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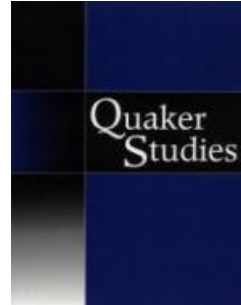
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Offices and Services: Women's Pursuit of Sexual Equality within the Society of Friends, 1873 - 1907

[Sandra Stanley Holton. University of Adelaide](#)[Margaret Allen. University of Adelaide](#)**Abstract**

The presence of Quaker women at the founding of a social movement for women's rights in Britain in the late 1860s has received growing attention from historians in recent years. Yet the links between the religious faith of such Quaker women and their political radicalism has remained largely unexamined. A liberal theology which acknowledged the spiritual equality of women has been assumed to have prompted their involvement in a liberal politics, and more especially in women's rights campaigning. This article argues that the relationship between religious views and political action was more complex in this case. It suggests that the growing participation of Quaker women in moral and social reform movements in this period, together with their increasing access to office in local government and voluntary organisations, served, in fact, to fuel a reevaluation of their position within the Society of Friends. It concludes that indeed the constitutional arrangements of this body became a ground of gender contest as a consequence of women's enlarged role in the outside world.

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Women are an inherent part of society and cannot be neglected due to their less power and authority. They are created as a companion for men and men have to make her walk with them in the course of life. "O fairest of creation! last and best Of all God's works". Man and woman have been rightly compared to the wheels of the same carriage. The carriage cannot properly if one of the wheels is defective. So, Woman are an integral part of society. Subscribe to Blog via Email. The working women have to face sexual harassment. They are commonly subjected to discrimination. They can not claim equality. They don't enjoy equal rights of movements. They are bound to obey their male members. In advanced countries, the situation is quite different. There is role of law. Women and girls represent half of the world's population and, therefore, also half of its potential. Gender equality, besides being a fundamental human right, is essential to achieve peaceful societies, with full human potential and sustainable development. Moreover, it has been shown that empowering women spurs productivity and economic growth. Unfortunately, there is still a long way to go to achieve full equality of rights and opportunities between men and women, warns UN Women. Therefore, it is of paramount importance to end the multiple forms of gender violence and secure equal access to -Traditionally, women have demanded equality with men, even to the point where feminism is often characterized as a movement for the achievement of sexual equality - However, the issue of equality has also exposed major faultlines with feminism: feminists have embraced contrasting notions of equality and some have rejected equality in favour of the idea of difference. - Liberal feminists champion legal and political equality with men. They have supported the equal rights agenda so that women are able to compete in public life on equal terms with men and be free to act as genuine individuals - Socialist feminists argue that equal rights may be meaningless unless women also enjoy social equality.