

Holistic Higher Education? This issue of QHE features articles that attempt to take a step back and think about why we teach, how we teach, and what our teaching is meant to do for our students. All the essays in this issue grew out of presentations at the June 2013 conference of the Friends Association for Higher Education at Malone University.

[Jay Case](#) (Malone University) opens this issue, as he did the conference, with an appeal to consider our students as both thinking and desiring beings, with perhaps the thinking part being less important than we would like to think. He charts a way forward through the demands and expectations of our materialistic and utilitarian society by contextualizing our educational work within the Quaker spiritual and intellectual traditions.

[Tracey Hucks](#) (Haverford College) challenges us to embrace the challenges of diversity in deed as well as word, and move our education out of the classroom into the whole lives of our students and ourselves. [Laura Foote](#) (Malone University) informs us of the challenges facing women who speak out in the public sphere, throughout history down to today, and shows how three Quaker women, in particular, have dealt with those challenges, risen above their detractors, and inspired others to speak up and speak out.

Finally, [Steve Chase](#) (Antioch University New England) uses the example of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., to inspire us to be creatively maladjusted to the injustices of the world. He shows us through example how education can weave together knowledge, caring, and activism.

All these stories show us ways to break down the artificial barriers that attempt to compartmentalize and (intentionally or not) trivialize what we teach and what we learn. Holistic learning extends through history, through the classroom, out to the community, and into action.

Submissions: *QHE* is published twice a year, in the spring and the fall. Articles submitted for possible publication should be sent as Word documents to: either weinholtz@hartford.edu or to dsmith4@guilford.edu. Since *QHE* is not wed to any particular referencing format, you may use the professional style of your choice. In case you want to send a hard copy, our addresses are: **Donn Weinholtz**, Department of Educational Leadership, University of Hartford, 223 Auerbach Hall, 200 Bloomfield Ave., West Hartford, CT 06117 and **Donald Smith** Guilford College, 5800 West Friendly Ave., Greensboro, NC 27410. If you would like to discuss an idea that you have for an article, our telephone numbers are: 860-768-4186 (DW) and 336-316-2162 (DS).

FAHE ANNUAL CONFERENCE

June 12-15, 2014



Mark your calendars now for June 12-15, 2014. FAHE will meet jointly with the Friends Council on Education at [Haverford College](#) to consider *Exploring Right Relationships*. The call for papers with queries will be made available [at the FAHE web site](#); submissions will be accepted and reviewed in the fall and winter.



Students are Not Simply Thinking Beings: Cultivating Desires for Quaker Principles

*Jay Riley Case
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Just about everybody in our society, it seems, believes that the primary purpose of college is to train students for jobs. For those of us who understand the importance of holistic education and for those of us who hope to teach in a way that instills Quaker ideals in our students, this is a serious problem. How are we to encourage our students to seriously consider peace-making, for instance, if they think that the primary reason they are in college is to obtain skills for computer programming, physical therapy, or marketing?

I used to think that the answer was pretty straight-forward. I had to figure out how to get students to think about significant issues in life and embed those issues in my history curriculum. By getting them to read, write, discuss and these issues in my history classes, they could also see that there is more to higher education than job training. If I could get them to think critically about racism, and economic inequality, and the role of mass media, they would start to see why these things matter.

At this point in my career, however, I am not convinced that this approach really gets at the heart of the matter. Maybe this way of looking at human beings doesn't quite get it right.

Maybe, at the core of who we are, we aren't really thinking beings. Yes, we think (some of us less clearly than others), but perhaps there is something that goes deeper than thinking,

something that directs how we think and why we think about those things we think about. Maybe it is more accurate to consider humans as fundamentally desiring creatures.¹ I use this word "desire," though other terms can be used, such as "affections" or "love." – terms that I use interchangeably in this article, though some philosophers would make distinctions between these words.

I need to be clear that when I use the term "desire," I am *not* simply speaking of an emotion. This is important, because I am working with a definition that differs from much of the western intellectual tradition from the last three centuries. Enlightenment thinkers had a tendency to describe human nature in terms of two competing characteristics: rationality and emotion. The result of this intellectual arrangement was that there has been a strong tendency in modernity to divide human qualities into one of these two categories. Desire and love were often considered to be emotions, which were seen to be a detriment to the dispassionate, calculating, and critically thinking methodologies of higher education.

¹ Most recently, James K.A. Smith has made this point in *Desiring the Kingdom: Worship, Worldview and Cultural Formation*, (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2009). However, this idea about human nature goes back at least as far as Augustine and has influenced Christian thought at different times through history. As I show in this article, it deeply influenced Quakers like John Woolman.

There is good reason, though, to consider desires to be something that are neither quite the same thing as emotion or rationality, but something deeper that influences and drives both. For instance, the most dispassionate, objective, rationalistic scientist is still driven by desires: she has a desire to discover what is true, a desire to analyze the data accurately, and a desire to prevent biases from influencing her analysis.

Undoubtedly, we desire certain outcomes from our teaching. We want our students to love learning. We want them to love all humans equally. We want them to love God. We want them to desire social justice.

But I'm not sure we recognize how deeply the modern practices, habits and structures of higher education still affect us. The reality is that we are deeply ensconced in an academic culture that assumes that humans are fundamentally thinking beings. Without realizing it, perhaps, we often act as if critical thinking, problem solving and a certain kind of rationality will lead students to act and live in the way we would like them to.

For example, I am an instructor in our required first-year orientation course here at Malone, which we call "The College Experience." It is a great and important class, with its own particular set of challenges. One of the things we try to do in this course is to help first-year students consider more carefully what college ought to be about. We raise questions about whether college should just be about job training. We talk about how at Malone we believe that college is more about what students will become, rather than what they will

do. We discuss how general education classes fit into this philosophy and why we think these classes are just as important as the classes in their major. We hit them with this right from the beginning of the semester. Students engage these themes through readings, discussion, and papers.

Last fall, I led a class through these ideas in the first weeks of the semester. Sometime after midterm we had moved to the topic of academic performance and discussed how the students were doing at that point. To facilitate discussion, I asked the students to identify what sort of things helped their academic performance and what sort hindered them. The students, unsurprisingly, eventually came to the problem of what they called "boring" classes. As we discussed what sort of factors made a class boring and how to handle this, somebody mentioned that it was difficult to get interested in classes that weren't in their major – general education classes. Another student then asked why we had to take general education classes in the first place. Shouldn't we just be taking classes related to our major, he asked, since those were the classes that were preparing us for jobs?

To review: this student had already read several articles about this topic. He had been in class when, on more than one occasion, we had discussed this idea. He had even written a paper that dealt with this issue. Now, three weeks later, this student showed that these ideas still did not sink in.

Why not? Well, the *idea*, in and of itself, was not enough. If students don't have a desire to consider, weigh and

analyze ideas, simply presenting them with a new idea will not compel them to take that idea seriously, even if we require them to discuss and write about it. Surely you have had the disquieting experience of reading a paper or an exam in which a student is repeating or mimicking an idea that you have talked about in class, but you realize that there is no conviction behind the writing. Students have learned how to pick up and wear an idea for a short period of time, like a costume in a play, and then cast it away after the final curtain comes down.

But if you are rather dense, like me, you keep trotting out newly designed costumes every semester, thinking that this particular wardrobe will have staying power. If you are like me, you think that by the virtue of wearing these ideas long enough, our students will become the characters that they have been acting out during the semester.

A qualification: we know that some students are not acting. Some of my students in that college experience class really did get it. We know that some students show up in our classes primed to get engaged with the Quaker principles. With those students, we can really go places.

But most of these students already arrive at college with many of these desires in place. My focus here, then, is not about students who already love learning or already have a deep desire to serve the world. My concern is with that conglomeration of students whose desires run in different directions. For some, the desire for education is driven by a desire of an imagined “good life” of consumerism and entertainment. Some

love one subject, like biology or sociology, but do not desire a holistic education. Some are conflicted by competing desires: a desire to live a life pursuing consumerism and entertainment (which is driven by a basic selfishness) and the desire to be a good person in life (which requires the opposite of selfishness – service and selflessness).

To more effectively engage these students, let us briefly think about ourselves. There is a reason why we think that our ideas, or critical thinking tasks, our problem-solving exercises – as well as our desires for social justice, Quaker testimonies and holistic education -- will hold our students’ interest: these are the things that we love, that we desire. That’s what makes us academics and intellectuals. We care about ideas, higher education, about our students, about our society and about the Quaker heritage. We are pretty sure they are all related to one another somehow and we want to figure out how. But we should recognize that this also means we live our working lives amongst practices, habits and dispositions that subtly but powerfully lead us to believe that humans are first and foremost thinking beings, rather than desiring beings.

This is a legacy of higher education from the past three centuries.² For instance, consider how we do assessment - both our grading system and the accreditation system that encourages us to establish

² Intellectual history is actually a long and complicated story, which I cannot fully capture here, so these points are necessarily simplified. For a fine overview of these themes in higher education, see George M. Marsden, *The Soul of the American University: From Protestant Establishment to Established Nonbelief*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994).

assessment procedures. In the 17th century the Scientific Revolution made huge strides in our understanding of the natural world through empirical observation and measurement. By the late nineteenth century, higher education, especially in the newly created disciplines of the social sciences, had institutionalized the sense that human societies could be best understood through measurable processes. The result is that today we assume that the most important things we do in higher education are those things that can be measured, and that these measurements tell us what we need to know about how education works.

There is a strong pull here to see assessment and measurement as the same thing, (though good assessment does not have to be measurable.) The problem with this idea of measuring everything is that it is actually difficult, and sometimes impossible, to measure the desires that we want to cultivate in our students. I can measure how effectively my students can *say* what I want them to – like whether my first year students write that college is not just about getting a job -- but that does not mean they really believe them or will implement them in their lives. Could you create a tool that accurately measured increases in students' love for the Quaker testimonies? Will you ever find yourself in a committee meeting saying the following, "Ah, I see from this spreadsheet that the desire for peacemaking among our sophomores has risen 13.4% this semester?"

Secondly, the compartmentalization we have created in higher education has fragmented and undermined any consensus about the purposes of college

or even how to engage the most significant questions of life. Since the late 19th century, academics have created disciplines and majors and courses that are very good at isolating tasks and methodologies, a system that works well if, say, you want to teach students how to build a bridge. In the late 19th and early 20th century, it was assumed that this sort of scientific education would naturally produce graduates whose work would be good for society. In the terminology of the day, the "progress of civilization" could be seen in tasks of building electric dynamos and analyzing statistics on poverty and researching diseases.

But here is the rub: while many of these tasks truly have produced good for society, the technical processes underlying them could also be used for more pernicious ends. And so during the twentieth century, higher education also produced college graduates who have built nuclear weapons, who have analyzed financial statistics to cheat others out of their money, and have used African Americans as unknowing experiments for testing diseases. It is difficult to develop a sense of justice in all areas of learning when higher education has compartmentalized and isolated tasks without an accompanying overarching and robust discussion about significant human questions related to those tasks.

We attempt to address this problem by requiring students to take general education or core courses that engage important issues. But this system doesn't address these matters as well as we hope. If, for instance, questions of social justice only appear in separate courses and are not integrated across the

curriculum, they end up getting framed as consumer goods – optional sort of items that I can add to my life if I want to, like a particular major or a job. In effect, our students are led to adopt the attitude, “Oh, so you like social justice? That’s great. Good for you. I’m really excited about information technology myself.”

Finally, it became increasingly clear in the late twentieth century that the entire project of grounding education in empirically-based investigation, scientific objectivity, and the assumptions of Enlightenment rationality did not actually produce widespread agreement on issues of what is good or true or important.³ Without consensus, we have fallen back, almost by default, onto ideals of individual autonomy and freedom of choice as the way to function in a society when we can’t agree upon larger human questions.

As a result of this ethic of individual autonomy, we not only give students more and more options for shaping their own education, we tell them in countless ways, that they should study and do whatever they like. Having been shaped as consumers from that pre-school day when that they first got excited about commercials for Trix cereal and Disney movies, this system of thinking that they should just choose what they want in education comes naturally to them. To our students, it seems like common sense that they should study whatever they want. And here is our problem: If this is so, why, then, should they be compelled to study topics that they don’t like? What if they don’t like political science, literature, economics or

chemistry? What if they don’t really care about integrity, or social justice?

This is a serious set of challenges that we face. But I believe there is hope for those of us who wish to cultivate desires toward the good. I am encouraged when I consider the efforts of John Woolman, a Quaker who lived in colonial New Jersey in the mid-eighteenth century. He was an active campaigner for many causes, though he is most famous for campaigning against slavery. Given what he was up against, I am amazed at what John Woolman and his fellow Quakers were able to accomplish in their lifetimes. Woolman began campaigning against slavery in 1746. By 1784 (ten years after his death) every single one of the Quaker yearly meetings in America had eliminated slaveholding among their members. Furthermore, this campaign formed the impetus for the small but growing antislavery movement in America and Great Britain. That is no small accomplishment.

This may be an odd historical event to compare to higher education, but I think it can provide some interesting insights for us. Just as John Woolman hoped to encourage his fellow Quakers to act and live in a just and compassionate way for the good of society, so we hope to encourage our students to live and act in a just and compassionate way for the good of society.

I daresay that Woolman had the harder task. He was deeply engaged in cultivating desires – desires to do what was just and good and right. In the first sentence of his opening paragraph of his influential antislavery pamphlet, “Some Considerations on the Keeping of Negroes,” Woolman spoke to his readers

³ Marsden, *The Soul of the American University*, 430.

about the “treasures of the soul.”⁴ He then immediately launched into a discussion of human affections – or what I have been calling desires. An interesting way to begin a persuasive tract.

These themes permeated his work. At the London Grove Quarterly Meeting in Pennsylvania in 1758 he told listeners that they were to be “careful to have our minds redeemed from the love of wealth.” He later observed that for slave-holding Quakers, “the desire of gain to support” the practices of slavery “has greatly opposed the work of truth.”⁵ These were not simply emotional appeals. Woolman was very much committed to the business of getting his audience to think clearly. But he believed that in order to think clearly, to grasp what he called the “infallible standard (of) Truth” – to be truly rational, as it were – human desire needed to be directed toward loving the right things.⁶

Let me use John Woolman as a touchstone to suggest a few principles for how we might help cultivate proper desires in our students.

First of all, John Woolman understood that we are spiritual beings, and that spirituality is deeply related to our

⁴ This is an allusion to the New Testament passage from the Sermon on the Mount where Jesus says, “Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.” “Some Considerations on the Keeping of Negroes: Recommended to the Professors of Christianity in Every Denomination, 1754,” John Woolman, *The Works of John Woolman, in Two Parts*, Fifth edition, (Philadelphia: Benjamin and Thomas Kite, 1818), 176

⁵ John Woolman, *The Journal of John Woolman*, (Memphis, Tenn.: General Books, 2010), 56, 58, 73.

⁶ Woolman, “Considerations,” 176.

desires. He prayed often. He believed that God changed hearts. He wrote about promoting spirit of meekness, heavenly-mindedness, sympathy and tenderness. He believed that God was actively at work in the process of understanding. “In infinite love and goodness he hath opened our understanding from time to another concerning our duty towards this people,” he wrote.⁷

I realize universities are not meeting houses or churches. What we can do in the realm of spirituality in our classes varies widely. And I realize that those who are associated with different branches of the Friends tradition have different ways of thinking and speaking about spirituality. But at a fundamental level, we share a belief that all persons have a deep spirituality to them. We can all gain confidence and encouragement from the conviction that this spiritual quality of humanity means that what we do in education can truly encourage and cultivate desires for what is good.

Secondly, when reading Woolman’s journal, I was struck by how he did not just encourage people to do certain kinds of things, but encouraged listeners to become certain kinds of people. In other words, Woolman did not simply focus on the task of giving up slave-holding. He encouraged listeners to be people who demonstrated a life guided by wisdom, justice, and mercy. This is important. He believed that if Friends truly and fully desired these things, then they would give up slave-holding. Despite the compartmentalization and task-oriented structures of our institutions, I believe we can tap into deep seated spiritual desires to

⁷ Woolman, *Journal*, 57.

encourage students to *be certain kinds* of people, people who learn to love learning, who desire to be people of integrity, who care about others, who demonstrate wisdom.

Thirdly, John Woolman kept pointing his listeners to something bigger than themselves. “When self-love presides in our minds, our opinions are biased in our favor,” he wrote in his antislavery pamphlet.

We should “apply to God for wisdom, that we may thereby be enabled to see things as they are.”⁸ Suffused in a culture of consumerism, entertainment and entitlement, many of our students are trapped by a certain kind of self-absorption and they are rather adrift. But if they find a purpose higher than their own selfish desires, then their desires for what is good in education will be deepened.

Let me suggest, then, that we keep in mind what role the cultivation of desires has to do with our teaching. And let us enter into our teaching with the hope and encouragement that, despite everything else our culture throws at us, what we do is important, it is good, and it will endure.

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⁸ He urged them to “be divested of all selfish views” and to “look, my dear friends, to Divine Providence.” Woolman, *Journal*, 47, 48.

Becoming ‘Quakerly’: The Legacy of Social Justice and its Challenges

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Social justice at Quaker educational institutions has always been in a dialogical relationship with the wider society. Throughout major historical moments in North American history, Quaker institutions of higher learning have struggled to maintain their commitment to tolerance and community while seeking to deepen their ties to social justice. Today, in contemporary contexts, we grapple with what it means for academic institutions with Quaker roots to live and to learn in multicultural educational environments, while negotiating the challenges of a sustained enduring commitment to co-existence across difference. Haverford College has been no exception.

Lucius Outlaw, the esteemed African-American philosopher, taught at Haverford College for over two decades, into the 21st century. At a major Haverford forum in honor of Martin Luther King Jr. Day, he once remarked that if you teach long enough at a place like Haverford, even if you do not become Quaker, you will “become *Quakerly*.”¹ Becoming “*Quakerly*” is an important metaphorical and transformative trope in the lives of non-Quaker academicians who live out their professional lives at intellectual institutions with Quaker heritages. I found these words quite probing and insightful as I reflected on how the institutional values of Quakerism

influenced my and other colleagues’ expressions of our professional/ethical identities and the impact of these values upon the students we teach at Haverford College.

My own initiation into the unique ways of Haverford College and its Quaker academic culture began with my unequivocal embracing of its expressed core values of “testimonies of peace, simplicity, equality, integrity, ...and justice.”² Initially, its student Honor Code challenged my Harvard-trained sensibilities, where proctors were in high demand and handsomely compensated each semester to monitor and supervise young undergraduates engaged in the taking of exams. Over time, I came to appreciate and to acclimate to an educational practice that assumed student honesty and academic integrity as institutional norms.

Most helpful in facilitating this transition was learning more of Haverford’s historical consistency in seeking to live out, even when imperfectly, its highest ideals. For most scholars of American religious history, knowledge of historical Quakerism has been closely associated with contested, yet consistent, campaigns against slavery and with frequently quoted citations from the 1688 Petition Against Slavery. This petition (drafted by Francis Daniel Pastorius) is often heralded as the

¹ Lucius Outlaw, “MLK in the Age of Obama,” Haverford College, February 16, 2011.

²“[Quaker Elements: Faith and Practice of Quakers](#)”

earliest denominational anti-slavery literature from a religious body, clearly articulating, “Now tho they are black we cannot conceive there is more liberty to have them slaves, as it is to have other white ones. There is a saying that we shall doe to all men like as we will be done ourselves; making no difference of what generation, descent or colour they are.”³

This historical Quaker campaign against slavery was not just localized in North America but extended throughout the larger Atlantic world. For example, I recall two summers ago conducting research at the British Museum Library in London on slavery in the Anglophone Caribbean colonies. I discovered numerous pages of microfilmed Quaker documents regarding their abolitionist efforts in the British West Indies. At one point, the museum librarian was unable to locate one of the requested microfilms on Quaker abolitionism in the Caribbean and apologized that there was only a single original copy of the document that existed in the world. Much to my surprise and delight, it was located in Haverford College’s Quaker Special Collections and rare book archives, which boasts a holding of approximately 40,000 books and materials on or about Quakers.

It is the distinguishing social behavior of Quakers that weaved itself throughout Atlantic world history and sought educational distillation in the formation of Haverford College in 1833. Today, the faculty, staff, and student body of Haverford can perhaps be divided into

two groups: the ‘formally Quaker’ and the ‘practicing *Quakerly*.’ Collectively, this body has both spearheaded radical innovation and weathered internal challenges. For example, one important and momentous occasion in the history of the institution’s hiring practices was the employment and retention of University of Chicago-trained Dr. Ira De Reid, a Quaker, and the first tenured African-American faculty member at Haverford from 1946-1966. Reid was hired under Gilbert White, the sixth president of Haverford College and a Convinced Friend who worked for the AFSC in France during WWII. White pledged as his vision for Haverford a “balanced concern for the intellectual, emotional, and spiritual.”⁴

Ira Reid became the first African-American chair of sociology and anthropology in 1947. This was a monumental moment for racial diversity at the institution. I locate myself within a narrow lineage of African-American tenured presence on Haverford’s campus that began with Ira Reid’s early Quaker presence and continued in more recent years with Quaker colleague, Emma Lapsansky-Werner, Professor Emeritus, former Curator of the Quaker Collection and the first African-American woman awarded the rank of Full Professor at Haverford.

In the 21st century, Haverford has had to navigate the challenges of racial diversity and the creation of a tolerant atmosphere that accepts it. In 2004, the institution (under the Quaker leadership

³ Garret Hendricks, Derick Op den Graeff, Francis Daniel Pastorius, and Abraham Op den Graeff, “[The Germantown Protest](#)” February 2, 1688.

⁴ Founded By Friends: The Quaker Heritage of Fifteen Colleges and Universities, John W. Oliver Jr., Charles L. Cherry, and Caroline L. Cherry, eds. (Lanham: Scarecrow Press, 2007) 13.

of President Thomas Tritton) was severely confronted on these issues when two white male Haverford seniors adorned in minstrel blackface and Afro wigs, confessedly dressed like Black women, attended the Bryn Mawr College annual Halloween Party. Eventually tried under Haverford's Social Honor Code, this event shattered two campuses for well over a year. Haverford wrestled internally with how students were being trained; students openly challenged the curriculum and the failure of the social justice requirement to comprehensively address matters of American racial difference; the Honor Code and system of student self-governance were structurally strained and challenged as a result.

Spearheaded by the then Dean of Multicultural Affairs, Sunni Green Tolbert, Quaker faculty member Doug Davis, and Lucius Outlaw, the first Unity Fest was collectively launched in 2005 in an effort to bring restorative and healing measures to two communities fractured by an egregious act of racial and gendered consequence. During Unity Fest, Davis offered his reflections on the occasion of this event, "I've been at Haverford for 33 years. I came the year after Haverford experienced a major crisis of confidence in its ability to commit itself to diversity."⁵ In his observations of over a half dozen crises the institution had weathered over the years, Davis surmised, "They all have certain features in common. They all involve the Honor Code. They all involve issues about social responsibility. They all challenge our notions of who we really are, whether we are what we claim to be [as a

Quaker-founded institution], whether we can pay off on the noble claims that we make."⁶

In concert with Davis' efforts, Lucius Outlaw offered sharply critical reflections and located Haverford as part of a larger national body of elite educational institutions that perpetuate what he called "the systematic production, validation, justification and mediation of ignorance."⁷ He offered a hypothetical example to elucidate his point more emphatically,

No candidate for an open position in philosophy...is going to be hired if all they know are literatures regarding people of African descent because you will not be regarded as sufficiently competent to be hired in such a position...No white person applying for a position in...philosophy will be *denied* a position because they know *nothing* about people of African descent. You can be thoroughly systematically ignorant and your competence will never be questioned if you know *nothing* about people who are fundamental to this nation-state.⁸

Furthering his point, Outlaw discussed his current institutional affiliation and stated "You can...get a PhD in Philosophy with a specialty in American Philosophy [and] you never have to read a history book; you never have to look at any literature not produced by three or four white males and be certified with a PhD and go off and teach at colleges and universities..."⁹ He concluded, "this is both intellectually bankrupt and morally

⁵"Haverford College Unity Fest," Haverford College Field House, October 20, 2005.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid.

grotesque” and “inexcusable.”¹⁰ it complements the “structures of emotions, of passions, and attitudes and of sentiments that ill prepares us for living in a social order increasingly made up of people of a variety of racial and ethnic cultural backgrounds, economic class, religious convictions, sexual orientations.”¹¹

At the close of his address, he posed a critical question to the larger Haverford audience, “How are we going to deal with this?”¹² This question is a fundamental challenge for many institutions of higher learning, inclusive of the many institutions associated with FAHE, as we reflect on how Quaker resources will be a part of these greater efforts of inclusion. What will be our institutional representation to the world as we do so?

In recent years at Haverford we have struggled, particularly as a faculty, with how we should represent ourselves to a wider public in relationship to Quakerism. Today, you will find on our website, “Haverford was founded in 1833 as Haverford School by a group of New York and Philadelphia Quakers who sought to create an institution of learning grounded in Quaker values. Though we are nonsectarian today, our Quaker roots influence many of our values and processes.”¹³ These representational challenges are closely linked to broader issues of institutional identity—are we a Quaker college? Are we a *historically* Quaker college? Are we a college with Quaker roots and Quaker elements? These questions

become increasingly critical and relevant as liberal arts colleges navigate the demands and pressures of a growing culture of pre-professionalism among undergraduate students across the nation. Perhaps the time is ripe for faculties of Quaker-inspired institutions to revisit the lengthy challenges Lucius Outlaw posed in 2005 when he queried:

Is this education really and truly deeply devoted to producing young people who will go forth as leading citizens in a nation-state increasingly made complex by racial and ethnic and other kinds of diversities? Or is the curriculum really a collage of deep commitments within the near silos of disciplines that is designed more and more to make of our young people apprentices in the specialization of our disciplines? Do we have the courage to look deeply at what we are doing educationally for young people and really take up the issue of no longer being involved in any way possible in the systematic production of ignorance? ...Do we have the courage to fashion an education of young people at Haverford that is as courageous as were those crazy Quakers who broke the deal in the 1790s and simply went in [to Congress] and said on behalf of this nation we must stop this slavery business, if we are really about these values... But they were not crazy, they [were visionaries]. Is that a legacy that we could tap [in] to take a look at education of young people at Haverford? ...Do we have the courage to do it?¹⁴

Resolved in his ultimate belief in the virtues of Haverford College, Outlaw

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ “[Haverford College: History](#)”

¹⁴ “Haverford College Unity Fest,” Haverford College Field House, October 20, 2005.

concluded, “I happen to think that this is one of the few places of higher education in this country where... in fact, it could be done.”¹⁵

In 1997, I accepted a tenure-track position in the Religion Department at Haverford (turning down a position from my undergraduate alma mater) because I, too, believed it could be done at Haverford College. My experience in teaching at an institution that privileges its Quaker heritage has enabled me to be bold in pushing the boundaries of my intellectual goals and pedagogical approach to student learning. In my own discipline of religious studies, Quakerism itself has been a symbolic boundary-pushing entity within a normative Protestant historiography. Teaching at an institution that embraces and privileges this spirit of boundary pushing has cultivated an even greater boundary-pushing commitment in me with regard to curriculum.

Although many religious studies curriculums have tended to focus on tradition-based approaches to understanding the discipline, I have found a freedom at Haverford to shape the contours of my curricular offerings. This sense of freedom is undergirded by an institutional educational mission to cultivate the “process of discovery,” ask “difficult questions,” and challenge injustice. More specifically, the mission states:

...Quakerism and liberal arts education both see the pursuit of new insights as being relentless. Truth is contestable—it can be expected to continually evolve. And the process of discovery is not

constrained by any established authority...Haverford is one of America's leading liberal arts colleges, a close-knit intellectual community that combines the Quaker values of dignity, tolerance and respect with a rigorous academic program... Today, Haverford's Quaker elements are dynamic and evolving, and they correlate with an attitude of openness — asking difficult questions, resisting dogma, and challenging injustice.¹⁶

This is a tall order to fill as it encourages me to be bold and innovative in my teaching.

Teaching aspects of Quakerism—as in my semester-long course on Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, or entire courses such as the *History and Principles of Quakerism* taught by Emma Lapsansky-Werner—within the Haverford curriculum has had tremendous impact upon Haverford students. Quakerism is not only a set of values to be espoused and embraced, but it also functions as the source and subject of sound critical intellectual research and reflection.

To illustrate this impact, I mention that Haverford students are required to produce a senior thesis or senior project equivalent. In the past year alone, the Religion Department has seen a tremendous increase in the number of student majors who have chosen some aspect of Quakerism as the subject of their senior thesis. Recent titles of 2013 senior theses in the Religion Department included: “*State and Religion: Austrian Quaker Nazi Identity in World War II*,” “*Levi Coffin's Abolition*

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ “[Quaker Elements: Elements Today](#)”

Crusade: A Narrative of Moral Disagreement and Ethical Practice;” and *“Inwardly Outward: Quaker Representation in Uncle Tom’s Cabin.”*

Thus, given this historical legacy of human service, collective risk taking, and the espousal of these Quaker values at an institutional level, I have felt unfettered as a faculty member at Haverford College to teach on the cutting edge of social justice, to bring intellectual value to the silenced, muted, and marginalized of American society, and to cultivate a student atmosphere of expansion, risk, and voice. Perhaps only in the context of Haverford College could I have experienced teaching the single longest class in my career from 1:30-8:00 p.m. Over the duration of seven and a half hours, we debated a series of sensitive and contested issues, compelling us all as culturally Quakerly to remain open and engaged, stand firm through the discomfort, and work through our collective deliberations. It is in this academic space that I have had the confidence to add to the Haverford curriculum a semester-long course on intellectual history featuring one of America’s brilliant thinkers, James Baldwin, who never received an advanced degree beyond Dewitt Clinton High School in NYC.

Finally, I convey to my students that in addition to shaping course content, the radical pedagogical challenge for me is not whether or not I can get students to discuss the great social issues of race and gender and sexuality within the boundaries of the classroom, but whether or not I can instill in them and model for them as an educator the necessary courage and risk-taking to discuss these issues beyond the safety of the

classroom and in their own homes, in their own families, and to those who look like them in their own communities.

It is at this powerful juncture where academic knowledge must leave its ivory towers and be exported into the personal world of family and identity that I become most aware of the dichotomous lives our students often lead. At Haverford, students fearlessly travel the world in service to unknown others supported by the Center for Peace and Global Citizenship, yet they find one of the hardest things to do is to travel home and be in service to their own families and communities regarding issues of justice and equity. I express to the students enrolled in my courses that my ideal course environment would not be in the Margaret Gest Center in room Gest 101 but traveling each week as a class to their hometowns, to their living rooms, to their kitchen tables teaching amidst their extended intergenerational families members.

Until such time, I rely on unconventional pedagogy and creative assignments to simulate a boundary crossing and innovative knowledge transmission. One of the most frightening final assignments in my course on the intellectual thought of James Baldwin requires them to write a letter addressed to one of their family members, conveying an analysis of the thought of James Baldwin. Furthermore, an ungraded version of their submission will be mailed to the addressee. From this exercise has emerged some of the most insightful and generative student work where students directly engage the world of ideas within a wider social milieu. I leave you with an excerpt from

one student letter written as an example of pushing the learning boundaries through Quaker-inspired intellectual endeavors:

May 16, 2013

Dear Dad,

In 1962 when you were seven years old, and I was not even a possibility, James Baldwin was writing a letter to his nephew called "My Dungeon Shook." He was writing on the one hundredth anniversary of Emancipation and spoke to his nephew about how to continue living in a world where he was still not free. He wrote, "I have begun this letter five times and torn it up five times" (Baldwin, *The Fire Next Time*, 1963, 3). I too have written and rewritten this letter to you. Writing to someone you know well is at once easy and comfortable while at the same time incredibly challenging.

I chose to write to you because you know Baldwin; I remember how excited you were when I told you I was taking this course. I also chose to write to you rather than someone else because there were days in class when it felt like Baldwin was speaking to *you*. I thought of you, of your childhood, and your parents, and I heard your stories in Baldwin's words... Even though Baldwin died in 1987, the thoughts and ideas that emanate from his words resonate in what I see in the world around me. This world that you and I live in Dad, might claim to be more modern and more developed than the world of previous generations, but there is a lingering attribute that has persisted throughout American history. It is something that stares us directly in

the face every time we drive down Whalley Avenue in New Haven and pass the invisible line that separates the ghetto from Yale...

But like a stubborn child with an unsatisfactory answer, I am driven to understand why White America needs to pretend this dichotomy exists and the purpose it serves in society... I have found in my two years at Haverford that it is surprisingly easy to let classroom discussions remain perfectly separate from myself. In the Passover story that we read every year at Seder, there is mention of the Wicked Son. He is the one who asks his parents what the story of Passover has to do with *them*, excluding himself from the history and the narrative of the Jewish people. It is too easy to be the Wicked Son, something Baldwin acknowledges. ["It is the innocence which constitutes the crime."] To acknowledge that you and I are also afraid is challenging. However, that is what I am asking of both of us. I want us to better understand where our crime has been committed and in what ways we can strive towards a true self-consciousness within America.

Throughout this course, we worked to fight the mentality of the Wicked Son and to involve ourselves in what we read and discussed. We shared personal anecdotes of family members and our experiences at home and at school. In one class, about half way through the semester, we read Baldwin's essay *Negroes are Anti-Semitic Because They're Anti-White*. This essay reached at a small part of me that had remained distant from all of our class discussions -- my Jewish identity... As I hope you can tell from this letter, I am leaving this

course with more knowledge and more questions than I would have imagined at the beginning of the semester.

Baldwin was like taking off a blindfold you always knew was there, but you were not sure how to deal with. I was looking at what I knew to be unjust and waited for someone else to come along because I felt defeated by apathy. I often still feel that way; just opening up a newspaper is enough to make me doubt that any change can ever happen. However being able to take my thoughts and my ideas from this class and transport them outside the round table of our classroom makes

me feel less doubtful. These conversations cannot stay in our insular group but need to be brought out and discussed among all types of circles of people. I look forward to making your kitchen table one of those circles.

Love always, H

Students like this remind faculty of the impactful potential of teaching in classrooms with permeable borders, of the need to cultivate innovative transmissions of knowledge production, and of the responsibility to inspire students to collectively imagine a world of true *Quakerly* social justice for all.

* * * * *

Women's Speaking Justified: Quaker Women in the Public Sphere

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Who are the most famous public speakers in history? Familiar names that come to mind might include Martin Luther King Jr., John F. Kennedy, Winston Churchill, or even Adolf Hitler. An Internet search on “famous public speakers throughout history” lists similar familiar names, like Abraham Lincoln, Mohandas Gandhi, or Malcolm X. One noteworthy aspect of this list is that it is primarily male. People are most familiar with the speeches of men. In the list of the top 100 speeches in American Rhetoric (Eidemuller, 2013), the top 20 includes the name of one woman, and there are 19 women in the top 100.

This list does not reflect a lack of women's rhetoric, as women have been speaking and writing throughout history. Rather, women's rhetoric has not been viewed as valuable or noteworthy. Virginia Woolf has been quoted as saying “For most of history, *Anonymous* has been a woman” (Brainy Quote, 2013). Historically, cultural injunctions required women to remain silent and to operate within the private and domestic spheres of home and family (Stallybrass, 1986) or their virtue was called into question. For millennia women were “closed out of the rhetorical tradition, a tradition of vocal, virile, public—and therefore privileged men” (Glenn, 1997, p. 1). Consequently, if women wanted to publish, they often did so under male pseudonyms. If women dared to write or speak publicly, their rhetoric was not published or archived, as it was deemed neither appropriate nor significant.

In spite of these injunctions against women publishing and speaking publicly, women throughout history have demonstrated moral courage by speaking up and speaking out. They developed creative and effective strategies to justify speaking publicly. In particular, several Quaker women have had a noteworthy impact on women's rhetoric and women's public speaking. The following essay addresses the following aspects of women's rhetoric: (a) women's apologia, (b) the influence of Quaker women on public rhetoric, and (c) implications for women speaking today.

Women's Apologia

Apologia is a rhetorical category of public speaking designed to defend one's positions, opinions, or actions. For example, Christian apologetics is the defense of Christian theology and doctrines. Moreover, Ware and Linkugel (1973) proposed that apologia is the speech of self-defense used in response to “an attack upon a person's character, upon his worth as a human being” (p. 274). Speakers using apologetic rhetoric may use *justificatory speech* as a means of defending themselves when moral character has been questioned, as has been the case for women speaking publicly throughout much of history.

The rhetorical posture of justification is comprised of two strategies: *bolstering* and *transcendence* (Ware & Linkugel,

1973). Bolstering reinforces the existence of the beliefs and values and sentiments of the audience. Transcendence connects a viewpoint, value, or sentiment to a larger, noble concept that the audience can accept but has not previously associated with that viewpoint, value, or sentiment. The use of bolstering and transcendence has been a primary strategy used by women throughout different eras to justify speaking and writing publicly. Women used justificatory speech to establish their credibility to speak publicly, thus, in essence, asking the audiences for understanding and approval of their rhetorical situation.

The necessity of using these strategies was prompted by the misogynist social taboos that called women's virtue and piety into question if they spoke out publicly, particularly if their speaking challenged patriarchal and or hegemonic norms. These norms can be traced back to misogynous Greek and Roman philosophies and practices that influenced Western intellectual traditions and the misuse of the Christian scripture to silence women.

Misogyny and Women's Rhetoric

In ancient Greece and Rome, women were considered subordinate to men in every way; they were not educated formally and not given citizenship. They were considered little better than chattel. They were considered to be a curse and the source of evil (Cunningham & Hamilton, 2000, p. 75). Influential thinkers in the succeeding eras echoed the Greek and Roman belief that women were inferior to men intellectually, morally, emotionally, and physically. Cunningham and Hamilton

(2000) explained that Greek hostility toward women "was repeated for many generations by Greeks, Romans, Jews, Arabs, and Europeans, shaping politicians, artists, educators, architects, generals, and entrepreneurs" (p. 78). These views were perpetuated rhetorically through the "classical" education of men via the study of classical rhetoric. Rhetoric, as established by the Greeks, was one of the cultural cornerstones of the intellectual system for centuries.

The influence of Greek and Roman views about women also leavened Jewish rabbinical tradition and the early Christian church. Jewish rabbinical leaders over the centuries had incorporated Greek hostility toward women by teaching that women were more prone to sin and considered possessions to be used (Cunningham & Hamilton, 2000). "Jewish women were marginalized from the worship of God. They couldn't participate in many of the most important rituals. They were segregated into a separate court...even though this was not God's original design for the tabernacle" (p. 105). This is in contrast to the Judeo-Christian tradition established in the Genesis account of creation where "man and woman are shown to have a shared origin, a shared destiny, a shared tragedy, a shared hope" (p. 93). The early Christian church in many ways reflected the Jewish tradition that birthed it, particularly concerning women speaking publicly.

In contrast to traditional Jewish views of his time, The Apostle Paul commended numerous women to ministry which included public speaking: Priscilla, Euodia, Synthyche, Lydia, Phoebe, and

Junia were released into leadership positions in the early church. Additionally, the Gospel accounts reveal that the risen Jesus commissioned women to preach and fulfill the requirements of apostle (Cunningham & Hamilton, 2000, pp. 24-26). In spite of Paul's account and apparent approval of women in leadership, his words in I Corinthians and I Timothy have been misused and misinterpreted to marginalize women's voices since he wrote them:

- Let the women keep silent in the Churches; for they are not permitted to speak, but let them subject themselves, just as the Law also says. And if they desire to learn anything, let them ask their own husbands at home; for it is improper for a woman to speak in Church. (I Cor. 14:34, NASB)
- Let a woman quietly receive instruction with entire submissiveness. But I do not allow a woman to teach or exercise authority over a man, but to remain quiet. (I Tim. 2:11)

In spite of the common historical misapplication of the scripture, men and women throughout successive eras have challenged the application of this scripture to all women, at all times, and all places.

These strong cultural, social, and religious injunctions restricted women's roles and inhibited them from speaking or writing publicly for many centuries. Consequently, women throughout different eras have had to (a) establish their ethos to speak publicly as women, and (b) to find a way to make their arguments palatable to mixed audiences in spite of the challenge their rhetoric

might level against patriarchal, political, or cultural ideologies of their day. That is, they specifically utilized forms of women's apologia, characterized by the strategies of bolstering and transcendence indicative of justificatory speech. I will illustrate this technique through the example of women speakers in the Society of Friends.

Quaker Women Speaking

Women throughout every era have demonstrated great ingenuity in addressing injunctions against their rhetoric. Some of the best examples have been Quaker women. The Quaker movement is a Protestant movement, birthed in the seventeenth century and characterized by its egalitarian views. Quakers, or "The Society of Friends," emphasized the right of each person, male or female, to listen to the "inner light" or leading of the Holy Spirit.

Consequently, Quaker women were active members of the congregation and many travelled extensively to preach the gospel: "Especially in the early years, a large number –possibly the majority – of travelling Quaker preachers were women" (MacLean, 2013). Quaker women were arrested, beaten (Ann Coleman, Mary Tompkins, Alice Ambrose), and even martyred (e.g., Mary Barrett Dye) because they refused to stop preaching.

Margret Fell

One of the best known Quaker speakers is Margret Fell (1614-1702), wife of George Fox, the founding father of Quakerism. Fell was a gifted speaker and writer who had a skillful command of scripture. In particular, she is famous

for her arguments against misinterpreting Paul's words; she spoke out rigorously in favor of women speaking publicly, especially Christian women. Her knowledge of scripture and argumentation skills made her a powerful advocate in defense of women's right to speak publicly. Fell relied on bolstering and transcendence to make her case. She bolstered her arguments by appealing to the cultural value placed upon Christian scripture by relying on biblical themes. Similarly, she relied on transcendence by referring to the importance of obeying God and the guidance of The Holy Spirit rather than the laws and traditions of men.

Fell (1666) outlined her arguments in her essay *Women's Speaking Justified, Proved, and Allowed by the Scriptures*. She bolstered her arguments by relying on the Bible to disprove prevailing false perceptions about women based on the misapplication of Christian scripture. First, she cited Genesis—explaining that when God created man and woman He created them equally in His image: “God joins them together in his own image, and makes no such distinction and differences as men do” (Bizzell & Herzberg, 2001, p. 753). Her argument transcended the cultural belief that women were inferior by demonstrating their equality as proven by the Genesis account.

Next, she explained that silencing women was the devil's scheme: “if the seed of the women speak not, the seed of the serpent speaks . . . those that speak against the woman and her seeds speaking, speak out of the enmity of the old serpent's seed” (p. 753). That is, she accused those who would silence women as being in league with Satan: “All this

opposing and gain saying of women's speaking hath risen out of the bottomless pit and the spirit of darkness that has spoken for these many hundred years together in this night of apostasy” (p. 756). Thus, women's speaking transcends cultural prohibitions because if women don't speak out, the devil will.

Fell addressed Paul's exhortation for women to remain silent by explaining the cultural context in which Paul delivered that message. She argued that specific scriptures can only be interpreted in the light of the whole scripture. Bible verses must not be taken out of the context in which they were written. She explained that the Corinthian church (made up of men and women) was in confusion over the use of the gifts of the Holy Spirit, and Paul was writing because he was concerned about the disorder and chaos. She pointed out that both men and women (not simply women) were commanded to be quiet, if there was confusion or disorder. Moreover, the women who were to save their questions for their husbands at home were Jewish and Gentile women who had not yet converted to Christianity. That is, these women were under the Law and had not been liberated in Christ. Fell inferred that these unconverted women were causing confusion and strife, not the Christian women who had received the Holy Spirit and the gifts of the Holy Spirit. She suggested that perhaps these women were attempting to introduce heretical teachings associated with the pagan religions of that day. This would have been true of women in Ephesus also, famous for its worship of the goddess Artemis (Diana), where Timothy was the pastor. Additionally, Fell pointed out that Paul allowed women to pray and

prophesy; that is, Paul allowed women to speak for God. Fell reminded her readers that according to Joel 2 “handmaids would prophesy. . . [and asked] are not handmaids women?” (p. 759). Similarly, she referenced the book of Acts when “the Spirit of the Lord was poured forth upon daughters as well as sons” (p. 758), who were all speaking in many languages and glorifying God. Fell argued that the “True Church” was made up of men and women compelled to speak by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Furthermore, Fell bolstered her arguments by citing precedents of women speaking, as cited in the Bible. She listed Mary Magdalene, Mary (the mother of Jesus), and Joanna whom Jesus commissioned as the first apostles because he told them to go and tell others about his resurrection. They were commissioned by Jesus to speak publicly about what they had witnessed. Fell also lists Priscilla, Hannah, Elizabeth, the daughters of Phillip, Hulda, Miriam, and Esther—women in the Bible who spoke publicly by the authority of God.

By explaining that Jesus and the Apostle Paul allowed women to speak, she also bolstered her argument by appealing to the importance of the authority given to these men in scripture. Not only did women in the Bible speak with God’s blessing, but also these same women have been cited by famous men throughout history. Undergirding her argument with examples of men who supported women speaking allowed Fell to appeal to hegemonic gender norms of her time, a means of bolstering. Consequently, Fell bolstered her own credibility and justified her own public speaking. Bizzell and Herzberg (2001) explained Fell’s strategy:

Fell did not justify her own speaking merely on the grounds that she was possessed by God, prophesying in the grip of a holy vision.¹ Many Protestant women adopted the posture of prophet to justify their public speaking, but this was an inherently humble role, implying that the women herself did not speak but that God spoke through her, and that she would subside when the divine spirit left her. Fell, in contrast, behaved like a full-scale leader of the Society of Friends throughout her life. She was never silent on any controversy within the Society. (p. 751)

Fell relied on bolstering by using the Bible itself as the source of her arguments, and she skillfully demonstrated the strategy of transcendence indicative of the justificatory stance of women’s apologia.

Women and the Enlightenment

During the nineteenth century, Enlightenment philosophies had taken root and the separation of the public and private spheres influenced ideas about women’s roles in society (Hoeffcker, 2007; Percy, 2005). The public sphere belonged to reason, logic, and scientific discovery; it was the world of rational, educated men. The private world was reserved for domestic and spiritual pursuits; it was better suited for women because of their highly “emotional” and “irrational” natures. This directly influenced views about women’s roles in

¹ This argument had been made by Christian women previously, especially religious women, such as Hildegard of Bingen and Teresa of Avilla, in convents who wrote about their mystical experiences with the Lord.

public: they were to be seen but not heard.

Religious institutions reinforced the misinterpreted biblical injunctions that had successfully silenced women and demanded they demonstrate piety and submission. This manifested in strong social sanctions meant to keep women from speaking, especially to mixed audiences of men and women, or “promiscuous” audiences (Zaeske, 1995). Although originally signifying mixed audiences, the term “promiscuous” came to represent a term that cast doubt on a woman’s femininity, chastity, and virtue. The idea of the promiscuous audience reinforced “early nineteenth century conceptions of woman’s sphere and became a puissant weapon in the hands of traditionalists – secular and religious alike—who sought to keep women off the platform and out of the public arena” (p. 191). No woman wanted to be identified as promiscuous.

The threat of having one’s virtue called into question silenced women: “At the time piety was considered a preeminent feminine virtue; few women dared to risk appearing un-Christian by speaking to mixed audiences” (Zaeske, 1995, p. 197). At that time the ideology of “true womanhood” reinforced the belief that women were irrational and seductive and should be silent. Welter (1966) defined the ideology of virtuous womanhood as *the cult of true womanhood* or *the cult of domesticity*. MacHaffee (1982) explained:

The word “cult” is used to indicate that this was an almost sacred ideal to which many people were devoted. The ideal America woman was described as submissive, morally pure, and pious. She found power

and happiness at home in the role of wife and mother. The cult of true womanhood permeated American culture even in remote corners of the frontier. (p. 93)

In other words, women who ventured out of their assigned private spheres of house and family to speak publicly risked harsh social consequences. Consequently, the challenge for women who felt compelled to speak out was to prove it was virtuous and in accordance with moral authority to do so.

The Grimkes

This was the rhetorical situation in which Sarah and Angelina Grimke found themselves during the early 1800’s. The Grimke sisters grew up in the Southern United States; their father was an influential judge and slave owner. As young women, Sarah and Angelina moved to the North and became abolitionists. They attracted much attention not only because they were southerners speaking out against slavery, but also because they were women who dared to breach social conventions by speaking to mixed audiences. They traveled all over America, speaking out against the injustices of slavery.

Initially, they spoke to women’s groups. However, they spoke so effectively that men came to hear them as well. With increased fame came increased risk, because male hecklers followed and threatened them. Sometimes violence broke out, and the sisters found it harder to find places to speak. Consequently, they received harsh criticism not only from men but from women also. Sarah and Angelina also became role models for generations of women who followed because of their skill in taking on

arguments in defense of women's right to speak publicly.

The rhetorical situation demanded that the sisters devise a strategy of defense; they did so through justificatory speech in defense of women speaking publicly. The sisters used similar strategies of bolstering and transcendence. A comparison of Sarah's rhetoric in *Letters on the Equality of the Sexes and the Condition of Women* and Angelina's rhetoric in *An Appeal to Christian Women in the South* reveals that both sisters were well educated, intelligent, and had a good theological grasp of biblical texts.

Like women rhetors before them, both women relied heavily on transcendence via the use of biblical themes. They indicated their desire to obey the New Testament and the teachings of Jesus above the traditions of men. Citing the Bible bolstered their argument by appealing to the cultural and religious norms that placed value on the Christian scriptures, and it bolstered their credibility as moral, pious women who desired to live virtuously before God.

Sarah Grimke explained that women were to depend on God for truth and instruction. She directly challenged hegemonic gender views about women. She explained that men and women were "CREATED EQUAL; they are both moral and accountable beings, and whatever is right for man to do, is right for woman" (Bizzell & Herzberg, 2001, p. 1051). Insisting that God did not make distinctions between the sexes in terms of intellect and morality, she challenged male-biased interpretations of scripture as a means of silencing and subordinating women unjustly. She

reminded her audience that Jesus required all, men and women, to shine before men, and defends her obedience:

I follow him through all his precepts, and find him giving the same directions to women as to men, never even referring to the distinction now so strenuously insisted upon between masculine and feminine virtues: this is one of the anti-Christian "traditions of men" which are taught instead of the "commandments of God" (Bizzell & Herzberg, 2001, pp. 1050-1051).

Sarah argued that the doctrine of silence imposed upon women only was an "antichristian" doctrine – damaging to a woman's moral being and destructive to her soul. Bizzell & Herzberg (2001) explained her arguments against the hypocrisy of men's perceptions of womanhood:

She denounces men's insistence on seeing women always as sexual beings and argues that women's eloquence arises not from sex but from spiritual and mental powers that they share equally with men and that they must be allowed to exercise (p. 1048).

Thus, Sarah confronted the hypocrisy of applying biblical truths to women and not to men.

In contrast to Sarah, Angelina took an indirect approach by appealing to women's beliefs about their own abilities to speak up and make a difference. Like her sister, Angelina used biblical themes and demonstrated her familiarity with Bible history, texts, and interpretations. Angelina urged women to speak to their fathers, husbands, brothers, and those within

their sphere of influence, i.e., their homes. By doing so, she affirmed the hegemonic gender norm of a woman's place in the home.

She skillfully developed her argument against slavery by asking her southern sisters to first pray, then read, then speak, and finally to act. She told them to search the scriptures for themselves and allow God to speak directly to them before they spoke to others. In this way, Angelina does not directly attack the views of men; she simply addresses women from a moral stance, asserting that speaking out against slavery is a Christian and virtuous act of righteousness, approved by God.

Angelina developed her arguments in the letter by explaining that women should care for the slaves, be patient with them, teach them to read, and intervene on their behalf. She appealed to women's nurturing side, which further bolstered her argument by affirming the piety and virtue of godly womanhood. In other words, she indirectly offered a contrast between virtue and ignorance—the virtuous, kind woman in contrast to the ignorant and/or cruel male.

Sarah and Angelina both used similar arguments and bolstered those arguments by appealing to biblical themes and hegemonic gender norms, and demonstrating their own virtue and piety and their desire to be godly women, wives, and daughters. Both Grimkes bolstered their arguments by appealing to male authority: they both listed the males in the Bible and in church history who sanctioned and allowed women to speak. They bolstered their arguments by demonstrating that wise men not only allowed women to

speak, but stood up against unrighteousness and injustice. Both used transcendence by calling women to obedience to God over man. They wanted women to speak up for righteousness and truth and against injustice and oppression because God had called them to obey Him rather than the traditions of men. These Quaker women demonstrated brilliance and invention when crafting their arguments in favor of women speaking publicly.

Down to Today

During this time other social movements were germinating as well. Many in the women's suffrage movement began as abolitionists, e.g., Cady Stanton and Lucretia Mott. The Quaker and Methodist denominations both produced and released women into leadership and speaking ministries. As a result many social agencies aiding orphans, the poor, and the sick were started by women from these denominational backgrounds. Some of the names of women speaking powerfully in that era include: Mary Bosanquet, Sarah Crosby, Sarah Mallet, Phoebe Palmer, Jarena Lee, and Catherine Booth. All of these women made an indelible mark on society because they dared breach conventions that would silence them and instead spoke out for the Lord and His cause.

These women learned from women before them and utilized the same kinds of arguments representative of women's apologetics. Because of these feminist forerunners, women secured the right to vote, and a greater acceptance of women's public speaking took root in America by the twentieth century. This is still not the case in some areas of the world today.

Does this have any relevance for women speaking today? Is women's apologia still needed? Do women still need to justify speaking publicly to mixed audiences? Although most do not think immediately of women when they are asked to think of a famous public speaker, most would not argue that women should not be allowed to speak. However, there is still ambivalence, some confusion, and even some hostility that exists on the subject of women speaking in the Church. Some denominations have lifted restrictions; some still have them. A letter asking well-known female Christian speakers about their public speaking policies revealed that each one had formed a defense of her right to speak publicly, using strategies of bolstering and transcendence that echoed female rhetors in previous eras (Foote, 2003).

If one does a simple Internet search on women speaking in the church today, there are numerous web sites condemning the practice and justifying keeping women silent. Many of these reflect the same misconceptions and misuse of scripture that has been evident since the Apostle Paul wrote to the Corinthians and to Timothy. However, there are also others that defend women speaking in the church, and books have been published by godly men defending such practices (e.g., Cunningham & Hamilton, 2000, & Grady, 2006).

Women in every era have demonstrated wisdom, skill, intelligence, and creativity when approaching and overcoming hegemonic gender norms. In particular, women's apologia gives women a historical well from which to draw strategies to bolster and transcend sexist ideologies and gender norms that

compel them to remain silent when they know they must speak. Quaker women, such as Margret Fell and the Grimke sisters, have given women good examples of how to rise above cultural, social, and religious barriers to speak in obedience to God rather than be silenced by traditions of men. Young women today who want to speak can learn from women before them who have spoken. Perhaps in the future, when people are asked to make a list of influential and famous public speakers, more women's names will make that list.

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Educating For Beloved Community: Cultivating Creative Maladjustment Within Ourselves and Our Students

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“The end is the creation of the Beloved Community.”

Martin Luther King, Jr., August 11, 1956

At the 2013 national conference of the Friends Association for Higher Education, I had the honor of being one of three plenary speakers to address the conference theme “Holistic Education: To What End?” Having a deep dialog about our purposes as educators is always worthwhile, but it is particularly important in light of our current global predicament, which is urgent and dire.

If you do not perceive this urgency, I encourage you to read the prophetic *Call for Peace and Ecojustice* put forth by the attendees of the Sixth World Conference of Friends held in April 2012 at Kabarak University in Kenya. Sounding like the prophet Hosea, and blasting right through their own lingering denial and complacency, this remarkably diverse group of Quakers shared several hard truths with us:

We have heard of the disappearing snows of Kilimanjaro and glaciers of Bolivia, from which come life-giving waters. We have heard appeals from peoples of the Arctic, Asia and Pacific. We have heard of forests cut down, seasons disrupted, wildlife dying, of land hunger in Africa, of new diseases, droughts, floods, fires, famine and desperate migrations-- this climatic chaos is now worsening. There are wars and rumors of war, job loss, inequality

and violence. We fear our neighbors. We waste our children's heritage. All of these are driven by our dominant economic systems – by greed not need, by worship of the market, by Mammon and Caesar. Is this how Jesus showed us to live?¹

In response, these Friends at Kabarak University echoed Martin Luther King and urged all of us to become ever more faithful, counter-cultural, nonviolent revolutionaries. They declare, “We are called to work for the peaceable Kingdom of God on the whole earth, in right sharing with all peoples.”² This is the Quaker way at its best.³

It is also my answer to the question, “Holistic Education: To What End?” The *Kabarak Call for Peace and Ecojustice* suggests to me that we should ultimately be in the business of nurturing the habits of head, heart, and hands that will equip our students to become ever more effective, wise, and loving participants in fostering “the peaceable Kingdom of God” within their personal, professional, and public lives. This holistic vision, which is focused on helping our students foster “peace, equality, simplicity, love, integrity, and justice,” resonates deep in my heart and soul.⁴

¹ “The Kabarak Call for Peace and Ecojustice.”

² Ibid.

³ Guiton, *The Early Quakers and the “Kingdom of God.”*

⁴ “The Kabarak Call for Peace and Ecojustice.”

Yet, religious language about the Kingdom of God as the central purpose of our work as educators is only powerful in some academic settings, not all. As a faculty member at a secular school such as Antioch University New England, for example, it does not make much sense for me to talk about the “Kingdom of God” as Antioch’s answer to the question “To What End?” In my educational setting, I have had to find other ways to articulate and share this message with people of other faith traditions and with secular—and sometimes even militantly anti-religious—faculty, staff, and students. This effort to find more inclusive language is important, for as the *Kabarak Call* points out, “We are called to... cooperate lovingly with all who share our hopes for the future of the earth.”⁵

I have found the prophetic words and deeds of Martin Luther King of particular value in this effort, especially his concept of “the beloved community,” which was King’s favorite way of naming the Kingdom of God when he was speaking to a diverse audience that included secular people and people of different faith traditions. I have also found great value in King’s lesser-known concept of “creative maladjustment.” Both of these themes have been useful in my educational setting, and maybe they will be in yours.

Cultivating Creative Maladjustment

Do we, as Quaker educators, also believe that fostering “the beloved community” is our central calling—regardless of our different theologies, schools, disciplines, departments, or programs? If so, I think

it is valuable to pay attention to King’s ideas on cultivating “creative maladjustment.” As King wrote in 1963:

This hour in history needs a dedicated circle of transformed nonconformists. Our planet teeters on the brink of atomic annihilation; dangerous passions of pride, hatred, and selfishness are enthroned in our lives; and men do reverence before false gods of nationalism and materialism. The saving of our world from pending doom will come, not through the complacent adjustment of the conforming majority, but through the creative maladjustment of a nonconforming minority.⁶

This passage suggests that our institutions of higher education should help as many of our students as possible make the transition from “the complacent adjustment of the conforming majority,” what the Jewish prophets would call missing the mark, to the “creative maladjustment of a nonconforming minority,” a form of ever-growing faithfulness and adventurous living.

Martin Luther King discussed the issue of creative maladjustment in more detail during a keynote address he gave at the 1967 national convention of the American Psychological Association. In that little-known talk, King directly challenged the notion that the ultimate goal of psychology is to help individuals become “well-adjusted,” or conformed, to the social world around them. As King declared in this address:

You who are in the field of psychology have given us a great

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ King Jr., *Strength To Love*, 18.

word. It is the word “maladjusted.” It is good certainly declaring that destructive maladjustment should be eradicated. But on the other hand, I am sure that we all recognize that there are some things in our society, some things in our world to which we should never be adjusted. There are some things that we must always be maladjusted to if we are to be people of good will. We must never adjust ourselves to racial discrimination and racial segregation. We must never adjust ourselves to religious bigotry. We must never adjust ourselves to economic conditions that take necessities from the many to give luxuries to the few. We must never adjust ourselves to the madness of militarism and the self-defeating effects of physical violence.⁷

In his talk to the APA, King also argued that it is actually pathological for any person to become well-adjusted to a world of injustice, violence, and exploitation, even if this reality is often hidden and obscured from our view. He went on to say that if psychologists want to make a meaningful contribution to mental health they should find ways to help ordinary citizens deepen their capacity for “creative maladjustment.” As he put it, “It may well be that our world is in dire need of a new organization: The International Association for the Advancement of Creative Maladjustment.”⁸

I think many of us would like our campuses or departments to serve as local chapters in this envisioned international association. Does not the cultivation of “creative maladjustment”

concern us as educators, as well as practicing psychologists? Parker Palmer and Arthur Zajonc argue in their book *The Heart of Higher Education*, “If higher education is to keep evolving towards its full potential, it needs people who are so devoted to the educational enterprise that they have a lover’s quarrel with the institution whenever they see it fall short of that potential—and are willing to translate that quarrel into positive action.”⁹

Creative Maladjustment At Antioch

As someone long inspired by King, I have aspired to cultivate a growing level of “creative maladjustment” in my work as an environmental studies professor at Antioch University New England in Keene, New Hampshire. I think these efforts have made a positive difference in my department and in my students’ lives—despite the continued existence of both internal and external countervailing forces that seek to keep us all lulled into the “complacent adjustment of the conforming majority.”

One good example of this change is that my department has consciously agreed that our purpose is to “train effective local, national, and international environmental leaders working to create a sustainable society that embodies respect and care for the community of life, ecological integrity, social and economic justice, democracy, nonviolence, and peace.” Given this vision of social change, we now require courses in “Political Economy and Sustainability” as well as “Leadership For Change.” These courses are required for all master’s students—whether they

⁷ King Jr., “King’s Challenge to the Nation’s Social Scientists.”

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Palmer and Zajonc, *The Heart Of Higher Education: A Call To Renewal*, 21.

are studying to be high school science teachers, field biologists, resource managers, environmental educators, or social movement activists.

For the last twelve years, we have also been the only environmental studies program in the country to offer a master's program concentration in Advocacy for Social Justice and Sustainability. In this concentration, we cultivate creative maladjustment by educating public interest advocates and grassroots organizers working for ecological sustainability, social justice, the democratic control of corporations, and alternative forms of economic development rooted in fair trade, economic relocation, community ownership, and permaculture principles. As part of my work as director of this program, I get to teach courses in "Organizing for Social Change" and "Diversity, Justice, and Inclusion."

I have also worked with my colleagues to make our extensive field studies program more "creatively maladjusted." For years, our field studies program included wilderness-based, ecological science trips to Costa Rica, Mexico, Alaska, the Pacific Northwest, and the Adirondacks. These were all amazing field courses. They were not the problem. The problem was that there was not a single field studies course in our curriculum that focused on the grassroots environmental justice movement in the United States. This movement emerged in the late 20th century as a popular response to the corporate and government malfeasance underlying the disproportionate pollution impacts that regularly hit poor communities and communities of color.

I worked with a colleague to ensure our students were exposed to—and challenged to understand—corporate power, the capture of government regulatory agencies, urban environmental issues, and, very importantly, racism and white privilege—the latter a topic poorly addressed in most of our nation's environmental studies programs. We also wanted our students to get to know tough and creative people who have resisted these powerful forces and won real victories for their communities. We saw our proposed field studies course on environmental justice issues in Louisiana as a good way to address these creatively maladjusted educational goals within our department's curriculum.

Maladjustment in Action

Most of our fieldwork took place along the 87-mile stretch of the Mississippi River between Baton Rouge and New Orleans, which is now home to 156 petro-chemical plants and oil refineries on both sides of the river. The Louisiana Chamber of Commerce calls this stretch of the Mississippi the "Chemical Corridor," but most of the local people call it "Cancer Alley." This is clearly contested territory.

Before going to Louisiana, our students researched the characteristics of the state they were about to visit. They found out that Louisiana produces about 25 percent of the United States' petro-chemicals—a huge source of financial wealth—but that Louisiana is also the second poorest state in the country. This made them think about economic justice. Louisiana also has the worst public health record of any of the 50 states, which is not a surprise given the plague of high levels

of industrial pollution, particularly in the part of the state they would be visiting. Furthermore, although African Americans make up around 35 percent of the state population overall, African Americans usually make up 90 to 95 percent of the population in the communities surrounding the many plants along Cancer Alley. As my students concluded, it is very hard to believe that “environmental racism” is a not a variable in this situation.

This became even clearer to us when we arrived in Louisiana and met Margie Richard. Margie is a retired elementary school teacher who used to live in Diamond, Louisiana. She has deep family roots there. Her great, great grandfather, for example, had lived in what is now called Diamond as a slave on the old plantation where a Shell Oil refinery and chemical plant now sits. Margie told us with pride that he was a leader of the largest slave rebellion in Louisiana’s history. Margie also explained to us how she led her own community rebellion in Diamond to ensure that the Shell Oil Company paid every homeowner in Diamond enough money to move out of harm’s way after just a few decades of its toxic operations had made life there unsafe.

We picked Margie up at her new house, an hour or so from her old community, and drove with her in our rented van to the now abandoned town of Diamond, Louisiana. According to Margie, her organizing efforts did not keep her community in place, healthy, and together, but they still sparked a needed change in Shell corporate policy. As background, she told us about how she and her neighbors used to sleep in their clothes so they could make a quick

escape from the town if the plant sirens went off in the middle of the night. She also told us about the increasing number of miscarriages, respiratory diseases, leukemia, and breast cancer cases that she and her neighbors noticed over the years after the plant had moved into town. She even told us how many vegetables stopped growing in their gardens and how people stopped fishing in the river because of how deformed the fish had become.

Now standing with us on the spot where her front porch had once been, Margie pointed across the street to a lot bordering the fence line of the still active Shell plant. She told us about the hot summer day when she was sipping tea and watching a 17-year-old neighbor boy mowing the lawn for her elderly friend. A giant explosion suddenly erupted from the plant. Margie saw the fireball spread across the fence line and engulf the teenager, a young man whom she had taught in elementary school and known for years. She described the terror that swept over her as she watched this young man, still on fire, run away, and she traced his path for us with her finger. Pointing to a tree on her side of the abandoned street, she said that was where he finally fell and died, before the ambulance could arrive.

She told us, too, of her anger and heartbreak when the Shell Oil Company offered the boy’s mother \$500 for her son’s death—but only if the mother would sign away her right to sue the company for negligence. The mother was poor enough, Margie said, that she felt she had no choice but to take the corporation’s offer, just to have enough money to bury her son. The community felt so disempowered back then that they

did not feel like there was anything they could do about the situation.

Margie showed us a still-intact playground whose back fence is the fence line of the Shell plant. She pointed to a sign put up by Shell saying, “Parents, Keep Your Children Safe!” and asked, “Is there any way to keep our children safe on this playground?” Several of my students answered that they did not see how. We had only been in Diamond for about a half hour, and all our eyes were watering. Half of us had severe headaches. Several were starting to cough. One student had to go lie down in the van, because she was overcome with nausea.

A student then asked Margie what finally prompted her to start organizing a campaign to pressure Shell to buy out her and her neighbors’ homes. Margie explained that as their living conditions continued to worsen over the years, the Shell Company finally offered a buyout deal to the white residents who lived in her town. The corporation refused, however, to offer the same deal to the African Americans living in Diamond. This was too much for Margie. She decided then and there that she had to become a community organizer, had to try to negotiate a fair deal with Shell about buying out *all* the neighbors in Diamond, and had to begin building a national coalition with environmental groups like Greenpeace and the Sierra Club to pressure Shell to do the right thing: to offer the same deal to the African Americans in Diamond that they had offered her white neighbors.

My students sat on the playground’s bleachers and listened intently as Margie told them the details of how she

organized her community over a period of years—including the heartbreaks along the way, the temptations to give up, and the creeping hopelessness about their chances of changing Shell’s racist policies. Margie also told us about her group’s very creative strategies and tactics, like raising enough money to buy Margie a few shares of Shell stock and sending her to Europe to attend a corporate shareholder’s meeting. There, Margie went up to the table where the corporation’s directors were sitting and poured each one of them a glass of water. Margie explained to them that this was water from a well in Diamond, Louisiana, and she encouraged them all to drink up and quench their thirst, if they thought living in Diamond was safe. None of the directors drank from their glasses. It was not long after this that the Shell Oil Company accepted the campaign’s demands and offered everyone in Diamond enough money for their homes so that all the residents could move to relative safety.

One of my students then asked Margie how she found the courage to go up against one of the most powerful corporations in the world. Margie looked directly at my student, and said, “Aw honey, if Jesus can die on the cross for me, I can damn well take care of the babies in my community!”

What About Academic Resistance?

Margie’s answer to my student brings us all the way back to our spiritual calling as Quakers—to follow the pattern and example of Jesus, to listen to our Inward Teacher, and to strengthen the Kingdom of God within all the spheres of our lives. For Quakers and other people of goodwill working within higher

education this means staying professionally focused on the core goal of “education for beloved community,” no matter what our theology, department, or discipline. This is our sacred calling.

It is not an easy calling. Palmer and Zajonc document the frequent hostility this educational vision engenders among many conventional and well-adjusted academics who believe that this vision is too messy, value-laden, emotional, controversial, community-based, and spiritual. Happily, Palmer and Zajonc offer several good ideas about engaging these academic critics in meaningful and transformative dialog, but they also note that there are no easy answers for educators “seeking the insight and skillful means necessary to encourage forms of teaching and learning that honor the complexities of reality and our multiple ways of knowing, weaving it all together in ways that contribute to personal well-being and to the common good.”¹⁰ We still have a lot to figure out in practice.

Still, we, and our students, are worth the effort. Miracles do happen. Transformative learning does take place. Time and time again, education shakes up empires, challenges patterns of injustice, strengthens the beloved community, and nurtures right relationships in our midst. This spiritual enlightenment encourages both faithfulness and skillfulness among those whom God reaches and teaches. In King’s words, this helps people “make a way out of no way.”¹¹ I personally

cannot imagine a better vocation than educating for beloved community, even when it is so challenging.

Conclusion

I also cannot think of a better way to finish this essay than going back to the *Kabarak Call for Peace and Ecojustice*, which reminds us:

- We are called to see what love can do: to love our neighbor as ourselves, to aid the widow and orphan, to comfort the afflicted and afflict the comfortable, to appeal to consciences and bind the wounds.
- We are called to teach our children right relationship, to live in harmony with each other and all living beings in the earth, waters and sky of our Creator, who asks, “Where were you when I laid the foundations of the world?” (Job 38:4)
- We are called to do justice to all and walk humbly with our God, to cooperate lovingly with all who share our hopes for the future of the earth.
- We are called to be patterns and examples in a 21st century campaign for peace and ecojustice, as difficult and decisive as the 18th and 19th century drive to abolish slavery.¹²

All I can add to this is to shout, “Amen,” and note that this is the spirit that should shape what, how, and why we teach.

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