and practices as related to women's rights.

⁴⁹ Bacon, *Valiant Friend*, 25.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 25.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 25.

⁵² 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

⁵³ Mott, "Notes on the Life of Lucretia Mott as Given to Sarah J. Hale,."

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*,

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*,

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*,

⁵⁷ Mott, "Notes on the Life of Lucretia Mott as Given to Sarah J. Hale,."

(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 speeches⁵⁸ 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.⁵⁹

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 Quaker Testimony of Equality rests on the core belief of the seed of God in every person and is its practical expression.

⁵⁸ 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.

⁵⁹ Mott, "The Truth of God . . . The Righteousness of God (9/23/1841)," 26.

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."⁶⁰ 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.⁶¹

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"⁶² 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."⁶³ 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'.⁶⁴ 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."⁶⁵ Friends believe that--if properly understood--scriptural teaching will not contradict the guidance of the Inner Light.

⁶⁰ Mott, "The Truth of God... The Righteousness of God (9/23/1841)," 27.

⁶¹ Ibid.,

⁶² Ibid., 28.

⁶³

⁶⁴ Mott, "Notes on the Life of Lucretia Mott as Given to Sarah J. Hale,."

⁶⁵ Mott, "The Truth of God... The Righteousness of God (9/23/1841)," 28.

Free Discussion and Other Quaker Lessons in a Discourse on Woman

Without a doubt, this Lyceum speech,⁶⁶ delivered in Philadelphia in December, 1849, is the best known of Lucretia Mott's public addresses.⁶⁷ 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."⁶⁸ 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:"⁶⁹ (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."⁷⁰ 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."⁷¹ Lucretia addresses several of the biblical arguments to clarify that "if these scriptures were read intelligently"⁷² 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.

⁶⁶ Mott, "Discourse on Woman (12/17/1849)."

⁶⁷ For rhetorical analyses of *Discourse on Woman* see Olson, Bayer and, "Lucretia Coffin Mott."; Carlson, "Defining Womanhood: Lucretia Coffin Mott and the Transformation of Femininity.."

⁶⁸ Mott, "Discourse on Woman (12/17/1849)," 144.

⁶⁹ *History of Woman Suffrage, vol. 1*, 36.

⁷⁰ Mott, "Discourse on Woman (12/17/1849)," 144.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 143.

⁷² *Ibid.*, 146.

Custom suited to darker ages in Eastern countries, are not binding upon enlightened society. The solemn covenant of marriage may be entered into without these lordly assumptions, and humiliating concessions and promises.⁷³

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.⁷⁴

Her presentation of alternative perspectives on women's place in marriage, she hoped would lead her listeners "to reflect upon this subject."⁷⁵

She also hoped to call "public attention"⁷⁶ toward the subject of access to "more profitable employment" for women.⁷⁷ 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."⁷⁸

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

⁷³ Mott, "Discourse on Woman (12/17/1849)," 152.

⁷⁴ Ibid., 154-55.

⁷⁵ Ibid., 158.

⁷⁶ Ibid., 159.

⁷⁷ Ibid.,

⁷⁸ Ibid., .

eneration for power" pervasive in that English culture. The realms of power in seventeenth-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.⁷⁹

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."⁸⁰ 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.⁸¹

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 that resulted from the republican principles and "how far" the leaders would be carried by them:

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

⁷⁹ 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.

⁸⁰ Mott, "The Laws in Relation to Women (10/5-7/1853)," 219.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 219.

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 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.⁸²

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.⁸³

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.⁸⁴

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.

⁸² 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.

⁸³ Mott, "An Encouraging View as to What Has Already Been Effected (11/25-26/1856)," 231.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*.

It is always unsafe to invest man with power over his fellow being "Call no man master" --that is the true doctrine.⁸⁵

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,⁸⁶ 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."⁸⁷ 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."⁸⁸ 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.⁸⁹ Not endorsed by all, this unparalleled situation precipitated some "to have their names expunged" from the convention roster.⁹⁰ 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.⁹¹

⁸⁵ Mott, "The Laws in Relation to Women (10/5-7/1853)," 218.

⁸⁶ 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.

⁸⁷ Mott, "Letter to Edward M. Davis,,"

⁸⁸ Kraditor, *Means and Ends in American Abolitionism*, 67.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 42.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 49.

⁹¹ *The Liberator*, 82.

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."⁹²

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.⁹³

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.⁹⁴

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."⁹⁵

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.⁹⁶ 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."⁹⁷ About the same incident, Frederick B. Tolles reports, that the mob accused Daniel Neall of "preaching 'disorganizing doctrines' on the subject of slavery."⁹⁸ All the while, Lucretia objected. As she later wrote in a letter to Maria

⁹² *The Liberator*, 82.

⁹³ *Ibid.*,

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*,

⁹⁵ Mott, "Letter to Edward M. Davis,,"

⁹⁶ Bacon, *Valiant Friend*, 84.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 84.

⁹⁸ Tolles, "Introduction," 26.

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' ".⁹⁹ This Public Friend seemed to know her preaching was unwelcome.

Three-Month Diary of Lessons about Women's Speaking in Public, 1840

In May 1840, James and Lucretia Mott and other abolitionists¹⁰⁰ 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"¹⁰¹ diary, described Lucretia's writing style as "terse and telegraphic."¹⁰² 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."¹⁰³ 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).¹⁰⁴

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 meeting¹⁰⁵. Notwithstanding these credentials, Tolles maintained that Lucretia Mott was on the "wrong side"¹⁰⁶ 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'...mysticism and freedom from doctrinal preoccupation"¹⁰⁷ --articulated by Elias Hicks--as the essence of her Quaker faith.¹⁰⁸ 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."¹⁰⁹

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

⁹⁹ Bacon, *Valiant Friend*, 84.

¹⁰⁰ Mott, *Slavery and "The Woman Question": Lucretia Mott's Diary of Her Visit to Great Britain*, 2.

¹⁰¹ Tolles, "Introduction," 11.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, 7.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, 6.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 6.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 9.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 8.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 5.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 4.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 5.

on Unitarian faith--Factory system--Woman's duties & responsibilities--education of the poor."¹¹⁰

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."¹¹¹ In visiting 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."¹¹²

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,"¹¹³ 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.¹¹⁴ . . . 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.¹¹⁵ . . . 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.¹¹⁶

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."¹¹⁷

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:

¹¹⁰ Mott, *Slavery and "The Woman Question": Lucretia Mott's Diary of Her Visit to Great Britain*, 15.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*,

¹¹² *Ibid.*, 19.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*,

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 16.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 18.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 72.

¹¹⁷ Mott, *Slavery and "The Woman Question": Lucretia Mott's Diary of Her Visit to Great Britain*, 26.

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.¹¹⁸ Visited Mechanics Institute--Jubilee scholars there.¹¹⁹ Went thro' Eton schoolchildren of 'the great' educated there preparatory to Oxford & Cambridge."¹²⁰ Went to Mechanics Institute--one room devoted to Phrenology & Anatomy"¹²¹ 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.¹²²

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."¹²³ Then, as the convention was about to open, according to her diary, two men "came with official information that Women were to be rejected."¹²⁴

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.¹²⁵

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. The meeting with some male delegate intermediaries came to dissuade the women from further efforts to participate in the convention.

¹¹⁸ Mott, *Slavery and "The Woman Question": Lucretia Mott's Diary of Her Visit to Great Britain*, 17.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 18.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, 21.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, 62.

¹²² *Ibid.*, 64.

¹²³ *Ibid.*, 22.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, 27.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, 28.

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."¹²⁶

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 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."¹²⁷ 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."¹²⁸ 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."¹²⁹

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.¹³⁰

James Mott Records His Understanding

James Mott wrote also of the "subject of admitting women as delegates to the Convention."¹³¹ 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."¹³²

¹²⁶ Mott, *Slavery and "The Woman Question": Lucretia Mott's Diary of Her Visit to Great Britain*, 29.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*,

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*,

¹²⁹ *History of Woman Suffrage*, vol. 1, 419.

¹³⁰ Mott, *Slavery and "The Woman Question": Lucretia Mott's Diary of Her Visit to Great Britain*, 31.

¹³¹ *James and Lucretia Mott: Life and Letters*. Edited by their Granddaughter, Anna Davis Hallowell., 198.

¹³² *Ibid.*,

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 . . .¹³³ 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 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.¹³⁴

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.¹³⁵

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

¹³³ Mott, *Slavery and "The Woman Question": Lucretia Mott's Diary of Her Visit to Great Britain*, 75.

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*,

¹³⁵ *History of Woman Suffrage*, vol. 1, 419.

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](#)¹³⁶.

Lucretia herself spoke of "travelling through New York and Ohio" in 1848.¹³⁷

She also wrote about such travel. After expressing sympathy for friends who had recently lost a young child that Lucretia calls "my little namesake,"¹³⁸ 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.¹³⁹

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.¹⁴⁰

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](#).¹⁴¹

Each minute was returned to the Monthly meeting, duly recorded, usually with a notation such as "Lucretia Mott returned the Minute granted in 7th month last with information that she felt the reward of peace in having attended to the service. An endorsement from Sanford Quarterly

¹³⁶ Bacon, "In Souls There Is No Sex: Pioneers in Antislavery and Women's Rights."

¹³⁷ Mott, "Progress of the Religious World (3/23-24/1848)," 69.

¹³⁸ Lucretia Mott, "Letter to William and Mary Johnson, Buckingham, Bucks County, Pennsylvania," PS CHI LM 756 (17/1, 1842).

¹³⁹ Lucretia Mott, "Letter to William and Mary Johnson, Buckingham, Bucks County, Pennsylvania,."

¹⁴⁰ "Minutes of the Monthly Meeting of Friends of Philadelphia" (1833-1841).

¹⁴¹ Ibid.,

Meeting held at Hudson was read which informs she had acceptably attended among them."¹⁴² 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 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.¹⁴³

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 19th and 20th 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.¹⁴⁴

Having done that, the women met on a Sunday morning "to write their declaration, resolutions, and to consider subjects for speeches."¹⁴⁵ 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."¹⁴⁶ This historic meeting was called just a decade after women's public speaking about abolition had sparked the Pennsylvania Hall fire.

¹⁴² "Minutes of the Monthly Meeting of Friends of Philadelphia,."

¹⁴³ Ibid.,

¹⁴⁴ *James and Lucretia Mott: Life and Letters. Edited by their Granddaughter, Anna Davis Hallowell.*, 299.

¹⁴⁵ *History of Woman Suffrage, vol. 1*, 68.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid., 68.

The Text for Educating about the Rights of Women

After asserting their complaints in a *Declaration of Sentiments* modeled after the *Declaration of Independence*,¹⁴⁷ 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."¹⁴⁸ 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.

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.¹⁴⁹

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."¹⁵⁰ 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. . . .*¹⁵¹

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.

¹⁴⁷ *History of Woman Suffrage, vol. 1*, 68.

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 72.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 72.

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.*,

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*,

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.¹⁵²

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."¹⁵³ 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."¹⁵⁴ 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."¹⁵⁵

Building On Experiential Learning

Two weeks later in Rochester, New York, a second Woman's Rights Convention¹⁵⁶ 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."¹⁵⁷ 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."¹⁵⁸

¹⁵² *History of Woman Suffrage, vol. 1, 72.*

¹⁵³ *Ibid.,*

¹⁵⁴ *James and Lucretia Mott: Life and Letters. Edited by their Granddaughter, Anna Davis Hallowell., 300.*

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid., .*

¹⁵⁶ August 2, 1848.

¹⁵⁷ *History of Woman Suffrage, vol. 1, 75.*

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.,*

At the Rochester convention "several gentlemen" debated some of the claims contained in the Resolutions and the Declaration of Sentiments.¹⁵⁹ Again, the issue of women's public speaking arose, especially in relation to women's "occupying the pulpit."¹⁶⁰ Lucretia Mott responded with the thought that, "we had all got our notions too much from the clergy, instead of the Bible."¹⁶¹ 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."¹⁶² Lucretia recalled for the convention that just "a few years ago, the Female Moral Reform Society of Philadelphia 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."¹⁶³ The women agreed, and Lucretia reported, "a D.D. was called upon to preside, and another to read the ladies' report of the Society."¹⁶⁴

Another man reported that he was "disturbed as to the effect of equality in the family." The *History of Woman Suffrage*¹⁶⁵ 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.¹⁶⁶

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."¹⁶⁷ 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."¹⁶⁸ Quaker couples, families, meetings, and

¹⁵⁹ *History of Woman Suffrage*, vol. 1, 76.

¹⁶⁰ *Ibid.*,

¹⁶¹ *Ibid.*,

¹⁶² *Ibid.*,

¹⁶³ *Ibid.*, 76-77.

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 77.

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 77.

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 79.

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 80.

¹⁶⁸ Solomon, *In the Company of Educated Women: A History of Women and Higher Education in America*, 220n25.

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.¹⁶⁹ 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 the visitors how one woman, in a day, can perform the work of thirty or forty women in the same time¹⁷⁰ !

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."¹⁷¹

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's¹⁷² lectures to educate adult women about their health.¹⁷³

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."¹⁷⁴ 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

¹⁶⁹ For a brief exploration see Stubblefield Harold W. and Keane, *Adult Education in the American Experience*, 144-145.

¹⁷⁰ Mott, "The Laws in Relation to Women (10/5-7/1853)," 221.

¹⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 220.

¹⁷² ¹⁷² 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.

¹⁷³ Bacon, *Valiant Friend*, 136.

¹⁷⁴ Elizabeth and Emily Blackwell, *Address on the Medical Education of Women* (New York: Baptist and Tayler, Book Printers, 1863), 6.

physicians, and seen her young children die by thousands."¹⁷⁵ According to a reprinted newspaper report, Lucretia Mott herself on February 2, 1853, delivered a lecture entitled "Medical Education of Woman."¹⁷⁶ 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 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."¹⁷⁷

¹⁷⁵ *History of Woman Suffrage, vol. 1*, 28.

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 389.

¹⁷⁷ Mott, "Discourse on Woman (12/17/1849)," 143.

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."¹⁷⁸

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."¹⁷⁹

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."¹⁸⁰

Concern: "A course of action taken under deep religious conviction."¹⁸¹ A concern "is felt to be a direct intimation of God's will."¹⁸²

Discipline: The *Book of Discipline* summarizes the faith and practice to which Quakers are "committed."¹⁸³ 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."¹⁸⁴

Epistles: "A public letter [sent among] Friends groups to supply information, spiritual insight, and encouragement."¹⁸⁵

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."¹⁸⁶ 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.¹⁸⁷

Guarded Education: For Quakers, "divine revelation was a gift, its application a skill."¹⁸⁸ William Kashatus, historian of Quaker education, described "'a religiously guarded education' as

¹⁷⁸ Philadelphia Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends, *Faith and Practice: A Book of Christian Discipline* (Philadelphia: Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, 1997), 215.

¹⁷⁹ Lyn Cope-Robinson, *The Little Quaker Sociology Book: With Glossary* (Melbourne, FL: Canmore Press, 1995), 180.

¹⁸⁰ Philadelphia Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends, *Faith and Practice*, 216.

¹⁸¹ Trevett, Christine, *Women in the 17th Century*, Ebor Press, York, England, 1991: 5 as quoted in Cope-Robinson 1995: 198

¹⁸² Philadelphia Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends, *Faith and Practice*, 216.

¹⁸³ John Punshon, *Portrait in Grey: A Short History of the Quakers* (London: Quaker Home Service, 1984), 138.

¹⁸⁴ Philadelphia Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends, *Faith and Practice*, 215.

¹⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 216.

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 217.

¹⁸⁷ Sandra L. Cronk, *Gospel Order: A Quaker Understanding of Faithful Church Community* (Wallingford PA: Pendle Hill Publications, 1991), 3.

¹⁸⁸ 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."¹⁸⁹

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."¹⁹⁰ A sense of being called by God to undertake a specific course of action. A leading often arises from a concern.¹⁹¹

Meeting for business: These meetings are essentially educational in nature and are the Friends' primary "educational agencies."¹⁹² Within a meeting for business are made what Sheeran describes as "decisions by mutual consent."¹⁹³ Douglas Steere says the meetings for business function for Friends as the "corporate method of arriving at decisions."¹⁹⁴ 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."¹⁹⁵ The meeting for worship and meeting for business are the Friends' "unique" structures¹⁹⁶ in which to practice their convictions and testimonies as a covenantal "witnessing community."¹⁹⁷ 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."¹⁹⁸

Minute: "The record of a corporate decision reached during a meeting . . . for business."¹⁹⁹ Official records of proceedings kept for all Quaker business meetings (preparative, monthly, quarterly, and yearly meetings), along with their committees."²⁰⁰

Openings: What early Friends experienced as being "directly revealed in [the] soul so that [a person] assuredly knew it to be true"²⁰¹ or "a spiritual opportunity or leading."²⁰²

¹⁸⁹ William C. Kashatus, Personal telephone conversation, Nineteenth-Century Quaker Education and Lucretia Coffin Mott (Philadelphia, July 3, 1995).

¹⁹⁰ Michael John Sheeran, "Friendly Persuasion: Voteless Decisions in the Religious Society of Friends," diss (New Jersey: Princeton University, 1977), 24.

¹⁹¹ Philadelphia Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends, *Faith and Practice*, 218.

¹⁹² Howard H. Brinton, *Guide to Quaker Practice* (Wallingford, PA: Pendle Hill, 1955), 58.

¹⁹³ Sheeran, "Friendly Persuasion," 4.

¹⁹⁴ 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.

¹⁹⁵ Sheeran, "Friendly Persuasion," 2.

¹⁹⁶ Howard H. Brinton, *Quaker Education In Theory and Practice* (Wallingford, PA: Pendle Hill Press, 1967), 11-12.

¹⁹⁷ Douglas Gwyn, *The Covenant Crucified: Quakers and the Rise of Capitalism* (Wallingford, PA: Pendle Hill Publications, 1995), 20.

¹⁹⁸ Philadelphia Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends, *Faith and Practice*, 218.

¹⁹⁹ Ibid.,

²⁰⁰ "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."²⁰³

Public Friend: A Public Friend signifies one who expresses religious beliefs as a preacher.²⁰⁴ Public Friends traveled among groups of Quakers, and interacted "with the larger society"²⁰⁵ 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."²⁰⁶

Sense of the meeting: "An expression of the unity of a meeting for business on some . . . concern."²⁰⁷

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 ."²⁰⁸

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."²⁰⁹

Traveling Minister: "Friends recognized both women and men ministers who felt called...to speak to a specific group or person."²¹⁰

Truth: "The revealed will of God, as experienced in communion with the Inner Light or Inward Christ."²¹¹

Unity: "The spiritual oneness and harmony whose realization is a primary objective of a meeting for worship or a meeting for business."²¹²

²⁰¹ 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.

²⁰² Philadelphia Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends, *Faith and Practice*, 219.

²⁰³ *Ibid.*, 219.

²⁰⁴ 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.

²⁰⁵ Stoneburner, "Introduction," 1.

²⁰⁶ Philadelphia Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends, *Faith and Practice*, 219-20.

²⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 220.

²⁰⁸ Cope-Robinson, *Little Quaker Sociology Book*, 195.

²⁰⁹ *Faith and Practice*, North Pacific Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends, 1993, quoted in Cope-Robinson, *Little Quaker Sociology Book*, 195.

²¹⁰ Cope-Robinson, *Little Quaker Sociology Book*, 195-96.

²¹¹ Philadelphia Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends, *Faith and Practice*, 221.

²¹² *Ibid.*, 221.

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."²¹³ 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."²¹⁴

²¹³ Philadelphia Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends, *Faith and Practice*, 221.

²¹⁴ "Guide to Genealogical Resources," D-7.