

Gender, the Hat, and Quaker Universalism in the Wake of the English Revolution

In 1661, the Quaker John Boyer was beaten, blinded and left to die after refusing to doff his cap to a nobleman.¹ Other Quaker men in revolutionary and Restoration England suffered similar reprisals for their insulting denial of 'hat honour' to their supposed superiors. Others yet found themselves gaoled, fined, or whipped for refusing to remove their caps in court.² In 1652, James Nayler explained to one judge the early rationale for this practice. Charged with blasphemy for claiming that Christ resided within him, and then accused of failing to pay due reverence to the court, Nayler said that he kept his hat upon his head not in contempt but in obedience to authority. He obeyed the authority of God rather than that of man, however, and divine authority recognized no earthly degrees of difference: 'I honour the Power as it is of God, without respect of persons, it being forbidden by Scripture. He that respects men's persons commits sin, and is convinced of the law as a transgressor.'³ The Quaker missionary Edward Burrough echoed these sentiments, asking 'Hath not God made of one mould and one blood all nations to dwell upon the face of the earth? And doth not he that respects persons commit sin?'. He challenged his readers: 'Must it now be an offence not to put off the hat or give respect to the person of him that hath a gold ring and fine apparel? Hath not all the earthly lordship, tyranny, and oppression sprung from this ground, by which creatures have been exalted and set up one above another, trampling underfoot and despising the poor?'⁴

John Perrot tried pressing this notion that God was no respecter of persons to its furthest point, one that denied distinctions based on sex as well as social status. A Quaker missionary imprisoned in Rome from 1658 to 1661, Perrot urged in one missive home that 'if any Friend be moved of the Lord God to pray in the congregation of God ... without taking off the hat, or the shoes, let him do so in the fear and name of the Lord'.⁵ Although Quaker men assiduously retained their hats before all people, they kept the common practice of uncovering during prayer, while women prayed with heads covered. Perrot wrote that this was yet another needless, carnal custom of the sort that

Quakers had otherwise repudiated. More to the point, it implied an unwarranted distinction between men and women where none existed. God was no respecter of persons, in this sense or any other. George Fox, then coming to be recognized as the leader of the Quakers, reacted to Perrot's intervention angrily and with alarm. He hounded out Perrot and those who agreed with him, and refined a centralized system of discipline over members of the sect that emerged from the fray.

The Quakers' refusal of 'hat honour' to their superiors is well known; once meant to deny distinctions, it became a distinctive badge of the movement and its members. The 'hat controversy' that splintered the early movement and helped solidify a Quaker sect over the 1660s is rather less familiar, however, as are the gender dimensions of both hat testimonies. Generally overlooked or quickly dismissed, this hat controversy has received better, if still brief, mention in a few Quaker studies. Richard Bauman, for example, treats it as a manifestation of the struggle between spontaneity and formalism, between the inner light and outward forms; Larry Ingle depicts it as a contest between individual conscience and group discipline.⁶ The hat controversy did manifest these tensions; but highlighting its gender dimension suggests that a conflict over the social significance of spiritual equality lay behind it as well. Accordingly, this essay first introduces the broader history and historiography of dress and gesture before turning to the Quakers' use of the hat to repudiate earthly hierarchies of social rank. After a brief excursion to outline the history of headwear in marking *sexual* subordination, it examines the conflict over Perrot's plea that his fellows fully reject all carnal distinctions. It argues that the hat controversy illuminates a struggle among early Quakers between a universalism premised on the fundamental sameness of all individuals and a communalism, or separatism, that abstracted the spiritual from the social in ways that maintained difference.

Recognizing this struggle, in turn, clarifies something of the change in Quakerism at the time of the Restoration and its broader significance. That Quakerism changed is not in doubt; precisely what it changed from or to, and why, remain matters of some dispute.⁷ A focus on the hat controversy suggests that Quakers unwilling or unable to embrace the premises of a universalism rooted in similarity always had a tendency towards separatism, one that the experience of heightened persecution in the Restoration only magnified. The strengthening of this separatist impulse, tied to an assertion of difference more generally, shaped the roles accorded to women in their ranks and the rhetoric defending those roles. It also contributed to a compartmentalization by which religion went from being the 'totalizing and world-transforming immanent force of seventeenth-century English society'⁸ to something more contained and containable, safer and separate from political life, thus making religious difference more readily tolerable.

I

As the Quakers themselves well understood, dress and gesture serve as forms of communication. They very often communicate distinctions, be they between men and women, clergy and laypeople, or the intricate gradations of social status. They can, moreover, not just communicate hierarchies based on other factors but also help construct or undermine those differences. Michael Braddick has recently called for studies of the 'politics of gesture', by which he means 'how power relations, cultural or partisan identities and divergent social interests were expressed and contested non-verbally'.⁹ Citing Sir Francis Bacon's reference to gestures as 'transitory hieroglyphics', Keith Thomas has warned that 'no student of social differentiation can afford to neglect the part played by differences in physical comportment in separating social groups from each other and arousing feelings of mutual hostility'.¹⁰ While historians' attention to gesture is relatively recent, scholars of many sorts have long pointed out that clothing serves functions beyond the purely practical, especially in demarcating difference. Clothing 'does more than merely cover and protect the body', Penelope Corfield notes: 'The visibility of dress conveys instant and often multiple messages: social; sexual; occupational; generational; ethnic; geographical; personal. Some of those are conveyed implicitly; others explicitly and self-consciously.'¹¹

Such observations about the ability of dress and gesture to communicate and to construct difference apply across time and place. Scholars of the early modern period, however, have argued that their subjects had an especially strong sense of the formative, or transformative, power of such things. Ann Rosalind Jones and Peter Stallybrass, for example, have suggested that clothing could transfigure the pre-modern self: 'For it was investiture, the putting on of clothes, that quite literally constituted a person as a monarch or a freeman of a guild or a household servant. Investiture was, in other words, the means by which a person was given a form, a shape, a social function, a "depth".'¹² Such characterizations do not necessarily transpose modern theoretical preoccupations in ways foreign to early modern observers. Thomas, and others, have highlighted the belief that externals of dress and deportment manifested truths about the soul. Instruction in proper behaviour mattered precisely because conduct was not just an external affectation. It both shaped and revealed one's nature.¹³ The mutable, humoural body alone only imperfectly anchored identity and difference.¹⁴ Living in an overtly and intensely hierarchical society, early modern men and women also had an especially keen eye for the signs and symbols of status. Until the early seventeenth century, sumptuary laws had sought to reserve certain fabrics and colours to mark different dignities. Social conventions continued to shape practices such as bowing, kneeling, prostration and eye contact between people of varying ranks. To a degree that may now seem foreign, their own dress and gestures, and the gestures of those they encoun-

tered, shaped the identities of early modern men and women.

The hat had long constituted a key element of 'sartorial semaphore'.¹⁵ The style and substance of headwear readily designated members of different professions, clerics of differing confessions, even women's marital status and sexual availability. When and where people removed their hats also signified status. They bared their heads in the presence of superiors, such as fathers, landlords or sovereigns, and even when hearing the royal name or seeing a servant carrying the king's food.¹⁶ As a 1564 tract called *A Pleasant Dialogue or Disputation Between the Cap and the Head* explained, removing the cap in sign of honour 'is a very ancient custom, and it sprung up of this, that because the head is the noblest part of the body, and the tendrest and aptest to receive harm, the same being presented bare and naked to our betters, is the greatest sign of obedience and humility that can be'.¹⁷

The routine and recognizable nature of hat honour made refusal to doff the cap a readily available sign of disrespect or protest. The late medieval Lollards kept their hats on their heads in defiance of the priestly authority they disputed. Over the late 1500s and early 1600s, parishioners of a puritan bent sometimes wore their caps during the Prayer Book services they disdained or in front of the bishops whose presence they despised.¹⁸ Such protests occurred in more obviously social and political contexts in the months preceding and years following the outbreak of civil war in 1642. One observer noted with some surprise that the Earl of Strafford travelled from his parliamentary trial to prison with 'no man capping to him, before whom that morning the greatest of England would have stood discovered'. When he saw bishops in Westminster Hall with 'no man cap to them', he opined that 'God is making here a new world'.¹⁹ When King Charles himself travelled to and from his trial for offences against his subjects, he found himself similarly confronted by people who refused to bare their heads, with soldiers abusing those who tried to do so.²⁰ A new world indeed: when a delegation of Diggers appeared before Lord General Fairfax after attempting to restore private property to the 'common treasury' that God intended, they explained that they kept their hats on their heads as Fairfax 'was but their fellow creature' and 'all men are equal'.²¹

Quakers, then, were not unique in either the action or the basic impulse that first drove it. Gerard Winstanley, the Digger spokesman, wrote of an equality premised on the presence in each individual of a share of the 'Spirit Reason, which I call God'.²² The Quakers similarly spoke of the indwelling Inner Light common to all creation. George Fox later recalled that he had experienced the core of this revelation in 1648, realizing that 'every man was enlightened by the divine light of Christ; and I saw it shine out through all, and that they that believed in it came out of condemnation and came to the light of life'.²³ By 1650 the 'Quaker' name had emerged, first applied pejoratively but soon embraced by Fox and his fellows.²⁴ By 1652 a recognizable band of Quaker itinerants had appeared, and they quickly grew in number.²⁵ The

foundation of the theology that impelled this movement, as Leo Damrosch notes, was 'the full presence of Christ in each of the saints'; for them, 'the indwelling Spirit and saviour Christ were synonymous'.²⁶ E. P. Thompson once wrote of early Quakers who borrowed a 'ranterish' belief in a sort of 'mystic pantheism, which took God as dispersed throughout all creation'. He quoted one Quaker's assertion that 'as touching Christ's Flesh, we are Bone of his Bone, and Flesh of his Flesh, and we have the Mind of Christ'.²⁷ Theirs was no 'God at a distance' or 'God beyond the stars'.²⁸ They did not expect Christ's second coming at some point in the future; rather, each personally experienced it as they recognized the power of the light within themselves. Nor was this redemption reserved for the few. God had not predestined a select number for salvation, but was a light that existed within all people that had only to be allowed to work its transforming effects. Quakers used words such as 'light', 'seed', and 'spirit' to convey a sense of the illuminating, engendering or animating energy of the divine. In various publications, John Perrot called this Inner Light the 'Spirit of Love', 'Spirit of Life', and 'Seed of Immortal Love'. One man, an 'earthen vessel ... known among men by the name of Samuel Fisher', published a collection of answers devised by Fox, Perrot, Burrough and himself to queries that had been asked of them. To the question 'What is God really in himself, without any definition?' they answered that God was 'a Spirit, Light, Love, that One, Omnipotent, All-Sufficient, Spiritual, Substantial, Living, Everlasting, Infinite Subsistence, which hath his own being of himself and gives being, life, breath and All things unto All, in whom we, and all mankind, who are his offspring, both live, move and have our being'.²⁹

The central belief in a universally indwelling Light had a number of implications. Initially it promised both unity and equality. It manifested itself in an urgent missionary impulse. In William Dewsbury's refrain, the seed already existed in individuals of 'every kindred, tongue and people and nation'.³⁰ Quakers testified to the Light's presence before audiences in such places as Alexandria, Athens, Zante and Rome. Some travelled the Atlantic, cultivating the seed from Newfoundland to Nevis, Boston to Barbados. After Mary Fisher spoke before Sultan Mehmed IV at Edirne, she reported of her Ottoman hosts that 'there is a royal seed amongst them which in time God will raise. They are more near truth than many Nations'.³¹ She and others spoke not of converting but of convincing. In an address intended for the people of India, Perrot insisted that 'the one spirit and power of love, makes all but of one soul'.³² The early Quaker interpretation of the Inner Light manifested a universalism premised on the fundamental sameness of all in God's creation.

This belief also shaped Quakers' language, dress and gestures in ways that denied distinctions of social status. In addition to refusing to perform hat honour, they abandoned honorific titles, calling people by their given names. They adopted the familiar 'thee and thou' forms of address instead of the

formal 'you and ye'. Many divested themselves of finery and favoured a studied plainness in dress. Such actions served several purposes. Like others among the godly, Quakers who dressed simply did so in part to avoid vanity and frivolous excess.³³ They wanted to renounce all carnal creations, all empty forms that rested not in the spirit. But the common impulse initially behind such things was a denial of distinctions of social rank. Such distinctions did not exist; acting as if they did was dishonest hypocrisy. Fox later noted that 'When the Lord sent me forth into the world, he forbade me to put off my hat to any, high or low; and I was required to "thee" and "thou" all men and women, without respect to rich or poor, great or small.' Such acts, he said, repudiated 'an honour invented by men in the Fall, and in the alienation from God'.³⁴

But what of distinctions of gender? How far did the belief in an Inner Light promise to undermine all hierarchies of privilege based on birth, not just those of social status but also those of sex? Without doubt, the Quaker movement saw women in much more prominent roles, and in greater numbers, than did any other movement or group of the revolutionary years. Elizabeth Hooton, one of the first people convinced by Fox, became an indomitably confrontational missionary; Margaret Fell emerged as the organizational centre of the group. Women published their own works and assisted with the publications of others. Forty per cent of the titles published by women in the 1650s came from Quakers.³⁵ Women routinely spoke in front of Quaker meetings and had the support of their fellows as they set off on public preaching tours throughout the country and beyond, often leaving behind husbands and children as they did so. Of the nearly 300 women Phyllis Mack found to be active between 1650 and 1665 as prophets, missionaries and writers, over 200 were Quaker.³⁶ Quakers both male and female insisted that the Light manifested itself equally in both men and women, regardless of sex. When horrified contemporaries reiterated St Paul's injunctions that women remain silent in the church and under subjection more generally, Quakers responded by citing Paul's promise to the Galatians: 'There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.'³⁷

But what sort of equality was this and what were its implications? Did it insist upon the fundamental oneness of all before God, or did difference supersede the similarities? Quakers themselves had no single answer, which has contributed to divergent evaluations by scholars, as perhaps have preferences shaped by modern incarnations of debates about difference and equality. In response to scholars who offered glowing appraisals of the Quaker empowerment of women, Phyllis Mack provided a lengthy, nuanced study which argued that the movement did not empower women *as* women. Some contemporaries saw women as fit vehicles for prophecy precisely because of their weaknesses; on the other hand, Quakers premised defences of women's speech on a dissolution of gender that failed to valorize the feminine. When 'there is neither male nor female' in Christ, men and women as such cease

to exist. 'Self-annihilation was', Mack acknowledges, 'a prerequisite for the preaching of both sexes'. Men as much as women sought to transcend their earthly identities and described themselves as containers of the spirit.³⁸ Nonetheless, in their defences of women's public speech Quakers relied on feminine labels to describe that which was weak and to be overcome, leading Mack to argue that, ultimately, 'the self-transcendence of Quaker men was different from the self-alienation of Quaker women'.³⁹

Kate Peters has responded by suggesting that the early Quakers' negation of worldly gender must not be exaggerated. She points out that the much cited defences by Fox and Richard Farnsworth argued only for a spiritual equality that extended no further than public prophecy; as she notes, both Fox and Farnsworth complemented their defences of women's spiritual equality with descriptions of carnal difference, promising continued wifely obedience to earthly spouses and fulfilment of domestic duties. They attempted simultaneously to defend and to contain the very active women around them. She also suggests that these limited defences of women's spiritual equality need to be weighed against the actions of women within the movement.⁴⁰ Judging from their activities, many Quaker women either felt themselves empowered by the notion of transcending gender or at least felt it no hindrance to their continued activism. Elaine Hobby responded with a brief reminder of the diversity of arguments for women's public speech, pointing out that there was 'no single or coherent tradition with which women's preaching was defended by Quakers'.⁴¹ Stepping back from the explicit defences of women's speech and turning to the hat testimonies also highlights a persistent tension between notions of similarity and difference, one that had implications not just for discussions of gender but for the movement more generally.

II

First, though, a brief survey of the distinctive history of women's headwear and its significance is necessary. For one, that history seems to have meant that the defining Quaker practice of refusing hat honour to social superiors was not available to female Friends. In Joseph Besse's compendious record of the sufferings of the early Quakers, for example, none of the Friends subjected to court sanctions for their refusal to remove their hats were women.⁴² Either Quaker women submissively removed their headwear in court or, more likely, no one expected them to do so in the same way they required this gesture from men. As recently as 1615, Chief Justice Sir Edward Coke had ordered a female defendant to remove her hat, but she then, quite properly, replaced that hat with a handkerchief to cover her hair.⁴³ Men signalled their submission by uncovering but women signalled theirs by remaining covered, in at least some fashion. The strictures of women's hat honour differed from those that applied to men.

Women's headwear had long had a special significance, focused in part on hair and its connection with sexual shame. Late Antique Mediterranean customs had held that a married woman must keep her head covered in public, a practice to which the Apostle Paul gave a place in Christian Scripture and thus to subsequent European history. In one of his letters to the Corinthians, Paul had written:

I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God. Every man praying or prophesying, having his head covered, dishonoureth his head. But every woman that prayeth or prophesieth with her head uncovered dishonoureth her head: for that is even all one as if she were shaven ... For a man indeed ought not to cover his head, forasmuch as he is the image and glory of God: but the woman of the man. Neither was the man created for the woman; but the woman for the man. For this cause ought the woman to have power on her head because of the angels ... Judge in yourselves: is it comely that a woman pray unto God uncovered? Doth not even nature itself teach you, that, if a man have long hair, it is a shame unto him? But if a woman have long hair, it is a glory to her: for her hair is given her for a covering.⁴⁴

As this suggests, the practice and interpretation of women's head covering varied within the early church; Paul may well have been responding to women who thought that their Christian rebirth somehow freed them from existing conventions. Certainly, by the early third century, some Carthaginian women who had become consecrated virgins thought they had thereby made themselves free from both the shame and the veiling practices that pertained to married women. Tertullian responded with a tract *On the Veiling of Virgins*, arguing at length that Paul's injunctions meant that all women of reproductive age must cover their head and hair, in all public appearances. The veil was not just for women who had submitted to 'the common disgrace' of marital sex, but for all women as sexual creatures who might tempt men to sin. The effort he spent attempting to prove that 'virgins' were still 'women' suggests that he was responding to a specific argument that sexual renunciation and Christian baptism had made these individuals fundamentally distinct.⁴⁵ Certainly, he insisted, virgins were not some third sex free of sexual shame and danger, not a 'third generic class, some monstrosity with a head of its own'. He warned all members of his female audience that: 'All ages are periled in your person. Put on the panoply of modesty; surround yourself with the stockade of bashfulness; rear a rampart for your sex.'⁴⁶

Throughout the middle ages, adult women who claimed any sort of respectability wore something, at least, upon their heads. While unmarried women might show their hair, wives generally hid theirs. The chronology of changes to women's headwear is unclear, but it seems that over the sixteenth century such apparel less often covered the hair. French hoods and other new styles left more hair visible, and by the end of the century small ornaments or net caul's sufficed even for married women.⁴⁷ Preaching before the court in 1550, Bishop Hugh Latimer made what sounds like a rear-guard effort to

retain full head coverings, and to remind women of their significance. He cited Paul's dictum that 'a woman ought to have a power on her head', which he interpreted to mean that a woman's covered head 'declar[es] that she hath a superior above her, by whom she ought to be ruled and ordered: for she is not immediately under God, but mediately. For by their injunction, the husband is their head under God, and they subjects to their husbands.' Yet, the 'power' women wore, he said, was naught but a false sign: 'It is a false sign when it covereth not their heads as it should do. ... [T]here should not any such tussocks nor tufts be seen as there be; nor such laying out of the hair, nor braiding to have it open.' True, he conceded, Scripture made no specific mention of the need for complete covering of the hair, but only because in 'Scripture-time' no one was yet 'come to be so far out of order as to lay out such tussocks and tufts'. Latimer complained, moreover, that women seemed not to read the right meaning into the sign they wore upon their heads, seeing their bonnets as merely another opportunity for costly decoration rather than as reminders of their subjection.⁴⁸

Moralists came to focus their efforts on keeping some distinction between the male and the female and some badge of womanly subjection. The fervid Elizabethan social critic Philip Stubbes barely bothered with visible hair. Instead, he focused his denunciations on the curling, dying, 'trimming and tricking', and even the purchasing of hair: women's sign of subjection had instead become an 'ensign of pride'.⁴⁹ Such pride might go so far as to prompt women to cut their hair in ways suitable only for men. John Williams complained that although God had divided men and women, the devil had now joined them; trimming their hair and bedaubed with cosmetics, women had become 'half man, half woman', 'Chimera-like' monsters.⁵⁰ Writing in the early 1600s, William Prynne gave little attention to the need to cover the hair entirely, but insisted that women's hair be left uncut as a 'natural veil', which sufficed as a 'badge or emblem of their subjection to their husbands'.⁵¹ While full veiling fell into disuse, then, the Pauline injunctions remained current. Moralists insisted that distinctions need remain as a sign of women's subordination. In practice, it seems that respectable women still wore something, however small, upon the head, and certainly, they continued to cover their heads in church while men bared theirs. The Quaker strictures against 'hat honour' had not directly challenged any of this. Quaker men used their hats to repudiate distinctions of social rank, but not those of sex.

III

It was against this backdrop that John Perrot issued his own particular 'hat testimony'. Perrot had an especially strong sense of the universal, equalizing aspect of the Light within. Like other Quaker authors, he sought to transcend his earthly identity and signed his works with such descriptors as

‘a servant of the Lord who ... was named in the flesh, John Perrot’. Indeed, he took this practice further than most, signing himself in one publication as ‘one of your dear sisters’ and in another as ‘your sister in our Spouse, John’.⁵² The universalizing aspect appeared most strongly in his missionary journeys. A Baptist until Edward Burrough convinced him in 1655, Perrot quickly turned to spreading the Quaker message. After brief stays in gaols in his native Ireland, he travelled to England, whence he soon embarked on a more ambitious journey. Along with the well-seasoned traveller Mary Fisher, he set out with Mary Pierce, Beatrice Beckley, John Luffe and John Buckley to awaken people of all faiths, nations and tongues to the spirit within. After some time in Livorno with the Jewish community, the group travelled to Zante, briefly dividing when Perrot and Buckley went to Corinth and Athens, then regrouping to travel through Smyrna, Venice and back to Zante. There, they divided again: some sought to testify to the Ottoman sultan, Buckley heading for Istanbul while Fisher and Beckley went to Edirne. Perrot and Luffe planned to go to Jerusalem, but had a more dangerous midpoint in view: they returned to the Italian peninsula, this time to speak with Pope Alexander VII. Perrot and Luffe’s travels ended abruptly in June of 1658, when their attempts to arrange an interview with the pontiff landed them before the Inquisition and then in the *pazzarella*, or prison for madmen. Luffe died in prison, but Perrot remained until his release in 1661.⁵³ Some of his prison writings appeared in England shortly before his return; others came off the presses in the weeks and months that followed. These, too, sought to awaken their readers to the power of the Light within all people.

One of them contained the ‘hat testimony’ that soon splintered the movement. After discussing various outward forms and ceremonies that stifled the spirit within, Perrot addressed the hat. He suggested that while his fellows had abandoned most instances of useless formality, this stricture about men removing the hat in prayer remained, and remained unexamined. He noted several instances in Scripture in which men of God had prayed with their heads covered, and other passages which seemed to enjoin the removal of shoes. He urged his readers: ‘Stand you therefore in the power of God to salvation, which is the cross of Christ to all that stand in the customs and traditions.’ Hats on or off – or shoes, for that matter – made no difference. He then pointed to another inconsistency: ‘ask the world what is the difference between the fleshly head of a carnal man, and a carnal woman, and which of them two God doth most respect? That one stands in such an exercise with hoods and fine dressings, or hat on, and the other with hat or cap off; and the answer of the Seed in them will confound them; and hereby God Almighty is glorified in you.’⁵⁴ If women who shared an equal measure of the divine could remain covered, so too could the men. To insist on either being covered or uncovered repudiated the fundamental similarity of all before God, and with God.

Perrot elaborated on these points in a second letter. He insisted again upon the denial of useless outward forms that originated not with God, and upon the universality of the Light within both male and female:

The purpose of God is to bring to nought all the customary and traditional ways of worship of the sons of men which have entered into the world and stand unto this day in the curse and state of apostasy from the true power of the living worship. For which cause I preach the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ unto that reasoning part in all which seem to stand in opposition to that which I have received by express commandment from the Lord God of heaven in the day of my captivity in Rome, viz, to bear a sure testimony against the custom and tradition of taking off the hat by men when they go to pray to God, which they never had by commandment from God, and therefore unto them may be righteously said, Who hath required this thing at your hands? ... God is one and the same, both in the male and in the female ... God looketh not for the uncovering the external heads in the female.⁵⁵

Perrot clarified, too, that this did not constitute an order for men to remain covered in prayer. The point was to abandon any requirements that had no proper sanction and to pray whenever and however the spirit moved.

George Fox responded with alarm and anger. He called Perrot before him and other leading Quakers, berating him for a number of failings. Over the course of two meetings, he criticized Perrot for the heavy expenses he had incurred in his travels and imprisonment, and for borrowing on the Quakers' behalf to support two Quaker women then imprisoned by the Inquisition at Malta. He complained that Perrot had composed some of his works as poems, apparently a style that Fox saw as a dangerous affectation.⁵⁶ And finally he focused on the hat. Perrot's hat testimony threatened 'comely order' and decency. It risked a return of the 'Ranterish spirit' of disorder, and more particularly, the 'Ranterish spirit' of James Nayler. Nayler had insisted upon obeying the motions of the spirit above all external law and institutional discipline; God within mattered beyond all outer forms. Nayler's entry into Bristol in October 1656, re-enacting Christ's Palm Sunday entry into Jerusalem and accompanied by the hosannas of his fellows, had sought to advertise the notion of Christ within. To many observers, however, it seemed a blasphemous claim to *be* Christ. Nayler's blasphemy trial before parliament had exposed the Quakers to ridicule and reprisals. Fox then had moved to institute firmer discipline, to focus on the needs of the group over the stirrings of the individual, and to maintain order in ways that to some seemed a reintroduction of the forms they fought against.⁵⁷ A separatist impulse began to overtake the universalizing impulse. Fox thought that Perrot threatened that shift, a shift that had become all the more important to him in the wake of the Restoration.

The hat testimony, then, exacerbated a tension that the Restoration had made more pressing between the group and the individual, between discipline and the spirit, between communalism and universalism. Fox complained that Perrot had 'given occasion to the world to say that the people of God called

Quakers are divided, some with their hats on, and some with them off'.⁵⁸ Perrot aggravated Fox further on this count by publishing a work insisting upon unity with all, not just with a separate few. The full title of the work offers a good sense of its argument: *An epistle for the most pure amity and unity in the spirit and life of God to all sincere-hearted-souls, whether called Presbyterians, Independents, Baptists, Seekers, Quakers, or others, under any other denomination whatsoever, that desire that God's truth and righteousness in power, may be exalted over all within them and without them (in the whole earth) for ever.* Perrot wrote as one that 'seeth the end of all distinctions, and separations by names and such like terms as denominations'. The only real distinction was that between those seeking righteousness and those who abandoned the search. He urged that people not insist upon particular and divisive forms or ceremonies, for unity 'stands in none other than the measure of the Spirit and Grace of God, as it is given unto and manifested *in us all*'.⁵⁹ Fox would not forgive him for suggesting that he felt more unity with some Seekers, Baptists and Independents than he did with some people who called themselves Quakers. Fox complained that this showed division among the Quakers, and suggested an unthinkable fellow feeling for members of groups that had, in some cases, persecuted Quakers. Quakers had suffered horribly at the hands of people whose fellows Perrot sought to embrace with 'amity and unity' and this Fox could simply not tolerate.⁶⁰

Indeed, persecution of Quakers worsened after the Restoration.⁶¹ Many, including Perrot, now found themselves imprisoned. Increasingly ostracized by Fox and those closest to him, in 1662 Perrot accepted an offer of transportation to the colonies in return for release from Newgate. He went first to Barbados, then settled in Jamaica after brief travels on the American mainland. While his departure probably smoothed Fox's path to leadership over a separatist sect, it did not end the controversy over the hat and the larger issues it signified. Perrot and others of his mind continued to write and to publish, some well after Perrot's death in 1665.

One of the more important responses to Fox came from Benjamin Furly, a wealthy Quaker merchant who had settled in Rotterdam in 1659 and quickly became a leading figure in the Dutch Quaker community. In later years, his home also hosted many key figures in the budding Enlightenment, including Pierre Bayle, John Toland, John Dury, and John Locke. He remained throughout these years an advocate of religious toleration and an opponent of 'anything that looks like sectism, singularities, and authority'.⁶² Now, in the early 1660s, Furly wrote to suggest that it was Fox who caused unnecessary division. 'Is this a time for us (who are gathered into the unity of the one spirit and life and truth of God) to be found smiting one another about things in which neither our unity with God nor with each other is established nor broken? Is this a day for any to be found beating their fellow servants for wearing (all) their clothes when they worship ... ?' The time was not opportune, nor was the matter itself worth contention. 'Is there any difference to

be made in clothes in the worship of God? (Especially by such who are come to the estate in which Adam was before he fell, or to Christ who was before Adam was) ... Were not all outward coverings made in the fall, from the hat to the shoe?' To understand Paul literally, or 'carnally', was to lead back to earthly, carnal forms that stifled the spirit. 'Are we not called unto liberty from all yokes and bonds in all outward things, ought we to suffer ourselves to be thus judged in meats, drinks, times, places, clothes, gestures, or postures in the worship of God ... Ought any man to make a law, or band for himself or his brother where the spirit of the Lord hath left liberty in the hearts and consciences of his people? Especially in a thing which is a fashion of the world, a thing of no substance?'⁶³

Furly berated those who set about 'introducing or rather keeping up a distinction betwixt covering and uncovering, and betwixt male and female in the worship of God, whereas it is certain that there is no such difference and that there is neither male nor female but all are one in Christ'. To insist upon differences in dress and gesture was to deny the fundamental similarity and equality of all in God's creation. Paul's injunction that women be covered should be read metaphorically, as Fox and other Quakers had done when responding to opponents who cited Paul's dictum that women must remain silent in the church. Richard Farnsworth, for example, had described that which must not speak in the Church as the carnal part of humankind, be it in the female or the male: 'nothing must speak in the church in God, but the Holy Ghost, and that may speak in the church, either in male or female ... Let all carnal wisdom in male as well as in female keep silence.'⁶⁴ Similarly, in 1655, Priscilla Cotton and Margaret Cole depicted the 'woman' who was not to speak in the Church as the weakness in all the unregenerate: 'Thou tellest the people, Women must not speak in a Church, whereas it is not spoke only of a Female, for we are all one both male and female in Christ Jesus, but it's weakness that is the woman by the Scriptures forbidden.' Christ, the true head, must be uncovered for either a man or woman to speak within the church.⁶⁵ Both Furly and Perrot recalled that metaphorical meaning and applied it to the matter of the hat. That which must be covered, like that which must be silent, was the carnal part of the person, be it a male or a female individual. Insisting upon distinctions between men and women at prayer both repudiated the equality between them, and missed the point of Paul's injunction. 'Is there any difference betwixt the man and the woman outward, whether considered as in the fall or in Christ? Is not Christ the head of all and in all, both men and women that are in him? And is not the devil head both of male and female in the fall?'⁶⁶

But for Fox, dangers from both within and without necessitated a closing of ranks, with tighter discipline and clearer distinctions. A group of leading Quakers concurred and in May 1666 responded to the 'Perrotians' with the Testimony that provided the basis for future organization. They decreed that the movement of the spirit to travel or preach or publish must first be

subjected to the approval of the community, and that in matters of disagreement, the elders of the Church had the final say.⁶⁷ This imposition of order would include a reconfiguring of women's place within the sect and a delineation of difference. To one 'hat-man', Fox challenged that 'you would bring all men to sit like a company of women'.⁶⁸ Responding to another, Fox asked 'doth not he pray like a woman covered? ... And doth not the Apostle reprove such men as pray covered, or would have the women uncovered like the men, and so make no distinction in the sexes?'⁶⁹

Distinctions promoting conventional gender roles became particularly important to Restoration Quakerism. While in Barbados in 1671 trying to quell remaining 'Perrotian' dissent, Fox announced the institutionalization of separate meetings for women that recognized their special duties and roles. As he noted, 'there is many things that is proper for women to look into both in their families, and concerning of women which is not so proper for the men, which modesty in women cannot so well speak of before men as they can do among their sex'.⁷⁰ Talk of genderlessness disappeared; women would be empowered *as* women. For its time and place, such an institutionalization of women's governance was remarkable, 'no less innovative because limited to matters of hearth and home'. But as Mack and Hobby have noted, the creation of the women's meetings was 'both supportive and repressive, and clearly the two functions were linked'. The separate women's meetings that enshrined women's responsibilities as 'mothers in Israel' provided both a 'site of autonomy' and a 'means of containment'.⁷¹ Equity triumphed over equality. Spiritual similarity did not negate earthly difference.

The creation of the separate women's meetings fostered a new schism, and reinvigorated the existing hat controversy as well. Some men opposed the new meetings for giving women control over men's affairs; proposals for marriage needed to be approved by both men's and women's meetings, an assertion of women's power that some male Friends found deeply offensive.⁷² But others criticised yet again the institutionalization of difference and sect, with its abandonment of the universalizing promise of the light within. Control over marriage had become another way of compelling conformity, with permission denied to those who varied on the matter of the hat. William Mucklow now published or republished earlier texts from the hat controversy, including a letter from Furly and the Dutch Quakers which insisted again that 'every member is to be guided by the measure of Life, in which alone the true unity and good order is'.⁷³ In embracing unity with the few, they suggested, Quakers had abandoned unity with all.

Robert Rich was among those whose earlier disputes with Fox found a fresh airing. Rich had defended Perrot and his views, even while disavowing the Quaker name. He admitted that he had once counted himself among their number, but Fox's censure first of James Nayler and then of Perrot had convinced him of his error. Whereas he had once 'contended only for one sort of people', he said his 'present state is to own that which is of God in any sort

of man'.⁷⁴ He had come to believe that 'those of all religions that feared God and acted righteously towards Men, were accepted of God', no matter the name by which they went. In the aftermath of the Great Fire, he donated £210 to help people rebuild, dividing it among representatives of seven churches: the Catholic, Anglican, Presbyterian, Independent, Anabaptist, Quaker, and 'Church of the First Born'. He did so, he said, for 'the gathering and uniting of the seed of Jacob dispersed and scattered amongst the various constitutions of outward Forms, into the new Jerusalem, viz. the free grace and love of God, which appears to all men'.⁷⁵ While the other recipients accepted his donations, the Quakers quickly returned their share, refusing any indebtedness to this 'hat man' and Judas. (His gift of precisely £30 made this last label a little too easy a choice.)⁷⁶ Rich saw this as further evidence that Fox sought only to create enmity and 'to make parties'. Under his leadership, strictures on hat-honour, whether its denial to men or its requirement before God, had become marks of distinction emptied of their true meaning. Like Jeroboam with his two brazen calves, Fox had made 'thee, thou and the hat' into dangerous idols.⁷⁷ Rich maintained that in accepting centralized leadership and party control, Quakers had fallen into the same apostasy as the Church of Rome. In giving so much power to Fox, they had chosen for themselves 'a king, like other sects and nations, to judge and rule you'. What they had lost in this apostasy was any sense of the 'universal free grace of God' that resided within members of 'all nations, sects and people together'.⁷⁸

Another early supporter of Perrot who now found his writings republished was Isaac Penington. If anyone had a background that would dispose him to a conflicted response to Perrot's hat testimony and its premise of the fundamental similarity and equality of all, it was Penington. His father had served as Lord Mayor of London and a longstanding member of parliament before dying while imprisoned for his role in the regicide; Isaac Jr had dabbled with ranterism before turning to the Quakers in 1657 or 1658. Penington later admitted that when he had first heard Perrot's hat testimony, 'the fleshly and reasoning part in me did exceeding stiffly rise up', but further reflection led him 'not to set up a rule in my mind either for or against the thing, but to wait singly how the Lord would draw me'. Perrot's terrible sufferings in Rome, his providential delivery, and the 'sparklings of life which brake forth from him' all prompted Penington to urge patience; so, too, did the sure testimony in his own heart that Perrot walked uprightly in the Lord.⁷⁹ More generally he agonized over the implications of the attack on Perrot. As he later recalled:

Nor was I for keeping on the hat in prayer: but I was against the imposing of putting off the hat, believing that no man was to have a law laid upon him by others what to do in the particular, nor to lay a law upon himself but to wait what the Lord would have him do. I had likewise a fear begotten in me, that there was an eldership and authority of man coming over us, and that we were not left so nakedly to be guided by the principle of truth, which we were first directed and turned to.⁸⁰

Within a few years, however, Penington came to accept the need for an authority that diminished independence and equality. The pain of dissention among Friends, together with the apparently providential warnings afforded by his own arrests and sufferings, led Penington back to Fox. Whereas he once feared ‘an eldership and authority of man’, he now asked: ‘Hath God made all equal? Are there not different states, different degrees, different growths, different places, etc.? Then if God hath made a difference, and given degrees of life and gifts different according to his pleasure, what wisdom and spirit is that, which doth not acknowledge this, but would make all equal?’ To deny such differences was to deny the Lord. ‘O my Friends, ... honour the Lord in his appearances, and in the differences which he hath made among the children of men and among his people. He gave Prophets of old, and the rest of the people were not equal with them. He gave Evangelists, Apostles, Pastors, Teachers, etc., and the other members of the churches were not equal with them. He hath given Fathers and Elders now, and the babes and young men are not equal with them.’⁸¹

Nor were women their equals. In 1678, Isaac’s wife Mary wrote to women dissatisfied at having separate meetings from the men, praising the separation for allowing women to perform those ‘services that are more proper for us than for the men, and to do some other services that are mean, and of less concern than is convenient to engage the men in’. She explained that ‘Our place in the creation is to bring forth and nurse up, to keep things orderly, sweet and clean in a family, to preserve from waste and putrefaction, and to provide things necessary for food and raiment.’ Strikingly, she concluded, ‘The men need not grudge us this place in the body, wherein we are meet helps, and usurp not authority over them, and act as the inferior parts of the body, being members, though but a finger or toe.’⁸² She did not seem to find being an inferior an impediment, and remained a strong force within the sect for years to come. Just as some women had found talk of the transcendence of gender empowering, she and others now found the assertion of difference an aid to action.

Nor was there, of course, any one ‘women’s position’ in the hat controversy itself. Among others, Jane Stokes, Isabel Harker and Mary Booth all stood by Perrot, Booth having also defended Nayler in his troubles.⁸³ Rebecca Travers, Booth’s sister and another one-time Naylerite, claimed to see pride and self-exaltation on both sides of the hat controversy, but ultimately implored the hat-men to submit for the sake of unity within the sect. Like Isaac Penington’s agonized writings on the conflict, her text makes clear how deeply difficult some found it to negotiate the tensions between spontaneity and formalism, between the individual and the group, and between a universalist appeal and a separatist focus. But even as she sided with the group, she suggested that she was not at all prepared to subject the leadings of her own share of the light to the judgement of others. To those who might criticize her for pleading for her leaders, she said simply, ‘I answer in the feeling of that power which justifies, and therefore none can condemn.’⁸⁴ As long as the Inner Light remained

central to Quakers' beliefs, the shift from universalism to communalism, from spiritual similarity to earthly difference, would always remain partial and potentially reversible.

IV

By the time the hat controversy revived in the 1670s in the midst of the dispute over the women's meetings, Quakers had an especially able defender in the recent convert, William Penn. His writings on the hat demonstrate a subtle but significant change in the rationale for the denial of hat-honour, and in the Quakers' conception of their place in the world. In one publication he listed 'Sixteen reasons why cap-honour and titular respects are neither honours nor respects'. The heading alone gives a hint of the change: he focused here not on asserting some fundamental sameness or equality of all, but on showing that Quakers meant no offence in abandoning meaningless customs and fashions. Reason fourteen did acknowledge that 'God is declared to be no respecter of persons'; elsewhere Penn objected that by current custom, 'the hat is ne'er as frequently off to equals and inferiors as to superiors'. Otherwise his arguments stemmed from the premises that true honour better manifested itself in more meaningful ways than the doffing of a cap, in ways that grew from virtuous respect and obedience, and that Quakers had no objection to such displays of honour.⁸⁵ They denied hat-honour, but not difference and degree. In his response to the 'hat-men', he accused them generally of innovation and individually of improprieties, but focused his effort on defending the Quakers' status as a church. Like any other society, body, or church, they constituted a group that one might join or leave, and that might in turn accept or reject the members it chose.⁸⁶

The Inner Light continued to be a vital force in Restoration Quakerism and beyond, but not quite in the all-encompassing ways some early advocates anticipated. Those in possession of it would be a group apart, proudly bearing the Quaker label and humbly wearing plain dress while the men kept their hats upon their heads before all save God, but they would not be found among 'every kindred, tongue and people and nation'. The shift from universalism to communalism happened in part because of the heightened pressures of persecution in the Restoration, but also manifested a pre-existing tension within the movement over the earthly manifestations of spiritual equality. Penn devoted himself to the search for religious peace on the basis of the Quakers being a people separate and safe, their differences being matters of private conscience and not of public consequence.⁸⁷ Part of this project involved depoliticizing what had once been a deeply political gesture. Perrot, Rich, and others of their kind had hoped for 'peace and amity' based on a recognition of the similarity afforded by the shared seed of the divine; Penn and the Quakers sought a toleration of difference.

The new insistence by Penn, Fox and other Quakers that hat-honour was ‘an earthly, vain and mean thing’, and thus its absence not something that merited punishment, prompted ‘hat-men’ to cry foul. If hat-honour was so mean a thing, why expel those men who felt moved to wear their hats in prayer? With no reference whatsoever to men, women, or the relations between them, Penn simply responded that the hat’s removal was a decent and necessary ‘token of the unveiling of our spirits to God in prayer’. He insisted, furthermore, that ‘That which gives weight to any gesture is the reason inducing to it, and both the end and frame of the mind in using of it’.⁸⁸ It is not the historian’s place to take sides in such disputes, but perhaps one might suggest that Penn erred in that last statement and knew it. The viewer’s response to a gesture gave it at least as much meaning as did the actor’s intent. Penn and his fellows achieved no small thing in making their denial of hat-honour appear a simple marker of difference rather than a profound assertion of similarity.

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Notes

- 1 Joseph Besse, *A Collection of the Sufferings of the People Called Quakers*, 2 vols (London, 1753), I, 333. Note that in at least one of the beatings recorded by Besse, it was not so much the insult of the hat that prompted the beating, but that the hat signified a ‘fantatick’.
- 2 Besse, *Collection of the Sufferings, passim*. Refusal to remove the hat figured into trials for other offences, but Besse notes at least thirty men who were imprisoned, fined or whipped primarily for such refusal before 1660, and a further twenty-six thereafter.
- 3 Besse, *Collection of the Sufferings*, II, 4.
- 4 Edward Burrough, *A declaration of the present sufferings of above 140 persons of the people of God* (London, 1659), p. 27.
- 5 Friends Library, London (hereafter FL), MS 292 (Crosse MS), p. 12; printed in William Salt, *Some breathings of life from a naked heart* (London, 1663), p. 17.
- 6 Richard Bauman, *Let Your Words Be Few: Symbolism of Speaking and Silence among Seventeenth-Century Quakers* (Cambridge, 1983), pp. 128–9, 140–4; H. Larry Ingle, *First Among Friends: George Fox and the Creation of Quakerism* (Oxford, 1994), pp. 198–9. Such interpretations are in noted contrast to that offered by Kenneth L. Carroll in *John Perrot: Early Quaker Schismatic* (London, 1971), which depicts it essentially as a contest between madness and sanity or, at best, wilful rebellion and obedience. See also Clare C. J. Martin, ‘Tradition versus Innovation: The Hat, Wilkinson-Story and Keithian Controversies’, *Quaker Studies*, 8:1 (2003), 5–22, which offers a fairer reassessment but one that still sides with Fox and sees this as a struggle between enthusiasm and the order necessary for unity and long-term survival. Rosemary Moore offers a good overview

- of its after effects in *The Light in their Consciences: Early Quakers in Britain, 1646–1666* (University Park, Pennsylvania, 2000), pp. 193–203.
- 7 See, for example, Christopher Hill, *The Experience of Defeat: Milton and Some Contemporaries* (London, 1985); Hill, 'God and the English Revolution', *History Workshop Journal*, 17 (1984); Barry Reay, *The Quakers and the English Revolution* (London, 1985); Ingle, *First among Friends*; Moore, *Light in their Consciences*; Jordan Penney, 'Change and Continuity in Restoration Quakerism, 1660–1700' (Unpublished MA Thesis, Dalhousie University, 2005); and a number of works by Richard Greaves and Gary S. DeKrey.
 - 8 James Holstun, *Ehud's Dagger: Class Struggle in the English Revolution* (London, 2000), p. 33.
 - 9 Michael J. Braddick, 'Introduction: The Politics of Gesture', *The Politics of Gesture: Historical Perspectives, Past and Present* (2009), Supplement 4, p. 12. In the same volume, see also John Walter, 'Gesturing at Authority: Deciphering the Gestural Code of Early Modern England', pp. 96–127.
 - 10 Keith Thomas, 'Introduction', in Jan Bremmer and Herman Roodenburg (eds), *A Cultural History of Gesture* (Cambridge, 1991), p. 8.
 - 11 Penelope J. Corfield, 'Dress for Deference and Dissent: Hats and the Decline of Hat Honour', *Costume*, 23 (1989), 66.
 - 12 Ann Rosalind Jones and Peter Stallybrass, *Renaissance Clothing and the Materials of Memory* (Cambridge, 2000), p. 2.
 - 13 Thomas, 'Introduction', pp. 9–10.
 - 14 See Rebecca Earle, "'Two Pairs of Pink Satin Shoes!': Race, Clothing and Identity in the Americas (17th–19th centuries)", *History Workshop Journal*, 52 (2001), 175–95, and "'If You Eat their Food...': Diets and Bodies in Early Colonial Spanish America", *American Historical Review*, 115 (2010), 688–713; Roxann Wheeler, *The Complexion of Race: Categories of Difference in Eighteenth-Century British Culture* (Philadelphia, 2000); Thomas Laqueur, *Making Sex: Body and Gender from the Greeks to Freud* (Cambridge, Mass., 1990).
 - 15 Corfield, 'Dress for Deference', p. 76. For hats and status, see also Dave Postles, "'Flatcaps", Fashioning and Civility in Early-Modern England', *Literature & History*, 17 (2008), 1–13; Maija Jansson, "'The Hat is No Expression of Honor'", *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society*, 133 (1989), 26–34; Kathleen H. Thomas, *The History and Significance of Quaker Symbols in Sect Formation* (Lampeter, 2002), pp. 35–9, 111–24.
 - 16 Walter, 'Gesturing at Authority', p. 112.
 - 17 Anon., *A Pleasaunt Dialogue or Disputation between the cap and the head* (London, 1564), sig. C6r. This is based on a work written years before by the Italian humanist Pandolfo Collenuccio (1444–1504).
 - 18 Adrian Davies, *The Quakers in English Society, 1655–1725* (Oxford, 2000), pp. 135–6; Walter, 'Gesturing at Authority', pp. 116–20; Corfield, 'Dress for Deference', pp. 71–2.
 - 19 David Cressy, 'Revolutionary England, 1640–1642', *Past & Present*, 181 (2003), 45, 47, quoting *The Letters and Journals of Robert Baillie*, ed. David Laing, 3 vols (Edinburgh, 1841), I, 272, 283.
 - 20 T. B. Howell, *A Complete Collection of State Trials*, 33 vols (London, 1816–1826), V, 1126, 1151.
 - 21 Anon., *The Declaration and Standard of the Levellers of England* (London, 1649),

- p. 3; Brian Manning, *The Far Left in the English Revolution, 1640–1660* (London, 1999), p. 59.
- 22 See John Gurney, *Brave Community: The Digger Movement in the English Revolution* (Manchester, 2007), p. 912. A number of Diggers in fact became Quakers, as did Winstanley himself in due course; see pp. 134, 217, 221.
- 23 *The Journal of George Fox*, ed. J. L. Nickalls (Cambridge, 1952), p. 33.
- 24 On the Quakers' adoption of this label, see in particular Kate Peters, *Print Culture and the Early Quakers* (Cambridge, 2005), pp. 91–6.
- 25 Reay, *Quakers and the English Revolution*, p. 8.
- 26 Damrosch, *Sorrows of the Quaker Jesus*, p. 92. See also David Como, *Blown by the Spirit: Puritanism and the Emergence of an Antinomian Underground in Pre-Civil War England* (Stanford, 2004), for earlier manifestations of a 'perfectionist' strain of antinomianism, esp. pp. 38–9, 254–65.
- 27 E. P. Thompson, 'On the Rant', in Geoff Eley and William Hunt (eds), *Reviving the English Revolution* (London, 1988), p. 158.
- 28 See, for example, Francis Howgill, *The Inheritance of Jacob* (London, 1656), p. 6.
- 29 Samuel Fisher, *Apokrypta apokalypsa* (London, 1661), p. 5.
- 30 See *The Faithful Testimony of that antient servant of the Lord ... William Dewsbury, his books, epistles and writings* (London, 1689), pp. 8–9, 156–7.
- 31 FL, MS 320 (Caton MS), p. 164. On Fisher and her 'radical attempts to overcome difference in the light of ... eschatological imminence', see Sylvia Brown, 'The Radical Travels of Mary Fisher: Walking and Writing in the Universal Light', *Women, Gender and Radical Religion in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Sylvia Brown (Leiden, 2007), pp. 39–64.
- 32 John Perrot, *Beames of eternal brightness, or, Branches of everlasting blessings springing forth of the stock of salvation to be spread over India and all nations of the earth, to the uniting all mankind as one single and simple body of everlasting love* (London, 1661), p. 16.
- 33 Leigh Eric Schmidt, "'A Church-going People are a Dress-loving People': Clothes, Communication, and Religious Culture in Early America', *Church History*, 58 (1989), 36–51. For the later history of Quaker dress, see Joan Kendall, 'The Development of a Distinctive Form of Quaker Dress', *Costume*, 19 (1985), 58–74.
- 34 *Journal*, p. 36.
- 35 Patricia Crawford, 'Women's published writings 1600–1700', and Richard Bell and Patricia Crawford, 'Appendix Two: Statistical analysis of women's printed writings 1600–1700', in Mary Prior (ed.), *Women in English Society 1500–1800* (London, 1985), p. 269. See also Catie Gill, *Women in the Seventeenth-Century Quaker Community* (Aldershot, 2005), esp. p. 5; Gill shows that the numbers are even higher when multiple-authorship is taken into account. For the broader context, see Keith Thomas, 'Women and the civil war sects,' *Past and Present*, 13 (1958), 42–62.
- 36 Mack, *Visionary Women*, p. 1.
- 37 Galatians 3:1.
- 38 See, for example, the title page of William Dewsbury, *Discovery of Mans returne to his first estate* (London, 1654) and Peters, *Print Culture*, p. 97.
- 39 Mack, *Visionary Women*, pp. 173, 178.
- 40 Peters, *Print Culture*, pp. 124–42.

- 41 Elaine Hobby, 'Handmaids of the Lord and Mothers in Israel: Early Vindications of Quaker Women's Prophecy', in Thomas N. Corns and David Loewenstein (eds), *The Emergence of Quaker Writing* (London, 1995), pp. 88–98, quote at p. 90.
- 42 Joseph Besse, *A Collection of the Sufferings of the People Called Quakers*, 2 vols (London, 1753), *passim*.
- 43 Howell, *State Trials*, II, 931. (My thanks to Dr Andrea McKenzie for this reference.)
- 44 1 Corinthians 11: 3–15.
- 45 See Peter Brown, *The Body and Society: Men, Women, and Sexual Renunciation in Early Christianity* (New York, 1988), pp. 80–1, 260, for this and for other references to the veil as both a sign of shame and, among nuns, as a mark of consecration.
- 46 Tertullian, 'On the Veiling of Virgins', trans. S. Thelwall, in Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson (eds), *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, vol. IV (Grand Rapids, 1976 reprint), pp. 27–37, quotes at pp. 31, 37.
- 47 It is unfortunate and, given the degree of interest in the contemporary Muslim headscarf, surprising that so little work has been done on the history of veiling within Christianity. For brief allusions, see Désirée G. Koslin, "'He hath couerd my soule inwarde": Veiling in Medieval Europe and the Early Church', in Jennifer Heath (ed.), *The Veil: Women Writers on its History, Lore and Politics* (Berkeley, 2008), pp. 160–70, which addresses the nun's habit; James R. Farr, 'The Pure and Disciplined Body: Hierarchy, Morality, and Symbolism in France During the Catholic Reformation', *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, 21 (1991), 391–414, which discusses the disorderliness French moralists feared to be manifest in women's increasingly visible hair; and Merry Wiesner, *Gender, Church and State in Early Modern Germany* (New York, 1998), p. 63. See also Georgine de Courtais, *Women's Headdress and Hairstyles in England from AD 600 to the Present Day* (London, 1973), esp. pp. 38–59.
- 48 *The Works of Hugh Latimer*, ed. George Corrie (Cambridge, 1844), pp. 253–4.
- 49 Philip Stubbes, *Anatomie of Abuses* (London, 1583), sigs. F2v–F3r.
- 50 John Williams, *A Sermon of Apparell* (London, 1620), pp. 7, 20.
- 51 William Prynne, *The Unloveliness of Love-Lockes* (London, 1628), pp. 10–11. The question did exercise some New England colonists for a time, with John Endicott and Roger Williams urging that all women be veiled in church, but countered by others who argued of veils that 'where (by the custom of the place) they were not a sign of women's subjection, they were not commanded by the apostle'. See James D. Knowles, *Memoirs of Roger Williams* (Boston, 1834), pp. 61–2.
- 52 John Perrot, *Two epistles written to all Friends in the Truth* (London, 1661), p. 15; FL MS 320 (Caton MS), p. 172.
- 53 For Perrot's own accounts of his journeys and imprisonment, see Perrot, *A narrative of some of the sufferings of J.P. in the city of Rome* (London, 1661); *John Perrot's answer to the pope's feigned nameless helper* (London, 1662); *Battering rams against Rome* (London, 1661). For context, see Stefano Villani, *Tremolanti e papisti: Missioni Quacchere nell'Italia del seicento* (Rome, 1996).
- 54 FL, MS 292 (Crosse MS), p. 12; Salt, *Some breathings of life*, p. 17.
- 55 FL, Swarthmore MS 5.17.
- 56 Moore notes that some Quakers felt suspicion of 'any form of writing that needed planning or revision'. As she also notes, though, over twenty other Quakers

- also published verse in these years: *Light in their Consciences*, p. 205. See also Nigel Smith, 'Exporting Enthusiasm: John Perrot and the Quaker Epic', in Thomas Healy and Jonathan Sawday (eds), *Literature and the English Civil War* (Cambridge, 1990), pp. 248–64.
- 57 Moore, *Light in their Consciences*, pp. 129–41, and Damrosch, *Sorrows of the Quaker Jesus, passim*. See p. 141 for Nayler's refusal to remove his hat when Fox prayed, which may well have predisposed the latter to react poorly to Perrot's intervention. On the broader context of antiformalism in these years, see J. C. Davis, 'Against formality: One aspect of the English Revolution', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 6th series, 3 (1993), 265–88.
- 58 Fox, *Friends, the Matter concerning not putting off the Hat at Prayer* (London, 1663?), postscript, p. 3.
- 59 Perrot, *An epistle for the most pure amity and unity* (London, 1662), p. 12.
- 60 See Fox, *Friends, the Matter concerning not putting off the Hat*; John Bolton, *Judas his thirty pieces not received* (London, n.d.), p. 9.
- 61 See John Miller, "'A Suffering People": English Quakers and their Neighbours, c. 1650–1700', *Past and Present*, 188 (2005), esp. pp. 86–7, 94; as Miller notes, popular attacks against Quakers diminished after 1660, but in part because the legal machinery to prosecute them became better developed.
- 62 Richard L. Greaves, 'Furly, Benjamin (1636–1714)', in H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (eds), *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2004); online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, January 2008. See also: William I. Hull, *Benjamin Furly and Quakerism in Rotterdam* (Lancaster, PA, 1941) and the essays in Sarah Hutton (ed.), *Benjamin Furly, 1646–1714: A Quaker Merchant and his Milieu* (Florence, 2007).
- 63 FL MS 292 (Crosse MS), pp. 22–3. See also Furly, *The Worlds Honour Detected* (London, 1663).
- 64 Richard Farnsworth, *A Woman Forbidden to speak in the church, the grounds examined, the mystery opened, the truth cleared, and the ignorance both of Priests and People Discovered* (London, 1654), pp. 3–4.
- 65 Priscilla Cotton and Margaret Cole, *To the Priests and People of England, we discharge our consciences* (London, 1655), pp. 6–8.
- 66 FL, MS 292 (Crosse MS), p. 23. For Perrot's complaint that Fox used 1 Corinthians 11:4 one way when dealing with the issue of women's prophesying, but another when dealing with the hat, see *Hidden Things Brought to Light, or, The discord of the grand Quakers among themselves* (London, 1678), p. 11.
- 67 FL, Portfolio MS 41, no. 94.
- 68 Fox, *The spirit of envy, lying and persecution ... being an answer to a scandalous paper of John Harwoods* (London, 1663), p. 7, responding to John Harwood, *To all people that profess the eternal truth ... the cause why I have denied and do deny the authority of George Fox* (London, 1663).
- 69 *Something in answer to ... the hidden things brought to light* (London, 1679), p. 25.
- 70 Mack, *Visionary Women*, p. 287, citing Haverford College Library, Richardson MS, 7; see also FL Portfolio MS 30, no. 96.
- 71 Mack, *Visionary Women*, pp. 285, 292; Hobby, 'Handmaids', p. 91. See also H. Larry Ingle, 'A Quaker Woman on Women's Roles: Mary Penington to Friends, 1678', *Signs*, 16 (1991), 593.

- 72 As Hobby suggests, Mack errs in depicting the opposition to women's meetings as a common front. Mack blends the various voices or factions to suggest that the opponents wanted 'their women to stay home and wash the dishes' and that the separatist advocates of 'decentralization and democracy' stood against the 'extension of that democracy to women' (pp. 276, 298; Hobby, 'Handmaids', p. 90). Also, as they note, more defences of women's preaching appeared in these years than earlier, but now more clearly premised on difference.
- 73 William Mucklow, *Tyranny and Hypocrisy Detected* (London, 1673), p. 68. See also *The Spirit of the Hat* (London, 1673), and Rich, *Hidden Things Brought to Light* (London, 1678), p. 35.
- 74 John Pennyman, *Abstracts of some Letters written by Mr. Robert Rich ... for promoting of universal love amongst all sorts of people, without respect of persons, parties or sects* (London, 1680), p. 24.
- 75 *Mr. Robert Rich his Second Letters from Barbadoes, writ upon the occasion of the Quakers Prevarication in the matter of the 30l sent to them* (London, 1669), p. 4. See also Rich, *Love without Dissimulation, or, the Letter and Directions of Robert Rich to M. John Rayne, for the distributing his benevolence to the seven churches in London* (London, n.d.) and Rich, *Epistle ... to the Seven Churches ... Containing his testimony to God's Approbation of the Good and Aversation to the Evil in all persuasions* (London, 1680).
- 76 John Bolton, *Judas his Thirty Pieces Not Received* (London, n.d.) and *Judas his treachery* (London, 1670).
- 77 Pennyman, *Abstracts of some Letters written by Mr. Robert Rich*, p. 13.
- 78 Robert Rich, *The Letter sent by Robert Rich to William Bayle and Mary Fisher, called his wife, and to the rest of the Quakers* (London, 1669), p. 3.
- 79 FL, MS 292 (Crosse MS), p. 6; also printed in Rosemary Moore and R. Melvin Keiser, (eds), *Knowing the Mystery of Life Within: Selected Writings of Isaac Penington in their Historical and Theological Context* (London, 2005), pp. 40–1.
- 80 FL, MS 344 (John Penington MS 4), p. 145
- 81 *Ibid.*, p. 59.
- 82 *Ibid.*, p. 111.
- 83 FL, MS 292 (Crosse MS), pp. 59, 100.
- 84 Rebecca Travers, *A Testimony* (London, 1663), p. 16. Travers went on to become the leader of the separate women's meeting in London. See Lotte Mulligan, 'Travers, Rebecca (c.1609–1688)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, Sept 2004.
- 85 William Penn, *No Cross, No Crown, or, Several Sober Reasons against Hat-Honour* (London, 1669), pp. 6–12.
- 86 William Penn, *Judas and the Jews* (London, 1673), pp. 9, 11–17. Accusations by Fox, Penn, Bolton and others included charges that Perrot had behaved improperly with Jane Stokes, one of the Quakers who travelled to Rome to secure his release; that he neglected his duties as a husband; and that he converted to Catholicism while in Rome or lied about the nature of his sufferings while imprisoned. See also John Taylor, *A Loving & Friendly Invitation to all Sinners to Repent* (London, 1683), pp. 5–13.
- 87 On Penn and the broader context of calls for toleration or liberty of conscience, see for example, Gary S. DeKrey, 'Rethinking the Restoration: Dissenting Cases for Conscience, 1667–1672', *Historical Journal*, 38.1 (1995), 53–83; Scott Sowerby,

“Of Different Complexions”: Religious Diversity and National Identity in James II’s Toleration Campaign’, *English Historical Review*, 124 (2009), 29–52; John Coffee, ‘Puritanism and Liberty Revisited: The Case for Toleration in the English Revolution’, *Historical Journal*, 41 (1998), 961–85; Alexandra Walsham, *Charitable Hatred: Tolerance and Intolerance in England, 1500–1700* (Manchester, 2006); John Marshall, *John Locke, Toleration, and Early Enlightenment Culture* (Cambridge, 2006); and Jeffrey Collins’s review essay, ‘Redeeming Enlightenment: New Histories of Religious Toleration’, *Journal of Modern History*, 81 (2009), 607–36.

88 William Penn, *Judas and the Jews* (London, 1673), p. 29.

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