

'EXPERIMENT WITH LIGHT' IN BRITAIN: THE HETEROTOPIAN NATURE OF
A CONTEMPORARY QUAKER SPIRITUAL PRACTICE

by

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Abstract

This thesis is an ethnographic study into 'Experiment with Light', a reflexive spiritual practice within contemporary British Quakerism, based on seventeenth century Quaker writings. This is the first academic study of British Quakers to focus on religious experience. It demonstrates how Experimenters' religious experience and transformation supports them in changing the wider group's behaviour.

I interweave heterotopia, reflexivity, religious experience, religious transformation and examination of internal Quaker conflict handling to argue that the Experiment is a heterotopian process leading Experimenters to find heterotopic places within themselves and that they sit in a heterotopic position vis-à-vis British Quakers generally. I extend Foucault's concept of heterotopia to show how (heterotopian) process interacts with (heterotopic) site to reveal heterotopia's multi-dimensionality and its potential to change its context, thus demonstrating that applying an analytic concept in an empirical study can reveal new aspects of that concept.

I also show how using heterotopia as an analytical lens reveals how power plays out amongst British Quakers and thus how heterotopia is particularly useful for the nuanced sociological analysis of groups generally. This thesis is the first study in the sociology of religion to apply heterotopia to the experience, practice and structure of a religious group.

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Abbreviations and glossary of Quaker terms

business meeting

A meeting for worship to decide items of business. Decisions are recorded in a 'minute' (see below) written by the Clerk (see below) and agreed in the meeting (*Quaker Faith and Practice: the book of Christian discipline of the Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in Britain* (hereafter '*QFP*'): Chapters 3 to 8).

BYM

Britain Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers). BYM is used both to denote the combination of all the MMs (see below) in Britain and the annual event which is the prime event for church affairs in Britain (*QFP* 1995: Chapters 6 and 8).

Clerk

The Clerk bears the final responsibility for preparing the business, conducting the meeting and drafting the minutes. The Clerk is considered to be 'the servant of the meeting', rather than the Meeting's leader. The Clerk is appointed by the Meeting for a three-year term and should serve for no more than two triennia at a time (*QFP* 1995: Chapter 3).

discern

To discover and understand God's guidance by listening together and to each other in a Quaker group (*QFP* 1995: 3.02) (can also be applied to individual listening, for example a Clerk's discernment of the appropriate time to submit a minute (see below) to a meeting (*QFP* 1995: 3.07)).

Elder	Elders are responsible for the spiritual health of the Meeting and the right holding of MfW (see below). They are appointed for three-year terms and should serve for no more than two triennia at a time (<i>QFP</i> 1995: 12.12).
Experiment	'Experiment with Light'.
Experiment with Light	A contemporary Quaker spiritual practice, usually undertaken in Light groups in Quaker Meetings, based around a forty minute meditation with prompts.
Friend	Alternative word for Quaker.
gathered	A MfW (see below) is said to be gathered when the Divine is felt to be present (<i>QFP</i> 1995: 2.39).
LIG	Listed Informal Group, a group listed in BYM's annual <i>Book of Meetings</i> . A group may be listed if it meets certain criteria: the group's aims, purpose and manner of proceeding should be consistent with Friends' testimonies and methods; the group should be specifically for Friends and Attenders within BYM or the wider Religious Society of Friends - it should not be part of a wider grouping outside the Society, although might affiliate with other groups; the group should be open to all Friends and Attenders who

qualify within the YM (see below); the group should be properly constituted, with officers as appropriate; membership levels should indicate a continued interest within BYM and should not normally be merely a very few individuals; the group should be ongoing, i.e. not set up merely for a short period of time; a copy of the aims of the group should be sent to the Assistant Recording Clerk, Friends House (*Listed Informal Groups: Status and Criteria for Recognition* 2003).

Meeting	One of the constituent Meetings of BYM (PM, MM, MfS (see below), etc. and BYM itself), as opposed to an occasion of meeting.
Meeting for Church Affairs	See business meeting.
MfC	Meeting for Clearness, originally held to establish clearness from conflicting obligations in preparation for marriage, but now used also to test concerns, make decisions about membership or seek guidance at times of change or difficulty (<i>QFP</i> 1995: 12.22-12.25).
MfS	Meeting for Sufferings, the standing body which acts on behalf of the Society between YMs (<i>QFP</i> 1995: Chapter 7).
MfW	Meeting for Worship (<i>QFP</i> 1995: Chapter 2).

ministry	<p>Heard speech within a MfW (<i>QFP</i> 1995: 10.05). (Can also mean upholding (see below) a MfW in silence or a calling to a particular form of service, but I am not using those meanings.)</p>
minute	<p>A minute of record which captures the sense of, and is agreed in, the meeting. The Meeting is bound by its contents until and unless another business meeting decides differently in a new minute (<i>QFP</i> 1995: 3.07).</p>
MM	<p>Monthly Meeting, a grouping of PMs for the purpose of Quaker business. [As from 2008, MMs were renamed 'Area Meetings' (AM), but I have retained the former usage as my data was collected before 2008.]</p>
PM	<p>Preparative Meeting, a local community of Quakers. [As from 2008, PMs were renamed 'Local Meetings' (LM), but I have retained the former usage.]</p>
QFP	<p><i>Quaker Faith and Practice: the book of Christian discipline of the Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in Britain.</i> <i>QFP</i> is the canonical Quaker text, containing advice on how to conduct Quaker worship, business affairs and examples of Friends' spiritual journeys. The first was issued in 1738. It has been revised several times each century since.</p>

QSRA	Quaker Studies Research Association is a membership organisation of research scholars in the field of Quaker studies.
QPSW	Quaker Peace and Social Witness Central Committee of BYM is responsible for BYM's central work for peace and justice.
Quaker Life	Quaker Life Central Committee of BYM [formerly Quaker Home Service], responsible for nurturing BYM's worshipping community through spiritual development, religious learning and pastoral care (<i>QFP</i> 1995: 8.05).
the Society	Britain Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends: used in this thesis to refer to the collection of Quaker Meetings in Britain.
uphold	'Uphold' implies 'hold in the Light' or support spiritually. It is something short of prayer yet more than applying private attention to.
YGM	Yorkshire General Meeting [now Quakers in Yorkshire (QiY)]. At the time of the fieldwork General Meetings were regional groupings of Meetings. [Most GMs were laid down (abolished) between 2005 and 2008. QiY was retained as it had particular responsibilities and a strong identity, as was also the case for Quakers in Wales and Quakers in Scotland.]

YM

Yearly Meeting. A collection of MMs in a particular geographical area, e.g. France Yearly Meeting, Britain Yearly Meeting, or the occasion of the YMs annual meeting. Used in the thesis to denote BYM's annual meeting.

Chapter 1 - Introduction

This thesis is an ethnographic study within the sociology of religion into 'Experiment with Light' (hereafter 'the Experiment'),¹ a reflexive² spiritual³ practice within contemporary British Quakerism, based on seventeenth century Quaker writings. The thesis works with ideas derived from Foucault's concept of heterotopia,⁴ Labaree's work on insidership,⁵ scholarship on religious transformation and an analysis of

¹ 'Experiment', 'Experimenter', etc. (capitalised) are used to denote 'Experiment with Light' or its practice, a person practising the Experiment, etc.

² The Experiment is described as 'reflexive' because it incorporates questioning of the Experimenter's own position, see this chapter FN21 and Chapter 7 ('The significance of reflexivity'), pp273-274.

³ 'Spiritual' and 'spirituality' are used throughout the thesis to denote belief, experience and practice which Quakers understand as extraordinary and non-mundane; the terms encompass both religious and non-theist understanding. Given the diversity of contemporary British Quaker belief (see this chapter ('Pluralist and post-Christian developments'), pp23-25) it is difficult to apply the term Quaker theology to contemporary British Quakers. Throughout the thesis I use the terms 'religious experience' and 'spiritual experience'. 'Religious experience' indicates experiences of something which the participants understand as coming from the Divine: such experiences may be diverse (see Chapters 5, 6 and 7 for the range of experiences) but together they become religious experience. 'Spiritual experience' is used to encompass both religious experiences and experiences which the participants do not understand as coming from a transcendent Divine (a deity external to themselves), but do understand to be extraordinary: even the non-theist participants, whilst denying an external deity, understand that there is an element in their lives which is not mundane - for a non-theist example, see i12a's experience described in Chapter 5 ('Underlying reality and language: a non-reductionist stance'), p183. (See Chapter 4 FN4, i12a was one of the interviewees in my fieldwork.) See this chapter FN27 for the sense in which I use the term 'Divine' throughout the thesis.

⁴ Heterotopia, deriving from the Greek *hetero* (different) and *topia* (places), is a plural noun (Onions 1970: 897). The concept is reviewed in detail in Chapter 3. Heterotopia is an 'other', 'different' space, either real or conceptual, and connotes challenge to the expected order of things, juxtaposition, experimentation, simultaneous reflection and contestation, complexity and ambiguity; heterotopias are expressions of (in)ability to contain difference, they mirror and mediate their contexts and actualise subversive-transformative ideas. Like Foucault (1986 [1967]-a) and Hjorth (2005), I use 'heterotopia', as a singular noun, to convey the idea of heterotopia and 'heterotopias' to convey the sense of more than one example of heterotopia. Some commentators use 'heterotopia' for multiple examples, for example Hetherington (1997: viii-ix, 8 & 140). I use 'heterotopian' to describe a process of heterotopia (where a verb is implied - to be heterotopian or to do something heterotopian) and 'heterotopic' to describe something which is in a space of heterotopia (where a noun - a site - is implied). Foucault (see Chapter 3) used the word '*heterotopique*' in the radio broadcasts (2004 [1966]) and *Des Espaces Autres* (2004 [1967]) to describe heterotopias; '*heterotopique*' has been translated from the French in *Des Espaces Autres* as both 'heterotopic' (*Of Other Spaces* (1986 [1967]-a)) and 'heterotopian' (*Different Spaces* (1998 [1967])). Most scholars use 'heterotopic' but a few use 'heterotopian' without there apparently being any distinction in what they mean (and in some instances without following the particular English translation they cite, for example Liff and Steward (2003) cite *Of Other Spaces*, but use 'heterotopian'). I do, however, draw a distinction. Except where I am directly quoting other scholars' work, where I use the terms they use, I use 'heterotopian' for process and 'heterotopic' for space, regardless of the terms they use.

⁵ Insidership is reviewed in Chapter 4.

handling internal Quaker conflict, in order to argue that the Experiment is highly and complexly heterotopic.

This chapter continues by explaining briefly the Quaker context, then outlining the origins, process and practice of the Experiment, in order to contextualise the research questions which follow. It then locates the thesis in the field of Quaker studies and outlines the remainder of the thesis.

British Quakers⁶

Quakers began in seventeenth century Britain as a radical charismatic and evangelical Christian movement whose worship was based on stillness and silence.⁷ A key difference from other seventeenth century groups was that Friends⁸ believed that it was possible to understand Scripture only through the spirit of God⁹ within the believer (Moore 2000: 51-55).¹⁰ Quakers have always had a distinct understanding of

⁶ Whist in seventeenth century Britain, as many as one percent of the British population, or 70,000, was said to be Quaker (Dandelion 2007: 82, 170), by the twenty first century British Quakers officially numbered only about 23,000 (*Tabular Statement* 2007: 10), but more likely fewer (Chadkirk & Dandelion 2008b: 262). (The number 70,000 is derived from a graph prepared by Levin and Berridge (Dandelion 2007: 170). There were, however, no central records of Quaker membership in the seventeenth century. The source for one percent is JS Rowntree's 1859 essay (Dandelion 2007: 82).)

⁷ Dandelion (2008b) refers only to silence, but Fox, one of the founders, also emphasised stillness (Ambler 2002: 15-16, 20) and in his sociological study Dandelion himself found that movement occurred during a Meeting for Worship (MfW) only when there was some other disturbance (1996: 246-248).

⁸ The terms 'Quaker' and 'Friend' are used interchangeably.

⁹ In the seventeenth century early Friends' understanding of God was based on the bible. In the twentieth century the word is more problematic for Quakers as they have no single theological language (Scully 2002: i) and there are Buddhist (Huber 2001b) and other non-theist Quakers (Rush 2002). The pluralist and post-Christian tendencies in Quakers are addressed further in this chapter ('Pluralist and post-Christian developments'), pp23-25.

¹⁰ As did the Family of Love in the sixteenth century (Hill 1972: 26). Hill suggested that the Grindletonians provided a direct link from the Family of Love to Quakers (1972: 77 fn 21, 81-85) and Manning cites Evans' suggestion that Quakers borrowed the 'Blasphemy of *Equality* with God' from the Family of Love (Evans 1757: 6; Manning 2009: 50 fn 34). Moore said that Quakers had only a marginally different attitude to the Bible from Baptists and Independents in that the Bible could be properly understood only by the guidance of the Holy Spirit and that those with whom they disagreed read the Letter (the actual words) without the Spirit (2000: 52). Moore found that a systematic reading

Christianity, which for them is rooted in the experience of direct encounter with God (*QFP* 1995: 26.01-26.78)¹¹ and admits the possibility that anyone can respond to the 'divine principle' within (*QFP* 1995: 27.04).¹² Quakers have, however, adapted to new theological insights and social settings several times, becoming liberal in Britain by the start of the twentieth century (Dandelion 2008b: 1-21).

Four key theological ideas are still held in common by Friends everywhere:¹³ (1) the centrality of direct inward encounter with God and revelation; (2) a vote-less method of doing church business based on the idea of corporate direct guidance;¹⁴ (3) the spiritual equality of everyone and the idea of 'the priesthood of all believers'; and (4) the preference for peace rather than war and a commitment to other forms of social witness (Dandelion 2008b: 2). Whilst some traditions of Quakerism now maintain pastors, British Quakers continue to operate 'unprogrammed' silent worship: the group gathers in silence out of which anyone may stand to minister if so moved (*QFP* 1995:

of the Quakers' early tracts was more reliable than Fox's *Journal*, which was based on the mature and cautious reflections of his later years (2000: xi-xii, 54-55) and her reading led her to conclude that Friends believed they had the same spirit that had inspired the prophets and the apostles (2000: 53-55).

¹¹ '*QFP*' is an abbreviation for *Quaker Faith and Practice: the book of Christian discipline of the Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in Britain*, see 'Abbreviations and glossary of Quaker terms'.

¹² There has been a 'universalist' dimension to Quaker Christianity from the beginning: George Fox (1624-91) and William Penn (1644-1718) pointed out that individuals who lived before the Christian era or outside Christendom had responded to a 'divine principle' within them (*QFP* 1995: 27.04); the universal spirit was focused and made personal in the figure of Jesus, so the Universal Light became the Light of Christ (*QFP* 1995: 26.43). It is interesting to note how *QFP* states only the positive possibility of having the divine principle within (*QFP* 1995: 27.04), whilst scholars (notably Moore) have shown that early Quakers attacked opponents for not being inspired by the spirit of God within (see this chapter FN10).

¹³ Worldwide Quakers have three main traditions: most European, Antipodean, South African and Japanese and some North American Quakers retain silent worship, hold that inward experience is primary, and are liberal; some North American and European conservative Quakers retain silent worship, hold direct experience with Christ as primary and conserve old Quaker traditions; whilst the majority in USA, and those evangelised from there in Africa, Central and Southern America, India and Far East Asia are evangelical Christians, have pastors and include singing and prepared addresses, generally referring to themselves as Friends Churches rather than Quaker Meetings (Dandelion 2008b: 17-18).

¹⁴ The decision-making process is considered in detail in Chapter 6 ('Sheeran' and 'Morley'), pp249-252.

2.55-2.73). Twenty first century British Quakers are not necessarily Christian. Some, for example, are Buddhist (Huber 2001b) and some are non-theist (Rush 2002).¹⁵

British Quakers meet together to worship and organise their local business affairs in Preparative Meetings (PMs) (*QFP* 1995: 4.29-4.32).¹⁶ Anyone may attend a Meeting for Worship (MfW). Members from groupings of PMs meet to decide business matters (such as entry into membership, marriage and appointment of Elders and Overseers)¹⁷ in Monthly Meetings (MMs).¹⁸ Any member may attend Yearly Meeting (YM), where matters of policy are decided (*QFP* 1995: 6.02-6.13); Meeting for Sufferings (MfS), which comprises representatives from MMs, acts on behalf of the Society in between YMs (*QFP* 1995: 7.01-7.10).¹⁹ Offices, for example Elders (*QFP* 1995: 12.07) and MfS representatives (*QFP* 1995: 7.05), are time-limited and filled by the appropriate business meetings appointing those Friends who have been nominated by nominations committees, which are themselves comprised of Friends who have been nominated and appointed, although no nominations committee should nominate or appoint its own membership (*QFP* 1995: 3.23-3.24).²⁰

¹⁵ This diversity of belief was reflected in my informants, see Chapter 5 ('Belief frameworks'), pp185-186 for the faiths interviewees mentioned.

¹⁶ Local business affairs include appointment of PM Clerk (see 'Abbreviations and glossary of Quaker terms') and Treasurer, representatives to go to MMs and sundry matters relating to the life of the Meeting (*QFP* 1995: 4.37-4.39). [PMs and MMs were renamed in 2008, but I have retained the usage applicable at the time of my fieldwork: see 'Abbreviations and glossary of Quaker terms'.]

¹⁷ The MM is the primary meeting for church affairs (*QFP* 1995: 4.01-4.12). Some MMs hold property (usually, but not only, Meeting Houses) at the MM level and some at the PM level; there are different arrangements for property holding in London. Elders are responsible for the spiritual health of Meetings and Overseers for pastoral care, see 'Abbreviations and glossary of Quaker terms'.

¹⁸ Members have a right and duty to attend business meetings; at MM and YM attenders may also be present with the Clerk's permission, although they will be asked to leave the room when membership matters and appointments are decided (*QFP* 1995: 4.05, 6.12). Attenders are not usually required to seek formal permission to be present at PM business meetings (*QFP* 1995: 4.37).

¹⁹ The structure changed in 2008, when YM Trustees were appointed to deal with legal and financial matters (*QFP* 2009: 8.03) and MfS' responsibilities were accordingly amended (*QFP* 2009: 7.02).

²⁰ The implication of this is that each constituent body has its own nominations committee. For example, PM nominations committees nominate Friends to serve on MM nominations committees (and the appointment is made by the MM (*QFP* 1995: 4.02)) and MM nominations committees nominate Friends to serve in MM roles, for example its Clerk, Elders and Overseers (the appointments being made by the MM (*QFP* 1995: 4.02, 12.07)), and its MfS representatives (the appointments being made

Experiment with Light

The Experiment is a process developed independently within British Quakerism in an attempt to rediscover the power of early Friends' practice (Ambler 2009: 3-4). I first outline what the Experiment is, then consider the origins and history of the Experiment, how it is practised and how the practice has spread.

The Experiment itself comprises a forty minute meditation, consisting of six steps interspersed with periods of silence.²¹ The meditation is usually guided by a tape or compact disc (CD), but in some groups one member reads it. Usually, but not always, the meditation is followed by silence for individual personal reflection, making notes or drawing representations of the Experimenter's experience. Finally, participants share what has come up for them without comment from the others present, in a 'worship sharing' manner.²² The Experiment can also be undertaken alone.²³

by MfS (*QFP* 1995: 4.14)). A Central Nominations Committee (CNC) makes nominations to MfS for appointment of various offices, but there is a separate nominations group (selected annually by MfS in open session) to put forward the names of Friends for MfS to appoint to CNC (*QFP* 1995: 8.18).

²¹ The versions of the Experiment favoured by Ambler, who devised it, (2002: 45) are heavily influenced by *focusing*, a modern psychological process (Gendlin 1981), but versions have been developed by others (including one using only the words of seventeenth century Friends and one hybrid), abbreviated versions, as well as other locally devised variations, and one where the steps are marked only by the ringing of a bell instead of spoken words. The original version, a 1997 version and the version using only the words of seventeenth century Friends are available on the internet and others are available on tape and CD by mail order (*Experiment with Light Meditations*) or download (*Experiment With Light Mp3s* 2006). The text of all the versions is in Appendix A, from which it can be seen that the prompts (most explicitly A5i2) suggest Experimenters consider their own position: thus, the practice is reflexive (see Chapter 4 for discussion of reflexivity and Chapter 7 ('The significance of reflexivity'), pp273-274, for further discussion of how the Experiment is a reflexive process).

²² Worship sharing is the art of listening to God, to others, and to oneself and best practice includes: limiting the size of the group to a maximum of twelve; beginning and ending the meeting in silence; the requirement of absolute confidentiality; allowing space between contributions; speaking from personal experience; not commenting directly on what another has said; listening with attention; not lapsing into discussion; and respecting that some may not want to contribute in spoken words (*QFP* 1995: 12.21).

²³ Of my informant, only i3 mentioned this (see Chapter 4 FN6, i3 was one of the interviewees in my fieldwork). I did undertake the Experiment on my own on one occasion (see Chapter 4 FN53).

There is no typical experience of an Experiment with Light; the experience is ethereal and ephemeral.²⁴ Experimenters bring their personal life experiences to the Experiment and get their own very different experiences from it: some Experimenters see images, others hear, or feel what they experience bodily, some are in the experience as in a dream, or suddenly become aware of something.²⁵

The Experiment's origins

The Quaker meaning of 'Light'

Moore says early Friends may have used the term 'the light' as a relatively neutral term to avoid charges of blasphemy in preaching unity between Christ and the believer (2000: 81). The original phrase 'the light within' was sometimes used as equivalent to Christ and sometimes the way Christ made himself known, an overwhelming invasive force (Wilcox 1995; Moore 2000: 80-82). 'Children of Light' was also an early name for Quakers (Braithwaite 1981 [1912]: 44; Moore 2000: 29, 132, 251).

In the twentieth century the term 'Inner Light' came into common use in place of 'Light within', 'inward Light' or 'Light of Christ'; 'Inner Light' has a subtly different meaning, Dandelion argues, being the Divine part of the person in whom it exists, and not as God coming from beyond (2007: 132-133).²⁶ By the late twentieth century

²⁴ See Chapter 3 (The Experiment and heterotopia), p119: ethereal (*éthéré*) is one of the words Foucault uses in his discussion of Bachelard preliminary to introducing the concept of heterotopia: ethereality is one of the qualities of primary perception (Foucault 1986 [1967]-a: 23; Foucault 2004 [1967]: 14).

²⁵ As informants' accounts in Chapter 5 indicate. See also Appendix D4 for a record of one group's Experiment.

²⁶ Moore says that early Friends never used the term 'Inner Light' and rarely used 'inward light' (2000: 81). Dandelion does not define the term 'Divine' (1996; 2007).

'Light' was in use as a unifying term acceptable to all British Quakers, whether Universalist, Christian, Buddhist or non-theist, for the Divine²⁷ or whatever Friends understood as the spirit within, as well as for the way in which the Divine operates (*QFP* 1995: 1.02.1, 1.02.3, 20.05).²⁸

The development of the Experiment

The Experiment was devised by Rex Ambler, a British Quaker,²⁹ after reading early Friends' writings and researching the nature of Quaker experience in worship (Ambler 1994; 1997a; 1997e; 2001; 2002).³⁰ During the course of talking to Quakers about his explorations, Ambler led the first Experiment in September 1996 at a General Meeting of British Quakers (2002: 37).³¹

²⁷ I use the term 'Divine' as a catch-all to encompass non-theist diversity, especially in Chapter 5, which explores Experimenters' specific understanding of 'God' as well as their sense of the Divine. Rush's survey of non-theist Friends is neither systematic nor academic, but it does nonetheless give an idea of what non-theists understand their non-theism to be and is thus useful to explain my choice of the term 'Divine'. Rush's survey shows that some of those who self-identified as non-theist (see this chapter FN9) nonetheless understood the term 'God' to mean very different things (Rush 2002: 13-17). In answer to Rush's question about what they understood 'God' to mean they indicated they believed in, variously, 'an integrating force in the universe', "'the god" as the equal polarity to the Goddess ... within the Divine', and one identified the word 'God' as 'lazy shorthand for the divine', going on to say, 'I feel uncomfortable with the arrogant limiting of something too huge to box in by any name' (2002: 14), others were clearly pantheist 'in which God is understood as everything' (2002: 15) and Rush himself writes: 'under the general rubric of "non-theism", there are many understandings of the divine' (2002: 16). Rush's survey also found some Friends who were clearly atheist (2002: 15-16), but none of my participants so identified. The pluralist and post-Christian tendencies in Quakers are addressed further in this chapter ('Pluralist and post-Christian developments'), pp23-25.

²⁸ The *QFP* references cited use the words 'God' and 'Light', but *QFP* was agreed by BYM in session in 1994 (*QFP* 1995: 4), before the extent of non-theism developed or became apparent, I have thus used 'Divine' to encompass subsequent developments.

²⁹ Ambler taught theology at the University of Birmingham for over 30 years (Dandelion & Scully 2007: vii).

³⁰ Ambler wrote two books, *Truth of the Heart* (2001), a selection of Fox's writings translated into modern idiom, and then *Light to Live by* (2002) explaining the background to and genesis of the Experiment. Ambler's work was given an element of Britain Yearly Meeting (BYM) approval, since both books were published by Quaker Books, a sub-department of Quaker Life (which is part of BYM), but see also Chapter 8 FN56 for the context in which they were published.

³¹ A General Meeting (GM) was a grouping of MMs: GMs' main purpose was for conference and inspiration (*QFP* 1995: 5.01-5.04). Ambler told me that he devised the first form of the Experiment on the train on his way to the meeting (Private conversation). Ambler does not name the GM at which he first led the Experiment, but another informant told me she had been present and that it was at Western GM, which, broadly, covered Gloucestershire, Hereford and mid-Wales, South Wales, Worcestershire and Shropshire.

Ambler concluded from his reading that 'seeing in the light' is different from 'thinking and imagining, and all human activity, so that in a mode of inner as well as outer silence we can become aware ... of the reality of the world, beneath its images and illusions' (1997a: 20). Ambler drew parallels with the Eastern concepts of enlightenment as liberation from illusions of self-centredness;³² he referred to early Quakers' finding 'self-will' as a fundamental obstacle to realising God and the truth and he pointed out the moral content: 'what we come to see in the light is not just illusion, falsehood, deceit, but also evil' (Ambler 1997a: 20), so that:

following the light comes to be a matter of living with the truth as we have come to see it ... giving up our customary, all-too-human, characteristically modern habit of deciding everything for ourselves; for a condition of seeing in the light is that we surrender to it, recognising that a true vision of the world comes from beyond ourselves, and that it becomes clear to us only as and when we can be free of the ego that obscures our vision.

(Ambler 1997a: 20)

Ambler presents what he believes to be an approach or a method he found particularly in Fox's writings; he sets out the steps he found in Fox's writings,³³ citing relevant tracts and letters, (2002: 7-22; 2009: 7-22) and says Fox made it explicit to early Friends that to find peace they had to undergo a step-by-step process (2002: 12; 2009:

³² Ambler acknowledged significant differences between Quakers' being enlightened by the light and Eastern traditions of enlightenment (without specifying what those differences were); he referred to both Japanese Zen and Indian *advaita* as liberation from the illusions of self-centredness, so drew on both Buddhist and Hindu ideas of enlightenment (1997a: 20). He also includes a Sufi story in his introduction to the Experiment (Ambler 2009: 13). Ambler practised Zen meditation for four years before learning more about Buddhism during a stay at Bodh Gaya in 1976; he also visited the Gandhi Peace Foundation in New Delhi in 1976 (Nesbitt 2010: 144, 147). Ambler has written about Gandhi (1983; 1989a; 1989b; 1997b) and was most likely following his own experience in looking to the East for comparisons (Nesbitt 2010: 154 fn20) rather than looking to, for example, Catholic or other Christian mysticism.

³³ George Fox (1624-91) was one of the first Quakers. He travelled, wrote extensively and led the early movement (Braithwaite 1981 [1912]: 28-466; Ingle 1994; Moore 2000). He is seen by most Quakers as the founder (for example, although other early Friends are mentioned, Fox is cited most in *QFP* Chapter 19, a poster seen in Barnsley Meeting House on 27 June 2009 has the caption: 'George Fox founded the Quakers in 1652' and an article in *The Friend* describes him as 'the father of Quakerism' (Squires 2009)) since he was the most prominent and longest surviving of the earliest group of Friends (Mullett 1991; Ingle 1994; Moore 2000: 30, 46).

5). He explains how it worked in his own life (2002: 23-29; 2009: 5) and invites Friends to try it for themselves (2009: 4-5, 19).

The core steps in the process are: 'mind the Light' (that is, pay attention to what the conscience shows);³⁴ 'open your heart to the Truth' (look at the reality shown by the conscience in an attitude of receptivity); 'wait in the Light' (look at what is shown in a detached manner, distancing oneself from it); and 'submit to the truth' (welcome the insights and accept what is shown) (Ambler 2002: 16-22).³⁵ Ambler makes explicit the link with God in the final step:

Of course, ultimately, submission to reality is submission to God, since God is the ultimate reality. And being at peace with ourselves we find peace with God. But along this path to God we do not have to surrender our intellect, our feeling for life, our morality, our integrity, our sense of truth. On the contrary, they make up the path.

(2002: 22)

Ambler elides early Quaker authority with contemporary Quaker practice in constructing his case for the Experiment, but he never actually claims that modern Friends will have the same experience as early Friends:³⁶

we shall be undertaking an experiment to see if the experience of 'the light', as early Friends understood this, is still available to us; and if it is, to see what implications we should draw from that for our lives today. We will therefore be exploring our own spiritual resources, as well as those of our old Quaker tradition.

(Ambler 2009: 7)

³⁴ See this chapter ("The Quaker meaning of "Light"), pp6-7, for Quaker usage of 'Light'.

³⁵ See Appendix A, especially A6 comparison of the versions, there are also introductory and valedictory steps.

³⁶ Ambler has implied this link between early Friends and what modern Friends experience without making an explicit claim in his earlier writings as well. One example is: 'Early Quakers spoke a great deal about "self-will" as the fundamental obstacle to realising God and the truth. The light exposes the devices of the self so that we can come to see ourselves as we really are.' (Ambler 1997a: 20)

Ambler said he found that George Fox in particular used the imperative, telling people not what to believe, but what to do, directing them to the truth they have in them (Ambler 1997a: 12) by conducting 'an experiment with light' (Ambler 1997a: 14), that is, by undergoing a process. The 'truth' revealed by that process³⁷ is maintained by sharing discernments³⁸ with each other, testing discernments over time and 'trusting the process' (Ambler 1997e: 163-164). The Light group practice of sharing the experience in the meditation and repeated Experiments in the group provide the sharing, testing and trusting which Ambler identified as a possibility.³⁹

The Experiment is thus based on the steps which Ambler believes led seventeenth century Quakers to their 'convincement' or encounter with God and the resulting dramatic changes in their lives.⁴⁰ Its aim is to follow the same process as Ambler suggests early Quakers went through and to see what happens, literally to experiment, and to see if the Light can be experienced as it had by early Quakers, to resolve issues and find peace (Ambler 2002: 37-38).

³⁷ 'Truth' here means reality, whether it is acceptable, accepted, embraced or not (Ambler 1997e: 162-163). Ambler has been influenced in his understanding of truth in the experience of George Fox and other early Friends by his experience with psychotherapy (Nesbitt 2010: 148) as well as his Gandhi scholarship (Nesbitt 2010: 150). (Ambler's contribution to scholarship on Gandhi was also influenced by his Quakerism (Nesbitt 2010: 151).) Ambler says in his June 2009 interview with Nesbitt that he did not study Quakerism until his early retirement (Nesbitt 2010: 151), but I have seen 1994 papers about his reading of early Friends and he had clearly undertaken extensive reading before the first Experiment in September 1996 and before he wrote his papers for the Quaker Theology Seminar (1997a; 1997e) and other fora (1994; 1997d). He retired on 29 June 1999 (I was at an introduction to the Experiment at Harrogate Meeting House on 30 June 1999 during which he said he had retired the day before).

³⁸ See 'Abbreviations and glossary of Quaker terms'.

³⁹ See Chapters 6 and 7 for what happens in Light groups over time. Appendix D4 provides a snapshot.

⁴⁰ The process of 'convincement' is described in detail in Chapter 6. Broadly, it was a process of a new awareness of God, conviction of sin, coming to a new immediate and 'perfected' relationship with God, being drawn into community and a call to mission (Dandelion 2003: 11-12; Tousley 2003: 11-14, 43-44).

Experiment practice

The Experiment is usually undertaken in Light groups based in Quaker Meetings,⁴¹ although some Experimenters do practise individually. There are no accurate statistics of the numbers of Light groups, nor Experimenters.⁴² How widespread the practice is varies from year to year as groups fold and new ones begin. In 2002 Ambler claimed there were between fifty and sixty groups worldwide (2002: 60). I estimate that there were between twenty and thirty groups active in Britain during the period of my fieldwork (2003-2008).⁴³ Groups are small, generally varying between four and twelve members.⁴⁴ Some Meetings have more than one group.⁴⁵

Some Light groups are 'closed', that is Friends may join only at the beginning of the group's life or by specific invitation, whilst others are 'freeflowing' and may be joined at any time by anyone from the Meeting in which it operates. There are variations

⁴¹ Light groups are based in and draw their members from a PM or several PMs within a MM. I came across only two groups whose members were drawn from more than one MM. (One was established around Rex Ambler in Birmingham, although it ceased to function as a cross-MM group when he moved to Lancashire in 2006. The other arose in 2007 after one MM joined in workshops run by a neighbouring MM, but by 2009 it had separated into two groups, one in each MM.) A Light group can and usually does fall under the care of a Meeting and all its attendant support structures (*QFP* 1995: 12.20-12.21), but need not necessarily do so.

⁴² In 2009, however, as part of his Quaker Life duties, Bill Shaw, the then manager of Swarthmoor Hall, where Experiment with Light workshops are held, conducted a survey of Meetings using the Quaker Life network. See also this chapter FN43 for an estimate of the number of groups. Although an attempt was made in 2009 to create a database of Light groups, it was defeated by a breakdown in Swarthmoor Hall's technology: the database was lost when Bill Shaw tried to e-mail it to me. As a result, the October 2009 conference ('EwL2') for experienced practitioners interested in rolling the practice out through workshops ('EwL1s') was not advertised to all MMs, rather those attending found out about it largely by word of mouth. A conference was planned for 2010 to discuss where the Experiment sits in BYM and to get BYM to take ownership of the Experiment through Quaker Life ('EwL3'), but that was postponed to 2011.

⁴³ The Quaker Life network survey reported 16 groups in 13 MMs. Rex Ambler, Catherine King Ambler and I were aware of a further 20 groups, so in 2010 it seems there were at least 36 groups. By early 2011, we were aware of 55 groups, but there may be more and some of those 55 might have discontinued without our knowing.

⁴⁴ I came across only one Light group with a larger membership. The group met together for the meditation itself, then divided into small sharing groups for the sharing part of their group meeting.

⁴⁵ For example, of the 55 groups (see this chapter FN43), four Meetings had two groups and one had three, so there were thought to be groups in 49 Meetings. Ambler described an initial practice of groups meeting in Friends houses, then coming together to share their experience (2002: 43) and two of my informants (i15, g8) described a similar pattern. Later, especially where there was only one group in the Meeting, groups met in Meeting Houses, whilst some continued meeting in Friends' homes.

within the two types. Some groups are closed at a maximum number of members so that new members can join only when others leave. One group was closed for a period but then renewed, at which point two or three left and new people joined. One group established itself with a requirement for commitment from all for its course, but in fact some dropped out and new people joined.⁴⁶

Experimenters do not expect 'convincement' or encounter with God,⁴⁷ although they are clearly open to such experience. In the Experiment they find truths about themselves, the nature of their relationships, their values and what gets in the way of living their lives truthfully and, in the words of one interviewee, '*in right relationship with God*'.⁴⁸

Experimenters are clear that the Experiment is not therapy (Lampen 2008: 15): there is no appointed leader in the process and Friends are not therapists to each other; the discipline surrounding the sharing requires that fellow-Experimenters only listen and do not intervene except to clarify their own understanding (*QFP* 1995: 12.21). This is similar to the practice of early Friends who gave no spiritual direction, only spiritual friendship (Grundy 2007: 152-153). Gendlin (1981) devised a method of therapy which he called *focusing*. Although Gendlin said that *focusing* emerged from

⁴⁶ There were sometimes differences in how the Light groups perceived their policy of membership and how others perceived it, sometimes even within the group. Two informants from one group attached to a PM said that its meetings were announced in the PM's newsletter and in notices after MfW and that it was open, but another Friend from their PM who was not in the group said that she thought it was closed. One member of the Light group crossing several MMs said that the group was open, but another told me that membership was by invitation only (and in practice, membership of the group could only be by invitation since there were no notices in any PM or MM to announce it). The reasons for groups to be closed included that the matters shared would be so confidential that sharing would be possible only once deep trust had been engendered and that admitting new joiners would require explaining the basics each time. Groups which were freeflowing wished to prevent any suggestion of cliques within a PM, although the Light groups in one PM overcame that concern by holding frequent meetings to introduce the Experiment to any Friends who were interested.

⁴⁷ For example, one participant in Group A had an outburst to this effect at the group's first Experiment together. Also, one interviewee was very critical of such an inherent expectation. (Field notes.)

⁴⁸ See Chapter 6. (Throughout the thesis, all informants' direct quotes are in italics.)

psychotherapy practice, he described it as 'an internal act' or 'skill' which '*successful patients do inside themselves*' [italics in original], crucially it was not the therapist's technique which made the therapy successful (Gendlin 1981: 3-4). Gendlin has subsequently admitted that *focusing* arises from Quaker MfW (Saunders 2008: 37).⁴⁹ Ambler refers to *focusing* therapy in *Light to Live by* (2002: 25-30) and the first version of the Experiment draws on it heavily (2002: 46-47).⁵⁰

Although the Experiment is based on early Friends' advice, it does not attempt to recreate their experience, but rather to apply their method (as Ambler sees it) to modern Friends' lives. In some versions it contains elements which would have been completely unknown to early Friends⁵¹ and it is practised over a concentrated forty minute period, whereas early Friends may have taken months to go through the steps Ambler has identified.⁵²

Similarities to and differences from other Quaker forms

Meeting for Worship

Friends are advised to approach MfW 'with heart and mind prepared' (QFP 1995: 1.02.9), but the only practical guidance is others' experiences of waiting and finding

⁴⁹ In addition to the fact that Saunders says this, Gendlin himself reviewed her article (Saunders 2008: 37).

⁵⁰ The text is at Appendix A2i. As Light groups Experiment longer, they tend to move on to other versions of the Experiment, if they are aware of them: the group I observed long-term, for example, used version 2 seven times, version 4 seven times and version 5 fifteen times (on the other three occasions for which I have data they used version 3 twice and once had complete silence). In the workshops at which I have co-facilitated since 2008, I have used version 5 (see Appendix A5i) and in the Light group in my own Meeting we prefer the shortened version (see Appendix A5ii). Appendix A includes all the versions.

⁵¹ The various versions are included at Appendix A. Appendix A2 is influenced by *focusing*. A4 includes modern language and incorporates breath control (Diana Lampen, who co-wrote it, teaches yoga). A5 uses quotations from George Fox's writing, but they are unlikely to have been put together in this way in the seventeenth century.

⁵² Early Friends and Experimenters' processes of transformation are compared and contrasted in Chapter 6.

Divine Presence through sharing silence and listening to vocal ministry (*QFP* 1995: 2.01-2.17, 2.35-2.40). Experimenters' intentions are similar in their approach to the Experiment.

The Experiment has more process structured into it than MfW: the Experiment has spoken prompts at regular intervals during a forty minute period,⁵³ whereas MfW has only silence as its structure with the potential for vocal ministry to arise (or not) at irregular intervals determined only by whether and when Friends are moved to speak.

The Experiment's focus is initially largely on the individual:⁵⁴ Experimenters usually close their eyes and enter a meditative state. In contrast, MfW is more communal: Friends may have their eyes open and are likely to be paying as much attention to other Friends as to their own inner processes; Friends are advised not to meditate and the experience is not one of concentrated isolation (*QFP* 1995: 2.35-2.40).

When the Experiment is practised in Light groups, however, the sharing provides deep awareness of other Friends' experience in the meditation. Friends are unlikely to be aware of each others' experience in MfW as there is little opportunity to either

⁵³ Some Light groups which have met over long periods have found that they need fewer (or no) words and there is one CD for use in the Experiment where the steps are marked only by the ringing of bells. One Experiment which I observed had no steps at all (see this chapter FN50), but the group did remind themselves of the steps before starting and they were able to undertake this experimental form only because they were able to ask me to close the Experiment at the end of forty minutes; they did not repeat the experience while I was observing them.

⁵⁴ Most of the fieldwork referred to Experiments on the individual, but there was some reference to Experiments on the group. I think it likely this reflects practice generally. There are also Experiments on other people and on the world.

explain or be heard after the worship itself, although they may catch glimpses of it if a Friend ministers about it.⁵⁵

Meeting for Clearness

Despite a superficial similarity, the Experiment is also different from Quaker Meeting for Clearness (MfC).⁵⁶ A MfC may be held when there is a need to become 'clear'⁵⁷ about options for a way forward about a particular issue (*QFP* 1995: 12.22-12.25). In both cases clarity emerges for an individual Friend in her or his own understanding. In MfC, however, each member of the group has the opportunity to question and explore the background to the matter that is to be clarified, with a view to helping the person whose issue it is to a place where she or he may become clear; notes may be taken, options tested and 'affirmation' given. In contrast, in the Experiment fellow-Experimenters ask questions only so that they may follow what their Friend is sharing,⁵⁸ not to explore their Friend's understanding, nor to affirm, nor record. Apart from the rare question, sharing is received into silence and stillness, for the meaning to emerge in the Experimenter's understanding with the guidance only of the Light.⁵⁹

⁵⁵ Some Experimenters said they find the Experiment both deeper and more personal than MfW, some expressing frustration at MfW getting stuck with the '*dreadfulness of the world*', containing too much ministry from the head or at too many Friends limiting their spiritual practice only to MfW on Sundays.

⁵⁶ MfCs were originally held as part of the necessary preparation for marriage. Only once an appointed group of Friends had established there was clearness from other conflicting obligations could they recommend solemnisation of a marriage (*QFP* 1995: 12.22). Latterly, MfCs have been used to test concerns, make decisions about membership, consider new forms of service or seek guidance at times of change or difficulty, as well as preparing a couple for marriage (*QFP* 1995: 12.23).

⁵⁷ A MfC enables everyone present to become 'clear' about possible options and ways forward (*QFP* 1995: 12.24).

⁵⁸ An Experimenter may, for example, make reference to context in which her fellow-Experimenters are unversed or the Experimenter who is sharing may use pronouns so that it is not clear to whom they refer. In those cases the question might be 'which person do you mean by "him"?' or 'which budgets are being cut?' The purpose of the question is solely for the questioner's understanding.

⁵⁹ Where comment is made on another's sharing, it gets in the way of that person's process of arriving at understanding, see also Chapter 4 FN108 and Chapter 7 FN22. This is in contrast to Ambler's first public Experiment, when he said Friends did comment and it was initially helpful (Ambler 2002: 39). Latterly, however, Ambler has advocated not commenting in the small group sharing when he introduces the Experiment at workshops (notes 14 July 2007 and 19 July 2008), although in the plenary reflection, after the sharing in small groups, he does himself comment on what Friends tell the whole group has been their experience (notes 21 February 2004, 19 July 2008 and 11 July 2009).

How the Experiment has spread

There was initially no formal central organisation for disseminating the Experiment.⁶⁰

After his initial Experiment in 1996, Ambler gave a talk at Britain Yearly Meeting (BYM) and Light groups first began to meet in late 1997 (2002: 42).⁶¹ A group gathered around him and then met at Glenthorne⁶² in 1998. There were then two meetings of 'interested Friends' to collate information and decide the way forward. When faced with a long agenda at the second meeting, the group conducted an Experiment in which they decided to abandon a formal approach to the work:

In the meditation a strong leading was felt by a number of friends that the work was to be carried lightly; a feather on the breath of God, a lighting of candles one by another and a butterfly in flight were images offered. As this was the sense of the meeting we agreed to depart from the agenda in the afternoon session. (Collier 1999)

A further meeting was proposed for 2000, but there is no record of its having taken place.

A photocopied collection of articles (Ambler, et al. 1999), including some previously published in the Quaker weekly journal *The Friend* (Glover 1998; Hosking 1999b; 1999a; 1999c), was available by 1999⁶³ and there were workshops at various Quaker

⁶⁰ Some form of organisation began to emerge in late 2009 as Ambler began to consider retiring from introducing the practice. By 2010 six Friends, including Ambler, Catherine King Ambler (his wife), Diana Lampen, myself and two others had created as a non-profit making partnership and were organising a conference to discern what corporate form within BYM might be appropriate.

⁶¹ Ambler says Light groups in the Norwich area began to meet as a direct response to a talk he gave at BYM (2002: 42). His paper 'Quaker Truth' (Ambler 1997e) was given earlier, in April 1997 (Ambler 1997c: 1).

⁶² Glenthorne Country Guest House & Quaker Conference Centre, Grasmere, Cumbria.

⁶³ The collection is in the Library at Woodbrooke Quaker Study Centre in Birmingham and was distributed on an *ad hoc* basis, including from workshops.

centres⁶⁴ and by invitation at Friends' gatherings.⁶⁵

In November 2004 there was a second gathering at Glenthorne, where it was agreed that the Experiment should permeate the whole of BYM rather than be a special interest group and, to this end, an epistle⁶⁶ (*Glenthorne epistle*) was sent to all MMs in the hope that it would make the Experiment more widely understood.⁶⁷ As had happened in 1998, there was also a deliberate decision that there should be no formal separate organisation: it was felt that if the Experiment were to become a Listed Informal Group (LIG)⁶⁸ its fundamental importance would be demeaned.⁶⁹ In 2008 *Seeing Hearing Knowing* (Lampen 2008), a collection of Friends' experience of the Experiment, was published independently.⁷⁰

⁶⁴ There were and continue to be regular weekend introductions to the Experiment at Swarthmoor Hall (an historic hall, recognised as the 'birth' place of Quakerism) at Ulverston, Cumbria (run by Quaker Life, a central department of BYM) and Charney Manor (Quaker Conference Centre and Retreat House), at Charney Bassett, Wantage, Oxfordshire (whose Trustees are appointed by Quaker Life). There have also been occasional weekend introductions at Woodbrooke and there have been events at Claridge House in Lingfield, Surrey, and Lattendales, near Penrith in Cumbria (field notes, 4 November 2004). Claridge House and Lattendales were at that time healing centres. Lattendales closed in 2006.

⁶⁵ For example, I first saw Ambler speak about the Experiment on 30 June 1999 when he was invited to a special meeting organised by Yorkshire General Meeting (YGM) in Harrogate.

⁶⁶ BYM in session produces an epistle to summarise its proceedings (*QFP* 1995: 6.19). The epistle is produced by an Epistle Drafting Committee and is made available to all Friends present at the YM for written comment, then finally read at the closing session, approved by the YM and signed by the Clerk. YM epistles are exchanged with other YMs (*QFP* 1995: 6.04 & 6.21). The practice has been adopted by other gatherings within BYM who wish to communicate with Meetings.

⁶⁷ Field notes. This was the second participant observation. I gave a paper on the middle day about researching the Experiment.

⁶⁸ See 'Abbreviations and glossary of Quaker terms', most Light groups would not meet these criteria: some are not open to all; they do not have formal officers; some may be established for only a limited time and they do not have formal aims. Similarly there are no formal officers of any central organisation (as there is no formal central organisation).

⁶⁹ Field notes.

⁷⁰ I was invited to contribute a chapter on my research to date (Meads 2008b).

Research questions

No one else has previously studied the Experiment.⁷¹ Apart from my work there is only the popular Quaker literature mentioned above (Ambler, et al. 1999; Ambler 2002; Lampen 2008).

Whilst drawing on core Quaker spirituality and history, the Experiment is different from other Quaker forms of worship and discernment and does not fit into existing British Quaker structures, so the questions arise as to what the nature of the Experiment is as a spiritual practice, how it functions for Experimenters in relation to British Quaker culture and what the structural barriers to its wider adoption are. To consider the questions fully, they need to be asked on different levels: how does individuals' experience of the Experiment relate to their experience as Quakers; how do Light groups relate to the Quaker Meetings in which they are situated; how does the Experiment as a whole relate to BYM? Similarly, what impact does the individual experience of the Experiment have on the Light group and on Meetings and what does that reveal about British Quakerism?

The following section of this chapter and Chapter 2 consider previous related scholarship and possible approaches to these questions.

⁷¹ I was the first to respond to Ambler's invitation to study the Experiment (Ambler 2002: 60). Best does make reference to the Experiment, citing verbatim (but without attribution) text from my chapter in *The Quaker Condition* (Meads 2008a: 217, 218) for his glossary (Best 2010: 350). His references to the Experiment, however, otherwise show lack of understanding. First, Best suggests that the Experiment is an attempt to recreate the experience, and restore practices of, early Friends, when no one has claimed that the Experiment is the same as early Friends' practice, only that it is based on advice Fox gave to others [Best also incorrectly references Ambler as '(2001: 1)' when the passage of Ambler he cites is '(2002: 1)'] (Best 2010: 184). Secondly, Best describes the Experiment as countercultural (2010: 298); see Chapter 2 ('The Experiment and sub/counterculture'), pp78-79, where I demonstrate that it is not countercultural.

*Location of this thesis in the field of Quaker studies*⁷²

This section outlines, then situates the thesis within, the field of Quaker studies.

Quaker studies

Initially academic Quaker studies was principally within the discipline of history with special reference to theology, politics or education, in parallel with general historical scholarship touching on early Quakers (Nuttall 1946; Hill 1958; 1972; Dandelion 2009: 5).⁷³ Early examples include King (1940), Stroud (1944), Creasey (1956), Hall (1960), Barbour (1964)⁷⁴ (all into seventeenth century history), Beamish (1965), and Hall (1972). Isichei's (1967a; 1967b; 1970) study of Victorian Quakers provided sociological analysis of an historical period. History, in combination with early theology and politics, remains a strong strand and still constitutes the larger part of Quaker studies: examples include Marietta (1984), Reay (1985), Gwyn (1986; 1995), Damiano (1988), Davie (1992), Moore (1993; 2000), Ingle (1994), Walvin (1997; 2008), Kuenning (2000), Kennedy (2001), Tousley (2003) and Manning (2009).⁷⁵

⁷² Quaker studies consists in the study of Quakers and Quakerism by scholars who may or may not themselves be Quakers (McClelland 1996: 3-4).

⁷³ Dandelion traces the history of modern Quaker studies back further to Robert Barclay of Reigate in 1876 and includes reference to Rufus Jones, W.C. Braithwaite and J.W. Rowntree's inspiration for the history of Quakerism published in 1912 (Barclay 1876; Braithwaite 1981 [1912]; Dandelion 2009: 6), but Nuttall's is the earliest academic study (although Nuttall's book was published in 1946, it is based on his doctoral thesis (1946: xxvii) which began in 1938 (1946: xxix)). (Dandelion refers also to Rufus Jones writing outside his academic discipline of philosophy and Lewis Benson, who was not an academic, writing in the 1950s and 1960s (Dandelion 2009: 5).)

⁷⁴ Barbour's book was based on his 1950 thesis (Dandelion 2009: 6).

⁷⁵ Of the examples listed, only Marietta, Damiano, Walvin and Kennedy do not focus on the seventeenth century.

By the early twenty-first century the field of Quaker studies⁷⁶ had broadened into other disciplines: contemporary sociology (Dandelion 1993; Plüss 1995; Dandelion 1996; 2002; Best 2008b; Dandelion & Collins 2008; Frith 2008); anthropology (Collins 1994; 1999; 2002b; Kline 2002; Pilgrim 2003b); philosophy and theology (Cohen 2002; Hardisty 2002; Uren 2002; Wong 2005; Odell 2007); social psychology (Robson 2005: 8); education (Freeman 2007; Lunn 2007); and economics (Jones 2009). In addition there has been work in peace studies (Mendlesohn 1997; Guiton 1999; Glover 2002; Jung 2004; LarkinJones 2007), mental health and theology (Sansom 1999; Lawrence 2009) and ethics (Scully 2002; Chambers 2006). Nesbitt provides a focus on research methodology (2002; 2010).⁷⁷ Visual culture and aesthetics also feature, for example Homan (2000; 2006), Collins (2001) and Abbott & Abbott (2008).

At the same time, redressing male bias became a prominent theme of history and literary studies; examples include Hobby (1989), Trevett (1991), Wilcox (1991; 1995), Mack (1992), Tarter (1993), Hinds (1996), Gill (2001), Newton (2002), Glines (2003), Padgett (2003) and Smith (2007). History also developed in the sub-strands of the history of science (Cantor 2003; Stanley 2007; Morries 2009), local studies

⁷⁶ From 1995 to 2003 the University of Sunderland provided a centre for academic Quaker Studies (*Postgraduate: Quaker Studies*). That role was also provided by the Centre for Postgraduate Quaker Studies at Woodbrooke and the University of Birmingham from 1999 (and solely from 2003), but work continued at other Universities as well. The Quaker Studies Research Association (QSRA) was founded in 1992 (*About QSRA*) and its fully refereed journal, *Quaker Studies*, was founded in 1996 (McClelland 1996; Dandelion 2009: 5). The Conference of Quaker Historians and Archivists (CQHA) is sponsored by the Friends Historical Association (FHA) in USA and in 2010 had its eighteenth biennial conference (*Conference of Quaker Historians and Archivists*). FHA was founded in 1873; it publishes the journal *Quaker History* (*Friends Historical Association*). There is also a Friends Historical Society founded in 1903 in UK, which publishes the *Journal of the Friends Historical Society* (*Quakers in Britain: Useful Links*; Roberts 2007 [2003]: 4, 135).

⁷⁷ I am indebted to Dandelion (2009) for many of the references in this brief review of latter developments in Quaker Studies. His review is more comprehensive; I have cited only some examples, although I have some references which he does not, partly because more has been published in the meantime.

(Bell 2003; Pietrusiak 2004; Dixon 2005; Stevens 2005; Evans 2008) and biography (Kerman 2000; Lacey 2002; Falcetta 2004; Bernet 2007).

Much of the work in Quaker studies is multi- or inter-disciplinary,⁷⁸ for example Walvin's work (1997; 2008) touched on ethics and economics as well as history. Hobby (1989), Hinds (1996), Graham (1996) and Gill's (2001) work focused on historical material and employed literary theory (Dandelion 2009: 7). Collins (1999) employed anthropological analysis to an historical incident, using Bordieu's and Goffman's sociological and Foucault's philosophical theory. Kline (2002) and Robson (2005; 2008b) deal with conflict handling within Quaker Meetings. Pietrusiak's article on Sir James Reckitt's philanthropy and Hull Garden Village (2004) and Bailey and Bryson's article on George Cadbury and Bournville (2006) encompass architecture, biography, economics, geography, politics and theology as well as local history. *The Quaker Condition* (Dandelion & Collins 2008) is described in its subtitle as sociology, but incorporates work in the disciplines of anthropology (Collins 2008; Pilgrim 2008), ethics (Chambers 2008; Scully 2008) and social psychology (Robson 2008b) as well as sociology, so is also multi-disciplinary.

Relation to Quaker studies scholarship

The only previous scholarship on the Experiment has been the papers I have given and the work I have published as this study has progressed (Meads 2004; 2005; 2007b; 2007a; 2008a). Hitherto the focus in academic Quaker studies has been on

⁷⁸ The journal *Quaker Studies* describes itself as multi-disciplinary, encompassing aesthetics, anthropology, architecture, art, cultural studies, history, literature, peace studies, philosophy, research methodology, sociology, theology and women's studies ('Quaker Studies').

what Quakers believe and how they behave, rather than on what their religious experience is. There is no previous academic study of contemporary Quakers' religious experience: given how Quakers' experience is such an important element of their spirituality, this is a big gap. Below I first review the scholarship on Quaker theology, which has concentrated on belief with only limited reference to Quaker religious experience; I provide analysis of contemporary Quaker religious experience generally in Chapter 5 and in the Experiment in Chapter 6.⁷⁹ I then review significant elements of Quaker sociology, which contextualise Chapters 7 and 8.

Quaker belief and experience

Moore identified that great difficulty arose from early Friends trying to fit their experience of intense religious upheaval⁸⁰ within the thought and theology of their time (2000: 75); she concluded that Quaker theology had to develop rapidly to defend Quaker ideas and practices against criticism (2000: 87) and to address the serious threat of capital punishment for blasphemy (2000: 79-80, 84-85). The foundation of Quaker theology was that the 'Light within' provided the immediate inspiration of God in Friends: the Light was primary authority, taking precedence over creeds and Scripture on the premise that the Apostles had not read texts in order to establish a

⁷⁹ *Seeing Hearing Knowing* includes descriptions of Experimenters' experience in, and as a result of, the Experiment, but provides no analysis (Lampen 2008). I have not referred to it in detail as it was published after the period of my fieldwork and only one chapter gives the experience of British Friends' Experimenting (Gray & Gray 2008).

⁸⁰ Moore cited various examples of early Friends' religious experiences from contemporaneous writings (of Hooton, Farnworth, Hubberthorne and Dewsbury) and Fox's *Journal*. (There are various versions of Fox's *Journal*, part of which describes Quaker beginnings from the mid 1640s; the shorter version - which is not an ordered story - was written in 1663-64 and the longer was compiled in either 1674-76 or 1675-77 (Moore 2000: 5, 245 fn8).) The examples of religious upheaval incorporated both corporate 'quaking' (Moore 2000: 6, 13, 247 fn 35) and individual experience (Moore 2000: 7, 10-12, 20, 83). She also said that the writings of Nayler (another early Friend: see Chapter 7 FN14 for the 'Nayler incident') did not convey the same intensity of religious experience as Fox's; for Nayler union with God was static and mystical, rather than Fox's being taken over dynamically in a prophetic call (2000: 79) – she did not define 'mystical'.

relationship with God (Underwood 1997: vii; Manning 2009: 31-32); the bible had to be read in the understanding of direct inward experience.⁸¹

Quakers had no need to define their beliefs for their own understanding, only to keep themselves alive and to be able to proselytise and meet together. Whilst their interpretation of their experiences was originally within a Christian paradigm, it was particular and distinct.

Pluralist and post-Christian developments

Quakers retained the Christian paradigm until the mid-twentieth century (Punshon 1984). Heron (1995) and Dandelion (1996: 12, 148-164, 175-179) have both argued that since the 1950s British Quakerism has become increasingly pluralistic.

Pilgrim argues that the breakdown of an overarching religious paradigm has led to a fragmentation of Quaker identity (2008: 60) into three types: 'Exclusivists', 'Inclusivists' and 'Syncretists' (2008: 62-64). She focuses mainly on belief, although her use of the concept of heterotopia (see Chapter 3) hints that other factors are in play: she cites Quaker behaviour to explain the ways in which Quakers have been heterotopian throughout their history (Pilgrim 2004: 209-217). Best observes that adolescent Quakers' have a multiplicity of 'belief stories' (2008a: 210).

⁸¹ There is an interesting methodological point here. Like most outsider researchers (and sociological approaches to date), Manning has approached the question of Quaker theology in terms of belief, whilst Moore has used her insider understanding to explain the difficulty of fitting the peculiar and particular early Quaker experience into a belief framework: her relevant chapter is entitled 'Putting Experience into Words' (Moore 2000: 75-87). Moore recognises, in her own experience as twenty-first century practising Quaker and historian of the seventeenth century, that the seventeenth and twenty-first centuries illuminate each other in relation to Quaker controversy, belief, practice and organisation (2004: 59).

Huber's (2001b; 2001a) work examines the spirituality of Buddhist Quakers,⁸² all of whom said that Buddhism was the major source of their spirituality (2001a: 80, 95). He finds that some have stronger roots in Buddhism whilst using the Quaker community as a cultural home: 'Quaker Buddhists' who are 'rather a Quaker and a Buddhist'; others remain closer to the British Quaker mainstream: 'semi-Buddhist Quakers', describing themselves as 'rather a Quaker' (2001a: 82). Vincett (2008) similarly explores the fusing of Quakerism and contemporary paganism into the dual identity of 'Quagan'. Despite Quagans being a very small minority of British Quakers in belief terms,⁸³ they are indicative of a continuing trend towards Friends drawing from different belief systems.⁸⁴

By the late twentieth century, on the basis of his 1989 survey of British Friends, Dandelion described Quakers as post-Christian (1996: 133). Rutherford repeated Dandelion's survey in 2003 and similarly found that only 46% of her respondents thought of themselves as Christian (Mellor 2008: 72). Mellor's research, which allowed participants to self define, however, found that 80% considered themselves Christian (2008: 70).⁸⁵ It seems likely that Dandelion's and Rutherford's participants were led to a definition of Christian in non-Quaker terms, as Mellor discusses

⁸² Huber does not define spirituality, but, as he used the word in his letters to potential participants (2001a: 80), it can be inferred that they self-defined.

⁸³ Vincett interviewed only four British Quagans; gaps in her data were filled with e-mail lists and blogs, which included US participants (2007: 192; 2008: 175, 189 fn 7). She said the e-mail lists together had 100 subscribers, but it is not clear to what extent they were US or British.

⁸⁴ Plurality extends beyond the different faiths mentioned in this sub-section. See Chapter 5 ('Belief frameworks'), p185, for the faiths mentioned by interviewees. In the early twenty-first century non-theism is also prevalent among British Friends, but there is as yet no academic work on what Quakers mean by 'non-theist'. A survey (Rush 2002) highlighted the issue, but there was disappointingly no real accompanying analysis. It is, however, clear that 'non-theist' does not necessarily equate to atheist. In Chapter 7 ('Spiritual perspective'), pp293-294, I address the question of what Experimenters' authority is.

⁸⁵ Mellor's data was collected in 2005 and 2006 (2008: 72), very close in time to Rutherford's 2003 survey. Mellor's survey also found that 83.4% believed in God and only 9.8% did not believe in God (6.9% of the total sample either did not answer the question or circled both answers) (2009: 37); Dandelion's survey found that only 74% believed in God, 3.1% did not and 22.9% were unsure (1996: 159).

(Dandelion 1996: 6; Mellor 2008: 74). Mellor wanted her respondents to be free to distance themselves from any mainstream definition of Christianity (2008: 78).⁸⁶ The Dandelion/Rutherford and Mellor data are not directly comparable to each other because the premise on which each was produced is different. The basis on which Mellor's respondents' self-defined is unknown.⁸⁷

Plüss (1995) looked at a conflict between the Christian and Universalist wings of BYM (the New Foundation Fellowship (NFF) and the Quaker Universalist Group (QUG)). The NFF and QUG claimed different theological understandings for Quakers: some Friends had claimed there was no place in Quakers for non-Christians, while others had objected to the use of Christian language. The compromise text, which settled the conflict in 1994, pointed out both that universalism is by definition inclusivist, so incorporating Christianity, and that the Quaker Christian faith had had a universal dimension from its seventeenth century beginnings (*QFP* 1995: 27.04).⁸⁸

The conflict Plüss studied was settled with the particular and distinct Quaker understanding of Christianity and Mellor's work suggests that Quakers remain Christian in a particular way. A more subtle understanding of Quaker spirituality (than the otherwise confusing picture of pluralist belief) will emerge with this thesis' study of contemporary Quakers' (religious) experience.

⁸⁶ Mellor also did not have a 'minimum definition' of Christianity, whereas Dandelion only categorised his participants as Christian if they believed that 'Jesus was unique' (Mellor 2008: 78).

⁸⁷ Mellor's nonetheless allows for the distinct way in which Quakers were Christian from their beginnings: they interpreted how they were meant to be Christian by the Light within their consciences, that is, in their own experience of the inspiration of God within them. Given that over 83% of Mellor's respondents said that they believed in God (see this chapter FN85), it is possible that at least that proportion of her informants answered her questions out of their experience and understanding of God (that is, out of the Light within their consciences), rather than in purely intellectual terms: see this chapter FN27 for an illustration of how Friends may understand 'God' in particular and unusual ways.

⁸⁸ Plüss' work is part of the background to my Chapters 7 on conflict handling and 8 on the Experiment's Quaker context.

The experiential element of twenty-first century Quaker spirituality

Dandelion suggests that British Quaker adherence to theological uncertainty, forever seeking and never finding represents an 'absolute perhaps': 'Belief, individual or corporate, is marginalised, because it can never come close to fully and accurately describing the experience which gives rise to it'; Quakers can never find a certainty of truth claims to match the religious experience itself (2004a: 224). Dandelion neither defines nor gives examples of what that religious experience might be.⁸⁹

Pilgrim refers to Fox's 'visionary' experience (2008: 55) and says early Friends' 'experience of being convicted by Christ' was liminal (2008: 59-60); Turner (1969) described liminal rites as promoting strong bonds and strengthening relationships and obligations within the group. Pilgrim claims that the majority of twenty-first century British Friends do not undergo liminal religious experience, but instead their experience is liminoid, with weaker effect (2008: 59-60), leading to an internalised and individualised heterotopian impulse amongst British Friends (2008: 64).⁹⁰ She does not review her informants' experiences in detail to justify her claim that they are liminoid, nor does she define 'religious experience'. Contrarily, Collins claims that Quaker MfW is liminal (2005: 327-328), although he does not develop how the experience during worship might be liminal, other than to cite one informant's general impression ('magical', 'out of the ordinary', 'excitement', 'danger') afterwards.

Given that the experiential element of spirituality is important to Quakers, there are remarkably few accounts of exactly what individual experiences make up Quaker

⁸⁹ He has, however, written about his own experience of the in-breaking of God (Dandelion 1998: 198).

⁹⁰ I discuss Pilgrim's work on heterotopia and British Quakerism in Chapter 3. Broadly, she argues that Quakers have been heterotopic in relation to British society from their beginnings and that by the twenty-first century their heterotopian impulse had turned inward, with heterotopic groups (for example adolescent Quakers and Experimenters) appearing within the wider Quaker group.

religious or spiritual experience and hardly any are mentioned in academic studies.⁹¹

In Vincett's thesis, two Quagan participants spoke of 'communication with other-than-human-beings' (2007: 210-211) and one described a specific experience (2007: 214).⁹²

Robson resorts to citing Barclay's oft quoted 1678 experience,⁹³ saying his experience was probably more intense than twenty-first century Friends' but it would often still be their experience (2005: 16).

As Chapter 5 discusses, Experimenters have widely differing explanations for what they believe, but they recognise they have similar experiences which together I term religious experience.⁹⁴ This thesis therefore focuses on the experiential element of Experimenters' spirituality, rather than on their belief.

The picture which emerges is that Quaker belief is diverse and not a defining element of Quaker spirituality. Ostensibly it might be difficult to see what holds Quakers together, especially when few Quakers talk of their 'religious experience', there is little published as to what that experience might be and one Quaker's experience could be

⁹¹ *QFP* contain a section on experience of God, but only four are direct personal experiences from the mid/late twentieth century (*QFP* 1995: 26.08, 26.12, 26.13, 26.14). What other accounts there are tend to be by Quaker scholars, for example Pilgrim (2001: 84-86), Tarter (2004: 83-86), albeit that she is American, and Dandelion (see this chapter FN89). Bevan similarly notes that David Adshead, Eva Pinthus, Pat Saunders and Ben Barman wrote about their personal awareness of God and experience of revelation as part of their contributions to the Quaker Theology Seminar (Bevan 2001: 52).

⁹² Vincett's participant described being with friends from the Quaker Women's Group (which is a *LIG*) and a man but did not explicitly say that her friends shared her pagan understanding (2007: 214). The occasion seems to have been impromptu rather than a Quagan gathering.

⁹³ '...when I came into the silent assemblies of God's people, I felt a secret power among them, which touched my heart; and as I gave way unto it I found the evil weakening in me and the good raised up; and so I became thus knit and united unto them, hungering more and more after the increase of this power and life whereby I might feel myself perfectly redeemed' (*QFP* 1995: 19.21). Robson cuts the quotation short before Barclay goes on to say this is the surest way to become a Christian, probably because that would be more controversial in the twenty-first century. The *QFP* text is a very close rendering of the original (Barclay 2002 [1678]: 300) [the punctuation is different and the *QFP* truncation requires insertion of a pronoun and a different article].

⁹⁴ Sheeran found something similar in relation to whether Friends had experienced a 'covered' or 'gathered' meeting: Christocentric Friends would describe their experience in Christian language and Universalist Friends in more universal terms, but the experience for both groups was primary (Sheeran 1996 [1983]: 87-89).

very different from another's. The cohering factors emerge more clearly when sociological factors are considered.

Sociological factors

I consider work within Quaker studies which informs sociological understanding of Quakers: first the different expression of Quaker cultures and then group and power relations.

Quaker cultures: double, triple, silence and contribution

In his sociological analysis of Quaker theology, Dandelion identified a 'double culture' of liberal belief and a conservative behavioural creed (1996: 118). The behavioural creed is 'a conservative and conformist culture around the way in which the group operates' and includes the sacralisation of silence (Dandelion 1996: xv). Dandelion claimed the behavioural creed is a credal attitude to maintaining the organisational and behavioural rules of the group, which consist in the explicit rules of Quaker practice outlined in *QFP* and the cultural rules around 'Quaker-time'⁹⁵ behaviour (1996: 100-110). Those rules include opposition to both credal belief-statements and certainty of personal belief (Dandelion 1996: 101). Dandelion said it forms the definitional basis of the group (1996: 302); that is, how Quakers define that they are Quakers (1996: 101).

Amongst the cultural rules, Dandelion found a 'culture of silence' operating from within the form of silent worship. The culture of silence describes the value of silence, the devaluation of language and the consequent rules governing the breaking

⁹⁵ 'Quaker-time' describes the time which Friends spend together on Quaker activity (Dandelion 1996: xii).

of silence with speech (Dandelion 2008a: 22). Religious experience⁹⁶ happens in the silent worship but is not vocalised (silence as defence) and so there is no reaction to it (silence as consequence) and the covert change of theology is masked in silence (Dandelion 1996: 257-259). Fear of treading on toes (hurting others) and of ostracism (hurting oneself) then prevent any discussion of experience or belief and extend the culture of silence outside MfW as well (Dandelion 1996: 255-257). The culture of silence can apply equally to wider aspects of Quaker life.

In her study of conflict handling among British Quakers, Robson finds that Friends also defined the Quaker way of being⁹⁷ as excluding anger (2005: 96, 98, 122-123) and averting from conflict (2005: 97, 114, 117, 203), which usually involves expressing strong emotions or words, acting without the approval of the group, or thinking about power, attributes which her Quaker informants find 'unQuakerly' (2005: 145-146).⁹⁸ Aversion from conflict, questions of power and showing strong emotion thereby form part of the definitional basis of what it is to be a Quaker and thus become part of the behavioural creed. Conflict, power relations and strong emotion, as well as religious experience and changes in belief, are hidden in the culture of silence. The culture of silence is thus extended from Dandelion's application of it in terms of belief (1996: 257-259) to some behaviours which define

⁹⁶ Dandelion's book contains 'A Note about Terms' (1996: xi-xiv), which for example discusses 'belief', but does not mention religious experience. As noted above (this chapter ('The experiential element of twenty-first century Quaker spirituality'), p26), he neither described nor defined what he meant by 'religious experience', although in other places (see this chapter FN89 and Chapter 8 FN65) he has described his own.

⁹⁷ Robson does not use the term 'behavioural creed', but the traits she identifies do fit its definition (Dandelion 1996: xv).

⁹⁸ Robson's work is considered in more detail in Chapter 7.

Quaker identity.⁹⁹ My study considers conflict handling and the nature of Quaker power relations (Chapters 7 and 8), from which Quakers avert their minds.

Although not describing her findings in terms of 'culture', Plüss concluded from her study that the glue which holds Quakers together is their socialisation process (1995: 91). She found that adherence to Quaker 'institutional conduct' is a necessary characteristic of that conduct, since it stems from how Friends define quality of truth, that is, how they define the will of God, together in MfW (Plüss 1995: 62). Implicitly the requirements of Quaker membership 'stipulate' that Quakers should not consider their individually held beliefs as being of foremost importance, their epistemology is collective (1995: 129). Plüss also finds that difference in Friends' collective explanations of institutional conduct may act as an integrative social principle, through legitimating institutional conduct in ways that transcend the beliefs and intentions of any one group of participants alone (2007: 270), since novices cannot easily identify, nor therefore contest, possible discrepancies between their own and the group's expectations (2007: 264). Plüss therefore indicates that acceptable ways of behaving are implicit, that is they are discovered by the novice for herself within the culture of silence.¹⁰⁰ Plüss (2007) effectively concludes that Friends avoid defining the content of their practices as well as their beliefs. She does hint at the

⁹⁹ Although Robson did not make this point, perhaps because her discipline was social psychology and her focus lay elsewhere, her findings do fit Dandelion's definition, which is thus extended for them into a new element, behaviour.

¹⁰⁰ Plüss does not actually name the culture of silence in this respect, although she does refer to it in citing Dandelion (Dandelion 1996: 257; Plüss 2007: 267). Her 2007 article uses the present tense, although it is based on her fieldwork conducted in the early 1990s (Plüss 2007: 258-259, 265) and she has some misunderstandings, for example she confuses worship with business meetings, citing Brinton's (1952) work on decision making as being about worship (Plüss 2007: 259). Robson made a similar observation about Plüss' (1995) thesis: 'It is not clear if Plüss fully understood the difference between meeting for worship and meeting for worship for business' (Robson 2005: 65); with the later citation (Plüss 2007: 259), it is now clear that Plüss did not understand the difference.

experiential ('experimental and affective' (2007: 253)), but not in theological terms, since her focus is on social dynamics.

Best identifies that adolescent Quakers have a 'triple culture' of ritual (their 'culture of contribution'), networked community and narrative (2008a: 211-213), a different culture from adult Quakers. Adolescent Quakers' culture of contribution arises from their worship having a lower level of differentiation from adults' in the use of speech (not standing to minister, for example) and in the closing of worship (all join hands, rather than a handshake extending from Elders to the whole group, for example) (Best 2008a: 197-198). Their worship is based on silence but can be programmed and semi-programmed,¹⁰¹ as well as unprogrammed. Religious experience¹⁰² is possible both in worship events and at other times and is shared, each sharing encouraging others to share more: theological diversity is accepted so that changes do not need to be covert (Best 2008a: 198). The culture of contribution thus militates against the consequences of Dandelion's culture of silence (Best 2008a: 196-199).

Vincett says that Quakers' behavioural creed extends from the corporate form of MfW and business meetings to include how they act with others, including other species and the earth's natural resources, justice, pastoral ministry in other contexts, social, eco-justice and peace activism; that is, it extends beyond Quaker-time into their whole way of life (2008: 178, 190 fn18). She extends the definition of 'behavioural creed' to mean the living out of Quaker values (Vincett 2008: 177-179), so her point is not unique to Quakers. Best identifies that to some extent adolescent

¹⁰¹ Programmed or semi-programmed worship is based on silence, but includes prepared contributions, for example a reading or a piece of music (Best 2010: 52).

¹⁰² Like other Quaker studies scholars, Best neither describes nor defines religious experience. His use of the term somewhat contradicts his findings (see Chapter 6 ('Community of love'), p241) that adolescent Quakers do not focus on God, but on 'that of good' in everyone (Best 2010: 200).

Quakers lives outside Quaker-time are influenced by their values (2010: 107-113), which is also true of adult Quakers (*QFP* 1995: 27.25; Chambers 2006; Scully 2008). Vincett, however, finds that Quagans extend their values outside Quaker-time, whilst Best's (2010) findings are less clear-cut and Robson (2005) finds that in conflict situations Quakers do not live out espoused values.

Group and power relations

There has been little work on group and power relations among Quakers since Isichei's (1970) study of Victorian Quakers.¹⁰³ Isichei examined three occasions where theological differences led to small groups separating from Friends (1970: 44-67).¹⁰⁴ She ascribed the separations in two cases to YM's enquiry committees trying to silence the instigator and in the third to the instigator establishing a separate Meeting in an isolated rural area. In each case the schism was localised, although one led to individuals resigning and joining other groups. Isichei had earlier concluded that power was exercised in an informal concentration, rather than by the participation of all equally, in mid nineteenth century decision making (1967b: 193-209).¹⁰⁵

¹⁰³ On the issue of gender power-relations, Isichei observed that the equality of Victorian Quaker men and women was more apparent than real, but Quaker women had more power than women in other Victorian organisations, whether religious or not (1970: 107-109).

¹⁰⁴ Each of the three schisms was small: Isichei emphasised the relative stability of Victorian Quakerism, which she ascribed to family and affective ties. The Quaker 'hedge' of peculiar dress and endogamy was removed, but its consequences lingered: most Victorian Quakers went to the same Quaker schools and conducted business (both commercial and Quaker) together. They knew, understood and felt affection for each other. (Isichei 1970: 65-67). The three schisms were respectively in the 1830s, 1860s and 1870s.

¹⁰⁵ Whilst it is likely that Isichei's conclusion is right, she makes an assumption: 'In considering the real locus of power in Yearly Meeting it is crucial to remember that decisions were shaped exclusively by what was *said* in the meeting' [emphasis in original] and 'In Quakerism, those who were present but silent, made no contribution to decision making' (1967b: 193). As she was studying an historical period, she had only records of occasions of speaking and what was said, so could make no other assumption, but she missed the theological point that those who are silent and uphold other Friends do (at least in twenty-first century British Quaker meetings) contribute and this may also have been the case in the nineteenth century. I have been present at business meetings where the majority of speakers articulate one view, yet the single speaker articulating a contrary view carries the meeting to a different decision: it is the Clerk's role to discern the will of the meeting. There is a report of such an occasion, when John Woolman (1720-1772) asked to be recognised in London Yearly Meeting on his arrival in Britain in 1772: he met hostility until he spoke simply to the meeting (Whitney 1943: 370-373; Cadbury 1971: 45-46; Reynolds 1972 [1948]: 18-19; Sox 1999: 101-102).

Most contemporary Quaker studies scholarship has considered British Quakers in their Meetings or as a whole group (Collins 1994; Dandelion 1996; Chambers 2006; Frith 2008; Whitehouse 2008), where the question of how different groups of Quakers related to each other and to BYM each other did not arise. Vincett's study of Quagans is based on interviews and she gives no indication of their meeting as a group (2007: 192-220; 2008), except at occasional workshops (2007: 308).¹⁰⁶ Pilgrim (2003b) gives no indication that 'Syncretists' and 'Inclusivists' met in groups without other Quakers and the 'Exclusivists' left BYM. Plüss' (1995) work is the only study of groups which did meet together without other Quakers present.

As adolescent Quakers largely meet outside the structure of BYM's Meeting hierarchy, Best (2008b; 2010) considered the relationship of one group of Quakers (the adolescents) to the general body, finding that adolescent Quakers are a 'hidden sect' within BYM (2010: 232-292)¹⁰⁷ whose deliberations are paid lip-service by the wider group;¹⁰⁸ Best hints at but does not fully explore power relations.¹⁰⁹

Kline (2002) and Robson (2005) consider conflict handling,¹¹⁰ where power relations could be expected to feature, but Kline largely accepts Quakers' own accounts about

¹⁰⁶ Vincett interviewed only four Quagans, but supplemented her data by monitoring Quaker-pagan blogs and e-mail lists (2007: 192 FN 2). Her participant observation appears not to have included Quagans as a practising group.

¹⁰⁷ I consider the concept of 'hidden sect' in relation to the Experiment in Chapter 2 ('Sect'), pp79-81.

¹⁰⁸ See this chapter ('Empty co-option in BYM'), p34.

¹⁰⁹ Best refers to adults' power over worship at adolescent Quaker gatherings, citing instances of changing an introductory explanation of worship and Eldering a contribution in worship (2010: 264). He suggests that the 'critique' of adolescents' programmed worship, where the culture of silence is broken and becomes a culture of contribution, is silenced by the co-option of programmed worship (Best 2010: 264-265). Elsewhere he refers to the operation of power only in citing Collins and Pilgrim (Pilgrim 2004: 223; Collins 2005: 336-337; 2008: 41; Best 2010: 147, 263, 304).

¹¹⁰ Kline and Robson's work is considered in more detail for the comparative case study on conflict handling in Chapter 7; this section considers their work only in relation to the question of power.

how power is exercised, hegemonically by hierarchy of Meetings, and Robson finds that Quakers avert their minds from questions of power, so neither fully addresses the nature of Quaker power relations. Dandelion (1996) has explored how Quaker behaviour was controlled within Meetings, but a more sophisticated analysis becomes possible when one group (Experimenters) is considered in relation to the wider group (BYM). Below I review the existing scholarship and how I develop it.

Empty co-option in BYM

Best describes how adult Quakers have added adolescent Quakers' minutes as 'minutes of record' to the Yearly Meeting's (YM) own minutes since 2001; adding them as 'record' means that the adolescents' minutes are not an integral part with which the adult group unites (2008b: 109-110). Best argues that the adult group does not consider the theological, cultural or organisational content of the adolescents' minutes and adult Quakers are not bound by them, a situation Best terms 'empty co-option' (2010: 269-271). The effect of being emptily co-opted is that the adolescents are held by the adults to be part of the same group, without the adults having to recognise any of the adolescents' ideas or acknowledge their different ways of behaving (Best 2010: 275).¹¹¹

The concept of empty co-option is powerful: Berger and Luckmann discuss something similar in their concept of *nihilation*, that is, incorporating the deviant conception within one's own symbolic universe,¹¹² liquidating conceptually everything outside that same universe, thus obliterating its significance as opposition (1991 [1966]: 133).

¹¹¹ Best does himself not go on to make the link between empty co-option and the exercise of power, although he does discuss adults' control of orthodoxy in the revisions of *QFP* (2010: 276-277) and adolescents' exclusion from decision making (2010: 279-280) in terms of the different sectarian characteristics of the two groups.

¹¹² *Nihilation* may also be achieved by assigning an inferior ontological status (Berger & Luckman 1991 [1966]: 132). For empty co-option only *nihilation* by incorporation is relevant.

The adults leave the adolescents powerless without ever having faced a challenge from them. In Chapter 8, I examine how BYM relates to the Experiment to test whether its power retention strategy is nihilation with another group as well.

Best does not link the notion of 'empty co-option' with heterotopia, although elsewhere he does argue that adolescent Quakers occupy heterotopic space, both in relation to British adolescents and adult Quakers (2008a: 210).¹¹³

Contemporary Quaker power relations

A few Quaker studies scholars have approached analysis of contemporary power relations within BYM; others make passing reference.¹¹⁴

Dandelion (1996: 193-236) considered how Quakers' behaviour is controlled. He found that explicit leadership was constrained by sanctioned and time-limited management roles, which were perceived in terms of responsibility, not influence, and exercised as secular authority. Nonetheless, in practice, as a consequence of their vocal ministry during worship, some Friends¹¹⁵ did exercise influence, although it was ascribed and arena specific. Dandelion's analysis focused on the idea of a leaderless group, which he concluded was Quaker mythology rather than empirical reality. His

¹¹³ Best's use of heterotopia is taken uncritically from Pilgrim and he imports her incorrect referencing of Hetherington (1997) as 1996 and her incorrect page number references (Pilgrim 2003b; 2004; 2008; Best 2010: 302-304).

¹¹⁴ Best mentions adults' exercising power over adolescent Quakers' activities (2010: 38, 264) and adolescent Quakers lack of power to communicate with BYM or MfS by way of minute. Collins says that in some circumstances 'ritual' will serve to maintain existing power structures, but it may also provide the context for critique (2005: 336-337). In discussing her argument that British Quakers' sense of Otherness has become internalised and individualised, Pilgrim says: 'The shifting power relations open up the possibility of serious splits' (2004: 223).

¹¹⁵ Commonly recognised by the term 'weighty', because their words carry 'weight' (Hubbard 1992: 122). Plüss found something similar (1995: 148), although she relied on an American publication (Bartoo 1978: 18) rather than her British fieldwork for it. Plüss also suggested Clerks exercised influence by putting potentially controversial items towards the end of an agenda, by calling upon particular Friends to speak, or by summarising the sense of the meeting before all who might wish to do so had spoken (Plüss 1995: 149); she ignored the right and ability of Friends to speak in opposition or addition to the Clerk's summary, however.

approach and conclusion were binary (led/leaderless, collective/individual, secular/theological, management of the managed), with an implicitly hierarchical focus on control and based on Quakers' own idea of themselves.

Kline describes Quaker structures as a flattened hierarchy of collectives, designed to allow participation of as many Friends as possible at all levels, where authority is constantly negotiated and no single person's authority over communal truth is accepted (2002: 127).¹¹⁶ He describes the relative power of the Meetings at each level (PM, MM, MfS, YM) and concludes that MM is the most powerful (2002: 128-158), but maintains that power is 'theocratic' (2002: 169) as it is given over to the 'Inner Light' (2002: 127). Kline believes that power is exercised within Quakers as hegemony (2002: 174), negotiated through social contract (following Rousseau and Proudhon) and controlled by the self-regulation of internalising Bentham's 'panopticon' (Foucault 1977 [1975]: 239; Carrette 2000: 121; Kline 2002: 178-185).¹¹⁷ Kline's broad conclusion is that Friends themselves deny power-play (2002: 220-224) and the more involved Friends exercise more power, but that all power is exercised through decisions taken in business meetings (2002: 312-314). Kline, more than Dandelion, accepts Quakers' own view of power-relations.

¹¹⁶ Plüss had also concluded that authority is widely shared in the Quaker movement, because it is constantly negotiated (1995: 150), but Kline did not reference her.

¹¹⁷ The panopticon was conceived by Bentham as a visual assemblage and luminous environment (a central tower surrounded by cells) in which a prison warder can see all the detainees without their being able to see either him or each other (Deleuze 2006 [1986]: 28). The point of Bentham's panopticon was that the warder would no longer need to see what was happening: the detainees' behaviour would be modified in the expectation that they could at any time be watched; they would never know when or whether they were being watched and so would have to behave as if they were always watched (Foucault 1977 [1975]: 200-209). See also Chapter 3 FN37. Kline seems to miss Carrette's criticism of Foucault here (in spite of citing the page on which Carrette makes the criticism (Carrette 2000: 121; Kline 2002: 178)): Carrette points out that Quaker spirituality was a reflection of the religious techniques of self-examination, not an internalisation of architecture; the internal panopticon preceded the architectural forms, as Foucault later recognised in relation to monasticism (Foucault 1999 [1982]: 194-195; Carrette 2000: 121).

Robson considers some aspects of power in organisations (2005: 35-46) and finds Quakers avert their minds from questions of power (2005: 26, 35-37) (a stage prior to the denial Kline finds).¹¹⁸ She concludes that Quakers do not allow the possibility that conflict may arise and consequently are unable to handle it when it does. Robson shows how Plüss seemed to confuse MfWs with business meetings and did not analyse the conflict which was central to her work, nor discuss that the conflict's resolution was achieved outside formal business method (Plüss 1995; Robson 2005: 64-65). I follow Robson's reading of Plüss and conclude that Plüss did not fully consider the operation of power relations either.

Consideration of Quaker power relations

There is a gap in contemporary Quaker studies scholarship on power: the Quaker group has been held to operate power hegemonically (Kline) to negate the challenge of any difference (Best), to be subject to influence (Dandelion), or to avert their minds from it altogether (Robson), but no one has yet examined the over-arching dynamic.

I review potential methods of analysing power in Chapter 2, I consider how Experimenters take power to themselves to handle conflict in chapter 7 and I develop the most appropriate analytical frame for considering how power is exercised within BYM in Chapter 8.

¹¹⁸ It could be that Kline found denial rather than aversion because he directly confronted his informants with the relevant notions of 'weight' and, for example, the Clerk's role (2002: 169, 220, 223).

Location in Quaker studies

The sociology and anthropology of British Quakers has hitherto focused on belief without considering Quakers' religious experience: it has examined Quakers' social behaviour and praxis. My study fills an important gap, developing previous Quaker studies scholarship by focusing on the religious experience of Experimenters, who are outwardly indistinguishable from other adult Quakers (although they do meet in separate groups) and by considering the sociological implications of the Experiment for BYM, including the first examination of British Quaker power relations.

Thesis outline

In Chapter 2, I discuss approaches to the study of religion, extend the review of relevant scholarship from Quaker studies into cognate fields (principally sociology of religion, but also congregational studies, anthropology and theology) and situate the thesis in the field of sociology of religion. Potential analytical lenses are examined to conclude that a spatial method, heterotopia, is the most appropriate. The concept of heterotopia as originally outlined and subsequently developed is examined in Chapter 3, which also considers how the process of the Experiment, and Experimenters' experience in it, align with the concept of heterotopia.

Having established in the earlier chapters that the study is within the sociology of religion and having selected the most appropriate analytical lens, Chapter 4 outlines the approach to fieldwork in relation to reflexive insidership, demonstrating how heterotopia is inherent in the research. In order to contextualise Experimenters' experience in the Experiment, Chapter 5 discusses their religious practice and

experiences outside the Experiment and reviews their varying belief frameworks and what sense they make of their experience. It demonstrates that diversity/plurality of belief is irrelevant to their Quakerism and Experimenting. Chapter 6 conveys how experience comes in the Experiment and compares the stages of transformation Experimenters undergo with those of early Friends, on whose writings the Experiment is predicated.

Chapter 7 takes conflict handling as a case-study by which Experimenters' behaviour, based on their experiences and transformation discussed in Chapters 5 and 6, can be contrasted with that of British Friends generally and considers how Experimenters exercise their power in Meetings. I argue that Experimenters operate a culture of contribution (Chapters 7 and 8) and, whilst they may adhere to some aspects of the behavioural creed while they are not Experimenting, they sit in a heterotopic position vis-à-vis their Meetings when Experimenting or when conflict arises, because their source of authority is different, arising from their religious experience (Chapters 5 and 6).

Finally, Chapter 8 draws all the strands of the previous chapters together to conclude how Experimenters sit in a heterotopic position vis-à-vis British Quakers generally and to discuss the multi-dimensional nature of the heterotopias examined and what might transpire from them. The implications of the study and further areas of research are suggested.

This thesis makes an original contribution in six main areas: on the sociology of British Quakers; on religious experience in religious groups; on spiritual

transformation; on handling conflict; on research methodology; and on the concept of heterotopia.¹¹⁹ It is a case study of religious experience in one particular religious group and is the first academic study of contemporary Quakers' religious experience, explicitly illustrating a previously implicit element of Quaker spirituality. It develops Foucault's notion of heterotopia from (heterotopic) site into (heterotopian) process and applies it to show how heterotopias can be multi-dimensional and interactive and how a heterotopia may change its context. It demonstrates that religious experience and transformation are more fully explained and analysed by an insider researcher who shares the participants' understanding, both in her own personal practice and the research experience. It identifies reflexivity as necessary (heterotopian) methodology for insider research in the religious context. It also shows the importance of spiritual underpinning for successful conflict handling in a religious group: Experimenters have a different source of authority from other British Quakers in this respect. Experimenters operate a triple culture of liberal belief, conservative behavioural creed and explicitly shared spiritual experience. The thesis demonstrates that Quaker religious experience is diverse, that liberalising trends may be checked by conservatism based on that diverse experience, that power relations are better explained with dynamic rather than static models so that heterotopia is a particularly useful tool for the analysis of group relations generally, and that nuances revealed in empirical research can reveal features of the lens applied in the research analysis.

¹¹⁹ Further literature review for religious experience is in Chapter 5, for spiritual transformation in Chapter 6, for conflict handling in Chapter 7, for heterotopia in Chapter 3 and for method in Chapter 4.

Chapter summary

This chapter has introduced the background to the Experiment, the thesis' main research questions, previous Quaker studies scholarship on which the study will build and the thesis' contents.

Chapter 2 - Approaches to studying religious phenomena

This chapter reviews relevant studies and approaches to studying religious phenomena and movements beyond Quakerism and relates the thesis to sociology of religious movements, particularly innovatory movements. It discusses possible methods for analysing such movements and phenomena and shows how the thesis is sociological.

I first consider phenomenology, then review relevant recent ethnographies, relate them to my approach and consider how theory is better grounded in empirical data in order to site the thesis firmly in sociology of religion. I then review 'subculture', 'counterculture' and 'sect' as possible analytical lenses to conclude that a spatial theory is more appropriate.

Phenomenology as method

Phenomenological approach in sociology

Phenomenology has its roots in Kant's distinction between *noumena* (things in the real world) and phenomena (the way things appear to us) (Butt 2004: 89), but originated with Husserl in the early twentieth-century (Schutz 1982 [1945]-b: 99).¹ The phenomenologist is interested in meaning, as it is constituted in the mind, not in the objects themselves (Schutz 1982 [1945]-b: 115), so that phenomenological method requires suspension of value-judgements and accepts informants' accounts in their own terms (Schutz 1982 [1945]-b: 104; Butt 2004: 88-92). In phenomenological

¹ Schutz recommended reading *The Foundation of Phenomenology* (Farber 1943) before approaching Husserl's own work, which he described as condensed, highly technical and fragmentary (Schutz 1982 [1962]: 100-101). Schutz observed that phenomenology came close to the early writings of William James (James 1890a: Chapter IX; Schutz 1982 [1962]: 4-5, 109).

theory, individuals construct their own 'worlds', but out of building blocks presented by others and Schutz's application of phenomenology to sociology was an attempt to highlight the interplay between social life and experience (Spickard 1991: 192-193).

Schutz's 'provinces of meaning' and 'tuning-in'

Schutz used a reductive method² to explain various 'provinces of meaning'³ with their own 'universes of discourse' (Schutz 1982 [1945]-a).⁴ Provinces of meaning are 'orders of reality, each with its own special and separate style of existence'; the prime example is the everyday life-world (Schutz 1982 [1945]-a: 207). There are probably an infinite number of provinces⁵ and they are perceived disconnectedly, so that when an individual deals with one, she forgets its relations to the rest (Schutz 1982 [1945]-a: 207); the provinces do not overlap.

When interacting with others, an individual enters 'We-relationship', which exists in the 'vivid present': 'We' participate without an act of reflection, whereas the 'I' appears only after reflection (Schutz 1982 [1942]: 174-175). Reflection takes place in *durée*⁶ and the 'vivid present' is the intersection of *durée* and cosmic time (Schutz 1982 [1945]-a: 216). Thus, We-relationship originates in mutual biographical involvements

² In discussing Husserl's 'constitutive phenomenology', Schutz himself referred to the method as 'reduction' (1982 [1962]: 104-105, 121).

³ Schutz based his provinces of meaning on James' universes and sub-universes of meaning (James 1890b: 283-332; Schutz 1982 [1962]: 207). Schutz eschewed James' term 'sub-universe' in expounding his theory, preferring the term 'province of meaning': 'We speak of provinces of meaning and not of sub-universes because it is the *meaning* of our experiences and not the ontological structure of the objects which constitutes reality' [emphasis in original] (Schutz 1982 [1945]-a: 230). Nonetheless he used the term 'sub-universe' in applying the theory to the story of Don Quixote (Schutz 1976 [1954]).

⁴ Berger and Luckmann's *Social Construction of Reality* (1991 [1966]) is based on Schutz' theory (Butt 2004: 91).

⁵ Other examples include the worlds of science, of ideal relations, of the supernatural (mythology and religion), of individual opinion and 'of sheer madness and vagary' (Schutz 1982 [1962]: 207).

⁶ Following Bergson (1889), Schutz used the term *durée* to mean inner time, within which actual experiences are connected with the past by recollection and retention and with the future by projection and anticipation, a separate time dimension from spatialised, external, cosmic, 'objective' time (1982 [1962]: 85, 215-216). [Schutz references Bergson as 1899, but the original publication was 1889.]

and transcends the participants' individual existence in the realm of everyday life/paramount reality.⁷ Each province of meaning has its particular 'tension of consciousness' (Schutz 1982 [1955]: 341), from wide-awakeness at the highest tension, giving full attention to life and its requirements, to dream at the lowest, with passive attention (a 'surf of small indiscernible perceptions') in between (Schutz 1982 [1945]-a: 212-213).⁸

Schutz claimed that all scientific thought has to be derived, directly or indirectly, from tested observation (1982 [1945]-a: 251). He did not, however, exemplify provinces of meaning from the everyday life-world which he advocated as the paramount reality (Schutz 1982 [1945]-a: 252), but from the fiction of Cervantes' *Don Quixote* (Schutz 1976 [1954]; Cervantes 1991 [1605, 1615]): he illustrated it from something which was not real,⁹ rather than from the tested observation he advocated.

Neitz and Spickard (1990) suggested Schutz's 'tuning-in' (1976 [1951]) might be an applicable conceptual tool for opening religious experience to sociological study.¹⁰

⁷ In explaining 'We-relationship', Schutz said: 'my friend is to me and I am to him an element of the reality of everyday life. But our friendship surpasses our individual situation', partnership ('buddies, lovers, fellow-sufferers, etc.') is the most general term for 'We-relation' (1982 [1962]: 318, 353-354). This is, however, different from Quaker 'holding in the Light' (see the definition for 'uphold' in 'Abbreviations and glossary of Quaker terms') and Buber's *I-Thou* relationship (see Chapter 5 ('Relationship with God through relationship with others'), pp195-196, and Chapter 6 ('Transformation as religious experience'), pp238-239) which incorporates implicit Divine presence.

⁸ Schutz derived 'tension of consciousness' from Bergson's philosophy in several of Bergson's works, from 1889 to 1922, which are cited (Schutz 1982 [1962]: 212-213).

⁹ Schutz did not claim that Don Quixote evidenced his (and William James' – see this chapter FN3) theory, rather his thesis was that Cervantes' novel dealt systematically with the problem of multiple realities (1976 [1954]: 136). Contemporary analogies would be a theory of education illustrated by reference to *Harry Potter* (Rowling 1997; 1998; 1999; 2000; 2003; 2005; 2007) or a theory of politics illustrated by reference to *His Dark Materials* (Pullman 1995; 1997; 2000); the illustrations could be entertaining, but would not evidence the theories. See this chapter ('The importance of ethnography in developing research approach and theory'), pp49-50, for a discussion of the importance of empirical research in developing (and evidencing) theory.

¹⁰ Schutz ended his paper by saying that the elaboration of the theory of the tuning-in relationship had to be reserved for another occasion (1976 [1951]: 178). 'Tuning-in' does not appear in the theory volume of his collected papers (Schutz 1982 [1962]), so presumably Schutz did not publish the

Schutz said it is by the 'mutual tuning-in relationship' that the 'I' and the 'Thou' are experienced by both participants as a 'We' in vivid presence (1976 [1951]: 161).

Schutz explained that a piece of music cannot be grasped 'monothetically' (summed up conceptually, without continually having to recreate its proof), it (like all art) must be apprehended polythetically (taking as much time to reconstitute the meaning as it did the first time one experienced it: one must play or listen to the piece of music again) (Neitz & Spickard 1990: 28). Thus Schutz effectively suggested that apprehension of music (experience) is prior to apprehension of its meaning, semantic communication presupposes sociality, not the other way around (Neitz & Spickard 1990: 28). The shared *durée* (the sociality) in the case of music, however, does not have to be contemporaneous (shared in outer- or cosmic time): a pianist can perform music by a dead composer through realising a musical score in a performance (Neitz & Spickard 1990: 30).¹¹ Thus 'we-relationship' can be created in shared *durée* without physical presence, without co-existence, shared 'across the generations', 'in the flow of time' (Spickard 1991: 191-192).

Neitz and Spickard did not apply 'tuning-in' to any of the religious experiences they cited (Fox's 'flaming sword' vision (Nickalls 1975: 27) was one), but argued that for Schutz, as for participants in religious experience, the meaning is not the experience, a polythetic event cannot be subsumed by a monothetic interpretation: tuning-in to shared *durée* is the ground on which all communication – and thus meaning – is based (1990: 29). They analysed the potential application of Schutz's theory only to shared religious experience, but there is no indication that Fox's vision occurred when he was with anyone. Spickard applied a similar Schutzian analysis to Navajo ceremonies,

promised theoretical elaboration and so his tuning-in theory can only be inferred from his illustrative paper, in the way Neitz and Spickard approached it (1990).

¹¹ Similarly, an audience can share music with a dead performer by listening to a recording.

where it is clearer that the object of analysis was religious ritual: prayer, for example, is polythetic (1991: 200).

The Experiment might provide a real illustration of Schutz's theories. Experimenters apparently leave the everyday life-world (paramount reality, the basic province of meaning) in meditation (meditation being a province of meaning somewhere in between the everyday life-world and the world of dreaming).¹² It would also be possible to explain the Experimenters' relationships during the process in Schutz's terms as leaving the vivid present of We-relationship¹³ (coming together to undertake the Experiment together) to become 'Me' (a partial self in the *durée* of the meditation), returning to the We-relationship of the sharing after the meditation and creating the 'I' on reflection. One could argue, further, that the polythetic experience of the meditation is shared not only in the same outer-time as other Experimenters, but also afterwards both monothetically (in words) and polythetically (in the act of sharing), that the sharing is, like Schutz's musical analogy, a further experience of tuning-in, in a shared *durée*. 'Tuning-in' could, further, be applied to participants' linking the Experiment with early Friends' practice.¹⁴

This thesis is not, however, *phenomenological* sociology because, whilst Schutz's theories can describe Light group practice, they do not explain all the areas the research questions seek to explore, which encompass not only the implications of

¹² Schutz did not expound on meditation as a province of meaning in itself, although he referred to it in contradistinction to scientific theorising as a province of meaning, thus implying that it might have its own province of meaning (1982 [1945]-a: 245, 256).

¹³ It follows from Schutz's exposition that in a thoughtful conversation, each participant would switch from 'We-relationship' to *durée* and back many times.

¹⁴ It is doubtful that the Experiment replicates early Friends' practice as the forty minute meditation compresses the steps Ambler found in several of Fox's writings (Ambler 2002: 16-22, 55-56), Ambler does not claim the experience will be the same as early Friends' and the Experiment is filtered through Ambler's exploration of Eastern religion and psychotherapy, see Chapter 1 ('The development of the Experiment' and FN37).

Experimenters' experience in the Experiment, but also how Experimenters are affected by its process and how the Experiment might affect its context, BYM.

Phenomenological approach in religious studies

In the work of Otto (1932; 1950 [1927]) and Wach (1951; 1958; 1962 [1944]), the phenomenological approach to the study of religion came to mean something specific and subtly different from its general use in sociology. They held that the central religious experience is the *sensus numinis* which gives knowledge of ultimate reality (Smart 1973: 59) and that, despite the variety of religious ideas and practices around the world, there is an underlying unity of all religions ('core theory') which is not reducible to anything else (Smart 1973: 61).

I take a phenomenological approach to informants' accounts in the sense that I do not interrogate their motivations, nor question their sense of the Divine (Chapter 5). I do not analyse the meaning they describe as much as show how the meaning they ascribe to their experiences alters their behaviour: in other words, despite taking a phenomenological attitude to the accounts themselves, I am taking an analytical sociological approach in considering their implications.

Ethnography

Stringer distinguished ethnography as practised in other disciplines¹⁵ from the 'ideal' ethnographic method of anthropology as practised by Malinowski, who advocated immersion over a period of years (rather than months); holistically taking into account

¹⁵ Nesbitt adds religious studies (2011: 968) to Stringer's illustrative list of sociology, social psychology, media studies and cultural studies (1999: 42-43).

everything occurring within a specific community; providing a holistic understanding of events and trying to understand what is happening 'from the native's point of view' (1999: 42-43).¹⁶

Ethnography has been broadly defined as:¹⁷

social research based on the close-up, on-the-ground observation of people and institutions in real time and space, in which the investigator embeds herself near (or within) the phenomenon so as to detect how and why agents on the scene act, think and feel the way they do.

(Wacquant 2003: 5)

In this section, I review relevant contemporary ethnographies in the disciplines of anthropology, sociology and theology. I first draw on Ward (2004) and Wood (2004) to show how evidence based in lived experience produces rich nuanced theory, then review relevant aspects of studies about individual religious experience, religious experience in one religious group, new religious movements, new forms of practice and small groups and invisible exercise of power within groups.

¹⁶ It would be difficult to practise ethnography with a group of Experimenters as Malinowski did in his work: Experimenters do not live in community, but come together periodically and depart to other areas of their lives (home, family, work, non-Quaker social lives). Collins (1994) undertook an anthropological study of a Quaker Meeting, which he inhabited (as its Meeting House Warden), but his immersion would have been similarly limited since the Meeting's members also spent most of their lives doing other things. My attendance at Group A was as frequent and regular as the most frequent and regular group members' attendance, so I was as immersed in their practice as they were, but not in their whole lives. See Chapter 4 for my methodology.

¹⁷ The broad definition was for the purpose of an international conference held by *Ethnography* journal and the Center for Urban Ethnography at the University of California. The conference purpose was to take collective stock of past achievements, to reflect on contemporary practice and to outline what ethnography as a distinctive mode of enquiry might produce. The main impulse behind the conference was to get anthropologists and sociologists who practice and think about fieldwork seriously to acknowledge, and engage with, each other. The premise was that the most promising route for strengthening and enriching the craft of field enquiry was the braiding of existing traditions of fieldwork across an artificial disciplinary divide between anthropologists and sociologists. The issues addressed in the conference were also concerns for the disciplines of education, law, geography, history and science, amongst others. (Wacquant 2003: 5-6, 12 en3).

The importance of ethnography in developing research approach and theory

Ward shows how a particular research project may lead the researcher towards data collection that only ethnographic methods can supply, requiring presence in amongst the researched population over a length of time in order to collect (observe, note, interview, transcribe and journal) data to support the research hypothesis (2004: 125). Her original intention was to conduct a comparative study of congregations in three different denominations to investigate corporate identity, but she found that disparity in circumstances meant that comparative study would be meaningless and that the data she was gathering challenged the very notion of 'corporate identity' and led her instead to consider the power dynamics within the congregation (Ward 2004: 126-127): the nature of the ethnographic data belied the basis on which she started.

In his analysis of kinship and class, Wood (2004) brings out the shortcomings of theory unrelated to ethnographic evidence. He argues that focus on text is to the detriment of contextual analysis (of the writers of the texts or, more importantly, the lives of those who do not produce texts) (Wood 2004: 203): Strathern, in interpreting social relations as choices rather than as the conditions in which people are collectively bound together, fails to recognise the role played by family in people's lives because her interpretation is not based in her earlier kinship study (Strathern 1981; 1992; Wood 2004: 201-202); Giddens lifts modern friendships out of their contexts (Giddens 1994; Wood 2004: 199-201); Schutz's social phenomenology (in particular his analysis of the 'we-relationship' (1967 [1932]: 164)) tears people away from the structures of social power (Wood 2004: 200); and Heelas' analysis of the New Age, focusing on perception, meaning and language, has obscured the question

of social power and therefore a proper appraisal of what New Age spirituality is and its place in wider society (Heelas 1996; Wood 2004: 200-201).

Like Ward's, my project (investigating the Experiment) could realistically be undertaken only with a qualitative, ethnographic approach: its very nature suggested that experience of it was key to understanding its relationship with its wider Quaker context. In Chapter 4, I discuss how my use of adapted grounded theory underlay the ensuing analysis, so that, like Wood, my conclusions stem from ethnographic evidence.

Below I draw on selected relevant ethnographies in sociology and anthropology of religion¹⁸ and congregational studies (which combine sociology of religion and theology),¹⁹ in order to review possible approaches to illuminate the sociological analysis of the Experiment and to show how aspects of this thesis fill gaps left by other research. I consider respectively individual religious experience; religious experience in one religious group; new religious movements; new forms of religious practice in small groups; and exercise of power within groups.

Individual religious experience

Hay (1990) gave examples of mystical and numinous²⁰ experiences from the work

¹⁸ In addition to the work in sociology and anthropology of religion (Saunders 1993; 1995; Toulis 1997; Luhrmann 2002; Riches 2003; Hasselle-Newcombe 2005; Stringer 2005; Wood 2007), I consider work from general anthropology (Boehm 1993).

¹⁹ Specifically, Ward (2000) and Guest (2004; 2007).

²⁰ Hay defined 'mystical' as an experience where the person talks about 'merging' with the rest of reality and 'numinous' as 'experiences of the presence of God' (1990: 31). Hay's definition of numinous was derived from Otto (Otto 1950 [1927]: 11-24; Hay 1982: 86-88) and his definition of mystical from Stace (Stace 1960; Hay 1982: 88). Hay also used the term 'religious experience' as a classification of accounts submitted in response to a question as to whether respondents had been 'conscious of, and perhaps influenced by, a power, whether they called it the power of God or not; this power might either appear to be beyond their individual selves, or in part outside and in part within their being' (1990: 30); in his own research, he used the question: 'Have you ever been aware of or influenced by a presence or

undertaken by the Alister Hardy Research Centre, Manchester College, Oxford,²¹ and there are similar popular accounts, for example Hawkins (2004), but, unlike the experiences discussed in Chapters 5 and 6, these are not within the context of understanding a single religious group or practice.

Luhrmann analyses 'dissociation' in 'magical practice' and claims that spiritual experiences and visions are at least in part as a result of the 'self-manipulative' techniques of meditation and visualisation (2002: 122-127). She says she was persuaded that 200 or 300 of the Wiccans, druids, kabbalists and shamans she met doing her research in the 1980s in London had become adepts and were able to have semi-mystical²² experiences at will (Luhrmann 2002: 124). She suggests they were able to induce states which are rare and usually spontaneous in the wider population (2002: 124) and she demonstrates the identical structure of magical pathworking visualisations and 'The Spiritual Exercises of Ignatius Loyola' (2002: 125-126). She also compares magico-religious and psychiatric experiences (2002: 127-130). She then suggests that the magico-religious and psychiatric express more or less the same psychophysiological shift (2002: 131).²³ Thus, she takes a reductionist stance, which

power, whether you call it God or not, which is different from your everyday self?' (1982: 113). I use 'numinous' as Otto defined it. I use 'mystical' following Stace, but with the additional implicit connotation that informants understand it either as emanating from a transcendent Divine being or as so mysterious as to defy rational explanation.

²¹ Hay described his research as starting with an informal enquiry of Nottingham University students in the early 1970s leading to a 1975 funded research project in which initial data was gathered by opinion pollsters, then on-street surveys and finally in-depth interviews in informants' homes (1982: 112-114, 130-132; 1990: 54-59). The work was therefore not strictly an ethnography, although it used the ethnographic methods of survey and interview.

²² Luhrmann based her use of the term 'mystical' on James' (1982 [1902]) definition of mystical experience as 'a highly intense, short-lived experience in which one feels suspended in space and time, immortal, at one with the universe and often surrounded by light and love' (Luhrmann 2002: 124).

²³ Luhrmann (2002: 135-136) cites James (1982 [1902]), whose work I find (following Jantzen (1995)) less useful; I prefer Otto (1950 [1927]). A reverse stance might argue that the psychiatric patients were having religious, rather than psychotic experiences; Luhrmann finds similarities without privileging one interpretation over the other.

I do not.²⁴ Although she does give detailed case studies to illustrate her argument, Luhrmann's focus is on the 'social technology' (the ritual of meditation or visualisation) rather than the experience itself. She does, however, conclude from her research, as I do from mine, that experience of God²⁵ is more important than belief (2002: 122). She considers similar groups with broadly similar practices, compares them with the Ignatian exercises from a completely different tradition and then links the resultant experiences with psychiatric conditions.²⁶

Hasselle-Newcombe's (2005) study of yoga practitioners concludes that their practice parallels Troeltsch's (1931 [1912]) and Campbell's (1978) 'mystical religion'.

Hasselle-Newcombe's approach favours quantitative data and does not include any individual accounts of mystical²⁷ experience, nor does she mention practitioners having such experience. Instead she finds physically focused practice generally creates an increased sense of meaning. She does, however, show that, like Experimenters,²⁸ different belief frameworks are irrelevant to her informants' practice, some of whom were affiliated with more than one faith (2005: 314-315).²⁹

²⁴ See Chapter 6 ('Underlying reality and language: a non-reductionist stance'), pp181-183, for my discussion of reductionism.

²⁵ Luhrmann uses the word 'God'; see Chapter 1 FN27 for my definition of the term I use in preference, the 'Divine'.

²⁶ Given Experimenters' insistence that the Experiment is not therapy, see Chapter 1 ('Experiment practice'), pp12-13, one observation of particular interest is that in psychiatry the relationship with God may be replaced by the relationship with the therapist (Luhrmann 2002: 135-136), suggesting that therapy is a substitute for religion rather than the reverse.

²⁷ Hasselle-Newcombe references Troeltsch and Campbell for 'mystical religion', which she says has more to do with 'personal experiences of holiness and spirituality' than 'visions or ecstatic religious experiences' and is 'based on the idea of immanence and an insistence on direct, personal experience' (Troeltsch 1931 [1912]: 793-794; Campbell 1978; Hasselle-Newcombe 2005: 316-317).

²⁸ See Chapter 5 ('Belief frameworks'), p185.

²⁹ The majority had no religion, most of the remainder identified multiple faiths and the single largest faith was Buddhist, despite Iyengar yoga having Hindu roots (Hasselle-Newcombe 2005: 314-315).

Religious experience in one religious group

In his study of four Manchester congregations in the 1980s, Stringer identified a five-stage process in the conversion experience of the Independent Christian Fellowship ('ICF') (1999: 159-161), whose similarities with Experimenters' experience I discuss in Chapter 6. Stringer brought out the importance of experience in worship, but he was clear that he was not discussing 'religious' experience in the sense that Hay (1990), Otto (1950 [1927]) and James (1982 [1902]) did (Stringer 1999: 207-208). Stringer said classification of religious experience does not explain what ordinary people are experiencing. I question Stringer's approach: he said he was not trying to define the nature or content of his informants' experience as to do so 'gets us nowhere' (1999: 207). I show, however, in Chapters 5, 6 and 7 that the nature of what Experimenters experience is integral to the explanation of the Experiment at a corporate as well as an individual or group level.

One of the few direct descriptions of contemporary religious experience (in the sense that I discuss it) in the context of a single group is to be found in Toulis' study of identity, religion and gender among African-Caribbean Pentecostalism in 1990s Birmingham (1997: 128-134, 157-161).³⁰ Informants' descriptions were mostly graphic, dramatic, embodied and visionary, understood in terms of a fight with a demon or the devil, culminating in a spiritual rebirth and understood in terms of Christian belief (Toulis 1997: 135), with a subsequent baptism by the Holy Spirit (Toulis 1997: 158).

³⁰ Toulis argued that her informants' Pentecostalism was not simply a means of spiritual compensation for their economic disadvantage, but rather their religious participation helped them challenge the dominant representation of Black people and the terms of their interaction with others in British society (1997: 268-269). More detail is provided in this chapter ('Crisis of presence'), pp55-56.

In contrast, as I show in Chapters 5 and 6, Experimenters' experience is not necessarily as dramatic, nor is it understood in terms of a particular belief, since there is no single language of belief within British Quakers which might describe it. Furthermore, except within the confines of confidential sharing in the Light group practice or in research interview, as a result of the culture of silence it is not made public in Meetings.³¹

'Crisis of presence'

Toulis' work considered individuals joining a church, it did not consider a new practice within an existing group. Her mention of the notion of 'crisis of presence', however, has relevance. She reviewed Saunders' explication of De Martino's idea of 'crisis of presence' to conclude that it precipitated her informants' religious conversion (Saunders 1995; Toulis 1997: 126-128).³² De Martino defined 'crisis of presence' as 'the existential drama of being exposed to the risk of not being here', not merely anxiety about the possibility of one's own death, but 'a deeper and subtler problem: a breakdown in the sense of self, eventuating in passivity and ineffectual engagement with the world outside' (Saunders 1995: 324). Saunders said De Martino derived 'crisis of presence' (in part) from Heidegger's notion of *Dasein*, which differentiates being from existing: human existence includes a relationship to being. There are different ways of being with oneself, of which it is easy to lose sight in the mundane

³¹ Some experience of the Experiment has been made public in *Seeing Hearing Knowing* (Lampen 2008), but only one chapter (Gray & Gray 2008) gives British Friends' own personal experience, although my chapter (Meads 2008b: 90-91) described informants' experience during the research; other chapters are about aspects of the Experiment or by Friends from overseas. In the culture of silence it may be more acceptable to read than to hear others' experience (it is possible to read silently).

³² Saunders said that De Martino's work is little-known outside Italy and France (1993: 875). All Saunders' De Martino references, including secondary sources, (Saunders 1993: 890 fn3, 890-892; 1995: 337 fn8, 338-340) are Italian, which I do not read (Toulis did not cite De Martino either, possibly for the same reason).

world: 'In losing sight of our fundamental being, we become inauthentic' (Saunders 1993: 883).

Drawing from these philosophical orientations, De Martino sees presence in the world as a relationship to the self, a kind of self-consciousness that informs (or in another sense is) a dialectic of 'presence in the world' and 'the world which presents itself.' The crisis of presence is a situation in which one is 'absorbed in the world' in a way that one loses control of one's own existence. And for De Martino, when the individual loses the kind of self-consciousness that includes 'its practical intentionality', when he finds himself unable to 'produce' himself, then one can speak of a crisis of presence. However, the crisis also produces the possibility of transcendence. For Heidegger, dread, or angst, is the stimulus to self-knowledge, and De Martino seems to share the conviction that overcoming the crisis of presence is the fundamental work of culture.

(Saunders 1993: 883)

A crisis of presence can be overcome through rituals (and specifically the ritual of conversion) whereby the person constructs a new sense of personhood and identity and is thus integrated into the world and regains self-consciousness and ability to act in the world (Cucchiari 1988: 418; Saunders 1995: 333; Toulis 1997: 127).³³

Toulis' informants faced racism, discrimination, poor housing, unequal employment opportunities and lack of social support as a result of the fragmentation of their families in the diaspora (Toulis 1997: 54-79). Their crisis, of not being valued by others nor being integrated into society, was resolved by the informants' identifying as 'Christian',³⁴ which they saw as more important than their superficial identities of ethnicity/social status and which was willed (not fixed) and individual (not collective)

³³ Cucchiari did not make reference to De Martino, nor to crisis of presence, although what he described was very similar. Rather his lens was Herbert Fingarette's existentialist-psychoanalytic synthesis (Cucchiari 1988). Cucchiari also noted (as Toulis observed) the paradox of a convert achieving a more autonomous self by giving up others' control only through surrender or recommitment to the claims of a moral order (Toulis called it 'the will of God') (Cucchiari 1988: 418; Toulis 1997: 127).

³⁴ 'Christian' [in quotation marks] denotes those who have been saved in a conversion experience, as distinct from, for example, English Christians who attend English churches or the African-Caribbean informants before their conversion experiences (Toulis 1997: 161-162).

(Toulis 1997: 162). Toulis' claim that her informants' religious conversion was precipitated by a crisis of presence is undermined by the fact that their dramatic experiences did not lead immediately to their joining the Pentecostal community: in each of the three cases she cited, the experience was some years precedent, so that the identification as 'Christian', which Toulis found was the most crucial part of her informants' identity, also came some time later.

Toulis said Saunders proposed that a 'crisis of presence' precedes conversion (1997: 126), but in his study of Italian Pentecostals, Saunders made it clear that most converts seemed not to have experienced crisis (1993: 325) and, further, that it was not the situations themselves that create a crisis of presence, rather it was a question of consciousness (1995: 332). Saunders applied crisis of presence as an analytic construct to three conversion accounts, where his informants had clear crises: alcoholism, a family feud and a crippling medical condition (1995: 327-330, 334-337), but he drew no conclusion as to what that meant for the concept, nor for their religious communities.

There is anyway some difficulty in applying the concept of crisis of presence to the Experiment because Experimenters do not, as Saunders' and Toulis' Pentecostals did (Saunders 1993: 327; Toulis 1997: 128-134, 144-145), rehearse a conversion or convincement narrative to construct a crisis of presence retrospectively.³⁵ There is

³⁵ Toulis did not discuss her methodology, so it is not clear whether the conversion accounts she cited at length (1997: 129-134) were gathered as testimony in a Church service or from interviews. The only references to how she obtained data (participant-observation and informal interviews) were in a footnote and the Acknowledgements (Toulis 1997: ix, 52 FN19). She did not say whether she was able to make audio recordings (although she distinguished verbatim quotes from fieldnote paraphrases (Toulis 1997: xi), so presumably she was) and she discussed her research with some informants so she appears to have been an overt researcher (Toulis 1997: ix, 168). Saunders was explicit that he taped an interview (1995: 327) (and implicitly, therefore also the others).

only the experience they articulate in the sharing after the meditation (or in interview). Experimenters may have a vague sense of all not being right in their lives, but there is little evidence that they are drawn to Experiment because of crisis.³⁶

Conversely, if crisis of presence is relevant to the phenomenon of the Experiment, it is created by the Experiment's inherent reflexivity rather than being a pre-existing condition which Experimenters seek to resolve by Experimenting. It cannot be said that Experimenters are passive and ineffectual in their worldly engagement prior to their Experimenting, but in the Experiment they do come to see how they may operate more effectively.³⁷ Experimenters' desire for the authenticity of early Friends' experience thus creates whatever crisis of presence there may be, which they then resolve by further Experimenting.³⁸

Davies suggests that Toulis' use of the idea of 'crisis of presence' which he says accounts for the meaninglessness precluding conversion, could be included in the spread of concepts (including Durkheim's *anomie* (1951 [1897])) of low or negative 'cultural intensity' (Toulis 1997: 126-128; Davies 2008: 15).³⁹ Davies' focus is the

³⁶ I came across only three clear examples of crisis: i10 described his grief on reading his wife's diary after she died (see Chapter 6 ('Uncomfortable experiences'), p216); one Friend joined i7's group when she was dying of cancer (Fieldnotes, 5 August 2003); and one member of Group A suffered chronic and debilitating pain. For the most part, however, my informants were able to function in the world normally.

³⁷ See Chapter 6 ('Stages of transformation'), pp212-234, for examples, in particular in relation to i1's, a1's and i16's employment and a8's and i13's family relationships.

³⁸ Paradoxically, it is much clearer that early Friends, and Fox in particular, underwent a crisis of presence, although this may be because they rehearsed the stories of their experience in order to proselytise (see chapter 1 FN80, Fox's *Journal* was not a contemporaneous record): they lived in tumultuous times (their world had been turned upside down by the execution of Charles I and the ensuing Civil War) and Fox also seems to have undergone a period of something akin to depression (Nickalls 1975: 9-11).

³⁹ Davies bases his theory of 'cultural intensification' on Chapple and Coon's (1947) 'rites of intensification'. Rites of intensification are repeated and renewed ritual events in which a group gathers to re-engage with its basic values and the individuals within the group engage with the values of their society: Eucharist would be one such rite, intensifying Christians' affective engagement with their corporate values (Davies 2008: 9). Where rites of intensification are specific, cultural intensification is

lack of an analytical category within which sociology and psychology can complement each other to allow the individual to reappear within sociological studies (Day 2008: 1). As I show in Chapters 4 to 7, individuals' experiences can be foregrounded in sociological analysis without having to borrow from psychology.

New religious movements

Wood's (2007) ethnography of a New Age network, including a meditation group,⁴⁰ provides a potential comparator for the internal workings of a Light group.⁴¹ The groups Wood studied overlapped with each other (2007: 4-7), but there was no overarching organisation to which, or within which, they related to each other, so they do not illuminate the Experiment in relation to its context.⁴²

Meditation group

Of the groups in his fieldwork, Wood's meditation group practice is the most similar to the Experiment's process. Participants gathered before the meditation, meditated by following one participant's visualisation, then had discussion afterwards (Wood 2007: 79-82). Wood and the other meditators found that, despite the visualisations, they were able to reflect on their lives and achieve clarity about their personal

general and can be applied to different facets of societies: religion, poetry, drama and money are amongst those Davies discusses (2008: 7, 16-17). There are implicitly degrees of cultural intensity involved in cultural intensification (Davies 2008: 15).

⁴⁰ The other parts of the network Wood studies were channelling workshops, a religious fair providing products and services, a spiritual healing circle, an Anthroposophical group and an occult study group.

⁴¹ Wood uses an analysis of power incorporating Bordieuan 'fields' and Foucauldian 'strategy' (Wood 2007: 41-46, 50-51). He applies the combination of both to conclude that his informants lacked power in aspects of their lives outside their religious practice – that the centrality of possession practices enables the legitimisation of their lives and practices as religious and corresponds to 'the status ambiguity' arising from 'their particular class position in the professionalized fraction of the working-class' (Wood 2007: 175). (I question Wood's analysis of his informants' 'class position' and I find his description of their home decoration as *petit-bourgeois* (Wood 2007: 170) condescending, so lacking respect for his informants.) Wood reads Foucault in Marxian (if not Marxist) terms (2007: 46). My analysis of power uses a subtler Foucauldian conception of power, because I am looking at group relations as well as exercise of power on and by the individual (see this chapter ('Application of power relations and egalitarianism to Quakers and the Experiment'), p72). Wood misses Foucault's characterisation of power as network, dynamic rather than a static possession.

⁴² See this chapter ('New forms of religious practice and small groups'), pp61-66, for discussion of a study which does relate small groups to their context.

relationships, health and work (Wood 2007: 81).⁴³ The main themes provided in the visualisations were light and relationships, but in the frame of Essene theology with darkness pitted dualistically against light; the meditations were directive and on one occasion meditators were instructed to transform their 'dark sides' (Wood 2007: 84).

Wood found the themes were so vague that in discussion after the meditation meditators shared 'manifold and divergent meanings' with a noticeable lack of consensus (2007: 85).⁴⁴ He does not report the content of any experiences in the meditation, nor any meditators reflexively questioning their own actions: one informant reported being confronted by uncomfortable truths about her mother, but Wood does not say what those truths were (2007: 85).⁴⁵

Non-formativeness

From his total fieldwork Wood concludes that the New Age is not simply a social movement in which self-authority triumphs over external authority (2007: 154). Rather, whilst participants' religious experiences and senses of self were shaped through their interactions with authorities in these phenomena (for example, their leaders, texts and traditions), those authorities are unable, either singly or in groups, to shape the experiences or senses of self in a formative manner (Wood 2007: 156). In participants' experiences (whether in the events or more widely) and in their

⁴³ Wood does not describe what the nature of that clarity was, nor how it was achieved. Whilst he may not have had such data from his informants, he would certainly have known his own experience, but chose not to explain it.

⁴⁴ Wood's use of 'consensus' (2007: 85) rather than, for example, commonality, reflects that he considers the discussion in purely cognitive/belief terms rather than as reflecting the content of meditators' experience.

⁴⁵ It is possible that Wood's informant did not say what those uncomfortable truths were, or possibly he did not think them relevant, if she did; he does not record the meditator considering her own part in her relationship with her mother either (2007: 85). The lack of any such data could have been because the post-meditation form was discussion rather than structured sharing (which prevents comment on another's experience and therefore allows participants to share more of their experience without fear of being ridiculed) and the lack of reflexivity could have been because of the content of the visualisations, which may not have encouraged participants to question themselves.

biographies, a proliferation of religious authorities existed, none of which exerted sufficient authority to act in a formative manner; even when one authority (for example Reiki or channelling) predominated, it was crosscut by a variety of other authorities (Wood 2007: 156-157). The multiple authorities were enfolded into participants' religious sense of self, so that relativised multiple authorities were present (Wood 2007: 157).

Comparison and contrast with the Experiment

Experimenters already relate to each other as fellow-Quakers in their Meetings before coming together to Experiment; Light groups are under the care of Meetings and subject to Eldership and Oversight within the Meeting.⁴⁶ Thus, unlike Wood's network, the Experiment exists in the context of Quakerism: it is nested within an existing framework.⁴⁷ The extent to which Experimenters' biographies affect their religious engagement will largely have been played out in their becoming Quakers before they Experiment.⁴⁸

Wood's meditation group differs from Light groups in that the Experiment is less directed to a given outcome and more encouraging of reflexivity. The Experiment's post-meditation sharing is without comment so that it does not devolve into discussion; instead it has a boundaried sharing of experience within the meditation. It

⁴⁶ Overseers are responsible for pastoral care (*QFP* 1995: 12.13). The tension between Light groups and elements in their Meetings, including the role of Elders, is explored in Chapter 7.

⁴⁷ The Experiment has been introduced to non-Quakers and practised outside a Quaker context, but (like the practice of the Experiment outside Britain) that is outside the scope of this study.

⁴⁸ Most Friends come to Quakers as adults, see for example the response to Dandelion's 1990 survey where only 15.4% of respondents had come into Quakerism as a child, which supported the similar 17% 'straw poll' results from Quaker events (1996: 74). Similarly, most are from other churches, see for example Heron's 1991 survey of Yorkshire Attenders, which found that 53.4% were members or fairly regular attenders at another church or place of worship (1992: 13-14); Dandelion asked similar questions (1996: 346), but did not report the results, except to mention that 8.8% of respondents claimed dual membership: 6% were Anglicans and less than 1% each were Methodists, Roman Catholics and Buddhists; he also mentioned one Pagan and one Moslem (1996: 276-277). It is rare for an Experimenter in a British Light group not to attend MfW regularly.

is, however, interesting to note that Wood and his meditators reported achieving clarity about their personal lives; the effect on Experimenters of their practice is examined in Chapter 6 in more detail than Wood's examination of the meditators'.

Wood's concept of non-formativeness is also relevant and is considered in Chapter 5, although with limited reference to Experimenters' biographies since the Quaker community is so small that very detailed biographical information would risk allowing them to be identified.⁴⁹ It is, however, not surprising to find a group which privileges religious experience over belief as non-formative.

New forms of religious practice and small groups

Guest's (2007) discussion of three types of small group meetings in his ethnography of an evangelical congregation potentially provides a comparison for the position of Light groups within their Meetings.

One form of small group, *Visions*, developed its own form of service, alternative to the main form of worship, from which its participants were alienated and therefore did not attend (Guest 2007: Chapter 6). *Visions* was strongly influenced by dance culture, so was configured entirely differently from mainstream worship with beanbags instead of pews, loud music, movie-clips, meditations, projection of scripture in word-loops and innovative rituals (Guest 2007: 135). It became a distinct community operating within the congregation (Guest 2007: 169).

⁴⁹ See Chapter 5 ('Belief frameworks'), p185, for the non-formative influences and Chapter 4 ('Confidentiality'), pp140-141, and Appendices D1 and D2 for my promise of anonymity to informants.

Alpha small group course sessions, and Alphalink, for course 'graduates', used prescribed literature and led to discussion, where discussion-leaders could police what was acceptable (Guest 2007: 175-179). Alpha was designed as evangelising outreach (Hunt 2001) and Alphalink, which followed as a bridge to church membership was used in 'home groups' consisting of church members, the newly converted and those on the margins of Christianity (Guest 2007: 175-176). Regular home groups provided sharing and mutual support: participants asked each other for advice in an atmosphere of relaxed informality, the only structure being opening and closing prayers (Guest 2007: 168-169, 180-181).

The Experiment's structure is very different from the Alpha and Alphalink sessions: there is no belief content, nor intention to convert (to either a belief system or membership); the written material used in both forms of Alpha are more directive than repeated Experimenting.⁵⁰ Light groups seem more akin to Guest's regular home groups, but the Experiment does not allow for discussion, only sharing what is experienced without comment. Differences in form and content notwithstanding, Guest's conclusions about small groups may still be relevant to the Experiment.

Guest theorises the various small groups as: sites for the expression and negotiation of the congregation's internal tolerance of diversity within affirmed theological boundaries; infusion of subjective experience with divinely ordained meaning; and a general expression of the importance of community through personal interaction and problem sharing in regular meetings (2007: 190). The intimacy and autonomy afforded by small group meetings allows legitimisation of shared values and thus

⁵⁰ See Chapter 6 for the effects on Experimenters of their practice.

embeds them in a Christian framework (Guest 2007: 190).⁵¹ Guest finds that sense, order and meaning are determined by concerns forged outside church life, relating to families, jobs, money and economic stability, so that middle-class lifestyles become dominant authority over shared Christian teaching and middle-class norms are conflated with Christian tradition to justify, for example, that careers are divinely guided and nuclear families as centres of moral authority (2007: 191).

Guest's analysis finds that small groups mediate value change, specifically a broadening of evangelical norms of acceptability and a more profound appeal to the resources of human experience as both authority and site of spiritual significance (2007: 192). He locates their experience in the 'turn to subjective life', turning away from life lived according to external expectations, to life lived according to inner experience (Heelas, et al. 2005: 3; Guest 2007: 105, 191), as a relatively new phenomenon amongst evangelicals.

Heelas and Woodhead say that of all the congregations they studied, Quakers go furthest in authorising subjective-life (2005: 21), so Experimenters would qua Quaker follow that turn. The potential difference to be explored is whether the subjective life Experimenters lead is prompted by inner experience based on pragmatism (as Guest found his congregation's was, in their aligning their inner experience with their middle-class lifestyles), or on a less comfortable and more demanding standard.⁵²

⁵¹ See Chapter 6 ('Community of intimacy' and 'Community of love'), pp239-242, for how Light groups are drawn together. See also Chapter 7 ("God" and "Love" in the community life of the group'), pp280-282, for the specific underpinning of Group A's intimacy in their community of love.

⁵² This is developed in Chapter 6, which shows how Experimenters are affected by their Experimenting.

A further potential difference is that, with the Experiment, any outcomes would not be Meeting-wide in the same way Guest found, since only a small proportion of Friends Experiment, but those Friends who do Experiment come to know each other's perspectives and life-circumstances intimately.⁵³

Guest describes evangelicalism as a subculture within society (2007: 17-19, 146), and *Visions* as a subculture within its church, because their respective identities are constructed around notions of otherness (evangelicals from modern society, *Visions* from the main church) and on their understanding of authenticity arising from that sense of otherness (2007: 147). *Visions'* identity depends on a strong sense of what its participants oppose, the charismatic, paternalistic and exclusive nature of the church (Guest 2007: 142-146), but the opposition is symbolic based on a need to maintain a distinctive identity rather than a desire to change the main church (Guest 2007: 161).

Guest explores the congregation's attitude to *Visions* and concludes that neither understood what the other was doing and that no conflict arose because there was little contact between them (2007: 160-161). There was acceptance of *Visions*, however, for its evangelism and it was financially integrated (Guest 2007: 139, 161).⁵⁴ Unlike *Visions*, the Experiment is additional Quaker-time activity for its participants,⁵⁵ not an alternative to MfW, so *Visions'* relationship with its context is

⁵³ The tensions arising from Light groups being small groups within Meetings where not all Friends participate are explored in Chapter 7 (Conflict handling).

⁵⁴ *Visions* was funded by its membership, but through the congregation's covenanting system, which supplied it with an annual budget (Guest 2007: 139).

⁵⁵ I came across only one (b4) who had stopped attending MfW. The fear that the Experiment would become an alternative to MfW underlay one of the objections to it in Meeting A, but this was a misconception.

different from the Experiment's, suggesting that subculture is not an appropriate analytical lens for the Experiment.⁵⁶

Guest's use of 'subculture' becomes rather loose: at one point he describes middle-class as subculture (2007: 191), which, given the predominance of the middle-class in British culture, is so general as to begin to render the concept (as he uses it) meaningless.⁵⁷ everything becomes a subculture of something else and nothing is mainstream so that 'subculture' loses its original connotations.⁵⁸ He does not directly address whether a subculture operating within a subculture (for example *Visions* within the evangelical) is different from mainstream culture, but he does say that for groups such as *Visions*, culture is ontologically prior in their identity (Guest 2007: 212), implying their subculture-within-a-subculture orientates them to the mainstream.⁵⁹

Where Guest's analysis may be of most relevance is in his discussion of evangelical networks as a means for spreading ideas and his open question as to whether networks may have more influence than congregations (2007: 203-204). *Visions* was in part impelled into being by its founders attendance at a Christian festival (Guest 2007: 135-136). People moving to the church he studied and then leaving to go to other churches and denominations form nodes of contact with other networks (Guest 2007: 199-200) and overarching religious world views may be held and maintained in non-

⁵⁶ See also this chapter ('Subcultural identity' and 'The Experiment and sub/counterculture'), pp75-79, for a deeper exploration of subculture as a potential analytical lens.

⁵⁷ See also this chapter FN92, it is implicit in Clarke's (1974) analysis that subculture cannot meaningfully be applied to the middle-class.

⁵⁸ As discussed further in this chapter ('Subcultural identity'), pp75-76.

⁵⁹ As exemplified in *Visions*' attitude to homosexuality: see this chapter FN96.

local discrete networks (Hirst 2003: 88; Guest 2007: 199).⁶⁰ At the same time, Guest concludes that community is a key value and small groups within the congregation foster intimacy and familiarity whilst also allowing communality and sharing of subjectivities (2007: 205-206).⁶¹

Guest's work is therefore of most relevance to the Experiment in its examination of how small groups may both foster a sense of community⁶² and facilitate change in the wider group⁶³ and how networks both act as a means for spreading ideas and may be more influential than Meetings.

Exercise of power within groups

In this section, I review work which informs power relations in that it shows how exercise of power can be curtailed by the whole group's behaviour in a form of egalitarianism. I first consider Boehm (1993) and Riches (2003) on egalitarianism, then Ward's (2000) thesis, which used Foucault's reading of power, to conclude how they are appropriate to Quakers and the Experiment.

Egalitarianism

Boehm surveyed a large corpus⁶⁴ of studies of autonomous societies to conclude that in the surveyed societies, rather than being dominated, the rank-and-file itself dominated by what amounted to social policy, hence 'reverse dominance hierarchy'

⁶⁰ At the time I undertook the fieldwork, there was no over-arching network for the Experiment, but it was often the case that Friends had attended workshops (see Chapter 1 ('How the Experiment has spread'), pp16-17), so there was the possibility of introduction to this new practice outside Meeting structure.

⁶¹ This applies also to Experimenters in their Light groups, see this chapter FN51.

⁶² See Chapter 6 ('5 Intimacy in the group (gathering together)'), pp227-231, and Chapter 7 ('"God" and "love" in the community life of the group'), pp280-282.

⁶³ See Chapter 7 ('Power: external conflicts', 'External conflicts' and 'Heterotopian conflict handling'), pp269-270, pp283-285 and p298.

⁶⁴ Boehm explained in a footnote how his methodology prevented him from being able to quantify exactly how many societies were included in his survey, but it was extensive (1993: 229 FN2).

(1993: 236). The social policy worked through intentional levelling mechanisms including rebuff, rebuke, shouting down, showing amusement and ridiculing; public opinion acted as a check on leadership where socialisation made the leader sensitive to group disapproval (1993: 228, 229-231).⁶⁵ Sanctions short of deposing the leader allowed the group to control negatively evaluated tendencies while continuing to enjoy the benefits of his strong leadership (Boehm 1993: 237). Boehm found that anticipation of dominance meant that, as long as both leader and followers were aware that egalitarian relations between followers and their leader were deliberately brought into being by collectively assertive followers, deliberate control might be highly routinised and ethnographically unobvious (1993: 233-234).

Riches (2003) attempts to draw out New Religious Movements' (NRMs) contrasting modes of social organisation and ethnographic similarity with hunter-gatherer societies; he explains their egalitarian similarities according to Boehm's (1993) idea of 'reverse dominance'.

Riches observes that egalitarianism correlates with specific experiences of space-time, which permits egalitarianism of outcome to flourish (2003: 122).⁶⁶ Bruce (2005) has criticised Riches for ignoring evidence belying both egalitarianism and similarities between Glastonbury and 'original human society',⁶⁷ but Riches' (2003) analysis does

⁶⁵ In some cases, boundaries on leadership were laid by disobedience, including refusal to listen, obeying insultingly and ignoring (in one case by the group physically turning their backs on their leader). Sanctions to terminate a leader's role included ostracism or, in the extreme, assassination, but a less direct technique was desertion, whether gradually or en masse, by leaving (Boehm 1993: 230-231).

⁶⁶ Riches uses the term 'counter-cultural' for the present-day societies he mentions; he makes explicit that this implies 'oppositional' (2003: 121). See this chapter 'Counterculture' for why I refute counterculture as a lens for the Experiment. I accept, however, that British Quakers exhibit countercultural tendencies towards British society generally.

⁶⁷ Bruce (2005) notes that Princes, who did the fieldwork at Glastonbury, was aware that at Glastonbury it was evident that women still undertake the bulk of childcare, are often left as single parents by their partners and are faithful, whilst it is the men who enjoy polygamous relationships;

hold good in the similarities in space-time parameters, if not in all details. Riches reviews the selected NRMs and hunter-gatherer communities on axes of internal and external hierarchy, egalitarianism of opportunity or outcome, space (dispersal, mobility, density) and time (continuity/discontinuity).⁶⁸

Of the communities Riches mentions,⁶⁹ Quakers have most similarity to the Rainbow People,⁷⁰ since Quakers live separately from each other, come together for a limited time and then disperse; those who set up camp are power holders, albeit that Quaker officeholders' power is time-limited. The analogy would suggest that: the life is not middle-class mainstream, albeit that most have middle-class occupations; the gathering is socially entirely open, whilst giving tolerance to others' social and cultural preferences; hierarchy is completely shunned in all social and practical arrangements; and food and other resources are shared in the event (Riches 2003: 127-128).

Power imbalance: the hybrid body of Christ

In her ethnographic study of an Anglican congregation, which she located in congregational studies and practical theology, Ward (2000) found that the dominant discourse of the male 'liberal' white church members subordinated black and female

Riches work with Princes (2002) ignores how dependent participants in the Glastonbury community are on capitalist society, for example living on inherited wealth or benefits or making a living from selling 'fripperies'.

⁶⁸ Societies with egalitarian outcome practice exemplary opposition and have no physical or social boundaries: the more publicly they are on view, the more equal they are likely to be and, where there are social and physical boundaries to prevent public view, the more hierarchical they are likely to be.

⁶⁹ Riches' comparisons are Glastonbury New Agers/Inuit, Rainbow People/Mbuti Pygmy, Findhorn/Kwakiutl and Ave de Jesus/Australian Aborigine (2003: 122-132).

⁷⁰ The Rainbow People assemble in remote forests in large groups for a few weeks each year; members pursue New Age practices in the forest camps, but revert to their urban middle-class lifestyles for the rest of the year (Riches 2003: 127). Robson also mentions the Rainbow Family of Light as a non-hierarchical secular group committed to a peaceful way of life (2005: 7). Following links from Robson's reference www.welcomehome.org to <http://www.welcomehome.org/rainbow/index.html>, (Welcome Home) makes it clear they are the same group.

members. She showed how 'gossip' and 'staying away' were used to register 'silent' discontent (2000: 193-199). Her conclusion developed the idea of the body of Christ as hybrid, both as a unifying and cohesive figure, especially in the dominant group's imaginations, but also as broken, a presence located in gaps and omissions (2000: 205-218).

Ward's work is particularly interesting for the way she analysed power. She found 'hegemony', an ideology which entails and legitimates domination, and wins consent from those who are subordinated (Eagleton 1991: 112)⁷¹ too dualistic to account for the ways in which subordinated groups and members resist dominance and develop strategies to deny; similarly hegemony did not encompass the material sites of life from which relations of power could be read (Ward 2000: 73). Ward observed that little had been written about power within the local church congregation and that Foucault's writing was a useful analytical lens, especially the idea that the wielder of power sustains that power by cloaking its own presence and projecting otherness on to those who are different (Ward 2000: 22; Foucault 2002 [1966]: 330-374).

Ward suggested that, as Foucault theorised, power circulates within an institution, so that both dominant and subordinate participate (2000: 75):

Power must be analysed as something which circulates, or rather as something which only functions in the form of a chain. It is never localised here or there, never in anybody's hands, never appropriated as a commodity or piece of

⁷¹ Eagleton wrote about hegemony in relation to Gramsci and ideology (1991: 93-124). Gramsci discussed hegemony in his *Prison Notebooks* (1971), which were fragmentary and originally written in the late 1920s and early 1930s (1971: x-xvi). He said that the dominant group exercises hegemony, through society's intellectuals (who are their 'deputies'), by means of 'spontaneous' consent of the masses of the population to the general direction imposed on social life by that dominant group: the consent derives from the dominant group's prestige and consequent confidence, which in turn arise from its position and function in the world of production (Gramsci 1971: 12).

wealth. Power is employed and exercised through a net-like organisation. And not only do individuals circulate between its threads; they are always in the position of simultaneously undergoing and exercising this power. They are not only its inert or consenting target; they are always also the elements of its articulation. In other words, individuals are the vehicles of power, not its points of application.

(Foucault 1980 [1976]: 98)⁷²

One possibility in the face of a power imbalance is to remain silent, as Ward's informants did, resisting the dominant power by staying away from church (Ward 2000: 76-77, 197-199):

Power is not a substance. Neither is it a mysterious property whose origin must be delved into. Power is only a certain type of relation between individuals. ... The characteristic feature of power is that some men can more or less entirely determine other men's conduct – but never exhaustively or coercively. A man who is chained up and beaten is subject to force being exerted over him. Not power. But if he can be induced to speak, when his ultimate recourse could have been to hold his tongue, preferring death, then he has been caused to behave in a certain way. His freedom has been subjected to power. ... There is no power without potential refusal or revolt.

(Foucault 2000 [1979]: 324)

Ward also analysed the silence of the dominant to show how it operated as a mask; its power was to create a myth of unity (2000: 199-204).

Power can also, however, be productive, offering compensatory benefits (Ward 2000: 80):

If power were never anything but repressive, if it never did anything but to say no, do you really think one would be brought to obey it? What makes power hold good, what makes it accepted, is simply the fact that it doesn't only weigh on us as a force that says no; it also traverses and produces things, it induces pleasure, forms knowledge, produces discourse. It needs to be considered as a

⁷² See Chapter 8 ('Foucault's spatial paradigm'), pp310-312, where networks and nodes are fundamental. There is a clear spatial element to Foucault's understanding of power; indeed Philo described Foucault as 'the geometer of power' (1992: 152).

productive network that runs through the whole social body, much more than as a negative instance whose function is repression.
(Foucault 2000 [1976]: 120)

Thus, power circulates and can be seen as negotiation between different degrees of dominant and subordinated members; it is evident in material and social locations and interactions (and their absences and silence) and read from the observed practices and discourses in the group being researched (Ward 2000: 80-81).

Application of power relations and egalitarianism to Quakers and the Experiment

Quakers understand themselves as an egalitarian group in which the testimony to equality relates not only to equality in the sight of God, but also in each other's sight (*QFP* 1995: 2.75, 19.39-19.40, 23.32-23.46).⁷³ Quakers' arrangements of Meetings and appointments (if operated as advised) limit individuals' ability to dominate: appointments are time limited and the system of nominations allows a group to appoint whomever is most appropriate⁷⁴ (and exclude anyone who is over-assertive). For example, Eldership is explicitly not elevation to a higher position (*QFP* 1995: 12.07). Levelling techniques are applied with subtlety (*QFP* 1995: 12.08).⁷⁵

The system operates in much the same way as a network in which power circulates and is intended to institutionally implement egalitarianism, although, as Isichei

⁷³ One extract reads: 'In the life of the Quaker meeting there is a tradition of equality and respect for individuals that I have found to be of pure gold in value' (*QFP* 1995: 2.75).

⁷⁴ See Chapter 1 ('British Quakers'), p4.

⁷⁵ One anxious member, on being asked to serve as an Elder, expressed her feelings of unworthiness to a much respected Elder who listened attentively, then said: 'My dear, we have to take what we can get' (*QFP* 1995: 12.08).

(1967b) and Dandelion (1996) found, influence can still play a part.⁷⁶ One informant applied an analogy:⁷⁷

I do not think power rests/lies in any one place in the RSofF.⁷⁸ I suspect that this is my general philosophical understanding of how power works, but I think it is actually purposefully explicit in the RSofF. Power is like water flowing through a plumbing system, there may be pockets where it accumulates, but the plumbing system should also include sewage and rain and total recycling of the water, and if any of these stop you are in trouble. So I suppose that leads to where are the reservoirs or cold water tanks? These are where the body as a whole, be it local or yearly meeting or subgroup, has delegated tasks to groups or individuals and asked them to spend more attentiveness on this task. But if anything gets stagnant and the group/individual ceases to communicate with whoever authorised it (?including God) then you are stuck and this is bad power, which may not be powerful.

Given the networked nature of Quaker structures and the application of reverse dominance, both through Quaker structures and subtle levelling techniques, Foucault's reading of power as network is more appropriate to apply to Quakers than hegemony. Hegemony requires dualistic domination of the subordinate (albeit by consent),⁷⁹ but in Quaker settings an individual always has the right to intervene, so the exercise of power is not dualistic, but circulatory: there is no dominant leader. In Chapter 7, I explore the tension between the exercise of power and individuals' ability to curtail this in the face of Dandelion's (1996) culture of silence⁸⁰ and Robson's (2005) aversion from conflict.⁸¹

⁷⁶ See Chapter 1 ('Group and power relations' and 'Contemporary Quaker power relations'), p32, p34 & pp35-36.

⁷⁷ E-mail, 3 September 2010.

⁷⁸ The e-mail is quoted as the informant wrote it: 'RSofF' is her abbreviation for Religious Society of Friends (or Quakers).

⁷⁹ See this chapter ('Power imbalance: the hybrid body of Christ'), p69, for the definition from Eagleton (1991: 112).

⁸⁰ Culture of silence is discussed in Chapter 1 ('Quaker cultures: double, triple, silence and contribution'), pp28-29.

⁸¹ Aversion from questions of power and conflict is discussed in Chapter 1 ('Group and power relations'), pp33-34, and Chapter 7 ('Robson'), pp254 & 256.

Implicit in analyses of power is spatial conceptualisation: hierarchy, for example, places one element above another, whilst egalitarianism places one element beside another.⁸²

Ward applied the concept of 'body of Christ', with its implicit spatiality of both the body and of the church building, but the Experiment does not present a similar concept of simultaneous unity and brokenness, nor is any theological concept obvious to analyse the Experiment as individual and group practice as well as in its relation to its context, so sociological analysis is more appropriate.⁸³

Summary: the discipline in which this thesis sits and its approach

Luhrmann's, Stringer's and Toulis' anthropological approaches analysed questions of identity, but did not examine the operation of that identity on the group. Wood's sociological approach examined how his informants' previous religious influences were non-formative, but his study did not consider relations between groups. Guest's sociological analysis explores both group-to-context relations and how small groups may influence their context, but does not examine the content of religious experience. Ward's practical theological analysis investigated the subgroup to wider congregation relations, but there was a clear imbalance of power; her subtle and discerning analysis of power relations suggests a useful direction to follow.

The review of these relevant recent ethnographies brings into relief that the focus of this thesis is contemporary and sociological. The research questions are what the

⁸² See this chapter FN72 and Chapter 8 for Foucault's spatial conceptualisation of power. His preference for similitude over resemblance (side-by-side rather than hierarchical comparison) is discussed in Chapter 3 ('Dynamic social ordering, spaces for play: Hetherington and Hjorth'), pp100-101. All these strands lead towards heterotopia (Chapter 3).

⁸³ Although the sociological analysis is underpinned by participants' theological understanding, see Chapters 5, 6 and 7.

nature and function of the Experiment is within the context of contemporary British Quakerism and what the structural barriers are to its wider adoption;⁸⁴ the study foregrounds individual Quakers' experience in order to uncover the specific ways in which the Experiment is organisationally, culturally and socially similar to and different from the general run of British Quakerism and investigates how that individual experience underlies the power and other corporate relations between Experimenters and their Meetings and between the Experiment and BYM.

This study is the first to explore the experiential element of contemporary Quaker spirituality.⁸⁵ I do not apply theological analysis,⁸⁶ but engagement with the participants' understanding (in particular the concept of 'the Light', which most participants understood as Divine) is important since it underpins both the Experiment and Experimenters' behaviour.⁸⁷

My study uses ethnographic method, developed in the discipline of anthropology and applied in the disciplines of sociology and practical theology.⁸⁸ It also draws on ideas

⁸⁴ See Chapter 1 ('Research questions'), p18.

⁸⁵ See Chapters 5 and 6.

⁸⁶ Although I discuss Buber's *I-Thou* theology in Chapter 5 ('Relationship with God through relationship with others'), pp195-196.

⁸⁷ The thesis draws on Quaker history to the extent that there are ramifications from the Experiment's basis in early Friends' experience. Ambler's study of Fox's writings and his claims about early Friends' method, which he codified into the Experiment, makes it attractive to Experimenters. Although he does not claim that Experimenters will have the same experience as early Friends, the link with early Friends gives it authority. (Ironically, Ambler appears to eschew authority in proposing the Experiment: its whole appeal is to the conscience, an inner source, not to any text.) I do not, however, analyse his claims, but rather examine the Experiment as it is practised; the thesis is thus not history in the same sense as, for example, Moore's seminal study of early Friends (1993; 2000). The history of the Experiment is unravelled from recent texts, in order to show the other elements from which it is derived: see Chapter 1 ('The Experiment's origins'), pp6-10. It is clear, for example, from *Light to Live by* that in devising the Experiment, Ambler also drew on *focusing*, which was inspired in twentieth century American MfW (Ambler 2002: 25-30 & 46-47; Saunders 2008: 37). This is relevant in that it caused confusion over whether the Experiment was therapy as opposed to an authentic Quaker practice. Nesbitt's (2010) article also shows the influence of Ambler's exploration of eastern religions impacted (see Chapter 1 FN32).

⁸⁸ See Chapter 4 for discussion of my methodology. The review of ethnographies in this chapter encompasses the disciplines I mention.

from other disciplines without becoming part of their *corpi*, for example the philosophical concept of heterotopia, following Foucault, which I apply to illuminate the nature of Experimenters' religious experience and their social and cultural relations with British Quakers generally.⁸⁹ Despite drawing on concepts from other disciplines and Quaker scholars' work in other disciplines,⁹⁰ this study is sociological.

Potential analytical lenses

In this section I consider analytical lenses for the Experiment. Analysis of group relations suggests the concepts of subculture, counterculture and, specifically in the field of sociology of religion, sect. I review these to conclude that a spatial metaphor is more appropriate and then to point to the most appropriate one.

Subcultural identity

In *Delinquent Boys* Albert Cohen argued that a subculture arose where the means to success were denied or severely limited, so that those so deprived became deviant (Cohen 1955; Clarke 1974: 435-436).⁹¹ Michael Clarke (1974) criticised the concept

⁸⁹ Foucault's heterotopia is discussed in the following and subsequent chapters. As discussed in Chapter 3 ('Using the concept of heterotopia'), pp86-87, although the notion of heterotopia began in philosophy, it has been developed and applied in many other disciplines, most notably in sociology (Hetherington 1996a; 1996b; 1997; 1998; North 1999; Johnson 2010) and architectural studies, but little in philosophy itself. The analysis of heterotopia which follows in Chapters 3 and 8 is sociological, rather than theological.

⁹⁰ Ostensibly my work might appear to be social psychology, like Robson's (2005), since it features the individual Experimenter's internal processes - see Chapters 5 ('Sense of the Divine') and 6 ('Experience: transformation') and their social connections (Chapters 7 and 8), but is not social psychology in the same sense, since I have not used social psychological analysis nor read social psychology sources. Further, Robson emphasises that her informants did not give religious explanations (Robson 2005: 8 FN 11), whilst mine do: Experimenters referred to 'the Light' and to God: see especially Chapters 5 ('Omnipresent and infinite' and 'Divine agency'), 6 ('A sense of being accompanied' and 'Transcendent experience in the group') and 7 ('"God" and "Love" in the community life of the group').

⁹¹ Cohen's study was criticised for its basis on loose class assumptions (Kitsuse & Dietrick 1959). In his work on subculture, Hebdige traces the study of subculture from nineteenth century urban ethnography and fiction through the 1920s Chicago School of participant-observation (which he considers under-theorised) and Albert Cohen and Walter Miller's 1950s theoretical perspective to Phil Cohen's and then his own work (Hebdige 1979: 75-80).

as lacking clarity and sought to better define it. Whilst a subculture may be influential, it should not dominate, otherwise it becomes the dominant culture, so to be a subculture, there has to be a sense of being distinctively different from either the majority or perceived mainstream culture (Clarke 1974: 431-432).⁹² In defining its boundaries, one of the important factors is the degree and manner to which members derive their identity from the subculture (Clarke 1974: 433). 'Sanctions' (implying deviance) and mutual perception are important elements in determining whether there is a subculture and there are likely to be differences of ideology, or at least parts of mainstream culture are rejected: drug subculture, for example, faced the sanction of the courts and bohemians and the middle-class each perceived the other as different (Clarke 1974: 437-438).

The Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies at the University of Birmingham

(CCCS)⁹³ developed the concept and defined subculture's characteristics:⁹⁴

Sub-cultures must exhibit a distinctive enough shape and structure to make them identifiably different from their 'parent' culture. They must be focussed around certain activities, values, certain uses of material artefacts, territorial spaces etc. which significantly differentiate them from the wider culture. But,

⁹² Clarke highlighted the ability of a powerful minority to determine the dominant culture; at the time he was writing it was possible to describe 'a working class sub-culture' even though the working class was 'more numerous than the other classes' (1974: 432); implicitly then, a dominant middle class could not be a subculture (a criticism I make of Guest (2007: 191), see this chapter ('New forms of religious practice and small groups'), p65).

⁹³ The CCCS was a research centre in cultural studies from 1963 until it was closed in 2002. Its theoretical approach was predicated on Marxism (*The Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies (1963 - 2002)*) and its work was often collaborative (Hall & Jefferson 1993 [1976]: 5-7). Interestingly, Michael Clarke was a Lecturer in Sociology at the University of Birmingham when he wrote his 1974 article, but he does not appear to have been in the CCCS. John Clarke, who co-wrote *Subcultures, Cultures and Class* (Clarke, et al. 1993 [1976]) seems to have been at CCCS since he is not acknowledged as an outside contributor (Hall & Jefferson 1993 [1976]: 5-7). Hebdige and Phil Cohen were also at CCCS. Given that Michael Clarke was published in a mainstream sociology journal and was in a sociology department, his article can be read as counter-balance to the CCCS view of subculture.

⁹⁴ The Kray twins were an example: they belonged both to the highly differentiated criminal subculture in East London and to the normal life and culture of the East End working class; their involvement in the criminal fraternity marked the differentiating axis, whilst their relations with their mother, family and home and local pub were the binding, articulating axis to their main culture (Pearson 1973; Hebdige 1974; Clarke, et al. 1993 [1976]).

since they are sub-sets, there must also be significant things which bind and articulate them with the 'parent' culture.

(Clarke, et al. 1993 [1976])

The CCCS identified different degrees of subculture:

Sub-cultures, therefore, take shape around the distinctive activities and 'focal concerns' of groups. They can be loosely or tightly bounded. Some sub-cultures are merely loosely-defined strands or 'milieux' within the parent culture: they possess no distinctive 'world' of their own. Others develop a clear, coherent identity and structure.

(Clarke, et al. 1993 [1976])

Phil Cohen defined subculture as a compromise solution between the need to create and express autonomy and difference from parents and the need to maintain the parental identifications; its latent function was to express and resolve hidden or unresolved contradictions in the parent culture (Cohen 1972; Hebdige 1979: 77). Hebdige qualified Cohen's view to incorporate the element of signification, or a distinguishing style as coded response, which he said was also inherent in the *Resistance through Rituals* collection (Hebdige 1979: 79-80; Hall & Jefferson 1993 [1976]).

Smith developed a subcultural identity theory of religious strength, which says that those religious groups, which better possess and employ the cultural tools needed to create both clear distinction from and significant engagement and tension with other relevant outgroups,⁹⁵ short of becoming countercultural, will be stronger (1998: 89-119).⁹⁶

⁹⁵ 'Outgroups' are groups by which the subculture (an 'ingroup') distinguishes itself (Smith, et al. 1998: 91-92).

⁹⁶ Smith's theory would explain why homosexuality is one of the primary issues used by evangelical religious groups to create organisational identity and mobilise resources (Wellman 1999: 188). Guest's *Visions* group was tolerant of homosexuals (2007: 154) whilst the general congregation was not (2007: 92), thus both making it subcultural in relation to the general congregation and placing it in mainstream culture.

Counterculture

Hebdige distinguished counterculture from subculture as middle class, more articulate and obvious: opposition in subculture is displaced into symbolic forms of resistance whilst counterculture is explicitly alternative, both politically and ideologically; examples include hippies, flower children and yippies in the 1960s (1979: 148).

Inherent in the idea of both subculture and counterculture, then, is the notion of opposition, deviance, rejection and separation from the main culture, if only in terms of the style adopted, and sanctions against the subculture by the main culture.⁹⁷

The Experiment and sub/counterculture

On the collaborative CCCS definition, the Experiment would appear to fit the definition of a subculture within Quakerism in that it is a sub-set of Quakers focused around distinctive practice, except that what *differentiates* them is not significant: the axis binding them to their 'parent culture', or context, is dominant. There is no sense in the practice of the Experiment of opposition, rejection nor separation from MfW, nor other elements of mainstream British Quakerism, rather it presents as *very* Quaker. Experimenters do not identify as Experimenters rather than Quakers, they identify as Quakers who Experiment.⁹⁸ The Experiment has resisted characterisation

⁹⁷ Guest (this chapter ('New forms of religious practice and small groups'), pp64-65) uses different sources to reference subculture (Widdecombe & Wooffitt 1995; Smith, et al. 1998; Guest 2007: 17-19, 147-148) and does not use the frame of counterculture. In Hebdige's terms, Guest's *Visions* group could be described as countercultural, because of its middle-class constituency and because of its ideological opposition to the paternalistic and exclusive nature of the church in which it operates, although Guest finds that *Visions* does accept that there need to be moral and theological boundaries, albeit that these are wider than those of the church in which they operate, (Guest 2007: 144-147), so it is not entirely countercultural.

⁹⁸ In the Group A external conflict (see Chapter 7), one of the Meeting Clerk's concerns was that the members of the Light group were attending the Experiment rather than MfW, but the Group vehemently denied it was the Experiment that had led them not to attend MfW: there were other reasons. They still viewed MfW as central to their Quaker lives.

as a special interest group⁹⁹ and has sought to permeate the whole of BYM (*Glenthorne epistle*). The Experiment is something which Experimenters *do* and which, because it relates to the beginning of Quakerism and has the effect that they face themselves truthfully,¹⁰⁰ brings them to feel Quaker in a deeper way. It is not something which results in their feeling different from their original Quaker identity, but rather it deepens and strengthens their ontologically prior Quaker identity. Subculture and counterculture are therefore not appropriate analytical concepts for the Experiment. Smith's subcultural identity theory suggests that Experimenters would be a weaker group, since they do not create clear distinction from nor significant engagement and tension with their Meetings (which they would anyway not consider to be outgroups, since they belong to them).¹⁰¹

'Sect'

In his seminal work on patterns of sectarianism, Wilson identified that church and sect types are most particularly applicable to Christendom and he cautioned against overextending typifications without due regard to cultural and historical specificity (1967: 3). Building on Troeltsch (1931 [1912]), Niehbur (1975 [1929]), Wilson (1967 [1959]; 1970), Isichei (1967a) and Iannaccone (1988; 1994), Dandelion makes a strong case for Quakers being an 'uncertain sect'; Quakers' emphasis on a shared concept of 'towards' or 'perhaps' theology (being uncertain of uncertainties, rather than being uncertain of corporate certainties) makes conformist and sectarian demands (2004a: 219, 226). Dandelion outlines liberal Quakers' plurality of belief (1996: 93-

⁹⁹ See Chapter 1 FN68, the Experiment does not qualify as a LIG and there is no other way of being a recognised special interest group.

¹⁰⁰ See Chapter 6 ('Stages of transformation') and Chapter 7 ('Reflexivity and the Quaker business method').

¹⁰¹ See Chapter 7 for discussion of internal Light group strength in the face of external conflict, with its Meeting's Clerk and Warden. There was a difference in perception: Meeting A's Clerk and Warden perceived Group A to be an outgroup, but Group A did not so perceive itself.

131; 2004a: 221), which takes them outside Christendom, yet his analysis fits the occasional exception Wilson allowed, because he takes account of cultural and historical specifics, especially that belief is non-definitional in the group.

By reference to Wilson (1961; 1967; 1970), Isichei (1967a) and Dandelion (1996; 2004a), Best argues that British adolescent Quakers are a 'hidden sect' whose sectarian characteristics are configured and emphasised differently from the adult group's (2010: 234-256). His analysis of the adolescents in relation to the adults concludes that, while the two groups are similar and have institutional relationships and structural links, there are discontinuities, cultural separation and conflict between the two groups so that in reality they are only tenuously connected (Best 2010: 256-281). Best goes on to argue that the adolescent group has a sectarian attitude to the adult group, which is unacknowledged by the adults: the adult perspective is that the two groups are the same but separate, whilst the adolescent perspective is that they are separate and different, so that the adolescents are a 'hidden sect' (2010: 281-291). Best is vague on the influence of adults in relation to the development of adolescent Quaker ways of being together, eliding the adults' laying ground rules with the idea of community (2010: 156-159) and saying that adults with designated responsibilities are seen as part of the adolescent group (2010: 160).¹⁰² Nowhere in his thesis does Best consider how the adolescent Quakers' identity and culture arises as a result of their being adolescents: he does not refer to any literature on adolescent development, nor does he consider how any adult group might be unaware of, or ignore, how adolescents view themselves in relation to their adult counterparts.¹⁰³

¹⁰² Best refers to those Quaker adults responsible for adolescents' Quaker events instigating exclusion (2010: 241-242), but asserts that adolescents would have preferred a lesser sanction (2010: 241).

¹⁰³ Following Robson (2008b: 155), Best refers to a 'heterotopic boundary' (2010: 280) as the degree of difference between the surrounding society and the Quaker group, but see Chapter 3 ('Dynamic social

It follows from Dandelion's analysis that Experimenters, qua Quaker, will operate as uncertain sect, but they do not exhibit sectarian tendencies towards the wider Quaker group. Of the characteristics of sect outlined by Wilson (1967: 23-24), the Experiment meets few in relation to British Quakers: it exists as voluntary groupings and equality within the group is evident with arrangements frequently being shared. It fails to meet more of Wilson's characteristics, however: there is no requirement for an Experimenter to exhibit personal merit and there is anyway no authority to which to prove such; exclusiveness is not emphasised¹⁰⁴ and expulsion is only exceptionally exercised.¹⁰⁵ Whilst some interviewees expressed frustration with other Friends in their Meetings being only superficially involved as one-hour-a-week Quakers, there was little evidence of any self-conception of Experimenters being an elect. Personal perfection was not expected¹⁰⁶ and commitment was evidenced only by attendance at Light group. Where there was any hostility, it emanated from minority elements in Meetings, rather than by Experimenters towards their Meetings.¹⁰⁷ It follows that as Experimenters are not sectarian in relation to the wider Quaker group, they cannot be depicted as a 'sect', hidden or otherwise.

ordering, spaces for play: Hetherington and Hjorth'), p99, for Hetherington's criticism of Turner's *limen* as static whereas heterotopias are dynamic and ('Heterotopian mirroring' and FN47), pp107-109, heterotopia is antithetical to the notion of boundary (or at least where there are discernable boundaries they are ephemeral, see Chapter 3 ('Heterotopia and religious experience: Smith'), p114).

¹⁰⁴ See Chapter 1 ('Experiment practice'), pp11-12, where Light groups are 'closed' it is only by virtue of belonging at the group's inception, not by virtue of any personal attribute, belief nor way of behaving.

¹⁰⁵ See Chapter 7: b15 was effectively excluded from Group B, but only after long conflict and Meeting B's Elders intervention.

¹⁰⁶ See Chapter 6, there was much evidence to the contrary, of what Experimenters came to see as their unacceptable behaviour.

¹⁰⁷ See chapter 7 ('Power: external conflicts' and 'External conflicts').

Spatial theory and method for the study of religion

Knott argues that together, as a system of principles, practices and procedures, the dimensions, properties, aspects and dynamics of space (including the interface of space and sacralisation), with the body as its source, constitute not only a spatial theory but also a method for the study of religion (2005b: 26).¹⁰⁸

Space, as opposed to place, is complex, dynamic and relational (Knott 2005b: 4).

Citing Kant (1968 [1768]), Knott presents the body as the foundation of our human experience and representation of space, allowing us to experience and conceptualise the relationships between things, places and people and to identify differences (2005b: 5). The dimensions, properties, aspects and dynamic of space are intertwined. The dimensions of space are physical, mental and social: space is relational between points on a grid, between different places, between people. Space is also a mental or conceptual dimension, providing a means of imagining and giving expression through metaphor (Knott 2005b: 8).¹⁰⁹ The properties of space are configuration, simultaneity, extension and power, which she draws from Foucault's lecture expounding the concrete aspects of heterotopia (Foucault 1986 [1967]-a: 22-23; Knott 2005b: 9).¹¹⁰ The aspects of space are how it is perceived, conceived/represented and lived/apprehended (Lefebvre 1991: 33, 38-40; Knott 2005b: 12-14): perceived in a common-sense, taken-for granted way; represented or produced by planners,

¹⁰⁸ Knott says spatial methodology is analytical and interpretive and, although it might inform data collection, her preferred method of data collection is ethnographic, especially the combined use of documentary methods, participant observation and interview (2005b: 26-27).

¹⁰⁹ Knott is primarily considering 'religion' rather than individual praxis and experience. She says 'Space is not something other than or further to the physical, mental and social dimensions that constitute it' (Knott 2005b: 9), but I argue that space can also have a spiritual dimension, albeit experienced through the senses and mental space, see the heterotopias Experimenters find within themselves (Chapter 3), their heterotopian Sense of the Divine (Chapter 5) and their heterotopian transformation (Chapter 6).

¹¹⁰ Foucault's initial exposition of heterotopia was abstract (2002 [1966]). To understand heterotopia, the expositions must be read together: see my detailed review of heterotopia in Chapter 3 and its application throughout the remainder of the thesis.

architects, engineers and scholars in the built environment, ideology and state and civic ceremonies as representations of space; and finally spaces of representation, lived or apprehended as possibilities of resisting the power of the dominant order.¹¹¹ Space does not exercise agency, but people's agency is continually expressed in and through it: it is dynamic; spaces are not only products but may reproduce themselves – a ritual gathering in a sacred space may spawn new social groups or cultural products which themselves have a physical form (Knott 2005b: 15).¹¹² Knott's focus is on locating religion in a variety of places (2005a: 124),¹¹³ rather than analysing the space within a religious practice or group.

Application of spatial theory/heterotopia to BYM and the Experiment

I have already applied a spatial metaphor to the way power circulates within BYM structures, as network, and observed that, as with plumbing, flow can become stagnation. The physical space in which Experimenters Experiment is of minor

¹¹¹ Knott does not refer back at this point to Foucault's heterotopia, although the sites she quotes from Lefebvre and Chivallon are heterotopic: they create the possibility of ordering society in a new way, providing underground resistance, politically inspired carnival and challenging racial order (Lefebvre 1991: 39; Hetherington 1997; Chivallon 2001: 477; Knott 2005b: 15). In particular, Chivallon's space of identity for Afro-Caribbean Christians' experience in England, in which they simultaneously live within the imposed order, challenge it with a non-racist narrative and transcend it by allowing something different and more just to be imagined (Chivallon 2001; Knott 2005b: 15) is an example of heterotopia.

¹¹² As an example of resistance, Knott cites the 2003 London demonstrations against the war in Iraq, which not only transformed the streets down which they passed and the bodies of their participants, but also reproduced themselves in other cities, the pages of the world's press and electronically on numerous websites (2005b: 11), entering the consciousness not only of the demonstrators, but also of those who supported the war as a reminder of the force of resistance. The demonstration was embodied, it expressed the dimensions of space (physical, mental and social), its properties (how it was configured, the simultaneity of demonstrations in different locations and their publicity in the media, extension through physical into virtual space and resistance to dominant power), its aspects (perceived, conceived/represented, apprehended/lived) and dynamism (production and reproduction).

¹¹³ In her longest use of her theory and methodology, Knott considers the left hand in relation to religion (2005a: 133-228). She shows that contemporary representations of the left hand ('sinister but intimate "other"') embody a variety of values, traces of different religious traditions, alternative paths to salvation and self-realisation, and shifting positions on the impure, demonic, inauspicious and sacred (Knott 2005a: back cover).

significance.¹¹⁴ What is explored within each Experimenter, within Light groups and within the network of British Meetings lends easily to abstract spatial analysis.

Hook and Vrdoljak claim heterotopia¹¹⁵ is 'an analytic node through which one might deduce wider networks of power' (2002: 208) and suggest that heterotopian analytics enables symptomatic readings of place/text, so that investigation of the symptom (the disguised representation of a state of affairs) reveals the prevailing social, moral political order (2002: 218).

Sohn indicates in relation to 'contemporary spatial disciplines', that heterotopia 'permits the reading of essentially different spaces to which no other explanation seems appropriate' (2008: 44). The remainder of the thesis seeks to thus open my field of enquiry in the sociology of religion to the 'broad array of radical alternatives of ... social and cultural interpretations' which Sohn suggests results (2008: 44).

Knott's theory, Hook and Vrdoljak's claim and Sohn's observation bring Foucault's idea of heterotopia into focus. Whilst heterotopia has physical application, its ability also to apply conceptually and in the abstract brings out the specific dimensions, properties, aspects and dynamics of the Experiment on individual Experimenters, Light groups¹¹⁶ and the Experiment in relation to BYM, potentially to reveal the symptoms of what ails BYM.¹¹⁷

¹¹⁴ See Appendix D3 for a description.

¹¹⁵ Heterotopia is reviewed in detail in Chapter 3. Hook and Vrdoljak (2002) consider heterotopia in relation to their empirical study of a South African gated community.

¹¹⁶ See Chapter 3.

¹¹⁷ See Chapter 8.

Potential analytical lenses conclusion

Implicit in the concepts of subcultural identity and hidden sect is a significant imbalance of power, which makes them less suitable for a group in which power is shared in a more egalitarian manner.

In this section I have reviewed how 'subculture', 'counterculture' and 'sect' are potential, but not appropriate, lenses for analysing the Experiment in relation to its context; rather, because of the egalitarian nature of BYM, a spatial concept is required. The Experiment is neither utopian, nor dystopian; rather it is other than the reviewed studies, so heterotopia, briefly glimpsed¹¹⁸ through Knott, is applicable. In the next chapter I show how heterotopia can provide a rich analysis of Experimenters' experience in the Experiment and of Light groups in relation to their Meetings.

Academic context

This chapter has reviewed relevant studies and approaches to studying religious phenomena and movements to conclude that the thesis is an ethnographic study within the sociology of religion. I have shown the extent to which the approaches and lenses in recent relevant ethnographies are appropriate to this study and narrowed the field to a spatial metaphor, specifically heterotopia, as the most appropriate to analyse the Experiment. The next chapter discusses heterotopia in detail.

¹¹⁸ Glimpsed, rather than referenced, since she quotes from *Of Other Spaces* without mentioning the concept or word 'heterotopia' (Foucault 1986 [1967]-a: 22-23; Knott 2005b: 9).

Chapter 3 - Heterotopia

This chapter outlines the concept of heterotopia, as articulated by the French philosopher, Michel Foucault (1986 [1967]-a; 2002 [1966]), and as developed and criticised by later scholars (Genocchio 1995; Marks 1995; Soja 1995 [1990]; Hetherington 1997; Urbach 1998; North 1999; Hjorth 2005; Johnson 2006; Boyer 2008; Dehaene & De Cauter 2008b; Saldanha 2008; Shane 2008; Sohn 2008). It also discusses how the concept has been applied in the field of religion (Smith 1997; Carrette 2000; Shackley 2002; Pilgrim 2003b; 2004; 2008). The elements from this scholarship are then applied to the process of the Experiment, as evidenced in the study participants' experience, to conclude that the Experiment's process is heterotopian and leads Experimenters to find heterotopic spaces within themselves.

Using the concept of heterotopia

Foucault first used the word heterotopia (which derives from medical use to describe something displaced in position)¹ in relation to language (2002 [1966]). He subsequently explained it in spatial terms, using illustrations to indicate the disruption of expected order, which is inherent in the word's meaning (Foucault 1986 [1967]-a; 2004 [1966]). Foucault did not himself develop the concept as such any further,

¹ Interestingly, whilst not being specialist, *The Shorter Oxford English Dictionary* definition (Onions 1970: 897) captures both the static and dynamic dimensions of a heterotopia in relation to its context and also suggests the growth of something new: '1876. Displacement in position, misplacement: a. *Path.* The occurrence of a tumour in a part where its elements do not normally exist. b. *Biol.* Gradual displacement of cells or parts by adaptation to the changed conditions of embryonic existence 1879.' (*Path* refers to usage in pathology and *Biol* to uses in biology (Onions 1970: xix-xx).) Foucault's maternal grandfather, his father, paternal grandfather and great-grandfather were doctors (and his father and maternal grandfather also taught medicine) (Macey 1993: 1-2), so he is likely to have been familiar with the medical use of the word heterotopia. His development of the idea may have stemmed from his work on the clinic (1973 [1963]).

although to some extent heterotopia reflects his wider questioning of power relations in his later work (Marks 1995: 69; Johnson 2006: 81, 86).²

As Carrette observes, Foucault's work 'always holds the possibility of going "beyond Foucault"' (2001: 135), that is, to make discoveries by applying his method of thinking to areas which he did not.³ Thus, the meaning of heterotopia has been explored in differing ways in different disciplines. It has been developed in relation to the physical spatiality of buildings and their context in architecture, geography, cultural geography, organisational and management theory and facilities management (Harvey 1989; Genocchio 1995; Soja 1995 [1990]; Lees 1997; Urbach 1998; McLeod 1999; Singh & Khan 1999; Hjorth 2005; Boyer 2008; Dehaene & De Cauter 2008b; Saldanha 2008). Similarly, it has been applied conceptually in literary theory (McHale 1987; Duran 2000), in gender and cultural studies (Rose 1993; Testa 2001; Elliot & Alfonso 2002; Stanley 2002; French 2004; Gonzales 2004; Elliott & Purdy 2005; Gonick & Hladki 2005; Elliott & Purdy 2006; Engels 2007), in anthropology (Rodman 1992; Kahn 1995; St. John 1999; 2001; Ma 2002; Owens 2002; Scott 2005; Wieck 2006; Faubion 2008), in relation to the internet and computer games (Stockburger 2006; Galin & Latchaw n.d.) and in sociology (Hetherington 1996a; 1996b; 1997; 1998; North 1999; Salter 2007; Johnson 2010) and law (Kotsakis 2011). It has, however, been surprisingly little mentioned in philosophy (Marks 1995; Simons 1995; Flynn 2004).

² Marks said Foucault 'obviously developed the notion of heterotopia in his work on the prison' (Marks 1995: 69). Given that Foucault's work on the prison (Foucault 1977 [1975]) came later, Marks must mean by his observation that Foucault later developed the concept without naming it as such, so making a similar point to the one later made by Johnson. Without considering the chronology, it would be easy to misread Marks' comment as being about the derivation of heterotopia since it occurs in his discussion of what Foucault meant by the term.

³ Carrette continues: 'the fluidity of his work and his conceptual dynamic allows us to move into hidden spaces' (2001: 135).

As Urbach (1998: 347) pointed out, Foucault's concept of heterotopia 'has remained slippery'.⁴ By reviewing the aspects of heterotopia brought out by scholars,⁵ I apply it cogently as a lens for discovering the nature of the Experiment. I explain the development and uses of the concept which I am applying, from Foucault, through Hetherington, Hjorth, North, Simons, French, Marks, Johnson, Genocchio, Saldanha, Boyer, Shane, Sohn, Dehaene and De Cauter. I then review its use in relation to religion and finally relate it to the Experiment as a process, in relation to what Friends discern in it and as a social phenomenon within its social context, twenty first century British Quakerism.⁶

Foucault's heterotopia

Foucault first used the term heterotopia, in contrast to utopia,⁷ in his preface to *The Order of Things* (2002 [1966]: xix) in relation to Borges' passage from a 'certain

⁴ Especially where its application as an architectural concept misses its more contingent and political aspects (Urbach 1998: 347). Dehaene and De Cauter's project is to find out (for the purposes of urban theory) whether the concept of heterotopia could be made consistent or be given up because its vagueness has brought confusion (2008b: 6); their project is not yet complete (2008b: 9) and they do not draw a conclusion, although the final, summarising contribution closes with no indication of giving up: 'Heterotopias' cultural practices and social formations-in-the-making can thus offer possibilities for displacing and subverting the naturalized logics of identity formation. Sadly enough, however, the fact that heterotopias *can* offer these possibilities does not imply they always *will*. Heterotopia's doubleness therefore continues to resonate.' [italics in original] (Heynen 2008: 322).

⁵ Particularly in the disciplines of sociology, social and cultural geography, management theory, philosophy and anthropology.

⁶ The process of the Experiment and what is discerned in it is considered in this chapter. Its social context is considered in Chapter 8.

⁷ Utopia is the 'perfect place'; for its derivation see this chapter ('Dynamic social ordering, spaces for play: Hetherington and Hjorth'), p96. Foucault said utopias unfold in a fantastic, untroubled region, 'they are able to unfold; they open up cities with vast avenues, superbly planted gardens, countries where life is easy, even though the road to them is chimerical' (Foucault 2002 [1966]: xix). He defined utopias as sites with no real places, having a direct or inverted analogy to real spaces, presenting society in a perfected form or turned upside down, but being 'fundamentally unreal spaces' (Foucault 1986 [1967]-a: 24).

Chinese encyclopaedia',⁸ emphasising its capacity to disrupt expected orderings:

Heterotopias are disturbing, probably because they secretly undermine language, because they destroy 'syntax' in advance, and not only the syntax with which we construct sentences but also that less apparent syntax which causes words and things (next to and also opposite one another) to 'hold together'

...heterotopias desiccate speech, stop words in their tracks, contest the very possibility of grammar at its source; they dissolve our myths and sterilise the lyricism of our sentences.

Foucault's intention with this abstract heterotopia was to push at the limitations of thought, to think the impossible by destroying the common ground on which the juxtaposition of the incongruous is sited (2002 [1966]: xvi-xix). Utopias, even though they have no real locality, afford consolation, whereas heterotopias do not (Foucault 2002 [1966]: xix).

According to recent scholars, Foucault elaborated on the concept in December 1966 radio broadcasts (2004 [1966]) and was subsequently invited to speak to a group of architects about it in 1967 (Johnson 2006: 75-76; Saldanha 2008: 2082). Johnson identifies that the 1967 lecture followed the same shape as, but did not include some of the illustrations from, the radio broadcast (2006: 76).⁹ Specifically the lecture omits references to children's imaginative games: in tents and dens in the garden and games played on or under the covers of their parents' bed.¹⁰ Johnson reports: 'The children's inventive play produces a different space that at the same time mirrors what

⁸ The encyclopaedia divides animals into: '(a) belonging to the Emperor, (b) embalmed, (c) tame, (d) sucking pigs, (e) sirens, (f) fabulous, (g) stray dogs, (h) included in the present classification, (i) frenzied, (j) innumerable, (k) drawn with a very fine camelhair brush, (l) *et cetera*, (m) having just broken the water pitcher, (n) that from a long way off look like flies' (Foucault 2002 [1966]: xvi).

⁹ Johnson refers to one twelve-minute radio broadcast, but Saldanha refers to two broadcasts issued on a CD in 2004 (Foucault 2004 [1966]); the CD runs for over 40 minutes.

¹⁰ Without referencing the radio broadcasts, of which he seems unaware, Hjørth refers to the space of children's play, for example under the dinner table, as heterotopias (2005: 392).

is around them. The space reflects and contests simultaneously' (2006: 76). The element of play and experimentation is missing from most of the later uses of the concept.¹¹ Saldanha and North bring out an element from the radio broadcasts found in neither *The Order of Things*, nor the 1967 lecture, namely that heterotopias emerge and are later 'reabsorbed' in society (Saldanha 2008: 2084-2085), they are 'effervescent' (North 1999: 75).¹²

In the 1967 lecture¹³ Foucault first contextualised his exposition of heterotopia (1986 [1967]-a: 22-23). He discussed the 'fatal' intersection of time with space, identifying the medieval hierarchical and binary nature of space (sacred/profane, protected/open exposed, urban/rural, super-celestial/celestial and celestial/terrestrial). The medieval space was opened up by Galileo's radical revelation ('scandal') of an infinite and infinitely open space, so that from the seventeenth century *localisation*¹⁴ was

¹¹ Hjorth (2005) and Hetherington (1996b; 1997) are notable exceptions, as they emphasise elements of play and experimentation respectively. Foucault is playful, teasing the architects, as a letter he wrote to Defert indicates (Johnson 2006: 76) – and see this chapter FN38, but most of the architects and geographers who picked up on the concept were not, for example Urbach (1998) and Johnson (2006); Dehaene and De Cauter's (2008b) collection does reflect more of the important nuances for architecture – Boyer's (2008) chapter is particularly sophisticated.

¹² Like Hjorth (2005) see this chapter FN10, North (1999) does not reference the radio broadcasts, so also apparently comes independently to an aspect of heterotopia which was present from Foucault's early conception of it.

¹³ Substantial excerpts from Foucault's lecture to a group of architects were published as early as 1968 and discussed in architectural works (Urbach 1998: 350-352: fn1 & fn 10); all lectures at the *Cercle d'études architecturales* were noted down by a stenographer and the typescript was distributed to all the circle's membership (Dehaene & De Cauter 2008b: 13). It is significant that Foucault gave permission for publication of the full text just before his death in 1984, since he also instructed that his unpublished papers not be published posthumously (McSweeney 2005: 124 fn29). Foucault was seriously ill for some time before he died (Carvalho 2006) and would therefore have known that, if he did not permit its publication, the full text would have been lost. As Urbach also points out, the 1984 publication claimed to be the first (1998: 351), although this claim is not repeated in the 1986 English translation. The architects using the concept before 1984 were Manfredo Tafuri as early as 1976, Porphyrios in 1978 and Georges Teyssot in 1980 (Urbach 1998: 350). McLeod (1999: 195: fn2) also pointed out that Porphyrios' Princeton doctoral dissertation, published as a book in 1982, was the first architectural work in the English speaking world to cite Foucault's heterotopia.

¹⁴ Reading Johnson's commentary (2006: 76-77) on the differences between Jay Miskowiec's 1986 translation (Foucault 1986 [1967]-a) and Robert Hurley's 1998 translation (Foucault 1998 [1967]), in conjunction with the 1986 translation, has been helpful in reaching a more complete understanding of Foucault's intended meaning. Johnson says that, confusingly, Miskowiec translates *l'emplacement* as 'site' and *la localisation* as 'emplacement'; Hurley uses 'emplacement' in English for *l'emplacement* to retain the sense of placing in a certain location. Dehaene and De Cauter import into the term

substituted by *extension*, breaking hierarchy and oppositions, creating instability and opening up possibilities.¹⁵ Foucault went on to say that *extension* was substituted by *emplacement*, defined by relations in terms of proximity (described as series, trees or grids) and demography.¹⁶ He also said that contemporary space was not, in practical terms, entirely de-sanctified by Galileo's theoretical de-sanctification, citing the hidden presence of the sacred in the 'oppositions' private/public, family/social, cultural/useful and leisure/work space, boundaries which, Carrette says, Foucault sets out to destroy (Carrette 2000: 107).¹⁷

Foucault said both utopias and heterotopias 'have the curious property of being in relation with all the other *emplacements*, but in such a way as to suspect, neutralise, or invert the set of relations that they happen to designate, mirror or reflect' (1986 [1967]-a: 24). They both link and contradict all the other *emplacements*, but whereas utopias are fundamentally unreal, heterotopias are real spaces in which all the other *emplacements* within the culture are simultaneously represented, contested and inverted. Foucault cited the example of a mirror as both utopia and heterotopia. As a placeless place in which one sees where one is not, in an unreal virtual space behind

emplacement a sense of estrangement, implied by Foucault's avoiding the usual French words *place*, *lieu* and *endroit* (Dehaene & De Cauter 2008b: 24 en6). Following Johnson, and therefore Hurley, I use '*emplacement*' for *l'emplacment* (and '*localisation*' for *la localisation*), even when quoting the Miskowiec translation, in order to retain Foucault's sense more closely. I favour Miskowiec's translation in other respects because his English is more idiomatic and therefore conveys the sense more actively; I find Hurley's translation stilted. There are two other translations: Dehaene and De Cauter (Foucault 2008 [1967]), which is literal (Dehaene & De Cauter 2008b: 14), but has an excellent introduction and amplifying endnotes (Dehaene & De Cauter 2008b: 13-14, 22-28) and the one which appeared in *Lotus* (Foucault 1986 [1967]-b) where the individual translator was not identified (Dehaene & De Cauter 2008b: 28).

¹⁵ The seventeenth century was also when Quakers started, in the spirit of this infinite possibility and the destruction of hierarchy (Ambler 2008: 12-17), and it is to those early Friends' experience that the Experiment relates (Ambler 1997a; 1997e; 2002).

¹⁶ See suggestions for further research in Chapter 8 for the significance for British Quakers generally of society moving from *localisation* to *extension* and from *extension* to *emplacement*.

¹⁷ Dehaene and De Cauter say that Foucault's remarks to introduce heterotopia are an impressive short history of space in three phases: the pre-industrial (*localisation*/old city), industrial (*extension*/modern metropolis) and post-industrial (*emplacement*/post-industrial megalopolis) (Dehaene & De Cauter 2008b: 24 en 7).

the surface, a shadow giving visibility to oneself, a mirror is a utopia, but, as the mirror itself exists, it is also not entirely unreal. As a heterotopia, the mirror makes the place one occupies, at the moment one is looking at oneself, absolutely real and connected with the space all around oneself and the mirror. At the same time, that surrounding place is absolutely unreal since in order to be perceived it has to pass through the virtual point of the mirror's reflecting function.

Foucault set out six 'principles' for heterotopias, with illustrations. The first principle is that probably all cultures have heterotopias, but their forms vary and there is no one universal form (1986 [1967]-a: 24). They are classified in two main types. 'Crisis heterotopias' are privileged, sacred or forbidden places reserved for those in crisis in relation to their society and 'human environment', for example, adolescents, menstruating women, the elderly. 'Heterotopias of deviation' are those where individuals whose behaviour is deviant from the required norm are placed, for example rest homes, psychiatric hospitals, prisons, retirement homes. The elderly are therefore demonstrably present in both types, which are not mutually exclusive.¹⁸

The second principle is that through its history a society can cause an existing heterotopia to function differently (Foucault 1986 [1967]-a: 25). Foucault gave the example of a cemetery, connecting with all the people whose relatives were buried there, but who (since the relatives were dead) were no longer part of their lives.

Originally cemeteries were central in the city, but, as belief in the resurrection of the body declined and concerns with hygiene grew, they shifted into the suburbs.

¹⁸ Foucault suggested that heterotopias of crisis were being replaced by heterotopias of deviation and that retirement homes were on the borderline (1986 [1967]-a: 24). He was possibly obliquely observing that societies were becoming less likely to recognise and tolerate crisis by allowing temporary physical spaces in which to experience it and were instead becoming more likely to treat difference as deviation, to be isolated in a different sort of institutionalised space.

The third principle is that the heterotopia is capable of juxtaposing in a single real space several *emplacements*, which are in themselves incompatible and irreducible to each other (Foucault 1986 [1967]-a: 25). One example is the cinema, an odd rectangular room, with a two dimensional screen on which is projected a different three dimensional space. Other examples include the garden and carpets, which were originally reproductions of gardens, 'a sort of garden that can move across space'.¹⁹ This complex juxtaposition and simultaneity in space charges heterotopia with social and cultural meaning and connectivity; without that charge the space would remain 'fixed, dead, immobile, undialectical' (Soja 1995 [1990]: 15).

The fourth principle is that heterotopias are most often linked to slices in time, they open onto heterochronies, a 'different' time that is an 'absolute break with traditional time' (Foucault 1986 [1967]-a: 26). Again, the cemetery is an example, since the loss of life and the quasi-eternity of permanent dissolution and disappearance are heterochronies. There are heterotopias of permanently accumulating time, such as museums and libraries and, on the contrary, heterotopias linked to the most fleeting, transitory and precarious aspect of time, for example fairgrounds and holiday villages.

The fifth principle is that heterotopias always presuppose a system of opening and closing that both isolates them and makes them penetrable (Foucault 1986 [1967]-a: 26). The heterotopic *emplacement* is not freely accessible like a public space: either the entry is compulsory, for example by military conscription or to a prison, or the

¹⁹ Johnson says that Foucault finished his 7 December 1966 radio broadcast with the example of the magic carpet, replaced in the lecture with the example of the ship (Johnson 2006: 80). The ship, of course, has more foundation in reality than a magic carpet, which might be construed as utopian, since it does not exist in everyday life.

individual has to submit to rites and purifications, having permission and making 'certain gestures'.

The last 'trait' is that heterotopias have a function in relation to all the space that remains and their function unfolds between the extreme poles of illusion (a space which exposes every real space as more illusory) and compensation (Foucault 1986 [1967]-a: 27). Examples include brothels (illusion) or the seventeenth century Puritan colonies (compensation), 'absolutely perfect other places' (albeit only from the perspective of the coloniser, as McLeod (1999: 187) highlighted), as meticulous, as well arranged as the rest of space is messy, ill constructed and jumbled.

Foucault finished the lecture (Foucault 1986 [1967]-a: 27) with the ship as the ultimate example of heterotopia:

the boat is a floating piece of space, a place without a place, that exists by itself, that is closed in on itself and at the same time is given over to the infinity of the sea and that, from port to port, from tack to tack, from brothel to brothel, it goes as far as the colonies in search of the most precious treasures they conceal in their gardens, you will understand why the boat has not only been for our civilization, from the sixteenth century until the present, the great instrument of economic development (I have not been speaking of that today), but has been simultaneously the greatest reserve of the imagination. The ship is the heterotopia par excellence. In civilizations without boats, dreams dry up, espionage takes the place of adventure, and the police take the place of pirates.²⁰

The ship (see also Stanley (2002)), provides passage to and through other heterotopias (brothels, colonies, gardens), so that it not only visits but also reflects and

²⁰ Soja wondered what Foucault would have made of the 'Disneyfication' of the rigidly docked *Queen Mary* at Long Beach harbour, next to Howard Hughes' *Spruce Goose*, then the largest aeroplane ever built, 'filled with dried up dreams of mobility' (1995 [1990]: 31: fn3). 'Disneyfication is that shameless process by which everything the [Disney] Studio later touched, no matter how unique the vision of the original from which the Studio worked, was reduced to the limited terms Disney and his people could understand' (Schickel 1986: 225) in Bryman (1999: 26).

incorporates them, illustrating that heterotopias form relationships within the site as well as between sites (Johnson 2006: 80).²¹

That Foucault cited the ship as a heterotopia *par excellence* and, as indicated above, that his 'principles' morphed into a 'trait' at the end of the lecture,²² and that he hedged the first four ('probably' (1986 [1967]-a: 24), 'can' (1986 [1967]-a: 25), 'capable of' (1986 [1967]-a: 25), 'most often' (1986 [1967]-a: 26)) are indicative that examples of heterotopia do not have to all fit all six criteria. They are illustrative of the nature of heterotopia rather than required characteristics. It is not clear, for example, how a prison or a carpet might have functioned in a different way throughout history (fourth principle), nor that colonies and holiday villages exist in all cultures, and even the heterotopia *par excellence*, the ship, does not exist in landlocked cultures (first principle). Foucault was, however, more emphatic about the last two ('always presuppose' (1986 [1967]-a: 26), 'they have a function' (1986 [1967]-a: 27)), which therefore appear to be more important.²³ Foucault clearly envisaged degrees of heterotopia by referring to one (the cemetery) as 'highly heterotopic' (Foucault 1986 [1967]-a: 26; Johnson 2006: 78) and to others (brothels and colonies) as extreme types of heterotopia (Foucault 1986 [1967]-a: 27).

²¹ Engels considers piracy as emblematic of Foucault's heterotopia, 'a state in which violence transcends space' and the destruction of a *common locus* from which events arise (Foucault 2002 [1966]: xvii; Engels 2007: 328). Engels (2007) identifies piracy as a renegade form of global capitalism and argues that the National Security Strategy of the United States of America under President George W. Bush conflated piracy with terrorism and enabled the USA, as *empire*, to defend both state power and economic power with military means.

²² Foucault slips from '*principe*' for the first five to '*trait*' for the last (Foucault 2004 [1967]): perhaps this is part of his playfulness or the slipperiness Urbach identifies (1998: 347).

²³ I differ from Johnson in my analysis: he says each heterotopia cited by Foucault involves all the principles to some extent. I agree with Johnson, however, that Foucault was probably teasing his audience with the illustrations, if not also with the principles (Johnson 2006: 78).

Foucault, then, expounded heterotopias as places that are 'other' in relation to the context in which they exist by reference to six possible, but not necessary, criteria. Linking his earlier and later expositions brings out the inherently disruptive effect of heterotopias, which can be abstract as well as real physical places (Foucault 1986 [1967]-a; 2002 [1966]; 2004 [1966]).

Heterotopia after Foucault

By considering Foucault's heterotopia in relation to specific sites or others' work,²⁴ later commentators bring out further aspects of heterotopia.

Dynamic social ordering, spaces for play: Hetherington and Hjorth

In his work on social ordering, Hetherington (1996b; 1997) developed Foucault's notion of heterotopia in conjunction with Marin's idea of utopics (Marin 1984; 1993), emphasising the dynamic and natal aspects of heterotopia.

Thomas More coined the term 'utopia' from *eu*-topia (perfect places) and *ou*-topia (no places), as perfect places that do not exist (Hetherington 1997: 66-69). Hetherington drew on More's origination of the term to show how Marin's utopics, a spatial play on the theme of utopia, explore the neutral space in between the perfect and the non-existent. Marin's neutral is a state through which things pass, it stands outside as

²⁴ Hetherington considered Stonehenge (1996b), The Palais Royal, de Sade's and Kafka's castles, Freemasons' lodges and the factory (1997) and drew on Marin. Hjorth (2005) looks at artist/business collaboration in the workplace and draws on de Certeau. North (1999) considered a Local Exchange Trading Scheme and extended his analysis with Deleuze and Guattari. Marks (1995) considered Foucault in conjunction with Deleuze. Genocchio (1995), Boyer (2008) and Shane (2008) looked at the application of heterotopia in architecture. Dehaene and De Cauter (2008a) consider Hippodamus' urbanism through Arendt (1989 [1958]). Sohn (2008) considers the site of the body in heterotopia's medical derivation and drew on Tafuri (1987 [1980]) and Shane (2005). Saldanha (2008) reads Foucault with Deleuze, Derrida and Althusser. Simons (1995) looked at Foucault and the political. French (2004) contrasts Foucault with Barthes and draws on Deleuze.

something separate, but is also a transition. Marin's utopia is a striving for an impossible social order, but the striving for it has both intended and unintended effects. Difference is encountered and ordered in the space of the neutral which is also the space of alternate ordering. Hetherington equated Marin's utopics with Foucault's heterotopia (1997: 67).

Hetherington argued that static views of social order do not take into account the processes, ambiguities and differences involved in trying to think about social *ordering* (1997: vii), a dynamic process. He defined heterotopias as:

spaces of alternate ordering. Heterotopia organise a bit of the social world in a way different to that which surrounds them. That alternate ordering marks them out as Other and allows them to be seen as an example of a different way of doing things. (Hetherington 1997: viii)²⁵

Hetherington said that Marin's neutral space is where heterotopias are located:

Heterotopia do exist, but they only exist in this space-between, in this relationship between spaces, in particular between eu-topia and ou-topia. Heterotopia are not quite spaces of transition – the chasm they represent can never be closed up – but they are space of deferral, spaces where ideas and practices that represent the good life can come into being, from nowhere, even if they never achieve what they set out to achieve – social order, or control and freedom. Heterotopia, therefore, reveal the process of social ordering to be just that, a process rather than a thing. (Hetherington 1997: ix)

Hetherington thus extended his definition of heterotopia to bring out explorative and dynamic aspects: process is inherent in heterotopias, they perform a function. The process is not, however, linear: heterotopia is a space of integration and disintegration,

²⁵ See Chapter 1 FN4, Hetherington uses 'heterotopia' for multiple examples, whilst most other commentators (and I) use 'heterotopias'. Owens criticises Hetherington for not fully conveying Foucault's notion of heterotopia (Owens 2002: 276), since Hetherington's definition (Hetherington 1997: viii & 41) does not consider the effects that heterotopias have on those who encounter them. Hetherington does, however, discuss the effects at length, as Owens admits in his footnote (Owens 2002: 307: fn7) and as I discuss. I consider the effects of heterotopia for Experimenters and BYM generally in the second part of this chapter and in the following chapters.

combination, resistance and disorder, incorporating ambivalence (Hetherington 1997: 140).

The element of difference inherent in heterotopia is unsettling:

Heterotopia are places of Otherness, whose Otherness is established through a relationship of difference with other sites, such that their presence either provides an unsettling of spatial and social relations or an alternative representation of spatial and social relations. (Hetherington 1997: 8)

Hetherington viewed heterotopias as sites associated with alternate modes of social ordering that are expressions of utopic social play, so that, like laboratories, they can be taken as sites in which new ways of experimenting with ordering society are tried out. The ordering is played out in the ambivalent, incongruous relationship between freedom and order, or social control (Hetherington 1997: 12-13, 42). This social ordering is social, technical, material, temporal and spatial (Hetherington 1997: 35) and it is an ordering that is continually changing, fixing and unfixing itself (Hetherington 1997: 28), open to infinite change and uncertain consequences (Hetherington 1997: 35). The alternative modes of ordering also, however, have their own codes, rules and symbols and generate their own relations of power (Hetherington 1997: 24).

Hetherington's 'Otherness' incorporates incongruity and he observed that heterotopias do not exist in themselves, but in relation, what they represent in contrast with other sites. For example, a festival next to a prison: either site could be considered heterotopic in relation to the other, but given that prisons are sanctioned by society whereas festivals are often not, it is more likely the festival will be seen as the heterotopia (Hetherington 1997: 8-9). Similarly, certain modes of writing, like the

surrealists' automatic writing,²⁶ might be said to be heterotopian because of the way it challenges expectations and offers a view of an alternative (Hetherington 1997: 9).

Thus, for Hetherington, as in Foucault's original mention (2002 [1966]: xix), heterotopias can also be spaces other than physical locations or social ordering.

Heterotopias are margins in the sense of the unbounded and blurred space-between, rather than the easily identified space at the edge (Hetherington 1997: 27).

Heterotopias can perform an ordering function, rather than simply being sites of transgression (Hetherington 1997: 17-18) and imply more than what Turner (1969) denotes as liminal or liminoid. Turner's liminal ritual performs an ordering function in small scale societies. Liminality is associated with a transgressive middle stage of a rite, it is the margin between separation and reaggregation. The liminoid resembles the liminal, but liminoid rituals are achieved rather than ascribed, they are weaker as sources of social integration and they are often clearly defined sites created in particular events. Hetherington criticised Turner's discussion for ignoring the process of ordering (Hetherington 1997: 32-35) and by implication assuming a monolithic, static, conservative and prescriptive order against which the margin stands. Hetherington identified that in small-scale societies there is no choice involved in rites of passage, but in larger, more complex, socially differentiated societies there is, so that neither the liminal nor the liminoid adequately describes how ordering occurs, whereas heterotopia does.

²⁶ Other forms may also be heterotopian: Julia Cameron's 'morning pages' (Cameron 2002 [1992]: 9-18), which allow the writer to get beyond her 'Censor' to 'our own quiet centre, the place where we hear the still small voice that is at once our creator's and our own' (Cameron 2002 [1992]: 12) and automatic spiritual writing amongst Quakers (Clinton 2004). In some ways, ministry in MfW is also heterotopian, not only in its effects on the hearers, but also it can be physically disruptive for the person giving it, (*QFP* 1995: 2.58). Chapter 8 suggests that this is an area for further research.

It is the juxtaposition of things not usually found together and the confusion such representations create that marks heterotopias out and gives them significance.

Heterotopias signify by similitude rather than by resemblance. With similitude, things are cast adrift without any of them being able to claim privileged status as model for the others. With resemblance, however, one thing resembles another, implying that one might have precedence over the other. In heterotopias, meaning is dislocated through a series of deferrals between signifier and signified (similitude), rather than directly to a referent (resemblance) and hierarchy gives way to exclusively lateral relations (Hetherington 1997: 42-43).²⁷ The example from Borges' Chinese encyclopaedia illustrates similitude (Foucault 2002 [1966]: xix): all the entries relate to 'animal', but they are not in hierarchical order; the signifier is 'animal' and the various encyclopaedia entries are signified by that word.²⁸ It is not the relationship seen from within the space, which may make perfect sense, that is the source of the heterotopic relationship; rather, it is how the relationship is seen from an outside perspective that allows it to be seen as heterotopic (Hetherington 1997: 43).

Heterotopias exist in lateral, not hierarchical, relationship with the society in which they exist. Hetherington described the process of similitude as revelatory:

like a collage, it brings forward the out-of-place and offers it up as a basis for alternative perspective and orderings, revealing what is hidden among the

²⁷ Foucault discussed the difference between similitude and resemblance in *This is not a Pipe*, his commentary on Magritte's work (Foucault 1983 [1968]: 43-52). Although Foucault did not use the word 'heterotopia' in that work, James Harkness, identified in his 1981 *Translator's Introduction* that Magritte and Foucault must have recognised in one another a common fascination with heterotopias and that both were cartographers of heterotopia (Foucault 1983 [1968]: 4-5). Harkness drew only on *The Order of Things* (Foucault 2002 [1966]: xix) for this discussion of heterotopia, presumably because he was writing before the full text of the 1967 lecture was published. See also Chapter 8 ('Foucault's spatial paradigm'), p310, and FN22, Philo similarly brought out how Foucault saw jumbling and simultaneity rather than hierarchy in his commentary on Roussel (Foucault 1987 [1963]: 78-84, 107-110; Philo 1992: 146).

²⁸ See this chapter FN8 for the encyclopaedia entries.

ruins: little fragments of past, forgotten lives, found objects, strange, unsettling novel things that have a poetic wonder about them.²⁹ (Hetherington 1997: 50)

Hetherington, then, said heterotopias are spaces of alternate ordering, in which a non-linear, unsettling process happens. They are sites of experimentation, dynamic and transitional, playing out ambivalent, incongruous relationships, through their own codes, rules, symbols and power relations. Heterotopias do not exist in themselves, but in relation (Foucault's important sixth trait) and are not at the margin, but in lateral juxtaposition to whatever it is that they are in relation with, revealing how they are in relation. They can be abstract as well as physical sites.

Hjorth referred to heterotopias as 'spaces for play/invention' again emphasising heterotopia's experimentation element (2005: 386-387). He said that heterotopias come into existence when multiplicity is embraced and, following de Certeau (1984) that new practices are created 'in the cracks in the surveillance of the proprietary powers' (Hjorth 2005: 391). They create and expand the cracks in the official version 'through actualising subversive-transformative ideas' (Hjorth 2005: 392).

Hjorth, then, adds the idea that the process of creation in the spaces in-between may be invisible and indicates that heterotopias come into being when multiplicity is embraced.

²⁹ Hetherington's reference to 'collage' brings to mind Frith's (2008) and Scully's (2002) use of the word as a metaphor for how Quakers make choices, respectively about use of time and in determining their ethics. An examination of their use of collage using the lens of heterotopia, which signify by similitude, could show that British Quakers do still occupy a heterotopic space in British society. See Chapter 8 ('British Quakers and heterotopia') for suggested further work on collage and British Quakers.

For both Hetherington and Hjorth heterotopias have the inherent dynamic element of creative experimentation, bringing the new and different into being by doing things differently and in an unsettling way, in the blurred space-between, rather than at any margin.

Non-geographical and political: North

North (1999: 71) described Foucault's heterotopia as a 'non-geographical, ephemeral yet temporarily liberated virtual space'. Following Harvey (1989: 48), North defined heterotopia as a multiplicity of fragmentary possible worlds coexisting in the same impossible space.³⁰

In his examination of the politics behind Local Exchange Trading Schemes (LETS), North (1999: 72-75) developed a new fourfold conception of heterotopia.³¹ He said, first, that LETS is a space in which multiple claims about money are raised which then knock up against each other. It is a 'hetero(geneous u)topia', a contested multiple space where no single value-claim is successfully imposed on other network members (anarchists charge a flat rate by time whilst their co-traders have guidelines as to the relative value of different types of work, for example). Second, attention to the power held by participants shows how they are able to deploy that power, so that LETS' creativity is emphasised; it is alongside the mainstream rather than going beyond or replacing it, whilst at the same time resisting or challenging it in living by different rules; it is a realisable alternative space. Third, it is a momentary, fleeting

³⁰ North did not reference Foucault directly, but in citing this definition from Harvey (1989), North (1999) is focusing on the third principle of heterotopia (1986 [1967]-a: 25), see this chapter ('Foucault's heterotopia'), p93.

³¹ North conducted an ethnographic study into LETS in Manchester using participant observation and semi-structured interviews. He referred to participants' reflexivity, participants' perspective and competing discourses (North 1999: 74): the similarities and differences between North's approach and my own are discussed in Chapter 4 ('Writing up'), pp170-171.

effervescence with limited implementability, only locally effective. Finally it is an impossible space, an unrealisable declaration of resistance providing an image of a presently impossible future.

North, then, like Saldanha (2008: 284) without apparently being aware of Foucault's comment in the radio broadcast, showed that heterotopias may come into being and disappear again (they are 'effervescent' and only locally effective). He emphasised the multiplicity within heterotopia (a different point from Hjorth's implication of already-existing multiplicity before heterotopias come into being). He also said that they are locally realisable, but, in his fourth aspect, may not achieve the desired change.

Heterotopia as an image of thought: Marks³²

Marks pointed out that, besides social spatial heterotopia, Foucault also elaborates heterotopia as an 'image of thought' or 'of thought which seeks to escape the image of recognition.'³³ Heterotopian thought is not the exclusive by-product of individual *cogito*, but also has material and institutional existence, where it seeks to evade and

³² Marks (1995) read Foucault (1973 [1963]; 1977 [1975]; 1984; 1986 [1967]-a; 1987 [1963]; 1989 [1969]; 2002 [1966]), in conjunction with Deleuze (1986; 1988 [1966]; 1989; 1992; 1994; 1994; 2006 [1986]). He was more concerned with the development of the notions of *becoming* and *space-time* (Marks 1995: 69-71) than heterotopia *per se*. Surprisingly, given the abstract bent of his analysis, Marks drew only on Soja's reading of Foucault's more literal discussion of space in *Of Other Spaces* for his discussion of heterotopia (Foucault 1986 [1967]-a; Soja 1989: 18), not on Foucault's more abstract discussion in relation to language in the preface to *The Order of Things* (Foucault 2002 [1966]). Marks did refer to *The Order of Things* (Foucault 2002 [1966]), but only as an outline of 'the theme of epistemic shifts and ruptures', of which Foucault's concept of archaeology in *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (Foucault 1989 [1969]) is a methodological consideration (Marks 1995: 73).

³³ Marks is here reflecting a different aspect of what was inherent in Foucault's abstract exposition of heterotopia; after enumerating the entries from Borges' encyclopaedia Foucault wrote: 'the thing we apprehend in one great leap, the thing that, by means of the fable, is demonstrated as the exotic charm of another system of thought, is the limitation of our own, the stark impossibility of thinking *that*. But what is it impossible to think, and what kind of impossibility are we faced with here?' (Foucault 2002 [1966]: xvi). *The Order of Things* was a challenge to (hitherto accepted) taxonomies and systems of thought. This makes it all the more surprising that Marks did not make more use of it in his article.

overcome boundaries established by images of thought which imprison thinking (Marks 1995: 69).³⁴

Marks emphasised heterotopia as the heterogeneous and relational aspects of space, encompassing simultaneity and juxtaposition (1995: 68-69). Marks' analysis was, however, deeper where he mined Foucault's other work in conjunction with Deleuze's.³⁵ He suggested Deleuze and Foucault together are not primarily spatial thinkers, but rather involved in the creation of *shapes*, that is, undetermined and dynamic forms of space or sketches of *space-time* (Marks 1995: 71).³⁶

Marks argued that both Foucault and Deleuze use space to describe the temporal process of *becoming* (that is, the process of ever-changing and developing).

Recognising that Foucault's discussion of the mirror (Foucault 1986 [1967]-a: 24) was as something between heterotopia and utopia, Marks said the mirror was 'a non-totalised relation between real and unreal space', functioning as a different sort of heterotopia from the external, real social spaces (1995: 70) in which Foucault located the *becoming* 'of his own thought in the elusive non-place between the mirror and the spectator' (1995: 74).

³⁴ Marks used the example of Euclidean conception of space being overtaken by Einstein's showing that the mechanistic separation of space and time was artificial (Major-Poetzl 1983: 67-68; Lefebvre 1991: 25; Marks 1995: 66-67): Euclidean geometry limited possibilities of understanding until Einstein's new conceptions emerged. In using the phrase 'thought which seeks to escape the image of recognition', Marks was summarising Foucault's and Deleuze's attempts to go beyond models of thought based on representation and identity, to undermine those concepts by emphasising the dynamic and fragmentary, chaos and flux: the 'new image of thought' acknowledges simultaneity and contemporaneity of divergent series (Marks 1995: 67-69). Marks links 'thought which imprisons thinking' with 'the image of recognition'.

³⁵ Marks perhaps found it necessary to look at Foucault's use of spatial metaphor in conjunction with Deleuze, since he described *Of Other Spaces* (Foucault 1986 [1967]-a) as 'a sort of work in progress, a provocative set of ideas and suggestions for further research', rather than a coherently argued piece (Marks 1995: 69).

³⁶ With the dynamic aspect to Foucault's appreciation of space, Marks came to a conclusion similar to Hetherington's on heterotopia (Hetherington 1997); as Hetherington (1996a; 1996b; 1997) did not cite Marks (1995) in relation to Foucault, he seems to have come to a similar conclusion independently.

Marks pointed out that Deleuze identified in Foucault's *Discipline and Punish* (Foucault 1977 [1975]) 'the informal diagram', a virtual multiplicity which can fully express the divergence and differentiation of the visible and the articulable only when expressed in concrete terms, for example in panopticism (1995: 75).³⁷ Foucault had developed panopticism into an abstract formula so that it was no longer 'to see without being seen' but became 'to impose a particular conduct on a particular human multiplicity', a new informal dimension (Deleuze 2006 [1986]: 29-30).

Deleuze described the informal dimension:

We need only insist that the multiplicity is reduced and confined to a tight space and that the imposition of a form of conduct is done by distributing in space, laying out and serialising in time, composing in space-time, and so on. The list is endless, but it is always concerned with unformed and unorganised matter and unformalised, unfinalised functions, the two variables being indissolubly linked. (Deleuze 2006 [1986]: 29-30)

The informal dimension is, Deleuze said (2006 [1986]: 30), named by Foucault as 'diagram': 'a functioning, abstracted from any obstacle [...] or friction [and which] must be detached from any specific use' (Foucault 1977 [1975]: 205); Deleuze interpreted this:

The *diagram* is no longer an auditory or visual archive but a map, a cartography that is co-extensive with the whole social field. It is an abstract machine. It is defined by its informal functions and matter and in terms of form makes no distinction between content and expression, a discursive formation and a non-discursive formation. It is a machine that is almost blind and mute, even though it makes others see and speak. (Deleuze 2006 [1986]: 30)

³⁷ Deleuze said that Foucault identified in *Discipline and Punish* (Foucault 1977 [1975]) that prison is concerned with whatever is visible: not only does it seek to display the crime and the criminal, but in itself prison constitutes 'a visibility', being a system of light before it is a figure of stone, defined by 'Panopticism'. See Chapter 1 FN117 for an explanation of Bentham's panopticon.

Marks said the informal diagram is linked to the absent place that has been shown to haunt Foucault's work.³⁸ Deleuze said:

the diagram, in so far as it exposes a set of relations between forces, is not a place, but rather 'a non-place': it is the place only of mutation. Suddenly, things are no longer perceived or propositions articulated in the same way. (Deleuze 2006 [1986]: 71)

Marks concluded that both Deleuze and Foucault seek to create 'open' systems, which are in disequilibrium, rather than a closed system of equivalence and exchange (1995: 75). The disequilibrium Marks identified is not dissimilar to Foucault's heterotopia of disturbing simultaneous juxtaposition, embedded in and at the same time different from its context, providing a possibility for dynamic change. Deleuze's description of Foucault's diagram reveals it to be something very like an abstract heterotopia.

Marks' discussion of Foucault's use of *space-time* (Marks 1995: 68) adds an emphasis not found as clearly in the other commentators. It is also possible to see in Marks' analysis the development in Foucault's later work of the elements underlying heterotopia, even though Foucault rarely referred again to heterotopia *per se*. Marks' and Deleuze's analysis of heterotopia and Foucault's diagram are relevant to any abstract form of heterotopia.

³⁸ Marks earlier in the article (1995: 68) referred to Foucault's final paragraphs in the introduction to *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (Foucault 1989 [1969]: 19), where Foucault referred to the blank space from which he speaks [when Marks said 'absent place' later in the article (1995: 75) he was referring to something subtly different]. In the paragraphs, Foucault imagines one of his readers challenging his (Foucault's) ever changing position and imagines his own (that is, Foucault's own) response: 'no, no, I'm not where you are lying in wait for me, but over here, laughing at you'. Foucault refutes such a situation in the final paragraph of the introduction, but I am left with the feeling that Foucault is, subtly and craftily through his double positioning and double negative, suggesting that he is indeed laughing up his sleeve at us and provoking us, his readers. (de Certeau read the passage as an irritated retort (de Certeau 1986: 193), but I disagree.) There is a similar sense of the audience of architects being laughed at when Johnson says that the context to Foucault's lecture, later published as *Of Other Spaces* (Foucault 1986 [1967]-a) was one of bewildered amusement (Johnson 2006: 76). Johnson cites a letter from Foucault to his partner, Defert: 'Do you remember the telegram that gave us such a laugh, where an architect said he glimpsed a new conception of urbanism? But it wasn't in the book [*The Order of Things* (Foucault 2002 [1966])]; it was in a talk on the radio about utopia. They want me to give it again.' (The letter extract suggests no bewilderment to this reader.)

Heterotopian mirroring

Dehaene and De Cauter make one of the most important observations about heterotopia in a footnote:³⁹

Heterotopias are aporetic spaces that reveal or represent something about the society in which they reside through the way in which they incorporate and stage the very contradictions that this society produces but is unable to resolve. (2008b: 25)

Foucault's essay provides a double introduction to the aporia:⁴⁰ as 'antipode' of utopia (utopias are imaginary, heterotopias are real arrangements); and as 'heterotopos', the other of normal or common places; heterotopia is at the intersection of two axes: real/imaginary (utopia-heterotopia) and normal/other (topos-heterotopos), so that it works by mirroring (Dehaene & De Cauter 2008b: 25). Boyer reviews heterotopia's mirroring effect in her examination of Koolhaas' encounter with the Berlin Wall;⁴¹ she points out that by their very imaginations and illusions heterotopias sustain the normality of everyday space and at the same time they negate the illusions: they are real spaces that show reality to be the illusion (2008: 54).⁴²

³⁹ The footnote refers to Foucault's discussion of the mirror as both utopia and heterotopia (Foucault 1986 [1967]-a: 24; Foucault 2008 [1967]: 17).

⁴⁰ 'Aporetic' derives from the Greek *απορητικός* and has the connotation of doubt and objection (Onions 1970: 82), but can also imply *impasse*, or a point of undecidability, 'at which the text most obviously undermines its own rhetorical structure, dismantles, or deconstructs itself' (Harmon 2006: 38-39).

⁴¹ Koolhaas was shocked that West Berlin was described as 'free', yet it was the western sector of the city which was encapsulated and imprisoned by the Wall, itself an agglomeration of ruins, barbed wire, bricks and rubbish, encompassing open terrain (no man's land) in the heart of the city and presenting different appearances on each of its sides (Boyer 2008: 65).

⁴² Boyer also reviews the operation of the mirror in Foucault's reflections on Velasquez' *Las Meninas* (Foucault 2002 [1966]: 3-18) and Manet's *Une Bar aux Folies-Bergère* (Foucault 2009 [1971]: 73-79), which she says Foucault was working on around the time he was writing the text of the lecture *Of Other Spaces* (Foucault 1986 [1967]-a; 2004 [1967]); thus Foucault was already considering spatial representation, what forces a subject to resist, counter-sites, the gaze and how the visible confronts the articulable (Boyer 2008: 60-62). Boyer referenced a 2003 publication in French for Foucault on the Manet painting: it was originally delivered as a lecture in Tunis in 1971 (Boyer 2008: 60); Foucault originally wrote his observations of *Las Meninas* in 1965 and *La Peinture de Manet* (with which the passage on *Une Bar aux Folies-Bergère* concludes) was developed in lectures from 1967 (Nale 2005: 145).

Dehaene and De Cauter also intimate that heterotopia is sacred, *hieratic* space,⁴³ a third sphere, between the private space of the hidden and the public space of appearance, which they call the space of 'hidden appearance': where appearance is hidden and the hidden appears (Dehaene & De Cauter 2008a: 90-91).⁴⁴ Hidden appearance incorporates other-spaces as *alternative*, *altered* and *alternating* spaces, particularly exemplified in the theatre where, when the play begins, the virtual space of the play's scene becomes real (and the real space of the audience disappears) but when the play is over the reverse happens and so-called reality reappears; hidden appearance also mediates, as in the examples of the cemetery which stands between the dead of the past and the living, in the present, and the temple between gods and mortals (Dehaene & De Cauter 2008a: 93-94);⁴⁵ they are central, but in an *eccentric* way (Dehaene & De Cauter 2008a: 100).⁴⁶ They are always complex, ambiguous and multi-cellular, mirroring and inverting their host societies (Shane 2008: 260).⁴⁷

Sohn summarises Foucault's six principles of heterotopia as having the common denominator *transformation of meaning*: shifts in the meaning of normal, abnormal and anomaly convey *levels* which account for the different types of heterotopia and

⁴³ From Hippodamus' term *hiéran* (Dehaene & De Cauter 2008a: 90). Hieratic, from the Greek *ἱερατικός* connotes priestly (Onions 1970: 900). Dehaene and De Cauter do, however, go on to say that such sacred space is today secularised as the cultural sphere, incorporating arts, sports and leisure as well as religion (2008a: 91).

⁴⁴ They assert that academia, missing from Foucault's examples (Foucault 2008 [1967]), definitely qualifies as a heterotopia (Dehaene & De Cauter 2008a: 91). They also link heterotopia with space-time from first principles, incorporating the sacred in holiday/holyday: heterotopia as holyday space is exemplified in honeymoon, old people's homes, theatre, cinema, libraries, museums, fairs, carnivals, holiday camps, hamams, saunas, motels, brothels and ships, together with the graveyard, a most sacred space visited on holy days (Dehaene & De Cauter 2008a: 92-93); they do not refer to Marks (1995) or Deleuze (2006 [1986]) and they similarly link heterotopia with play (Dehaene & De Cauter 2008a: 95-96) without reference to Hetherington (1997) or Hjorth (2005).

⁴⁵ The theme of heterotopias as sacred space is examined further in this chapter ('Heterotopias as sacred spaces of illusion which reveal: Shackley').

⁴⁶ That is, they do not share a common centre, they are not concentric, nor the same shape, they are regulated by no central control, they are irregular and anomalous (Onions 1970: 581).

⁴⁷ Implicit in heterotopias' role of mediation, their complexity and ambiguity is a denial of heterotopic boundary. See Chapter 2 FN103: Robson (2008b: 155) and Best (2010: 280) use the term 'heterotopic boundary' without understanding all heterotopia's complexity.

the impacts they have in any given context; heterotopias are generated through the different cultural and social meanings of heterogeneity and the strategies of a given society to cope with it (2008: 45).⁴⁸ The heterotopia which emerges from a particular society is an expression of its (in)ability to contain difference. Heterotopias are not the margin,⁴⁹ rather they are exceptions which cannot be fitted and fixed into a rigid taxonomy because they differ from all categories (Sohn 2008: 49).

Dehaene, De Cauter, Boyer, Shane and Sohn thus bring out both how heterotopias operate (by mirroring and mediating, by showing their context what that context's values are and challenging them by being different) and how they emerge from their context, in relation to that context's ability to contain difference, but are not marginal: they are side-by-side and alternate with their context.⁵⁰

Criticism of heterotopia: Genocchio and Saldanha

Genocchio (1995) criticised the use of heterotopia by 'theorists of social space' as ignoring the disruptive element inherent in it, particularly where only *Of Other Spaces* was the text defining heterotopia (omitting the complexity inherent in the additional extract from *The Order of Things*).⁵¹ Genocchio's most pertinent challenge to literal readings from *Of Other Spaces* was 'what cannot be designated a heterotopia?' (1995: 39).

⁴⁸ Sohn draws her analysis from the medical origin of the term heterotopia, involving proximity (2008: 42) and simultaneous spatial and morphological anomaly within highly complex structures (2008: 43). In her interpretation (Sohn 2008), she incorporates Foucault's first more abstract exposition (2002 [1966]) with his second material one (1998 [1967]) and cites Genocchio's (1995) criticism of the concept (see this chapter ('Criticism of heterotopia: Genocchio and Saldanha')).

⁴⁹ See also this chapter ('Dynamic social ordering, spaces for play: Hetherington and Hjorth'), p99, for Hetherington's criticism of Turner's concept of *limen* as static.

⁵⁰ As Hetherington suggested in his analysis of similitude (see this chapter ('Dynamic social ordering, spaces for play: Hetherington and Hjorth'), pp100-101).

⁵¹ As Johnson also observes, Genocchio did not, however, identify who the culprits were (Johnson 2006: 82).

Genocchio found an 'inconsistency' between Foucault's exposition of heterotopia in the two texts, claiming that its use in *The Order of Things* makes it impossible to realise a heterotopia within a coherent and familiar domain, whilst in *Of Other Spaces* it is a real space (1995: 36-37). Genocchio said that such a difference stems from the first exposition being in linguistic and discursive terms whilst the second is in actual extra-discursive locations. (In fact, a discursive element must be present in *Of Other Spaces*, once the relational aspect, the sixth trait, is considered.)⁵²

Further, Genocchio said Foucault's argument within *Of Other Spaces* is reliant upon a means of establishing some invisible, but visibly operational difference which provides a clear conception of spatially discontinuous ground (1995: 41),⁵³ the very thing Genocchio claimed was lacking from Foucault's argument. Genocchio, however, went on to say that the real power of heterotopia, as outlined in *The Order of Things*, would appear to lie in its ability to both question and undermine the limits of the alleged coherence and totality of self-contained linguistic and spatial systems.⁵⁴ In order to call an existing order into question, Foucault's heterotopia must remain outside (absolutely differentiated from) that order while at the same time relate to and be able to be defined within it (Genocchio 1995: 41).

Genocchio went on to conclude that heterotopia was thus more of an idea about space than any actual place, and suggested the ordering of spatial systems is subjective and arbitrary, producing and theorising space as transient, contestory, plagued by lapses

⁵² See this chapter ('Foucault's heterotopia'), p94.

⁵³ Genocchio said that in this he was following Noel Gray's unpublished remarks (Genocchio 1995: 41).

⁵⁴ Genocchio was here following McHale (McHale 1987: 44; Genocchio 1995: 41).

and ruptured sites (1995: 43). Genocchio therefore did not preclude the use of heterotopia as a means of considering the Experiment, which is not a real place, but a process taking place in a transient, internal space and an ever-shifting social space.

Saldanha (2008) says there are conceptual problems with the idea of heterotopia, on the grounds that Foucault needed to posit a totality to society. That is, Foucault implied that society is a 'discrete and monochronous system within which some sites can be readily recognised as completely and inherently different' (Saldanha 2008: 2087). Another conceptual problem is that Foucault needed to perform a 'slice of time' in order for heterotopias to be 'absolutely different' from 'all the rest' of space (Saldanha 2008: 2080). Johnson criticises Saldanha's reading of Foucault in this respect, saying that Foucault described heterotopias as 'different from all the emplacements that they reflect or refer to' (1998 [1967]: 178) and not as different from 'all the rest' of space (Saldanha 2008: 2080; Johnson 2010: 42).⁵⁵

Saldanha says that, in the light of postcolonial theory, heterotopia is inadequate for analysing spatial difference since it ignores mobility, unevenness and differentials of power and tends towards an insufficiently dynamic conception of space and time (Saldanha 2008: 2080-2081). He points out that if there are two or more sites, they are immanent to whatever networks those sites are part of, none of which adds up to a delineated whole, so that no site can be 'absolutely different'. All places are counter-

⁵⁵ Johnson relies on a different translation (Foucault 1998 [1967]) from Saldanha (Foucault 1986 [1967]-a), but in my reading the translations both accurately reflect the French original (Foucault 2004 [1967]): Johnson chooses one possible interpretation and Saldanha another. To some extent, this is Saldanha's own fault because he paraphrases his argument differently in the abstract ('all the rest of space') (2008: 2080) from the text of his detailed argument ('all the rest of a society's spaces') (2008: 2083); Johnson does not give a page number reference in his criticism of the point (2010: 42). This scholarly spat is but one example of Urbach's observation that heterotopia is 'slippery' (1998: 347) – see this chapter ('Using the concept of heterotopia' and FN4). One extraordinary feature of Johnson's criticism of Saldanha (2008) is that he describes Saldanha with female pronouns and adjectives (Johnson 2010: 41-42), but Arun Saldanha is a man (*Dr Arun Saldanha* 2008).

sites in varying degrees, and change relative to other places. They compete, but none is completely opposed to another (Saldanha 2008: 2087). He does say, however, that he is not deconstructing the concept in order to eliminate it, rather to forewarn those, specifically geographers, putting it to use (Saldanha 2008: 2082). I use heterotopia with Saldanha's warning, aware that, like any other theory, heterotopia is a useful tool for analysis, not a complete explanation, but also I am not looking so much at geographical space as at internal and social space.

Although he says Hetherington's (1997) reading of heterotopia is perhaps the most inspiring, Saldanha finds Hetherington's use of heterotopia too Eurocentric and flawed because he characterises modernity as a total condition of one society (Saldanha 2008: 2091). Saldanha does not take issue in the same way with Genocchio's (1995) reading which focuses more on Foucault's preface to *The Order of Things* than to the 1967 lecture. In *The Order of Things* heterotopia is an epistemological concept and does not refer to physical spaces: its use there is strategic rather than necessarily oppositional and therefore less prone to the 'fallacy' of assuming a totality ('the supposed wholeness and simultaneity of structure') (Saldanha 2008: 2088-2090).⁵⁶

⁵⁶ Saldanha claims (2008: 2090) that Foucault preferred the geopolitical, more structuralist meaning of heterotopia because of Foucault's mention of heterotopia in a 1982 interview with Paul Rabinow (Foucault 1984 [1982]: 252) [Saldanha references the interview from its publication in a different collection]. Saldanha, however, takes Foucault's comment out of context. The interview was on the theme of architecture and Foucault mentioned heterotopias only parenthetically as the subject of the talk he gave to the architects in 1967, in order to contextualise a comment a Sartrean psychologist made about space being reactionary and capitalist (Foucault 1984 [1982]: 252). Foucault's comment does not support Saldanha's claim. Foucault's American biographer, James Miller, described how the gay community of San Francisco had by 1983, when he was (it later transpired) already dying of AIDS, became for Foucault 'a kind of magical "heterotopia," a place of dumbfounding excess that left him happily speechless' where he could exercise his special interest in consensual sado-masochistic eroticism (Miller 1993: 26-27). Miller links quotes from Foucault's description of such extreme experience to the words used in his first exposition of heterotopia ('heterotopias ... stop words in their tracks' (Foucault 2002 [1966]: xix)): 'the sort of extreme experiences that stop words in their tracks "the overwhelming, the unspeakable, ... the ecstatic" ... the "limbo" of "those closed, narrow and intimate societies"' (Miller 1993: 396, fn 41). Miller thus links Foucault's view at the end of his life to the non-geopolitical and non-structuralist use of heterotopia.

Saldanha's criticisms do not invalidate my deployment of the concept of heterotopia. I am using it in the epistemological sense in relation to the Experiment as a process and as unreal spaces that Experimenters may find within themselves, and am deliberately applying it to analyse early twenty-first century British Quakers, a specific society in a narrow time frame (or 'slice of time'). Saldanha (2008: 2093) characterises a 'slice of time' as a bounded territory. Of course, I know that early twenty-first century British Quakers are not absolutely boundaried. Doubtless others will come afterwards and, with the benefit of historical and other different perspectives, take a different view; my work cannot be final, but only point towards a possibility of understanding.

The developed notion of heterotopia

The scholars after Foucault have brought out heterotopia's dynamic and experimental aspects more clearly than Foucault did in his originating expositions. They have shown that it can be non-geographic, ephemeral, temporarily liberated and virtual, that it can apply to the political and abstract as well as to physical sites and that it creates potential for change by mirroring a society's characteristics back to reveal what is illusion. They have emphasised the importance of its disruptive implication and developed it beyond the limitations of Foucault's original conception. Thus heterotopia is an 'other', 'different' space, whether real, abstract or conceptual, and connotes challenge to the expected order of things, juxtaposition, experimentation, simultaneous reflection and contestation, complexity and ambiguity; heterotopias are expressions of (in)ability to contain difference, they mirror and mediate their contexts and actualise subversive-transformative ideas.

Heterotopia and religion

The concept of heterotopia has previously been discussed and applied in relation to religion by Smith (1997), Carrette (2000) and Shackley (2002) and specifically in relation to Quakers by Pilgrim (2003b; 2003a; 2004; 2008).

Heterotopia and religious experience: Smith⁵⁷

In discussing the intention of a Buddhist to achieve utopia, Smith suggested that an individual's heterotopia consists of varieties of religious experience (1997: 126).⁵⁸ In order to explore Buddhism's relationship with Western modernity, Smith set heterotopia in contradistinction to utopia as profane is to sacred, reality is to hyper-reality and Buddhist convention is to ultimate truth (1997: 24). Smith claimed that heterotopias have discernable, but relatively ephemeral boundaries which allow for the existence of both the traditional and the non-rational (1997: 158).⁵⁹ Smith touched only lightly upon heterotopia: he claimed Buddhist heterotopia as typical of other heterotopias, without saying what those others are (1997: 158), but his insight that heterotopia might be appropriately applied to religious experience was original.⁶⁰

⁵⁷ Smith read heterotopia only through Soja, who in turn read it only from *Of Other Spaces* (Foucault 1986 [1967]-a; Soja 1995 [1990]; Smith 1997: 24, 111-113), so Smith's application of heterotopia is not nuanced, although his insight about religious experience (1997: 126) is original. Smith listed the six 'attributes' of heterotopia (Soja 1995 [1990]: 15-16; Smith 1997: 111-112), but he did not apply them to Buddhism to demonstrate his claim that Buddhism occupies heterotopic space in Western modernity. The nearest he came to justification of his use of heterotopia was: 'I would suggest that the qualities which are inherent in these spaces are consistent with those which are present in the de-universalised spaces of contemporary Western society' (Smith 1997: 112) – 'qualities' refers to those six attributes.

⁵⁸ Although Smith suggested that the religious experiences would be constructed towards a utopian goal (1997: 126), he did not define 'religious experience', nor did he provide examples: his work was (like Carrette's) not empirical, but philosophical (1997: 111, 114, 128).

⁵⁹ Smith's notion of ephemeral boundary complements Hetherington's criticism of Turner's static *limen* and Dehaene and De Cauter's idea of heterotopia's mediating role: see this chapter ('Dynamic social ordering, spaces for play: Hetherington and Hjorth', 'Heterotopian mirroring' and FN47). His locating ephemeral boundaries between the traditional and the non-rational contradicts to some extent his location of heterotopia as profane (in contradistinction to sacred utopia) and is more akin to Carrette's, Shackley's, Dehaene's and De Cauter's reading: see this chapter FN57.

⁶⁰ My analysis - see this chapter ('The Experiment and heterotopia') - is the first to empirically support what Smith suggests.

Foucault and religion: Carrette

In his work on Foucault and religion, Carrette (2000) mentioned heterotopia only twice. First, in relation to Foucault's interest in the secret and cryptic, specifically Foucault's (1983 [1968]) work on Magritte's *This is not a pipe* (Carrette 2000: 58), where Carrette equated heterotopia with 'disorder' in the sense of undermining language (from *The Order of Things*). Secondly and more interestingly, in line with *Of Other Spaces*, Carrette said heterotopias are a space outside all others, the 'Other space' or 'counter-sites' and linked heterotopias with the notion of 'hidden exclusion', sacred or forbidden, as in the examples Foucault gave of brothels and Jesuit colonies. 'Foucault's religious questions can be seen as an attempt to enter the "heterotopias" of religion and in the process destroy the boundaries between the sacred and profane' (Carrette 2000: 107). Carrette provides an authoritative link between heterotopia and religion since his reading of Foucault in relation to religion is the most thorough, but claiming heterotopia as outside all other space is open to Saldanha's criticism that to do so is to posit a totality to society (2008: 2087).⁶¹

Heterotopias as sacred spaces of illusion which reveal: Shackley⁶²

Shackley examines the English cathedral as heterotopia, a ritual space that exists out of time (2002: 345), drawing in particular on Foucault's last trait of heterotopia. It functions in relation to all the remaining space, its 'role is to create a space of illusion that exposes every real space, all the sites inside of which human life is partitioned, as still more illusory' (Foucault 1986 [1967]-a: 27; Shackley 2002: 351).

⁶¹ See this chapter ('Criticism of heterotopia: Genocchio and Saldanha'), p111.

⁶² Shackley's analysis is a practical example of what Dehaene and De Cauter' later term 'hidden appearance' (Dehaene & De Cauter 2008a: 90-91), see this chapter ('Heterotopian mirroring'), p108.

Although she is discussing the physical space of a cathedral, Shackley brings out the 'echoing, dark, cavernous and mysterious interior' which allows 'temporary entry into another world where the sense of time is lost' where the individual is removed from the constraints of everyday life (2002: 351). Cathedral as heterotopia, then, is a ritual space where the participant is divorced from her surroundings so that the space becomes complete on its own, achieving a sense of timelessness (or perhaps timefullness) in which all sense of time is collapsed into a particular time-frame.⁶³

Shackley observes that part of the mystery of a cathedral is its otherness, its removal from the world of time constraints (and commerce) and concludes that, by acting as an interface between the sacred and profane (2002: 345), its function as a visitor attraction is to offer its visitor a glimpse of the numinous (2002: 350-351).⁶⁴ Thus her study provides a link between Carrette's observation (2000: 107) and the Experiment, which is also an opportunity to glimpse the numinous (Chapter 5).

I prefer Carrette's (2000: 107), Shackley's (2002: 345), Dehaene and De Cauter's (2008a: 90-91) reading of heterotopias as sacred spaces, as they are more developed and nuanced than Smith's view of heterotopia as profane (1997: 24).⁶⁵

⁶³ Thus, without referring to Marks' work (1995: 67), nor to Deleuze's (2006 [1986]), Shackley also brings out the notion of 'space-time'. Shackley does not specifically refer to heterochronia, but she is clearly describing a break in chronological time which is a different time, perhaps polychronic (Frith 2008: 71-73).

⁶⁴ Shackley also concludes that visitors are made uncomfortable by paying for entry to cathedrals because of their expectation of meeting the sacred; charging and money matters remind visitors of the commercial and disturb their sense of the cathedral's otherness (2002: 351).

⁶⁵ See this chapter ('Heterotopian mirroring', 'Foucault and Religion: Carrette' and 'Heterotopia and religious experience: Smith').

Heterotopia and British Quakers: Pilgrim

Pilgrim (2003b; 2003a; 2004; 2008) uses Hetherington's definition of heterotopia⁶⁶ in her analysis of British Quakers' historical behaviour and contemporary belief, but she does not pick up on the sense of dynamism inherent within the concept. Instead she demonstrates how Quakers had performed alternate ordering throughout their history. Early Quakers used the courtroom where they were prosecuted to preach, standing on the church furniture to rail against the priest and met in barns for worship in the seventeenth century (Pilgrim 2004: 211-212). In the eighteenth century Quakers became philanthropists without participating in the arts, sport or other leisure pursuits (Pilgrim 2004: 213). They self consciously maintained visible differences in dress, speech, lifestyle and worship practices until the nineteenth century (Pilgrim 2004: 214). Pilgrim argues that in the late twentieth and early twenty first century Quakers' heterotopian impulse became internalised (2003b: 156), referring to the examples of adolescent Quakers and Experimenters (Best 2008a; Meads 2008a; Pilgrim 2008: 65).

Pilgrim modifies the definition of heterotopia to include the idea that a heterotopic site *seeks* to be different from its context:

Heterotopias, or sites of Otherness, express their alternate ordering of society directly through the society whom they seek to be different from. To do this effectively they need to inhabit spaces which are sufficiently central to render their alternate ordering visible. (Pilgrim 2008: 56)

The intention to be different is absent from others' use of the term; they describe spaces which exist and have come into being as different, thus potentially, but not necessarily, causing change.

⁶⁶ See also chapter 1 FN113, Pilgrim references Hetherington incorrectly.

Pilgrim makes the notion of intention concomitant with the notion of visibility: to be effective in their alternate ordering, they need to be *visible*⁶⁷ within the society from whom they *seek* to be different. Visibility necessarily applies only to manifestations with physical form, and could not, for example, apply to spoken language, thought or religious experience (although Pilgrim does apply it to belief, or lack of it (2008: 60-64)). Since she is considering early Quakers' position vis-à-vis society generally, Pilgrim does not, however, consider *audibility* as a vehicle to express (or establish) difference, an aspect which is important in the context of differences *within* BYM, where silence is the basis of worship.

The Experiment and heterotopia

Although Experimenting can produce a liminal experience (Turner 1969: 94-130), in terms of Quaker experience it is not 'at the edge' (Hetherington 1997: 27).

Experimenters participate in other Quaker spaces in the same way any other Quaker does.⁶⁸ Also, Experimenters' liminal experiences can and do occur elsewhere: in MfW, for example, and outside Quaker places (see Chapter 5).⁶⁹ Heterotopia is a more useful concept than 'margin' (Turner 1969; Shields 1990),⁷⁰ 'subculture'⁷¹ or

⁶⁷ Pilgrim produces no evidence to suggest visibility is necessary; I prefer Hjorth's observation on invisibility based in his fieldwork (see this chapter ('Dynamic social ordering, spaces for play: Hetherington and Hjorth')), p101, and Dehaene and De Cauter's notion of 'hidden appearance' (see this chapter ('Heterotopian mirroring')), p108, as more reliable.

⁶⁸ Except where conflict arises: see Chapter 7.

⁶⁹ St John (2001), in developing the notion of 'an alternative cultural heterotopia' similarly finds Turner's concept of liminality inadequate to describe complex phenomena.

⁷⁰ See also this chapter ('Dynamic social ordering, spaces for play: Hetherington and Hjorth'), pp97 & 99; I follow Hetherington's (1997: 32-35) criticism that Turner's use of *limen* is too static.

⁷¹ Ma points out that Hebdige argues that subculture forms at the interface between surveillance and evasion of surveillance (Hebdige 1979; Ma 2002: 138). As Hjorth observes, heterotopias come into being 'in the cracks in the surveillance of the proprietary powers' (2005: 391). Thus, subculture shares one aspect with heterotopia, but heterotopia gives a more complex picture.

'counter-culture'⁷² for considering the Experiment because the Experiment's context and function are complex. In the individual Experimenter's Quaker experience, the Experiment is a 'blurred space-between' (Hetherington 1997: 27) rather than clearly delineated.

In his introductory remarks and before turning to address only external space, Foucault made reference to Bachelard's and phenomenologists' work on internal space:

we do not live in a homogeneous space and empty space, but on the contrary in a space thoroughly imbued with quantities and perhaps thoroughly fantasmic as well. The space of our primary perception, the space of our dreams and that of our passions hold within themselves qualities that seem intrinsic: there is a light, ethereal, transparent space, or again a dark, rough, encumbered space; a space from above, of summits, or on the contrary a space from below, of mud; or again a space that can be flowing like sparkling water, or a space that is fixed, congealed, like stone or crystal. (Foucault 1986 [1967]-a: 23)

This is highly relevant in relation to Experiment with Light, which is an internal process. I show in this section how the process of the Experiment is heterotopian in this internal sense. I apply the concept of heterotopia, incorporating its dynamic, experimental, abstract, effervescent, mirroring, mediating and eccentric properties to the varieties of Experimenters' religious experience.

The Experiment as heterotopian process

Simons said that critical reflection occurs in a heterotopia where the very grounds of categorisation are destroyed (Simons 1995: 89).⁷³ There are breaks between

⁷² See Chapter 2 ('Subcultural identity' and 'Counterculture') for a fuller discussion of subculture and counterculture.

⁷³ One example of the destruction of categorisation is Borges' encyclopaedia entry (Foucault 2002 [1966]: xvi-xvii), see this chapter FN8. Simons cited works of art that illustrate the breaks between

epistemes, between the extremes of, on the one hand, a culture's fundamental codes and, on the other, scientific theories or philosophical interpretations, where there:

lies a domain which, even though its role is mainly an intermediary one, is nonetheless fundamental: it is more confused, more obscure, and probably less easy to analyse. It is here that a culture, imperceptibly deviating from the empirical orders prescribed for it by its primary codes, instituting an initial separation from them, causes them to lose their original transparency, relinquishes its immediate and invisible powers, frees itself sufficiently to discover that these orders are perhaps not the only possible ones or the best ones; this culture then finds itself faced with the stark fact that there exists, below the level of its spontaneous orders, things that are in themselves capable of being ordered, that belong to a certain unspoken order; the fact, in short, that order exists. As though emancipating itself to some extent from its linguistic, perceptual, and practical grids, the culture superimposed on them another kind of grid which neutralised them ... (Foucault 2002 [1966]: xxii)

Drawing on Foucault's description of the mirror in the 1967 lecture (Foucault 1986 [1967]-a: 24), French neatly summarises the same point in Foucault's notion of heterotopia: 'It is through the undoing of already established relations and the experimentation with different modes of relation that a locus of difference can be found in everyday life' (2004: 290).

None of the commentators on heterotopia has specifically mentioned one very important aspect of a mirror, however, that it produces an image which is back-to-front, or more accurately left-to-right, an effect which in itself can be disruptive.⁷⁴

The Experiment does not present images exactly as they would be in everyday life; instead they arise in a disjointed, strange and juxtaposed way. The image the Experimenter has of herself is replaced with a subtly different image.

epistemes: *Don Quixote*, *Las Meninas* and *Sade* (1995: 89) and included Foucault on Magritte in a footnote (Foucault 1983 [1968]; Simons 1995: 134). Foucault examined *Las Meninas* in the opening pages of *The Order of Things* (Foucault 2002 [1966]), see also this chapter FN42.

⁷⁴ A photograph, for example, would show an individual how she appeared to another, but that image would be different from the one she is accustomed to seeing in the mirror.

Not only does the Experiment operate in a heterotopian way, as a re-ordering process, but it is also a process which involves ordering in a different way, an alternate ordering. It has the effect of causing the norms of everyday life to be questioned in a way that is not scientific or philosophical, but things simply become apparent during the course of the meditation and the sharing. The Experiment is a break between consciously constructed everyday ways of being and deeper knowledge of what is really going on.⁷⁵

One example is a1's seeing herself with a concrete block around her neck.⁷⁶ She understood from the image that, rather than (as she had previously thought) her colleagues being difficult with her, it was in fact she who had been keeping them at bay. The incongruity of the image of the concrete block around her neck (something that would never happen in everyday life) broke her hitherto ordered image of herself in relation to her colleagues. She began to feel extremely uncomfortable about what she was discovering, that her own behaviour was contributing to make work relationships difficult, that her image of herself was not as she had thought; there was no consolation, nor any immediate resolution. Her customary notions of herself were disrupted, tested, challenged and replaced.

The Experiment can (1) be precipitated by crisis, although that was exceptional rather than frequent, for example, a member of i7's group joined because she was dying of cancer.⁷⁷ It can precipitate crisis, as happened for a1, who had six months off work ill

⁷⁵ Salley Vickers explores the differences in such ways of knowing in her fiction. She explores how listening and responding truthfully bring about transforming understandings (Vickers 2007).

⁷⁶ Fieldnotes, 20 July 2004. See Chapter 4 FN6, a1 was one of Group A, with whom I undertook participant observation. See also Chapter 6 ('Embodied experience' and 'Realisation of Truth (God breaks in)'), pp199-200 & p214 for how she described her experience.

⁷⁷ See Chapter 2 ('Crisis of presence' and FN36), p57.

during the period of my fieldwork. It deviates from other Quaker forms in its semi-programmed method of being led by specific prompts.

The Experiment can (2) function differently at different times to its practitioners.

Sometimes it presents symbolic meanings: a2 for example felt buffeted like a sailing ship on two occasions.⁷⁸ Sometimes it provides a more general response: a2 wept in one meditation and reported only that she needed to '*accept*'.⁷⁹

The Experiment (3) juxtaposes in a single real space (the place where the Experimenters sit to Experiment together) several incompatible sites irreducible to each other. For example, a4 reported being taken to '*a different place*' like an out-of-body experience⁸⁰ and a6 reported that he had been taken to a garden where dawn was breaking and also mentioned three other locations with different senses of light: fluorescent fish; mushrooms in the dark and crustaceans under a microscope.⁸¹

The Experiment (4) operates heterochronically (Cross 2008): time shifts in a mysterious way. In the example above, a6 perceived the time to be dawn in the meditation although the Experiment was taking place in the evening and he was taken to a different place, a garden⁸² (itself one of Foucault's examples of a heterotopia (Foucault 1986 [1967]-a: 25-26)). The meditation runs in parallel with the everyday world and clock time yet affords a different perspective from which to regard the everyday world. Cross observes in relation to her examination of heterochronia in

⁷⁸ Fieldnotes, 3 February and 5 October 2004.

⁷⁹ Fieldnotes, 6 April 2004.

⁸⁰ Fieldnotes, 6 April 2004.

⁸¹ Fieldnotes, 4 May 2004. The details appear more fully in Chapter 7 ('Light as a narrative thread'), p279.

⁸² Fieldnotes, 4 May 2004.

medieval literature: "'heterochronia" serve to make Meriadoc (and us) realise that you have to create your own destiny' (2008: 173), an outcome which becomes apparent in Experimenters' experience of Experimenting (see Chapter 6, stages 3 to 6).

Each Light group (5) had its process of opening and closing its Experimenting together. Group A began by reporting to each other what they had been doing recently and finished with mundane arrangements for the next meeting. Most groups formed agreed ways of proceeding.

The process of the Experiment also (6) functioned at different times and for different Experimenters as spaces of illusion: a1's impression that she was carrying concrete blocks around her neck;⁸³ a4's seeing a cathedral of light.⁸⁴ It similarly functioned as spaces of consolation: a8 being reminded that God is ever-present and loving⁸⁵ and, in a different sense, i5 and g2 finding in the Experiment the spiritual depth they felt was lacking in MfW.⁸⁶

Looking in particular at Foucault's description of the ship as heterotopia *par excellence*, it can be seen that the Experiment is a floating, journeying experience. In it Experimenters go to (unexpected) places from their ordinary everyday existence, but they also take their learning from it back into the everyday. It goes deep into Experimenters' history and imagination, plumbing the great reserve of their creative being with visual images, to find the treasure of understanding not previously found, which they may then employ to enrich their relationships and their lives.

⁸³ See above, fieldnotes 20 July 2004.

⁸⁴ Fieldnotes, 15 June 2004.

⁸⁵ Fieldnotes, 7 June 2005.

⁸⁶ Fieldnotes, 7 April 2003 and 28 July 2003. See Chapter 4 FN7, g2 was one of the participants at the weeklong Glenthorne participant-observation.

In addition to Foucault's six principles, the aspects of heterotopia brought out by Hetherington, Hjorth, North, Marks, Shackley, Dehaene and De Cauter can be seen in the process of the Experiment. The Experiment also extends and challenges some of Pilgrim's observations on heterotopia.

Hjorth brings out that the process of creation in the spaces in-between may be invisible.⁸⁷ The Experiment's processes are invisible⁸⁸ and, similarly, aside from the additional activity the Experiment provides, in other Quaker-time Experimenters have no visible difference from Friends who do not Experiment.

Experimenters' difference from non-Experimenting Friends is not visible, but it can be audible. As a result of their experience in the Experiment, Experimenters' ministry (heard speech within a MfW) may be different from non-Experimenting Friends⁸⁹ and (as Chapter 7 shows) is different in business meetings where Experimenting itself is the object of conflict. Similarly, the form of the Experiment itself allows sharing (audible speech describing) what happened for or to the Experimenter in the meditation, whereas opportunities for Friends to speak about their experience in MfW are very limited, if they occur at all.⁹⁰

As Hetherington suggested is the case with spaces of alternate ordering, the Experiment is a non-linear process and can be, and often is, unsettling. Ambivalent,

⁸⁷ This directly contradicts Pilgrim's notion that heterotopias must be visible: see this chapter FN67.

⁸⁸ Invisibility is emphasised at step 2 of the fifth version of the Experiment in particular, see Appendix A5(2): 'As the light opens and exercises your conscience, it will let you see invisible things, which are clearly seen by that which is invisible in you.'

⁸⁹ Notes, 1 July 1999.

⁹⁰ Fieldnotes, 25 October 2009.

incongruous relationships are played out, as happened with a8's relationships with her son and daughters, a1's and a2's relationships with their colleagues and, in retrospect, a3's and a6's relationships with their fathers. Hetherington suggested that the process of similitude is revelatory, as is the Experiment in exactly the way he describes, especially in the case of a3 and a6 in relation to their past actions. What occurs in the Experiment and its process sit in relation to the rest of Experimenters' lives, including the rest of their Quaker lives. For example, a6's disclosure of violence towards his father when he was a young man sat in contrast to his well known adherence to the Quaker peace testimony and his own advocacy of non-violence.⁹¹

Hetherington (1997: 43) said that the relationship seen from within a site may make perfect sense (as is the Experimenter's experience in the meditation), but the relationship between the signifier (what is seen in the meditation) and the signified (what is meant by what is seen or emerges in the meditation) is dislocated, through a series of deferrals (the silence, the sharing and subsequent reflection after the meditation). Thus, hierarchy – or rational deduction - gives way to lateral relations – or sudden understandings. The Experimenter's own outside perspective, created by the deferrals, allows her to see her experience as occurring in in-between spaces, as rather strange and incongruous, in other words (although the Experimenter might not use the word) to be seen as heterotopian. One example would be i5's seeing her son-in law's name with a spiral instead of the letter 'o', which helped her to understand his depression. She was therefore able to be more compassionate towards his inability to

⁹¹ The Quaker peace testimony has been Friends' corporate witness against all war and violence since 1660 and by the late twentieth century had extended to encompass responses to tensions and conflicts in all their forms (*QFP* 1995: 1.02.31, 19.46, Chapter 24, especially 24.04).

support her daughter and grandchildren (which she had previously seen as unwillingness).⁹²

Experimenters open themselves to the multiplicity of new possibilities which already exist,⁹³ by waiting to see what will come in the meditation and by listening with attention in the sharing, without interruption nor lapsing into discussion (*QFP* 1995: 12.21). The process is dynamic and, as its name suggests, experimental and the meditation itself is a blurred 'space-between'.

Hjorth identifies that heterotopias occur in the cracks in the prevailing powers' surveillance so that the 'official version' is subverted and transformed. The Experiment is such a crack in self-surveillance, by both societal and Quaker norms: the Experiment leads to new understandings of where the Experimenters really are in relation to other Friends and non-Quaker aspects of their lives. Examples include i7's becoming a vegetarian and being unable to tell white lies,⁹⁴ i13's being able to relinquish Quaker responsibilities⁹⁵ and Group A's struggle in Meeting A.⁹⁶

North emphasises the multiplicity within a heterotopia. Examples can be seen in the Experiment's process: a6's perceiving God making a tapestry where every stitch is a person's actions, emerging as a picture, at least in God's eyes and a4's likening his

⁹² Similarly, my perspective of the Experiment as insider researcher, deferred through the interviews and participant observation I undertook, through reading theory and through the writing process allows the process of the Experiment to emerge as heterotopian, as I discuss in Chapter 4.

⁹³ This is prompted at step 5 of the meditation, see Appendix A2i(5), A2iii(5), A2iv(5), A4(5) and A5(5). Ambler shows how in Fox (1654: 34) and Fisher (Barbour & Roberts 1973: 307) the invisible (which lets one see what is invisible within one) is the 'Light within', is God (Ambler 1997a: 15).

⁹⁴ See Chapter 6 ('Letting go, dealing with pressure and making life changes'), p223, and ('1 Realisation of Truth (God breaks in)'), pp212-213.

⁹⁵ See Chapter 6 ('Letting go, dealing with pressure and making life changes'), p222-223 and Appendix D2.

⁹⁶ See Chapter 7 ('Analysis of the evidence from my research').

experience to playing a musical instrument, creating art and craft and doing yoga – *'blood, sweat and tears'* to do something simple.⁹⁷ Like North's LETS, the Experiment is non-geographic, ephemeral, temporarily liberated and virtual. In the Experiment what comes, comes; there is no imposition of outcome.

North identifies that heterotopian process is effervescent, it arises and disappears again. This can clearly be seen in the process of the Experiment: as examples in the following chapters show, images and understandings arise, they can become clearer for the Experimenter in the silence which follows the meditation, in the sharing and as they later percolate into the Experimenter's understanding. Yet once they are integrated into the whole of the Experimenters' life, they are subsumed and no longer exist in themselves.

North also says that heterotopias are locally realisable, but may not achieve the desired change. The understandings which come to Experimenters are localised to each Experimenter, yet whether they lead to any change is up to each Experimenter's appetite or capacity to implement what they understand. a8, for example, transformed her relationships with her adult children. a3 remained in considerable distress, but perhaps not as much distress as before the Experiment, for example when he was brought from being in a black hole to feeling that he was at an event horizon, on the brink but not yet obliterated.⁹⁸ What appears in the Experiment is of necessity virtual, since it exists only in the Experimenter's awareness, though the Experimenter can subsequently act on what occurs to make it real. The understanding coming and the

⁹⁷ Fieldnotes, 17 August 2004 (both examples).

⁹⁸ Fieldnotes, 4 May 2004. See Chapter 7 ('Light as a narrative thread'), pp277-280, for the full account of how a4 and a6's careful listening and encouragement helped a3 on that occasion.

subsequent changed behaviour is a blurring of the sacred/profane boundary Carrette observes as a characteristic of heterotopia.

In relating heterotopia to thought, Marks' commentary relates most closely to the process of the Experiment, since that process takes place within the Experimenter's understanding.⁹⁹ Marks identified that heterotopian thought seeks to evade and overcome boundaries established by images of thought which imprison thinking. The Experiment causes the Experimenter to see things in a new way, not in the conscious everyday routine way under the mask of Quaker and societal norms, as identified above in discussing Hjorth's cracks.¹⁰⁰ The Experiment re-orders thought into a new frame and throws out of equilibrium previously taken-for-granted ways of understanding the world.

As with Foucault and Deleuze's *becoming*, the heterotopian process of the Experiment takes Experimenters towards new ways of being; as long as the Experiment is practised, its effect on the Experimenter is ever changing and developing and the Experimenter herself continues to change and develop.¹⁰¹

The Experiment is similarly a *shape*, an undetermined and dynamic form, of *space-time*: Experimenters experience in it other aspects of their lives, those aspects which are experienced in different time-frames (parts of everyday life), and time itself takes on a different aspect in the Experiment. Instances include a4's timeless cathedral of

⁹⁹ I argue below in Chapters 5, 6 and 7 that Experimenters understand their experience as religious or spiritual. The Experiment is not merely a cognitive process, although cognition is a factor.

¹⁰⁰ See this chapter ('Dynamic social ordering, spaces for play: Hetherington and Hjorth'), pp101.

¹⁰¹ See Chapter 6.

light,¹⁰² i3's being imprisoned (something which never actually happened and therefore existed in no-time)¹⁰³ and i21's experience of her first Experiment recorded in a poem.¹⁰⁴ Shackley's description of the cathedral as ritual heterotopic space, where the participant is divorced from her surroundings so that the space becomes complete on its own, with either a timelessness or time-fullness collapsed into a particular time-frame, also describes Experimenters' experiences in the Experiment.

The Experiment occurs in the elusive non-place between the real space of everyday life (of which it becomes a part) and the virtual space of the Experimenter's internal life (where it operates). It mirrors life and time back to the Experimenter (Boyer 2008: 54; Dehaene & De Cauter 2008b: 25), it *becomes* that elusive non-place, ever-changing between that mirroring and the spectator. It is also the *informal diagram*, a process which can be described and has practical application, affecting Experimenters' conduct if they choose to apply the layers of *space-time* they discover. Echoing Deleuze's interpretation (2006 [1986]: 30),¹⁰⁵ like the *diagram*, the Experiment is co-extensive with the whole social field of the Experimenter's life. It is 'an abstract machine,' non-discursive in the meditation, but providing a discursive form: in the silence afterwards for the Experimenter alone (discursive with herself) and in the subsequent sharing for the Experimenter with her fellow-Experimenters (discursive with others). It makes Experimenters see what is really going on in their lives and allows them to speak of that. Similarly, it is a place only in the sense of mutation (or transformation) where suddenly things are no longer perceived in the same way and what was previously taken for granted no longer attains (Deleuze 2006 [1986]: 71).

¹⁰² Fieldnotes, 15 June 2004.

¹⁰³ Fieldnotes, 19 July, 2003.

¹⁰⁴ The poem is at Appendix B.

¹⁰⁵ See this chapter ('Heterotopia as an image of thought: Marks'), p105.

Like Simons, Genocchio emphasised that heterotopia's power lies in its ability to both question and undermine the limits of the coherence and totality of self-contained systems, remaining outside and differentiated from that order while at the same time relating to and being able to be defined within it (Genocchio 1995: 41; Simons 1995: 89-90). The Experiment's process is outside everyday being (one cannot be Experimenting in a Light group all the time, one has to eat, drink, speak, work, etc.) yet it also is part of what an Experimenter does and it produces different ways of looking at and understanding what is going on in the Experimenter's life, in the examples of a1's concrete block, a3's black hole and i7 becoming vegetarian.

Carrette says Foucault's religious questions can be seen as an attempt to enter the heterotopias of religion and in the process destroy the boundaries between the sacred and profane (2000: 107). Bringing the 'sacred' into the everyday is precisely what Quakers in general and Experimenters in particular do, so both operate a heterotopian impulse in this respect.

Shackley says heterotopia's role is to create a space of illusion that exposes every real space, all the sites inside of which human life is partitioned, as still more illusory (2002: 351). In this way, for example, the Experiment showed a8 that her relationship with her adult children was not as she thought, but could be transformed by her behaving differently herself; she stripped away the constructions of ego and the coping strategies she had developed over the years, when she discovered they had actually exacerbated the family difficulties. The Experiment mediates difficulties in Experimenters' lives: a8's difficulties with her adult children were shown in an

alternative way (the hidden appeared), so that she could stop contributing to destructive behaviour and so improve (alter) her relationship with them; a8's understanding and reflection in alternating Experiments and experience showed that her previous conception of what was happening was the illusion (Boyer 2008: 54; Dehaene & De Cauter 2008a; Shane 2008: 260; Sohn 2008: 45).

Shackley's description of the sacred space of the cathedral as 'echoing, dark, cavernous and mysterious' which allows 'temporary entry into another world where the sense of time is lost' where the individual is removed from the constraints of everyday life (2002: 351) resonates with Experimenters' experience, especially the examples of a1's caves¹⁰⁶ and a4's cathedral of light.¹⁰⁷

The Experiment's internal rules (*QFP* 1995: 12.21) prevent contradiction and disagreement in the sharing,¹⁰⁸ but clashes do occur within the process. It operates a heterotopian effect, it lights up an imaginary spatial (and temporal) field and illuminates a passage for the imagination, with testing, disturbing consequences along the way, as Johnson remarks in his conclusion:

there is here a teasing play of differences, but without the logic of contradiction, or negative dialectic, [or any consequent utopic formulation]. They offer no resolution or consolation, but disrupt and test our customary notions of ourselves. ...¹⁰⁹ With different degrees of relational intensity,

¹⁰⁶ Fieldnotes, 20 April 2004, 5 April 2005 and 31 May 2005.

¹⁰⁷ Fieldnotes, 15 June 2004.

¹⁰⁸ When the rules are not followed, clashes can occur: for example a4 tried to comment on a8's sharing on 4 May 2004 and she stopped him; similarly b15's persistent comments on the sharing of the other members of Group B contributed to the conflict discussed in Chapter 6 ('Analysis of the evidence from my research'), pp268 & 270.

¹⁰⁹ Johnson here says: 'These different spaces, which contest forms of anticipatory utopianism, hold no promise or space of liberation.' I have omitted these words from the quote, since they are not supported either by Foucault's describing heterotopia as 'a kind of effectively enacted utopia' (Foucault 1986 [1967]-a: 24) nor by North's ethnographic work, which concludes that heterotopia presents an image of a presently impossible utopia (North 1999: 73).

heterotopias glitter and clash in their incongruous variety, illuminating a passage for our imagination. (Johnson 2006: 87)

The resolution and consolation may come in the sharing and afterwards, but only with the Experimenter's taking further action, not inherently in the Experiment's process.¹¹⁰ When the Experiment becomes integrated into the Experimenter's life, as happened with a8's relationships with her children, it ceases to be heterotopian: thus, the heterotopia of the Experiment effervesces to change its context. Occasionally this can happen in the Experiment itself: a4, for example, described going through the line of his '*energy centres*' in a '*really spaced out different place*' in one meditation and finally said: '*Well this feels incredibly chilled out and good.*'¹¹¹

In summary, the review of the Experiment in relation to Foucault's exposition of heterotopia and its development by other scholars shows its operation to be heterotopian. Further, the review makes explicit that a heterotopian process can change its context, as is implicit in Hetherington's, Hjorth's, Boyer's, Dehaene and De Cauter's analyses.

Experimenters find heterotopias within themselves

Experimenters find images and understandings within themselves which are heterotopic.

Some of Foucault's specific examples of heterotopia: a prison (i3); the garden (a6); and *par excellence* the ship, or a boat (a2, a8, i5, i13); appeared to Experimenters in

¹¹⁰ Although occasionally resolutions may occur within the meditation itself, this is rarer.

¹¹¹ Fieldnotes, 6 April 2004. The words '*spaced out*' and '*different*' suggests that the place he went to in the meditation was heterotopic. At the end of the sharing, '*chilled out*' and '*good*' suggest integration.

their Experimenting, and in the case of i13, in MfW.¹¹² So, perhaps some Experimenters have a predisposition to such internal images, or, for some, the process undergone in MfW can be very similar to that of the Experiment. Also, one of Ambler's articles which led to his developing the Experiment was subtitled 'The Way of the Ship in the Sea' (Ambler 1997e), following a quote from a 1659 letter between early Friends.¹¹³ That the process of the Experiment, seeking truth, moving towards an effectively enacted utopia, produced some of the examples Foucault gave for heterotopia indicates that it is inherently heterotopian.

Experimenters are confronted internally with juxtapositions, incompatible images, irreducible to each other in one image. One striking example was i16's insect on an Amazonian lily representing how she would try to help her friend's son; eventually it became a fat caterpillar weighing the lily down when she was no longer able to help him. Similarly, she saw a mirror-ball, which she interpreted as her being too ready to consider others' views of her.¹¹⁴ Other examples include the circus elephant with a small 'pure' elephant inside,¹¹⁵ a griffin's claw,¹¹⁶ pools,¹¹⁷ and a cave.¹¹⁸ The most graphic example was i20's image of her cupped hands, enfolding her friend:

As I looked my hands began to morph into wings, still cupped around her. I was seeing that I'd been over-protective and to my great surprise, the wings began to reform around her shoulders and she became a bird, but not just any old bird, not a sweet little robin or shy dunno, no! As I watched she became

¹¹² See Chapter 6 ('Integrating the experience into the whole of life'), pp205-206 and Appendix D2.

¹¹³ The author was most likely Anthony Pearson: '...that truth itself in the body may reign, not persons nor forms, and that all such may be honoured as stand in the life of the truth, wherein is the power, not over but in the body – that our path may be as the way of a ship in the sea which no deceit can follow or imitate.' (Braithwaite 1981 [1912]: 328-329)

¹¹⁴ See Chapter 6 ('Gaining confidence and a sense of identity'), p221, and Appendix D1.

¹¹⁵ i16, see Chapter 6 ('Images in the Experiment'), pp201-202, and Appendix D1.

¹¹⁶ i13, see Chapter 6 ('Integrating the experience into the whole of life'), p205-206, and Appendix D2.

¹¹⁷ a1 and a6, see Chapter 6 ('Transcendent experience in the group'), pp229-231, and ('Experience continuing through several Experiments'), pp204-205.

¹¹⁸ a1, see Chapter 6 ('Experience continuing through several Experiments'), p205, and ('Heard experience'), p207.

*a powerful bird of prey with a great beak and sharp talons and she proceeded to use these to lift me off the ground. When we had reached a suitably great height, I was dropped.*¹¹⁹

Although some of the internal images Experimenters described were very disturbing, the heterotopian possibility they represent is not always disruptive.

Genocchio (1995: 41) called for a means of establishing some invisible, but visibly operational difference which provides a clear conception of spatially discontinuous ground in order that Foucault's argument for heterotopia (1986 [1967]-a) could be sustained. The Experiment is an example of what Genocchio identifies as necessary to sustain the idea of heterotopia. The invisible difference is inside the Experimenter as she Experiments, in her experience in the meditation. The visibly operating difference is what the Experimenter experiences, should she wish to make that visible by changing her behaviour as a result of that experience (although such changes in behaviour may be so gradual they are not necessarily visible to other Friends). The spatially discontinuous ground is the Experimenter's everyday life and the clear conception of it is the new way of looking at it in the light of her experience in the Experiment. The Experiment is the mediating mirror, showing the heterotopic images of hidden appearance (Boyer 2008; Dehaene & De Caeter 2008a).

¹¹⁹ Field notes, 22 February 2009, subsequently provided in a written account by e-mail 26 February. The meaning for i20 was that she had repeated an old pattern of putting others' needs above her own and subsequently being let down when they rejected and hurt her. The wings represented her over-protection of her friend. She realised that the images were not about the specific friend but rather were about herself and her tendency to be carried away by illusion of her own making and then disappointed when the reality she had really already known at some level came home to her emotionally.

Experimenters operate a heterotopian impulse within British

Quakers

In the following chapters I elaborate on my methodology which is both inextricably linked to the data, including the heterotopian nature of the process of the Experiment, and is heterotopian in itself (Chapter 4). I review in detail the data about Experimenters' sense of the Divine (Chapter 5), transformative experience (Chapter 6) and where the Experiment makes conflict apparent against the grain of British Quakers' conflict aversion (Chapter 7), showing where it demonstrates heterotopian impulses. In Chapter 8, I conclude that, not only is the Experiment a heterotopian process which leads Experimenters to find heterotopic spaces within themselves, but also Experimenters operate a heterotopian impulse within British Quakers. I show how the Experiment disrupts British Quakers' ways of doing things, specifically their culture of silence (Dandelion 1996), aversion to acknowledging conflict (Robson 2005), behaving non-reflexively (Robson 2005), undergoing a liminoid rather than liminal religious experience (Pilgrim 2003b) and 'empty co-option' (Best 2008b). I also show how the Experiment as a social phenomenon fits Foucault's six principles, resonates with heterotopia as developed by Hetherington (1997), Hjorth (2005), North (1999), Marks (1995), Dehaene & De Cauter (2008a), Boyer (2008), Sohn (2008) and Shane (2008) and meets Genocchio's (1995) and Saldanha's (2008) criticisms of Foucault's conception.

Chapter 4 - Methodology: insider research, heterotopian reflexivity

Methodology: introduction

In this chapter, I set out how I approached the research, including the research ethics. I reflexively review my insidership by reference to the work of Labaree (2002). I explain how I reviewed the data using an adapted form of grounded theory (Strauss & Corbin 1998). I consider the iterative process of reviewing data and academic conversations (reading, conferences, talking in the research community, supervisions) in relation to the hermeneutic spiral (Osborne 2006 [1991]: 22-23) and heterotopia.

Ethnographic method

In this section I explain my approach to gathering data and research ethics. I had been Experimenting for three years when I started academic work.¹ I was drawn to research the Experiment because of the experiences I had had in it, because I felt it was important for Quakers and because I was puzzled as to why the practice was not more widespread in BYM.

¹ I first came across the Experiment when I went to a special Yorkshire General Meeting (YGM) event at Harrogate Meeting on 30 June 1999. YGM had invited Rex Ambler to introduce the Experiment to Yorkshire Friends and there were approximately 160 Friends present. I started to Experiment regularly in 2000, when a Friend who had not been to the YGM event but who had been on an Experiment weekend at Woodbrooke (see Chapter 1 FN63) began a Light group in the Meeting to which I belong. This group ran for a while, ceased and began again several times, entering its fourth incarnation in 2006.

Primary data

In early 2003 I visited Diana Lampen² and Rex Ambler to discuss my research with them. I felt their support was crucial to my research and they gave it without reservation.³

Between July and November 2003, I undertook semi-structured interviews of 21 Experimenters in order to discover what they had experienced.⁴ Most of the interviews were in the interviewees homes.⁵ From February 2004 until June 2005, I undertook participant observation of a Light group (Group A) from their first Experiment with the intention of observing the process of which the interviews had been a snapshot.⁶ I took notes, but with permission I also recorded the interviews and observations on minidisc and then reviewed the recordings, making notes or transcribing as appropriate. The interviews provided participants' considered reflection on their experience, whereas the participant-observation revealed the process as it was happening.

² Diana Lampen was well known in BYM as key in the Experiment's dissemination. She had also written to *The Friend* about it on several occasions, co-facilitated workshops and also undertaken the distribution of the Experiment's tapes and CDs.

³ Had they not supported my research, Experimenters might not have talked to me so readily: to say I had seen them credentialised me with the interviewees and opened the door to the groups in which I participated-observed.

⁴ The aide-memoire for the interview with i18 is at Appendix C1. On two occasions both husband and wife presented themselves as interviewees together, so there were nineteen interview occasions altogether. The interviewees are identified as i1 to i19b. The couples are i12a, i12b and i19a, i19b. A full transcript of the interview with i16 is at Appendix D1 and of i13 at Appendix D2. See this chapter ('Mirroring effect'), p152, for how the interviewees were selected.

⁵ There were two exceptions. One interviewee was a warden and I met him in the Meeting House. I met one of the couples where they were house-sitting.

⁶ The members of Group A are identified as a1 to a8. The context of participant observation is at Appendix D3 and a record of one Group A participant observation is at Appendix D4. Group A's host Meeting is referred to as Meeting A. See this chapter ('Permissions and withdrawal' and FN34) for how the group was selected.

In November 2004 I went on a five day/four night Experiment with Light retreat at Glenthorne.⁷ This was to participate in and observe the workings of the people core to the Experiment's dissemination and organisation.⁸ With the attendees' permission, I recorded all the sessions (but not the sharing in small groups after the Experiments) and the final Experiment.⁹ In February 2006, I spent two days interviewing members of another Light group where there had been some conflict (Group B) and some Elders from the Meeting to which it was attached (Meeting B) and again recorded them all with permission.¹⁰ I also participated in Group B's Experiment on the first night of the two day visit. Throughout the period of my research, on learning of my research Friends in all settings would tell me their experience of the Experiment and I noted relevant points from these ad hoc conversations.¹¹ In addition, I had some written material: informants gave me papers relating to Glenthorne 1998, minutes of 1999 meetings and a written account of the conflict surrounding Group A.

Identifying the research participants by code¹² highlights coherence amongst diversity since the Experiment is the only focus. Also, apart from incidental use of pronouns and personal adjectives, the participants' gender is not identified.¹³ Prompted by reading Gonick (2005: 290-291), who had deliberately not categorised the girls she

⁷ See Chapter 1 FN62. The participants are identified as g1 to g21.

⁸ Although some of the Glenthorne participants had also been interviewees, where I am citing them from the Glenthorne retreat, I identify the them as g1 to g21.

⁹ Unfortunately the battery failed towards the end of some of the sessions, so I did not have a complete record of the questions and discussions. With permission, I did record the plenary sharing after the final Experiment (there was no small group sharing on that occasion).

¹⁰ The members of Group B and Meeting B Elders are identified as b1 to b15. The way the conflict was handled is examined in Chapter 7. See this chapter ('Permissions and withdrawal'), p144, for how Group B was selected.

¹¹ The additional informants are also identified with the prefix 'i'. Only two appear in the thesis and I obtained specific explicit permission to use them: see i20's experience Chapter 3 (Experimenters find heterotopias within themselves), p133, and i21's poem in Appendix B.

¹² a1, b1, g1, i1, and so on.

¹³ I have considered whether there were gender differences in participants' experience in the Experiment elsewhere (Meads 2005). Broadly: I found gender difference only in expression of experience, not in the experience itself; the gender balance in the Experiment reflects the gender balance in BYM.

was researching,¹⁴ it occurred to me that I had not described the research participants' race, class, gender, ethnicity and sexuality: those categories did not seem relevant to my enquiry.

Some potential data remains outside my research: the sharing of Experimenters in the group in my own Meeting,¹⁵ an Experiment with Light weekend at Woodbrooke¹⁶ in February 2004 and workshops I co-facilitated from 2007. This potential data informed my background understanding, but was not the object of research.

The Light groups in my research were well established, with the exception of the final four interviewees' group.¹⁷ I concluded from interviewing i17, i18, i19a and i19b that their group had not lasted partly because they had not followed the recommended form of the Experiment: they followed the meditation immediately with discussion.¹⁸ a1 also made reference to a group ceasing to meet and I knew that was because they had not maintained confidentiality.¹⁹ The research conclusions are thus based on

¹⁴ Gonick was challenged by an examining committee member who was reading a draft of her thesis: 'Yes, but you still haven't told us, who are the girls? That's what I need to know.' The aim of Gonick's ethnographic study was, however, precisely to investigate and render problematic 'who the girls are', to challenge what was impossible to think and what kinds of possibility they (and she) were faced with in identities at the intersection of gender, race, class, ethnicity and sexuality in order to write about femininity as a paradoxical space and to explore the contradictory and ambivalent (dis)identifications the girls made (Gonick & Hladki 2005: 290).

¹⁵ I told the Friends in the group in my own Meeting that I would not include their experiences in my research.

¹⁶ Woodbrooke runs Quaker courses as well as having a Quaker Library (see Chapter 1 FN63).

¹⁷ I undertook those interviews in November 2003, after the main interview period (July to October 2003) partly because I wanted to contrast their experience, which i19a had indicated in e-mail correspondence he considered to be a failure.

¹⁸ i19a had also run a group during the day for young mothers in his Meeting, but that was even more curtailed, to 45 minutes, because it was timed around a children's activity which allowed the mothers to be free. In that case, both the meditation itself was abbreviated (i19a read it) and the sharing was limited, with no 'time alone' (see Chapter 1 ('Experiment practice') for the recommended form of the Experiment).

¹⁹ See Appendix D4, pp11-12 for a1's comments. This was the group which told me they were not prepared to participate in the research, see this chapter FN34. I had learned at the Glenthorne retreat that its difficulty was that confidentiality was not maintained: they were advised by a Friend on the retreat not to continue meeting. The tensions in the Meeting to which a1 referred were caused by the discussion in the Meeting of one Friend's sharing in the Experiment about marriage breakdown.

successful Light groups' practice.²⁰

Contact with informants after fieldwork

After the interviews, I wrote letters or e-mails thanking the interviewees for their time and hospitality. Some responded at greater length than others.²¹

After the participant-observation, I had intermittent contact with some of the members of Group A. I had long conversations with a1, who had facilitated my introduction to the group. I also saw some of the others in different Quaker settings and always managed at least a brief private word about the group, so I was kept up to date with developments, especially in relation to the conflict surrounding Group A.²²

In August 2006, as an article I had written (Meads 2007b) was shortly to be published, I wrote to all the interviewees and members of Group A, as well as one participant from Glenthorne who was not also an interviewee, offering to send them a copy if they were interested.²³

Confidentiality

The informants are identified by codes to fulfil the promise I made to them of anonymity. Being an insider researcher meant that I met research participants in other contexts and I had to take extreme care to be able to keep our research relationship

²⁰ Similarly, I do not consider b15, who persistently commented on others' sharing and tried to subvert the Light group into a different meditation practice see Chapter 7 ('Outline of the conflicts'), pp266-267, was an 'Experimenter' as I discuss 'Experimenters' in Chapters 7 and 8.

²¹ I had e-mail correspondence with two (i15 and i17) that went on for some weeks but then ceased altogether. I had intermittent e-mail exchanges with others (i3, i7 and i15) over some years. Occasionally I met some of the interviewees in other Quaker contexts.

²² I am aware that this information was filtered through their perceptions in the retelling, more than if I had been observing the group as it discussed them. As noted above, the conflict-handling is examined in Chapter 7.

²³ Only a few interviewees and two members of Group A took me up on this offer. The letter to one interviewee was returned 'gone away'. One interviewee had by this time died.

confidential. Some were unconcerned about confidentiality for themselves,²⁴ but on several occasions I reminded members of Group A that even though they might not be concerned for themselves about their becoming identified as participants in my research, if they did 'come out' then they would also be identifying other members of the group as research participants, and they might be more concerned.²⁵ The issue was crucial: if confidentiality were breached and a participant objected, important data might have to be excluded from the research.

My presence at Group A's meetings was noted by Meeting A's Clerk and warden: on one occasion I arrived early and the warden was very aggressive towards me as I parked my car;²⁶ there was an occasion when I left the charger for my mini-disc at the Meeting House and rang the warden to ask her to leave it for me the next time the Light group met;²⁷ and on another occasion the Clerk was still in the Meeting House when the Light group started arriving. Since they did not recognise me as being from their MM and as none of Group A introduced me to them, it is likely that the mystery surrounding who I was contributed to the Meeting A conflict discussed in Chapter 7.

²⁴ For example, i15 had told i16 that I was going to interview her, so that, as can be seen in Appendix D1, I was freely able to refer to i15 in the interview with i16.

²⁵ One such occasion was during the period of participant-observation, after I gave a4 the name of a Friend in my own Meeting as a potential speaker for a series of talks he was arranging. Most of Group A were to attend the talk and I was concerned they might reveal how I knew them. As I know a lot of Friends all over Britain from my Quaker activities, it did not occur to the Friend from my own Meeting to ask how I came to pass his name to a4. Two other occasions were at weddings where all the members of Group A were present. The risk of identification in such a small community is real, for example I easily learned not only the Meetings which Collins (1994) and Kline (2002) studied, but also the names of some of the Friends whom Collins identified only by pseudonym.

²⁶ I told a1 about the incident when we met to eat before the Light group that night.

²⁷ In hindsight, it would have been better to ask one of the group to do this for me. I was risking 'outing' the research. But for giving my name to the warden when I rang, I could have been a little-known member from another PM in the MM. Giving my name meant, however, that she could have checked the MM membership list and discovered that I was not on it.

There was an occasion in 2006²⁸ when I was at Woodbrooke for a supervision,²⁹ where I sat at a meal next to my supervisor and opposite us sat two participants from different aspects of my research. Both participants knew my supervisor as a Woodbrooke tutor and one knew him from a different context, but the other did not know he was my supervisor. I was not sure whether my supervisor would know that the Friends opposite were participants in my research and if the participants thought he knew it might be an issue of confidentiality. The two participants knew each other from another, different context and each knew the other Experimented, but neither knew that the other was a participant. From the conversation, it was clear to all three that I knew each of them, but not in what context. I felt extremely uncomfortable, as though I had my heart in my mouth, while I concentrated on keeping the conversation as neutral and natural as possible: it felt bizarre.

I had a similar experience some time later, in 2006, when an old friend, whom I had introduced to Friends in another part of the country, telephoned me in distress about what she should do about the conflict in Meeting A. I had known that she had moved and was attending a different PM in the MM from which Group A was drawn, but I had not known that she had moved to Meeting A. I knew I could not comment on what she was telling me, especially as her perspective was different from mine,³⁰ and so told her that the MM's Elders must be aware of what was happening (as I knew they were) and that it was their responsibility to deal with it and she should not feel

²⁸ Fieldnotes.

²⁹ In addition to holding a Quaker Library and running Quaker courses (see Chapter 1 FN63 and this chapter FN16), Woodbrooke has an arrangement with the University of Birmingham whereby Quaker Studies scholars undertake most of their work and are supervised at Woodbrooke.

³⁰ She had a partial view and it was tempting to tell her this: she did not know either the full background, nor what actions were being taken to address the Meeting's difficulty. Her view of the Clerk and warden, however, also gave me an insight into their behaviour: she said they had nothing but the welfare of the Meeting at heart, worked very hard for the Meeting and were being persecuted. I knew they were not being persecuted, but had previously only seen how difficult, aggressive and intransigent they were being and not what might have been their virtues.

that she had to intervene. During the telephone conversation I felt a very real sense of danger that if my link with Group A became known, I might lose the opportunity to use the data I had gathered.

Permissions and withdrawal

I had permission from all the interviewees to use any potential data they gave me.³¹

During the course of each interview I said that if there was anything that the interviewee subsequently decided they did not want me to use in my research I would not use it. My recording the interviews and Group B's Experiment on minidisc was overt, so every participant had an opportunity to object.³² There was only one such occasion, when i18 asked me to turn the minidisc off, because she was crying; I did so until she regained her composure and started talking clearly again, when I turned it back on.³³

In late 2003 I contacted several Light groups which were newly starting.³⁴ One seemed promising and few months later, I was invited by a1 to address Group A at their first Experiment. At her suggestion, a1 and I met for a meal before the group's

³¹ I told each participant that I would make my work available to them when it was complete.

³² As noted above and below, I specifically sought Group A's permission to record. On three occasions (7 & 21 September and 2 November 2004) I left my minidisc with the Group and they recorded Experiments I could not attend. On one occasion (17 May 2005), they could not manage the technology and I have no record of that Experiment. At Glenthorne, participants' permission was also specifically sought to record the discussion sessions and the Experiment on the group; they questioned me as to why I wanted to record that final Experiment, before giving their permission. (I said it was because the Experiment on the group was pertinent to the Experiment's organisation.)

³³ She did not initially realise that I had turned the minidisc back on and when she had spoken for several minutes she said it was a shame I had not recorded what she had gone on to say. I told her that I had re-started recording when she stopped crying. (I did not do this covertly, as the minidisc was clearly visible on a table, although I did not draw her attention to what I was doing as I did not want to interrupt the flow of what she was saying; she had not noticed what I had done.) I had decided to turn the minidisc back on because another researcher had had a similar experience and her informant had objected only to her distress being recorded, not what she had said (Lunn 2003). Had i18 objected to what I had done, I would not have used what I had recorded, but she did not object and indeed seemed to have wanted me to have recorded it, bearing out Lunn's observation that it was the interviewee's distress, not the content of the interview, that might cause an interviewee to object to recording.

³⁴ See letter dated 29 August 2003 at Appendix C2. (One contact advised me that there were difficulties within the group which meant that my research would not be appropriate.)

first Experiment. After the meal, I spoke to a1 and the three other members of the group who were there.³⁵ I had the strong impression that a4 had reservations, since he was not making eye contact with anyone, so I suggested the group needed to talk without my being present and I withdrew. When I returned, the group agreed, subject to the approval of the others who were not there that evening, that I could observe them, starting with that evening's Experiment. a3 preferred me not to sit with the group, so I sat aside from them in a corner of the room and took notes.³⁶ After the Experiment, I asked if I could record the subsequent sessions and the group agreed, again subject to the others' agreement and as long as my microphone was unobtrusive.

When the group next met,³⁷ all eight members were present and I was given the opportunity to speak.³⁸ On this occasion I withdrew from the group twice, again both times at my suggestion.³⁹ The group agreed that I could both observe and record, but I was left with the impression that there were still reservations, since a1 suggested that if anyone contacted me then I should withdraw without indicating to the others who had objected. In the event, none of them contacted me.

A friend introduced me to b10, an Elder in Meeting B, and she introduced me by e-mail to b1, whom I met for the first time for a meal before the group's Experiment.⁴⁰ She had already discussed my visit with the group who, unusually, were all present that evening. I took the pre-discussion and full attendance as implicit permission for

³⁵ Fieldnotes, 3 February 2004. See Appendices C3 and C4 for the *aides-memoire* I intended to use. On both occasions, the group discussion moved on to their decision and to the Experiments they had gathered to undertake without my covering all the points.

³⁶ I did not have my minidisc with me as I had not been expecting to be asked to stay.

³⁷ Fieldnotes, 2 March 2004.

³⁸ I had met a5 before on the Woodbrooke February 2004 Experiment with Light weekend (see this chapter ('Primary data'), p139), from which she already knew I was researching the Experiment.

³⁹ My first absence was for nine minutes, returning for five minutes questions, and then I went out for another seven minutes.

⁴⁰ Fieldnotes, 16 February 2006. See Appendix C5 for letter to b1.

my research. I was invited to participate in the group's Experiment and did so fully, including in the sharing.

I had explicit permission to research from the interviewees, from Group A, from the Glenthorne participants and from Group B and the Meeting B Elders whom I met, but I had no direct contact with other members of the Meetings who were mentioned by my informants. Thus, not all the conflict protagonists were aware that their actions, as reported to me, would appear in my research, so I was not overt as researcher to Meeting A nor the MM Elders (except those who were in Group A) nor Meeting B's other Elders and b15 (who was at the centre of the conflict).⁴¹ I have taken the view that the need for successful conflict handling narratives (Robson 2005: 230) overrides my lack of explicit permissions; I believe that if I had been completely overt the successful conflict handling narratives in Chapter 7 might not be available to relate.⁴²

Reflexivity

In ethnographic research, reflexivity is used as a tool to consider how the researcher's own autobiography informs and requires management in the research. McCutcheon defined the reflexive stance as 'a position which addresses the manner in which all observations are inextricably linked with the self-referential statements of the observer',⁴³ and says that the reflexive approach agrees in part with the empathetic approach to research ('it is indeed important to study inner states and experiences of

⁴¹ As described in Chapter 7, b15 was, by 2006, no longer in contact with Meeting B.

⁴² I am a member of the British Sociological Association Sociology of Religion Study Group (SOCREL) and Quaker Studies Research Association (QSRA), so in all other respects I have been guided by the relevant research ethics guidelines (*Quaker Studies Research Association Statement of Research Ethics* 2000; *Statement of Ethical Practice for the British Sociological Association* 2004 [2002]).

⁴³ Reflexivity can thus refer generally as well as in a research setting, see also Chapter 1 FN21.

free, creative human beings') and the explanatory ('there is a significant gap between researcher and subject') (1999: 8-9).⁴⁴

By examining my own experiences as I researched the Experiment, I enquire how the research I was undertaking may have been influenced by my own insider position, as my roles changed and my insiderness moved backwards and forwards. Below, I illustrate Labaree's conclusion that insiderness is better characterised as a continual process of introspective enquiry which researchers can use to monitor their position, view and conclusions.

Insider research

Labaree discusses the hidden dilemmas of being an insider participant observer: the perceived advantages of accessing and understanding the culture under research are not absolute; there are ethical and methodological dilemmas (2002: 116). Insiderness contains hidden dilemmas relating to unintended positioning, shared relationships and disclosure and often conflicting negotiations concerning the process of entering the field and disengagement from it.

Labaree also maps the boundaries of insiderness: he rejects the simple dichotomy of insider versus outsider and the incomplete explanation of a continuum from insider to outsider, preferring instead a frame of multiple insiders/multiple outsiders, depending on the researcher's position in relation to the researched at any given time.

⁴⁴ McCutcheon is here using 'subject' in the sense that elsewhere scholars of reflexivity use the word 'object' (See, for example, (Hufford 1999: 294): '... the scholar is always the *subject* of scholarship in the grammatical sense, that is "the doer of the action" and those we study are the *objects* of our scholarship'); consequently elsewhere in this chapter I am using 'subject' to describe the researcher and 'object' to describe those researched (and the Experiment itself).

Insiderness and outsidership is neither ascribed nor achieved, but the researcher moves backwards and forwards between the two.

Multiple insiderness in the interviews

Generally, whilst researching, I was multiple insider and outsider: I am inside Quakers, I am inside Experiment with Light, but was outside particular Light groups; I have access to the people central to the Experiment, but I arrived as a stranger in the homes of the people I interviewed.

One example of this was in undertaking the interviews: within a very short space of time I positioned myself, as Labaree identifies, as multiple insider and outsider, moving from insider to outsider and back to insider again at the beginning of each of the interviews. I would first introduce my research questions, then mention that I had the support in my research of Rex Ambler and Diana Lampen. In this way, I was as inside the Experiment as it was possible to be. I then, however, explained to the interviewees that as a Quaker and as an Experimenter, I would very likely understand what they would be explaining to me, but that, as I wanted to capture as nearly as possible what they understood rather than my own interpretation, I would be asking questions to which they might expect me to know the answers.⁴⁵ In this way, I was reminding the interviewees that I was a Quaker and an Experimenter, but also that I was present in the role of 'Researcher'⁴⁶ who intended to explain the phenomenon to outsiders.⁴⁷

⁴⁵ See Appendices D1, pp 1-2, and D2, p1.

⁴⁶ 'Researcher' (capitalised) is used to denote my role as researcher.

⁴⁷ i14 initially thought that I might have difficulty in getting Friends to talk to me about their delicate experiences (telephone note 23 June 2003) and in the interview she revealed that she had been hurt when she had shared such experiences with Friends in her Meeting and they had responded by suggesting she had made them up.

Drawing on personal practice in the research

To maintain credibility as Researcher investigating a process which brings Quakers in touch with their spiritual foundation requires a level of Quaker 'Truth' where it becomes all but impossible to separate the roles of Researcher and Quaker-Experimenter.

Apart from being good research practice, the Quaker testimony to Truth⁴⁸ meant that, as a Quaker and to be credible to Quakers helping with my research, I had to be completely open and as honest as possible with all my informants: those I interviewed and observed and other people who gave me time and information and provided contacts. There were, however, occasions when the truth⁴⁹ conflicted with promises I had given as Researcher: I had, for example, promised anonymity to all the interviewees and to members of Group A, but interviewees asked questions about whom else I had seen and what other interviewees had said; this was an ethical dilemma. It was also possible that the answer to questions I was asked might have influenced what I was observing and contaminate the research; this is a methodological dilemma. In short, as Researcher and as Quaker, I needed to find a way to deal truthfully and as completely as I could with my interviewees' questions without compromising the research.

⁴⁸ I use 'Truth' (capitalised) as the term for the Quaker testimony to Truth: 'The Quaker testimony to truthfulness is central to the practice of its faith by members of the Religious Society of Friends. From the beginning Friends have believed that they could have direct and immediate communication with God which would enable them to discern right ethical choices. They soon experienced common leadings of the Spirit which became formalised into testimonies ... Arising from the teachings of Jesus as related in the writings of John and James: "Let your yes mean yes and your no mean no", Quakers perceived that with a conscience illuminated by the Light, life became an integrated whole with honesty as its basis.' (*QFP* 1995: 20.45)

⁴⁹ I am using 'truth' (not capitalised) to indicate 'the disposition to speak or act truly or without deceit': (Onions 1970: 2258) This is, of course, a part of 'Truth'.

Despite its potential to provide data far more extraordinary than anything I have come across in the course of the research, I intended the group in my own Meeting to be outside the research. As a matter of ethics, my relationship with the other members pre-dated my research and they had not given prior consent to being researched.⁵⁰

In the event, what I did when faced with interviewees' questions was to answer the questions out of my own experience, that is, out of my Experimenting in the Light group in my Meeting, which I had said I wanted to keep out of the research. So I answered as Quaker-Experimenter out of my religious practice,⁵¹ not as Researcher. I would not have maintained a sufficient level of trust if I had avoided or declined the questions.⁵²

As part of the testimony to Truth, it is expected that Quakers should speak only out of their own direct experience and not, without specific reason, repeat others' views or cite others' experiences. Replying out of my own experience, despite my avowed intention of keeping my own group outside the research, therefore potentially gave additional credence to my position of Researcher, because I was demonstrating a much valued Quaker way of behaving, as Dandelion observed was important (1996:

⁵⁰ I also wanted to protect myself – my relationships with the other members are very special to me (as also emerges in Chapter 6 to be the case for my informants) and I didn't want to lose that and I wanted to be able to share all my issues with my fellow-Experimenters without any complications.

⁵¹ This was as a result of a way I have of testing what I should do and was based on advice from academics at the British Sociological Association's Postgraduate section of the Sociology of Religion Study Group (SOCREL-PG) at the January 2003 conference. Dr. Sophie Gilliatt-Ray (Cardiff University) gave a paper (Gilliatt-Ray 2003) on the practicalities of researching, including how to face one's own personal limits of physical and emotional endurance. In the subsequent discussion panel a very senior academic in the field of Sociology of Religion pointed out that we (both the postgraduates and senior academics) all had our own religious faith and practices and that we could therefore find a place of refuge within ourselves, if no external refuge were available.

⁵² For example, i19a was much exercised by the fact that the group in which he had been involved had not been sustainable and asked me about other groups' practices. Had I not addressed his concern, his frustration might have led to withdrawal of his goodwill and co-operation in the interview. I was concerned not to identify any other group at that stage and so again I answered out of the experience of my own group, explaining how it had become sustainable only at the third attempt.

100-110); Plüss similarly concluded from her research that idiosyncratic conduct is illegitimate within Quakerism (1995: 118).

My honesty with the interviewees was not, however, 'complete' as I privileged prior promises (of confidentiality) to other interviewees. Even when I answered out of my own personal experience, I was using information about Experimenting in the Light group in my own Meeting. This was potentially contrary to my promise to my fellow Experimenters, albeit that I was not revealing any of their personal experiences. This was a multi-layered ethical and methodological dilemma, involving promises to those I was researching and my own Light group, dealing with contradictory Quaker expectations and ultimately compromising by relying on my religious practice.

I was present as Quaker-Experimenter as well as Researcher in all the interviews and participant-observation and I had to demonstrate by my behaviour that I fully understood how a Quaker and an Experimenter should behave, with respect for the interviewees' concerns and with integrity. Although I was initially satisfied that disclosing my own experience was the right response, I subsequently felt uncomfortable about it; I chose between my Researcher's promise and my undertaking given as an Experimenter and have to justify to myself that the Experimenter's undertaking is not broken in the most important respect (personal confidentiality) either.

I review below some of the aspects of my insiderness influencing my research (and some of the ways the research influenced my practices and behaviour).

Mirroring effect

My initial approach to the research unconsciously mirrored the process of the Experiment, as represented in Figure 4.1. About six months in, I realised that, despite abandoning an earlier deliberate attempt to use the Experiment as a tool,⁵³ the process of the Experiment was influencing the way I was conducting my research.

<i>Experiment</i>	<i>research</i>
discernment	grounded theory
Spirit led	opportunity/snowball sampling
unlocking meaning	mindmap
sharing	interview

Figure 4.1 The research mirrors the Experiment

The Experiment is a process of discernment: Experimenters begin to understand who and what they are, how they fit into the world (and possibly the greater scheme of things) and what that should imply for the way they conduct their lives. This is mirrored by my choice of grounded theory (Glaser 1978; Strauss & Corbin 1998): the analysis follows what the research uncovers.

⁵³ I contemplated using the Experiment with Light itself as a method of discernment in assisting the conduct of my work (by way of private Experiment alone, as distinct from Experiments in my own Meeting) but I rejected the idea after the first attempt on 12 February 2003; what emerged in the Experiment was not the research, but the nature of my relationships with my fellow M.Phil. students. It is common for the issue which emerges from the Experiment to be different from the question taken into the process, what comes may be an answer to a deeper question, as was my experience in the Experiment I shared with Group B. Similarly, when Group A undertook an Experiment on the group on 19 October 2004 (see Chapter 7 ('The significance of reflexivity'), pp271-272) it was not the issues in their own group which emerged, but their interactions in other groups to which they belonged.

The Experiment is 'Spirit led': Quakers believe they should not themselves determine or direct decisions in business meetings, for example. In silence and worship, they discern what the 'Spirit' wills and this emerges as Friends minister and the Clerk captures it in a 'minute' which is then read back to, amended and agreed by the whole meeting without a vote (*QFP* 1995: 3.02-3.07).⁵⁴ In the Experiment, Experimenters wait to learn and understand more about themselves. The 'Spirit leading' was mirrored in my choice of opportunity and 'snowball sampling', whereby respondents identify further respondents (Singleton, et al. 1993: 165). I found one contact, who distributed the letters I had prepared and enveloped without revealing her address list to me, and from there was led to others, as the letters found their way without any further intervention from me.⁵⁵

The Experiment unlocks meaning for Experimenters: Experimenters discover the implications of what has emerged from the process of discernment. This was mirrored in my use of 'mindmaps' (Buzan & Buzan 1993) as an interview plan, for analysing and for planning writing.⁵⁶

'Sharing' is when Experimenters talk to each other after the meditation, about what came up and what it might mean. This was mirrored by the interview process: the Experimenters who agreed to be interviewed shared with me their experience of the

⁵⁴ See also Chapter 7 ('Sheeran' and 'Morley'), pp249-252, for further discussion of what happens in Quaker business meetings.

⁵⁵ Some of the early letter recipients also distributed copies of my letter more widely. I was subsequently introduced to Groups A and B similarly, by being passed from one contact to another. The main value of snowball sampling is to identify respondents who are few in number and where a degree of trust is required to initiate contact (Atkinson & Flint 2001: 2). The main limitation of snowball sampling is that extrapolation from the specific to the general may not be valid, but this is a qualitative rather than a quantitative study and as there was no central record to sample participants in any other way. See Appendix C6 for the text of the letter to potential interviewees.

⁵⁶ See this chapter ('Adapted grounded theory/iteration'), pp168-170. Appendices C1, C3 and C4 are illustrative examples of mindmaps.

Light, Quakerism, and their lives; they described spiritual emergencies,⁵⁷ numinous and mystical experiences and told me what they mean by 'God'. It was very like confession: under a protocol of complete confidentiality, easier to tell to a stranger than someone close, and a great privilege to hear.

Six months into the research, I could see that I was deeply affected by the object of my research (the Experiment), which was moulding the way I was conducting it: I discovered I was using an Experiment with Light-type process for my research.⁵⁸ Had I not become aware of this, first, I might not have been able to adjust for the fact that my sample of interviewees was skewed towards those who had been central to dissemination of the practice and, secondly, I might have missed something which a more rigorous approach would uncover.⁵⁹

Participant observation

Even in the role of Researcher, it was not entirely possible for me to resist the process of the Experiment when observing a Light group. Although I was a participant in the context (Quakerism), I was at first dubious about using the description 'participant-observation' for my observation of Group A, since I was observing, not participating in their Experiments. After the fourth observation, however, it became apparent to me that I was in fact participating: on the drive home, I suddenly understood something quite profound about my relationship with one of my friends.

⁵⁷ 'Spiritual emergencies' are experiences which form part of an individual's personal transformation and which are frightening or worrying (Grof & Grof 1989).

⁵⁸ See this chapter FN53, my attempt to use the Experiment actively as a research tool was not successful.

⁵⁹ I collected data from Experimenters who were not central to dissemination of the practice in the participant-observation. Later in the research, I found that my practice enhanced my understanding, rather than causing me to miss the significance of data.

The awareness of my participation continued throughout the data gathering phase of my research. During the course of the fifth observation, I could feel something palpable in the room. I felt it at my forehead, then it moved through my heart to my solar plexus, as an involuntary response to something happening in the room. It was 'response data' (St. Pierre 1997: 177), something produced in the researcher which reveals aspects of the research situation. The sharing revealed that something extraordinary had happened: two of the group had the same image in the Experiment and a third said she would take away a completely different sense of herself.⁶⁰

So, I participated as well as observing, albeit sometimes the participation was delayed until the observation finished. In fact, I realised by the seventh observation that I was actually observing (watching, concentrating, noting) in order not to sink completely into participation during the silences in the meditation. At the same time, I noted the physical effect on me of the Experiment I was observing.⁶¹

Covert participation

It was some time after I had ceased the participant observation and I was reviewing my contemporaneous notes that I realised that the research had provided me with a new, more immediate way of Experimenting.

I had developed the practice of noting, alongside my observations on my notepad of what the members of Group A were doing in the silence of the meditation, my personal observations of what was happening for me. [I distinguished my

⁶⁰ Field notes, 20 April 2004. The incident is described in more detail in Chapter 6 ('Transcendent experience in the group'), pp229-231.

⁶¹ Field notes, 18 May 2004: 'Is the note-taking a deliberate displacement to stop me going into a meditative state?' I noted during this observation how the tension was leaving my body: 'SIGH (me)'; 'I shift in chair slightly'; and 'I am letting the tension go from my neck'.

observations about me from those about the group by denoting them in square brackets.]⁶² This began as something to do while not much was happening and served as a way of keeping myself in the present and alert to what was happening to the group. It had proved significant in the fifth observation where two of them had had the same image.

When I reviewed the notes of the last few observations, however, I became aware that I had undertaken a full meditation myself, alongside the observation, but instead of experiencing the meditation, then making notes afterwards and sharing them (as I did in the group in my own Meeting), I had made the notes at each stage of the meditation. Also, as the group's Researcher, I did not sit amongst them and did not share what happened for me in the meditation with them, I shared it only with myself: contemporaneously as I sat there in the meditation; with my notepad; with the me who was experiencing as I experienced; and with the me who was the Researcher later reviewing.⁶³

Not only was I participating in the group's Experiment, but I was participating in two different timeframes: contemporaneously with my notes and later with the reviewing Researcher. I was drawn into the practice of Group A, whilst the Group saw me as Researcher; I was overt as Researcher, but covert as Experimenter since the Group were not aware that I was Experimenting and I did not contribute in the sharing. The implication is that, from my involvement in their Experiments, I experienced their

⁶² See for example Appendix D4, pp20-24.

⁶³ By this stage in the research, I was more experienced at observation and found it easier to participate and observe and there was probably less that was new to discover. The most complete participation occurred after I had announced I would cease researching Group A. I undertook participant-observation twice after my announcement, see this chapter ('Withdrawing from the participant-observation' and FN71).

practice as powerfully based spiritually, thus potentially compromising my ability to consider the extent to which the Experiment functions as a transformative experience (Chapter 6).

In several supervisions in 2005 I was encouraged to discontinue the participant-observation on the grounds that, after more than a year I should have sufficient data, but I resisted. I said that I was waiting for the transcendent⁶⁴ moment. I also admitted that I did not want to cease to be a part of the lives of Group A.⁶⁵

Research relationships

I met at least one member of Group A for a meal before most of the group's Experiments. Initially this was so that a1 could explain the background to the group's formation, to set out how the group would together decide whether or not I could research their Experimenting and perhaps also to decide for herself whether she

⁶⁴ Except where a general meaning is clearly intended, in the thesis I use the terms 'transcendent' and 'transcendence' to mean otherwise inexplicable connections or the Divine working as an agent outside the human/everyday life, rather than the more usual sense of God being outside the universe (Borg 2000: 42). At the point I was discussing withdrawal from the fieldwork with my supervisor, I had in mind a particular type of experience, where the Experimenter reported she had been visited by a figure or being. Two members of the Light group in my Meeting (the data from which was outside my research, see this chapter ('Primary data' and 'Drawing on personal practice in the research')) had reported such experiences and i14, i7 and i16 had told me of such experiences (see Chapter 5 ('Out-of-the-ordinary and profound experience', 'Gradual and gentle experiences' and 'Dramatic experiences')). I came to realise in the course of analysing the data that 'transcendent' experiences could be less obvious and dramatic.

⁶⁵ In addition, there were increasing difficulties in the Light group in my own Meeting: on one occasion none of the other members turned up at the appointed time and, in spite of the fact that every time we met I repeated the protocol against commenting on each others' sharing, other members of the group would comment, especially on my sharing. Group A became my true Light group. No one commented on my sharing there, not least since it was only with my own notepad. More than that, though, the members of Group A were all committed to making the process work and knew how to do that better than the members of the group in my own Meeting. Initial commenting on sharing and disturbance of the silence between the meditation and the sharing had been faced, faced down, and then willingly agreed by the group to be stopped. Group A moreover shared in and out of silence, not lapsing into discussion, but keeping separately signalled time at the beginning and the end of the evening for organisational matters. (Such matters included who would host the next meeting, dealing with any issues surrounding the Light group and the MM and arranging their review meeting.) Group A knew how to keep the discipline and by and large made sure they did (see Appendix D4). At that time the group in my own Meeting did not and my experience in the participant-observation was consequently deeper than in the Light group in my own Meeting.

thought I should be permitted to do so. It became a regular event. It was a convenient way of ensuring I got a meal at the right time. a1 was always open with the other members of the group about our eating together beforehand and at different times she invited others from the group to join us; over the seventeen month period there were only three of the group who did not.⁶⁶

I, of course, was hoping that I would learn useful additional information for my research and I did, especially in relation to the conflict handling discussed in Chapter 7. Also, a1, and on occasion the others, got to know a lot about me and I about them. I was another Quaker contact as well as part of the life of the group. In the sharing after the Experiment the members of the group gave very personal details about their lives and, talking to me over a meal, they got to know some similar details about me: it increased trust between us. Even those who did not join us for a meal could feel this confidence in me as they felt it about each other and trusted each other to vouch unspokenly for me.

On one occasion the group met at a5's home and she provided a simple meal beforehand;⁶⁷ I had a long conversation with her as the others were late and during the meal a3 and a4 teased me about my research. On that occasion I was so moved by what a3 had shared that, after the end of the post-meditation sharing, I broke out of my role as silent Researcher and suggested he might try a different approach to his debilitating condition.

⁶⁶ a3, a6 and a8.

⁶⁷ Thus I also ate with a3 at a5's on 30 November 2004 (and with all the group at a7's on 5 October 2004, when the group actively involved me in the evening's process not only in conversation but specifically by asking me to calculate how much each of us should contribute as our share of the cost of the takeaway meal).

The nature of my growing friendships with different members of Group A had both a potentially helpful and a potentially problematic side, as represented in Figure 4.2.

<i>helpful</i>	<i>problematic</i>
increased familiarity and trust	others feeling left out
giving back personal information	influencing what researching how to deal with their questions my Light group my research

Figure 4.2 Issues arising from contact with Group A members outside their Experiments

Those not joining me and a1 for a meal beforehand might have felt left out or that we might be talking about what was happening in the group's Experiments. If I talked to those I ate with about what happened in the group in my own Meeting (which I did except in respect of individual Friends' experience) or what was emerging in the research (which I resisted every time a question arose), they might think that I could not be trusted to keep their own sharing confidential.

In the event, it seemed that the potential drawbacks did not transpire, or that the familiarity and trust outweighed the potential drawbacks. The individual members of Group A held the information I gave them about my personal life, elements of the research and my Experimenting in the Light group in my own Meeting in the same

way they held each others' sharing and either trusted each other to judge for them or were simply unconcerned.⁶⁸

One example of the trust in me occurred at the fifth Experiment. In the early part of the evening the group checked with each other how their day had gone and a4 responded *'I'm alright'* in such a tone that I noted in my contemporaneous observation: *'[clearly not!]'*. I was surprised that in the subsequent sharing, when a4 had an outburst about other members of the Group discussing outside the group what went on in the sharing, he said I was the only person with whom it was legitimate to discuss what went on inside the group.

The close relationships I developed with the members of Group A were necessarily demanded by the process of the Experiment, not a matter of slack research discipline. Once I became aware of how I was responding to the group's Experimenting (for example, the palpable feeling at the fifth Experiment) my own Quaker and Experimenter identity demanded I be true to it and respond naturally to them socially, recognising my deep affection for them, that I had entered their 'community of love'.⁶⁹ What began as research relationships became very personal.

Withdrawing from the participant-observation

In the end, I had to admit to myself that it was not the research which was behind my continuing the participant-observation. I had told the group that I would give them adequate notice of my research with them ceasing and I decided to discuss it with a1

⁶⁸ I had the impression that a6, for example, was unconcerned.

⁶⁹ For an explanation of 'community of love', see Chapter 6 ('Community of love'), pp241-242. It seemed the relationship was reciprocal, for example I was invited to two weddings when members of Group A later married. (The weddings were after the fieldwork period.)

when we ate together before the Experiment.⁷⁰ She took my broaching the subject as an announcement and my withdrawal from the group became a fact. Even at this last point I was reluctant to withdraw quickly, but a1's response gave me no room to prevaricate.⁷¹

As I left the group for the last time a4 said he had no doubt that what I did would be fine.⁷² This was both an endorsement and a reminder to honour the trust placed in me.⁷³ His comment stayed with me powerfully: it was an ongoing challenge that left me in dilemma every time I wrote, because I had to ask myself whether the research really demanded particular evidence be used or whether it was too sensitive, so that instead I should omit it. Further, I knew I had to determine this for myself because only a few of my informants took up my offer to read my soon-to-be-published article (Meads 2007b), so they were unlikely to read my thesis and voice any reservation themselves.

It was only when I reviewed my contemporary notes of the participant observation that I realised how closely I had become involved with the members of Group A.⁷⁴

⁷⁰ Fieldnotes, 31 May 2005.

⁷¹ I went to two more Experiments after my discussion with a1. This gave me the opportunity to myself announce to all the members of group (except a5, whom I e-mailed) that I was finishing my research observations.

⁷² I had already turned the minidisc off, but as soon as I got into my car I dictated what had been said to me. I dictated: 'a4 said he had no doubt what I did would be fine because I'm a good person, which was very sweet.'

⁷³ I subsequently noted (methodology notebook, 29 April 2007) that a4 could not have thought there was anything about himself to reveal, since he hardly ever shared anything personal, but I understood him to be referring to the experience and the life of another member, whose sharing had at first been tentative, then so deep and trusting of the others and me, that we knew something which in another context could have led to criminal investigation and potentially to a prosecution. Without discussing it, the group and I recognised that the actions described were honest and truthful, not criminal.

⁷⁴ One in particular, shocked me so rigid that I had to walk away from the reviewing process and could not return to it for several days: I understood viscerally the significance of my hearing inside my head the voice of a2's husband as she wept - a2's husband was not present on that occasion (Fieldnotes, 4 April 2004). The occasion of a2's weeping is described in more detail in Chapter 6 ('6 Acceptance (instead of mission)'), p232. Subsequently my shock came to seem excessive: I have moved further

Like Grinyer (2005), whose research into the impact of life stage when a young person is diagnosed with cancer was financed by close friends whose son had died young, mine is another story in the lesser acknowledged area of researchers' 'emotional work'.

Checking insider 'bias'

My intention was that, by gaining a greater understanding of the processes of the Experiment as they act upon me, and therefore of interviewees' understanding of their experiences and meanings, I could better enquire of the next interviewee, or better observe on the next occasion and better understand in my subsequent analysis of the data. I cannot, however, claim absolutely that I achieved either better data and understanding or correct representation, only that I attempted to determine where I stood and to note improvements.

The minidisc recordings provided useful data to check my potential insider bias. When I left i15, I was extremely dissatisfied that I had not established a better rapport; I felt the interview had not gone at all well.⁷⁵ The following day I interviewed i16 from the same Light group and her experiences provided very rich data.⁷⁶ When I came to listen to the recordings, however, there was little difference between the two

along the hermeneutic spiral (see this chapter ('The hermeneutic spiral'), pp166-168) and I have more experience of being in tune with other Experimenters, so to know what they are experiencing is more familiar (although I have never since heard a voice in relation to a fellow-Experimenter's contemporaneous experience, nor indeed in relation to my own). Also at a further distance I can more clearly see that a2's weeping was a release of her accumulated distress, especially as in the sharing she had said she knew she had to '*accept*', and I can see that she had come to terms with whatever underlay her distress, that she was enigmatically saying that she would be strong enough to deal with whatever arose, that her experience on that occasion was very healing and positive. Now it feels wonder-full to have participated in that, rather than shocking.

⁷⁵ I now understand that this was because before I interviewed her I knew from an article i15 had published in *The Friend*, the weekly British Quaker journal, that her life, like mine, had been touched by suicide. The emotional reaction was entirely personal and related to my own anger, not to the interview, nor to the research.

⁷⁶ See Appendix D1 for the transcript of the interview with i16.

interviews; indeed, i15's provided better information on some aspects and both interviews sounded equally cordial and engaged. I also had very helpful subsequent e-mail exchanges and extra data from i15. On second positioning, made possible by the minidisc (listening as a third person later to myself as interview participant), it was clear my response had been unjustified. I had objective evidence of my reactions: it was possible to observe myself and correct initial misperceptions.

As a result of my having felt something palpable in the room, I re-reviewed and listened more closely to the recording of the participant observation when a1 and a6 had the same image.⁷⁷ I heard the sense of wonder and awe in their voices as they described what had happened in the Experiment: I applied an extra level of search into the evidence to show that it was not just my highlighting something I thought was important and that I was not unduly influenced in my conclusions by my participation. It was not enough to say merely that I felt something palpable in the room, but I had to analyse participants' responses to explain the effect the experience had on them. My 'response data' caused me to think further and reach deeper into the data.

As I wrote, I was concerned that my own voice might distort or drown out the participants' voices. My greatest discomfort was in trying to write as a whole piece a1 and a6's having the same image.⁷⁸ I was lifting the experience out of the integrity in the moment it happened, asking myself how that integrity could be maintained and conveyed without my words around it (thick description (Geertz 1973)). I doubt that

⁷⁷ Mentioned in this chapter ('Participant observation' and FN60) and discussed in detail in Chapter 5 ('Transcendent experience in the group'), pp229-231.

⁷⁸ The reflections come from methodology notebook 24 April 2007 and the piece as finally written is at Chapter 6 ('Transcendent experience in the group'), pp229-231.

an outsider would have felt the palpable energy in the room.⁷⁹ Although I could be accused of imputing something to the group, to add my response to the account gives a more complete understanding of what happens in the Experiment. I questioned my interpretations and, as a result, went back to my data time and again to mine it more completely, to answer Patai's challenge 'does self-reflexivity produce better research?' (Pillow 2003: 176).

As the analysis phase of the research progressed I became distanced from emotional identification with the Experiment by the very fact of applying an analytic lens: I began to think about the Experiment in abstract and conceptual terms, more as an object in itself than as my own practice.⁸⁰ As I wrote, I wondered whether it would persist or whether its effervescence (North 1999: 75) would result in its demise rather than in changing its context.

Insidership summary

While interviewing and undertaking participant observation, I was multiple insider and outsider. In practice for me also, as Labaree reviews, the boundaries are

⁷⁹ In correspondence with another scholar whose paper (Minkjan 2007) had included response data, she said she did not agree with my doubt that an outsider was unlikely to have felt palpable energy in the room (Meads 2007b: 290). In her own trance state experiences in neo-shamanic groups, where she was outsider both to neo-shamanism and the groups, she saw deer, snow owl and other guides, on one occasion felt a couple standing behind her and heard a voice even though when she opened her eyes no one was there and on another occasion felt as if someone were walking over her. Her view was that it was accepting the meaning that makes one an insider, not having the experience. Minkjan did not tell me her own view of her experiences, but said there were two viewpoints: either they were real spirits and power animals or they were something from the individual's unconscious. She suggested that Experimenters might be in a light trance state in the Experiment. I replied on 19 May that I was not Experimenting *in* Group A, but was researching from a separate corner of the room and that I had the sensation three times during the evening: once in the meditation and twice during the group's sharing and, although I was concluding that I was being drawn into Experimenting while researching, I was not in a light trance state, particularly not while the group was sharing. I still think that an outsider, particularly a sceptical outsider, would not have experienced the palpable feeling as I did.

⁸⁰ The Light group in my own Meeting ceased meeting from late 2005 until early 2006 and when it restarted I sometimes allowed other engagements to take precedence, so I was not present on every occasion as I had been previously. Although (or perhaps because) from 2007 I co-facilitated introductory workshops, my approach to the Experiment's development became more analytical than hopeful.

situational, defined by the perception of the researched (2002: 101): my understanding, behaviour and spiritual practice affected the research, but the tools I was using and the distance created by time helped me negotiate the many dilemmas.

Quaker Ethnography and Reflexivity

'Insider/outsider' and 'reflexivity' have been discussed in previous Quaker scholarship, but not addressed in the framework of Labaree's challenge. From an anthropological perspective, Collins argues that the insider/outsider issue disappears because, comprising a multiplicity of voices, we (that is, Quaker insider researchers and the Quakers we research) each become simultaneously insiders and outsiders, making the distinction redundant (2002a: 92). I go further by applying Labaree's more subtle frame of multiple insider/multiple outsider. Collins reviews the development of the insider question in anthropology and refers to the continuum of the insider/outsider question, but, except insofar as his chapter looks back to his research, does not seem to move on to a continual process of introspective enquiry to monitor his position, view and conclusions. On the contrary, as Nesbitt points out, in order to distance himself as ethnographer from himself as Quaker, Collins referred to himself in the third person in his doctoral thesis (Nesbitt 2002: 143-144).

From her background in theology and education, Nesbitt (2002) undertakes a review of reflexivity and Quaker ethnographers. She looks at whether being a Quaker and ethnographer involves or develops similar attitudes and skills, concluding that the ethnographer's own religious commitment should be addressed in discussions of reflexivity as it can direct their research and affect their approach to fieldwork. She comments that Dandelion's typology of covert/overt insider to the context/insider to

the group needs to be extended to accommodate the researcher's journey, with shifting insights and patterns of allegiance. I have now done this in the Labaree's frame.

Insider perspectives are considered throughout Dandelion's (2004b) collection of Quaker scholars' creation of theory, but with the exception of Tarter, whose mystical experience led her to a new understanding of early Quaker writings (2004: 83-89), the scholars do not reflect on the implications for their research of their personal journeys. Their personal journeys may provide interesting background to the Quaker reader, but do not answer Patai's challenge (1994: 69).

I have extended the reach of Quaker ethnography, by addressing insiderness and reflexivity within the framework Labaree reviews and affirm his conclusions.

Heterotopian research method

This section concludes the chapter by reviewing the research process with heterotopia and the concept of hermeneutic spiral (a track from data to interpretation and back again (Osborne 2006 [1991])).⁸¹

As I note above,⁸² I found my method mirroring (Foucault 1986 [1967]-a: 24) the research object. The research created a crisis (Foucault 1986 [1967]-a: 24) for me personally and I deviated from the more usual research context of methodological agnosticism. My reflexivity found me highlighting how the research and practice

⁸¹ See this chapter ('The hermeneutic spiral') pp166-168.

⁸² See this chapter ('Mirroring effect'), pp151-153.

informed each other⁸³ and reading and understanding the data differently; it functioned in different ways throughout the research process (Foucault 1986 [1967]-a: 25).

The hermeneutic spiral

The term 'hermeneutic spiral' was coined to describe biblical interpretation from text to context, from original meaning to its contextualised significance for the present (Osborne 2006 [1991]: 22-23). Osborne felt the term 'hermeneutic circle' described an endless closed process which would never detect the true meaning, whilst 'spiral' was a better metaphor for an open-ended movement from the horizon of the text to the horizon of the reader. He saw himself as spiralling nearer and nearer the text's intended meaning as he refined each hypothesis and allowed the text to continue to challenge and correct the alternative interpretations, then to guide delineation of its significance in the present: it was also critical to envisage the spiral as a cone, not twirling upward forever with no ending in sight, but moving ever narrower to the meaning of the text and its present significance.

In my work, the 'text' is the experience and stories of the research participants and I travel through the spiral, or, as Robson suggests, through several contexts on several spiral tracks (2005: 87): from participants' experience related in interviews or in real time participant-observation, from the review process to my response data, from research to my own Experimenting and back to the research, from review to reading, from reading to conversations, from analysis to theory and at each stage back to

⁸³ See this chapter ('Drawing on personal practice in the research' and 'Covert participation'), pp148-150 & pp154-156.

data.⁸⁴ Such tracks must exist within my understanding and together the tracks form a mental space, which I argue is also heterotopic.

There were myriad examples. One occurred when I was travelling by train reading Gonick and Hladki's (2005) article on heterotopia in writing research.⁸⁵ One of their subtitles 'Heterotopia: out of the laughter' brought home to me the link with Gromit's role in ameliorating Group A's internal conflict and heterotopia.⁸⁶ I was by this time very familiar with the Foucault passage and intuitively felt humour was a major element in Foucault's position, that in much of his work he is laughing up his sleeve at his potential readers,⁸⁷ and some months before⁸⁸ I had understood the importance of the comic in Gromit's role in Group A, but had not previously brought the two elements together to understand that in addition to Gromit's narrative being crucial to Group A's internal conflict handling, there was a link with heterotopia. When I came

⁸⁴ Ostensibly this seems similar to MacMillan's 'reflexive spiral' which she initially describes: 'I see reflexivity more as a spiralling movement, with the shape of the metaphor suggesting that each turn, however lightly made, however brief, offers a shift in focus. Topics may be endlessly rehearsed, but with each rehearsal a different perspective is gained, as the text moves, not back to the beginning, but to the next turn upon the spiral of reflexivity', but she goes on to say this demands reflexivity not only on the researcher's role in the research process, but also as a practitioner of reflexivity (MacMillan 2003: 234-235). MacMillan feels uncomfortable only when she finds herself in a supervision as a topic for sociological enquiry and she responds by creating a fictional sub-characters for herself, Evangeline Scribbler, who then talks back so that the conversation becomes the research data which she then analyses as another fictional character, Sybil Sleepstone (MacMillan 2003: 239-247). The response data is fiction and MacMillan admits she ends up with no critique at all (MacMillan 2003: 248), whereas I relate the process of researching to increasing understanding in travelling the hermeneutic spiral.

⁸⁵ Fieldnotes, 4 April 2009.

⁸⁶ I wrote on my copy of the article: 'p288 out of the laughter – pick this up – link Gromit, Friends finding heterotopia, laughing from over here; disruptive – humour relies on juxtaposition; a2 was using Gromit to get Group A to look from the other's perspective'. See Chapter 7 ('Gromit's part in the story'), pp276-278, for the link (Gromit is a character in a series of animated films (Park 1992) and a2 had brought a soft toy version of him to a Group A meeting).

⁸⁷ See also Chapter 3 FN38: Foucault seems to admit he is laughing at his reader in *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (Foucault 1989 [1969]: 19). de Certeau wrote about 'the laugh of Michel Foucault' (1986: 193-198), but did not suggest that Foucault was laughing at his reader, rather that Foucault 'is not the author, but the witness of these flashes' (1986: 194), that his laughter denotes surprise, out of which invention of a new way of thinking and understanding is born: 'It is not Mr. Foucault who is making fun of domains of knowledge ... it is history that is laughing at them' (de Certeau 1986: 195). Reading the extract from *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (Foucault 1989 [1969]: 19) in conjunction with the private letter to Defert (Johnson 2006: 76) suggests a different conclusion.

⁸⁸ In August 2008.

to write the link up,⁸⁹ the thought developed further and I understood that Gromit was another heterotopia within Group A's already multi-dimensional heterotopia.

Adapted grounded theory/iteration

I used grounded theory (Strauss & Corbin 1998), but adapted it in that I did not fully transcribe nor code every interview and participant-observation in the recommended way, although I did build up analytical categories from reviewing and re-reviewing the data and coding it idiosyncratically. I used mindmapping to make notes (Buzan & Buzan 1993). Mindmapping is a graphic technique where the object of attention is crystallised in a central image, the main themes emerge from the central image as branches. Each branch comprises a key image or key word in radiating lines with topics of lesser importance in turn spreading from the branches as sub-branches to form a connected nodal structure (Buzan & Buzan 1993: 59). The meaning of the data emerged from the iterative process of review and the mindmaps.

I had reviewed the interview data as I undertook the interviews, making manuscript notes, but fully typing only the i16 transcript. Similarly I made initial manuscript notes during the Group A participant observation, later fully transcribing most of their meetings in manuscript.⁹⁰

When I came to analyse the data, I used mindmapping, seeking the links between parts of the data within each interview⁹¹ using one colour on each interview mindmap. I extracted from each interview mindmap similar themes on particular topics into

⁸⁹ On 14 April 2009.

⁹⁰ Of particular necessity, I transcribed the three group A meetings when I had not been present, but the group had recorded the evening's Experiment for me.

⁹¹ See example at Appendix C7.

different mindmaps retaining the colours from the interview mindmap,⁹² eventually codifying the data topics in spreadsheets, which I refined using colour coding into categories.⁹³ The categories gave me the initial basis for the thesis chapters,⁹⁴ although these later changed.

I had already reviewed the Group A participant-observation data for a conference paper (Meads 2005) and had prepared a spreadsheet to keep track of what occurred when. In 2007, after having reviewed the interview data I revisited and completed the spreadsheet, this time using colour coding to map the participants' experiences on to the stages of transformation.⁹⁵ The stages of transformation discussed in Chapter 6 emerged more clearly from the Group A data, where I was able to observe the process as the participants underwent it. The interviewees were giving me an historical account of a process they had already either undergone or were at a particular stage of, so that stages in the process were not as clearly discernable.

I had not initially reviewed the Group B data, but when I came to analyse the participants' historical accounts, I reverted to mindmapping. Since the purpose of the data analysis was more focused (as the data gathering had been) I was able to categorise the data in the course of preparing the mindmaps, using colour coding,⁹⁶ subsequently preparing mindmaps for each category.⁹⁷ When I came to write the chapter on conflict handling my approach followed a more theoretical lead, building

⁹² See example at Appendix C8.

⁹³ See example at Appendix C9.

⁹⁴ For example the Appendix C8 'transformation' mindmap appears at cell B42 of Appendix C9, ultimately forming part of the 'what' category at cell W9, where some of the stages of transformation discussed in Chapter 6 (understanding relationships, darkness) have already emerged.

⁹⁵ See Appendix C10.

⁹⁶ See Appendix C11.

⁹⁷ See Appendix C12.

on Kline (2002) and Robson (2005; 2008a; 2008b), but the mindmaps provided ready reference to the data I needed to cite.

In the iterative process of reviewing and re-reviewing the data, I absorbed it and was able to draw links; as I made notes, drew mindmaps, attended conferences, read, had academic conversations with scholars and their texts, and wrote, I moved along the hermeneutic spiral, between the data and possibly relevant theory, back to data and arrived at further nuances of theory. The site of the spiral was my subconscious and conscious learning, my internal mental space. The processes were invisible until they emerged in half-complete or more-complete form on the page.

Writing up

I decided that I needed to quote informants at length, using their own words as far as possible, not my version of what they said, but theirs, because of the delicacy of their experience. I wanted the reader to understand the depth of participants' experience. At the same time I surrounded the informants' quotes with thick description (Geertz 1973) to bring that depth and delicacy out, so my interpretation was also present. I tried to be true to their sense by using their own words, but at the same time I recognised that of itself selection interposed me between their experience and the reader.⁹⁸ Like North (1999: 74), I reviewed from the research participants' perspective, to analyse their experience, citing their own words at length to present from their perspective. North found heterogeneous forms of understanding and that LETS was heterotopic.⁹⁹ His ethnography, however, saw the participants reflecting

⁹⁸ Methodology notebook, 24 April 2007. Even the complete transcripts in Appendices D1, D2 and D4 have an element of interpretation in the selection of punctuation; the transcripts provide more words, but do not give the participants' inflections, which can only be inferred.

⁹⁹ See Chapter 3 ('Non-geographic and political: North'), pp102-103.

on the nature of the scheme, whereas the Experiment participants reflected on their lives and their Experimenting, rarely on the process of the Experiment itself.

I wrote my research up in stages, referring to data, texts and mindmaps iteratively reading, brainstorming, writing, ordering with mindmaps and scripts, re-ordering. Without initially realising it, I found myself using a Foucauldian method in writing the chapter on heterotopia, by similitude rather than resemblance, through a series of deferrals.¹⁰⁰ I first read all three of Pilgrim's chapters (Pilgrim 2003b; 2004; 2008) to see how she developed the concept in relation to Quakers. Pilgrim led me to *The Order of Things* (Foucault 2002 [1966]), *Of Other Spaces* (Foucault 1986 [1967]-a) and Hetherington (1997; 1998). In order to understand the concept thoroughly, I then found all the articles and some of the books available from searching the databases using the term 'heterotopia'. Some of these articles and books led to more articles and books.¹⁰¹ I read most of them carefully.¹⁰² As I read them, phrases in them seemed to be describing both my own experience of the Experiment and what my informants had said. I became aware that not only did Experimenters sit in a heterotopic position vis-à-vis British Quakers generally (Chapter 8), but also that the Experiment itself was a heterotopian process (Chapter 3). I spread the articles out on my desk and picked up each in turn, writing what appeared to be salient points into the draft chapter. Except for setting out the basis of the concept from the dictionary (where I was surprised to find the pathological meaning linked to a human foetus and therefore to natality) and

¹⁰⁰ Although I am clearly capable of simultaneously using very unFoucauldian method, in that I analysed Foucault's six principles of heterotopia using an Excel spreadsheet.

¹⁰¹ I even read a novel about Foucault (Duncker 1997).

¹⁰² Some I skipped as they were not as scholarly. The facilities management articles, for example (Cairns 2003; Cairns, et al. 2003), had a very binary unFoucauldian approach and seemed to fall within Genocchio's criticism of applications where anything could be heterotopia (Genocchio 1995: 39). Similarly, the article about democracy in schools (Fischman & McLaren 2000) seemed hardly relevant, except for a footnote on Marks' (1995) article interpreting heterotopia as 'an image of thought'.

in Foucault, I did not order them in any hierarchy. I then understood that what I had done was to set them out in a plane in order to find where they were in relation to each other and to the concept of heterotopia, both the plane of my desk and then the plane of the computer screen as I wrote. The range was from facilities management and democracy in schools to museums and organisational entrepreneurship, which were not at all alike. It was not dissimilar to Borges' classification of animals: by similitude rather than resemblance, through a series of deferrals (gathering data, reviewing it, reading, academic conversations at conferences and less formally, supervisions, spreading papers on my desk and going between the papers and the laptop as I wrote), in much the same way as Foucault advocated finding relationships in *The Order of Things*, I came to see their relevance and therefore to re-order the paragraphs in my draft chapter.

Spiralling to a conclusion

As insider Researcher, I stand in juxtaposition (Foucault 1986 [1967]-a: 25; Foucault 2002 [1966]: xix) in several real spaces: sitting outside Group A's circle but a covert Experimenter in the room; sitting in Group B's Experiment circle overt as Researcher and participator, especially in the sharing; in the interviewees' familiar living or working spaces, listening as their fellow-Experimenters would in their Experiments; at Glenthorne November 2004 as a co-Experimenter in all the meditations, sharing and other time together,¹⁰³ but presenting a paper and conflicted about what I could reveal about my findings;¹⁰⁴ and finally, as I emerged from the research process, as a workshop leader rolling out the best practice my research had suggested.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰³ Including leading evening Epilogue on 2 November 2004 (fieldnotes).

¹⁰⁴ To the extent that the discomfort gave me a week-long headache: fieldnotes, 1-4 November 2004.

¹⁰⁵ For example: arising from the work on conflict (Chapter 7) I advised that best practice would include a PM minute acknowledging the Light group, so that any reservations could be aired under the

Analysing the data, I was in several separate timeframes: listening to the recordings, whilst I re-reviewed and wrote fuller transcripts in between the lines of my fieldwork notes and initial reviews; then again when I wrote drafts from the notes, transcripts and academic texts, also visiting the mental space of my recollections. The research opened onto heterochronies (Foucault 1986 [1967]-a: 26).

My covert participation during the fieldwork with Group A functioned as compensation (Foucault 1986 [1967]-a: 27) for the lack in the group in my own Meeting.¹⁰⁶ As Researcher I was the ship (Foucault 1986 [1967]-a: 27) travelling from the ports of research setting to research setting (the interviews, Group A, Glenthorne, Group B, the libraries, my desk, supervisions) over the sea of others' and my own Experimental experience to find the 'precious treasures' in their hearts and minds,¹⁰⁷ as g19 said of her experience in one Experiment at Glenthorne:¹⁰⁸

I saw us as earthen vessels full of treasure, but it wasn't just really earthen vessels, we were more like lanterns so you could see the sparkly treasure from the sides as well as from the top ... And we were all there with our treasure

discipline of the Quaker business method so that potential conflict would not arise, or at least Elders' support where the Meeting is so large that it has many small groups and it might be difficult to achieve a PM agenda item; from Groups A's experience that the discipline (QFP 1995: 12.21) should be firmly held as comment on each others' sharing and lapsing into conversation gets in the way of the process; from the experience of Group A, i17, i18, i19a and i19b, that a period of silence between the meditation and sharing is crucial to allow the process to settle within the Experimenter; that groups are more likely to thrive when a core of Friends from the Meeting have attended a workshop together, so that an additional Meeting workshop would help in this.

¹⁰⁶ See this chapter ('Covert participation' and FN65).

¹⁰⁷ See Chapter 3 ('Foucault's heterotopia'), pp94-95, the ship is the heterotopia *par excellence*: 'a floating piece of space, a place without a place, that exists by itself, that is closed in on itself and at the same time is given over to the infinity of the sea and that, from port to port, from tack to tack ... goes as far as the colonies in search of the most precious treasures they conceal in their gardens'.

¹⁰⁸ It is possible that g19 had in mind the passage in 2 Corinthians 4:7: 'But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us'. g19's sharing after the Experiment was reflected in the last paragraph of the epistle to all BYM's MMs from the Glenthorne weeklong (*Glenthorne epistle*): 'We invite all Friends who have not yet done so to share this treasure with us by embarking on the Experiment yourselves. May you be blessed with the same sense of healing and joy that we have found, and may we all grow together in listening more attentively to the promptings of love and truth in our hearts.'

and saying to anyone who was around 'Come and have a sip' and some people would come and say 'It's not for me' ... It's a long job, but we're faithfully there with our treasure, offering it in humility. And then I followed on saying 'Let each of us with our treasure be free to follow what we may do with the treasure.'

My research process was dynamic, iteratively embracing the multiplicity of prime data, analytic data, theory and writing, ordering and re-ordering in a non-linear way (Hetherington 1997), invisibly and experimentally (Hjorth 2005).

The meaning of the research object emerged and was absorbed, as Foucault envisaged (Foucault 2004 [1966]; Saldanha 2008: 2084-2085) and North observed (1999: 73).¹⁰⁹

Within the research process I embraced the multiplicity of data of different levels (North 1999: 72), as I moved along the hermeneutic spiral of *becoming* (Marks 1995) in an open system of disequilibrium. My experience as Researcher, in the field and back at my desk, questioned and undermined the limits of the alleged coherence of an everyday contained system (Genocchio 1995: 41).

The hermeneutic spirals I travelled were a space in-between, a dimension of heterotopia, from which the theory (of heterotopia) emerged as the most appropriate to model the dimensions of the research object. The spiral is itself a heterotopic mental space and heterotopian process, functioning differently at each stage.

I asked myself whether I was very suggestible in my method, or perhaps just messy. I considered whether there was more to be understood from this, too. I had already noted the link between the Experiment and insider researching (Meads 2007b), and I

¹⁰⁹ See Chapter 3 ('Foucault's heterotopia'), p90, and ('Non-geographic and political: North'), pp102-103.

had already noted the link between Experimenters' reflexivity as a result of their Experimenting and their challenges where other Quakers would decline to ask, tell and think about conflict (Chapter 7). The dynamic between heterotopia and the Experiment (that the Experiment is heterotopian in both its intrinsic process and its social effect) was having similar effect on my research method. Gonick and Hladki (2005) draw a link between heterotopia and reflexivity in writing research, but in my work the heterotopia imbued the method not just of writing in a particular way, but also of all the processes in the research: gathering data, reviewing, reading, academic conversations, finding applicable theory and writing.

I recognised the mirroring of research and practice¹¹⁰ before I read *Of Other Spaces* (Foucault 1986 [1967]-a). Its additional significance now is its illustration of the heterotopian nature of the research. Foucault begins his exposition of heterotopia in *Of Other Spaces* with the example of the mirror (Foucault 1986 [1967]-a: 24): on one side of the research mirror (and it could be either the side of the viewer or the reflection) is the research object (the Experiment) and on the other the research process, each reflecting back the other through the focal point of the researcher: heterotopic research object, itself a heterotopian process (Chapter 3), and heterotopian process of research, each the heterotopic space inside the other in an ever diminishing-sized reflection to infinity.

¹¹⁰ See this chapter ('Mirroring effect'), pp151-153.

Chapter 5 - Sense of the Divine¹

Sense of the Divine: introduction

In order to contextualise Experimenters' experiences in the Experiment in Chapter 6, this chapter reports what Experimenters' accounts of their spiritual practice, beliefs and experience and, from that, what sense they have of the Divine.² It also explores how Experimenters' sense of the Divine links to Foucault's idea of heterotopia.

Religious practice

As well as Experimenting, my informants attended MfW regularly and the interviewees mostly had an individual daily practice in addition; this practice encouraged their preparedness for religious experience. The different daily practices ranged from '*sitting in the silence and listening*' after yoga (i15) or focused around reading (i10, i11), through a simple sitting and breathing into thought-less '*total physical relaxation*' (i8), '*quiet time*' (i14), '*stillness*' (i6), to regularly setting aside time '*to pray with icons*' (i7), prayer for others, '*silence based on "Be still and know that I am God"*' (i10) and journaling (i9).

Most interviewees had experience of meditation before they began Experimenting. i3 and i6 said they had practised Buddhist meditation, i14 Hindu and i2 a visualised light meditation. i11 said she based meditation around words given to her. i7 and i8 had

¹ See Chapter 1 FN27 for my definition of 'Divine'.

² The interviewees spoke of their experiences of the Divine in the course of wide-ranging discussion around the Experiment and their more general Quaker experience. I did not specifically elicit examples of peak 'cosmic consciousness' as Hawkins did with her 2003 survey (Hawkins 2004), nor of their most significant religious experience as Hood did in his experimental psychology (Hood 1973; Hood & Hall 1980). Consequently, my informants' accounts of their religious experiences are less directed to an expected outcome and possibly they are therefore less explicit.

experiences of other meditation groups. It was likely therefore that they would be drawn to a specifically Quaker meditation. Only i16 said she had no previous experience of meditation.

i17 described meditation as '*mental limbering up*' and said '*it feels like dynarod for the spirit: it clears your tubes; it opens up the pathways that you use when you're centring down*'. i14 said, drawing an implicit distinction from the Experiment:

True meditation, deep meditation is what I understand as the emptying, which is not actually focusing on one particular issue or any particular thing, but on the contrary trying - an aim - to empty oneself of all preconceptions and images. And, in that place, the self falls away and there is no separation experienced between oneself and God.

Experience of the Divine (what is sensed)

In this section, I review some of Experimenters' experiences of the Divine.³

Out-of-the-ordinary and profound experience

i14 reported an intensely real, non-ordinary and profound experience:

My deepest experience of meditation was, I was like Alice in Wonderland, suddenly reduced to a tiny person and I felt this was amazing. To me it felt like the stripping away of the ego. It felt like the stripping away of all that was me. And it was very important to me.

³ Most of the data in this chapter is from interviews. Chapter 6 draws more on the participant-observation to examine experience in the Experiment in more depth, suggesting that, as early Friends were (Dandelion 2003: 11-12), Experimenters are transformed in a six stage conviction process: (1) realisation of Truth (God breaks in); (2) not being in 'right relationship' (conviction of sin); (3) possibility of changed behaviour (choice of repentance); (4) coming into right relationship (born again into perfection); (5) intimacy in the group (gathering together); and (6) acceptance (instead of mission).

Although this experience had occurred outside a Quaker context, i14 related it to a well known Quaker story. An eighteenth century Quaker, John Woolman, had a vision, heard the angels saying he was dead although he knew he was alive; he interpreted the experience in Christian terms, as religious, and ultimately he understood that the experience was the death of his own will (QFP 1995: 21.64). She said:

I've never forgotten that experience and it felt very important to me. It was like John Woolman talking about 'John Woolman is dead'. At first it struck him with terror that he should be dead, but then he realised that something new was being formed in him.

i14 also felt something new being formed in her, a consequence to the experience:

And I felt I was being shrunk and hopefully a re-forming going on or a, what you'd call, a re-patterning, inward re-patterning. To me it was an amazing, very wonderful experience. It was like I was not the body. I had a brief experience. I wasn't completely annihilated, I still had a bit of me, matchstick size, but I had a sense of it was alright to be not the body, a sense of surviving being not the body, spirit being the important eternal life. I was not aware of my body at all until I came out of it, a sense of being beyond it, just beyond it, just I got a glimpse of 'I am that I am'. I had a glimpse of it in that meditation. It wasn't the whole of it, it was a glimpse of the way to go.

Implicit references to experience

My informants conveyed an understanding of their experience in implicit references as well as explicit language. i17, for example, conveyed a strong sense of her experience:

a bit like when I stand in the road on a dark night – and there are no street lights round here – and you look at the whole of the Milky Way and I know myself to be a tiny speck in an unimaginably huge universe and yet to be a part of it and in my right place at my right time.

i19a said: *'It's not one experience it's many. It's like coming home at night. I come down over the hill and the sun's coming down and I can say "Oh, wow!" That's an extreme.'*

Gradual and gentle experiences

i7 gave an account of her recurring experience on taking communion in the Anglican Church.

It's simply an enormously bathed sense of encompassing light, even with the eyes closed. It's very often ... It's very hard to describe it, except it's being in light ... It's a much more sort of ambient and softer ... but being absolutely enfolded.

i13 described experiences which convey a strong sense of what had happened to him.

He said the Experiment was a silken thread to himself, to other people and to the mysterious, the mystical, the beyond, and then described an experience he had had outside the Experiment, before a MfW: *'Driving to Meeting one Sunday morning, hearing the trees singing. It was so strong.'* He also described another experiences in nature:

And more recently walking along this lane behind me, a couple of years ago, early morning walk, the rosebay willow herb on the side of the path, a stream on the other side and blue sky behind it and the light was such and just a gentle breeze and there was a gap in the hedge. So just the willow herb and its lovely colour, the pale blue sky and the breeze taking it gently side to side and suddenly I was transported, suddenly it was a dance of joy and it was a profound sense of joy, the angel singing.

He said his very profound experiences *'where you're transported, if you like, onto the edge of another dimension'* occurred *'when for some reason I was momentarily*

unawares, momentarily between thoughts, so I wasn't expecting anything other than the walk or the drive to meeting.'

i10 spoke of his experience being gradual; he said he accepted the existence of God without any proof except his own experience:

Peace, light. It isn't the Damascus Road, it's much more gradual with me. But, yes, a deepening ability in prayer, prayer for others, prayer to be shown what the right thing to do is, which tends to be instinctive.

i17 was similarly clear that her experience was not dramatic: it swept gently, pervading her mind with tranquillity and wonder, and it had an outcome for everyday life, trying to be the person God wants:

And being in the Presence is about experiencing my connection with the Divine, my unimportance and yet the rightness of it all; trust; not much of what I was taught to call worship, not a lot of this falling down in awe stuff. Much more of the reassurance of, yes, it's ok to be me, and I'm going to try and be the me You want me to be. Often it's just being open spiritually, like you are when you sit on the top of a high hill and just absorb the hugeness of the view and the wonder of it. You just look at God and let God look at you.

Dramatic experiences

i16 related an experience which resonated some years later with her when she saw a poster outside a Quaker Meeting and which led to her beginning to attend MfW regularly:

On Tenby beach I had this experience - I was with my daughter, my husband had gone off to get the car mended - and I just felt I had to get off because I felt assailed on all sides by noise and light. I just, I felt I couldn't see. It had been a very explosive moment and I just had to yell, 'I'm going' and I sat on the cliff, so that I could see again. And then we all met up and we walked, but I was very dazed and very confused and very, well, I felt I was not there at all, I was in danger of losing myself. And then I saw this - there was a sign up, 'Be

still and know that I am God', and well, it went in and has stayed with me ever since and even now I love to just dwell on it.

Summary: what Experimenters sensed of the Divine

The examples of experiences described in interviews show a wide range and demonstrate that they can be very dissimilar in nature. What informants experienced of the Divine was heterotopic space,⁴ creating a perspective which questions, neutralises and inverts everyday values, creating disequilibrium and it *is* always, heterochronically, both outside and within time.

Experimenters' understanding of the Divine (what sense is made)

This section discusses my stance on what Experimenters sense is the nature of the Divine, describes their belief frameworks and relates their sense of the Divine to heterotopia.

Underlying reality and language: a non-reductionist stance

Jantzen cited Katz's argument that there can be no pure or unmediated experiences (Katz 1978: 26), a 'constructivist' and contextualist position, whereby any particular religious and cultural context makes certain sorts of religious experience possible and others out of the question (Jantzen 1995: 336-337). King accused Katz of reducing mystical experience to mystical language for reasons of methodological convenience

⁴ See Chapter 3 ('Experimenters find heterotopias within themselves').

(King 1988: 268),⁵ making the point that experience can be prior to the cultural context by considering the experience of tasting coffee:

in all the words, lifestyles, and art forms associated with the cult of coffee, there is nowhere even an approximation of an adequate description of the taste of coffee. The power of the coffee tradition to convey information about the taste of coffee is limited to the point of insignificance compared to the power of the sensation of tasting coffee in experience. (King 1988: 264)

I emphasize this point: the coffee tradition in this country overwhelmingly invades our minds. The act of drinking coffee in its totality can by no means be said to be an unmediated experience. Nonetheless, before one drinks coffee one really has no idea what it tastes like; after one cup, one knows exactly. How far does the conditioning power of the coffee tradition extend? In the end, though drinking coffee is a mediated experience, that mediation is a relatively insignificant element of the experience itself. (King 1988: 265)

She answered Katz's criticism of her analogy:⁶

If Katz admits that drinking coffee is different from 'describing that taste' then it should follow that he acknowledges that something unmediated or unconditioned exists or can exist in experience, mystical as well as non-mystical ... Katz, for his part, likewise needs to recognize the aspects of experience which are unmediated by such factors as language and doctrine. If Katz agrees that the experience of listening to music cannot be reduced to one's training, then perhaps we have come to agreement: aspects of experience are mediated by linguistic and cultural training, but there is much more to experience than those aspects. (Katz, et al. 1988: 760)

Like King, I take the view that experience can be primary and language inadequate to describe it completely (although language may convey a sense of it), that language and culture do not determine or create its nature. I take a 'non-cognitive' approach,

⁵ She illustrated the effect using the example of another discipline: 'There is a parallel situation in psychology with respect to methodological and theoretical behaviorism [sic]. Starting from the observation that the so-called "inner world" is inaccessible to scientific observation, behaviorists limited themselves to what their scientific methodology could adequately study: human behavior. What began as a concern with methodological propriety, however, resulted in theoretical reductionism such that many behaviorists explained away mental and emotional phenomena altogether, "mind" became a four-letter word, and human beings were reduced to a set of material functions and processes.' (King 1988: 268)

⁶ In his criticism, Katz said that he only *claims* that experience is mediated (Katz, et al. 1988: 754-757). Katz cited himself in an earlier work by way of explanation of his position: 'the experience itself as well as the form in which it is reported is shaped by concepts which the mystic brings to, and which shape, his experience' (Katz 1978: 26; Katz, et al. 1988: 754-755).

accepting the informants' experiences 'as they appeared' as primary (Davis 1989: 5-10).⁷

Smart argued that the sense of the numinous is a fact, but the object it is supposed to reveal is not necessarily a fact (1973: 63) and that the theory that there exists an ultimate reality, expressed through numinous experience, is unnecessary to the study of the phenomena: there is a distinction between the study of religion and theology (1973: 66). Hay suggested that the raw material of religious consciousness is particular experience which leads people to feel that they are directly aware of or being influenced by a transcendent presence or power (1982: 86-88).

My informants similarly concluded from their experiences that there was a Divine reality, with the exception only of i12a who explained his extraordinary experience some decades before in terms of evolutionary science and remained agnostic:⁸

And I can remember coming this great sort of thing, you know, this is resurrection for me, that I know that when I go I shall be dissolved into all the atoms and molecules and everything and spread all round, you know, I shall be in the lot. And that's my view of resurrection. It hit me. I'd known it intellectually in a way, but it suddenly grasped me as this is it. ... The feeling that I'm all part of this and when I die I'm still all part of it.

i13 described his life-long awareness:

⁷ Davis reviews three different approaches to religious experience: (1) the 'non-cognitive' where religious experience is understood to give the experiences access to something beyond the material world and a 'sense of presence' remains (1989: 9), so that, implicitly, the experience is prior to any meaning which may be ascribed; (2) 'critical realism' where cognitive content (models, metaphors and myths) are prior (1989: 10-14), so that, implicitly, they form the experience; and (3) ineffability, where the particular emotions and sensations must be experienced to be understood and so cannot be described (1989: 14-15).

⁸ Whether i12a's agnosticism was as a result of or despite his having been an Anglican priest (see this chapter ('Belief frameworks'), p185) is an interesting question, which I did not think to explore at the time of the interview.

Since I was a child, I was aware of something. Long before I was presented with the doctrines of the church and so on. I think I've been in that sort of situation with it ever since. ... I have no picture and image of God.

Similarly, i17's religious enquiry had begun when she became aware: *'There is something and I don't know what it is and I want to explore.'*

Some informants used the term 'God' freely (i13, i17, i19a, i19b, a3, a6, a8) and some 'the Other' (i11, i15), whilst, not surprisingly in the context of talking about Experiment with Light, the use of 'the Light' was common.

i17 expressed an initial reluctance to use 'God' language after her teenage evangelical Christian phase when the word was *'discoloured by this concept of the whole "world, the flesh and the devil" thing'*. i9 felt that to use God language was not crucial: *'And I can be very flexible about my language. If I find someone can't cope with "the word of God", I'll say "life" or "the universe".'*

Echoing Ambler's 'paradoxical' understanding that the word 'God' was all he could find to describe the reality in him that enabled him to become aware of the truth of his life (2002: 34), i4 came to the use of the word 'God' for want of anything more explicit:

I have absolutely no word for what is the ultimate. I only use words because there's no other way of communicating. ... God is the name I give to my experience. It's the only word we have, in a way, and we can only give that name to the experience of it.

The purpose of the examination of my informants' experience is not to discuss whether they experienced an underlying Divine reality, or whether the 'perennial

philosophy' or 'universal core' is proven, rather it is to show what they experienced and how they explained their experience to themselves.⁹

Belief frameworks

More usually the interviewees referred to definite belief frameworks: Christian (i7, i9, i10, i11, i12a, i14, i18, i19a, i19b) or specifically mystical in the Christian tradition (i4, i11), Celtic (i10), Buddhist (i3, i6, i14), Hindu (i9, i14) and New Age (i9). One had previously been a minister and one a priest in other churches (i9, i12a) and two (i7, i19a) had considered taking Anglican orders. For some, these frameworks were fluid: i9 and i14, for example, used three of them and i10 used two. Only two interviewees (i12a, i17) explicitly refuted them. It therefore seems that, like Wood's (2007) meditators,¹⁰ Experimenters had a number of non-formative influences underlying their involvement both in Quakers and in the Experiment.¹¹

i12a described his spiritual interest as Sea of Faith,¹² non-theist and agnostic rather than atheist, and i17 explicitly denied the framework of belief altogether:

⁹ Smith said that the perennial philosophy does not turn on assessments of mystical phenomena at all, nor presuppose their existence, but instead relies on four 'doctrines' identified by Aldous Huxley (*The Bhagavad-Gita* 1944; Huxley 1980): (1) the phenomenal world is the manifestation of the Divine Ground; (2) human beings are capable of attaining immediate knowledge of that ground; (3) in addition to their phenomenal egos, human beings possess an eternal Self which is of the same of like nature with the Divine Ground; and (4) this identification is life's chief end or purpose (Smith 1987: 554). The 'doctrines' derive from metaphysical intuitions which are themselves ineffable and cannot be rationalised, only symbolised.

¹⁰ See Chapter 2 ('New religious movements').

¹¹ Even the interviewees who refuted belief-frameworks had non-formative influences: for example, as mentioned, i12a had been a priest.

¹² 'The Sea of Faith explores the implications of understanding religious faith as a human creation, promotes the validity of human-centred religion, affirms the continuing importance of religious thought, practice and the inspiration of sacred stories in our personal and cultural lives, has no creed and welcomes people from all faith communities, including the Christian and humanist traditions, and those with no involvement in any organised religion' (*Sea of Faith Network*) following the inspiration of Don Cupitt (1988).

I don't think that I have faith and belief; I have experiences that I trust and I have a framework which changes quite often about how I think things work, but I know that it's tentative.

The heterotopian nature of the Divine

Although my informants presented nuances in their understanding of the Divine, a picture emerged of a God which is not personal; is omnipresent, infinite, immanent¹³ and also transcendent,¹⁴ at the deepest layer and boundary-less; is energy, light and dark, is evolving; is eternal; acts directly and through human agency, without worry and with intent; and is ultimately mysterious.¹⁵

Location of the Divine

Immanent and transcendent

i12a accepted human spirituality as arising through evolution, but said: *'When Quakers talk about the will of God, I have difficulty, of this idea that there's something outside ourselves.'*

i12b implied her understanding was that God was only immanent:

The Light is like the light of truth, the light of love, the light of understanding. It's certainly on a level, a level which is almost unattainable. God is love; love is God. I don't believe in a God kind of out there, but I believe in love. I know I can be really nasty and it's the Light that enables me to see that.

¹³ Except where a general meaning is clearly intended, in the thesis I use the terms 'immanent' and 'immanence' to mean a sense of the Divine within the person, rather than the more usual theological understanding that immanence is the indwelling of God in everything [my emphasis] in the world, which equates immanence with omnipresence (Borg 2000: 42).

¹⁴ For the sense in which I am using the terms 'transcendent' and 'transcendence', see Chapter 4 FN64.

¹⁵ I make no claim that my informants' understandings of the Divine are typical, either of Experimenters, nor of British Quakers generally.

She denied she believed in a 'God out there', but (by then referring to the Light as something which helped her to see how she is behaving) she actually said something more complex. The equation of God with love implies a giving and receiving, an exchange or energy, something other than or outside herself, so not simply immanent as her denial suggests, but implicitly also transcendent.

i18 suggested an external God when she said: *'I think God is around more than other people think'* and told me how, on a retreat, she had been *'feeling the love of God, within and out'*, so she was not equating God with love as i12b did, but rather saying there is a God who loves.

Some said that God was both immanent and transcendent. i18: *'God is within, God is within and without'*; i10: *'the within is the without and the without is the within.'* i11 referred to a physical feeling as part of her understanding: *'The Other is both me and God. Anything that isn't me but can be felt in me physically.'* i16 emphasised the immanent, acknowledged interconnection and related God to truth:

I experience it as God. Is it in man, is it in mankind, individually and collectively: brain, or mind, or from outside? At this moment I am content to call what I experience God. Both that access to the truth within me, deep [with]in, and the interconnectedness.

i4 understood her experience in terms of wholeness and compassion:

I don't know, we don't know, I don't think anybody knows. We are part of a wholeness which exists and the Divine is the wholeness, maybe. And the compassion comes from understanding that we are part of the wholeness, so that when we are compassionate, we are compassionate to ourselves, because we are part of this wholeness.

i13 made sense of God's immanence and transcendence with an analogy, also explaining how he understood people could shut themselves off from God:

If you think of a simple cell floating in some sort of fluid, that's how God is, he's both outside and as the life support, both, inside. If you're semi-permeable then you're going to be like that. If you're impermeable, then you're going to be collapsed in, you force God outside of yourself.

Apart from i12a (who was agnostic), informants' understanding was of a God both immanent and transcendent.

Relation to the human psyche

i9 talked of the relationship between the human psyche and spiritual levels:

I think we're layered and at the deepest level of all we are connected with the Divine, with the Spirit, whatever word one wants to use. So I think at the deepest level we're connected with the essence of the cosmos behind the being at the very fount, root of being, all being. But then I think the human psyche is layered, so there's superficial here-and-now day-to-day consciousness, now there are subconscious levels, there are deep psychological unconscious levels of traumatic material from early years or maybe that causes people to be in difficulties emotionally in adult life and can be resolved with therapeutic work, but below that there are other levels of the spiritual kind.

This was echoed in i4's observations: '*Our spiritual life cannot be healthy if our psychological life isn't healthy*' and '*What lies beyond the psychological is yet another door to open.*' She elaborated:

an opening up of doors that have been closed, so it's being in touch with what is inside each of us but that is deeply covered up by different layers ..we also move up and down and in and out of ourselves into different levels of experiencing, taking in what's happening ... We need to have this sense of the experience of whatever. If you call it 'otherness', then it seems like it's outside of us, but it isn't, it's being open to this wider dimension of ourselves in order to live more compassionately in the world.

Omnipresent and infinite

i14 said God was everywhere, both in form as well as formless:

Well, there's no place where he's not ... God is everywhere, therefore he is in form as well as formless. So I feel relationship is important. I think it is Jesus in every stranger, Christ in every stranger. Every relationship, God is there.

i6 took the idea of a God within each person and extending it from each person to every other person simultaneously: *'maybe there's a place inside me where you are and where everyone else is and where God is.'* i8 captured a similar sense:

Spiritual is the part of us which is in a sense the innermost, but in another sense is an otherness, because although it's the innermost part of us, it's also something that's infinite and the thing that kind of makes us live really. I suppose you would call it the Light.

Informants, then, understood and explained the Divine as immanent and transcendent, at the deepest layer and without boundaries, omnipresent and infinite, as an underlying reality to their everyday life).

Composition of the Divine

Not a person

My informants did not, on the whole, relate to a personal God. i19a, for example, said: *'God is not personal'*. i17 explained her understanding at more length:

And the biggest revelation and greatest relief was realising that God isn't a person - I only relate to the personishness of God because I'm a person - and is huge and inconceivable and whatever I conceive is bound to be wrong. And I can only do my best and that is ok.

The one exception was i2, who had a very personal relationship with God, addressing him as 'Buster' so that on occasions she could say 'fuck you', but then she went on to say that the relationship was full of paradoxes:

God and I are one and we are not. When I say God and I are one and we are not, because I know I can, if you like, on one level, access God deep within me, but I'm also aware of the separateness, that is when I say 'Right, mate, go there, or out there, or in thin air, or whatever.'

Light, dark and energy

i7, in talking about the nature of uncreated light in icons, said:

Any light we have available to us as human beings has a source that you can see: the sun. Uncreated light is light that simply exists because the nature of God is light.

i19a on the other hand, said that darkness was also an element:

The idea that God is all light and not darkness is a load of rubbish. Yes, I very much believe that the spiritual basis to us is not all light or all good or all bad. It actually is the knife edge between the two.

i5 said God was: 'Spirit, energy of the universe.' i19a explained his understanding:

God, this world and us are all part of the same organism and we're all intrinsically linked, maybe because we're creatures of the planet or whatever but we're all together. And I would take that further and say within the universe, within any concept we think of, feel, appreciate, know of, we're all linked. And that linking has a power source and that power source is God.

Evolving, eternal, a mystery

i6 talked of 'spiritual energy, the evolving mind of God' and attempted a definition of God:

There is an evolving, unifying, vivifying energy, force, dimension, which in our limited approach to a perception, we have hints of it in the word 'love' and

when we join things together, when we see links, that is an intimation of that energy. And maybe a bit of experience of the evolving and vivifying and energising, what we call creativity, and, and we can be more consciously part of it. And I think that people like Jesus, Buddha, and people back in Dewsbury who you never hear of, have been open to, to channel that.

i5 said of God: *'Well, you could call it the Spirit, spiritual basis of the universe, the survival of our spirit when we die.'*

Finally, some informants gave up their attempt to name or understand the nature of God at all. a8 said:

God is about love and compassion and so on and so forth. And we can't describe God anyway because it's without our real comprehension, something once we try to describe it, we can't really describe it.

i19b said: *'I don't name things; that sense of wonder, that sense of awe; it's a mystery. I don't need to know any more.'*

i10 said that by the word 'God' he understood: *'The Mystery, God is a mystery'* and he offered an analogy:

An analogy I've used on occasions, perhaps too often, is that of a huge circle of people around a pillar of flame, which is always changing colours. And that is the mystery of God: you see certain colours, you cannot see what people on the other side of the circle see, but you can see the light reflected in their eyes.

i17 ended her interview by saying: *'It strikes me that God is profoundly ordinary, as well as extraordinary. As ordinary and as marvellous as breathing.'*

Divine Agency

In addition to i12b and i18 above, i17 said: *'My recent experience of God has been that it is unconditionally loving,' and 'My primary experience of God is of universal love, and the complete power of love.'*

'The Light' was a common term in Group A for the agency of the transcendent,¹⁶ something which could be accessed to achieve something. On one occasion a1 said: *'I had difficulty tonight accessing the Light'*, implying it was external and would show her what was going on in her life. a3 implied the same when, because of his own condition, the Light was absent for him:

I didn't feel God present in what I was feeling. I didn't feel inspired or that anything changed. There are areas of my life I'd like to change, but I'm stuck. Some areas are too painful, maybe that's why.

On another occasion when the sharing of one of Group A's members had deeply upset the rest of the group,¹⁷ a8 said:

I think we must remember that the Light shows us things and it's about forgiveness and learning how to love and how to actually communicate that, I think really. Light can be very powerful that way. ... Well, I felt it really.¹⁸

i18 's citing *'God has no hands and feet but ours'* makes it clear God also acts through people.

i17 singled out one human characteristic absent in God:

¹⁶ All the members of the group used the term at one time or another, except a5 (whose principal belief framework was Zen Buddhism).

¹⁷ What he said also deeply upset me.

¹⁸ That the Light is external and will show what is going on is implicit in the meditation, see Appendix A.

One of the lovely insights I had a few years ago is: God doesn't worry. When you encounter Spirit in worship, it is not an anxious thing and, if you have a universal timescale, the things I'm worrying about this year aren't fantastically important. The human race is only a part of the whole of evolution. So, don't let's take ourselves that seriously.

i1 understood that God has intent, but did not know what that intention was for him:

'There's this, what God wants of me, I suppose. And not always getting an answer to that, maybe not ever.' i17 identified a clear element of agency in her understanding of God:

Let's allow that there is universal intent. Yes, I do, I do think that God has intent. I couldn't tell you what it is. But my experience is the more I try and be in control, the more I mess things up; the less I am in control, the more things sort themselves. And unexpected things happen, and very often they are good things. And even when I perceive them as being bad, useful things happen afterwards.

It is implicit in i17's talking of 'things happening' that others were involved and so the intent must also therefore include an element of God acting through people, as i18 also suggested, as well as directly. There is a mirror gaze implicit in i17's saying: *'You just look at God and let God look at you'.*

My informants' understanding was of a God within as well as Other, a spirit underlying the universe, and for them although God has intent, wanting something of them, they do not yet know what that something is: they accept their part in a relationship, they share responsibility. God breaks in for them not because God comes and goes; they practise waiting, and extend that waiting into the everyday, they are open between moments, preparing themselves to experience what is always there, but what they may prevent themselves from knowing.

Summary: the sense Experimenters made of the Divine

Whilst referring to different belief systems, Experimenters descriptions of what they understood of the Divine were in experiential and relational terms, they considered language only an approximation towards their understanding. What they described of their sense of the Divine has elements of Foucault's principles and other characteristics of heterotopia: its location in juxtaposition to the everyday, a space between; its composition paradoxical, dynamic, heterochronic and invisible; and having agency, acting both directly and indirectly, functioning with a mirror effect.

Heterotopian sense of the Divine

Informants' sensing the Divine is a sea over which they travel, as does the heterotopia *par excellence*, the ship (Foucault 1986 [1967]-a), to find the treasure of being touched by the Divine.¹⁹

Smith suggested that an individual's heterotopia consists of varieties of religious experience (1997: 126), Carrette indicates that heterotopias break down the boundaries between the sacred and the profane (2000: 107) and Shackley shows that Cathedrals as heterotopic spaces similarly act as an interface between the sacred and profane (2002: 345).²⁰ Experimenters' sensing the Divine is similarly heterotopian: for example, i16 on Tenby beach, suddenly unable to see, feeling in danger of losing herself, all reference points (the grammar, syntax and sentences of everyday

¹⁹ See Chapter 3 ('Foucault's heterotopia'), pp94-95, the ship is the heterotopia *par excellence*: 'a floating piece of space, a place without a place, that exists by itself, that is closed in on itself and at the same time is given over to the infinity of the sea and that, from port to port, from tack to tack ... goes as far as the colonies in search of the most precious treasures they conceal in their gardens'. See also g19's experience in Chapter 4 ('Spiralling to a conclusion'), pp173-174.

²⁰ See Chapter 3 ('Heterotopia and religion'), pp115-116.

experience) completely disrupted and for a short time destroyed, not just desiccating speech and stopping words in their tracks, as Foucault indicated was the effect of heterotopias (2002 [1966]: xix),²¹ but all normal senses desiccated and stopped. She was also in crisis, Foucault's first principle of heterotopia (1986 [1967]-a: 27), and, as Foucault's mirror suggests, with all her senses gone she was in a placeless place, an unreal space behind the surface of everyday life (1986 [1967]-a: 24),²² in the crack in the surveillance of her senses, her own proprietary powers in experiencing the world (Hjorth 2005: 391).²³

The space Experimenters explore is heterotopic (as I have shown in Chapter 3)²⁴ and their encounters are heterotopian, so there is layering of heterotopia: as with Foucault's ship, the heterotopia *par excellence*,²⁵ their experience travels to heterotopia as well as being heterotopian in itself.

Relationship with God through relationship with others

Borg distinguishes between the panentheistic (everything is within God) and pantheistic (everything is God) (Borg 2000: 41). Some informants' understanding of the Divine was panentheistic, for example i10's '*the within is the without and the without is the within*' and i19a's '*God, this world and us are all part of the same organism*', and some was pantheistic, for example i14's '*wholeness*'. Only three (i7, i12a, i14) made a Christian reference ('*resurrection*' and '*Christ in every stranger*'),²⁶

²¹ See Chapter 3 ('Foucault's heterotopia'), p89.

²² See Chapter 3 ('Foucault's heterotopia'), pp91-92.

²³ See Chapter 3 ('Dynamic social ordering, spaces for play: Hetherington and Hjorth'), p101.

²⁴ See Chapter 3 ('Experimenters find heterotopias within themselves').

²⁵ See Chapter 3 ('Foucault's heterotopia'), pp94-95: 'The ship (see also Stanley (2002)), provided passage to and through other heterotopias..., so that it not only visits but also reflects and incorporates them'.

²⁶ i7 discussed her Christian background at various points during the interview, although she used the terms 'God', 'Holy Spirit' and 'Light', rather than 'Christ'.

not altogether surprisingly amongst Quakers, a group where a direct relationship with God as the 'Light within' has traditionally been assumed (Isichei 1970: 6; *QFP* 1995: Chapter 2; Wilcox 1995; Moore 2000; Dandelion 2007; Grundy 2007).²⁷ There is no sense from my informants of God being dominant; Jantzen suggested dominance as utterly contrary to divinity, that a pantheistic religious symbolic would foster 'mutuality' rather than 'mastery' (1999: 269). Similarly, Buber wrote of how the Other is found when the 'I' truly meets the 'Thou' as 'I-Thou', but is absent when the other person is objectified and the relationship becomes 'I-It', (Buber 1970 [1923]). Ambler says he found, initially in Barbour and Roberts (1973: 22), that early Friends were dealing with the ego, that to reach God and be truly oneself without the mask and without ego in the way, it is necessary to face the ways in which one is not in right-relationship with everyone and everything (Ambler 2002: 4, 6, 11, 19, 21, 33-34). This process is fostered in Experimenters' experience, as I show in Chapter 6.

Experimenters' sense of the Divine prepares them for the transformation (described in Chapter 6) and is reinforced by it. This chapter has discussed Experimenters in relationship with the Divine. Chapter 6 explores their transformation in the Experiment, bringing out how relationship with others plays a key part.

²⁷ Although 'the Light' was originally often 'the Light of Christ' (Moore 2000: 103) or of God, without actually being Christ or God (Moore 2000: 109), no or little distinction is drawn between God, the Holy Spirit and Christ. Passages in *QFP* refer variously to God (for example: 'Take heed, dear Friends, to the promptings of love and truth in your hearts. Trust them as leadings from God whose Light shows us out darkness and brings us to new life.' (*QFP* 1995: 1.02.1)), Christ (for example: 'Bring the whole of your life under the ordering of the spirit of Christ. Are you open to the healing power of God's love?' (*QFP* 1995: 1.02.2)), Jesus (for example: 'How does Jesus speak to you today? Are you following Jesus' example of love in action? Are you learning from his life the reality and cost of obedience to God?' (*QFP* 1995: 1.02.4)) and the Holy Spirit (for example: 'In worship we enter into communion with God and respond to the promptings of the Holy Spirit.' (*QFP* 1995: 1.02.9)).

Quaker cultures

I have shown in this chapter that Experimenters' belief is not as relevant to them as what they experience. Although my informants related to different belief frameworks, experience of the Divine was much more significant for their understanding. Thus my work builds on others' (see Chapter 1) who also suggest that Dandelion's double culture of behaviour and belief (1996: 110-131) only partially describes British Quakers. Vincett's Quagans extend their behavioural creed into their whole way of life (Vincett 2008: 178). Best suggests a triple culture for adolescent Quakers of ritual, networked community and narrative (Best 2008a: 211-213), entirely different from that of adult Quakers. I conclude that for Experimenters there is also a triple culture, but it is different from the adolescents', incorporating the two elements of Dandelion's double culture, belief and behaviour (Dandelion 1996: 118), together with explicitly shared experience of the Divine (this chapter) and the transformation to which their Experimenting leads them (Chapter 6). This triple culture is explored further in Chapters 7 and 8.

Chapter 6 - Experience: transformation

Experience: introduction

This chapter focuses on the similarity between the process Experimenters' undergo and that of early Friends. I outline how experience comes to Experimenters in the Experiment and argue that Experimenters go through a 'convincement' process similar to that of seventeenth century Friends', in similar ways and in discreet identifiable stages (although the last stage is different and Experimenters' experience is less dramatic). Experimenters understand their experience as unmediated, emanating directly from the Divine. Like the first Friends, they enter a 'community of love', for them a more authentic Quaker experience than they find in other Quaker contexts.

Experimenters said their lives were changed by their practice: they indicated that in their Experimenting they came to find truths about themselves and their relationships, what got in the way of their living their lives as honestly as they would like or being fully at ease with themselves and others. Although they did not explicitly relate this to the fundamental Quaker testimony, to Truth (*QFP* 1995: 19.41, 20.45; *Living What We Believe* 2005),¹ 'truth' was frequently mentioned. In the participant observation, Experimenters reported what they had realised in the course of their Experiments and then, in sharing following later Experiments, what had followed from their realisations. What they said bore out what interviewees had already described to me.

¹ The testimony to Truth underlies all the testimonies: early Friends were known as 'Friends in the Truth' (*QFP* 1995: 19.59) or the 'First Publishers of Truth' (Braithwaite 1981 [1912]: 132) and this is still apparent in Quaker Peace and Social Witness philosophy: 'Quakers try to live according to the deepest truth we know, which we believe comes from God. This means speaking the truth to all, including people in positions of power. Integrity is the guiding principle we set for ourselves and expect in public life.' (*Living What We Believe* 2005).

The Glenthorne epistle, which was sent to all MMs in BYM in 2004, claimed transformation in a very similar way:

Many of us have experienced the Light as a transforming power in our individual lives and in our relationships with others. It challenges us to face the reality about ourselves and the world and encourages us to live more mindfully and more adventurously. (Glenthorne epistle)

Experimenters' experience in the Experiment, as I observed it and as they described it, was not always explicitly an experience of the Divine.²

Chapter 3 has already argued how the Experiment is a heterotopian process and that Experimenters find heterotopic space within themselves. Heterotopia is considered in this chapter only briefly, in relation to the process of transformation; the focus instead is on the nature of Experimenters' experience in the Experiment. Chapter 8 considers further how Experimenters operate a heterotopian impulse within British Quakerism.

How the experience comes

This section describes how experience manifested in the Experiment.

Embodied experience

Experimenters' experience in the Experiment was physically embodied.³ For example, as a1 reflected further on the meditation where she mentioned the concrete block,⁴ she said: *'And I realised when I was sitting back here with my tea that actually*

² Their explicit sense of the Divine is already discussed in Chapter 5.

³ See this chapter ('Relationship with the Divine' and FN32), p225, for another example of embodied experience.

⁴ See this chapter ('1 Realisation of truth (God breaks in)'), p214.

I'm really sort of tense across here⁵ and that's back into carrying this great concrete block.'

a2 mentioned a sailing boat on two occasions. She may not have known that in the first meditation her upper body was swaying about and that she was physically experiencing the movement. In the sharing she said: *'I had the image of being on a little sailing boat in a strong wind.'*

a1 may similarly not have been aware that during the meditation she reddened from the neck upwards, but in the sharing she told the others:

I felt like a pound of marmalade boiling. I felt physically really, really hot. ... The useful thing tonight was to hone in on what's feeling troubled. It was heat – I'm angry a lot of the time. What's that about? Towards the end I got that the anger's masking my fear of being overwhelmed and losing myself totally ... Deadly cold – fear underneath.

Images in the Experiment

Some of Experimenters' understandings came in the form of images. The image then prompted reflection on something fundamental in their nature.

Most Experimenters found meaning in the images for their life and current behaviour, but some reflected on past events in order to come to terms with them. This was particularly apparent in a6's preface to his confession of violence:⁶

When I was about eight, we had a sitting room light in the middle of the ceiling of the sitting room. It was quite powerful. Hanging below it was a

⁵ At this point she indicated the back of her neck (fieldnotes, 20 July 2004).

⁶ See this chapter ('Facing past violence, power and collusion'), p217.

large dish made of alabaster, about a metre across, three feet across, and you could look at the light through the shade, it wouldn't hurt your eyes.

The image he describes presented a metaphor for the Light in the Experiment. The Light was powerful and the metaphor provided a measure of protection in the shade echoing Barclay's measure of the Light (Barclay 2002 [1678]: 115-116).⁷ He went on to find the significance in the shade itself:

And you could see the veins of black and red and cream weaving their way across the alabaster. I was thinking today I'm a bit like that alabaster lampshade: black of eyes, red in violence and white of hope.

He then described the significance of 'red in violence' and finished: *'The white is for the future, I think'* without reflecting on what the significance of that might be.

Some images were helpful, not just for the insight, but because an image was something which could be carried as shorthand access, as i16 reflected:

I just know that I'm so capable of running off and just doing and it not being, it not being anything. And that's being a side-by-side existence to the truth, that that's the whole, that is the whole. And without it, I'm not living at the whole. You know, I'm perfectly capable, I'm living and breathing and, and on one level it's just that, but diminished, a diminished existence, diminished living, quite possible and, when you're in it, if you're really in it and not looking outside, I even lose sight that it's possible to lose sight.

Then she described the image:

One of the images I had which brought this home was the circus elephant. It began as me seeing the circus elephant: inside that circus elephant was a smaller elephant, which was pure elephant and the bigger elephant was filled up with all the things that his trainer at the circus and the audience and everybody expected it to be and it was doing all that, but the real elephant was inside.

⁷ Barclay introduced the idea in the second generation of Quakers that not all Friends had the same 'measure' of the Light, that is, some were closer to its power than others.

She went on to reflect on its significance:

And that's what I would compare it with, it's quite possible to go on living and being highly regarded, because, you know, the audience claps and the trainer rewards or whatever, but to be this thing that an elephant is not, never supposed to be, which is contained, and a feeling of filling up the space, filling up the skin with elephantness.

Referring to the image which prompted the transformation could also highlight its transforming effect and this could be lasting. i18 reflected on the image which came in her first Experiment:⁸

So that remains with me now as probably the most powerful thing, because I have continued until quite recently perhaps to think about this hamster in a wheel which maybe a lot of people feel and I do think I can still see the positive aspect of it.

Experimenters also carried each others' images with them. i5 described one:

My image was of that Zambezi River and the Victoria falls, completely mind-blowing, but the river just above is very calm, peaceful, going through the meadows and so on. And so the image was of a boat on the river unaware that that there was going to be a waterfall, devastating waterfall. And the boat was us and the environment and disturbing things that are beginning to be obvious now, global warming, and that we were coming to the brink of this waterfall that was going to be disastrous.

The following day i6 told me:⁹

I like images when others share. One spoke about going down the Zambezi and it's very deep and very calm, but the Victoria falls, I think are only a mile and a half down the river, and we're going over the top. And I found that very graphic and remembered it.

⁸ See this chapter ('Experience unfolding in one Experiment'), pp203-204.

⁹ i5 and i6 were in the same Light group.

i13, whose experiences in the Experiment often took the form of dream-like sequences, some of which could be upsetting, found them coming more often with acceptance: *'So I have images in the Light meeting. I get them more often now because I now accept them.'* What he went on to say suggested that he felt the Experiment allowed access to an older way of being and experiencing the world, lost through emphasis on words:

There was a time, and they say that most people do this, because we use language all the time, people don't see things as much and it's partly because they don't recognise that they're having imagery and that in fact it's an important part of their lives and if you start to acknowledge it, if you acknowledge them, then they will come more often, that is certainly true.

i3 said the Experiment allowed him to *'get a clearer sense of abstract aspects of life, feelings that then come out as images'*. He said the images he described were:

just a means to that end, to help me do the right thing at the right time. You see yourself and your inner condition as it really is without any mask, without anything hidden away, and that in itself, that is very powerful

Experience over time

Interviewees reported that the process they underwent with the Experiment continued over a period, both within the practice of the meditation and afterwards. The transformation in their lives was not always immediate, but sometimes took place as a gradual dawning understanding, or developed, over a lengthy period. The process of the Experiment was also integrated into their everyday lives and, as discussed in Chapter 5, some had transcendent and numinous experiences outside the Light group.

Experience unfolding in one Experiment

i18 described how her understanding developed in her first Experiment. Her initial experience seemed negative:

I was like a hamster going round in a wheel, just going to work every day, every week, every month, every year, servicing my family, it felt like. That was quite a powerful thing.

Further reflection on the meditation, however, showed that there was a positive perspective as well:

But actually, by the end of that particular session, I did see the positive aspect of that, which was that actually it was much better to be part of a cog or a wheel in society than not to be in it. Somehow I do remember redeeming in the course of that particular meditation what had been a distressing metaphor.

i13 said of the gun which he was facing as a dream-like sequence ended:¹⁰ *'I'm still looking at it';* and then later: *'If I do something stupid, it's going to discharge.'* So he was aware that the matter was not finished, he had yet to understand more about it, and that he needed to be careful lest he be damaged if he were not still and patient.

Experience continuing through several Experiments

One element of al's process reappeared in later Experiments; she had an image of a pool on several occasions, one almost a year after the first:¹¹

And then I had a momentary flash of an image I've had at least twice previously in meditations, of this, of being in this wood with this deep, dark pool of water, and standing looking in and trying to see what's down there. And once I think the moon was illuminating it, but I'm still trying to stand there, looking in. And I had this momentary image, and then I realised I wasn't looking in, I was in that pool, and that pool was in me, and it was like that was integrated. And it doesn't, you know, I don't have to look in any more, it's there.

On a later occasion she became aware that there was yet more to be revealed:

¹⁰ See this chapter ('Examining fears'), p217, and Appendix D2, pp7-8, for more of the sequence.

¹¹ See Appendix D4, p25.

Suddenly I found myself at the entrance to this cave with this pool, there's a big scarred rock that's in this pool and it's very still and the cave is really dark behind; because the entrance is so big it's very light but it narrows as it goes back and I thought, hmm, I've done a lot of work on myself in the last few months, but I haven't let the Light penetrate. So I started going in deeper and deeper and it's that sort of cave where if you do go in you think it's dark and your eyes adjust and you see more and more and more as you're going in.

Integrating the experience into the whole of life

The effects of the Experiment were not limited to the time of the Experiment itself, but became integrated into the whole of Experimenters' lives. i2 talked of falling into spontaneous Experiments and treating 45 minutes of MfW as Experiments. i18 explained that her understanding from the hamster wheel led to a change in her attitude to what was happening in her life:

That particular transformation did make a difference because perhaps I might have been resentful before about, if you like, my role in or what life was doing to me at the time and I possibly felt less resentful and more positive, so that would have made a difference, yes.

The effect of the understanding led ultimately to a fundamental life changing event as well:

I probably did start thinking fine, but is there an alternative to this. Well, actually I've left my husband so I guess actually, at the end of the day, something external has changed. I suppose I have got out of that rut, if you like, or that hamster wheel, but that's taken a time, because it was a long time ago.

i13 described how not long after joining the Light group he faced an unpleasant image, whereas before he had tended to want to push images to one side and not even look at them. In MfW he had an image of a griffin's claw with great talons, unpleasantly grey, and when he accepted the challenge of focusing on it, the claws

dropped off and it was quite harmless. The effect of the Experiment had begun to permeate the rest of his life.

Conversely, i6 found the experience given to him in the Experiment needed to be rediscovered and so, albeit infrequently, he re-reviewed his journal in which he recorded his Experimenting. He then recognised that even doing so reinforced changes in his life. He said:

Sometimes I have a feeling of weariness; I had the opportunity of this deep insight and it lasted four days. I forget and I get the idea that I'm just going round and round and round. Sometimes then more philosophically I say no, no, you've got to experience something to get it and then rediscover it and by rediscovering it, it then helps you to integrate it more into your life.¹²

Mystical experience after the Experiment

After practising the Experiment, some had mystical experience outside the Light group. i16 said:

I've also had something else that's happened since the Light group has, and not just in the Light group, outside as well, greater experience of the inter-connectedness with everything: time, space, others, everything.

She then described a particular experience:¹³

The most powerful was when I was on holiday with a group of people and we'd gone for a night time look at the caiman on a tributary to the Amazon, and we'd gone against the current with the motor on, seeing them. And then we were given the experience of cutting the lights, to be in silence as we drifted back and gradually more and more you became aware of the connectedness. A sound came, you know, your initial hearing and sight expanded and expanded, and the stars, and then of time itself. That, you know these caiman were, had been on the earth, were descendants of thousand millions, I don't know how long, many years, but, you know, going back. The Amazon, this was

¹² He is articulating his hermeneutic spiral (see Chapter 4, pp166-168).

¹³ This was the clearest description of an incidence of what Hay (1982: 88), after Stace (1960), called mystical experience, when the experiencer feels that, in an extraordinary way, all things are One.

coming from, we were near the Pacific, this water, that we were on, was connecting right through eventually to the Atlantic.

i16 continued: *'Very firmly there, a small part of it, but almost indivisible from the whole, but at the same time separate, separate and part, both at the same time.'*

Heard experience

Occasionally Experimenters experience a heard voice. When a1 came to the end of the cave:¹⁴ *'You get to this solid narrow wall, it's ended, you can't get any further. And then this voice said: "consider it possible you may be mistaken".'*¹⁵

Ethereal and ephemeral

Experimenters' experience in the Experiment was often ethereal¹⁶ and ephemeral. One example which particularly captures this is i21's poem¹⁷ exploring her dream-like journey in her first Experiment through all five senses.¹⁸

Summary: the way experience comes

Experimenters' transformation was signalled physically, in visual images, continuing over a number of Experiments, sometimes as a voice, ethereally and ephemerally.

¹⁴ See this chapter ('Experience continuing through several Experiments'), pp204-205.

¹⁵ This is a reference to one of the well known Advices and Queries (*QFP* 1995: 1.02.17).

¹⁶ See Chapter 1 FN24 and Chapter 3 ('The Experiment and heterotopia') for the link with primary perception and ethereality as introduction to heterotopia.

¹⁷ See Appendix B.

¹⁸ There are others, for example a4's cathedral of light mentioned in Chapter 1 ('The Experiment as heterotopian process'), p123, a6's shifting experience described in this chapter ('Transcendent experience in the group'), pp230-231, and i13's dream-like experience in this chapter ('Examining fears'), p217.

Stages of transformation

In the tradition of Friends (Grundy 2007: 157-158), the process of transformation occurred without spiritual direction or comment from other Friends, but instead from Experimenters' own understanding of their experience.¹⁹ As with early Friends, various stages of Experimenters' transformation are apparent.

Early Friends' convincement

Tousley cites three stages of early Friends' convincement: (1) Day of Visitation or new awareness of God's presence, including conviction of sin; (2) Internal Spiritual Warfare; and (3) Regeneration, in which sin is conquered and a new, immediate relationship with God is discovered; she says this last stage may lead to a call to travel in the ministry (Tousley 2003: 11-14, 43-44). These stages were refined by Dandelion as (1) powerful breaking in of God; (2) sense of conviction of sin; (3) a choice, repentance; (4) being born again into perfection, or a measure of perfection; (5) gathering together, living a life not as before; and (6) mission (Dandelion 2003: 11-12). Dandelion uses an example, a passage from Howgill (Barbour & Roberts 1973: 173-174):

My eyes were opened, and all the things that I had ever done were brought to remembrance and the ark of the testament was opened, and there was thunder and lightning and great hail. **(1)** And then the trumpet of the Lord was sounded, and then nothing but war and rumor of war, and the dreadful power of the Lord fell on me: plague, and pestilence, and famine, and earthquake, and fear and terror, for the sights I saw with my eyes: and that which I heard with my ears, sorrow and pain. And in the morning I wished it had been evening, and in the evening I wished it had been morning and I had no rest, but trouble on every side. **(2)** And all that ever I had done was judged and condemned, all things were accursed; whether I did eat, or drink, or restrain, I

¹⁹ See Chapter 4 FN65, when members of Group A commented on each others' sharing, those others found it got in the way and so they then reinforced the worship sharing protocol of receiving each others' contributions in silence, allowing space between contributions, speaking only from personal experience, listening with attention and not commenting on what each other said (*QFP* 1995: 12.21).

was accursed. Then the lions suffered hunger, and the seals were opened, and seven thunders uttered their voices . . . I became a perfect fool, and knew nothing, as a man distracted; all was overturned, and I suffered loss of all. In all that I ever did, I saw it was in the accursed nature. (3) And then something in me cried: 'Just and true is his judgement!' My mouth was stopped, I dared not make mention of his name, I knew not God. And as I bore the indignation of the Lord, something rejoiced, the serpent's head began to be bruised, and the witnesses which were slain were raised . . . (4) And as I did give up all to judgement, the captive came forth out of prison and rejoiced, and my heart was filled with joy. I came to see him whom I had pierced, and my heart as broken, and the blood of the prophets I saw slain, and a great lamentation. Then I saw the cross of Christ, and stood in it, and the enmity slain on it. And the new man was made . . . the holy law of God was revealed unto me and written on my heart.

Dandelion goes on to refer to the other two stages:

Ultimately, this experience would lead to (5) the convinced gathering together (we can think of Howgill's phrase of being 'gathered as in a net'), and in the years which followed, (6) calling 'the world' towards a new mode of religious experience: Howgill and Edward Burrough were to lead the mission to London. (Dandelion 2003: 11-12)

Experimenters' transformation

In twenty first century British society, Friends lack a single theological language (Scully 2002: i), whereas founding Friends and the seventeenth century society in which they existed shared the King James Bible language of Christianity (Tousley 2003: 37).²⁰ Few twenty first century Friends talk about 'the Lord'; the nearest they come is to talk about 'the Light', dropping the original context that this was 'the Light of Christ.'

Experimenters live in a completely different context and use different language from early Friends, but nonetheless similar stages of transformation can be seen, as I

²⁰ Tousley says Friends appropriated scripture boldly to describe their experience. Elsewhere in her dissertation she also refers to first generation Friends' appropriation of and building on Puritan language (2003: 28, 33, 38, 80-81).

discuss below. Not all talked of God, though some did, the words Light and truth were more common. A sense of not living truthfully (1), not being in right relationship or not having behaved in the right way was more usual than words like conviction or sin (2). Repentance (3), although only one used that word, and moving into a newer, better way of being (4) were apparent. Becoming a gathered community (5) was clear. Only mission (6) was not. Twenty first century Experimenters had a different sixth stage, acceptance of what they could not change, rather than early Friends' impulse to change others.

Comparison with conversion experiences

The first five of early Friends' and Experimenters' six-stages of transformation are reflected in the five-stage conversion stories which Stringer found in the 1980s Manchester ICF (1999: 157-161): (1) a state of unease; (2) an awareness of sin; (3) the need to seek help; (4) acceptance that they are powerless to do anything themselves; and (5) upsurge of joy. Stringer found the ICF's five stages also reflected in Reinhard's response in prayer (Manly & Reinhard 1984: 148-190): (1) focusing on self; (2) gathering and accumulating; (3) choosing to stop; (4) becoming empty; and (5) responding (see comparison in Figure 5.1). Stringer said that Reinhard illustrated the stages with an experience from Martin Luther King's life (1999: 160-161) and that conversion is a response, which follows the same structural pattern as other forms of response (1999: 161) because it is 'dynamic' (1999: 162).

Thus, not only do Experimenters respond to the Experiment in a similar way to that in which early Friends responded to their practice, but also such a response happens in other forms, both spontaneous, as in Martin Luther King's experience of responding to a death threat, and to worship. Stringer did not claim that worship was responded to

	early Friends	Experimenters	ICF	Reinhard
1	God breaks in	realisation of Truth	sense of unease	focus on self
2	conviction of sin	not in right relationship	awareness of sin	gather and accumulate
3	choice of repentance	possibility of changed behaviour	seek help	choosing to stop
4	born again into perfection	coming into right relationship	accept powerlessness	becoming empty
5	gathering together	intimacy in the group	upsurge of joy	responding
6	mission	acceptance		

Figure 6.1: Comparison of stages of transformation, conversion and response

in such a dramatic way every Sunday, rather that it would occur perhaps only once or twice in a lifetime, but it would colour and determine experience of worship (1999: 162-163).

Stages of transformation

Since the interviewees were responding to my prompting and not giving a chronological history, I cannot tell whether the stages I have identified occurred in the same order as in early Friends' experience. Although in the long participant observation there was a sense of progression and development, it seemed there was a gathering together when some of the earlier stages were not apparent. The gathering was at least partly engendered as a result of the trust created by sharing in the delicacy of each others' experience. Experimenters' transformation did not necessarily happen in stages in the same linear order in which early Friends' convincement has been portrayed,²¹ nor once and for all time.

1 Realisation of truth (God breaks in)

More than one Experimenter talked of feeling a very deep sense of peace, tapping into and being guided by a force or energy, an inner spiritual resource, infinite potential, '*external intentionality*'; some named it as '*the Light*', outside or other than themselves, yet part of themselves, both immanent and transcendent. All the interviewees and participants were describing an increasing awareness of truth.

i7 described a fundamental understanding which arose early on in her experience:

²¹ See this chapter ('Not mission, but acceptance'), early Friends' writings were largely for the purpose of convincing others (Moore 2000: Chapters 6 & 7, 150), so the description of their experiences may have been compressed.

It was the first thing in the Light group: 'Speak truth'. I was being constantly brought back to this question of truth, that I was not speaking truth. I would be saying one thing to one person and another thing to somebody else because it was, you know, socially acceptable; it was convenient or you didn't want to hurt someone's feelings. I've come into this awareness of truth, 'speak truth'.

She had to explain to her identical twin sister that she would no longer tell white lies for social convenience, that she would have to change from this life-long way in which they had both conducted themselves, whether her twin changed or not.

i16 said of the Experiment: *'it's made me aware of the need to get in touch with that truth which is in me, and that is in me.'* An increasing awareness of truth also underlay all of the experiences and new understandings Experimenters described.

This was particularly evident in the case of a6, who prefaced his sharing with reflection:

My favourite way of telling lies is by telling partial truth. For example, I say that I went to prison for six months, which is the truth. But the implication is that I'm a very peaceful person, which is not the truth at all. So I'm telling a lie when I'm saying one thing and it implies another thing.

a8 similarly found truth the crucial element in understanding how she needed to be with her daughter and linked it with a larger question of Truth:²²

The word that I was hanging on to there was truth. And I thought I've been pussyfooting around for a long time with this younger daughter of mine and not really speaking the truth as I see it. ... Anyway the Truth thing is important, isn't it, because suddenly I got this feeling that God is there for us all the time, loving us, no matter what we're doing, whether we're being wicked or uncaring or pushing people away, ignoring people, whatever we're doing, there is still that love there. And maybe that's all I've got to say.. And all of a sudden I feel quite relieved.

²² For the difference between 'Truth' and 'truth', see Chapter 4 FN48.

a1 said '*one of the things about the Light is that it's about exposing parts of yourself to yourself*'. She went on:

One of the things I realised was that for years and years and years the picture I had of myself was of me carrying around this huge concrete block in front of me as a kind of defence. ... I'm not even being honest with myself, I'm hiding myself ...

Experimenters did not describe anything like Howgill's 'thunder and lightning and great hail' nor a 'trumpet of the Lord', but it was clear that in the Experiment their eyes were being opened to what they already knew but had not been able to admit to themselves. The meditation, whether formally in the Light group or spontaneously as the practice became internalised, woke them up. As they came to terms with what was true, they became aware of an underlying Truth.

2 *Not in 'right relationship', feeling darkness (conviction of sin)*

Experimenters described how they failed in their relationships, how they began to understand those relationships and how this was uncomfortable both spiritually and physically. They began to face their fears, what they had done wrong in the past, how they had colluded with their own oppression and for what they had been responsible. i1 said he found his awareness from the Experiment of how he was living his life helpful:

What's come oftentimes is the failings, the difficulties of actually living the life you aspire to. So it's the amount of time we spend out of touch with our own spirituality, I think, and not really serving God in any sense.

Uncomfortable experiences

The experiences Experimenters described were not comfortable and could be very upsetting. Echoing Margaret Fell's 1656 warning 'let the eternall Light search

you...for this will deale plainly with you, it will rip you up & lye you open, & make all manifest which lodgeth in you' (Glines 2003: 212), i7, described the effect of what she had understood about no longer telling white lies:

It was like being convicted and I had to literally take time with my own prayer. Day after day I had to come back to this: 'Well, you're not speaking the truth.' That kind of Light, it's very eviscerating. It lays you bare.

i6, who had begun to understand what underlay his impulses,²³ had acknowledged the process of being uncomfortable when he wrote: *'Feel the "unease", feel the darkness.'* He also said the Experiment had been *'vital and threatening'* and he described being on what he termed the *'threshold'*:

When I know there's a threshold time it makes me feel vulnerable and tingle and I know there's a shift or a change in my life due, and I don't know what it's going to be, but the Experiment with Light brings me to that threshold.

He acknowledged that he had a tendency to lapse into self-centred mechanical living, so he knew that he needed challenge and this could upset his physical system as well as his spirit:

I know that I'm more creative and alive when I'm on the threshold and yet it's not a comfortable experience, it can lead to stomach upsets and things and it can lead to some moments of bleakness.

In describing an Experiment when he had realised his life was a compulsion of frenetic achieving which was going to kill him, i6 said: *'I felt it tangibly in me, felt its texture and knew that I should grow through it.'* The texture was *'claustrophobic, hot and stifling'* so that even in his discomfort he knew the possibility that he could take

²³ See this chapter ('Facing past violence, power and collusion'), p217.

control and be at ease: *'as if the more deliberate joy and more meditative approach to life would be cooler.'*

i7 described how Experimenters reacted when the group began its sharing: *'There was plenty of Kleenex tissue being handed round, there was plenty of crying. Sometimes really difficult issues would be coming up.'* a2 wept silently from the step *'let the real concerns of your life emerge'*²⁴ for 14 minutes through one meditation.²⁵

i10 discovered that his relationship with his late wife was not as he had thought. He had found an entry in her diary about him which read: *'his self confidence borders on arrogance.'* He was still tearful when he said:

I did not make the opportunities which I might, I should have done, for dialogue on occasions. And I saw the need to do certain practical things which, in terms of property and so on, she didn't agree with ... So that coming to terms with that, and finding the grace of forgiveness in that, has been part of the Experiment with Light.

Examining fears

a1 described how she had felt that colleagues were trying to trip her up. She described how in the meditation she became aware that it was she who did not like them and went on: *'What's that about? And it came down to a fear of being judged and that was so uncomfortable.'*

i13 said that the Experiment had: *'helped me to try and look directly at fears, rather than shelving them, and face up to them.'* When asked for an example, he mentioned

²⁴ See Appendix A2ii, step 2.

²⁵ This incident is also mentioned in Chapter 4 FN74 and Chapter 6 ('6 Acceptance (instead of mission)'), p232.

his fears surrounding various difficult relationships with his family, saying: *'I still have an inclination not to want to be involved with them'*. He then gave a long description of a dream-like sequence of visual images he had experienced in the previous week's Experiment. The images began with his waking up blind and then being led by a guide on a long journey downwards and then through a ship, where, as he climbed up through the deck levels, his sight began gradually to return. The images ended with his being alone in a vast arena where, with a flash of light like a spotlight moving across him, his sight returned completely and he found himself staring down the barrel of a gun. He said: *'I backed up a couple of steps and then made myself stand still and even go forward another step'* and then the meditation ended.²⁶

Facing past violence; power and collusion

a6 cited a particular incident in his early adulthood:

And the violence is very much subdued in that when I came back from the army, I was young and fit, in my twenties, and my father was a middle aged man in his fifties. And I pushed him across the table, the dining table, and held him down completely at my will and did nothing whatsoever, but had humiliated him.

In notes made after an Experiment, i6 recorded how he had understood that his impulses prevented his living fully and also what underlay those impulses:

My work is in the particular. My impulses are the most accessible way into the particular. When an impulse is mean and self-centred, I don't grow, I become less vital. Feel the "unease", feel the darkness. Trust the Light. Don't jump in with blame or judgement. See my besottedness with sex (linked with power and domination).²⁷

²⁶ See Appendix D2.

²⁷ These notes also reflect his discomfort.

In their Experimenting, Friends came to understand how some of what they had suffered in the past had been because they had not confronted what was oppressing them, but had gone along with it. a8 said:

I'm thinking about how it's possible to collude, I'm thinking from a woman's point of view, and it suddenly triggered off way back in my working life how men will make sexist remarks, or remarks to put you down, and how it was easier to collude than confront it, to giggle or whatever.

a1 had struggled with how she had bent to the way her employer was organised rather than be true to her own values:

I don't see myself as a victim, although it would be comfortable for me to do so. I mean, as regard to my work, what I am clear about is I, I acceded to that and played my part in being in that organisation and letting it do to me what it's done to me, letting myself be treated like that.

One Friend described how he had contributed to someone dying earlier than otherwise he might have done and how he had not complained when someone else had contributed to another person dying when he might have been saved. He did not talk about 'sin', yet the air of confession was clear when he said: *'I need to forgive myself.'*

Not in right relationship

In his exposition of the Experiment, Ambler set the scene for personal relationships to feature (Ambler 2002: 24-25). They transpired to be a recurring theme of Friends' Experimenting, both in the interviews and in the participant observation. In each case Experimenters could take control only of their own roles in the relationship or situation. If others were not ready to change, or to respond to the Experimenters' changes, then there was no point in forcing the issue.

i17 reported that she had had little experience from her Light group, but then after reading *Light to Live by* (Ambler 2002) she entered a spontaneous Experiment in a MfW at her mother's house. She described being 'out of sorts' with her father, who was long estranged from her mother, and the sudden realisation:

*which didn't involve me in my usual thrashing around about why I don't like him because he's done so-and-so and so-and-so and so-and-so. It was more like a searchlight from God saying: 'you are not being completely honest; it's time you grew out of this; you are not allowing for change to have happened; you are stunting your own growth if you hang on to these grudges.'*²⁸

She had understood that her own behaviour was part of the difficulty in the relationship and staying with that behaviour was holding her own development back.

a8 became aware of what she should do about her younger daughter not speaking to her elder daughter for 20 years:

I've been thinking about how I've been feeling a bit sort of anaesthetised about it ... I get the feeling that for a long time I'm sort of pushed away ... I think [laughs] all I've got to do is be loving and whatever kind of response or behaviour I get back doesn't really matter. The fact that I do still love her, no matter what.

She reflected on how she had been with her younger daughter in the past and how this needed to change:

*Maybe in the past what I've tried to do, even though I think I haven't tried to do it, maybe I've tried to sort of force the way. And maybe I've just got to sit back now and wait. And way will open. And when the way opens, I'll be ready.*²⁹

²⁸ 'like a searchlight from God' also suggests stage (1).

²⁹ This also suggests stage (6), see ('Accepting what cannot be changed or getting out'), pp233-235.

All she needed to do was show her daughter she loved her, be patient, and be ready to deal with whatever changes her daughter wanted to make.

Although Experimenters more often described their understandings in terms of relationships with people rather than in terms of relationship with God, nonetheless they acknowledged and took responsibility for past violence, misuse of power and collusion, which they understood had been wrong, admitting their own contribution to their difficulties, and recognising and facing their fears. In describing their discomfort they acknowledged they felt its wrongness physically as well. Feeling what was and had been wrong was an important stage in Experimenters' transformation. They judged themselves, as Howgill said he had been judged, but their language was milder: i6 felt the darkness, rather than feeling 'condemned'. Sometimes even the sense of having done wrong was implicit: a6 did not comment upon but merely related his youthful violence.

3 *Possibility of changed behaviour (choice of repentance)*

Experimenters explained the Experiment's role in gaining confidence and a sense of identity and, by changing their behaviour, how relationships might improve.

Gaining confidence and a sense of identity

i2 had needed to be noticed: *'I always used to have this deep down sense that unless I stood out of the crowd and was noticed I might as well not exist'* until she got an insight during an Experiment:

No, you don't, you don't, you know, it's okay. And it's something to do with being a sandcorn on a beach. You know that one sandcorn on a beach is just as important and beautiful as another one. And it was okay to be one sandcorn on the beach; I didn't have to be the one in the castle with the flag on.

Several Experimenters described how it was helpful to become less concerned about what others thought. i16, for example, described an image which gave her increased sense of herself:

I had once had an image of a mirror ball and each facet of the mirror-ball was somebody's view of me and that that was what I was. And I think I'm less that now, I see myself less as a reflection of other people anymore than as somebody that has within me ability to access the Light.

The mirror-ball had merely reflected and as she understood how she had seen herself she also came to understand that, rather than being only a reflection, she had within her the ability to find out deep truth, more helpful ways of being, both in herself and to help others.

Changing personal relationships

For some the new understanding helped, but did not go as far as changing the behaviour to make the relationship work better. i13 described how he had reached the point where he said: *'Don't listen to the words, listen to the message,'* but went on to say that he had still not learned to do this in his difficult relationship with his sister. *'I tend to keep quiet there. We don't enter any discussion, or argument.'* He had more still to do: *'I think I anticipate it too much as well, probably, instead of being relaxed.'*

For others the new understanding and their changing their behaviour accordingly could help transform the relationship. a8 realised that her adult son, who lacked confidence, did not assert himself and saw himself as a victim, was not being helped by her response to him; she said she had an idea to redirect what was happening. The next time she Experimented, she told the group:

I did actually say it to him, yeah, it's a really difficult situation you find yourself in, but I know you've got the intelligence and experience to really be able to cope with this. That's what I actually said. And, and, and, his voice has changed. So I was sort of colluding with his whinge of not being able to cope with it.

Her acting on her new understanding, changing her own behaviour, had led to a positive change for him.

As they came to terms with themselves, as they now saw the truth instead of the image they had previously carried of themselves and as the masks they had created fell away, Experimenters began to see the possibility of changing their relationships. The possibility of changed behaviour began to grow out of Experimenters' confidence in their sense of themselves as they truly were in personal relationships, whereas Howgill's was expressed as being directly with God. Experimenters' experience was also not once-and-for-all: for example i13 was still working on what he might do in relation to his sister.

4 *Coming into right relationship (born again into perfection)*

Once they started to understand their relationships, Experimenters began to make changes in their lives and come into right relationship, with an increasing sense of both immanent and transcendent relationship with the Divine.

Letting go, dealing with pressure and making life changes

i13 described how in a small Meeting where there were not many to fill the various posts, the Experiment had helped him to '*back off a bit*' so that he had learned not to feel that he had to do things, that he should recognise the limit of his responsibilities so that someone else should have the opportunity:

There's also a problem that when you have a responsibility, particularly clerkings [sic], that when your term of office is finished, you don't let it go. That's something else I've had to learn. Somebody else can do it. Let them do it. Little things about the Meeting House I would have busied myself with because I was Clerk. I had to discipline myself away from that and again the Light meeting has helped considerably.

There was a theme of Experimenters finding the pressures of everyday life overwhelming. i1 found the Experiment, of itself, could restore his balance in life immediately:

We had it initially on a Friday night, which was a disastrous evening. So I'd come in stressed from work, have about half an hour to pick up my papers and get out. And I'd sit down and suddenly I'd feel wonderful. I'd leave the house thinking this is the last thing I want to be doing and I'd get back and I'd feel all set up for the weekend, really calm.

The life-changing effects Experimenters described of what they experienced were wide-ranging. i7, for example, told me that she became a vegetarian after her first twelve months' Experimenting:

It was like the road to Damascus. One day I could eat meat and the next day I couldn't. I don't know what that was about. After joining the Light group I became a vegetarian, oh dear!³⁰

i13 found that his changed way of viewing his own responsibilities had a relaxing and easing effect for others:

I'm hoping it's made me easier to live with. I think because I'm facing up to things it's easier. I'm less likely to blame other people. I check myself much more now. Yes, I think I'm much more tolerant of other people.

³⁰ 'like the road to Damascus' also suggests stage (1).

In turn, this new way of behaving led to further changed behaviour: he gave others more opportunity to express themselves; thus his understanding increased and he became more sympathetic and useful to them. The process was iterative:

I'm a better listener within groups and it's enabled me to be more helpful to other folk. It's possibly helped me to discern what their difficulty may be at any particular time and to advise.

Relationship with the Divine

Ambler described his understanding as emanating from a reality that was 'other-than-me' which he had to name as God (Ambler 2002: 34). My informants expressed a similar understanding, for example i15 described her Experimenting as relationship with God:

I think that the experience that I had in the Experiment with Light was one of relationship. It was one of: 'there's a dynamic going on between something beyond me but also in me' and it was a very real lived thing. That first Experiment with Light was an experience of relating to something beyond me that was illuminating me, so that there was a separate entity which was very real, very alive.

She did not interpret this 'separate entity' in Christian terms:

I didn't experience it personally in the sense that I felt that as some people do feel with it that they've made a connection with the person of Christ, for instance, I didn't feel it in that sense. I just felt that there was something out there that I felt that I was within, something bigger than me which could help me to clarify who I was, where I was, what I was doing, all that kind of thing.

In her response to it, however, there were echoes of early Friends' conviction experience:³¹

³¹ Early Friends were first named 'Quakers' in derision (Nickalls 1975: 58), although it was clear that Friends did tremble (Braithwaite 1981 [1912]: 57; Barclay 2002 [1678]: 302) and fall to the ground (Bauman 1998: 80-83).

*And it was a very physical experience for me as well. It made me judder physically, it was like I was feeling something majorly shifting in my auric field. It was not just a head thing: it was a physical thing and it was an emotional thing and it was something that I could not deny any more than I can deny that I love somebody I love. It was as real as that. And a sense of a power bigger than me that was kind of almost coming in and shaking stuff out that didn't belong to me.*³²

She described a discussion in her Meeting about truth being relative to perspective and her powerful realisation:

If I look at those kind of things from the position of being in right relationship with God, then it seems to follow from there that if you are lined up right, then you will act in an honest and true way and that's where your day to day truth has to come from. If you get into legalistic ways of going about it, then you're lost.

i16 talked at length about how one image had occurred time and again in Experiments helping her through a very difficult situation. Then she said about the Experiment:³³

I experience it as God. At this moment, I am content to call what I experience 'God', both that access to the truth within me, deep in me, and the interconnectedness, which is two-way flowing.

A sense of being accompanied³⁴

a1 reflected on how she had struggled with the Experiments:³⁵

I think she starts out, doesn't she, she says 'Wait in the Light'. And I always have such trouble with the process, thinking about it and trying to, kind of access the Light. ... All this time I've been waiting for the Light, and it's funny really, and it's all about waiting in the Light. And then I had this really, sort of, strange, sort of, realisation: the bloody Light's been there all the time. And I felt suddenly, sort of, really grounded in myself, which I hadn't before. ...

³² i15's account further supports the evidence of Experimenters' experience being embodied.

³³ See Appendix D1.

³⁴ The realisation of being accompanied echoes Isaac Penington's 1658 experience (Tousley 2003: 23-25): 'The Lord opened my spirit, the Lord gave me the certain and sensible feeling of the pure seed, which had been with me from the beginning; the Lord caused his holy power to fall upon me, and gave me such an inward demonstration and feeling of the seed of life, that I cried out in my spirit "This is he, this is he; there's not another, and never was another. He was always near me, though I knew him not."'

³⁵ See Appendix D4, pp24-25.

And this sense of being grounded, kind of felt, I feel integrated, you know, like all the bits have come back to myself, which was a, sort of, another kind of realisation.

g7 described a beautiful image encapsulating his sense of the process being from outside himself:

I had an image of Experiment with Light as a mountain spring, and in the biblical sense of the water of life, which when you drink it, you don't get thirsty any more.

The faith that matters would be well did not come without a sense of personal responsibility, however. In talking about how he faced his fears,³⁶ i13 said that various experiences in the Experiment had provided indications that: *'you've got to do the work yourself and, when you've done the work, then the help that is needed for the next bit comes along.'*³⁷

Experimenters' perspective on how they were changing relationships with other people and their environments led to an understanding that this connected them with the Divine, that they could live a different way, it was something for which they could and should take responsibility. They did not claim 'the new man was made', yet the sense of renewal was present.

³⁶ See this chapter ('Examining fears'), p217, and Appendix D2 where i13 describes the long dream-like sequence.

³⁷ See Appendix D2, p7.

5 *Intimacy in the group (gathering together)*

Experimenters shared very sensitive experiences with each other and, as their intimacy grew, the experiences were not merely personal and from within themselves, but also transcendent and I, too, felt this external force.³⁸

Sharing experiences with each other

An important part of the discipline of sharing is the protocol of confidentiality (*QFP* 1995: 12.21).³⁹ a6 described the incident of violence⁴⁰ despite being well known for adherence to the peace testimony and early conscientious objection, for which he had been imprisoned. The Friend who knew he had to forgive himself⁴¹ had described to his Light group the circumstances of his life-or-death mistake, for which he needed forgiveness. He revealed what his mistake was.

These confessions revealed facets which the other Experimenters would not have expected. To share in the way that these two Friends did risked loss of reputation (or more), exposed the very core of their being to others as it was newly exposed to themselves, and expressed great trust in fellow Experimenters.⁴²

i16 commented:

Another part of the Light group which I find invaluable is insights from other, from the other members. They can shed light on something or they can give – and sometimes it's not that, but sometimes it, you know, it's an extra

³⁸ The development of my role from merely observing to also participating is discussed in greater detail in Chapter 4 ('Covert participation'). See also Chapter 7 ('Constructing the alternative story'), pp275-282, for instances of where Group A drew closer together.

³⁹ This is understood to refer to not telling anyone who was not present on the occasion what other Friends say of their experience; it does not extend to one's own experience and it is understood that Friends who were present may on other occasions talk to each other of the experience.

⁴⁰ See this chapter ('Facing past violence, power and collusion' at stage 2), p217.

⁴¹ See this chapter ('Facing past violence, power and collusion' at stage 2), p218.

⁴² And in me as the researcher, whom they knew to be present.

dimension. And also it's - something we have found, more than once, well, quite often, is – it's not that they're the same, but there's a common element.

Experimenters noted a magnifying effect in relation to their participation in Light groups, so they knew their experience was deepened and reinforced by their sharing: Experimenting led to their listening more, paying more attention to spiritual matters and deepening both daily spiritual practice and experience in MfW.

Transcendent experience in the group

i8 described her sense of one-ness in the group's Experiments:

It's being part of something much bigger – and much – yes, an energy, as if nothing else matters really, as if the mundane worries you've got, and concerns, really don't matter and you suddenly become part of something much bigger. And, as I say, that's something I don't get very often. It's also very reassuring. It's more like I feel as if I could do anything, really, huge potential, without being specific at all, an infinite potential. It's not something I get very often, it's sort of like glimpses.

i7 described how their Light group's experience developed.⁴³ At first:

When we began, our expectation was that Light would simply flood into personal relationships, work situations, which it did, tangled areas where there'd been loss of communication and so on, all of that happened.

After some time Experimenting, however, the group's pattern of behaviour changed and together they came to rest in something transcendent, something external:

We found that there was nothing to share, that no one was dialoguing internally about problems or personal issues but we were coming into a sort of floating, what would be called a prayer of quiet or a prayer of the heart, resting in the Presence of God - wonderful.

⁴³ i7 and i8 were in the same group.

It was not just that the group arrived somewhere by their Experimenting together, but that something had brought them to that point:

I believe that the group has been touched in a very, very deep way, experientially, spiritually. ... I feel a sense of absolute holding in love, which I think has come from this kind of deepening awareness within a group. It's not like any other prayer group or anything that I've ever been in.

Its effect on the group was then to enable them to become active: '*You are able to communicate in silence and uphold and treasure and help and heal.*' In turn this led to a sense of complete awe: '*One person in the group is almost breathless with astonishment at how wonderful it is.*'

In the long participant-observation, there was an occasion when the group sensed it was touched from outside.⁴⁴ Two had the same image, of pools, another had a different sense of herself and from the corner of the room, outside the group's circle, I had a physical feeling that something was happening. I describe this below in detail, so that the link between the experiences of the members of the group is apparent. For this purpose I was one of the members, even though - as outlined in Chapter 4 - the others were unaware of my participation.

During the meditation at the step which says 'the Light will lead you out of darkness'⁴⁵, I had noted: '*palpable feeling from the group towards my forehead*'. Then, after noting two of the group's movements: '*I can definitely feel energy in my head when I sit still and attend to the group*'. Then, after noting my attention to a4 in

⁴⁴ Fieldnotes, 20 April 2004.

⁴⁵ See Appendix A5i, step 5.

particular, I wrote: *'now the palpable feeling moves through my heart chakra to solar plexus'*.

After the end of the meditation and the usual period of silence, one of the group began to make tea, but it became apparent the kettle was broken, then the group settled back into their circle. Unusually there was a further five minutes silence, until a1 began the sharing:

I think I've found I now want to share with yourselves how I felt, in the hope of getting some feedback from others. And for me, although the meditation wasn't a kind of revelation, and not focused specifically on one thing, what I felt was the –um– unity of the, of the group, in a way that we were doing this together. And for me that carried on after we formally finished the meditation. And – because I'm always hung up on the process and checking have I got this right, have I got this right – I had a much better sense on this occasion of moving together into a deeper place, really.

The group then, again unusually, lapsed into silence. A minute later, I noted: *'I can feel the palpable sense again'*. After a further minute's silence, a2 continued:

I appreciated the time of silence after because – I mean I, I didn't have a specific revelation at all – I just somehow found a kind of different sense of myself and felt that by sort of just walking about a bit and looking round without talking, I found I wanted to sort of incorporate that into everyday life, where I can just allow the meditation – so the transitional time is important.

Then, after further two minutes silence, she said: *'It feels like, even having the fuss with the kettle and things in between, it still feels like the gathered silence is still here.'* At this point I noted: *'I can feel this palpable sense again.'* After another two minutes of silence, a6 said:

I had a sort of film strip. What ought to happen is that you think in your conscious, and see in the Light something taking place. Each time the tape talked, I strolled in that direction, and was like a pool of water, that the effort continued for a short while and gradually the ripples would die down and I'd

be in the quiet until the next time it talked. So the internal life and the external talking were alternate.

Then a1 joined in again, clearly encouraged by what had just been said, to share further:

It's interesting that you had an image of the pool, because so did I, but in a different way, because I was very aware of all the activity of my brain as I was trying to drop things off and come into the Light. And I had this image of a pool with all this, this rain dropping into it, which was kind of the activity stuff. And then it stopped raining. And there was just this deep, still pool there, which was kind of, you know, kind of what was always at the centre, just –um- being, you know, still, and there, and ready when, when access. So it wasn't an image of Light, it was more centring or something.

It is possible that a1 might not have revealed the actual image she had had without a6 having described his. It was clear from the long and unusual silences and from the way they spoke that the group was very moved. In addition, unusually, I had felt something physically. The Light group drew closer together and in their similar experiences and their (and my) communal feeling, the Other was present.

Experimenters trusted each other deeply, sharing difficult experiences which might have destroyed their reputations; they became aware that their experience was deepened and reinforced by their sharing. i8 and i7 reported their group's drawing together in the transcendent and Group A's commonality of experience was signalled by what I felt in the participant-observation.

6 *Acceptance (instead of mission)*

Experimenters found different ways of being in the world by accepting things they found difficult and felt they could not change, whereas early Friends' experience led

to their drive to mission, to change the world without considering the personal consequences.

Experimenters began to live more truthfully and, once they made the necessary changes, more easily. They found unexpected solutions by seeing problems from a different perspective and were able to deal with devastating hurt. If they were able to accept what they could not change, then paradoxically change might occur anyway. If that were not possible, they changed their circumstances in relation to what they could neither accept (in relation to their new and growing understanding of what was right) nor change.

The need to accept came as a clear message to a2 when she wept through one meditation. In the sharing afterwards, she did not tell the other members of the group that she had been weeping (as they had all had their eyes closed and as she made no sound, they would not have been aware of it). She did, however, say, referring to the later step in the meditation about accepting what comes:⁴⁶ *'I had trouble tonight with, you know, the thing about accepting and again I suppose I realised what I need to do is accept. It just reminded me.'*

Solution and consolation

i16 described how she was burdened by her manager being more concerned with how things looked rather than the intrinsic requirements of the job, piling pressure on her. She took the issue into the Experiment:

It was an image of a donkey, a horse walking up quite a steepish hill and the struggle, pulling this load. It was blinkered, but looking down anyway

⁴⁶ See Appendix A2ii, step 6.

because that was the only way to concentrate, one step at a time: up, up, and not being able to stop, because if you lost the momentum, the weight would pull the donkey back. And that was the feeling.

She was presented with an unexpected solution:

The end bit of it was that the donkey noticed there was a side... it was more than a lay-by, it was a piece of land. It was beautiful, it was a field with flowers and you could get onto it because it was sideways and could play there. And so that was a big thing, that maybe I could, maybe I don't have to carry on in this path. I went along with this problem and, as I saw it, the solution I wanted was a way of pulling this load, whereas I found I can see things in a different way. A sideways step, why not: I decided to retire, I decided I would retire.

At a later point in the interview she reflected more generally on seeing things differently; she described how seeing things in her life differently actually came to her in Experiments:

It's made me aware of the need to get in touch with that truth which is within me. I can see something as a problem. I take that problem to the Light group and sometimes there's an answer, but more often it's seeing what it is in a different way, in a whole way. ... Quite a frequent thing is I'm flying over a landscape, so to see it in a different way, to see it as a whole from outside.

The Experiment's redemptive effect was described more generally as helpful by i15 who had suffered a major family trauma: *'I would say that the Experiment with Light and the place it took me to before that happened has been instrumental in saving my sanity since that happened.'*

Accepting what cannot be changed or getting out

i1 said he had become much more willing to accept how things were in the organisation for which he worked. He had, like his colleagues, been cynical, moaning and unhappy but his Experimenting had stopped him *'buying into any of that'* and he

became more willing to accept that the organisation was as good as it could be given its resources. He then found a surprising outcome:

I believe that things change when you no longer want them to change. If you can get to a space where you accept things exactly as they are, then that actually is more likely to open up a possibility of change - there's a paradox in there. That doesn't mean I don't still get distressed and still get anxious but underlying all that, there's the acceptance that things are ok.

i15 described how the Experiment led her to change her job and work more independently, because she could no longer accept the framework in which she was expected to operate:

I worked for the mental health team during that period and I couldn't work to the medical model any more and left because of that, because I couldn't stand, when they were talking about people who were schizophrenic, that their voices were increasing, so up the medication. Whereas my response to that was, 'Well, what are the voices saying and what's the significance of this?' And they say just that they're barking mad, give them more pills. And I couldn't hack that any more.

Since she could not change the organisation, she accepted she would have to change her circumstances. a1, whose employing organisation made her feel squashed down so that she became unable to work, similarly decided to: *'go back there eventually, in order to leave.'*

Experimenters accepted the things they could not change or accepted that the circumstances were such that they had to remove themselves, the obverse of mission, which seeks to change others. This sixth stage is subtly different from the fourth. The fourth stage is coming in to right relationship with their environment and other people and thus with the Divine, changing things in one's own life which can be changed. This sixth stage concerns things which left the Experimenter out of right

relationship and which the Experimenter felt she could not change. The Experimenter's response at this stage was either to accept what could not be changed and live with it, allowing that right relationship might come (as i1 did), or to change her life's circumstances. i15, i16 and a1 did not privilege their relationships with their work colleagues or organisations over their increasing sense of what was right and truthful, a sense which became clearer in the Experiment. They accepted the limitations of their positions and their lack of power and, instead of continuing to be ground down by the dissonance between what they felt was right and what their circumstances expected of them, they gave up their jobs.

Experimenters similarly did not accept conflict within their Light groups, nor conflict between the Light group and Meeting: as discussed in Chapter 7, empowered by their sense of the Divine (Chapter 5) and their transformation, they challenged what other Quakers usually avoid (Robson 2005; Robson 2008a; 2008b).

Experimenters' progress through the stages

All six stages were evident in several Experimenters' experience (a1, i7, i13, i16) and in others' some stages were clear and others implicit (i1, i8, i15).⁴⁷ Some of Group A shared in such an implicit way or more rarely (a3, a4, a5, a7) that only some stages were apparent, but stage 2 (acknowledging their part in what was difficult and how uncomfortable that made them feel) was evident for all group A.

⁴⁷ It is not surprising that it was not possible to see all six stages in the interviewees' experience, since they may have left stages out in summarising their experience, or they may simply have forgotten some of the stages they had experienced. Unlike in the ICF, there is no repeated recounting of a conversion experience in the sharing after the meditation, even though the staged process of the Experiment's meditation might be thought to suggest it in the same way that the conversion-story focus of the ICF's services did.

It is not easy to determine the order of the stages Experimenters went through. Indeed, in one short part of one interview, i7's inability to continue telling white lies in itself provided four stages: she realised she was not speaking truth (1), she felt eviscerated and convicted of it (2), she repented (3) and changed her behaviour as a result (4).⁴⁸ Some Experimenters went clearly through a particular stage, but some were still working on some areas, for example i13, in relation to his difficulty with his sister,⁴⁹ and a3. Similarly in the long participant-observation it was clear that some Experimenters went through the stages more than once. For example at a late stage, after having come to acceptance (6) in earlier Experiments, a1 went through a realisation of truth (1), darkness, feeling uncomfortable, understanding relationships and looking at fear (2) again.⁵⁰ The Light reminded her of the darkness which could still be exposed.⁵¹ She went on to describe how she had thought that some colleagues were out to get her, then understood that she had hooked into a sense of paranoia and that it was she who did not like them, at the root was her fear of being judged. i6, too, was aware of this in his rediscoveries.⁵² Their progress through the stages was not linear, nor once-and-for-all. It seemed the process was iterative as they considered different areas of their lives and that they were revisiting different areas with new understandings, but also that they could sometimes lose touch with what they had seen and felt.

⁴⁸ There were other examples. i17's searchlight from God was both about truth (1) and not being in right relationship with her father (2). i7's vegetarianism came 'like the road to Damascus' (1) and required changed behaviour (4). i18's hamster image helped her to understand her relationships (2), to come into right relationship (3) and led to her accepting she had to change her circumstances (6). a8 began to understand her relationship with her daughter (2) and came to accept that she would have to wait for her daughter to be ready to change before she could assist (6).

⁴⁹ See this chapter ('Changing personal relationships'), p221.

⁵⁰ There were other examples: a5 & a6 went from (3) to (2); a4 & a8 went from (6) back to (2); a3 went from (5) back to (2).

⁵¹ See this chapter ('Realisation of Truth (God breaks in)'), p214, for the quote.

⁵² See this chapter, ('Integrating the experience into the whole of life'), p206.

Transformation as heterotopia

Foucault's first definition of heterotopia was that it was disturbing, secretly undermining language, desiccating speech, destroying syntax, including the less apparent syntax which holds words and things together, dissolving myths, contesting the possibility of grammar at its source (Foucault 2002 [1966]: xix).⁵³ That definition would be too strong to describe the process that Experimenters went through (although not too strong to describe Howgill's, especially if his thunder, lightning, great hail, trumpet, plague, pestilence, famine, earthquake, fear and terror were literal). Nonetheless, as Experimenters' understanding changed and the constructions they had made of themselves (myths) fell away to reveal underlying truths, contesting the possibility of the grammar of conventional ways of being (i7's telling white lies and eating meat or i16's being a mirror-ball reflection of what others expect, for example), the transformation process resonates with what Foucault laid out.⁵⁴

It was not the consoling process of utopia, but rather the transformation brought about by the Experiment that destroyed the common ground on which the juxtapositions of life were situated (Foucault 2002 [1966]: xvi-xix), for example a6's juxtaposition of being well known for the peace testimony while he had been violent towards his father as a young man.⁵⁵ The process of transformation brought about by the Experiment disrupted and destroyed the possibility of maintaining the previous conceptions they had of themselves and their lives, especially at the first and second stages. As discussed above, Experimenters' process was not linear, but heterotopian,

⁵³ For the quote, see Chapter 3 ('Foucault's heterotopia'), p89.

⁵⁴ The mention of 'myths' and 'grammar' here refers to heterotopias' ability to 'dissolve our myths' and 'contest the very possibility of grammar at its source' (Foucault 2002 [1966]: xix), see Chapter 3 ('Foucault's heterotopia'), p89.

⁵⁵ This also picks up Foucault's third principle: a juxtaposition in one single real space several incompatible sites irreducible to each other (1986 [1967]-a: 25).

with integration, disintegration, combination, resistance and disorder (Hetherington 1997: 140)⁵⁶ as the Experimenters moved through their (heterotopian) hermeneutic spirals (Osborne 2006 [1991]: 22-23).⁵⁷

Transformation as religious experience

Experimenters did not themselves claim to have had religious experience, but they clearly reported a sense of transformation into a deeper relationship with the Divine and more truthful and accepting ways of living, significantly different from early Friends' conviction in its content, but similar in its stages.

Of all the Experimenters, only i7 used biblical language:⁵⁸ *'It was like being convicted'* (stage 2), of no longer being able to tell white lies, *'that was something I had to repent of'* (stage 3), of becoming vegetarian, *'It was like the road to Damascus'* (stage 4). The language the other Experimenters used, however, does not deny their experience was religious.

The I-Thou/I-it paradigm (Buber 1970 [1923]) is evident in the stages of transformation as Experimenters moved from an ego-centred view of their lives, where the other person is less important and the relationship is 'I-It', towards the 'I-Thou' of truly engaging with the people in their lives. In the stages Experimenters (2) look at how they had contributed to wrongs and to their fears and truly understand relationships, (3) change their relationships, in order to (4) come into right-relationship which they began to understand as having a Divine dimension, then (5)

⁵⁶ See Chapter 3 ('Dynamic social ordering, spaces for play: Hetherington and Hjorth'), pp97-98.

⁵⁷ See Chapter 4 ('The hermeneutic spiral'), pp166-168, for an explanation of the hermeneutic spiral.

⁵⁸ See Chapter 5 ('Belief frameworks'), p185, she had once considered taking Anglican orders.

gather closely together with each other in the group and experience the transcendent, the Divine Other Buber indicates is present in the full 'I-Thou' engagement.

Community of intimacy

Best defines 'community of intimacy' in relation to adolescent Quakers as a collective grouping with shared values which places emphasis on belonging to the group, inter-personal networks secured by friendships and the separateness of the group both from other Quakers and from non-Quaker peers (Best 2008a: 192). The community of intimacy is both the visible community and also the variable, networked community of friendships that exists beyond and between Quaker-time, strictly bounded in terms of behaviour and central in terms of forming both group and individual Quaker identity and ensuring its ongoing unity.

The content of religious/spiritual belief is unimportant and non-definitional; values are broad, generalised and open to individual interpretation and, in some cases, indistinguishable from secular values. Corporate worship is central, internal discipline is strong, involvement is extensive, commitment is high and the sense of belonging is great. Those within the community of intimacy form close bonds, both as a group and through individual friendships. The group has a strong perception of difference from other groups, both Quaker and non-Quaker. The group values inclusion and acceptance, and has a strong sense of allegiance to the community and its members.

When Experimenters shared with each other in depth, their relationships changed and the combination of Experimenting together and then explicitly sharing their experience amplified the experience, not least because they would then carry around

others' images as well as their own. They also carried their fellow-Experimenters' sharing, including these images, under the protocol of confidentiality, as they knew their fellow-Experimenters might do with the knowledge of their own sharing. The protocol served to bind them still closer and increased the intimacy.

Similarly, as shown in Chapter 5 and in this chapter, the content of belief is unimportant for Experimenters. Much more important is the form of the Experiment and the worship sharing method under which they share their experience (*QFP* 1995: 12.21). The level of commitment is not the same for all Experimenters, however.⁵⁹ Conflict surrounding Group A (discussed in Chapter 7) made them aware of how they were perceived to be different, whilst they otherwise fully participated in their own Meetings, including committees and another small group.⁶⁰ At the same time they felt that in the Light group they were investigating core Quaker practice and went to some lengths to communicate this throughout the MM. They became close personal friends, for example two members of the Group later got married and all were invited to both weddings.⁶¹ Group A was exclusive in that it was closed, but acceptance of each other was central to their Experimenting.

Light groups form local communities of intimacy, in that what they do is separate from other Quaker activity and different: they may meet in the Meeting House, but their Experimenting takes place separately and is different from MfW. The knowledge which Experimenters share of each others' inner and outward lives and the protocol of

⁵⁹ During the period of my fieldwork, Group A met 34 times yet all eight members were present only twice and on one occasion there were only two of them; one member was present only nine times, another only 16, whilst the others varied from 22 to 30 times.

⁶⁰ Two of them were Elders (though neither of these two was in Meeting A), three of them participated in a separate prayer group in Meeting A, two of them had responsibilities on the MM Property Committee and all regularly attended MfW in their different PMs.

⁶¹ As was I, see Chapter 4 FN25.

confidentiality under which they share it binds them into a local community of intimacy, too, not shared by the others in their Meetings.

Community of love

Best has described and defined 'community of intimacy' in and of itself and also in relation to adolescent Quakers, but Experimenters combine this with an additional dimension not present for adolescent Quakers: more like seventeenth century Friends, Experimenters have a mutual understanding that the Divine (however they describe it)⁶² underlies their experience and 'knits them in love', so that the transcendent is a part of their community. Best says contrarily that for adolescent Quakers the focus is often not on God (however described) but rather on that of 'good' in everyone (Best 2008a: 200), i.e. the immanent. I define 'community of love' as community of intimacy based on experience which goes beyond everyday existence to its spiritual foundation. It results from the very inward investigation of that spiritual foundation.

In the ordinary course of MfW, there is little or no opportunity for Friends to know what others' experience has been in the worship (although ministry might reveal experience in other aspects of Friends' lives, it will not necessarily do so), yet this is built into the Experiment. As Dandelion observed, individual Quakers' lives have become private to the rest of the Quaker group (1996: xviii) and, as he presaged, 'Quaker-time' is largely confined to worship and committee meetings (1996: xxvi).

In the sharing, the Experiment opens up the deepest aspects of Friends' lives to other members of the Light group. To share requires an ability to be vulnerable and this engenders love, both in the Experimenter exposing vulnerability, and thus

⁶² See Chapter 5.

demonstrating trust of the others in the group, and in the other group members holding⁶³ their Friend's vulnerability. For example, a Friend may have been aloof and distant, even uncooperative, but when the underlying cause is revealed in an Experiment as a painful personal experience or low self-esteem, understanding and compassion grow. Similarly when an Experimenter describes a transcendent experience, the Friends who are entrusted with that are honoured at and awed by being allowed to know of it, and to know they were present when it happened.

A deeper and more personal experience can be allowed to occur in the Experiment since the Experiment's form allows no vocal intervention from anyone else present until after the practice creates the experience. In MfW it can happen that someone will stand and minister before the meeting is 'gathered' (*QFP* 1995: 2.39) and before Friends have any depth of experience.⁶⁴

Not mission, but acceptance

Seventeenth century accounts of Friends' conviction were published with specific purpose (Moore 2000: Chapters 6 & 7, 150), the mission which Dandelion cites as the sixth stage of conviction (2003: 10-12). My informants were either reflecting in interviews or contemporaneously sharing what they had experienced, without any more public agenda. Also, much may have been edited out of early Friends' accounts.

⁶³ 'Hold' is a Quaker usage which, like 'uphold' (see 'Abbreviations and glossary of Quaker terms') implies 'holding in the Light' or spiritually supporting: it implies sustaining another Friend, partially taking on their concerns as one's own, to deal with those concerns in love and to have responsibility for them spiritually.

⁶⁴ I am grateful to John Lampen for this pointing out this distinction (conversation 4 July 2007). Not all ministry is disruptive to the process of 'gathering': it is also the case, conversely, that ministry in MfW may direct attention to a deeper place and lead the meeting to become gathered.

The specific editing in relation to early Friends' effusions of love for each other and what may have been identified as blasphemous is well documented (Bailey 1992; Moore 2000: 77), but we cannot know what was simply left out because it did not serve the missionary purpose. Nor did every Friend write and not all the written material survived. We do know, for example, that although Fox's *Journal* describes his training as a shoemaker (Nickalls 1975: 2)⁶⁵ it did not describe how he made his living while travelling in the ministry.⁶⁶ Early Friends' description of the early stages of their conviction may, as Tousley also speculates, have been compressed similarly because they were not relevant to the message of mission (Tousley 2003: 83).

Mission must, therefore, have influenced seventeenth century Friends' accounts, but was not evident as a direct result of twenty first century Experimenters' transformation. Indeed, Experimenters do not even proselytise their practice among British Quakers.⁶⁷

There is another reason why early Friends were impelled by a sense of mission: Dandelion suggests they felt themselves 'in the world, but not of it', that their sense of intimacy with God, consequent upon their conviction, placed them in a different relationship of knowing and being known than other people, so that they were 'out of

⁶⁵ 'I was put to a man, a shoemaker by trade, and that dealt in wool, and used grazing, and sold cattle; and a great deal went through my hands. While I was with him he was blessed; but after I left him he broke, and came to nothing' (Nickalls 1975: 2). This implies that Fox also arranged livestock deals and thought that he was better at doing so than his master.

⁶⁶ Ingle deduced that Fox did not need to work, having initially been funded by his parents, then inherited a substantial amount from them, so that at various times he leased a flock of sheep, invested excess cash in shipping and lent to traders for profits; he also stayed for extended periods with wealthy hospitable Friends (1994: 21, 23, 267 & 281).

⁶⁷ Towards the end of my research, there were signs that some Friends were trying to deal with this, to encourage the spread of the practice and I, too, became instrumental in the initiative, writing a chapter for *Seeing Hearing Knowing* (Meads 2008b) and becoming active in giving workshops from 2007. These initiatives, however, were far from a general impulse of Experimenters to mission.

the world' (2005: Chapter 3). Whilst Experimenters enter a community of love, they do not exit the world in quite the same way, since they are liberal-Liberal Friends with the acculturated understanding that faith needs to be relevant to the age; they do not have the sense of unfolding end-times which Dandelion claims early Friends did (2005: 12-13, 66, 69, 73).

Experimenters' transformation is not reported as single and immediately life-changing as early Friends' convincement is portrayed, because it is not proclaimed for the purpose of others' transformation or convincement. Indeed their experience was either related to me in conversation or observed by me and Experimenters were aware that I was already a Friend and an Experimenter⁶⁸ and potentially that I would have had similar experiences. Their expression was not enthusiastic, vehement nor evangelical,⁶⁹ rather it was thoughtful, quiet and low key and often more in terms of relationship with other people (that is, how they were in the world) rather than relationship with God, although they did acknowledge the transcendent. I was entrusted with personal, private confidences which in other contexts had been met with disbelief and for that reason they were not about to make their experience public.⁷⁰ Experimenters did not make claims of dramatic or deep experience in talking to me; the conversations resulted, rather, in the manner of shy and private revelation.

⁶⁸ See Chapter 4 for discussion of my insiderness.

⁶⁹ Matossian makes a powerful argument that early Friends' ecstatic experience, physical reaction to their convincement arising from it and consequent enthusiasm for the impact of that convincement experience was caused by a rye fungus, ergotism, a natural production of lysergic acid diethylamide (LSD) (Matossian 2007).

⁷⁰ See for example i14's experience described in Chapter 4 FN47.

The purpose of mission is to attract others to the expression of religious experience (Wach 1951: 37), so if mission is missing from Experimenters' transformation, there must be some constraint preventing them expressing their experiences publicly and encouraging others to Experiment. At Glenthorne, g19 had said: *'I am concerned about what I feel is the intellectual treading on the rose petals of my experience, my felt experience.'* As shown in the previous and following chapters, there is fear of having the 'rose petals' of their delicate experience trodden on and fear of conflict within the culture of silence (Dandelion 1996: 257-258).⁷¹ In general Quaker-time, away from the Experiment (where there is explicit sharing of experience), the culture of silence similarly masks Experimenters' fears.⁷²

Hay observed that the more trust was established, the more likely respondents were to admit to religious experience (Hay 1982: 117), so potentially distrust or fear keeps Experimenters from telling other Friends their specific experience in the Experiment. The culture of silence potentially masks that some might have deeper or more dramatic experience than others. A further reason for reluctance to discuss such experience is the fear of being seen to claim that one Friend is better than another.⁷³

British Quakerism has no priests or pastors and a formal nomination process in which an individual is ostensibly prevented from nominating herself, important organising

⁷¹ See Chapter 1 ('Quaker cultures: double, triple, silence and contribution'), p29, based on Robson's (2005) work, the culture of silence extends beyond matters of belief to incorporate aversion from conflict and questions of power and aversion to expression of strong emotions. (The culture of silence is the result of the process by which the silent form of worship leads to religious experience, interpreted in new forms of belief which are never vocalised (from lack of opportunity or courage) so that silence becomes a defence and there is no reaction to the change leading to silence as consequence and covert change of theology with silence as mask. The culture of silence describes the value of silence, the devaluation of language and the consequent rules governing the breaking of silence with speech (Dandelion 1996: 257-259; 2008a: 22).)

⁷² See Chapter 8.

⁷³ For example, I was challenged when I gave a conference paper (Meads 2007a) with a question about Experimenters' experience being somehow more spiritual than others (Meads 2008b: 89-90). See Chapter 2 ('Egalitarianism') for discussion of similar levelling techniques.

roles are time-limited, so that any individual making claims, or even without making claims being seen to be assuming authority, is likely to find herself checked (Dandelion 1996: 197-216) and pulled down like the Manx crab;⁷⁴ the culture of silence masks potential claims of hubris as well as scepticism.

Temple identified that there is tension between expression of religious experience and authority, expressed in order (Wach 1951: 46-47). The tension between Quakers' order (the behavioural creed, including the culture of silence) and Experimenters' experience is so strong that, notwithstanding that experience, the tension constrains Experimenters from expressing their experience in order to attract others, except where it threatens their ability to Experiment.⁷⁵

Summary: transformation in context

Experimenters undergo transforming experiences in Experimenting with Light, both in understanding their previous self-limiting ways of behaving and in mystical encounters. Like early Friends, they pass through stages of convincement, but, constrained by the mores of the times in which they live, instead of evangelising their experience they quietly accept their new understandings and ways of behaving, except as shown in Chapter 7 when their ability to Experiment is threatened.

⁷⁴ The Isle of Man is an island community of approximately 80,000 people in the middle of the Irish Sea, where most people know each other, or at least each other's backgrounds. The story of the Manx crab is legendary in the Island to explain the Manx attitude to people seen to be getting above themselves and to acknowledge that the attitude and behaviour described is both endemic and self-destructive. It relates that the fishing fleet come in with a catch of crabs and the fishermen leave a bucket full of them on Port St Mary's quay whilst they attend to something else. One crab decides that it wants to escape and not be eaten, so it starts to climb the side of the bucket, but rather than letting one of their group go free, the others reach up and pull it back into the bucket so that they will all be eaten together. (I lived in the Isle of Man from 1984 to 1991 and often heard the term 'Manx crab' as a reference to this legendary tale.) The crabs in the bucket were exhibiting a physical levelling technique as distinct from the social levelling techniques described in Chapter 2 ('Egalitarianism').

⁷⁵ See Chapter 7.

As early Friends did, Experimenters may come to feel that they have a different, less secular source of authority from other twenty first century Friends (although they did not make this explicit in interview, the groups I observed did show some signs of this). Dandelion argued that control of the Meeting and therefore of the behavioural creed stems from secular authority (1996: 210-211), but Experimenters' sense of the Divine (Chapter 5) and the personal transformation they undergo, leading to their sense of the community of love as a more authentic Quaker experience than the less close community of Meeting (this chapter) potentially gives them a different authority: Chapter 7 explores the public expression of difference from other Friends.

Light groups form local communities of intimacy and Experimenters form a community of love, which I explore further in Chapter 8 as heterotopic space.

Chapter 7 - Conflict handling¹

My data-gathering focused on Experimenters, but other scholars' empirical work on contemporary conflict handling within British Quaker Meetings provides evidence for a case study comparing Experimenters' to other adult British Quakers' behaviour.

Kline provided an in-depth study of conflict handling within one Meeting (2002: 6-7).

Robson's study was broader, gathering data from interviews, collaborative action and observing participation across BYM (2005: 9, 71-72).² Together Kline and Robson provide a deep and broad picture of the context in which the Experiment might be a mirror.³

In this chapter I review others' work on conflict within Quaker Meetings (Morley 1993; Plüss 1995; Sheeran 1996 [1983]) as well as Kline (2002) and Robson (2005; 2008a; 2008b), I then report what data I found about the context to the conflicts within and surrounding two Light groups and finally analyse the conflicts to draw conclusions about the similarities and differences between Experimenters' and other Quakers' use of silence, reflexivity, Quaker identity and use of spiritual resources.

¹ Throughout I use Schrock-Shenk's definition of conflict: 'differences plus tension' (1999: 23), since it encompasses not only the fierce opposition suggested by other definitions, but also lower key and covert experiences. Definitions of conflict are numerous and I chose Schrock-Shenk for the same reason Robson did, because it is the broadest. In addition to the definitions cited by Robson (2005: 47), a selection includes: 'An encounter with arms; a fight; a prolonged struggle; dashing together of physical bodies' (Onions 1970: 368); 'a clash of concrete demands motivated by [different] underlying interests; power struggle' (Ury 2000: 41); 'perceived divergence of interests, or a belief that parties' current aspirations cannot be achieved simultaneously' (Rubin, et al. 1994) in Fry and Fry (1997: 10).

² Robson's informants included 'key informants' (who gave an experienced and authoritative view from the centre), 'grassroots Quakers' (providing local points of view based in day-to-day experience) and 'Edge Quakers' (those coming into or leaving Friends, who had a particular or critical view) (2005: 9, 71-72). Kline's informants were a cross-section of one Meeting.

³ Kline and Robson's work has already been briefly reviewed in relation to the gap in contemporary Quaker studies scholarship on power in Chapter 1 ('Group and power relations'), pp33-37.

Other scholars' work

In this section I review the work of scholars who considered conflict handling within Quaker Meetings. Plüss (1995) and Sheeran (1996 [1983]) considered conflicts surrounding belief. Morley (1993) considered decision making in business meetings. Kline (2002) and Robson (2005; 2008a) considered mundane Quaker conflicts.⁴

Plüss

From an outsider sociological perspective, Plüss (1995) considered a conflict between the Christian and Universalist wings of BYM (the New Foundation Fellowship (NFF) and the Quaker Universalist Group (QUG). She concluded that the glue which holds Quakers together is their socialisation process (1995: 91) and that adherence to Quaker institutional conduct is a necessary characteristic of that institutional conduct, stemming as it does from how Friends define quality of truth, that is, how they define the will of God, together in MfW (1995: 62). Implicitly the requirements of Quaker membership 'stipulate' that Quakers should not consider their individually held beliefs as being of foremost importance; their epistemology is collective (1995: 129). Plüss did not, however, focus on the conflict itself, but rather on the question of belief and how Quakers make decisions (Robson 2005: 64-65).

Sheeran

Sheeran looked from an outsider socio-theological perspective at how decisions are taken when differences exist in American unprogrammed Meetings, which are

⁴ Although Sheeran's and Morley's work was principally in USA, the operation of Quaker business meetings there is similar to that in the UK. Plüss, Kline and Robson undertook their research wholly in UK, although they also drew on American literature.

organised very similarly to BYM (1996 [1983]).⁵ Sheeran's main focus was on the Quaker business method for making decisions, but to illustrate how the method works he looked at instances of 'conflict' (1996 [1983]: 50): the first he cited was 'apparently trivial' and 'prolonged' (1996 [1983]: 50, 53) and he also referred to 'dissent' (1996 [1983]: 69) and 'cleavages' (1996 [1983]: 84), terms which suggest 'differences with tension' (Schrock-Shenk & Ressler 1999: 23).

Sheeran said that a point of pride⁶ about Quaker decisions is that they occasion the emergence of a higher synthesis of individual ideas where 'two and two make five' (Sheeran 1996 [1983]: 53), yet recognising that the process was not always followed ideally:

In a sense, the conclusion reached by the assembly is a musical composition, and each participant has one note to contribute; if very many notes are missing, the theme loses its beauty and perhaps even becomes unrecognizable.
(Sheeran 1996 [1983]: 55)

He continued the musical analogy in describing how unity was reached:

The melodic image is useful. It suggests that the sort of agreement found in Quaker decisions is not an identity of view such that every participant ends up on the same note. Instead, they remain on different notes but blend them as the pianist blends complementary notes into a chord.
(Sheeran 1996 [1983]: 63-64)

He observed that there are at least two stages to this process: the preliminary stage follows initial presentation of both the problem and its possible solutions and in the second stage moves towards a conclusion. Where the meeting does not follow a tide

⁵ He cited the British books of discipline (*Christian Faith and Practice* 1960; *Church Government* 1968) as well as some American ones. Although first published in 1983, Sheeran's research was undertaken from 1973 to 1975 for his 1977 thesis (1996 [1983]: vii).

⁶ Sheeran seems to be implying that he found the 'point of pride' among American Quakers.

of building consensus, it may be that no conclusion can be reached, so the matter is postponed to a later meeting, as happened with Group A's internal conflicts.⁷

Sheeran considered belief systems underlying Quaker decision making (1996 [1983]: Chapter IV) and found: 'the real cleavage among Friends is between those who experience the gathered or covered condition and those who do not' (1996 [1983]: 87). Those who do experience it use different language to describe the event, 'gathered in Christ' for the Christocentrics and the expression of 'the force at the depth of the universe or in the depth of every human' for the Universalists. 'In either case, the words and concepts are secondary; the event, the experience, is what counts.' His evidence also showed that not all Friends at a meeting which some sense as gathered will so experience it. There may be little difference in language between those who experience the gathered meeting and those who do not, but:

In the experience, the former finds guidance, motivation to reconsider preferences, a sense of obligation to the decision reached in this special atmosphere. None of these factors directly affects the person who has identical belief but lacks the experience. (Sheeran 1996 [1983]: 87)

Sheeran did not refer to action science, but in his analysis of successful business meeting decisions he identifies what Argyris and Schön call 'Model II alternative learning culture', where solutions are found on the basis of internal commitment rather than external persuasion or coercion (Marsick & Sauquet 2000: 387). Sheeran found that real commitment comes because participants experience Divine inspiration and that Friends' experience of the Divine is core to achieving the best resolution of conflict.

⁷ See this chapter ('Outline of the conflicts'), p266.

Morley

Morley found consensus or compromise, an intellectual process, an unsatisfactory approach to and outcome from a business meeting, since commitment to the outcome was shallow (1993: 6). Morley observed that, on the other hand, 'sense of the meeting' requires that Friends 'open ourselves to being guided to perfect resolution in Light, to a place where we sit in unity in the collective inward Presence' where 'God gets a voice' (Morley 1993: 5) and which 'fosters powerful commitment' (1993: 6), echoing Sheeran (1996 [1983]: 84).

Morley cited examples of 'sense of the meeting' where the solution to the conflict was neither one party's position, nor the other's, but was suggested by someone else.⁸

Often the meeting, including the person who made the suggestion, could not remember from whom: 'the sense of the meeting came through us and for us, but not from us' (Morley 1993: 24). He also cited examples where compromise was unsatisfactory. For Morley, as for Sheeran, the sense of the Divine is crucial, both to business meetings reaching a successful resolution to conflict, and to the protagonists' commitment to that resolution.

Kline

From an outsider anthropological perspective, Kline considers local conflicts he found in one large Meeting. The conflicts were both over disruptions to MfW, caused by late arrivals and by children, and the Meeting's handling of one national issue referred back to local Meetings by MfS, about whether BYM could support training people

⁸ This echoes 'two and two make five' mentioned in this chapter ('Sheeran'), p250.

who were likely to intend to break the law in the Trident Ploughshares project (Kline 2002).

Kline's main conclusion is that the (British) Quaker disposition directs internal conflict into business meetings, although he notes Friends do not readily acknowledge business meetings as part of their resources in managing conflict. He suggests (on the basis of one informant's comment in a discussion on business method) that there is a dislike among Friends for the idea that there are limits on freedom among Friends. He says: 'When conflicts do occur in the Society, Quakerly strategies are employed to contain the problem both on and offstage' (Kline 2002: 309). He observes that avoidance is a stronger part of Quaker identity than business method, because few participate in business meetings (Kline 2002: 287-290), especially in that some Friends either kept away from the business meetings or left the Meeting over the local issues.

Kline's analysis goes further than Plüss' in that he acknowledges 'offstage' behaviour, following Goffman (1959), that is, 'unofficial routes of conflict management', which do not 'threaten' the efficacy of the official ('onstage') methods. Kline notes that withdrawal and avoidance are typically recognised as the primary means to manage conflicts within the Society, using silence and self-questioning to forestall overt dispute.

Kline reports his own experience of a gathered meeting and he appears to accept Friends' interpretation of it:

Prior to the meeting the participants spoke in strong terms about their position on Trident/Ploughshares 2000, giving the impression that no unity would be found that evening. Although I made no verbal contribution, my being there with all of the other participants was viewed as supporting the meeting and their decision. In Quaker idiom this is called 'upholding the meeting'. When the minute was read and everyone agreed on the statement, I felt a physical sensation that was not simply relief from the long evening being concluded. Hair stood on the back of my neck, and there was a sense of accomplishment. Many Friends described this as feeling the presence of the Inner Light when I described it to them. (Kline 2002: 146)

Kline does not, however, use Sheeran's finding about commitment consequent upon experiencing Divine inspiration in the gathered meeting, outlined above, although elsewhere he draws on Sheeran (2002: 12, 73-74, 188).⁹

Robson

Robson, from an insider social psychology perspective, concludes that the espoused theory in BYM is that of the 'peaceable kingdom' where the lion lies down with the lamb and all apparent natural aggression is absent (Isaiah 11: 6-9), but the theory-in-use (Argyris & Schön 1996) is 'don't ask, don't tell, don't even think about it' and the pattern of handling conflict is that 'aversion precedes avoidance, relationship is privileged above outcome, and moderation and restraint are required' (Robson 2005: abstract).

Robson observes that Plüss did not focus much on understanding or interpretation of the conflict at the centre of her thesis, but drew on it to ask broader questions about how belief systems are validated and, further, in her example of belief difference, resolution was achieved without using the business meeting structure from which her

⁹ Similarly, although Kline references Morley as a guide to how business meetings should be clerked (Kline 2002: 142, 170), he does not note in his analysis that Morley found compromise unsatisfactory because it left out the Divine element and led to a shallow outcome (1993: 6). Kline's omission of the central part of Sheeran and Morley's findings suggests that Kline maintained his outsider anthropologist stance notwithstanding his personal experience.

wider conclusions were drawn, but instead from informal meetings ('offstage' in Kline's terms) finally put to a formal session of BYM (Robson 2005: 64-65).

In direct contradiction of Kline's statement, the evidence from Robson's informants is that Quakers do not 'self-question', rather that, with a very few exceptions, they are unable to reflect upon their own position in any conflict, let alone put themselves in another's shoes, but Kline is focusing on the operation of business meetings and Robson is considering differences with tension some of which have not yet found way onto business meeting agendas and are therefore not formally acknowledged in the Meeting.

Robson's analysis is sophisticated. She reviews various conflict handling models to determine that narrative theory (Winslade & Monk 2000) would be the most useful, but there is a lack of Quaker narratives about successful conflict handling and those which exist are not known widely (2005: 227-230; 2008a: 12).¹⁰ The Experiment provides more narratives of successful conflict handling amongst Quakers, as I show below.

Robson concludes that Quakers' averting their attention from conflict within Meetings makes it difficult for them to acknowledge when there is conflict and therefore to analyse the conflicting acts, including their own, and that they avert their minds from questions of power as much as from conflict (2005: 219). Where there is corporate acknowledgement that conflict might arise, the approach is to focus on the individual

¹⁰ The other models she reviews are the dual concern model (Kilmann & Thomas 1975; Thomas 1988), Galtung's conflict handling triangle (Miall, et al. 1999), incorporating Ury's (2000) 'third side' (the conflict's context), and Rothman's (1997) ARIA framework.

(*Conflict in Meetings* 2000: 10-11), not to be reflexive corporately, about the institution of the Society itself.¹¹

Narrative Theory

Winslade and Monk base their theory in social constructionism (Berger & Luckman 1991 [1966]; Burr 1995) and set out a framework for narrative mediation (see Figure 7.1). The mediator first engages the conflict protagonists in the mediation (or resolution) process. The mediator and the protagonists then together deconstruct the protagonists' conflict-saturated story by discovering their dominant discourses (meta-narratives, such as patriarchy and feminism, racism, religion). The situation is then reframed by externalising language (for example, talking about the conflict as an object which is a problem for the protagonists instead of in terms of the protagonists causing the conflict (Winslade & Monk 2000: 79)). Finally they construct alternative discourses out of their unstoried experience (which usually requires two or three lived experiences that testify to more respectful and favoured interactions (Winslade & Monk 2000: 86)). This requires the mediator's reflexivity as well as the protagonists' (Winslade & Monk 2000: 120) and the process is likely to be iterative: going back to the engagement stage to ensure commitment to the process in the deconstruction phase; going back to the deconstruction phase in the construction of alternative discourses; and so on (Winslade & Monk 2000: 91).

Winslade and Monk say that postmodernism underlies their approach (2000: 124) and they emphasise that the relational context and perspective are extremely important, particularly in the participants' calling each other into position. For example, if one

¹¹ E-mail exchanges 25 July and 2 September 2008.

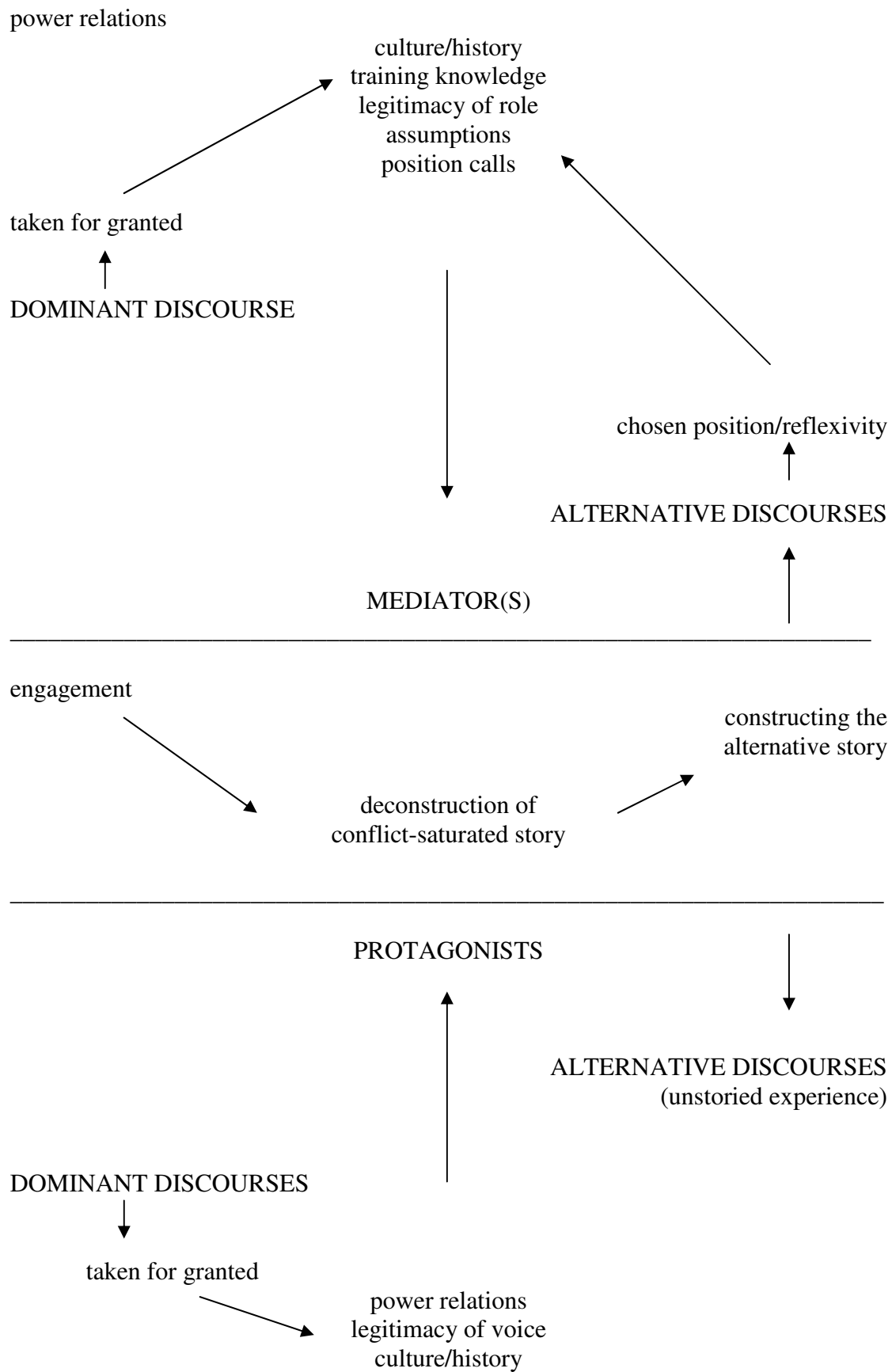


Figure 7.1: Narrative mediation model (Winslade & Monk 2000: 59)

protagonist positions himself as victim, he calls the other into position as perpetrator (Winslade & Monk 2000: 116-136). Winslade and Monk also recognise that a conflict might gather momentum when the parties are reluctant to abandon their positions of agency, but that it is far more likely that a conflict occurs because people think that they have no agency at all (2000: 100). They also review how each party's perceptions of and claims to their own entitlements (race, gender, religious affiliation or other elements of identity) can reinforce a conflict and so deconstructing these and re-storying them in the narrative process is essential (Winslade & Monk 2000: 94-115).

There are many similarities between the best practice Winslade and Monk outline for managing protagonists' relations and what Sheeran describes as a well-held Quaker business meeting: an atmosphere of confidence is required (1996 [1983]: 53-61), and there should be no decisions without unity (1996 [1983]: 63-71).

William Penn's conflict handling template

One narrative of successful conflict handling which Robson (2005: 230) identifies is the story of Richard Barnard and Isaac Baily (Cronk 1991: 27-29), where the conflict-handling is based on Matthew 18: 15-17.

The stages in Matthew 18 are: first speak only to the person with whom the conflict arises, if he listens, then he will be 'thy brother'; if he will not listen, then take 'one or two more', not for the purpose of their taking sides, but to help to resolve the dispute; if he refuses to listen to them and the conflict is still not resolved, then take the matter to the whole church. If still it is not resolved, then sit down with the person with whom one is in conflict as if he were a gentile and a tax gatherer. Ostensibly this

implies that being cast out from the community is envisaged as a possible final outcome, but Lederach pointed out that Jesus ate with gentiles and tax collectors, so that relationship and connection on the same level as each other is implied (1999: 133-135).

Baily had blocked a water course, preventing Barnard from access to water for his adjoining land. Baily was unresponsive to any of the stages instigated by Barnard. Barnard was advised simply by a travelling minister: 'There is more required of some than of others', so took the matter 'to God for direction and guidance'. Barnard then understood that to resolve matters with Baily required 'giving up claims of being right and going to his neighbour in humility and forgiveness', he was called to wash Baily's feet (Cronk 1991: 28) and, when he did so with water from the disputed watercourse, Baily initially resisted him but then conceded, subsequently unblocking the water course and being warmly reconciled to his Friend.

The passage in Matthew was the basis of William Penn's conflict handling template for conduct among Friends in seventeenth century Pennsylvanian settlement (Hartshorne 1993: 360), but Robson observes that the Barnard and Baily story adds an extra 'twist', the additional inspiration found in prayer. I participated in a Woodbrooke course ('The William Penn Conflict Handling Template' 18-20 January 2008), co-facilitated by Robson. Eleven participants, including the facilitators, reflected on the model in discussion and role play, concluding that in order for it to

work successfully at least one of the protagonists should undertake preliminary as well as penultimate prayerful reflection,¹² or, in secular terms, reflexivity.¹³

Robson observes that Barnard appeals to another narrative, not merely the Penn template, that of Christ washing his disciples' feet: he drew on a wider biblical repertoire to find a story which he could re-enact to express his feelings (2005: 230). Robson does not also draw out in her commentary, however, that early Friends often performed enactments,¹⁴ another narrative implicit in Barnard's re-enactment.

Business meetings

Robson refers to Sheeran when she observes: 'There is sometimes confusion between decision-making and conflict handling; they are related but they are not the same, and may require different methods of communication' (Robson 2008b: 145). Decision making may, however, be one way in which conflicts are managed and resolved, as Robson observes earlier: 'it is in these meetings for worship for business that most arguments, disagreements and conflicts will eventually be tackled. The atmosphere and conventions of Quaker business method influence all Quaker interactions when difficulty arises' (2005: 19). This was the case for the instances cited by Kline (because he did not examine 'offstage' conflicts) and ultimately for Group A.

¹² Robson remarks that the stories and methods arising from workshops are known only to a few (Robson 2008a: 12). See, however, this chapter ('The narrative of William Penn's Conflict Handling Template'), p285: Group A found this step before the Woodbrooke course participants identified it.

¹³ Reflexivity requires a person to consider her own position and how that position affects the matter under consideration; for its specific application in the research process see Chapter 4 ('Reflexivity'), pp145-146, and for the inherent nature of reflexivity in the Experiment see Chapter 1 FN21. Prayerful reflection would incorporate some sense of calling upon the Divine, which would be absent from a purely secular activity, so prayerful reflection and reflexivity differ in terms of perceived resources, but not necessarily in outcome: reflexivity incorporates the possibility of being mistaken (*QFP* 1995: 1.02.17) in the same way as prayerful reflection does.

¹⁴ Nayler's ride into Bristol in 1656, in re-enactment of Christ's entry into Jerusalem, is probably the best known since it caused a scandal and Nayler's trial by Parliament for blasphemy (Braithwaite 1981 [1912]: 251-265), but there were many prophetic enactments, including Fox's barefoot march through Lichfield (Nickalls 1975: 71-72) and 'going naked as a sign' (Bauman 1998: 84-94).

Summary of previous Quaker scholarship

Plüss did not focus on the dynamics of conflict and did not consider any relevant action outside business meetings. Kline concludes that the business meeting was where conflicts were handled, but that there was aversion from conflict within Quaker meetings in that Friends involved in conflict would absent themselves from business meetings where the relevant issues were to be considered.

Robson's evidence directly contradicts Kline's claim that Quakers 'self-question': her informants were not reflexive in their approach to conflict. Robson's more sophisticated analysis of conflicts which have not yet reached business meetings shows how Quakers' aversion from questions of power and authority leave them incapable of addressing conflict. Robson's informants did not draw on spiritual resources¹⁵ and she does not consider spiritual perspectives. She does however identify that a lack of successful conflict handling narratives contributes to Quakers' lack of self-confidence in addressing conflict.

Only Sheeran and Morley considered any spiritual resource or affect on outcome, in their conclusions that commitment to the outcome of conflict handling in business meetings was strongest where Friends experienced Divine inspiration.¹⁶

¹⁵ Robson asked what personal resources (including mental and spiritual resources) workshop participants drew on in considering conflict (2005: 192) to find that few reflected in terms of spiritual resources and she also found that references to prayer, God and spiritual practice were infrequent in her interview data (2005: 203-204).

¹⁶ Amongst the potential reasons for the difference in Sheeran and Morley's conclusions from Plüss', Kline's and Robson's are that their work was undertaken in USA and their perspectives: Sheeran was a Jesuit, looking to discover why 'communal discernment' (a method similar to Quaker business method) had fallen out of use in his Order (1996 [1983]: xiii) and Morley was concerned about the diminution of Quaker spiritual core (1993: 2).

The Experiment and its context

This section provides data about the specific context and outlines briefly several conflict narratives from my research data.¹⁷

The specific contexts

Kline and Robson provide a general picture of British Quakers' conflict handling, which provides a context to Experimenters' conflict-handling. I did, however, also find data specific to Meetings A and B.

Meeting A

Since I did not interview the members of Group A, I did not get their considered view of the life Meeting A. I gleaned that despite its being open to anyone from the Meeting, the prayer group there was perceived as closed. The written account of the conflict¹⁸ reflected that there were other difficulties in Meeting A, including lack of knowledge of Quaker processes as older Friends died, moved away or otherwise became unable to attend.

Meeting B

I had specific data from the Group B interviews, not only from members of the Light group, but also from b11, who had been an Elder when the conflict arose, and b10 who was Clerk of Elders before and after, but not at the time of the conflict.

¹⁷ There were others, for example Meeting B had an earlier conflict when it had not been possible to establish a Light group. I also had complete data from another Meeting (supplied by other informants), where the conflict handling was so similar to Group and Meeting A's (although the underlying causes were different) that I have not needed to include it to make the argument.

¹⁸ See Chapter 4 ('Primary data'), p138.

The spiritual life of Meeting B generally

b11 said that in the late 1990s she had felt that Friends were not revealing themselves in MfW, although they did in specific groups: *'There we were like brothers and sisters, truly. But in Meeting I wasn't getting that.'* So when she came across the Experiment on a weekend course, she thought that it would give Friends in Meeting a chance to experience that closeness in their own Meeting House. b2 observed: *'you need a safe environment for this kind of expansion'*; Meeting was not, it was perceived as *'cliquey'* and lacked depth.

b11 said when b1 started to attend Meeting in 2004, b1:

*stood up one day and ministered about 'Where is this Light?' It took a complete, may I say, novice, after a few meetings. It was very, very soon. She stood up and said, 'Where is it, Friends?' I think there was this great appeal; it was like a little voice in the wilderness. And she had a **huge** crowd of people round her. And so that's what was needed.*

b11 saw b1's appeal as highlighting an unmet need for spiritual enquiry in the Meeting: the Meeting had become complacent and a newcomer with a fresh enquiring perspective was the person to galvanise action where others did not try. When b1 described her enquiry to me herself, she said her questions to herself were: *'What is this about "the Light"? Do they mean it literally? Or is it a metaphor for something? And if it's an experience, can I experience it?'* By her very seeking the Light in another forum, it is clear that she was not experiencing it in MfW.¹⁹

¹⁹ b1 told me she had approached a Friend who ran a monthly bookstall at Meeting B and he had recommended *Light to Live* by (Ambler 2002) in which she had found all her questions answered. She then spoke to b3 and b7 about establishing a Light group and they advised she speak to b11. b11 encouraged her and she also discussed the idea with b2 and b10, so that b1 became aware of an earlier failed attempt to establish a group.

b10 said the Meeting's sense of early Friends was weak. She also said that at about the same time as the Light group began to meet, new people began to attend Meeting, younger people and families. She talked about fragmentation in the Meeting and said:

It doesn't matter as long as there's something available for people to feel is feeding their journey. I suppose it's more difficult to get a sense of the Quaker community, I mean, I wouldn't have too much idea about where the mass of the people in the Meeting were spiritually in terms of quest or questing or theological position, whereas in the early days you would know where to put people in their pigeon holes. When you could see people in those ways, it felt more of a place where it was a body, where people co-operated and you knew each other and did tasks in relation to one another. It's much harder to get a sense of that now.

Meeting B had difficulty in finding Friends to serve as Elders: b10 had been asked to be an Elder again after only a short break. b10 said that the Meeting should have had ten Elders, but with effect from 2005 there were only eight; she said Elders were not a strong group and had been affected by the Clerk moving away and others being unavailable. When she had again become Clerk of Elders towards the end of 2005, she had found that some of the minutes were missing.²⁰

b10's assessment of the Elders' lack of strength was borne out by b11, who told me that Elders had held endless meetings discussing one particular Friend whose ministry in MfW was long, rambling and inappropriate: *'In the last couple of years of my Eldership, I found it too difficult to go to Meeting, because of all these upsetting things that were personality driven.'* She had instead found support in an Assagioli creative meditation group (1993 [1965]; 1998 [1974]): clearly she felt isolated in her Eldership.

²⁰ Responsibility for minutes is important to Quakers (QFP 1995: 4.38g, 4.41-4.43) and it is rare for minutes to go missing.

b2 went further and described Elders' behaviour as '*moral cowardice, spiritual cowardice*': Elders had an inability to deal with people; they needed to be sensitive, but not over-sensitive:

We've had problems with Elders. We've had some people who've not been proactive. There are times when the thing that Elders need to do is to hold the Meeting prayerfully and there are other times when there are definite problems that need a pro-active approach.

Having taken guidance from the Light, there are times when, for example, if you have a Friend who is perpetually standing up and giving very, very long ministry, Elders have to be prepared amongst themselves to say the next time this happens one of us is going to actually stop it. And that hasn't happened.

It isn't fair on the rest of the Meeting. If you don't give that person a clue that what they're doing is actually harmful to the rest of the Meeting, they don't stand a chance, do they?

She said: '*I think [B] as a Meeting finds it difficult to confront.*'

b10 also said that the role of Elders had diminished from what it had been thirty years earlier; it was now to make information accessible to support the spiritual life of the Meeting, rather than to instigate learning about Friends.

Meeting B seemed to lack direction until b1, a relative newcomer, took initiative with her question of the meaning of 'the Light'. The fact that she was surrounded by Friends when she raised the possibility of a Light group showed there was a spiritual need, which was not until that point being met. The role of Elders is to nurture the spiritual life of the Meeting (*QFP* 1995: 12.12). In the perception of Friends, who were themselves at various times Elders, the Elders were not confident in the role with which they were charged: they were reluctant to speak directly to Friends who were disrupting MfW with lengthy or inappropriate ministry and they were reluctant to

address the issue of b15's behaviour in the Light group.²¹ They hoped that difficult issues would go away, rather than confronting them; Elders were not just passive, but positively reluctant to fulfil their role.

Outline of the conflicts

Group A had two internal conflicts which were resolved and one external conflict, with Meeting A, which ran for over two years. Each internal conflict was considered over several of the group's meetings. The first instance was between two members of the group (a4 and a8) over one of them (a8) talking to a third (a2) outside the group about a breach of worship sharing discipline.²² The second was a disagreement by telephone between two members of the group (a4 and a6) over the date for the group's review meeting. The external conflict concerned the Meeting's Clerk (who was also Clerk of MM Elders) and warden's objection to the Light group; a1 tried to report on the Light group's progress at an MM Elders' meeting, but could not get the matter onto their agenda. MM Elders were aware of the conflict but did not address it directly and eventually a1 addressed it in Meeting A by writing to each member individually.

When Group B started meeting, there was internal conflict over the behaviour of one member (b15), which developed into external tension with the Meeting's Elders. b15 had a pattern of attending Meeting B for a while and then disappearing. Meeting B Elders were aware that b15 had had a religious experience which he associated with Sanat Kumara,²³ which lay behind his disruption of Group B's meetings. He

²¹ See this chapter ('Outline of the conflicts'), pp266-267.

²² a4 had commented on a8's sharing at the previous Light group's meeting and in the telephone conversation a8 had discussed with a2 that she wanted to stop commenting on the sharing. (See also Chapter 3 FN108, a8 later directly stopped a4 commenting on her sharing.)

²³ b11 told me about b15's experience in interview after I had met and Experimented with Group B. She thought others might have mentioned it to me, but they had not. The Association of Sananda and Sanat Kumara was founded in 1965 by Dorothy Martin, whose end-of-the-world cult was infiltrated

attempted to impose a different form of meditation from the Experiment and commented on everyone else's sharing, so never fully participated in the Experiment. After persistent approaches from members of Group B, eventually the Elders arranged a special meeting, held under strict worship sharing discipline, where all members of Group B, including b15, were heard, but the matter was not resolved there. The external tension was resolved by Elders calling the special meeting,²⁴ but the internal conflict ended only when b15 was excluded from the Light group.

Analysis of the evidence from my research

In this section I analyse Experimenters' conflict handling. I consider the operation of power and the significance of Experimenters' reflexivity, already practised in the Experiment. I analyse how Experimenters managed and settled conflict, by reference to the narratives on which they were able to draw.

Group A's conflict handling narratives differ from those Kline observed, where Friends withdrew and in some cases left the Meeting (2002: 275-289): all the issues surrounding Group A were brought out and there was resolution. Group B's instances were more like those described by Kline, since one party, b15, was excluded and subsequently left the Meeting. Both groups' narratives differ from Kline in an

and studied by Leon Festinger and his students, giving rise to Festinger's theory of cognitive dissonance; Martin, as 'Sister Thedra' claimed she had been healed by Sananda (Jesus) and went on to channel messages from ascended masters to her contactee community (*After the Prophecy; Association of Sananda and Sanat Kumara*; Festinger, et al. 2008 [1956]).

²⁴ There may be an appropriate difference in small and large meetings between the Light group's establishment being a matter for PM in small Meetings and Elders in large Meetings, where there are likely to be other small groups and one more is less controversial. It is notable, however, that in Group B's case the matter could be handled only in a meeting held under strict discipline.

important respect, their difficulty in getting into the arena of a business method; in Kline's descriptions the matters were simply there already, on the agenda.²⁵

Power

Power and responsibility: internal conflicts

Part of Group A's method of operation was that all the members of the group had equal responsibility for running it and, although different members were more prominent in its arrangements (a1, a2 and a8 respectively at different times and in different respects), reference was always made to the whole group (or at least those present) for any decision. Responsibility was equally and easily shared, without much in the way of discussion.

Conversely, although it had always been b1's intention²⁶ that Group B should share responsibility for arrangements, b15's assertion of 'entitlement' to lead the group in a different direction from the Experiment (including persistently commenting on the other members' sharing) caused an imbalance which the rest of the group struggled to contain. As a result of the group's appeal to Elders, the internal conflict escalated into a conflict within the Meeting, where the Light group felt Elders perceived them as a nuisance.²⁷

²⁵ See this chapter ('Robson'), p255, Kline focuses only on conflicts which have already reached the business meeting, missing the earlier stages which Robson examines. Kline acknowledges there may be 'offstage' behaviour surrounding 'onstage' conflict handling (2002: 230) and that there may be offstage conflict (2002: 237), but he does not examine the offstage conflicts, nor acknowledge offstage elements of conflicts which get onstage. Possibly he was unaware of earlier stages in the onstage conflicts, perhaps because he was an outsider and his fieldwork was limited to twelve months in one Meeting.

²⁶ Group B was founded at b1's initiative.

²⁷ This echoes the comments of one of Robson's informants: 'in Quaker circles the person who creates conflict is in the wrong' (2005: 137).

Power: external conflicts

Group A tried to get an opportunity to report back to Elders in the accepted way, by asking for an item to be placed on the agenda, but met with resistance from the Elders' Clerk who disapproved of the Light group and was therefore herself a protagonist.²⁸ Although a8 and a5 were Elders as well as members of the Light group, a5 did not often attend Elders' meetings and was explicitly excluded from an impromptu Elders' meeting where the Light group was discussed.²⁹ Group A was initially unable to get the structure which might have helped resolve the conflict with Meeting A, since it had no power to force the issue onto the Elders' agenda and be present to report on the Light group's progress. Elders had, however, discussed the Light group since they had (albeit inappropriately) asked a8 to mediate between the Meeting and the Light group.³⁰ a8 reported to the rest of the Group A that she had explained why the Light group needed to be closed³¹ and, implicitly, that Elders were satisfied with her explanation. The matter was discussed independently by Elders and Group A, but as there was no direct dialogue between Elders and Group A,³² both discussions of the conflict were ineffectual. The Clerk had power over the Elders' meeting and subtly prevented the other Elders from exercising their power to resolve the conflict.

²⁸ See Appendix D4, pp6-10, for part of Group A's discussion about communication with the Clerk (there was more discussion at other Light group meetings), especially p10 where a1 reports to the group that the Clerk's reason for keeping the Light group off Elders' agenda was lack of time.

²⁹ a8 had been at the meeting from which a5 was excluded and had reassured the group that there was no issue, or that the issue had been dealt with when it had arisen informally in an earlier Elders' meeting. Subsequently it transpired that the Clerk had not been satisfied (so the issue had not been successfully resolved to all Elders' satisfaction) when the Clerk gave a1 an account which was different from a8's. The Clerk's account was in the letter referred to at Appendix D4, p8. The group discussed it again in a later meeting, but that discussion did not address whether the Clerk had persisted with her objections at the Elders' meeting or whether she had agreed with a8's view that the matter was dealt with and then subsequently decided to act on her own by writing to a1.

³⁰ a8 declined: she reported that she had told the other Elders that it would not be appropriate for her to mediate as she was in the Light group. It was not clear why, having identified that mediation was appropriate, Elders did not then ask someone else to mediate.

³¹ See Chapter 1 ('Experiment practice'), pp11-12, for an explanation of 'closed' and 'freeflowing' groups.

³² a8 did report to Group A, but the Elders' Clerk gave a different account in her letter to a1 (see the discussion at Appendix D4, p8), so there was no direct dialogue.

Eventually, the issue of the Light group arose at Meeting A's PM, because the warden would not allow Group A to book its meetings there without PM's consideration. At this point, a1 recognised her agency and her power as a member of the Meeting, escalating attention to the conflict by writing individually to all the active members of the Meeting; she did not avert from the possibilities of resolving the conflict by exercising her power. Once the issue was in the public arena in Meeting A, one of the Elders in that Meeting was able to exercise her power to call a meeting of the Elders in that Meeting and address the issue: the protagonists (Clerk and warden) did not step back from their objection to the Light group, but since they did not articulate what that objection was, they were not able to continue it publicly.

Group B also appealed to Elders over the several months when b15's behaviour was difficult, but Elders resisted acting. Eventually they had to acknowledge that so many in Group B were expressing hurt that they could no longer ignore the issue. As a result of Elders having to give the matter some attention when they were individually approached, the tension within the Light group became seen as a tension between the Light group and the Meeting. The Elders' inertia ('don't ask, don't tell') disempowered the Light group, but the group persisted until they were taken seriously, they were aware of their potential agency and used it, they did not simply give in but instead exercised their power by persisting.

Power: conclusion

Robson found that Quaker aversion from emotion and questions of power prevented conflict being addressed (2005: 149-150, 218-219), whilst there were instances where members of Groups A and B were simply without power, until they took it for themselves. Robson's informants' preferred aversion and avoidance; Experimenters

wanted to engage but were initially prevented by the aversion and avoidance Robson found. Experimenters broke the culture of silence³³ and used what means they could; they demonstrated Foucault's conception of power as circulatory (1980 [1976]: 98): they were the vehicles of power, not its points of application.³⁴

There is something in the process of the Experiment and Experimenters' experience that makes Experimenters behave differently from the generality of BYM: what this is becomes apparent in considering their reflexivity and the narrative model.

The significance of reflexivity

In Group A's first internal conflict, a4 was able to accept a8's concern over the sharing stage of the Light group's meeting when he reflexively understood and let go of his concern that he had not been able to defend himself when he perceived he was criticised. He accepted that no personal accusation underlay a8's concern, she wanted only to be allowed to talk about her experience without anyone's comment.

In Group A's second instance, there was no direct engagement between a4 and a6 about the conflict after the antagonism first surfaced, but they were held within the group and reminded of its significance when the group was next together at the review meeting. As a result, when the group next met, although the group was prepared to address their difference in the context of the 'meditation on the group' version of the Experiment, a4 and a6 were already making exchanges comfortably. It is also significant that, in the sharing after the meditation on that occasion, several members

³³ See Chapter 1 ('Quaker cultures: double, triple, silence and contribution'), pp28-29, for a full exposition of the culture of silence.

³⁴ See Chapter 2 ('Power imbalance: the hybrid body of Christ') for Foucault's conception of power.

of the group reflected on their positions in other groups, a2 in particular commenting that she had solved a problem at work. They were all being reflexive.³⁵

At the meeting where Group A learned of a5's exclusion from the impromptu Elders' meeting,³⁶ the sharing after their meditation revealed their reflexivity, albeit that this led to their leaving the matter in others' hands. a8 said she had been reflecting on how important it was to look for good in the other person, to understand where they were coming from, what their hurt or need was; it was easy to dismiss that. a6 said that he used to think that the truth was rather like an Egyptian obelisk, hard, rectangular, tall, narrow and spectacular, but now he believed it was rather like a bush with branches above ground, but also branches below ground. a1 had had a vision of the North Wind with his cheeks blown out, wasting an awful lot of effort, with her just standing watching it and she heard '*just stop it*'; she said: '*you just need to allow somebody to offload and let it be and just let it be and it'll be okay, let Elders and Overseers sort it out, you know there is no need to get wrapped up in this.*' a4 shared that it had come to him that it was the two people who were troubled by the Light group³⁷ who needed understanding and compassion, not the group. The spiritual resource of the Experiment led to their being reflexive, considering their own position in relation to the difficulty surrounding the Light group.

b15 was unable to be reflexive and this eventually led to his exclusion from Group B. Since the Experiment is a reflexive process, it did not sit well with him; he wished to impose a different method of meditation, whereas the rest of the group wanted to be

³⁵ See Chapter 4 FN43 and Chapter 1 FN21, reflexivity is consideration of one's own position (and the possibility one may be mistaken).

³⁶ See this chapter ('Power: external conflicts'), p269.

³⁷ The Clerk and warden.

reflexive. In particular, b5 described how she took the issue of the difference into her own meditation and came to see b15 not just as a difficulty for the group, but also what caused him to be so difficult, concluding in the end that Meeting B failed him. b5's reflection, on how her own personal feelings of hurt were an echo of previous occasions when she had been bullied, also gave her strength to challenge him in the special meeting.

In each external conflict, one protagonist lacked reflexivity: respectively Meeting B's Elders when they tried to ignore the conflict in the Light group and the Elders' Clerk in Group A's external conflict.

The Experiment is a reflexive process.³⁸ The meditation prompts call for the individual to ask: 'What is really going on in my life?'; 'Let the Light show you what is really going on here'; 'what makes it like that?'; 'When the answer comes, welcome it. It may be painful or difficult to believe with your normal conscious mind, but if it is the truth you will recognize it immediately and realize that it is something that you need to know. Trust the light. Say yes to it. Submit to it.'; 'An inner conflict is being resolved.'³⁹ In the process, what may have been difficult to accept was reframed by the participants as positive, since it was understood as the Truth. Experimenters learned to trust the process from the positive experiences they had had and they carried its processes and that trust into difficult situations which surrounded their Experimenting.

³⁸ See also Chapter 1 FN21. Reflexivity is also revealed in the stages of transformation in Chapter 6, especially stage 2.

³⁹ See Appendix A2i2; A2i3; A2i4; A2i5; A2i6. The other versions are framed in different language, but the steps are the same.

Experimenters' experience is explicitly shared and therefore their reflexivity is public within their Light groups and their experience gives them confidence to change.

What happens to them may be masked from other Friends in Meetings because of the protocol of confidentiality, but within the group there is no culture of silence

(Dandelion 1996: 237-259) masking change, rather there is a 'culture of contribution'

(Best 2008a: 198-199).⁴⁰

Applying narrative theory to the Experiment

The Narrative model brings out more clearly what informs the protagonists' positions, deconstructing the conflict-saturated story, and looks to construct the alternative story by revealing alternative unstoried experience.

Robson points out that it would be a very rare social group where there is only one discourse and that in the twenty first century individuals are positioned by myriad discourses. She suggests three as dominant in Meeting culture: Quaker, British and middle class (Robson 2008a: 2), but there are others discernable in the conflicts I examine, as described below.

Internal conflicts

Engagement phase

In Groups B's internal conflict, the engagement phase was lacking and thus it escalated to external conflict. Group A, however, was successful in getting the protagonists to engage in the resolution process.

⁴⁰ See Chapter 1 ('Quaker cultures: double, triple, silence and contribution'), pp28-31.

No apparent initial deconstruction phase

In analysing Group A's first internal conflict initially I could not find a deconstruction phase, but when I went back to the data I realised that, over the four previous Experiments, they had been deconstructing other conflicts in their lives.

Conflicts in different areas of a1, a2 and a4's lives emerged in the meditations. a1's were with her colleagues and her daughter. a2 did not identify with whom, but said she had to accept the way things were. a4 talked about forgiveness and similarly did not specify in respect of what he needed forgiveness. a8's sharing on conflicts was the clearest and had begun to result in resolution. In her first Experiment in the group she had come to understand that she was colluding in and contributing to her son's lack of confidence. She reported at her second Experiment that when she addressed him in a different way, his confidence increased and their relationship improved.⁴¹ At her second Experiment she then began to consider a difficulty with her daughter which had, over a twenty year period, caused her hurt, upset and anger; she had not confronted her daughter because of her fear of rejection.⁴²

Deconstructing those other conflicts had prepared them for considering how to handle what now arose in the Light group.

Constructing the alternative story

Diverse narratives (Gromit, Light, God and love in the community life of the group and early Friends) were apparent in Group A's constructing the alternative story to the internal conflicts.

⁴¹ See Chapter 6 ('Changing personal relationships'), pp221-222.

⁴² a4, a1 and a2 had been present at all four Experiments up to this point, but a8 at only two of them.

Gromit's part in the story

a2 brought Gromit⁴³ to the first meeting after Group A's first internal conflict emerged. Gromit carries with him the narrative of faithful, intelligent and vital support to his friend, Wallace (Park 1992). Significantly, in the films Gromit does not have to speak⁴⁴ in order to convey his affectionate exasperation as he makes sure the idiosyncratic Wallace is dressed by the automatic dressing-machine (whose levers Gromit pulls), fed with his favourite Wensleydale and crackers and rescued from the inevitable trouble, into which Gromit resignedly and non-judgementally knows Wallace's genial incompetence will inevitably lead him. Gromit often looks doubtful as Wallace ploughs ahead with yet another hair-brained scheme. Fans of the films love both Gromit and Wallace and laugh with them and at them; also, everything turns out well in the end.

a2 pointed out that Gromit looked different from different angles: Gromit was in the centre of the group, so each member saw him differently and took that perspective into considering the conflict.

The entire Wallace and Gromit narrative was implicit in Gromit's presence, as was shown when a2 invited the group to speak about Gromit after the meditation: the various aspects of Gromit's successful support of Wallace emerged. a2 herself recognised Wallace's misplaced tendency to think he knows better than Gromit, in her thinking that everyone else's view was more valid than hers. a6 recognised that Gromit looked doubtful and surprised. a7 saw that Gromit's ears meant he was a

⁴³ See Chapter 4 FN86: Gromit was a soft toy version of an animated film character (Park 1992).

⁴⁴ Of course, it is not usual for dogs to speak, but Gromit does drive a van and fly aeroplanes in the films, which dogs do not usually do either: these are amongst the elements of juxtaposition which make Gromit a heterotopic site in the films, and of course also make the films funny.

listener. a4 entered into the contributions less directly; first he reflected on the context of Quakers where validity of view is equal, implying acceptance of Friends as they are rather than as anyone else may think they should be, yet still he recognised Gromit was in the centre of things.

a2 brought Gromit again when the second internal conflict arose. Although Gromit did not facilitate rapprochement at the meeting when a4 and a6's disagreement became apparent to all the group, when he reappeared at the next Experiment, three of the group bantered about him. a4 said *'we need to have a discussion about him becoming a member of the group, whether he's allowed to be here'*; a1 replied: *'well, we have checked him over for confidentiality'*; a4 interjected *'it's becoming regular'* and a3 said: *'we've checked him for wires.'* Their humour demonstrated the maxim: 'a laugh is the shortest distance between two people' (Wheeller 2004). As Berger observed, humour is a 'signal of transcendence', an intimation of redemption (Berger 1970: 90), potentially also giving this banter yet more significance. The humour also touched upon the serious issues underlying the external conflict, the group's confidentiality and exclusivity; they were laughing at themselves reflexively and laughing with each other, reinforcing their closeness.⁴⁵

a2 deconstructed a story of friends at loggerheads and subtly replaced it with the alternative discourse of loving helpful friends, by bringing Gromit, a symbol from contemporary light-hearted comedy. Extra powerfully, since silence and stillness appeals to Quakers, she externalised the discourse without language, creating Gromit's enactment simply by bringing the soft toy to join the group. In his non-judgemental

⁴⁵ The group's intimacy is described in Chapter 6 as 'community of love', see pp241-242.

stillness and silence, doubtful, discerning and with gentle humour, Gromit was the perfect Quaker, modelling the ideal behaviour for the protagonists to follow.

Gromit also created a heterotopic space within the heterotopic space of the Experiment and the Light group's meeting. He was an impetus to what occurred for the group in their individual meditations, he was a participant in their sharing and his comic persona reflected the disruptive potential of heterotopia, itself borne out of Foucault's own laughter, when the incongruity of Borges' Chinese encyclopaedia entry for 'animal' struck him (2002 [1966]: xvi).⁴⁶ Gromit's presence was experimental, a deviation from the group's normal pattern (Foucault's first principle of heterotopia (1986 [1967]-a: 24)), his inanimate representation of an animal who is wise incorporated many layers of juxtaposition in one place of several spaces that are in themselves incompatible (Foucault's third principle (1986 [1967]-a: 25)), his silence and stillness personified the silence with which MfW opens and closes (Foucault's fifth principle (1986 [1967]-a: 26)) and he functioned both as an illusion of a person and to compensate (Foucault's final trait (1986 [1967]-a: 27)) for the initial bad feeling between a4 and a6 with the later expression of joking between a1, a3 and a4 (humour always relies on some form of juxtaposition).⁴⁷ Gromit functioned differently throughout the history (Foucault's second principle (1986 [1967]-a: 25)) of his appearances at Group A: initially he represented another Experimenter helping in the internal conflicts, but finally he represented issues of confidentiality and exclusivity, factors surrounding the external conflict.⁴⁸

⁴⁶ See Chapter 3 FN8 for the details of Borges' encyclopaedia entry.

⁴⁷ See Chapter 4 ('The hermeneutic spiral' and FN86), pp166-168. See also Chapter 3 FN38 on Foucault and laughter.

⁴⁸ The issues of confidentiality and exclusivity were discussed at the review meeting held on 5 October in connection with tensions with Meeting A, that is, before the joking on 19 October.

Light as a narrative thread

When Gromit first joined Group A, a6 shared four of his experiences on the theme of Light. He said that the discussion before the meditation had sharpened his focus: in previous meditations he had played with a spotlight on a stage, but in the meditation he recalled an experiment in which he had participated twenty years before when small crustaceans had been examined under microscopes. When a cone of light was shone on them it hurt them and they died. He felt this was what he had been doing in the earlier Experiments, killing the beast he was examining. He also shared that in the meditation he was taken to a garden and as dawn began over the horizon, shapes gradually appeared, groups of people with one cloth covering twenty people, an individual shape, which he called '*poly-people*', which meant to him that groups interact as well as individuals. He had also thought of mushrooms growing in the dark and in the meditation he had been carried across tropical seas: at night the water had seemed black, yet there was a scintilla of light from fluorescent fish feeding underneath.

a3 shared that he had not got anywhere in the meditation, he was stuck in a black hole. His sharing resonated with the whole group since a3 had shared in earlier Experiments his various life difficulties and it riveted the entire group with the seriousness of his condition.⁴⁹ a6 asked him to tell the group about it and a3 said '*it's black*'. a4 said that no light could get out of a black hole, but asked a3 if Light could get in. a3 said he did not know; he felt quite anxious and that it was difficult for light to get into a black hole, but it could do so at an event horizon; he was looking at an event

⁴⁹ Including me, sitting aside from them as participant-observer.

horizon.⁵⁰ a4 and a6's loving and gentle probing had pulled a3 back from oblivion, where all Light was absent, so that he could admit the possibility of Light, a glimmer of hope.⁵¹

The physical manifestations or absence of light refer to the divine meaning of Light. The original use by early Quakers of the word 'Light' referred to the 'Light of Christ'. Although that Christian specificity is no longer explicit, the Christian story is another narrative which Experimenters accept as an historical element underlying their current more Universalist understanding.⁵² The sharing after the meditation shows that these elements, of light and its deeper meaning as the Light, were present for Group A as they held their Friends so that the conflict could be resolved.

'God' and 'Love' in the community life of the group

When the group first addressed its internal conflict, a8 shared that in her meditation she had painted herself into a corner trying to persuade someone else to accept her view. She did not know how to get out of the corner, but had understood that she should always remember '*God's presence*' was there for everybody whether they knew it or not and maybe she had just to let go. All in good time something would happen and the other person would get that sense of love and rest in the love that was there.

⁵⁰ A black hole is a region where matter collapses to infinite density and its surface is known as an event horizon. The black hole's intense gravitational field prevents any light or other electromagnetic radiation from escaping; the inward pull of gravity behind the event horizon is overwhelming, so that no information about the black hole's interior can escape to the outer universe (NCSA 1995).

⁵¹ Although the advice for worship sharing groups includes not commenting directly on what another has said (QFP 1995), it is accepted that a question may be asked for clarification when the Friend has finished sharing. a4 and a6 mostly asked questions (a4 made an observation about a black hole, not what a3 had said) and so their interventions felt appropriate.

⁵² See Chapter 5 for what Experimenters shared of their sense and understanding of the Divine.

In the second instance, a2 said the issue of a4 and a6's conflict affected the whole group. a1 followed this with a call for a commitment from the entire group to ponder the conflict; a1 was reminding the group of their responsibility as a group to face and deal with the conflict.

In the middle of a4 and a6's conflict, at the review meeting, out of the silence came a sense of their closeness, reflecting the transformation they had undergone together.⁵³ a3 coined the phrase '*a shared endeavour*'. They were reminded of the life of the group and the details of running of the group were discussed.

When the group was still expecting to have to address the conflict between a4 and a6 and used the meditation on the group,⁵⁴ a2 expressed how precious the group was, especially being able to sit in it to solve a problem at work. She said:

I did feel very comfortable and I was aware that we still have this issue that arose before. And I got very upset about it at the time, but for me it feels it's passed now. And I just felt how precious this group is really, how sort of nice it was to come and sit with everybody here and solve a problem at work: it's brilliant.

In the middle of comfortably exchanging remarks with a6, a4 showed that the alternative narrative, of loving helpful friends,⁵⁵ once again replaced the conflict narrative: he had storied the experience himself. He said:

What's the group about? It's about love and Light, isn't it, that's what it's about, that's what I thought. So I really enjoy the fact that it's a good place to be, it doesn't surprise me if it's a good place to be.

⁵³ See also Chapter 6 ('5 Intimacy in the group (gathering together)'), pp227-231, and ('Community of love'), pp241-242.

⁵⁴ See Appendix A3 for the text of the meditation on the group.

⁵⁵ See this chapter ('Gromit's part in the story'), pp276-278.

Group A began to develop an intimacy within its first two months, becoming a community of love.⁵⁶ Individually, they heard each other wrestling with the difficulties and tensions in diverse areas of their different lives whilst they deconstructed other conflict narratives and, particularly clearly in a8's case, reconstructed alternative stories. These were individual narratives, but together they became another single narrative, of the Experiment enabling the group members to deal with conflicts in all arenas, including conflict within the group itself. It was a multi-layered, iterative process with a successful outcome and it increased their confidence to deal with other conflicts.

Early Friends' story

a7 drew on the narrative of early Quakers in her sharing during the first internal conflict:⁵⁷ she had felt taken back to what the Experiment was all about, being in touch with early Quakers, Quakerism and what that is actually about, not the things that have to be dealt with in the Meeting House. She understood that she should not run away, but instead face difficulties as early Quakers had done. She was not directly storying a4 and a8's experience in the conflict, but her naming the history of Friends shows that history underlay the life of the group.

Summary of internal conflicts

Group A's internal conflicts had all three stages of Winslade and Monk's (2000) narrative model for handling conflict. Members of the group had already been deconstructing personal conflicts in their Experimenting and so the group ensured that the protagonists were engaged in addressing the conflict. Together an alternative

⁵⁶ See also Chapter 6 ('5 Intimacy in the group (gathering together)'), pp227-231, and ('Community of love'), pp241-242.

⁵⁷ Fieldnotes 4 May 2004: this was the meeting when a2 first brought Gromit.

story of loving helpful friends was constructed using the narratives inherent in the group and the Experiment's process of Light, God, love, the life of the group and early Friends, as well as the introduced narrative of Gromit who became another heterotopic site, within the heterotopic site of the group.

External conflicts

Eventual engagement

Group A was initially unsuccessful in its attempts to engage the other protagonist, the Clerk of Meeting A and MM Elders prevented this and the group did not persist in direct engagement, although it did appeal to the wider Quaker community by writing an article for the MM newsletter and offering a workshop. Through a1 addressing letters directly to the active members of Meeting A, eventually there was engagement at Meeting A's PM and Meeting A Elders' meeting. Group B moved to an engagement phase by persistent appeal to Elders.

Deconstructing the embedded narratives and reconstructing the alternative story

Group A's narrative was deconstructed in a1's letters in which she said she regretted any hurt she may have caused by not having been sufficiently aware that the Light Group was causing dissension and distress in the Meeting. The perceived hurt of Friends in Meeting was replaced by their upset at her perception. The alternative narrative was their surprise and reassurance that the Light group was bringing new life and energy into the Meeting and working for Meeting not against it. The result was PM explicitly welcoming the Light group's presence in the Meeting.⁵⁸ Despite Group

⁵⁸ My source information for this is a written account (see Chapter 4 ('Primary data'), p138), which itself is based on what Friends in Meeting A told my informant, although she is likely also to have seen the resultant minute. It occurs to me now to wonder whether the Clerk was won over by the sense of Meeting A's PM, whether she wrote the minute in spite of her own feelings (the meeting with Meeting A's Elders came later, so she did retain her position) or whether the PM asked someone else to Clerk

A's (and eventually Meeting A's Elders') strenuous attempts, Meeting A Clerk and warden's narratives did not become apparent.⁵⁹

The external element of Group B's conflict was resolved by the Elders hearing the experience of the group: the perceived problem was re-storied as the Group's sincere attempts at spiritual exploration. In the Elders' attempt to resolve the internal elements of the conflict, there was, however, no deconstruction of b15's Sanat Kumara narrative. From the reports I heard, it seemed the special meeting concentrated instead on b15's behaviour.

I have no data about what might have informed the Elders' handling of the special meeting, other than the worship sharing method (*QFP* 1995: 12.21). Elders sought a rapprochement between b15 and the rest of the group, by asking him to apologise, but were powerless to make him do so, perhaps because they did not uncover his underlying motivation and so were unable to address him in his own terms. His Sanat Kumara narrative carried certainties about authority, that messages could be channelled from Sananda (Jesus) and ascended masters. For Quakers, whose focus is on finding Truth through experience, both individually and in the group's process of discernment (Plüss 1995: 62, 129; Dandelion 1996: 195-196), persistent promulgation of specific messages received by one person from on high (and untested by any

the particular matter. She may have Clerked it and viewed herself of the 'servant of the meeting' (*QFP* 1995: 3.13) and set her own objections aside, but Meeting A's Elders felt it necessary to have a further meeting with her and the warden to discover what her objections to the Light group were, so it seems likely that she continued her objections after the PM. (Although that further meeting lasted nearly four hours, neither the Clerk nor warden articulated to the Elders what their objections were.)

⁵⁹ I was, however, later given an insight into what their narratives might have been, namely that they saw themselves as upholders of others' interests and the way Meeting should be run (see Chapter 4 FN30). Had their narratives become explicit it would, under Quaker business method, have been deconstructed in the PM or in the later discussion with Meeting A's Elders, but neither meeting was afforded that opportunity.

Quaker group) was deviant. The rest of the Group appealed to other narratives, those of the Experiment itself and, implicitly, that of early Friends.

The Experiment's own narrative

Chapter 5 describes Experimenters' sense of the Divine and Chapter 6 their process of transformation and, as detailed above, the Experiment is also a narrative of successful conflict handling,⁶⁰ so that practice of the Experiment itself engenders confidence to tackle all the difficult areas of an Experimenter's life, including the Light group's communal life together. Repeated self-questioning and challenge with successful outcome, each individual's personal conflict handling, creates the confidence to challenge anything relating to the group which Experimenters find is not in right relationship or is untruthful and a cycle of successful narrative begins to develop into yet another hermeneutic spiral,⁶¹ of successful conflict handling.

The narrative of William Penn's conflict handling template

Group A contained and resolved its internal conflicts by a4's appeal to the witness of the rest of the group. In the use of silence at the meeting where the second internal conflict became explicit, it also incorporated the extra step, prayerful consideration, before it was identified at the Woodbrooke course.⁶² In the external conflict, its appeal to witnesses, the Elders, was unanswered and eventually a1 called on the PM (effectively the Meeting's 'whole church') to consider the matter and it welcomed the Light group. The PM's Elders then pursued the matter with the Clerk and warden, continuing the relationship with the protagonists whose position was not accepted in the PM. Finally, partly through the circumstance of some members of the group

⁶⁰ See also this chapter ("God" and "Love" in the community life of the group'), pp280-282.

⁶¹ For a general explanation of hermeneutic spiral see Chapter 4 ('The hermeneutic spiral'), pp166-168.

⁶² See this chapter ('William Penn's conflict handling template' and FN12), pp259-260.

leaving the area for unconnected reasons, the group left Meeting A, although it continued in another Meeting in the MM, a partial exclusion, but also a continuing relationship within the group of Meetings.

Group B appealed to the witness of the Elders. The internal conflict was unresolved: it concluded with the exclusion of b15 from the group, as is envisaged in the template, and his self-exclusion from the Meeting, so that no relationship could be maintained with him.⁶³ The external conflict, between the Meeting (or at least the Elders) and the Light group was, however, resolved in the process of witnessing the internal conflict.

British Quaker conflict handling: relationship to previous scholarship

The evidence from Experimenters adds a new dimension to the study of conflict handling within British Quaker Meetings. Previous studies have considered the use of silence, reflexivity and Quaker identity, each of which I consider in turn below, finally adding the spiritual perspective.

Silence

Dandelion discussed how the British Quaker culture of silence accommodates and conceals individual and group theological change (1996: 237-259). Kline comments on silence in relation to a sense of community: 'Silence, then, allows the participant the opportunity to feel a part of a community by letting them project their idiosyncratic meanings on the silence, and assume that these meanings are shared' (2002: 120-121). Robson (2005) shows how, in relation to conflict, British Quakers

⁶³ This was, however, a pattern with b15, where the cycle of his disrupting the Meeting or a group within it had occurred before. On the previous occasion he could not have felt completely and permanently excluded since he returned to trouble Group B. There remains, therefore, the possibility that he might return again.

not only keep silent about conflict but do not even admit it to themselves, averting their minds from its possibility.

As long as there is no explicit sharing and few opportunities for Friends to speak of their experience, they will not know each other's narratives. This makes it more likely that conflicts will arise. As Group A in particular showed, the group cannot operate fully while its members are in conflict (since it requires absolute trust to share, as a4 observed) and the more those in conflict understand and hold each other's narratives, the less likely it is that conflict will arise in the first place.

Experimenters, however, do share with each other what happens for them in the silence and they therefore know what meanings as well as what experience they share with each other. They will, however, only know what the meanings are for Friends in their Meetings who do not Experiment when there is some need to engage with the wider Meeting, for example in resolving conflicts. The silence in the Experiment does not mask, but instead reveals to the Experimenter, who then discovers in the subsequent explicit sharing that others' experience and understanding may be similar. Their own understanding is informed by their fellow-Experimenters' understanding.⁶⁴

Further, Experimenters are able to convict themselves 'publicly': in the embrace of the Light group, in front of others (each of whom knows the others are doing the same), they voice out loud what they do wrong in their lives. In the sharing after a8's conflict with a4 was resolved, for example, she acknowledged that it was she who had painted herself into a corner and a6 acknowledged that his imagery of spotlight,

⁶⁴ As described in Chapter 6 ('5 Intimacy in the group (gathering together)'), pp227-231.

instead of the dim light of dawn or the pinprick light of fluorescent fish, had been preventing him from properly examining what was going on. Similarly, at the meeting where a5 reported her exclusion from the impromptu Elders' meeting, she came to understand her busy concern with what needed to be done for her friend, who was in denial about Alzheimer's diagnosis, had both prevented her enjoying her friend's company and stopped her friend trusting her over what needed to be done.

Within the group there is no culture of silence, the meanings experienced in the silence of the meditation do not remain idiosyncratic; they are shared with and reflected back to the members of the group. In the context of the Experiment, then, Experimenters behave differently from the generality of British Quakers studied by Dandelion, Kline and Robson, but similarly to adolescent Quakers in their culture of contribution (Best 2008a: 198-199). Within the context of the rest of their Quaker-time, however, Experimenters do operate the culture of silence.⁶⁵

Reflexivity and the Quaker business method

Robson finds that her informants were largely unable to reflect on any conflict in their Meetings, nor on their own part in what conflict there was (2005: 200-205), citing one 2004 informant's later correspondence with her (2008a: 8).⁶⁶ She says:

Aversion from conflict makes it difficult for Quakers to acknowledge when there is conflict, and therefore to analyse the conflicting acts, including their

⁶⁵ See Chapter 6 ('Not mission, but acceptance'), pp244-246.

⁶⁶ I can confirm Robson's conclusion of Friends' inability to reflect on their own part in conflict in one particular case. One Friend told me she was assisting in Robson's research and I recognise in Robson's (2005) thesis the conflict and the process she describes. I also know that this Friend became a protagonist in the conflict concerned. Since she did not tell Robson, which she would have done had she recognised it, she cannot have seen her own part, only the others'. I am not above this myself either, since I told Robson at the time that there was no conflict in my own Meeting, when on later reflection I realised that I had had a part in it myself (albeit a small part).

own. They are not accustomed to focusing on the Quaker self. It makes them feel uncomfortable even to think about it. (Robson 2005: 219)

The Experiment is a reflexive process and creates a safe space in which to be reflexive,⁶⁷ which, as Morley observed, is required to fully articulate what the issues are (1993: 16). In the Group A meeting where the second internal conflict became apparent, trust was a key issue for a4 and the trust was rebuilt by the group's embrace over the ensuing month, evidenced by a4's recognition that the Light group was all about love and Light and was a good place to be.⁶⁸ Similarly when the first internal conflict was addressed in the safe space created by disciplined worship sharing, a4 felt able to reveal his underlying feelings and to apologise to a8. b5 took the difficulty of b15's behaviour into her own Experiment process reflexively, finding herself both in her own repeating patterns and in the other's shoes and ultimately knowing that somehow the group and the Meeting had failed to help b15.

Meeting A's Clerk and warden, especially in the Clerk's refusal to engage with a1, stayed firmly in Robson's frame of the generality of British Quakers' seeing conflict as someone else's difficult behaviour, even after the Meeting's PM and Elders had welcomed the Light group's work. Similarly, b15 could not be reflexive, was unaware of what he was doing and denied it; the Experiment in itself cannot make Friends reflexive without their being open to its process and to the narrative which underlies it. Whilst the Experimenters involved were reflexive, Meeting A's Clerk and warden and b15 were not.

⁶⁷ See this chapter ('The significance of reflexivity'), pp273-274.

⁶⁸ See this chapter ('"God" and "Love" in the community life of the group'), p281.

The process of the Experiment leads Experimenters to find 'what is really going on', which Robson found her participants (with a few exceptions) unable to consider; they could not consider their own part in the conflict – it was another person's issue, 'out there' rather than something to which they might themselves be contributing. The Experiment is not, of course, the only safe space for reflexivity and giving ground. Sheeran described various instances, which he noted required an 'atmosphere of confidence' (1996 [1983]: 53-61).

Robson observes that her informants were disappointed with the ineffectiveness of worship sharing where it was brought into action (2005: 118). It is not the method at fault, but the practice of it: where it was used with Experimenters, their reflexive practice meant that the sharing was deep, revealed their own feelings and positions completely honestly and openly, so that it was very effective. Because of their experience in relation to the issues which emerge for them in the Experiment, Experimenters trust Quaker practice and are therefore able to follow the process to achieve a successful outcome as Friends are encouraged to do [my emphasis]:

The right conduct of our meetings for church affairs depends upon all coming to **them in an active, seeking spirit, not with minds already made up** on a particular course of action, determined to push this through at all costs. But open minds are not empty minds, nor uncritically receptive: the service of the meeting calls for knowledge of facts, often painstakingly acquired, and the ability to estimate their relevance and importance. **This demands that we shall be ready to listen to others carefully, without antagonism if they express opinions which are displeasing to us, but trying always to discern the truth in what they have to offer. It calls, above all, for spiritual sensitivity. If our meetings fail, the failure may well be in those who are ill-prepared to use the method rather than in the inadequacy of the method itself.**

It is always to be recognised that, coming together with a variety of temperaments, of background, education and experience, we shall have differing contributions to make to any deliberation. **It is no part of Friends' concern for truth that any should be expected to water down a strong**

conviction or be silent merely for the sake of easy agreement. Nevertheless we are called to honour our testimony that to every one is given a measure of the light, and that it is in the sharing of knowledge, experience and concern that the way towards unity will be found.

(QFP 1995: 3.05)

Plüss observed that 'epistemological collectivism' (that individual discernments of the will of God are considered valid in understanding truth only insofar as they articulate the group's understanding of the will of God (1995: 150)) generates the unity of the Quaker movement (1995: 179), but she misunderstood the method.⁶⁹ She discussed it in terms of 'points of view' and 'opinion', implying positions which have to be 'negotiated' or accommodated into 'consensus' (1995: 150-152, 179). She did not take account of the role of reflexivity. She also claimed that what confers power in the group is knowledge of opinions of others in the group and the ability to negotiate compromise, whereas power (or 'weight') may also arise from completely giving up the position with which one began.

Quaker identity

Robson finds that her informants' instances of conflict progressed from the issue ostensibly at hand to what was 'Quakerly' and 'unQuakerly' and thus it is likely that her informants had different narratives and understandings of Quaker identity.

The issue of what was Quakerly or not arose throughout the instances of conflict in both Groups A and B. In Group A's first instance of internal conflict a4 objected to discussion outside the group of what went on within it (unQuakerly), but in the second instance he did this himself, so he seemed to have accepted that it was acceptable

⁶⁹ Like Kline (see this chapter ('Kline' and FN9), pp252-254), Plüss maintained an outsider perspective. In her purely sociological analysis, she did not admit spiritual understanding or motivation. I maintain that without that spiritual element, the analysis is incomplete.

(Quakerly), he accepted the group's view of what constituted Quakerly behaviour. The question of identity also arose in the external conflict over Elders' behaviour in excluding a5 (who was an Elder) from their impromptu meeting at the beginning of a MM and in Elders' objection to closed meetings when the Elders meeting itself was closed. a4 observed: *'the whole business is incredibly unQuakerly'* (a5 said that was what had made her decide to share with the group what had happened). a4 commented similarly about the warden and Clerk's behaviour at an open meeting about the Experiment,⁷⁰ he said there was *'very unQuakerly behaviour going on'* and:

one of the great things about the whole message of what Quakers are about for me is very much bound up with honesty and integrity and on a wider issue I think there's grave dangers in people who are Elders, are movers and shakers around within [MM] acting in this manner. Because I don't think it has integrity in it and it worries me, that does worry me.

In Group B's case it was clear from the outset that b15 had a completely different identity from both Experimenters and other Friends, although Elders had taken no action to restrain his resulting behaviour until the conflict was well advanced.

Experimenters go through a process of transformation, as shown in Chapter 6: they realise the truth, they are convicted, they see their relationships differently and can thus change them, they draw into a community of love and accept what they cannot change. At the same time, however, they attempt change when it affects the life of their community of love. Since they know they can be and have been in the wrong (at their 'conviction' stage of transformation) and that it is possible to come into better relationships, they are willing to try the same with Friends outside their Light groups.

⁷⁰ The open meeting was intended as an invitation for Friends who were not able to join Group A (because they had not been to a workshop and because Group A was 'closed') to experience the Experiment and perhaps form a second Light group. The Clerk and warden prevented the intention coming to fruition by their domination of the meeting.

Both Light groups also had confidence that structures (Elders Meetings, PM) were available in tackling the external conflicts.

Experimenters became surer of their Quaker identity, rooted in the narrative of early Friends, with a sense of the presence of the Divine, and as a result of the transformation they undergo in their Light groups.⁷¹ Since this then led to their behaving differently from the context of the generality of Friends in their Meetings, many actually developed a different Quaker identity, one which, in accordance with the Quaker testimony to truth and integrity, challenges conflict and achieves changed relationships. As Robson identifies, the theory-in-use, aversion, works against the testimony (2008a: 9).

Although Experimenters accept what they cannot change in terms of their individual transformation (Chapter 6), empowered by their sense of the Divine (Chapter 5) and personal transformation, they do challenge conflict.

Spiritual perspective

I have shown in Chapter 5 that Experimenters had mystical and numinous experience, outside the Experiment and outside Quaker meetings. Experimenters also experienced transformation (Chapter 6) and talked of the Light as transcendent as well as immanent, acknowledging that their experience draws on something other than everyday secular life. It was clear, for example, from a4's recognition in the sharing after the meditation that the group was '*about love and Light*'.⁷² Having once

⁷¹ See Chapter 5 for Experimenters' sense of the Divine and Chapter 6 for how that sense is present in their transformation.

⁷² See this chapter ("God" and "Love" in the community life of the group'), p281.

discovered a Truth,⁷³ the research participants felt obliged to settle for nothing less in their pursuit of resolution to the conflicts which arose. In sharp contrast to Robson's (2005) informants rarely calling on spiritual resources, the spiritual element (for example, use of silence and worship sharing method, reference to 'Light' and 'God') was clear and frequent in the data surrounding the Light groups' conflicts.⁷⁴ In considering my data, I add the dimension of the explicitly spiritual, in particular drawing out the significance in Sheeran (1996 [1983]) and Morley (1993) of the sense of the Divine in successfully resolving conflicts in business meetings.

Kline (2002) acknowledges something extraordinary in the hairs on his neck rising, but does not examine the theological explanation, beyond his citing Friends' interpretation of it as the presence of the Inner [sic] Light.⁷⁵ Plüss (1995) did not analyse the belief-conflict she observed by reference to conflict-handling models and her conclusions were in terms of epistemology, not theology.

Robson's work (2005; 2008a; 2008b) is based on social constructionism (Berger & Luckman 1991 [1966]) and does not include a spiritual perspective in her analysis. She found that her interviewees made little reference to prayer, God and spiritual practice, so she specifically asked her informants on what personal resources they drew; only one or two referred to practices which could be understood as forms of prayer, more referred to published texts (Robson 2005: 203-204). Group A specifically used the Experiment, which they understood to be a spiritual process,

⁷³ See Chapter 6.

⁷⁴ See this chapter ('The significance of reflexivity' and 'Applying narrative theory to the Experiment'), pp271-283.

⁷⁵ See Chapter 1 ('The Quaker meaning of "Light"'), p6, the use of the term 'Inner Light', carrying more of an inference of the immanent, became prevalent in the twentieth century (Dandelion 2007: 132-133), but the original term was 'Light within' or 'inward Light', reflecting the transcendent nature of Friends' experience, since it was a reference to 'the Light of Christ' (Moore 2000: 80-82).

guided by the Light, to assist in their understanding and resolution of conflicts and appealed to Meeting A's PM. Group B submitted willingly to the worship sharing instigated by the Meeting's Elders.

Robson did not consider Berger's later work, which applied his theoretical perspective derived from the sociology of knowledge to the phenomenon of religion (Berger 1969). Berger found that pluralism undermines stable belief. Dandelion (1996) identified that a culture of silence masked plurality of belief among British Quakers, but I show that there is also plurality of behaviour: in relation to conflict handling and in having a culture of contribution within the Experiment.

The Experiment: reflexively breaking silence with spiritual resources

I have shown how a practice, which itself refers back to early Quaker practice and is reflexive, led Experimenters to break the silence that usually masks differences and to tackle conflict within Meetings, rather than averting from it. The practice refers to Quaker spirituality, both in its intent and its outcome, and this informed and empowered Experimenters where conflict arose. Earlier scholars' conclusions about British Quakers generally (Dandelion 1996; Kline 2002; Robson 2005; Robson 2008a; 2008b) do not apply in the specific case of Experimenters, who broke the culture of silence, behaved reflexively and used the spiritual resources available to them, thus creating a different Quaker identity where conflict arose.

Heterotopian conflict handling

Experimenters' challenging conflict interrupted the general British Quaker conflict aversion, as Foucault observed was the case with heterotopias, where: 'the other real

sites that can be found within the culture, are simultaneously represented, contested, and inverted' (1986 [1967]-a: 24). Experimenters in external conflict held a mirror up to other Friends' unQuakerly behaviour, as Foucault's mirror functions as heterotopia:

it makes this place that I occupy at the moment when I look at myself in the glass at once absolutely real, connected with all the space that surrounds it, and absolutely unreal, since in order to be perceived it has to pass through this virtual point which is over there. (1986 [1967]-a: 24)

Friends' conflict aversion made the reality of Experimenters' conflict unreal; when they refused to admit its possibility, it did not exist for them and, when they did admit its possibility, they found it dissonant and out of place. Experimenters' persistence in getting external conflicts addressed, however, was the virtual point of the mirror which reflects what is really going on. (In Experimenters' internal conflict this process is invisible to other Friends, but has the same effect on those within the group in conflict as it does with other Friends in external conflict.)

Experimenters' reflexive conflict handling was a deviation from other Friends' unreflexive behaviour (Foucault's first principle of heterotopia (1986 [1967]-a: 24)), they juxtaposed in one site the incompatible sites of the espoused theory, of the 'peaceable kingdom', and the theory-in-use, conflict aversion (Foucault's third principle (1986 [1967]-a: 25)). Experimenters' conflict handling functioned in relation to and exposed as illusory all the other Quaker space, of conflict aversion, as Foucault indicated with his last trait of heterotopia, that heterotopias 'create a space of illusion that exposes every real space, all the sites inside of which human life is partitioned, as still more illusory' and in compensation, as 'well arranged' in relation to

conflict aversion's 'messy, ill constructed, and jumbled' way of expressing Quaker identity (Foucault's last trait (1986 [1967]-a: 27)).⁷⁶

The way Experimenters responded to conflict not only exposed, but created a crack in the (lack of) 'surveillance of the proprietary powers' (Hjorth 2005: 391): it created a heterotopic space for experimentation in other ways of behaving. Experimenters had their own mode of ordering in dealing with conflict, with their own internal codes, rules (use of silence and worship sharing), symbols (Gromit, for example) and relations of power (subject to the discipline of the whole group, under God and in the Light), as Hetherington identified heterotopic spaces do (Hetherington 1997: 24), rather than, as Robson (2005) finds, the general British Quaker unreflexive aversion from conflict. In their use of spiritual resources in conflict handling, Experimenters dissolved the boundary between the sacred and profane, as Carrette (2000: 107) observed Foucault's heterotopia does.

Most importantly, however, in their conflict handling Experimenters provided North's (apparently) impossible space, not just an unrealisable declaration of resistance providing an image of a presently impossible future (North's fourth conception of heterotopia), but achieved the possibility of that future, albeit only locally effective, where the conflicts arose (North's second conception) (1999: 72-75). If the Experiment's conflict handling narrative were to become more widely known, it could

⁷⁶ I have not reviewed Experimenters' conflict handling in relation to Foucault's other three principles. See Chapter 3 ('Foucault's heterotopia'), p95, heterotopias do not have to fit all six criteria, they are illustrative rather than required characteristics.

provide a model for handling other British Quaker conflicts and so be more widely effective.⁷⁷

Locally, where conflicts arose and were resolved, there was relief and the Light group was warmly received. This is an apparent paradox, but also an example of how heterotopic spaces can effect change and be absorbed back into their context, being 'effervescent' (North 1999: 73). Where conflict surrounded Light groups and was resolved, however, the absorption was not in the way North identified, where the heterotopia was absorbed (1999: 72-75): in this case the absorption was not by disappearance of the heterotopia, but by disappearance of the context, which then became heterotopic in relation to the remainder of British Quakerism.

The Experiment has inherent in it a clear, shared narrative, that of early Friends' experience of the Light. Other narratives also inform Experimenters' identity, however, most importantly shared experience of the Divine, an ability to speak plainly in the face of the culture of silence and the transformation Experimenters undergo in the Experiment's process, including the ability to deal with conflicts in other areas of their lives. Experimenters' deconstruction of protagonists' narratives and reconstruction of an alternative story, using diverse narratives, led to conflict resolution. The occasions of resolution provide new narratives on which British Quakers could model other successful conflict handling, were their conflict aversion to allow them to admit the possibility that conflict exists within Meetings.

⁷⁷ In conversations during 2008 and 2009 Robson repeatedly referred to British Quakers' lack of interest in her work, despite her attempts to make it widely known with articles in British Quaker publications (Robson 2006a; 2006b). She was asked by Elders from Cheshire and Sheffield to give workshops and she co-facilitated the January 2008 Woodbrooke course (see this chapter ('William Penn's conflict handling template'), p259), but found that otherwise British Quakers' aversion to conflict within Meetings extended not only to aversion from any conflict which might arise, but also to the possibility that there might be such conflict at all.

Experimenters engaged with internal conflict and compelled their host Meetings to engage with conflict surrounding the Light groups' existence, an outcome of their reflexive practice, arising from their sense of the Divine. Experimenters internalised the spiritually reflexive process of the Experiment and so were able to draw on other successful narratives, as well as those inherent in the Experiment itself.

Experimenters privileged truthful outcome over the risk of revealing differing positions which in turn might risk unity; their theory-in-use was the same as Quakers' espoused theory, operating counter to the general Quaker theory-in-use of 'don't ask, don't tell, don't even think about it.' They wanted to ask, tell and think about conflict, forcing their Quaker context to engage with them to find a solution acceptable to their Meetings as well as themselves.

I have shown that Experimenters' conflict handling is heterotopian, that they sit in a heterotopic position vis-à-vis the context in which they Experiment. I conclude that, in instances of conflict, Experimenters challenged the secular authority which underpins the control of the behavioural creed (Dandelion 1996: 197-212), because their authority was different, it depended both on the direct sense they have of the Divine (Chapter 5) and their sense of the community of love (Chapter 6) as a more authentic Quaker experience than the less close community of Meeting. When Groups A and B challenged the silence surrounding the conflict in which they found themselves, their Experimenting was warmly welcomed in their Meetings. Thus, their heterotopian narrative effected change in the context in which they had been heterotopic, so that in respect of conflict handling their Meetings then became heterotopic to the rest of the British Quaker context.

Experimenters are not likely to be the only British Quakers who differ from the Quaker theory-in-use, but their practice and visibility as Light groups in their Meetings enabled them to raise the profile of any conflict arising within their group or within their Meetings and address it more in the way of Quakers' espoused theory. British Quakers generally follow a 'don't ask, don't tell, don't even think about it' theory-in-use, whilst Experimenters were prepared to challenge that what was hidden should be brought into the open (thus operating a heterotopian impulse, to make what is hidden appear and (Dehaene & De Cauter 2008a)),⁷⁸ to achieve the espoused theory of the 'peaceable kingdom'. Despite the espoused nature of the 'peaceable kingdom', in use it is a counter-narrative. As long as British Quakers prefer the theory-in-use, it is likely they will not engage in a process which does ask, reveal and demand consideration of all manner of issues: this may partly explain why the Experiment is not more widespread.

Experimenters' potentially also exposed that British Friends' have an espoused theory of spiritual guidance, but a theory-in-use of personal and individual secular decision making. Experimenters were clearly led by their sense of the Light, but examination of conflict handling shows that other Friends weigh other considerations as more important.

The Experimenters in this study differ from the generality of British Quakers as described by Robson in another important respect: they do not avert from questions of power and authority because they are empowered by the sense they have of the Divine

⁷⁸ See Chapter 3 ('Heterotopian mirroring'), p108.

(Chapter 5), the transformation they undergo in the Experiment (Chapter 6) and successfully handling conflict in different areas of their lives, following understandings they reach in Experimenting together in Light groups. They persisted in getting the conflicts they experience into another arena (Elders' attention or a business meeting) by exercising their power as members of their Meetings; they recognised the authority in those other arenas and were prepared to be subject to it.

I have shown why resolution of conflict was at Experimenters' initiative and, in the process, add a new dimension to the study of conflict handling and to the study of Quaker behaviour and identity (Dandelion 1996).

Chapter 8 - Conclusion

Following a summary of previous chapters, this chapter draws conclusions together about the heterotopic relationship between the Experiment and BYM and about heterotopia itself. I first show how Light groups occupy heterotopic space in relation to their Meetings. I outline Foucault's spatial paradigm (Foucault 1986 [1967]-a; Philo 1992; Carrette 2000; Foucault 2002 [1966]; Liff & Steward 2003) and examine the Quaker space in which Experimenters Experiment (Dandelion 1996; Robson 2005; Best 2008a; Vincett 2008). I show how Experimenters operate a heterotopian impulse within British Quakers. I consider how the relationship between the different dimensions of heterotopia (Elliott & Purdy 2005; Zijlstra, et al. 2009) revealed in the research creates opportunities for change. Finally, I review the implications of my findings for future research.

Summary of previous chapters

Chapter 1 set the context for the thesis by introducing British Quakers, the Experiment and Quaker studies scholarship. Chapter 2 sited the thesis in sociology of religion and reviewed relevant recent literature in sociology and anthropology of religion and congregational studies. It also considered potential analytical approaches to conclude that heterotopia was the most appropriate lens. Chapter 3 reviewed heterotopia from Foucault's exposition through later scholars' development of the concept and applied it to show both how the Experiment is a heterotopian process and how Experimenters find heterotopic places within themselves. Chapter 4 set out the research methodology, showing how my insidership was approached reflexively and

concluded that the research process was also heterotopian. Chapter 5 cited Experimenters' (heterotopian) religious experiences outside the Experiment and showed how belief was irrelevant to their sense of the Divine. Chapter 6 described Experimenters' six-stage process of transformation and their drawing into a community of love underpinned by their mutual understanding of the (heterotopian and heterotopic) Divine. Chapter 7 demonstrated how Experimenters' sense of the Divine and various narratives supported them in (heterotopian) challenging conflict.

Experimenting in Light groups and heterotopia

This section shows how the characteristics of heterotopia are evident where Light groups' meet.

Foucault's principles of heterotopia

Foucault set out six principles of heterotopia in relation to real places (1986 [1967])-
a).¹ (1) Probably most cultures have heterotopias, either as spaces of crisis or deviation. (2) Through its history a society can cause an existing heterotopia to function differently. (3) Heterotopias are capable of juxtaposing in a single real space several *emplacements* which are in themselves incompatible and irreducible to each other. (4) Heterotopia incorporates heterochronia, a different time which is an absolute break from traditional time. (5) Heterotopias always presuppose a system of opening and closing which both isolates them and makes them penetrable either by compulsion or ritual. (6) Heterotopias function in relation to all the remaining space

¹ The principles are set out with examples in more detail in Chapter 3 ('Foucault's heterotopia'); this paragraph recaps them in summary.

as heterotopias of illusion (that exposes every real space as more illusory) or of compensation.

Although Experimenters are not deviant from a required norm in ordinary Quaker-time,² the form of the Experiment deviates from Friends' usual form of MfW and social or discussion meetings in that it has a specific led form (the meditation) and specific time for sharing when deep personal experiences are exchanged, which does not occur after MfW (Foucault's first principle (1986 [1967]-a: 24-25)).

In seeking an experience similar to that of early Friends, Experimenters charge Light groups with social and cultural meaning. They implicitly juxtapose in the same real intention the need for deeper seventeenth century-like experience with twenty first century life, incompatible real experiences irreducible to each other, Foucault's third principle (1986 [1967]-a: 25).

Light groups have 'a system of opening and closing', Foucault's fifth principle (1986 [1967]-a: 26-27). Their meetings are not publicly advertised in the way that MfW is on notice boards outside the Meeting House, nor on the Meetings' websites. Thus, they are closed to members of the public or Friends from other Meetings who have not already been inside the Meeting House (where they may see a notice on the notice board inside or hear a notice read after MfW). For those already involved in the Meeting, a Light group may be open only once (if it is a 'closed' group) or it may be permanently open (if the group is 'freeflowing').³ Although closed groups are clearly

² In the sense of BYM needing to exclude them in a space such as a prison, psychiatric hospital or retirement home, see Chapter 3 ('Foucault's heterotopia'), p92.

³ For an explanation of the difference between closed and freeflowing Light groups, see Chapter 1 ('Experiment practice'), pp11-12.

isolated from new joiners and freeflowing groups are apparently permeable, freeflowing groups may also be perceived by non-Experimenters to be closed (as expressed by a member of Group B, for example).⁴ Freeflowing groups also have a system of closing, though, in that the group discipline (*QFP* 1995: 12.21) has to be accepted. The systems of opening and closing proved controversial: Meeting A resented that Group A was closed and Group B had difficulty in getting support to restrain a Friend who consistently broke the group's discipline and tried to subvert its meetings.⁵

Light groups function as spaces of compensation in relation to the Meetings in which they are situated, Foucault's last trait (1986 [1967]-a: 27). Experimenters (for example i7, g8 and i20) reported that their Light groups enriched their MfWs and business meetings, suggesting that for those Experimenters there was some lack, if not crisis, in the meetings' spirituality,⁶ crisis being Foucault's first principle (1986 [1967]-a: 24).⁷ Some Meetings recognise this formally, as for example happened after the conflict described and analysed in Chapter 7, where Meeting A's Elders said that the group had only ever sought to enrich Meeting. It was thus implicitly recognised that Light groups enhanced their host Meetings' spirituality. Light groups functioned as spaces of compensation for what Experimenters (for example i5 and g2)

⁴ She had thought for a long time that she could not join the Light group, even though the others in the group had always thought it was open to all from the PM and its meetings were announced in notices after MfW.

⁵ As discussed in Chapter 7.

⁶ See also Chapter 7 ('The spiritual life of Meeting B generally'), pp263-265, for b2 and b11's view of Meeting B.

⁷ So, like the elderly (Foucault 1986 [1967]-a: 25), Experimenting in Light groups exhibits as both heterotopia of crisis and of deviation.

felt was lacking in the rest of their Meetings' spiritual lives.⁸ Where conflict arose, Light groups also contested Meetings' preferred behaviour of ignoring conflict.

Other scholars' characteristics of heterotopia

As Hetherington observed (1997: 24), heterotopias have their own internal codes, rules and symbols and generate their own relations of power.⁹ Such is the case for Light groups: internal rules include the form of the group's Experimenting together (coming together, meditating, a period of silence, then sharing) and the rules under which the sharing happens (*QFP* 1995: 12.21). When Group B's established rules were disturbed by b15 breaking them, conflict ensued.¹⁰

Hetherington (1997) drew together Foucault's work on Magritte (Foucault 1983 [1968]) with his work on heterotopia (Foucault 1986 [1967]-a; 2002 [1966]) to show that heterotopias signify by similitude, in lateral relationship (where no one thing is given privileged status as a model for others), rather than by resemblance where the relationship might be construed as hierarchical. So, too, the Light groups relate to their Meetings, laterally, in Quaker-time but separate from and in addition to MfW.

Hjorth's observations on heterotopia apply also to Light groups: heterotopias 'are silent cultures of everyday creativity, silenced also by the official culture of Art' (2005: 392). This is resonant of Experimenters saying they kept silent after being ridiculed by other Friends (i14), having their sharing repeated outside the group

⁸ See Chapter 3 ('The Experiment as heterotopian process' and FN86) and Chapter 7 ('The spiritual life of Meeting B generally') mentioned in this chapter FN6.

⁹ Thus Experimenters could be described as having their own behavioural creed (Dandelion 1996: xv, 100-110), but with different rules from British Quakers' behavioural creed (see Chapter 1 ('Quaker cultures: double, triple, silence and contribution'), pp28-29), as the culture of contribution allows belief-statements.

¹⁰ b15 tried to impose a different philosophy and form of meditation according to his own experience, as described in Chapter 7 ('Outline of the conflicts'), pp266-267.

inappropriately in breach of the protocol of confidentiality (g17) or not respected (g19).¹¹ It is also resonant of Experimenters' culture of contribution in their post-meditation sharing in the face of other Friends' culture of silence (Dandelion 1996).

North's fourfold conception of heterotopia¹² also fits the Light groups. Firstly, multiple claims are inherent. Light groups contain implicit promise (but not guarantee) of authentic Quaker experience in their meditations and sharing, so refer to early Friends' encounters with each other and the Light. Closer understanding of other Friends than is available in most of Quaker-time grows in Light groups. At the same time there is no imposition on other Friends in Meetings, nor on other members of the Light group, and the implicit claims (of authentic Quakerism, of access to the Divine, of deeper understanding) gently bump into each other. Secondly, the Experiment is an alternative form to MfW but Light groups meet alongside and not instead of MfW. Although experience in the Experiment may go beyond the experience in MfW for individuals, it is rarely undergone without also participation in MfW.¹³ Thirdly, effervescence and ephemerality apply: Light groups start and finish,¹⁴ and the Experiment is not found in every Meeting in Britain. Finally, Light groups provide an image of a presently impossible future: they offers a deepening of

¹¹ The implicit criticism of Friends' individual mystical experience in Allen's reservation about mystical experience (Stedman 2009) is further evidence of the general British Quaker attitude that no Friend may claim to have special experience. This is the background to Experimenters' operation of a culture of silence in general Quaker-time.

¹² See Chapter 3 ('Non-geographical and political: North'), North's fourfold conception of heterotopia is: (1) a space in which multiple claims knock up against each other and where no single value-claim is successfully imposed; (2) participants are able to deploy power so that its creativity is emphasised and it is alongside the mainstream rather than going beyond or replacing it whilst challenging it in living by different rules; (3) it is a momentary fleeting effervescence with limited implementability, only locally effective; and (4) it is an unrealisable declaration of resistance providing an image of a presently impossible future.

¹³ b4 was the only informant in the research who did not also attend MfW. I know of only one other Light group member who did not attend MfW.

¹⁴ For example: i17, i18 and i19a and i19b's group had ceased by the time I interviewed them; i7 and i8's group ceased after I interviewed them; i12a and i12b's groups were a remnant of multiple groups in their Meeting as was i15 and i16's group in theirs. I also became aware of and was instrumental in establishing new groups from 2007.

Friends' practice and provide the utopian possibility of religious experience (Chapters 5 and 6) in the face of what Pilgrim (2008: 59-60) found, that many Friends are not seeking liminal experience.

Marks developed the idea that heterotopian thought has material and institutional existence, where it seeks to evade and overcome boundaries established by images of thought which imprison thinking. The Experiment has developed its own institutional form: as workshops have spread the practice, new Experimenters learn how others have found Light groups work best.¹⁵ The boundaries of the culture of silence in Quaker-time are challenged and overcome in Light groups' meetings where the worship sharing provides a culture of contribution,¹⁶ so the Experiment re-orders experience into a new frame and reorders the frame for sharing experience.

Genocchio's call for a means of establishing some invisible, but visibly operational difference providing a clear conception of spatially discontinuous ground (1995: 41) is met also in the example of the Light groups' social practice. Light groups meet when other Friends are not present so their process is invisible, but there is a visibly operational difference in that other Friends are aware that of Light groups' existence¹⁷ and they may also notice changed behaviour, in some instances leading to conflict,¹⁸ but in others leading to positive effects in Meeting.¹⁹ The spatially discontinuous ground is the Meeting's life, which some Friends who do not Experiment may prefer

¹⁵ During the period of my research, this was 'hit and miss', depending on whether practising Experimenters attended workshops. The more systematic spreading of best practice is only now beginning in 2009, as the results of my research are shared with those who facilitate workshops.

¹⁶ See this chapter ('Culture of contribution'), pp318-319.

¹⁷ See Chapter 7, the activities of the Light group were generally known in the cases of Groups A and B. Interviewees (for example, i1, i5, i6, i7 and i15) mentioned Meeting's awareness of the Light group and its acknowledgment in a minute, notices, newsletter or on the notice board as well.

¹⁸ As described in Chapter 7.

¹⁹ As reported by i7, g8 and i20, as described in this section above and by i16 and i13, see Appendices D1 and D2.

to experience as continuous (satisfactory to or fulfilling for all). Such Friends may therefore become unsettled by Light groups' seeking a deepened spirituality, revealing Meeting life to be discontinuous.

Saldanha identifies that Foucault's heterotopia ignores mobility, unevenness and differentials of power, factors which were highlighted post-Foucault by postcolonial theory (2008: 2087). In instances of conflict, however, Light groups called power to themselves (asking for Elders' intervention, getting the matter before the Meeting's formal business process), demonstrating Foucault's argument that power is an operational and dynamic force, a strategy, not a possession, or property (Deleuze 2006 [1986]: 24).²⁰

Saldanha also says that the networks to which sites are immanent may overlap so that no site can be absolutely different from another. This is the case also with the Experiment. Light groups are embedded within (some) British Quaker Meetings, yet both their form and the experience in them are or may be different from MfW. At the same time, their discipline (*QFP* 1995: 12.21) is similar to that in which business meetings are ideally conducted (*QFP* 1995: 3.04-3.10).²¹ Similarly, Experimenters may behave differently in general Quaker-time from when they are Experimenting, for example operating the culture of silence in respect of their experience in the Experiment whilst not Experimenting, but offering contributions in the sharing in Light groups.

²⁰ Deleuze is not at this point citing Foucault directly, but summarising his own review of *Discipline and Punish* (Foucault 1977 [1975]; Deleuze 2006 [1986]: 24). Deleuze's observation, however, echoes Foucault's own theory that power circulates and is never in anybody's hands (Foucault 1980 [1976]: 98); the relevant extract is cited in Chapter 2 ('Power imbalance: the hybrid body of Christ'), pp69-70.

²¹ Particularly: 3.04, 2nd paragraph; 3.05, 3rd paragraph; 3.06, 1st paragraph: 'We act as a community, whose members love and trust each other'; 3.10, 2nd, 3rd and 4th paragraphs.

Thus Light groups are not only demonstrably heterotopian as conceived by Foucault and developed by commentators, but also resist Genocchio's and Saldanha's criticisms of Foucault's conception.

The space in which Experimenters Experiment

This section outlines Foucault's 'spatial paradigm', from which the idea of heterotopia emerged, then recaps my analysis of British Quaker space, which is the Experiment's context, and analyses how Experimenters operate a heterotopian impulse within it.

Foucault's spatial paradigm

Foucault's spatial paradigm is partially described in Liff and Steward as a multiplicity of different human sites, each of which may be investigated as a particular 'network of relations'; social space is characterised as the diverse and wide ranging set of 'relations among sites', a heterogeneous space where life is conducted inside a set of relations where sites are 'irreducible' and 'not superimposable' (Foucault 1986 [1967]-a: 23-24; Liff & Steward 2003: 318). The Foucauldian framework emphasises both the specificity and variety of social sites; network relationships operate to identify what makes up a site so that relationships between sites can be analysed as a network of networks (Foucault 1986 [1967]-a: 23-24; Liff & Steward 2003: 318).

In looking at what might be *Foucault's geography*, Philo examined the geographical elements of Foucault's analysis of history (Foucault 1973 [1963]; 1977 [1975]; 1984 [1982]; 1986 [1967]-a; 1987 [1963]; 1989 [1969]; Philo 1992; Foucault 2002 [1966]). Philo brought out the concept of 'spaces of dispersion', spaces where things proliferate

in a jumbled-up manner on the same 'level' as one another, not just as spatial metaphors, but also as empirical spaces and places; thus Foucault demonstrated that:

the phenomena, events, processes, and structures of history ... are always fragmented by geography, by the complicating reality of things always turning out more or less differently in different places ... (Philo 1992: 139-140)

Referring to Foucault's commentary on Roussel's literature (1987 [1963]: 78-84, 107-110), Philo said:

stress is placed upon how seemingly very different things (and things that might conventionally be conceived of hierarchically, such that one is reckoned to be 'superior' to the other...) may co-exist, may touch, may fuse into one another, and the result is an insistence upon 'simultaneity' which both raises the possibility of unlike ('discontinuous') things jumbling together in a fashion uncomfortable to 'the old principle of the continuity of beings' ... and of a challenge to 'the hierarchic'.²² (Philo 1992: 146)

Philo observed that envisaging dispersion was not tantamount to saying that all there is in the world is chaos, rather that Foucault envisaged the connectedness of an order that is transient, not a fixed but a momentary geometry (1992: 149-150) with Foucault as the geometer of power (1992: 152).

Major-Poetzl (1983) linked Foucault's *Archaeology of Knowledge* (1989 [1969]) with developments in physics field theory to interpret Foucault in the light of changing natural scientific notions of spatial relations. Baudrillard (1987) linked Foucault's work with how the physical fields of natural science (the 'new physics' opened up by Heisenberg's uncertainty principle and the 'new chemistry' opened up by Monod's genetic code) was arguably beginning to permeate social thought. Philo included

²² In this analysis, Philo is saying something similar to Hetherington's observation on heterotopias (that heterotopias signify by similitude rather than resemblance (1997: 42-43)), see Chapter 3 ('Dynamic social ordering, spaces for play: Hetherington and Hjorth' and FN27).

Baudrillard's and Major-Poetzl's spatial interpretations of Foucault to conclude that Foucault presented:

an image of a social world spatially constituted through nodes and channels of power – fixed nodes where power is produced and crisscrossing channels along which power is diffused and collected ... (Philo 1992: 152)²³

In Carrette's (2000) analysis of *Foucault and Religion*, a more abstract conception of Foucault's spatial paradigm emerges. In reviewing *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (Foucault 1989 [1969]), Carrette cited *Of Other Spaces* (Foucault 1986 [1967]-a: 23) on the delineation of sites which are irreducible and not superimposable by sets of relations. Carrette said this is not to say there is nothing but language, but rather that the world is shaped by a set of discursive structures (2000: 102) and 'Foucault's spatial metaphors help to break up singular constructions by creating something which is fluid and constantly interacting' (2000: 105). Foucault's emphasis is on the 'form of relations among sites', those sites being 'defined by relations of proximity between points and elements', formally 'series, trees and grids' in the epoch of 'simultaneity', 'juxtaposition', 'near and far', 'side-by-side' and 'dispersed', so that 'experience of the world is less that of a long life developing through time than that of a network that connects points and intersects with its own skein' (Foucault 1986 [1967]-a: 22-23; Carrette 2000: 105, 173).²⁴

²³ Philo's observation echoes my informant's analogy of Quaker power as a plumbing system, pipework in plumbing being channels for flow: (see Chapter 2 ('Application of power relations and egalitarianism to Quakers and the Experiment'), p72). Philo does not, however, envisage that power flow may get blocked, as happens if the sewage and rain drainage does not function.

²⁴ Carrette also discussed the space of the body (2000: 111, 119-120, 122), echoing Foucault's reference to Bachelard's 'internal space' (Foucault 1986 [1967]-a: 23). Carrette was particularly reflecting on Foucault's references to the space left by the death of God re-emerging in the sexual body, the cellular power of monastic regulation and monitoring being implanted in schools and prisons as panoptic gaze (he specifically mentioned Foucault's view that the locus of control moves from the external environment to the inner world in Quaker foundations) and finally that Foucault cites the body as a 'fragment of ambiguous space' (Foucault 2002 [1966]: 342) shaped and ordered by theological belief (Carrette 2000: 111, 119-120, 122). For Bachelard's internal space, see also Chapter 3 ('The Experiment and heterotopia'), p119.

Liff and Steward (2003) consider Foucault's spatial paradigm in only *Of Other Spaces* (Foucault 1986 [1967]-a). Philo (1992) brought in other works, but also concentrated on real spaces to reveal their dispersion, transience and flow. Carrette's review stemmed from consideration of *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (Foucault 1989 [1969]), but referred back to *Of Other Spaces* (Foucault 1986 [1967]-a) to emphasise fluidity and interaction as well as relationship and network. None of these commentators directly mentions that the context of Foucault's heterotopias in *Of Other Spaces* is also represented by the sea over which the heterotopia *par excellence*, the ship, travels (Foucault 1986 [1967]-a: 27), although Carrette's 'fluid' does suggest it. Nor do they link it to the room in which the mirror stands (Foucault 1986 [1967]-a: 24). My inclusion of context (the sea to the ship, the room to the mirror) thus extends other scholars' review of Foucault's spatial paradigm, to make that context explicit.²⁵

In the preface to *The Order of Things* (Foucault 2002 [1966]) a further element of the spatial paradigm in which heterotopias exist may be inferred, the obverse of the abstract heterotopia Foucault outlined. What it is possible to think (2002 [1966]: xvi), where the common ground is intact (2002 [1966]: xviii), the language in which heterotopias are placed (2002 [1966]: xviii), the operating table where physical operations happen ('the umbrella encounters the sewing machine') and where things are classified (2002 [1966]: xix) are all part of the spatial paradigm in which the heterotopias exist. In his first mention of heterotopias, Foucault described them as disturbing, undermining explicit communication (language) and the way things are

²⁵ Johnson examines Foucault's use of space as both method and object of study in *Foucault's spatial combat* (2008). Johnson, however, makes only passing reference to heterotopia (2008: 616) as he looks at Foucault's application of such a spatial method into spatial objects: the spaces of literature, clinical medicine and archaeology.

held together by contesting the possibility of an ordering process (grammar), dissolving myths and sterilising the lyricism of what is constructed out of the ordering process (sentences) (2002 [1966]: xix).²⁶

In short, the spatial paradigm in which heterotopia exists is the very thing Foucault seeks to challenge and change, the assumed order of things:²⁷ this order is an earlier paradigm, which Foucault seeks to shift.²⁸ This is not to say that the heterotopias Foucault outlined (in both *The Order of Things* and *Of Other Spaces*) seek to change their context (as Pilgrim implied they do (2003b: 148; 2004: 209; 2008: 55)),²⁹ but rather Foucault's impulse was to question what had hitherto been generally accepted: Foucault's analyses were in that sense the mirror to the context of the accepted order of things.³⁰ The heterotopia of the mirror reflects the nature of its context and in it can then be seen both the viewer and what there is behind as well as in front of the viewer, the whole reflected in contrast, so that possibilities for change emerge.

²⁶ Cited in Chapter 3, p89.

²⁷ *The Order of Things* was first published in French as *Les Mots et les Choses* (literally: Words and Things), but Foucault is said to have preferred the English title (Foucault 2002 [1966]: viii).

²⁸ Major-Poetzl expressed this most succinctly in summarising her comparison of Foucault's literary essays with Saussure's structural linguistics, Einstein's relativity theory and quantum mechanics, and various 'field' theories in the human sciences; all point to 'isomorphisms' in diverse disciplines which suggest the formation of a new paradigm: 'This paradigm replaces Newtonian-Cartesian conceptions of causality, time, space, subject, and object with systematic relations in which the subject is merely a variable function, objects have no fixed substance, space and time interact, and change is discontinuous. Old oppositions that divided rational from imaginative thought, form from content, and history from structure are collapsed in this new paradigm and replaced by the co-existence of differences. Old certainties, however, have been sacrificed. There is no longer the assumption of a fixed external reality subject to the progressive revelation of modern science. Nor is there the basis for belief in a fixed ego capable of knowing the essence of nature or man. In this new interpretation, thought and reality are not perceived as stable, homogenous entities but have become fragmented, variable forms defined by a multiplicity of discursive languages.' (Major-Poetzl 1983: 104).

²⁹ Pilgrim says that heterotopias express their alternate ordering by being simultaneously marginal to and embedded in the society from which they seek to be different and that Quakers were trying to change that order. See also Chapter 3 ('Heterotopia and British Quakers: Pilgrim'), pp117-118.

³⁰ See also this chapter FN25, Johnson (2008) approaches the same argument from a different perspective, but with only with glancing reference to heterotopia.

The British Quaker order of things

This sub-section summarises, from Chapter 1's review of Quaker studies scholarship, the assumed order among British Quakers, the grammar and syntax³¹ which hold their sentences³² together, some of their nodes and network of relations,³³ in order to show how the Experiment is a heterotopia in relation to its context of BYM. I also highlight areas in my research which reveal cracks beginning to appear in the order of the behavioural creed, British Quaker identity and the British Quaker way of doing things.

*British Quaker cultures*³⁴

British Friends' 'grammar'³⁵ is the double culture of liberal belief and a conservative behavioural creed (Dandelion 1996: 118). BYM's 'sentences' include a culture of silence (Dandelion 1996).³⁶ Other 'sentences' lie behind the mask of the culture of silence: behaving non-reflexively and aversion both to acknowledging conflict and expressing passion (Robson 2005); undergoing a liminoid rather than liminal religious experience (Pilgrim 2003b); and 'empty co-option' (Best 2008b). The heterotopia of adolescent Quakers' different triple culture (of ritual, networked community and

³¹ Grammar (a system dealing with the means of showing the relationship between words) and syntax (the structure of sentences) are analogised in this section to the system and structure together making up the British Quaker context.

³² Sentences (series of words complete in themselves as expressions of thought) are analogised in this section to a succession of British Quaker expressions.

³³ Other nodes and networks, the ways in which Light groups relate to their Meetings, were reflected in the last section.

³⁴ This subsection refers to the exposition of previous Quaker studies scholarship on BYM from Chapter 1.

³⁵ See Chapter 3 ('Foucault's heterotopia'), in his first exposition of heterotopia, Foucault wrote: 'Heterotopias are disturbing, probably because they secretly undermine language, because they destroy "syntax" in advance, and not only the syntax with which we construct sentences but also that less apparent syntax which causes words and things (next to and also opposite one another) to "hold together" ... heterotopias desiccate speech, stop words in their tracks, contest the very possibility of grammar at its source; they dissolve our myths and sterilise the lyricism of our sentences' (2002 [1966]: xix).

³⁶ BYM's sentences also include other ways in which the behavioural creed works, for example business method (see Chapter 7 ('Sheeran' and 'Morley')) and the contents of the liberal belief culture.

narrative), in which belief plays no part and which operates a culture of contribution (Best 2008a), is tolerated within the double culture grammar by means of empty co-option.³⁷

Cracks in the order: signs of breakdown of behavioural creed

One of the signs of the behavioural creed breaking down was Elders' inertia, fear or other inability to fulfil their role,³⁸ a role crucial to managing the definitional basis of what it is to be a Quaker: how a Quaker should behave (Dandelion 1996: 302, 304).³⁹ Elders' role is to take responsibility for the spiritual health of Meetings and to ensure MfW is rightly held (*QFP* 1995: 12.12), but my research revealed occasions of their not fulfilling their role. a5, for example, said not that she had other commitments which prevented her going to Elders' meetings, but that she probably did not have the dates in her diary, that it would be '*brilliant*' if a1 went to talk to an Elders' meeting about the Light group because '*To be honest, Elders make me lose the will to live.*' b10 said that much of what went on in Elders' meetings was functional (and implicitly not spiritual upholding). For them, the culture of silence was stronger than their willingness to perform their ascribed roles.

Dandelion initially thought that the behavioural creed was the glue which holds Quakers together (1996: 100-131). He later suggests that when uniformity of belief-content is weak, the behavioural creed is strong (and vice versa) (2008a: 27), but does

³⁷ For an explanation of empty co-option, see Chapter 1 ('Empty co-option in BYM') pp34-35.

³⁸ See in particular Chapter 7 ('Meeting B'), pp262-266, and ('Analysis of the evidence from my research'), pp267-295.

³⁹ Dandelion considered Eldership as a means of management (1996: 197-212), but if Elders do not fulfil their roles, Friends' aberrant behaviour can become established. Elders are responsible for, amongst other things, restraining unsuitable ministry (*QFP* 1995: 12.12c) and for checking 'transgression' (*QFP* 1995: 12.17). (It is interesting to note that *QFP* resorts to a 1669 quotation from George Fox (*QFP* 1995: 12.17) to indicate that other behaviour might not be acceptable. All advice to Elders and Overseers, even the Fox quote, is couched in terms of gentle encouragement rather than admonishment (*QFP* 1995: 12.12-12.24).)

not consider the consequences when both are weak. His more recent work argues that the boundary function is the 'absolute perhaps' of continual seeking and never reaching a definitive Truth (2004a; 2008a: 34-35), that Liberal Quakerism is held together not by *what* but by *how* it believes (2008a: 34), that is, uncertainly, provisionally, always seeking and never finding.⁴⁰ His argument, however, focuses only on belief (albeit on the *how* rather than the *what*); it ignores behavioural elements in the double culture and how the breakdown of those elements may lead to distress, Friends staying away from MfW⁴¹ and how the behavioural creed may be changing, to become less disciplined, less distinctive and not in accordance with Quaker testimonies.

Notwithstanding Dandelion's 'absolute perhaps' argument, then, to the extent that the behavioural creed breaks down, so too potentially does the glue which holds Quakers together. I maintain that the consequences of the breakdown in the behavioural creed are serious, particularly where there are already signs that parts of the behavioural creed (for example, conflict aversion and not being reflexive)⁴² directly contradict BYM's spiritual practice of considering one may be mistaken (*QFP* 1995: 1.02.17) and testimony to Truth (*QFP* 1995: 20.43-20.47). Quakers are a group whose espoused theory is to seek Truth, yet they continue to operate Festinger's 'cognitive dissonance', simultaneously believing or behaving in mutually exclusive

⁴⁰ See Chapter 1 ('The experiential element of twenty-first century Quaker spirituality'), p26.

⁴¹ See, for example, Chapter 7 ('The spiritual life of Meeting B generally'): b11 felt she had to stay away from MfW during the latter part of her Eldership because of Elders' failure as a group to address one Friend's inappropriate ministry. This was in itself a sign of her unwillingness or inability to perform her role as Elder.

⁴² See Chapter 1 ('Quaker culture: double, triple, silence and contribution'), Dandelion defines the behavioural creed as a credal attitude to maintaining the organisational and behavioural rules of the group, which consist in the explicit rules of Quaker practice outlined in *QFP* and the cultural rules around 'Quaker-time' behaviour (1996: 100-110). Robson (2005) shows that cultural rules include conflict aversion and, in particular, that lack of reflexivity is necessarily part of that aversion (2005: 153).

ways (Festinger, et al. 2008 [1956]), operating a different theory-in-use (for example, the pretence that internal conflict does not exist). Such behaviour may potentially lead to breakdown (as schizophrenia results from dissociation of thoughts, feelings and behaviour).⁴³

How the Experiment disturbs British Quakers' grammar

Below I examine how Experimenters' heterotopian impulse disturbs and undermines the 'sentences' of other British Quakers.

Double and triple cultures

As adolescent Quakers do (Best 2008a),⁴⁴ Experimenters operate a triple culture. Unlike the adolescents', however, Experimenters' triple culture incorporates the mainstream adult Quaker double culture and extends it, as do Vincett's Quagans (2007; 2008), to incorporate different behaviours. Experimenters' third element is spiritual experience, a different extension from the Quagans'.⁴⁵ Experimenters' triple culture, then, incorporates liberal belief, a behavioural creed (more conservative than other Friends in relation to handling conflict and Elders' conduct),⁴⁶ together with explicitly shared spiritual experience.

Culture of contribution

Experimenters' explicit sharing, like adolescents', provides opportunity and expectation of contribution in relation to their experience in the meditation and,

⁴³ Schizophrenia can in itself mean the simultaneous maintenance of two apparently conflicting attitudes, opinions, as well as psychotic breakdown resulting in withdrawal from social activity and the occurrence of delusions (*OED* 2007: 2693). Its literal meaning is 'split mind', from the Greek *schizein* (to split) and *phren* (mind) (Onions 1970: 1804).

⁴⁴ See Chapter 1 ('Quaker culture: double, triple, silence and contribution').

⁴⁵ Quagans extend their behavioural creed from the corporate Quaker forms (MfW and business meetings) into their whole way of life, see Chapter 1 ('Quaker cultures: double, triple, silence and contribution'), p31.

⁴⁶ See Chapter 7.

similarly, each Experimenter's sharing encourages the others'.⁴⁷ Whilst Experimenters' culture of contribution exists when they Experiment together (in 'Experiment-time'), outside Experiment-time, in other Quaker-time, Experimenters operate a culture of silence in relation to their religious experience (although where their ability to Experiment is threatened they may not operate a culture of silence in other respects, for example when conflict arises).⁴⁸ Thus, any positive effect on Experimenters' lives brought about by their Experimenting are not made explicit, and anyway may be so gradual⁴⁹ that they are not visible to other Friends in their Meetings, so that the Experiment's effects are masked from other Friends in the Meeting, who may worry about what is masked from them.⁵⁰ In general Quaker-time, Experimenters behave as other Quakers and not as they do in Experiment-time, thus increasing the mystique surrounding it. Experimenters' culture of contribution challenges the culture of silence, which itself masks Friends' fear of conflict and of potentially having different experiences and beliefs: contribution would reveal such differences.

Handling conflict

Robson (2005) analyses that British Friends' behaviour contradicts Quakers' aspirations in instances of conflict: they prefer to accommodate without addressing the underlying issues, so that conflict escalates to issues of Quaker identity (dispute over which protagonists are acting in the most Quakerly way).⁵¹ Experimenters challenged the silence surrounding conflict and sought resolution at the risk of

⁴⁷ A particular example was when a6's mentioning pools encouraged a1 to share her similar image, see Chapter 6 ('Transcendent experience in the group'), p231.

⁴⁸ See Chapter 7.

⁴⁹ See Chapter 6, the Experiment's transformational effect does not happen with the one-off life changing impact portrayed for early Friends' conviction.

⁵⁰ As the Clerk and Warden did in the Group A conflict (see Chapter 7).

⁵¹ As discussed in Chapter 7.

upsetting relationships, but ultimately achieved stronger truthful relationships based on better understanding.⁵² Experimenters' experience in the Experiment led them to behave more in line with the espoused Quaker theory that Quakers behave with integrity and truthfully.

Thus, the Experiment undermines the 'sentence' of 'don't ask, don't tell' (Robson 2005: abstract), incongruous behaviour in a church where one of the core testimonies expects justice (*QFP* 1995: 20.43-20.47). Experimenters undermined not the 'language' but the silence in which conflict was otherwise swept under the carpet, they exposed the 'sentences' of relationship privileged above outcome by insisting on right relationship and justice. Experimenters' impetus was not secular authority, but their sense of the Divine (Chapter 5) and the community of love into which they entered towards the end of their transformation (Chapter 6).

Reflexivity

Similarly, the Experiment demands and reinforces reflexivity,⁵³ whereas, again as Robson (2005) shows, British Friends generally are not reflexive in examining their own part in conflict, despite being corporately enjoined to think it possible they may be mistaken (*QFP* 1995: 1.02.17), nor do they draw on spiritual resources where conflict is acknowledged.

Organisational form

Arguably, LIGs are (like adolescent Quakers' YM minutes being added as 'record' and not being integral to BYM's minutes)⁵⁴ 'empty co-option', since they are not

⁵² See Chapter 7.

⁵³ See Chapters 4 and 7.

⁵⁴ See Chapter 1 ('Empty co-option in BYM'), pp34-35.

recognised by any formal Quaker procedure, nor does BYM have to unite with such groups' theological or cultural bent (although an organisational form is prescribed). Experimenters explicitly decided at Glenthorne in 2004 that the Experiment should not become a LIG (*Glenthorne epistle*), as to do so would demean its fundamental importance.⁵⁵ Thus, Experimenters declined the 'sentence' of being listed in the *Book of Meetings*, undermining the 'grammar' of BYM's organisation. That the Experiment has no organisational form both leaves it in an ambiguous position in relation to BYM (disturbing the prescribed order) and enables it to go in whatever direction it chooses without intervention from any BYM sanction. In 2008, MfS adopted a set of strategic priorities for BYM's work 2009-2014, whose first point in its first priority is to do exactly what the Experiment can provide:

develop the common spiritual base from which action can spring, learning from those who went before, bringing together our prayer life and our practical life and strengthening our ability to express our faith and hear that of others;
(*Framework for Action* 2008: 8)

BYM did not seek to draw on the Experiment to this end: BYM has not engaged with the Experiment,⁵⁶ so has not 'emptily' co-opted it,⁵⁷ nor considered how the Experiment might either present any challenge or offer any contribution.

Religious experience

Experimenters' liminal experience and awareness⁵⁸ indicates their predisposition to religious experience and suggests they would seek further opportunities for such

⁵⁵ See Chapter 1 ('How the Experiment has spread'), p17.

⁵⁶ Except to publish Ambler's book *Light to Live by* (2002) which discusses the Experiment, see Chapter 1 FN30. Ambler, however, submitted the manuscript to be considered as the second in a series of five conversations with early Friends (*Truth of the Heart* (Ambler 2001) had already been published) rather than pitching it in relation to the Experiment itself (e-mail, 9 May 2011).

⁵⁷ Experimenters can and do use business method, as already shown in Chapter 7. Business method is also open to adolescent Quakers in their PMs/MMs, but they choose not to operate within Meeting structure – they can enter membership, but do not do so widely. Thus, BYM found it necessary to emptily co-opt adolescents when challenged, but does not see the exercise of power by Experimenters as Experimenters already operate within Meetings, including YM itself.

⁵⁸ See Chapters 5 and 6.

experience. Other Friends may well not be aware that Experimenters are undergoing demanding and uncomfortable experiences.⁵⁹ The Experiment explicitly refers back to early Friends' experience (Ambler 1997a: 14; 1997e; 2002), so Experimenters' practice also refers back to early Friends. Those Friends whom Pilgrim identifies as 'syncretist' (2008: 63-64),⁶⁰ find early Friends' experience irrelevant as they seek their individual spiritual understanding,⁶¹ thus Experimenters' practice challenges such Friends' lack of interest in their founders' experience.

Experimenters' religious experience is made up of their several experiences, some dramatic in their own right⁶² and some as a series over time.⁶³ They are not hidden in a culture of silence, but are spoken and shared in a common understanding. Even though Experimenters' experiences are not the same as each others', together they are a body of experiences, which become their shared and understood experience as they hold each other within a community of love.⁶⁴ Their religious experience then becomes an explicit element of Quaker spirituality.⁶⁵

⁵⁹ See Chapter 6 ('Stages of transformation') for the experiences: although Experimenters' experiences are not the same as early Friends', I argue that they undergo a similar process involving similar changes in awareness. See also this chapter ('Culture of contribution') for other Friends' lack of awareness of Experimenters' experiences.

⁶⁰ Syncretists appear to be concerned about their personal spiritual quest, rather than corporate theology, have a sense of disconnection from traditional sources of meaning, seek and value comfort, healing and hope and often pursue other religious or quasi-religious practices as well as Quaker MfW; they place great emphasis on freedom authenticity, recovery of rejected knowledge and synthesis of spiritualities; they include those who are drawn by a lifestyle but not a religion, often explicitly rejecting religion (Pilgrim 2008: 63).

⁶¹ Pilgrim's finding (2008) echoes Dandelion's (2004a) 'absolute perhaps' of perpetual individual seeking, but she does not refer to his article.

⁶² See for example i13's facing a gun, mentioned in Chapter 6 ('Examining fears'), and i14's Alice in Wonderland experience in Chapter 5 ('Experience of the Divine (what is sensed)'). Although i14's experience did not occur in the Experiment, she linked it with John Woolman's experience and thus understood it as religious. (I do not know whether i14 had shared that experience with other Friends, so it may not have been explicitly shared before she told me of it.)

⁶³ See, for example i16's Amazonian lily, mentioned in Chapter 3 ('Experimenters find heterotopias within themselves') and fully narrated in Appendix D1, pp4-5 and pp15-16.

⁶⁴ See Chapter 6 ('Community of love').

⁶⁵ There are few accounts of the content of other British Friends' religious experience. Dandelion, for example, has *written* about his experiences (Dandelion 2010: 5-7), but he prefers not to *talk* about them (fieldnotes).

Quaker 'bureaucracy'

Chadkirk and Dandelion note that British Quaker Meetings create a 'bureaucracy' (2008a: 6). Wach (1962 [1944]: 163-166), drawing on Underhill's (1923) identification of 'introversive' mysticism, said that mysticism favours individualism and that strict organisation is very rarely found in mystical groups, but BYM is one of those exceptions.⁶⁶ I have shown in Chapters 5 and 6 that Experimenters undergo religious experience: they have a mystical bent. I have also described how Experimenters have decided against formal organisation (LIGs) and agendas.⁶⁷ a2 commented at one of Group A's Experiments that absence of 'jobs' was one of the refreshing elements of the Experiment, highlighting the contrast with general Quaker bureaucracy.

Experimenters do not seek to leave Quakers, remaining as an unstructured *ecclesiola in ecclesia* (Wach 1962 [1944]: 166) and heterotopia. Wach saw reversion to the group's early community experience as the most likely outcome of mystics' protest against its current form and institution (Wach 1962 [1944]: 164); the Experiment's reference back to early Friends is an example of such protest, albeit in the gentlest of forms.

Summary: contesting, dissolving, breaking, desiccating and undermining

Experimenters contested the possibility of British Quaker 'grammar' by dissolving the 'lyricism' of its 'sentences'. British Quakers' double culture 'dissolves' within Experimenters' triple culture. In Experiment-time the culture of silence is broken to

⁶⁶ British Quakers' mysticism is claimed explicitly in only a few passages (*QFP* 1995: 2.47, 27.38, 29.18), but it is also implicit in the understanding of a direct relationship with God (see Chapter 1 ('British Quakers'), p3).

⁶⁷ See Chapter 1 ('How the Experiment has spread'), pp16-17.

become a culture of contribution, which challenges that culture of silence in other Quaker-time by its very existence. Within the culture of contribution, an explicitly shared experience disturbs the privacy of unshared liminoid experience. The pretence that conflict does not exist is desiccated by Experimenters' aligning conflict handling with Quaker moral values. Experimenters undermined Friends' public 'language' by behaving reflexively and by declining empty co-option and bureaucratic organisation.

Dimensions and heterotopia

In this section I consider how the different dimensions of heterotopia relate to each other to show how heterotopian and heterotopic the Experiment is. I also show by reference to the Experiment the way in which heterotopias may relate to each other and how invisible dimensions contribute towards change.

Heterotopia: interim summary

Pilgrim shows how British Quakers have operated a heterotopian impulse (Pilgrim 2003b; 2003a; 2004; 2008). The analysis of the scholarship on heterotopia and the analysis of the data in this research (particularly Chapters 3, 4 and 7) shows that Experimenters' heterotopias are multi-dimensional. Experimenters' heterotopia operates within British Quakerism (Meads 2008a: 226).⁶⁸ Experimenters are, however, also heterotopian vis-à-vis British society qua Quaker, and, invisibly in their religious experience (Chapters 3, 5 and 6), also qua Experimenter. They therefore sit in juxtaposition to their peers in the world, like adolescent Quakers (Best 2008a: 210), as well as to other adult Quakers.

⁶⁸ As Best also claimed (Best 2008a: 210).

My thesis has revealed that the Experiment is a heterotopian process (Chapter 3), Experimenters find heterotopias within themselves (Chapter 3), the research into the Experiment is heterotopian (Chapter 4), Experimenters' understanding of the Divine is heterotopian and heterotopic (Chapter 5), Experimenters' transformation (Chapter 6) and Experimenters' conflict handling (Chapter 7) are heterotopian, Gromit is a heterotopic conflict-handling mediator (Chapter 7), Experimenters operate a heterotopian impulse within, to sit in a heterotopic position vis-à-vis, their Meetings and the Experiment similarly operates a heterotopian impulse, to sit in a heterotopic position vis-à-vis, BYM (this chapter). The Experiment is highly and complexly heterotopic. The question which arises as a result is how these heterotopias relate to each other.

Dimensions of heterotopia

Nested layers

Elliott and Purdy find layers of heterotopia in *Man in a Suitcase: Tulse Luper at*

Compton Verney:

an exhibition space conceived as a complex heterotopian play of 'other spaces', such as suitcase installations, vitrine displays, film projections, video screenings, drawings, and maps. (Elliott & Purdy 2005: abstract)

Compton Verney is a gallery in a Grade 1 listed mansion with a Robert Adam Hall

nestling in a Capability Brown landscape in the Warwickshire countryside: like

Foucault's example of the museum (Foucault 1986 [1967]-a: 26),⁶⁹ it is heterotopic.

Peter Greenaway's film *A Walk through H*, in which Tulse Luper is an absent

⁶⁹ See Chapter 1 (Foucault's heterotopia'), p93, Foucault illustrated heterochronia, his fourth principle of heterotopia, with the examples of museums and libraries, which accumulate time (he also gave the examples of fairgrounds and holiday villages, which are linked to the most fleeting, transitory and precarious aspect of time).

character, runs on a loop at the exhibition. The film is heterotopian at the level of the gallery featured in it, at the level of the narrator's discourse, at the level of the 'H' through which the walk happens and at the level of the film itself (Elliott & Purdy 2006).⁷⁰ The suitcase⁷¹ is a portable heterotopia⁷² and the only suitcase outside the gallery in the grounds is filled with fully functioning showerheads, a heterotopian reminder of the gas chambers at Auschwitz (Elliott & Purdy 2005).⁷³ All the heterotopias are nested: the exhibition within the gallery; the film and suitcases within the exhibition; the other gallery, the narrator's discourse and 'H' within the film.

⁷⁰ Elliot and Purdy do not apply the various characteristics of heterotopia to each of the levels of heterotopia in their article about Compton Verney, but refer (2005: en3) to their fuller analysis in a forthcoming (and now published) book chapter (2006). In the fuller analysis they relate passages in Greenaway's film *H is for House* (2003 [1976]) with Foucault's exposition of heterotopia in *The Order of Things* (Foucault 2002 [1966]: xvi-xix; Elliott & Purdy 2006: 274-275). They associate *A Walk Through H* (Greenaway 2003 [1978]) with *H is for House* and also analyse *A Walk Through H* as heterotopian by reference to Foucault's first, third, fourth and fifth principles from *Of Other Spaces* (Foucault 1986 [1967]-a: 23-25; Elliott & Purdy 2006: 275-277). (1) The film is a crisis heterotopia (first principle) in two senses: firstly, it transitions through rites of passage from one state to another visually and in the narrator's voiceover, through 92 maps and 1,418 miles, outside all real times and all real places, and, secondly, it represents the crossing of the threshold between life and death and serves also as a site of mourning. (3) Juxtaposed in one real space are several incompatible spaces irreducible to each other (third principle): the gallery (depicted in the film) contains drawings which serve as maps and a book whose jacket promises to map the migratory patterns of 1,418 birds of the Northern hemisphere; the narrator's discourse includes the maps (with their unlikely geographies) and places evoked in the stories of their acquisition – the gallery, the drawings, the maps, the places mapped (not least *H* itself), the places evoked in the stories of their acquisition and the places through which the birds migrate are incompatible and irreducible to each other (Elliott & Purdy 2006: 276-277). (4) The film, the narrator's discourse and all of the places depicted are also heterochronic (fourth principle) in their references to different timeframes (Elliott & Purdy 2006: 276-277). (5) The gallery curator's ritual gesture of closing evokes the fifth principle of opening and closing (Elliott & Purdy 2006: 276).

⁷¹ 92 are depicted in the film, 72 are installed in the exhibition closed and hanging from the ceiling in one room with light, music and natural sounds playing over them and 92 others are installed throughout the gallery open and with contents spilling out (Elliott & Purdy 2005).

⁷² "The suitcase is a portable heterotopia, an "other space" that is always there and here at the same time, a home away from home, but also offering the endless possibility of new departures, whether desired or forced' (Elliott & Purdy 2005), but it can also be compared the heterotopia *par excellence*, the ship (see Chapter 1 ('Foucault's heterotopia'), pp94-95).

⁷³ The showerheads evoke the gas chambers where millions died in Nazi concentration camps and the accumulation of suitcases is reminiscent of one of the large vitrines at the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum containing the suitcases of the camp's gassed internees (Elliott & Purdy 2005): the suitcase itself is a heterotopia and juxtaposed in it (one single real space) are the showerheads (incompatible real functioning systems), irreducible to each other, also heterochronically evoking references both to the holocaust, one of the most devastating crises of the twentieth century, and to the closed nature of the camps, designated by the Nazis for those they identified as deviant.

The heterotopias surrounding the phenomenon of the Experiment are not, however, layered, nor do they nest within each other in a hierarchy, in this way. Experimenters find Light in amongst the heterotopias within themselves and the Divine is felt as immanent (Chapters 3 and 6) yet the Divine is also felt as omnipresent, infinite, transcendent, evolving and eternal (Chapter 5), so Experimenters find themselves within the Divine. Each is within the other. Light groups practise the Experiment, heterotopian process (Chapter 3), within their groups to arrive in a heterotopic position vis-à-vis their Meetings (this chapter) which also operate a heterotopian impulse (Pilgrim 2003b; 2003a; 2004; 2008). The processes operate within and without at the same time. Experimenters' conflict handling is heterotopian within their groups and Meetings, so the relationship is both internal in the group and external from it. The issue is that the heterotopias are both process (heterotopian Experiment, research, Divine, transformation, conflict handling) and site (heterotopic Experimenter, Gromit, Light group, British Quaker setting, Divine). The concept of heterotopia is applied in an abstract manner as well as to physical sites. A more sophisticated relationship exists between the Experiment's heterotopias in their co-location with each other than a three-dimensional layering or nesting.

Invisible dimensions

Zijlstra, Chon and Gu (2009) show how it is possible to record and play information from media using five dimensions, the usual three spatial dimensions plus wavelength (colour) and polarity. They use the unique properties of the longitudinal surface

plasmon resonance⁷⁴ of gold nanorods;⁷⁵ the unstable gold nanorods are secured within a polymer layer. To the naked eye, only a CD- or DVD-like disc is apparent, but at the nano-level there is untold information (or at least it is untold until decoded by the correct type of player) in five different dimensions, as shown in Figure 8.1. The spatial paradigm is extended into new dimensions, so small they are unseen.

One additional dimension common to both the Experiment and the gold nanorod disc is that of time. Time is an implicit sixth dimension in Zijlstra, Chon and Gu's work: the material on the gold nanorod disc is recorded at a different time from when it is played. Experimenters' heterotopian transformation (Chapter 6) similarly happens over time, as has the heterotopian research (Chapter 4) and Experimenters' heterotopian conflict handling (Chapter 7), each also performing a 'slice of time', heterochronically referring back both to early Friends and to Experimenters' own experiences which inform the transformation, research and conflict handling.

The Experiment's processes are invisible and Experimenters' experiences are explicitly shared only in Experiment-time, so the additional dimensions in which their various heterotopias interact are also invisible. Invisibility was also recognised by early Friends and is explicit in the second step of the long fifth version of the Experiment: 'As the light opens and exercises your conscience, it will let you see

⁷⁴ Surface plasmon resonance is a phenomenon which occurs when light is reflected off thin metal films: a fraction of the light energy incident at a sharply defined angle can interact with the delocalised electrons in the metal film (plasmon) thus reducing the reflected light intensity (*The Astbury Centre for Structural Molecular Biology: Biocore Surface Plasmon Resonance (SPR)*).

⁷⁵ Gold nanorods are nanometre-scale particles of gold (*How to fit 300 DVDs on one disc*). (A nano- is a very small unit of measurement, used to denote a factor of one thousand millionth, or 10^{-9} (*OED* 2007: 1888).)

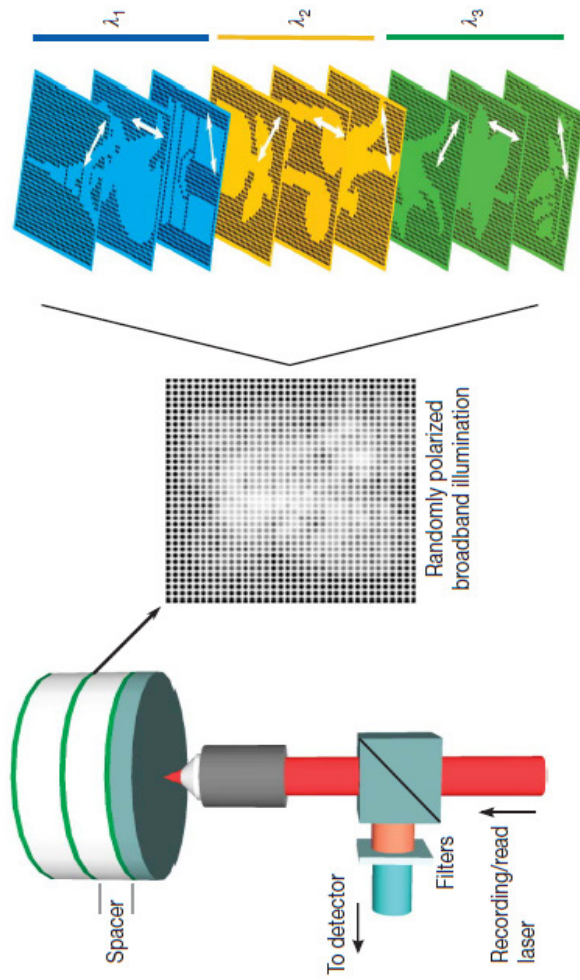


Figure 1 | Sample structure and patterning. Left, the sample consists of thin recording layers of spin-coated polyvinyl alcohol doped with gold nanorods, on a glass substrate. These recording layers were spaced by a transparent pressure-sensitive adhesive with a thickness of 10 μm . In the recording layers, we patterned multiple images using different wavelengths (λ_{1-3}) and

polarizations of the recording laser. Middle, when illuminated with unpolarized broadband illumination, a convolution of all patterns will be observed on the detector (filters attenuate the reflected readout laser light). Right, when the right polarization and wavelength is chosen, the patterns can be read out individually without crosstalk.

Figure 8.1: Five dimensional optical recording (Zijlstra, et al. 2009: 410)

invisible things, which are clearly seen by that which is invisible in you.⁷⁶ Thus, another fold over time emerges, it folds back into the present of the prompt, itself heterochronic, which partly induces the heterotopian transformation by the operation of the Experiment's process. In the Experiment's case, the additional dimensions are not physical,⁷⁷ but dynamic (as is anyway inherent in the nature of heterotopia's ability to mirror its context back to itself).⁷⁸

Folds of dimensions and heterotopias

Foucault's third principle of heterotopia, juxtaposing in a single real place, several sets of data (spaces), which are in themselves incompatible and irreducible to each other (1986 [1967]-a: 25), is exemplified in Zijlstra, Chon and Gu's disc. Foucault's fourth principle, of heterochronia (1986 [1967]-a: 26)⁷⁹ and North's notion of effervescence, the momentary rising and falling back of heterotopias' existence (1999: 73),⁸⁰ mean that time is simultaneously a dimension to describe heterotopias and an element in them. As noted above, time is also an additional dimension implicit in Zijlstra, Chon and Gu's work as well as in the Experiment's heterotopias. The dimensions used to

⁷⁶ The step is derived from Ambler (2001: 28 (1.74)), who in turn derives it from a secondary source, the 1831 collection of papers and tracts known as *The Gospel Truth demonstrated in a collection of doctrinal books*, volume 4 in *The works of George Fox*, reprinted by the New Foundation Fellowship in 1990 (Ambler 2001: 50, 53).

⁷⁷ As outlined in Chapter 1, the Experiment is a heterotopian process and Experimenters find heterotopias within themselves: the process and the site are within Experimenters' understanding (and only in their bodies to the extent that it produces physical manifestations as instanced in Chapter 6 ('Embodied experience')).

⁷⁸ See Chapter 3 ('Dynamic social ordering, spaces for play: Hetherington and Hjorth', 'Heterotopian mirroring' and 'The Experiment as heterotopian process'), Chapter 6 ('Transformation as heterotopia'), Chapter 7 ('Heterotopian conflict handling') and this chapter ('Other scholars' characteristics of heterotopia' and 'Heterotopian impulse and heterotopic position within British Quakers: mutation and change').

⁷⁹ See Chapter 1 ('Foucault's heterotopia') and this chapter ('Foucault's principles of heterotopia').

⁸⁰ See Chapter 1 ('Non-geographical and political: North') and this chapter ('Other scholars' characteristics of heterotopia').

describe heterotopias are folds within them and the heterotopias are folds within the dimensions.

The folding of dimensions and heterotopias echoes Carrette's finding Foucault's questions on religion by folding his texts 'back on each other, to establish some coherence and order in the religious ideas held at the margins' (2000: 3) and to Philo's finding Foucault's geography by similarly 'weaving in and out of Foucault's exegesis' (1992: 146).⁸¹ As they both admitted, Philo and Carrette sought to find a conceptualisation within Foucault of something he did not consider systematically, respectively geography and religion. For example, Philo said he did not: 'imply that Foucault self-consciously or systematically inspects his conceptualisation of space, place and geography' (1992: 140).⁸²

Ultimately the relationship can be observed, but not explained in one closed system. It is mysterious and open-ended, fluid and constantly interacting with its own skein (Carrette 2000: 105, 173). Thus, the dynamism of a complex heterotopia is amplified by its constituent heterotopias folding back on each other and by its dimensions folding back both on other dimensions and on the heterotopias of which they are dimensions.

⁸¹ Carrette's and Philo's work on Foucault are reviewed in Chapter 3 and this chapter.

⁸² Foucault's explicit 'take' on space is limited to *Of Other Spaces* (1986 [1967]-a), the similar radio broadcasts (2004 [1966]), an early article (*The Language of Space* (2007 [1964])), the Rabinow interview (1984 [1982]) and a later article (*The Force of Flight* (2007 [1973])), but Johnson (2008) argues that spatial analysis is present in much more of Foucault's work; see also the collection *Space, Knowledge and Power: Foucault and Geography* (Crampton & Elden 2007).

Heterotopian impulse and heterotopic position within British Quakers: mutation and change

The research questions⁸³ are, at the end of this study, answered by saying that the Experiment relates to British Quakerism as multi-dimensional heterotopia: individuals' experience of the Experiment augments their Quaker experience by heterotopian process to allow them to find heterotopic places within themselves; it enriches their Quaker lives by facilitating their (heterotopian) transformation and enabling them to enter a community of love with their fellow-Experimenters in the Light group⁸⁴ and to challenge reflexively what they find not to be right in their Meetings, where conflict arises but is not otherwise addressed because of the culture of silence.⁸⁵ BYM's culture of silence is one barrier to the Experiment's wider adoption, but the Experiment's initial failure to organise its dissemination was another. Light groups are heterotopic in their Meetings and the Experiment is heterotopic within BYM. Experimenters operate a heterotopian impulse within British Quakers with the result that that they sit in a heterotopic position vis-à-vis British Quakers.

The folding of a concept with other concepts to describe the first's relations (heterotopias with dimensions and dimensions with heterotopias) echoes Marks' (1995) observations on Deleuze's seeing a new informal dimension named by

⁸³ See Chapter 1 ('Research questions'), p18. What is the nature of the Experiment as a spiritual practice? How does it function for Experimenters in relation to British Quaker culture? What are the structural barriers to its wider adoption? Broadly: how does the Experiment relate to British Quakerism? How does individuals' experience of the Experiment relate to their experience as Quakers? How do Light groups relate to the Quaker Meetings in which they are situated? How does the Experiment as a phenomenon relate to BYM? What impact does the individual experience of the Experiment have on the Light group and on Meetings and what does that reveal about the overall relationship to British Quakers?

⁸⁴ See Chapter 6.

⁸⁵ See Chapter 7.

Foucault as 'diagram', a non-place of mutation (Foucault 1977 [1975]: 205; Deleuze 2006 [1986]: 29-20, 71).⁸⁶ Hetherington's (1997) exploration of heterotopias and European modernity, Hjorth's (2005) of workplace experimentation and North's (1999) of LETS as heterotopia⁸⁷ also imply that heterotopias are opportunities for a society to explore change, whether that change is something which goes on to be established (the factory in Hetherington (1997: 109-138) and Hjorth's (2005) workplace changes) or to be only effervescent and locally effective, falling back to previous state or never spreading elsewhere (Hetherington's Palais Royal and Masonic lodges (1997: 1-7, 13, 72-108) and North's (1999) LETS).

The Experiment's heterotopic site and heterotopian process, by their very existence, hold a mirror up (Dehaene & De Cauter 2008a) to show BYM that it is not as it would like to see itself, well held spiritually, trusting and loving, an open and honest peaceable church, but rather lacking leadership, unable to Elder unacceptable behaviour, unwilling to address internal conflict and drowning in bureaucracy. The Experiment is a symptom (Hook & Vrdoljak 2002) of dis-ease with the culture of silence, aversion from conflict, bureaucracy and lack of truthfulness, showing the schizophrenia that ails BYM. *A Framework for Action's* first priority is a sign that BYM is beginning to recognise it needs a remedy, which the Experiment could offer.

It remains to be seen whether the Experiment will persist among British Quakers, whether its effect will be felt more widely than in the local challenge to conflict-handling, whether the interweaving of the research findings into the practice will have

⁸⁶ See Chapter 3 ('Heterotopia as an image of thought: Marks'), pp105-106.

⁸⁷ Hetherington's, Hjorth's and North's work on the concept of heterotopia are reviewed in Chapter 3.

any effect on the way the Experiment operates and sits in BYM,⁸⁸ or whether the invisible and subtle workings of the heterotopia of the Experiment on the heterotopic places within Experimenters will bring the Society's diametrically opposed elements back into harmony.⁸⁹ The Experiment is multi-dimensionally heterotopic and heterotopian within the heterotopia of British Quakers (which also contains other heterotopias, for example, adolescent Quakers). It provides an opportunity for change within an increasingly secularised, bureaucratic and numerically declining British Quakerism (Chadkirk & Dandelion 2008a; 2008b), but only time will tell whether the spatial paradigm will subsume the heterotopias or the heterotopias shift the paradigm.

This study has not only drawn conclusions about the relationship between the Experiment and BYM, it has also developed the concept of heterotopia. Previously heterotopia was applied to sites. My study breaks new ground with its close analysis, extending heterotopia's hermeneutic spiral by finding its application to process as well as to sites, so discovering that heterotopias may be multi-dimensional and fold in and out of each other as they interrelate dynamically and mirror their context back to itself to create the potential for that context to change.

⁸⁸ Chapter 4 reflects some impact of the research on the practice, but only a few practitioners are aware of the contents of the thesis. When the whole thesis is disseminated, its findings may change some practice, for example through courses for those running introductory workshops, which may then impact on introductory workshops and Friends' subsequent practice. When Experimenters become consciously aware from dissemination of the research that their practice challenges what they find uncomfortable in their Meetings, they may be spurred to challenge more.

⁸⁹ Successful conflict handling has changed Light groups' context (see discussion of North's 'effervescence' (1999: 73) in Chapter 7 ('Heterotopian conflict handling')) and more challenge may lead to the heterotopia of the Experiment changing BYM's cultures more widely.

Implications for Sociology (of Religion)

Lived religious experience

As outlined in Chapters 1 and 2, there are few accounts of the content of individuals' religious experience and those which have been detailed are described in terms of their belief system (as Toulis' did (1997: 128-134, 158-161)). I have shown that descriptions of informants' experiences without reference to a belief system may differ, yet still be religious in informants' understanding. There may be many more varieties of contemporary lived religious experience to be explored and there may be considerable differences (or, possibly, similarities) between the experiences of individuals in different faith groups.

The effect of religious experience on the group

Internal secularisation within British Quakerism (for example Dandelion's claim that the behavioural creed is managed by secular authority (1996: 207-211), Wildwood's identifying Quaker work in the world as 'secular spirituality' (2009: 49-50)⁹⁰ and the reported increase of non-theism in Quakers⁹¹) is belied by my findings that a strong sense of the transcendent persists and has real application where there is conflict. The influence of the Experiment may complement the 'absolute perhaps' Dandelion identifies (2008a) by its conservatism, for example, in relation to the use of business method to address conflict. Similar empirical research may find similar subtle forces at play in other religious groups: Wood's (2007) ethnography, for example, found non-formative spirituality belied the conclusion of Heelas' (1996) textual analysis in a

⁹⁰ Wildwood cites campaigning on civil liberties, feminist and environmental issues, work with refugees and asylum seekers and suggests some Friends' spirituality is based on psychotherapy (2009: 49-50).

⁹¹ The extent of the increase is disputed. When informants self-define they are more likely to accept the term Christian or to say they believe in God: see discussion of Mellor's work in Chapter 1 ('Pluralist and post-Christian developments').

theory of self-spirituality because Wood's idea was drawn from ethnographic evidence, whilst Heelas accepted New Agers' picture of themselves.⁹² My research similarly draws from ethnographic evidence to present a challenge to conclusions in other scholars' work.

Exercise of power within groups

My work shows that the effects of groups within groups are complex. The binary paradigm of culture/subculture⁹³ is incomplete because it places a lesser group in opposition to the larger group within which it sits. It is not dynamic and does not identify the subtle exchanges by which the smaller (which is not necessarily the lesser) may fundamentally and radically change the larger (as for example did the factory (Hetherington 1997: 107-138)), nor does it bring out what might be invisible. Subculture is not an ordering process, but a description of two groups' confrontational and oppositional relationship. Hebdige's work (1979) implies dissent and assimilation,⁹⁴ one-way operation of power by the larger group to defuse any threat from the smaller.⁹⁵ Heterotopia implies belonging-in, subtle side-by-side disruption by mirroring and independence-within, identification-with as well as difference-from.

Ward (2000) argued Foucault's characterisation of power as network explained resistance where the power balance was unequal and showed how the wielder of power sustains that power by cloaking its own presence and projecting otherness onto those who are different. I have shown how Foucault's characterisation is also

⁹² See Chapter 2 ('The importance of ethnography in developing research approach and theory').

⁹³ Or culture/counterculture.

⁹⁴ Hebdige's analysis was mostly concerned with style, for example the incorporation of punk style into mainstream fashion (1979: 92-95).

⁹⁵ Hebdige's (1979) 'assimilation' echoes Berger and Luckman's *nihilation* (1991 [1966]) and the 'empty co-option' Best finds adult Quakers use on adolescent Quakers (2008b). All three concepts demonstrate the larger group operating on the smaller and do not seem to allow the possibility, as heterotopia does, of the smaller fundamentally changing the larger.

appropriate for describing how power works in an egalitarian group in the face of cultural constraints: the culture of silence, and conflict aversion within it, are themselves cloaks which can be lifted. The application of power as network shows the dynamics at play within a group more fully than hegemony and so results in more nuanced conclusions.

Heterotopia as analytical lens

This study has shown how detailed analysis of a phenomenon and process, based on empirical research, can reveal features of the analytical lens: heterotopia. Similar detailed analyses in other religious groups, of other spiritual practices, in other walks of life, or of groups generally may lead to other developments in the concept of heterotopia.

Nuances of time play within heterotopia to bring about change.⁹⁶ The highly heterotopic Experiment is one example of the multi-dimensionality of heterotopias operating to change their context.⁹⁷

Similarly, there are limits to typologies, which compare by resemblance, in hierarchy, with one type implicitly better than, and therefore determining, the other types' characteristics. Qualitative analysis using heterotopia, however, compares by

⁹⁶ For example, Experimenters' (current) reflexivity in sharing with each other their (past) experiences which occurred to them in the Experiment having the potential to transform and, in a8's case, actually transform their (future) relationships, then reported back to the Light group (subsequently) to help others potentially do the same: see Chapter 6.

⁹⁷ See for example Chapter 6 ('A sense of being accompanied'), pp225-226, where a1 links her understanding that the Light is always present with a sense of being grounded and Chapter 6 ('1 Realisation of Truth (God breaks in)'), p213, where a8 links God's presence with her understanding that she has been colluding with her daughter's behaviour (so that she subsequently ceases collusion). The (heterotopian) Experimenting leads Experimenters to find the (heterotopian) Divine within (as heterotopic site) and as transcendent (themselves within the (heterotopic) Divine) and their discoveries mean they change how they feel and behave.

similitude, in lateral relation, brings out the multi-dimensionality and subtleties of elements folding back on each other and allows the complex dynamics to emerge.

In the sociology of religion the debates include the binary analyses religious/secular, conservative/liberal (Berger 1969; Bruce 1996; Davie 2002; Smith 2003) and religious/spiritual (Heelas, et al. 2005; Lynch 2007). Although some work has examined the subtleties within groups (Dandelion 2004a; Versteeg 2004; Dandelion & Collins 2008), it has not done so with a common lens. Detailed heterotopian analysis (using heterotopia to show multi-dimensionality) could potentially bring all the disparate relevant elements into play to give a more complete picture of difference, power play and potential change.

Heelas and Woodhead, for example, categorise Quakers at the experiential end of religion (2005: 21-22), but that is an incomplete analysis, as Dandelion observes: they could also be part of the 'holistic milieu', straddling both worlds (2008a: 35).⁹⁸ In Heelas and Woodhead's terms, the Experiment apparently sits in the 'subjective-life' where life is lived according to inner experience (in the Experiment) rather than external expectations (2005: 3). My work shows, however, that the group-discerned Sense of the Divine⁹⁹ places Experimenters in the transcendent 'life-as' Experimenter, with external expectations overlaid. Similarly, Quakers' adherence to the behavioural creed, involves external expectations and 'life-as' Quaker (and Experimenters are indistinguishable from other Quakers in this respect).

⁹⁸ Dandelion attributes Quakers potential location in the 'holistic milieu' to Wildwood's analysis, which was unpublished at the time he wrote. It has since been published (Ashworth & Wildwood 2009: 45-47).

⁹⁹ The element of group discernment is more apparent in Chapter 7 when Experimenters deal with conflict. It is, however, layered over Experimenters' individual Sense (both what is experienced and what is understood) of the Divine described in Chapter 5 and their transformation in the Experiment both separately in the meditation and shared together in the group as described in Chapter 6.

The very nature of British Quakers' (and Experimenters') heterotopias defies the hierarchical resemblance of categorisation. The more complex and less definitive lateral analysis of similitude reveals the potential multi-dimensions which fold-back iteratively, potentially to cause the group to change in ways which (but for the analysis of heterotopia) would be invisible.

Any sociologists looking at groups within groups, in any field, need to take account not just of how heterotopia might deepen their analysis, but in particular of how my findings reveal multi-dimensionality and complexity.

Further research

The further areas of research suggested by my work include research methodology, the Experiment, British Quakers and heterotopia itself.

Research methodology

Although my study goes beyond what other ethnographers of Quakerism have done, it raises two more general areas for further qualitative enquiry. The first is the intersection of the process of complex reflexive insider research with spiritual enquiry processes by insider researchers in other groups (Buddhist, Sufi, Kabbalah, Catholic, Shaman, etc.). The second is the question of the extent to which an outsider researching a similar spiritual process might, in practising reflexivity, acquire degrees of insiderness as the research progresses: in starting from an outsider perspective how does Labaree's frame of multiple insider/multiple outsider (depending on the researcher's position in relation to the researched at any given time) unfold?

In the field of Quaker studies, Nesbitt (2002) concludes that Quaker ethnographers show elements of their Quaker lives pertinent to ethnography;¹⁰⁰ she also notes the potential for research to be a catalyst in the researcher's own spiritual development, as Pilgrim (2004: 224), Tarter (2004: 95) and Meads (2007b: 289-290) described. Nesbitt (2010) further considers the role of Eastern spirituality and religion in Quaker academics' career development. I have extended Pillow's (2003) analysis of 'uncomfortable reflexivity'¹⁰¹ from settings where race and gender are determining factors to the field of religious ethnography (Meads 2007b). I have applied Labaree's multiple-insider/outsider frame in relation to Quaker studies (Chapter 4). Further research in other religious groups could usefully consider whether Nesbitt's and my findings, about the impact of the researcher's religious background on the intersection of the elements of research and religious practice, is particularly Quaker or whether they also apply in other religious groups.

There is evidence that some outsiders do get drawn inside: Kline (2002: 146) was one such:¹⁰²

Participation in these [business] meetings allows the Attender access to a convincing aspect to Quaker life – taking part in the decision process and experiencing the development of unified action. On many occasions during business meetings, I personally felt a connection with Friends. Although I never verbally contributed to a decision, I did regularly feel the urge. The decision-making employed, which respects the contribution of everyone

¹⁰⁰ These elements are: affirmation of silence; practice of listening; marginality of Quakers in relation to mainstream Christian theology; openness to diverse religious insights; and distrust of theological terminology (Nesbitt 2010: 152).

¹⁰¹ Uncomfortable reflexivity examines how researchers' self-location, position and interests can not only assist in the research process, but also provide insight into how that knowledge is produced (Pillow 2003: 178).

¹⁰² There may well be others (and not only in the field of Quaker studies), for example Dandelion told me that Plüss (who had interviewed him during her fieldwork) had also been drawn inside, but I could find no mention of it in her thesis, nor the later article (Plüss 1995; 2007).

creates a unified course of action, giving me the urge to apply for membership on many occasions.

The fine balance between research and religious practice and the researcher's changing identity, both religiously and intellectually, is a wide field for further enquiry.

Further research into the Experiment

A specific enquiry would show what effects this research had on the interviewees' and participants' Experimenting.

A longer study of Experimenters might also consider whether and how their experience affects their moral view. In Scully's (2002; 2008) research into how Friends use virtue ethics in a moral collage, she refers to Friends' shared understanding of being 'a good Quaker' (2008: 120). As this study and Robson's (2005; 2008a; 2008b) work have shown, however, there are incongruities between espoused theory (Friends should be truthful with each other and not in conflict, justice should prevail) and theory-in-use (there is no conflict, any differences must be swept under the carpet and Friends must pretend they get on with each other) among British Friends generally, but not Experimenters. How does that difference play out more widely?

British Quakers and heterotopia

Applying heterotopia to Experimenters and the Experiment raises questions about what would be shown by using a similar analysis on British Quakers generally.

Although Pilgrim (2003b; 2004; 2008) applies Hetherington's definition of

heterotopia to British Quakers,¹⁰³ my analysis is extended for other commentators, bringing in further nuances (invisibility, playfulness/experimentation, effervescence and so on).

Foucault (1986 [1967]-a: 22-23) discussed *localisation* being replaced by *extension* in the seventeenth century and then *extension* being replaced by *emplacement*. What was the effect of those conceptualisations on British society and Quakers as they occupied their heterotopic space within it? Did Quakers grasp *extension* in a theological and spiritual sense more readily than others in Britain, as Ambler (2008) suggests? Did the liminal experience of early Friends cease to be of central importance in the later part of the twentieth century (Pilgrim 2003b), because most British Friends seized on *emplacement* spiritually, whilst Experimenters, as a result of their sense of the Divine, referred back to early Friends' spirituality and so became heterotopian? *Emplacement* suggests a connectedness as well as identification (and therefore separateness) in location and, after the Quaker 'hedge' (of plain dress, plain speech and exogamy) was removed in the mid-nineteenth century (Isichei 1970), Friends were not immune to changes in wider *mores*, including both a sense of individuality and egalitarianism. As liminal experience was hidden in the culture of silence, did it become potentially differentiating and therefore less acceptable?

¹⁰³ Dandelion suggests that Pilgrim's idea of heterotopia has begun to play with itself to the point that it can no longer adequately describe Quakers and that it may need to be revisited as something which can be predicted to continue to operate as normative and foundational (Dandelion 2008a: 37; Dandelion & Collins 2008), but he could only be thinking of a limited idea of heterotopia, as Pilgrim defines it in the same volume (Dandelion & Collins 2008; Pilgrim 2008: 53-55). Pilgrim uses a limited aspect of Hetherington's developed definition (Hetherington 1997: viii, ix, 7; Pilgrim 2008: 54-55) [Pilgrim's references are incorrect (see Chapter 1 FN113) – I have substituted the correct ones where I cite Pilgrim's references to Hetherington].

Is vocal ministry in MfW a heterotopian process in a way similar to the Experiment?

Vocal ministry can physically disrupt the person giving it and is said to come from elsewhere but is filtered through the Friend's experience (*QFP* 1995: 2.56, 2.58), so is ministry from a heterotopic space within the Friend giving it?

Is MfW itself a heterotopian process? Whilst Friends' experience in MfW remains hidden behind the culture of silence, how can it be known whether it is disturbing, disrupting and undermining to the grammar and syntax of each Friend's everyday life (Foucault 2002 [1966])? It certainly has a system of opening and closing (for example, settling into MfW, Elders' handshake to end it, maintenance of the rules of ministry (Dandelion 1996: 197-212)), Foucault's fifth principle (1986 [1967]-a: 26), but data is needed to consider the other principles and the characteristics of heterotopia from other scholars' work outlined in Chapter 3.

Is it that certain people are drawn to heterotopian practice or rather that heterotopian practice creates a certain approach to life? For example, was it the heterotopic space of Quaker worship that drew Roland Penrose, brought up a Quaker, to surrealism, heterotopian art?¹⁰⁴

Hetherington's reference to *collage* in discussing how heterotopias signify by similitude (1997: 43-50) resonates with Frith's (2008) and Scully's (2002) use of the word as a metaphor for how Quakers make choices, respectively about use of time and in determining their ethics. An analysis of their use of *collage* using the lens of heterotopia, which signifies by similitude, could show that British Quakers do, despite

¹⁰⁴ Penrose introduced surrealist art to Britain (Slusher 2007: 8), thus linking two expressions of heterotopia.

Pilgrim's conclusions (2003b; 2008), still operate a heterotopic space in British society.¹⁰⁵

British Quakers' triple culture

Dandelion (1996) and Robson (2005) have considered specific aspects of the behavioural creed, respectively the importance of silence, ministry, closing of worship and Eldering, the control of consensus, the negotiation of control and of process, and handling conflict within Meetings. Plüss considered institutional conduct but could find no articulation of it, only experimental and affective components (2007: 253). There are examples (Chapter 7 and this chapter) of the behavioural creed breaking down, possibly to become a new way of behaving.¹⁰⁶ Future research could explore the breakdown of the behavioural creed further. Dandelion's (2004a) explanation of 'orthocredence' addresses only ways of believing. My research suggests there is something more holding Quakers together: for Experimenters it is clearly their experience of the Divine, reinforced by their Experimenting together (Chapters 5 and 6). It is likely there is something similar holding other Quakers in the Society, but whatever that may be is hidden in the culture of silence.

¹⁰⁵ I was struck by Pilgrim's (2003a) exposition of heterotopia and immediately felt it was an explanation for the Experiment's position within BYM, but I recall that when questions and comments were invited after the lecture, I commented that Quakers' behaviour in Huddersfield on the day the second Iraq war was declared (20 March 2003) fitted the notion she described. Stop the War Campaign had a noisy demonstration starting in Market Place, which then became a march, blocking the traffic on the ring road and trying to overturn a bus, whilst I had joined a silent Quaker demonstration outside the station in St George's Square. Quakers had decided to become visibly (and audibly, or, rather, with a lack of audibility) different in their witness, not only (as I now define it) heterotopic, in a different site from the main demonstration, but also heterotopian in the way we demonstrated. One demonstrator from Stop the War remonstrated with us for not being in the main demonstration, and one of the members of Huddersfield Meeting replied that our separate presence had already been discussed with the main committee. This is but one anecdotal example. It is possible that applying the concept of heterotopia to Frith and Scully's work could show that Friends are heterotopian in relation to uses of time and ethics, for example.

¹⁰⁶ Best similarly finds that adolescent British Quakers have a new way of behaving: they configure Quaker culture differently from adult Quakers (Best 2008a).

Robson calls for successful conflict-handling narratives to act as models (2005: 228-230; 2008a: 12). Modern narratives of religious experience are also required, since belief and behaviour are only part of the Quaker story. Further research in BYM generally might investigate whether Experimenters' triple culture is also the hidden culture for other Quakers.

Hermeneutic spiralling

In this chapter I have identified how the Experiment operates a heterotopian impulse within British Quakers, how invisible dimensions of heterotopia may relate to each other, not as nested layers, but as invisible dimensions folding back on each other to create the possibility of the heterotopia changing its context. I have also discussed the implications of my findings for other scholars' work.

In the thesis I have shown how Experimenters' religious experience and transformation underpins their behaviour and supports them in breaking through the wider group's cultural constraints to change the group's behaviour. I have argued that the Experiment is a heterotopian process, that it leads Experimenters to find heterotopic places within themselves and that Experimenters sit in a heterotopic position vis-à-vis British Quakers generally, with multi-dimensions of heterotopia interacting to create opportunities to change the context in which they Experiment.

The thesis builds on previous scholarship and makes an original contribution in several different fields. It is a case study of religious experience in one particular religious group and is the first academic study of contemporary Quakers' religious

experience. It has developed Foucault's notion of heterotopia from (heterotopic) site into (heterotopian) process and applied it to show how heterotopias can be multi-dimensional and interactive and how a heterotopia may change its context. It has demonstrated that religious experience and transformation can be fully explained and analysed better by an insider researcher who shares the participants' understanding, both in her own personal practice and the research experience. It identified reflexivity as necessary (heterotopian) methodology for insider research in the religious context. It also showed the importance of practical spiritual underpinning in dealing with conflict in a religious group.

This thesis has travelled along several hermeneutic spirals. One is the spiral of the thesis' interweaving of previous scholarship (Chapters 1 and 2) and Foucault's notion of heterotopia (Chapter 3) through and with the research process (Chapter 4), Experimenters' religious experience (Chapter 5), their transformation (Chapter 6) and conflict-handling (Chapter 7) to show that the Experiment is highly and complexly heterotopic and to mirror back to BYM what its nature is, in juxtaposition to the Experiment (this chapter). Another was the spiral of the researcher's understanding, considered in Chapter 4 in relation to the whole of the research process as outlined in the other chapters. A third was the spiral of Experimenters' experience (Chapters 5 and 6). Yet another was the spiral of the heterotopias found in the Experiment through to Foucault's spatial paradigm, interrelating dimensions and the relations of space to non-place.

The spiral never closes to a point of arrival. There is need for further research in the suggested areas to continue the spiralling towards ever-developing understanding.

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Appendix A: Versions of the Experiment

A1 1997 Version

A nine-step meditation from early 1997, using quotations by George Fox and other early Friends, selected and arranged by Rex Ambler. This meditation incorporates the aspects of the individual, the group and the world.

An outline of the Experiment, according to George Fox (with a little help from his friends)

*Experiment with Light meditation by Rex Ambler, January 1997
using quotations from George Fox's writings and a passage each from the
writings of Francis Howgill, Samuel Fisher and George Keith*

1. Look inside

Your teacher is within you, look not forth. Mind that which is pure in you to guide you to God. Mind the Light, that all may be refreshed one in another, and all in One.

2. Identify the Light

Now this is the Light which you are lighted withall, which shows you when you do wrong; and you know with that when you have wronged anyone, and broken promise, and told a thing that is not so, there is something riseth in you that is a witness against you, and that is the Light. But oh, then did I see my troubles, trials and temptations ore than ever I had done! As the Light appeared, all appeared that is out of the Light, darkness, death, temptations, the unrighteous, the ungodly; all was manifest and seen in the light.

3. Let the light show you yourself

Mind the pure Light of God in you, which shows your sin and evil, and how you have spent your time; and shows you how your minds go forth. As the Light opens and exercises thy conscience, it will let thee see invisible things, which are clearly seen by that which is invisible in thee. That which is invisible is the Light within thee, which he who is invisible has given thee a measure of. *That* will let thee see thy heart. Therefore all now awake from sleep and see where you are. Let the Light of Jesus Christ, that shines in everyone of your consciences, search you thoroughly.

4. Trace the light to its source

The Light which lets man see sin and evil is a perfect Light of God. This which shows you sin and evil is in you, and makes manifest all that you have acted contrary to it. It is the eye that sees the deceit in all its transforming of you and it will let you see. The eye that sees, and the ear that hears that is of the Lord. Ye query, What God really is in himself? My counsel to you is, to stand still in his counsel, namely, his Light in your own consciences, that in that you may be led forth into his life and likeness. Wait for his appearing in his own spirit and power to restore his own image in your hearts. God, as he is really in himself, is beyond all definition of ours at all.

5. Trust the light to show you the alternative

That which lets you see your sins, in that stand, and you will see your Saviour. In the Light that shows you all this, stand, neither go to the right hand nor to the left; here patience is exercised, here is thy will subjected, here thou wilt see the mercies of God made manifest in death. For the first step to peace is to stand still in the Light (which discovers things contrary to it) for power and strength to stand against that nature which the Light discovers: for here grace grows, here is God alone glorified and

exalted, and the unknown truth, unknown to the world, made manifest. For looking down at sin, and corruption, and distraction, you are swallowed up in it; but looking at the light that discovers them, you will see over them. That will give victory; and you will find grace and strength, and there is the first step to peace.

6. Feel the new life grow

He who follows the Light comes to have the Light of life. The Lord hath a Seed that ways, if ye in patience all of you wait, and not matter the weather, the storms, the winds, the hail, the rain, when ye are to sow the seed, nor the rough ground that is to be tilled. For the husbandman waits patiently after the seed is sown. There is a winter before the summer comes. And there must be a great work before the misty heathen be cleared in their understandings (that are so naturally) and the dark air be driven back, and the Prince of life and Light be witnessed. So the Light shineth forth in the Darkness, to visit the Seed shut up therein, and the Light breathes Life into the Seed.

7. See other people in the light

Abiding inwardly in the Light, it will let you see one another and the unity one with another. Now, all loving the Light here no self can stand, but it is judged with the Light; and here all are in unity, and here no self-will can arise, no mastery; but all that is judged out.

8. See the world in the light

This Light, which is of God, lets thee see all the works of the world, and draws thee out of the worships of the world, and keeps thee in the fear of God.

9. Learn to love in the light

I stood up again in the eternal power of God and stretched out my arms amongst them all, and said again with a loud voice, "Strike again, here is my arms and my head and my cheeks" and I was in the love of God to them all that had persecuted me. Here is gospel for thee, here is my hair and here is my cheeks and here are my shoulders", and turned them to him, and the Truth came so over him that he grew loving.

A2 *Version from Tape 2 & CD2: The individual*

A2i Long version (Ambler 2002: 46-47)

1. **Relax body and mind.** Start by making yourself perfectly comfortable. Feel the weight of your body on the chair (or the floor), then consciously release the tension in each part of your body. Then let all your immediate worries go, all your current preoccupations. Relax your mind so much that you give up 'talking to yourself' in your head. Let yourself become wholly receptive.
2. In this receptive state of mind, let **the real concerns of your life** emerge. Ask yourself, "What is really going on in my life?", but do not try to answer the question. Let the answer come. You can be specific: "What is happening in my relationships, my work, my Meeting, in my own heart and mind?" And more specifically still: "Is there anything here that makes me feel uncomfortable, uneasy?" As we gradually become aware of these things we are beginning to experience the light.
3. Now **focus on one issue** that presents itself, one thing that gives you a sense of unease. And try to get a sense of this thing as a whole. Deep down you know what it is all about, but you don't normally allow yourself to take it all in and absorb the reality of it. Now is the time to do so. You don't have to get involved in this problem again, or get entangled with the feelings around it. Keep a little distance, so that you can see it clearly. Let the light show you what is really going on here. "What is it about this thing", you can ask, "that makes me feel uncomfortable?" Let the answer come. And when it does, let a word or image also come that says what it's really like, this thing that concerns me.
4. Now ask yourself **why it is like that**, or what makes it like that. Don't try to explain it. Just wait in the light till you can see what it is. Let the answer come. If you get a simple answer like, "Because I'm afraid" or "Because that's the way she is", ask again the question why. "Why am I afraid?", "Why is she like that?" Let the full truth reveal itself, or as much truth as you are able to take at this moment. If you are really open and receptive, the answer will come.
5. When the answer comes, **welcome it**. It may be painful or difficult to believe with your normal conscious mind, but if it is the truth you will recognize it immediately and realize that it is something that you need to know. Trust the light. Say yes to it. Submit to it. It will then begin to heal you. It will show you new possibilities for your life. It will show you the way through. So however bad the news seems to be at first, accept it and let its truth pervade your whole being.
6. As soon as you accept what is being revealed to you, you will begin to **feel different**. Even bad news will seem strangely good. Accepting truth about yourself is like making peace. An inner conflict is being resolved. Now there is peace. Your body may respond quite noticeably to this change. A sense of relief may make you sigh, or want to laugh. Your diaphragm may heave. This is the beginning of changes that the light may bring about. But if none of this happens on this occasion do not worry. It may take longer. Notice how far you have got this time and pick it up on another occasion. In any case this is a process we do well to go through again and again, so that we can continue to grow and become more like the people we are meant to become.

When you feel ready, open your eyes, stretch your limbs, and bring the meditation to an end.

A2ii Short version

- 1. Relax body and mind.** Start by making yourself perfectly comfortable, then consciously release the tension. Let all your immediate worries go. Let yourself become wholly receptive.
- 2.** In this receptive state of mind, let **the real concerns of your life** emerge.
- 3.** Now **focus on one issue.** You don't have to get involved in this problem again, or get entangled with the feelings around it. Keep a little distance, so that you can see it clearly. Let the answer come.
- 4.** Now ask yourself **why it is like that.** Don't try to explain it. Just wait in the light till you can see what it is. Let the answer come.
- 5.** When the answer comes, **welcome it.** Trust the light. Say yes to it.
- 6.** As soon as you accept what is being revealed to you, you will begin to **feel different.** Accepting the truth about yourself is like making peace. Now there is peace.

**

When you feel ready, open your eyes, stretch your limbs, and bring the meditation to an end.

1. **Relax body and mind.** Make yourself comfortable. Feel the weight of your body on the chair (or the floor). Let all the tension go, in each part of your body. Let your immediate worries go, your current preoccupations. Be relaxed, but alert. Let yourself become wholly receptive.
2. In this receptive state of mind, let **the real concerns of your life** emerge. Ask yourself, 'What is really going on in my life?', but do not try to answer the question. Let the answer come. You can be specific: 'What is happening in my relationships, my work, my Meeting, in my own heart and mind?' And more specifically still: 'Is there anything here that makes me feel uncomfortable, uneasy?' As we gradually become aware of these things we are beginning to experience the light.
3. Now **focus on one issue** that presents itself, one thing that gives you a sense of unease. Try to get a sense of this thing as a whole. Deep down you know what it is all about, but you don't normally allow yourself to take it all in and absorb the reality of it. Now is the time to do so. You don't have to get involved in this problem again, or get entangled with the feelings around it. Keep a little distance, so that you can see it clearly. Let the light show you what is really going on here. 'What is it about this thing', you can ask, 'that makes me feel uncomfortable?' Let the answer come. And when it does, let a word or image also come that says what it's really like, this thing that concerns me.
4. Now ask yourself **why it is like that**, or what makes it like that. Don't try to explain it. Just wait in the light till you can see what it is. Let the full truth reveal itself, or as much truth as you are able to take at this moment. If you are really open and receptive, the answer will come.
5. When the answer comes **welcome it**. It may be painful, or difficult to believe with your normal conscious mind, but if it is the truth you will recognize it immediately. You will realise that it is something that you need to know. Trust the light. Say yes to it. Submit to it. It will then begin to heal you. It will show you new possibilities for your life. It will show you the way through. So however bad the news seems to be at first, accept it and let its truth pervade your whole being.
6. As soon as you accept what is being revealed to you, you will begin to **feel different**. Even bad news will seem strangely good. Accepting truth about yourself is like making peace. An inner conflict is being resolved. Now there is peace. But if none of this seems to have happened yet, do not worry. It may take longer. Notice how far you have got this time and pick it up on another occasion. In any case this is a process we do well to go through again and again, so that we can continue to grow and become more like the people we are meant to be.

**

When you feel ready, open your eyes, stretch your limbs, and bring the meditation to an end.

1. **Relax body and mind.** Make yourself comfortable. Feel the weight of your body on the chair (or the floor). Let all the tension go, in each part of your body. Let your immediate worries go, your current preoccupations. Be relaxed, but alert. Let yourself become wholly receptive.
2. In this receptive state of mind, let **the real concerns of your life** emerge. Ask yourself, 'What is really going on in my life?', but do not try to answer the question. Let the answer come. You can be specific: 'What is happening in my relationships, my work, my Meeting, in my own heart and mind?' And more specifically still: 'Is there anything here that makes me feel uncomfortable, uneasy?' As we gradually become aware of these things we are beginning to experience the light.
3. Now **focus on one issue** that presents itself, one thing that gives you a sense of unease. Try to get a sense of this thing as a whole. Deep down you know what it is all about, but you don't normally allow yourself to take it all in and absorb the reality of it. Now is the time to do so. You don't have to get involved in it again, or get entangled with the feelings around it. Keep a little distance, so that you can see it clearly. Let the light show you what is really going on here. 'What is it about this thing', you can ask, 'that makes me feel uncomfortable?' Let the answer come. And when it does, let a word or image also come that says what it's really like, this thing that concerns me.
4. Now ask yourself **what makes it like that**. Don't try to explain it. Just wait in the light till you can see what it is. Let the full truth reveal itself, or as much truth as you are able to take at this moment. The answer will come.
5. When the answer comes **welcome it**. It may be painful or difficult to believe with your normal conscious mind, but if it is the truth you will recognize it immediately. You will realise that it is something that you need to know. Trust the light. Say yes to it. It will show you new possibilities. It will show you the way through. So however the news seems to be at first, accept it and let its truth pervade your whole being.
6. As soon as you accept what is being revealed to you, you will begin to **feel different**. Accepting truth about yourself is like making peace. Something is being resolved. If none of this seems to have happened, do not worry. It may take longer. Notice how far you have got this time and pick it up on another occasion. In any case this is a process we do well to go through again and again, so that we can continue to grow and become more like the people we are meant to be.

**

When you feel ready, open your eyes, stretch your limbs, and bring the meditation to an end.

(On workshops, the gaps between the stages are recommended to be respectively 5, 6, 7, 7, 6 and 5 minutes.)

A3 Versions from Tape 3 & CD3

A3i: The Group (transcribed from tape, 28 July 2008)

1. Start by sitting comfortably. **Relax body and mind.** Make yourself perfectly comfortable, feeling the weight of your body on the chair. And now consciously release each part of your body. Try to let all your immediate worries go, all your current preoccupations. And quieten your mind as much as possible, giving up talking to yourself, just being aware, wholly receptive.
2. In this receptive state of mind, let **the real concerns of your Meeting or your group** emerge. Ask yourself: "What is really going on in this group? But do not try to answer the question. You can be quite specific: what's happening in our relationships, our worship, our work together and my involvement with the whole group? Is there anything here that makes me feel uncomfortable or uneasy?"
3. **Now focus on one issue** that presents itself, one thing that gives you a sense of unease. And try to get a sense of this thing as a whole. Deep down you know what it is all about, but you don't normally allow yourself to take it all in and absorb the reality of it. Now is the time to do so. You don't have to get involved in this problem again or the feelings, keep a little distance and then you will see it more clearly. Let the light show you what is really going on here. What is it about this that makes me feel uncomfortable? Let the answer come. Maybe a word or image will also come which says what it's really like, but wait for the answer.
4. Now ask yourself **why is it or what makes it like that?** Don't try to explain it. Just wait in the light till you can see for yourself. And if you get a simple answer like 'because they're afraid', ask again the question why. Why are they afraid? And let the full truth reveal itself. The answer will come.
5. When the answer comes, **welcome it.** It may be painful or difficult to believe. But if it fits the truth, you will recognise it immediately and you will know that it is something that you need to know. Trust the light, say yes to it, submit to it. It will then begin to heal you and the Meeting. It will show you new possibilities for your life together. It will show you the way through. So however bad the news seems to be at first, accept it and let its truth pervade your whole being.
6. Now finally, **consider how you need to act.** You won't need to weigh up pros and cons here. So ask: what am I or what are we being called to do here? It may be no different from what you have been doing for some time but it may be very different. You will know as you open yourself to the truth. But recognising the truth in the light will give you a surprising certainty. Maybe not the whole answer yet, but about your next step. And you will be able to act with confidence that you are being guided. So ask: what are we being called to do here or what am I being called to do here, and let the answer come. Don't try to answer it yourself.

When you feel ready, open your eyes, have a good stretch, slowly come back to the present and bring the meditation to an end.

(The meditation on the Meeting in *Light to Live* by (Ambler 2002: 50-51) is shorter than the version on the tape and the meditation on the Group (Ambler 2002: 52) suggests a still briefer approach.)

A3ii Version from Tape 3 & CD3: The world (Ambler 2002: 52-53)

1. **Relax body and mind.** Start by making yourself perfectly comfortable. Feel the weight of your body on the chair, then consciously release the tension in each part of your body. Now let all your immediate worries go; in particular, let go of any images or stories of the world that have touched you recently from television and newspapers. We want to know the truth about our world. So let yourself become wholly receptive.
2. In this receptive state of mind, let **the real issues of the world** emerge. Ask yourself: "What is really going on in the world? What is happening in the world as I know it, as I experience it?" And be specific: "...in the world of work, of commerce, politics". Is there anything there that makes you feel uncomfortable? Don't try to answer yourself. Let the answer come. Let the light show you what is happening.
3. **Now focus on one issue** that presents itself, one thing that gives you a sense of unease. Try to get a sense of this thing as a whole. And ask yourself: "What is it about this situation, those events, those people that makes me feel uncomfortable?" Let the truth disclose itself. And when it does, let a word or image come that says what it's really like, what it is that touches you.
4. Now ask yourself **what makes it like that**. Don't try to explain. Just wait in the light till you can see for yourself. If you lose your concentration, simply ask why? Keep asking why, then wait for an image, a word, a memory. Be open to the truth, hard though it may be, and it will surely be revealed to you.
5. When the answer comes, **welcome it**. It may be surprising, even difficult to believe. It may not fit in with what you want to believe, or what you have seen and heard by others. But if it fits your own experience you will know immediately that it is true. And accepting that it's true will bring a sense of peace, and a freedom from the worry that has surrounded this issue.
6. Now finally, **consider how you need to act**. You won't need to weigh up alternatives or think through strategies. You will know in your heart what an appropriate response will be. What are you being called to do? How is the light leading you? Is it to do what you have already been doing for some time? Or is it to do something different? Only you will know, as you open yourself to the truth.

When you feel ready, open your eyes, stretch your limbs, and bring the meditation to an end.

A4 *Version from Tape 4 & CD4:*

1. BE STILL. Sit comfortably. Breathe slowly several times. Relax and let your mind become quiet. Be still.
2. WAIT. Be receptive. Turn to the Light.
3. LET your real concerns be revealed by the Light.
4. BE COOL or keep a little distance as you focus on something which is significant to you. Let the Light show you what is really happening there. If feelings or questions arise, hold them in The Light. Wait for clarity.
5. OPEN yourself to what is being shown. Wait and trust The Light. Let the understanding come.
6. SUBMIT TO or accept what is being shown. Welcome it. Continue to wait in The Light.
7. ALLOW yourself to be open to new possibilities. Accept and be thankful for your experience, whatever it has been.

When you feel ready, open your eyes stretch and bring the Meditation to an end.

A5 *Versions from Tape 5 & CD5: Experiment with Light meditation by Klaus Huber, August 2000 using edited passages from George Fox's writings*

A5i Long version (*Experiment with Light version 5*)

1. Keep within. For the measure is within, and the light is within, and the pearl is within you.
2. Let the light that shines in everyone of your consciences, search you thoroughly, and it will let you clearly see. As the light opens and exercises your conscience, it will let you see invisible things, which are clearly seen by that which is invisible in you.
3. As the light appeared, all appeared that is out of the light, darkness, death, temptations, the unrighteous, the ungodly; all was manifest and seen in the light.
4. Do not look at the temptations, confusions, corruptions, but at the light that discovers them. For looking down at corruption and distraction, you are swallowed up in it; but looking at the light that discovers them, you will see over them. There is the first step to peace.
5. The light will lead you out of darkness into the light of life, into the way of peace and into the life and power of truth.
6. Living in the truth ye live in the love and unity. In the light walk, and ye will shine.

A5ii Short version

1. Be still. Keep within. The light is within.
2. Let the light search you thoroughly, and it will let you clearly see.
3. As the light appears, all that is out of the light will appear.
4. Do not look at the confusions, but at the light that discovers them. There is the first step to peace.
5. The light will lead you out of darkness into the light of life, peace and truth.
6. Living in the truth, in the light walk, and ye will shine.

A6 Comparison of Versions

	<i>Light to live by</i>	tapes		
devised by	text	Rex Ambler	Diana Lampen & Elizabeth Brown	Klaus Huber
tape version		2: insert	4	5
date	2001	1998	2001	2003
steps:				
1	mind the light	look inside	be still	keep within
2	open your heart to the truth	identify the light	wait in the light	let the light search you thoroughly
3	wait in the light	let the light show you yourself	let your real concerns be revealed by the light	all appeared that is out of the light
4	submit to the truth	trace the light to its source	be cool	look at the light that illuminates
5		trust the light to show you the alternative	open yourself to what is being shown	the light will lead you out of darkness
6		feel the new life grow	submit to/accept	living in the truth

Appendix B: i21's first Experiment poem

Seek the light
Sense the sun
See the shadow
Cannot run

Feel the light
Warm on skin
Images abound
Shadows thin

Watch the light
Now it spins
Colours glowing
Spiralling wings

Hear the light
Sparkling seas
Drawing westwards
Mountain breeze

Taste the light
Dew on stone
Take it inwards
Finding a home

Smell the light
Mossy banks
Settling there
Giving thanks

Losing the light
Gull cries
Homeward bound
Opening eyes

Appendix C1: Interview prompt i18 mindmap



Appendix C2: Letter to potential Light groups

[postal address]
tel: [number] (home) [number] (mobile)
e-mail: [address]

29 August 2003

[a1]
[address first line]
[address second line]
[address third line]
[address town]
[address county]
[address postcode]

Dear [a1],

Experiment with Light

It was good to talk to you on the 'phone on 20 August. I'm sorry it's taken me a little while to get my thoughts together, but a major priority was rearranging and refurnishing my workspace at home so that the papers for my research are more easily accessible; it took some time both to do the thing itself and to get all the papers sorted. Anyway, here is an explanation of what I'm doing and what I'd like to do with the MMs likely to start new Light groups, so that, as you suggested, you can discuss it with the other organiser of the [workshop venue name] weekend and anyone who may set up a Light group afterwards.

Unfortunately, as I mentioned when we spoke, I am away when you are at [workshop venue name], but I would be very pleased to come over in October to speak to anyone who may be interested, whether they permit my research or not. I do have experience of facilitating my own meeting's Light group and, when I spoke to Rex Ambler he suggested that, after the theory of the weekend workshop, my talking to you might also be helpful for you on a practical level.

How did I get to this point?

In 1999 I saw Rex speak at Yorkshire General Meeting about the Experiment and have participated in and latterly led Experiments in my own PM. (We have had three attempts to run a viable Light group and seem to have succeeded at the third attempt.) At the outset, I believed that the Experiment was a major contribution to the spiritual life of modern British Quakerism and, from my involvement in my meeting's Light group, I do have an understanding of the experiences Friends can have and how these can sometimes change lives.

Since last September I have been studying for the M.Phil(B) in Quaker Studies at Birmingham University (based at Woodbrooke) and I have decided to research the Experiment with Light within BYM for my dissertation. In *Light to live by*, Rex invites someone to make a study of the phenomenon and I have discussed my approach to the research both with Rex and with Diana Lampen.

By way of background, I should perhaps add that I am a member of [Meeting name] PM (in [Meeting name] MM) in Yorkshire. I have been a Quaker for nearly five years, although I also attended a meeting in Birmingham for a while until 1981. I am

Appendix C2: Letter to potential Light groups

an elder of my PM and trustee of two MM trusts and represent [name of MM] at Meeting for Sufferings. I work part time to fund myself through my degree.

My research so far

Since July I have been interviewing various Light Experimenters around the country and I have some more interviews arranged, running through until November. The Friends who have kindly volunteered to help me received letters from me (with reply slips – see sample attached). Diana kindly distributed them for me. As you may know (or I am sure would otherwise soon have learned on the [workshop venue name] weekend) Diana distributes the five tapes containing background talks by Rex and different versions of the Light meditations, so she had access to the addresses of Friends who might be prepared to help me.

What I had hoped to hear about from interviewing these volunteers was their experience of the Experiment and their Light groups, how the groups are run, what the Experiment has meant to them and whether we are all experiencing the Light in the same way. I do have some initial research topics, but these may well change as I talk to Friends.

Friends have been very generous with their time and I feel very privileged to be allowed to share in their experiences. I have gained further insight into the workings of the Light and deeply appreciate their help with my research. I am, however, finding some limitations to the approach of interviewing some time after the pertinent events:

- I have found that some Friends experimenting in the same group remember the same events quite differently;
- the passage of time, and the various developments Friends experience in the Experiments, mean that they do not always clearly remember their initial experiences and how they felt at the time, only where they are at the point I speak to them;
- most of the Friends who responded to my mailshot via Diana are either facilitators of their groups or otherwise have been very involved in the roll-out of the Experiment (in other words they are particularly committed to it one way or another), only one or two so far are "ordinary" group members, with a more dispassionate perspective.

Following the progress of a new Light group

The advantages of following the progress of a new Light group from inception are that the research will:

- be much more nearly contemporaneous with the Experimenters' experience, so that the various stages can be captured;
- include those who are less committed, or even those who in time cease the Experiment for whatever reason.

I should value the opportunity to visit the groups set up after [workshop venue name] to ask whether I might seek volunteers from them to be interviewed at various

Appendix C2: Letter to potential Light groups

stages through their group's life. That would be an opportunity also for anyone to ask me any questions they might have, whether about my research or my own experience of my PM's Light group.

If Friends felt sufficiently confident in me, I should also like to participate in the group to get the most contemporaneous information possible, but I appreciate that this may be a more sensitive step, at least initially.

Some of the discipline surrounding my research

Any information which I find in my research will be treated as confidential: anything appearing in my dissertation will be anonymised. My papers, etc., are kept in such a way that the information Friends have given me is stored in an anonymised form, separately from the arrangements I have made to visit them.

So that the information I have is accurate and so that I can refer back to it, I record interviews on a mini-disc recorder. The mini-disc is small and quite unobtrusive and the discs do not bear the name of the person interviewed.

Friends have the right to withdraw from assisting me at any point and, if they mention to me anything which (despite the guarantee of anonymity) they do not want included in the research, perhaps because of its particularly personal nature, I would not include it.

I attach some extra copies of this letter so that you can share them with anyone you feel you would like to.

If there is anything you would like to discuss in the meantime, please do call me. Whenever I am away I check my home answerphone regularly; if you do not get me at the first attempt, please leave a message and I shall return your call.

I do hope you can help and I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours in Friendship

Helen Meads

Appendix C2: Letter to potential Light groups

To:

Helen Meads

[address first line]

[address second line]

[address town]

[address postcode]

tel: home [number]

 mobile [number]

e-mail: [address]

Yes, I would be willing to be interviewed for your Experiment with Light research

Name

Address

Tel no home

 mobile

e-mail

Availability:

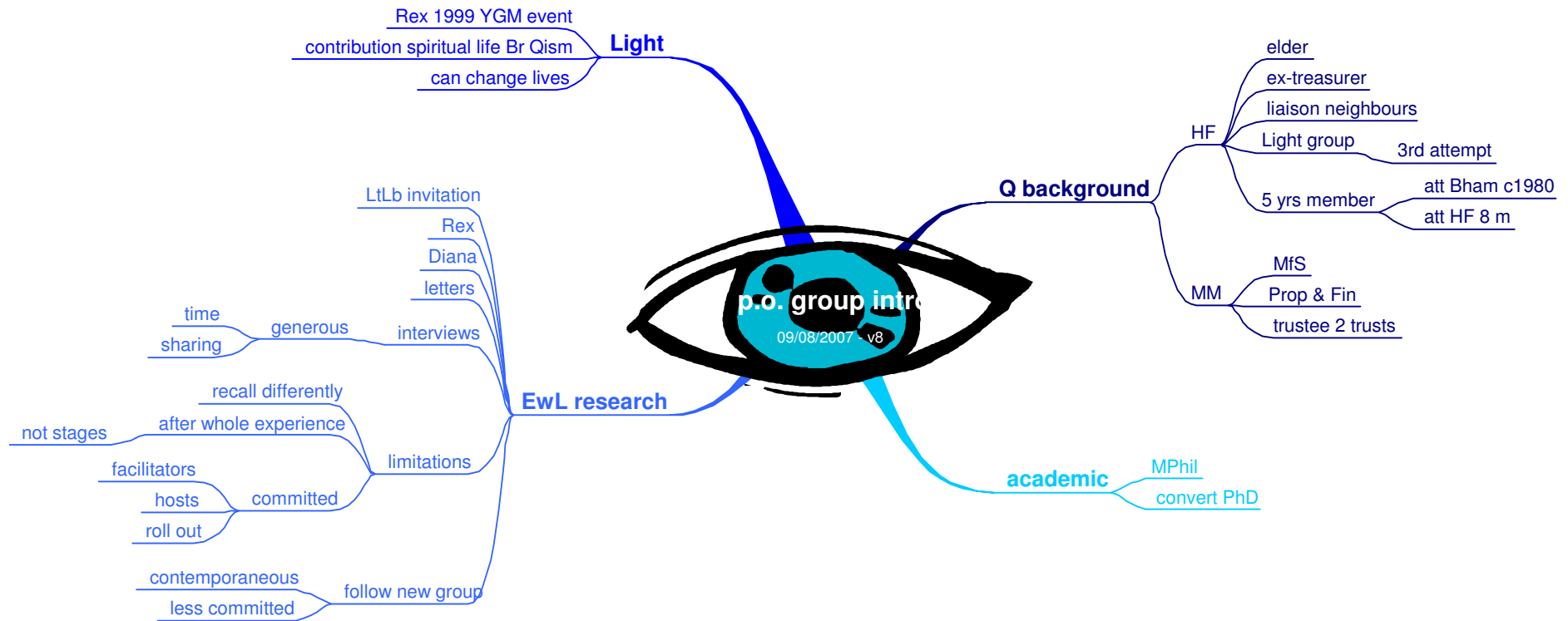
Day of week

Time of day

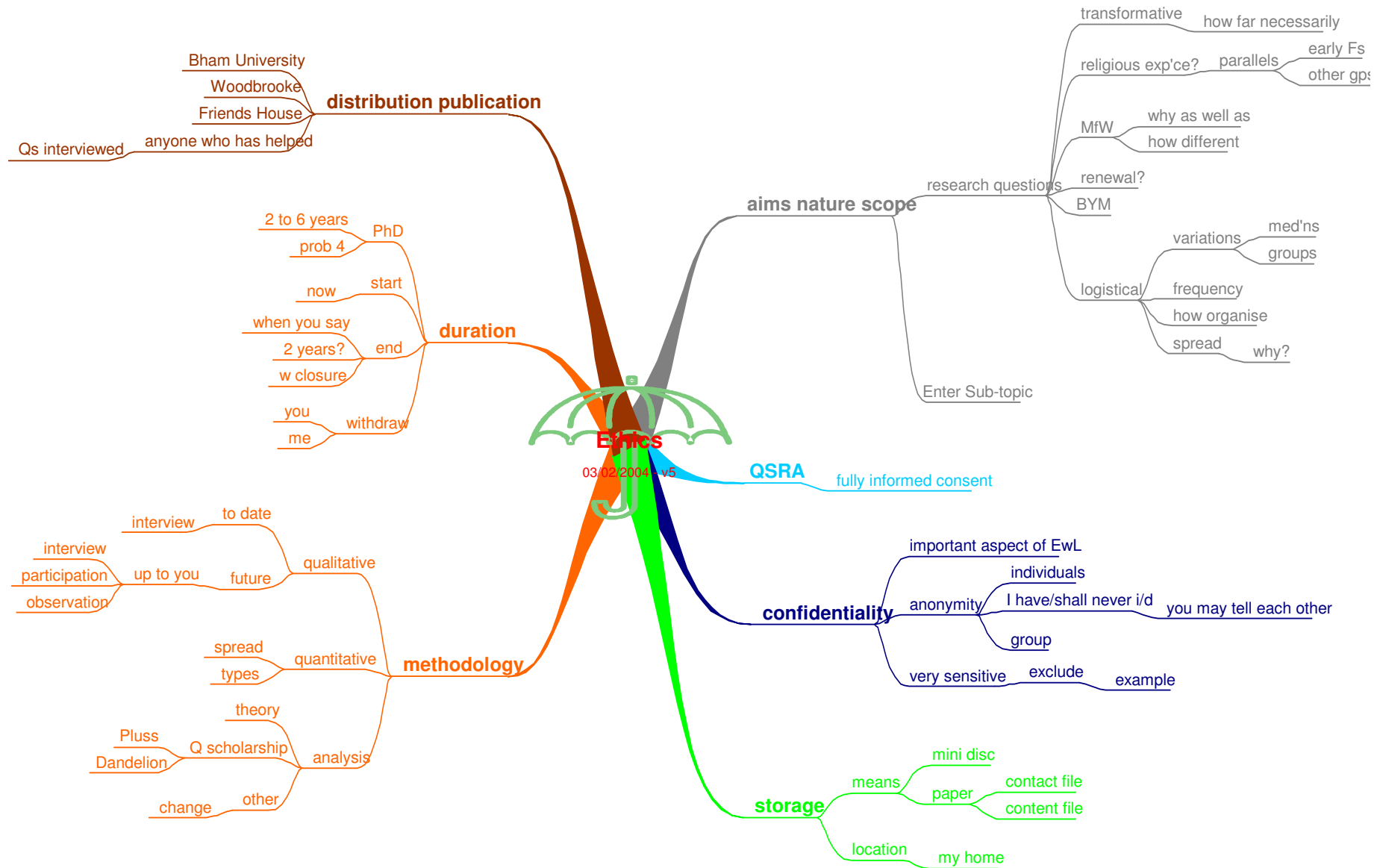
Dates (October to December 2003)

Location: home/meeting house/other

Appendix C3: Group A introduction mindmap



Appendix C4: Group A ethics mindmap



Appendix C5: letter to b1

[postal address]

☎: [number] 📠: [number]

💻/📧: [address]

29 January 2006

[b1]

[address line 1]

[address line 2]

[town]

[postcode]

Dear [b1],

Experiment with Light

It was good to talk to you on the 'phone earlier tonight. The following is a summary of what I'm doing, so that, as you suggested, you can discuss it with the other members of your Light group.

Who I am and my research

I belong to [name of Meeting] PM in [name of Meeting] MM and at various stages have been PM Treasurer, Overseer and Elder and am currently one of MM's representatives on Meeting for Sufferings. I have also been a Trustee (and Treasurer) of 2 MM trusts and I currently clerk an MM working party on its concern for forensic psychiatry.

Since 2002 I have been undertaking studies in theology part time through Woodbrooke's Centre for Postgraduate Studies and The University of Birmingham and I work part time to fund myself through my degree. I am, as I mentioned, researching Experiment with Light. [Details which would identify Meeting B omitted.] A chance remark in a conversation with [mutual Friend] led to my interest in [Meeting B]'s experience in setting up a Light group and, through [mutual Friend], to my talking to [b10], who, as you know, gave me your contact details.

In 1999 I saw Rex Ambler speak at Yorkshire General Meeting about the Experiment and have participated in Experiments in my own PM. At the outset, I believed that the Experiment was a major contribution to the spiritual life of modern British Quakerism and, from my involvement in my meeting's Light group, I do have an understanding of the experiences Friends can have and how these can sometimes change lives.

In *Light to live by*, Rex invites someone to make a study of the phenomenon and I have discussed my approach to the research both with Rex and with Diana Lampen, both of whom have been very generous with their time and supportive of my work.

Appendix C5: letter to b1

My research so far

In 2003 I interviewed various Light Experimenters around the country and from early 2004 until mid 2005, I observed a Light group undertake its Experiments; Friends have been very generous with their time and I feel very privileged to have been allowed to share in their experiences. I have gained further insight into the workings of the Light and deeply appreciate their help with my research.

I am using a "grounded theory" approach, whereby the analysis of the information I have gathered provides the theory explored in the thesis; I did not set out with an hypothesis. I am focusing on the experience of Experimenters and Light groups and would like to explore with you and your group how it was established and the circumstances which have led to its flourishing. I am interested in the effects that Light groups have on the life of the Meetings to which they are attached, whether that is, for example, being particularly cherished or resisted!

Some of the discipline surrounding my research

I am bound in my research not only by Quaker principles, but also by the ethics of the *Quaker Studies Research Association* (see <http://www.qsra.org/ethics.htm>) and of The University of Birmingham.

Any information which I find in my research will be treated as confidential: anything appearing in my thesis will be anonymised (unless anyone particularly wishes to be identified). My papers, etc., are kept in such a way that the information Friends have given me is stored in an anonymised form, separately from the arrangements I have made to visit them.

So that the information I have is accurate and so that I can refer back to it, with permission I have recorded interviews and the Experiments of the group I observed, on a mini-disc recorder. The mini-disc is small and quite unobtrusive and the discs do not bear the name of the people interviewed.

Friends have the right to withdraw from assisting me at any point and, if they mention to me anything which (despite the guarantee of anonymity) they do not want included in the research, perhaps because of its particularly personal nature, I would not include it.

If there is anything you would like to discuss in the meantime, please do call me. Whenever I am away I check my home answerphone regularly; if you do not get me at the first attempt, please leave a message either on my home 'phone or my mobile's voicemail and I shall return your call.

I do hope the group can help and I look forward to hearing from you and, possibly, seeing you on February 16.

Yours in Friendship

Appendix C6: letter to potential interviewees

Helen Meads

[postal address]

[tel: [number] (home) [number] (mobile)

e-mail: [address]

12 May 2003

Dear Friend,

Experiment with Light

In 1999 I saw Rex Ambler speak at Yorkshire General Meeting about the Experiment and have participated in and latterly led Experiments in my own PM. I believe the Experiment is a major contribution to the spiritual life of modern British Quakerism and, from my involvement in my meeting's Light group, I do have an understanding of the experiences Friends can have and how these can sometimes change lives.

Since last September I have been studying for the M.Phil(B) in Quaker Studies at Birmingham University and I have decided to research the Experiment with Light within BYM for my dissertation. In *Light to live by*, Rex invites someone to make a study of the phenomenon and I have discussed my approach to the research with Diana Lampen, who, as I expect you know, is one of the original Experimenters and has been very closely involved in facilitating Light workshops. I am going to have a similar discussion with Rex soon.

I have discovered from James Schaffer that there is no central list of Light groups, but, as a result of Diana doing the tapes and facilitating workshops, she does have a lot of information. Diana and I decided together that it would not be appropriate for her just to give me a list of names and addresses without everyone's permission, so I have prepared and enveloped this letter for her to address it to you. I do not have your name and address.

I should be very grateful for your help in the research. I am looking for a number of people, participating in different groups in different areas, who would be prepared to be interviewed for probably one to two hours. What I would hope to hear about is your experience of the Experiment and your Light group, how it is run, what the Experiment has meant to you and whether we are all experiencing the Light in the same way. Any information which I find in my research will be treated as confidential and anything appearing in my dissertation will be anonymised.

Please do contact me if you are willing to assist. I am prepared to travel to see you at your home or somewhere more convenient for you, e.g. in your local Meeting House. It would be helpful if you could let me know your name, address, telephone number, e-mail address, preferred meeting times, etc. I attach a form of reply in case it is useful. It would be helpful if you could reply to me by the middle of June as it will assist me to schedule interviews in the same area; I would hope to undertake them between July and November.

I attach two extra copies of this letter and would be grateful if you would pass these on to anyone you know who might also be prepared to help me. If you need any more, please let me know and I can send you further copies.

In case you are wondering who I am, I should perhaps add that I am a member of [name of Meeting] in Yorkshire. I have been a Quaker for just over four years, although I also attended a meeting in Birmingham for a while until 1981. I am treasurer of my PM and of two MM trusts and represent [name of MM] at Meeting for Sufferings.

I do hope you can help and I look forward to hearing from you,

Yours in Friendship

Appendix C6: letter to potential interviewees

To:

Helen Meads

[address first line]

[address second line]

[address town]

[address postcode]

tel: home number]

 mobile [number]

e-mail: [address]

Yes, I would be willing to be interviewed for your Experiment with Light research

Name

Address

Tel no home

 mobile

e-mail

Availability:

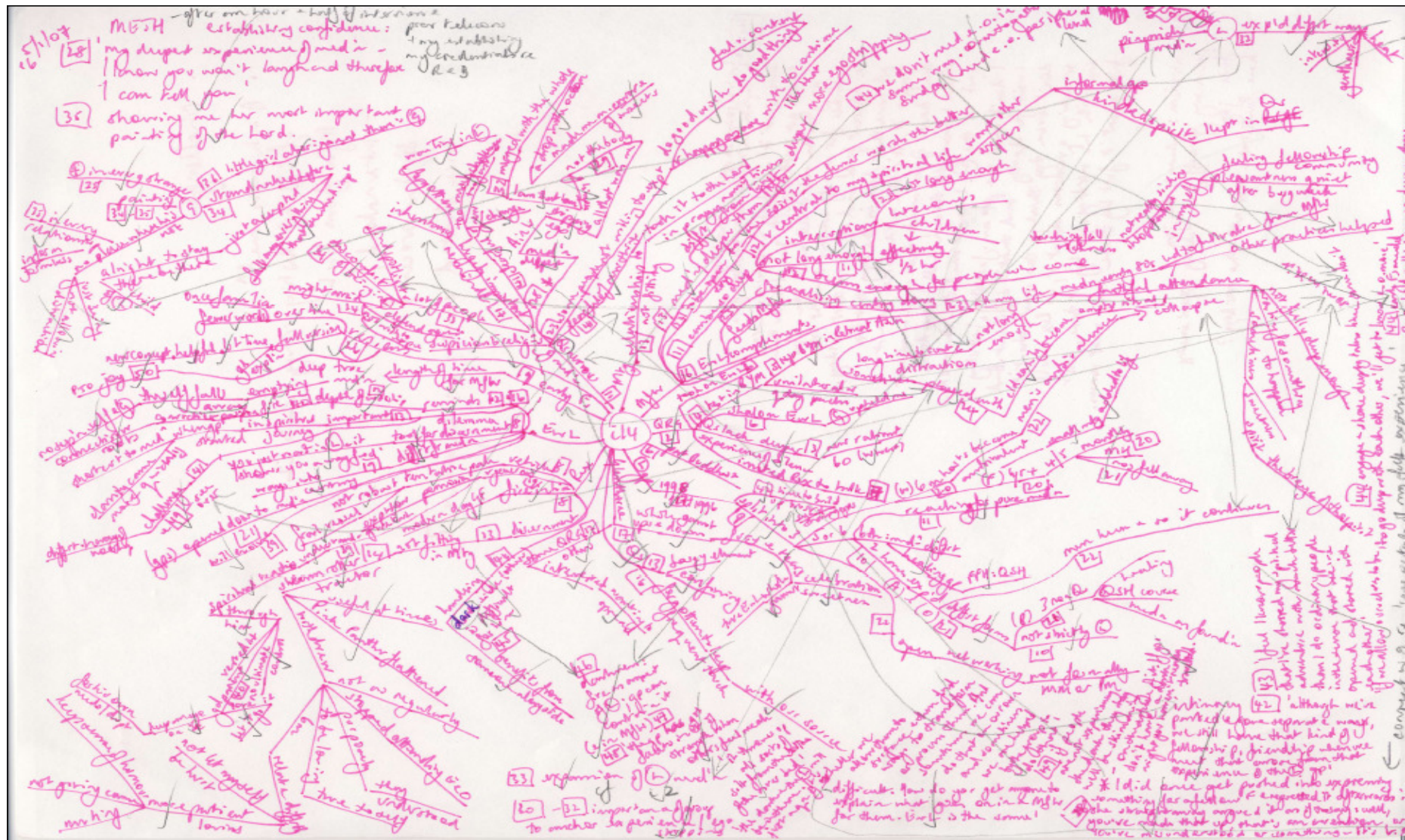
Day of week

Time of day

Dates (July to November 2003)

Location: home/meeting house/other

Appendix C7: i14 interview analysis as hand-drawn mindmap



Appendix C8: Transformation analysis as hand-drawn mindmap



Appendix C9: New categories colour order spreadsheet

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z	AA	AB	AC	
1	interview data							key				frequency analysis																		
2												combination				all														
3																														
4	EYM, Experiment's position in							who	personal/psychological			how	why			how		why		who				what			where			
5	connectedness							where	Qs organisational																					
6	control/ego - letting go							what	transformation			connectedness				connectedness	connectedness	daily practice		daily practice			Truth: own			Quakers, why belong				
7	criticisms, Experimenters'							why	spiritual							criticisms, Exprs' of Ex	daily practice	solo		solo			understanding relationships			early Friends				
8	criticisms, Experimenters of other Friends							how	EwL organisational			why	who			Experiments, nature of	solo	theol/belief system		theol/belief system			darkness			Glenthorne 1998				
9	criticisms, others'															EwL - what it is	theology/belief system	Truth: own		Truth: own			transformation			open/freeflowing				
10	daily practice											daily practice				facilitate	Truth: own			Truth: own			understanding relationships			outside Quakers, Exp run				
11	darkness											solo				Glenthorne 1998	darkness			Truth: own			control/ego - letting go			QRG				
12	death											theology/belief system				intimacy				death						time				
13	early Friends											Truth: own				L gs: pattern of Expts	Quakers, why belong			Quakers, why belong						Glenthorne II (2004)				
14	Experiments, nature of															early Friends	Truth: own			Truth: own						BYM, Experiment's position in				
15	EwL - what it is											what	why			open/freeflowing	Light			Light						criticisms, Exprs of other Fs				
16	facilitate															of's Qs, Exp run	meditation			meditation						criticisms, others'				
17	focusing											darkness				QRG	MfW & EwL			MfW & EwL						Meetings & Light groups				
18	Glenthorne 1998											Truth: own				time	ministry			ministry						conflict				
19	God & Christ															versions	numinous experience			numinous experience						Res				
20	identity											where	how			why Light groups fold (lifecycle)														
21	images															Glenthorne II (2004)														
22	intimacy																													
23	lack of elderly seasoned Friends																													
24	Light																													
25	Light groups: pattern of Experiments																													
26	meditation																													
27	Meetings & Light groups																													
28	methodological points																													
29	MfW & EwL																													
30	ministry																													
31	numinous experience																													
32	open/freeflowing																													
33	outside Quakers, Exp run																													
34	psychosynthesis																													
35	QRG																													
36	Quakers, why belong																													
37	religious or spiritual																													
38	Res																													
39	solo																													
40	theology/belief system																													
41	time																													
42	transformation																													
43	transformation, sense of																													
44	Truth: own																													
45	understanding true nature of relationships																													
46	versions																													
47	why Light groups fold (lifecycle)																													
48	workshops as ego																													
49																														
50	other data																													
51	conflict																													
52	Glenthorne I (1998)																													
53	Glenthorne II (2004)																													
54																														
55																														
56																														

Appendix C10: Group A what happened when spreadsheet amended 21 June 2007

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z	AA	AB	AC	AD	AE	AF	AG	AH	
1																			process	HCM	A1	A2	A5	A7	A8		A3	A4	A6	Grommit					
2																			meditation																
11	Jun	1	A6		A1	A2	A5	A7	A8		A3	A4	A6						tape side																
12		15	A1		1	1	1	1	1		1	1	1	7																					
13	Jul	6	A4		1	1	1	1	1		1	1	1	4																					
14		20			1	1	1	1	1		1	1	1	5																					
15	Aug	17	A3		1	1	1	1	1		1	1	1	5																					
16	Sep	7	A2		1	1	1	1	1		1	1	1	6																					
17		21	A4		1	1	1	1	1		1	1	1	6																					
18	Oct	5	(A7)		1	1	1	1	1		1	1	1	8	at A7's				review																
19		19	A1		1	1	1	1	1		1	1	1	6					(on group)																
20	Nov	2	A6		1	1	1	1	1		1	1	1	5																					
21		16	A8		1	1	1	1	1		1	1	1	5																					
22		30	A5		1	1	1	1	1		1	1	1	4	at A5's																				
23	Dec	7	A2		1	1	1	1	1		1	1	1	3																					
24		21	A1		1	1	1	1	1		1	1	1	3																					
25	2005 Jan	4	A7		1	1	1	1	1		1	1	1	5																					
26		18	A2		1	1	1	1	1		1	1	1	5																					
27	Feb	1	A8		1	1	1	1	1		1	1	1	4																					
28		15	A8		1	1	1	1	1		1	1	1	4																					
29	Mar	1	A6		1	1	1	1	1		1	1	1	6																					
30		15	A4		1	1	1	1	1		1	1	1	5					silence																
31	Apr	5	A2		1	1	1	1	1		1	1	1	4																					
32		19	A7		1	1	1	1	1		1	1	1	7																					
33	May	3	A1		1	1	1	1	1		1	1	1	6																					
34		17			1	1	1	1	1		1	1	1	3																					
35		31	A2		1	1	1	1	1		1	1	1	2																					
36	Jun	7	A4		1	1	1	1	1		1	1	1	5																					
37		21	A7		1	1	1	1	1		1	1	1	7																					
38	frequency	34			30	27	9	22	16			22	25	24																					
39																																			
40	hosted												1						silence																
41													1																						
42													1																						
43													1																				</		

Appendix C11: b1 interview analysis as hand-drawn mindmap



Appendix C12: Group B Meeting and Meeting for Worship analysis as hand-drawn mindmap



APPENDIX D1: i16 interview transcript

A	B	Legend A: track number on minidisc B: time reading on track <i>i16's speech in italics</i> interviewer's speech in ordinary text .. pause/hesitation/silence/may represent interviewer saying 'yes' or i16 saying 'um' (etc., etc.) xx... the end of the word is not actually spoken text omitted because not heard or only much hesitation which does not add to the transcription
1		[small talk]
		<i>time consuming, doing the research, I would think, with the travel (clinking teaspoons/cups) .. it is, yes, but I enjoy it .. you had quite good responses, did you, to your .. yes ..</i>
	0:32	right ...
		this is my very sophisticated form of note-taker, [i16's name] .. but you're still guaranteed <i>it is sophisticated</i> .. you're guaranteed .. <i>I've no idea what it is ..</i> anonymity .. it's a mini-disc recorder, it just makes sure that anything you say I get absolutely accurately .. I'm not transcribing them, but I'm picking data, you know, what people have said, out of it .. <i>okay, yes, I understand ..</i>
	0:58	<i>I just hope it's .. I don't know .. I just hope that it's of use</i> I'm sure it will be
	1:06	people have been very generous .. you know, in what they've shared with me and .. I'm very grateful for everybody's time
		[tea and biscuits]
	1:33	would it be helpful if I sort of said a few things about what I'm doing?
		<i>I think so, yes</i>
		it's basically a conversation, a sort of .. if you're able to .. an information dump of everything you know and have experienced about EwL ... I've got some questions, you know, about how to look at the EwL ... some research questions in my mind, but experience of other people suggests those shift as the work goes on ... I mean, they're questions like, you know, what is it, how does it work, who does it, all the kinds of things that, you know, you might think of .. is it a religious experience is one of the angles, so
	2:21	I don't know if you've read 'Light to Live by', which Rex Ambler wrote? – <i>mm</i> yeah, well in that he invites somebody to do the research and nobody had beaten me to it [laughs] so he's been very supportive, he's been very generous with his time and very helpful and I've seen Diana Lampen as well and in fact it was Diana who facilitated my finding people to talk to because she sent out my initial letters
	2:50	and I don't know how you actually got one. Was it through [i15's name]? <i>through meeting, no, it was through meeting actually</i> through meeting
	2:51	<i>well, I had two – through meeting and had [i15's name] and it was given out at meeting I don't know how it came to meeting .. whether through [i15's name] or as a group that, you know, that somebody knew that was .. taking part</i> so it was kind of like a bit of a scattergun approach .. <i>from the two ..</i> to find people .. but, as I said, people very generous ..
	3:16	I've got some areas to sort of cover, but what I find works best is if you just talk, but .. so that I don't get my own interpretation .. so I actually get yours,

APPENDIX D1: i16 interview transcript

		sometimes I might ask questions that you'd expect me to know the answer to, because I'm a Quaker and because I do EwL myself ..
	3:36	and I probably do understand, but I'll try and get to the very core of it .. and if at any stage any of the questions feel uncomfortable, well, just say, you know, just give an indication that I've gone far enough with you .. and occasionally I'll make notes and that's just .. because that's doing all the work for me .. that's just, I don't want to interrupt you, to carry on, and then maybe something that I'll come back to
		<i>that seems very clear</i>
	4:12	so tell me about your experience of the Experiment
	4:19	<i>my experience, yes, well it was</i>
	4:19	<i>it came through the meeting .. I mean, I don't know where it came, where it goes further back than that, but .. all I know from the point where Rex Ambler came to the meeting, just to speak .. after meeting because already had been arranged</i>
	4:42	<i>a weekend at [name of place] for anybody that wished .. for the .. to go as a group</i>
	4:51	<i>to have a workshop with him</i>
	4:24	<i>I don't know where it goes back further than that .. all I know from the point where .. Rex Ambler came to the meeting .. just to speak after meeting because already had been arranged a weekend at [name of place] for anybody that wished from the meeting .. to go as a group to have a weekend with him .. and .. so he came to speak to us, we had lunch with him, so we could speak informally to him which was nice as well and that's how we came to get in to it because</i>
2	0:10	<i>.. it was a very deep and moving experience .. I mean initially the big thing was I hadn't been away..you know.. just the experience of going away with your meeting .. was wonderful..</i>
	0:27	<i>but then the whole weekend culminating in .. a full Experiment with Light meeting .. the transcript it was recorded, Rex's words, and subsequently, so we used that as our tape to begin with....when we followed on</i>
	0:50	<i>but I find that a very deep experience and .. still remember .. other people as well, it was touched by that as well, but ..</i>
	1:11	<i>what I did before you came is you suggested looking at the journal .. well it's not as formal as that, it's just the notes after each EwL, and I thought well before I look at it I'll pick out the one, I'll write down, I'll jot down .. so that they're obviously the ones that have had the most</i>
	1:34	<i>long-lasting meaning</i>
3		<i>and that was one, which was a feeling of .. I mean is this what you want to do, the actual experience of the ..</i>
	0:12	<i>it was just having this nut inside of me, with the kernel, which seemed to be the important thing, but that this .. the nut shell was very very tight, very hard and .. could .. and needed to be cracked really .. and constricting and ..</i>
	0:36	<i>but as I say I've sort of put my own meanings on that and added to it, definitely added to the experience .. experiencing the same .. being there together and .. there was definitely more to it than doing .. even that first time ..</i>
	1:06	<i>there was more to it being in the group than .. being on our own .. and then ..</i>
	1:19	<i>there was also a worry expressed at that time, which .. I think all of us could</i>

APPENDIX D1: i16 interview transcript

		<i>feel, that because it had been such a joint experience, that hadn't come for whatever reason .. that there was a danger that we could be a .. a split, a them and an us</i>
	1:40	<i>situation, so I think, I mean, others, not me, sort of made a very conscious decision .. well, there was felt a need to .. sort of spread the word as it were or sort of provide the same sort of situation for those that would like to in the .. in the meeting itself</i>
	2:02	<i>.. I'm very grateful to the people that took that on .. and continued with .. they fed in .. there were other people that went .. to Diana Lampen and Rex Ambler .. and .. other people from [name of town]? .. yes .. and I was conscious that that was feeding in .. and a few groups were developed at that time</i>
	2:34	<i>.. I don't know how many and the idea at that time was going that we .. we kept for a certain amount of time in a group .. have regular meetings where we reported back, but change around the groups .. we would get to know at a deep level the other people .. and we've never ever done that ..</i>
	3:00	<i>well with one other person that was there right from the start .. but we've been together in a EwL group .. in the same group as [i15's name] then? .. yes</i>
	3:20	<i>we were a small group .. there were three core</i>
4		<i>members of our group, our little .. it was done partly .. I don't know how we formed .. I don't actually know how we chose the .. I think some attention was paid to locality .. but it wasn't completely that .. as you'll recognise with [i15's name] living so far away</i>
	0:20	<i>.. and there were three of us core .. I say core members, but there were other members that came in and out .. but there were three of us that kept together .. the third member moved away to [name of another town]</i>
	0:37	<i>and we still meet up and it's .. at one time we used to meet up and have a meditation on the Light group, but we don't do that now, but we still meet as our group as well as in pairs ..</i>
	0:59	<i>and that's continued for perhaps two or three years .. we used to meet in the other person's house and when she moved and .. we were still reporting back, we were still having meetings .. at our meeting ..</i>
	1:20	<i>to introduce .. the .. to new people, but also to feed in with our experiences and .. and it was sort of .. if there were people that .. not attached to a group who wanted to join which .. it was that sort of thing, so ..</i>
	1:46	<i>so our .. the two of us who were in that group are now .. six of us .. and .. it's steady but there have been shaky .. it's not .. there have been changes ..</i>
	2:07	<i>and the idea is to meet once a fortnight .. on average over a year it's not nearly that .. but that's what we try .. that's what we aim for ..</i>
	2:25	<i>and that's where we are at the present moment really</i>
5	0:09	<i>.. personally I find it .. so invaluable that I would find it hard .. I find it hard to imagine .. how I would've reacted to certain things that have happened in my .. life</i>
	0:29	<i>I mean, jumping really just to the beginning of this year .. was .. we took on a .. to live with us .. a .. I mean a very good friend .. very good friend .. someone I've known since he was six months old and he's 22 .. I mean known at a very close level .. been on holidays together our children .. been .. just lived in each other's houses .. very close</i>
	0:57	<i>but the .. idea was .. in great difficulties .. and .. that's the experience I meant that the EwL .. was core to how .. to my .. first of all he was living rough ..</i>

APPENDIX D1: i16 interview transcript

	1:21	<i>and .. rejecting everybody .. friends, all of his family .. and I took that to the Light, just that concern for him and the .. most of the things I get are images .. and</i>
6		<i>.. which I find really, really helpful, not just for the insight, but because it's .. it's something I can carry along with me .. as a shorthand to the .. to all .. every .. you know, shorthand access to it</i>
	0:16	<i>and the image was of the large Amazonian lily with the little lip at the end and of just waiting there .. and a little insect just crawling out and on .. and just lying in the sun, recovering in the sun,</i>
	0:32	<i>and .. but .. the feeling I got was my part was just .. wait there as this pad, not doing anything, just being there and it was very power .. very powerful that</i>
7		<i>there was no doubt in my mind that it was very significant and .. it was part .. I mean I was thinking about him daily anyway and trying to hold him in the light and .. and that became part of that and I spent one whole day it was a quiet day at the church really in preparation for Christmas but that was sort of .. that's what I spent doing ..</i>
	0:23	<i>and, lo and behold, I mean it really was .. I mean I'm sure .. there was a .. he turned up and came to live here and .. which was the first bit, the easy bit in a way .. because it didn't .. well ..</i>
7	0:45	<i>the first month he was just locked away .. in a room and just come down for meals at night and we hardly saw him and he recovered from that and began to make his way in the world ..</i>
	1:04	<i>but .. that .. and this is where I took it to the light quite a lot because .. all sorts of .. you know, bringing my own ego .. you know, sort of .. the extent to which I'd sort of see myself as a saviour and how I was going to be the key and ..</i>
	1:24	<i>I mean I hadn't really .. there was an element of that in it, I'm sure, well, I know</i>
8		<i>.. and that .. well more that I had to deal with the fact that I wasn't going to be the .. and so that .. again I was still having the same image of .. that was my role</i>
	0:12	<i>and .. which helped a lot because his mother .. became very resentful of me for all sorts of reasons and still it's not .. and that was, I mean, hurtful, very hurtful because we'd been very very close friends .. and ..</i>
	0:39	<i>and yet .. I didn't feel .. I don't know .. there was lots that I didn't resolve, but</i>
	0:46	<i>I didn't feel in a position to resolve with her because she was dealing with all .. and I don't still .. well maybe it was right to .. to .. not to confront her with .. our relationship ..</i>
	1:05	<i>but I had to take some of the things she .. she threw at me .. I had to take some of the truth that there was, you know, truth in what she was saying .. and .. and part of it, taking on board was to come back to this thing of just being the support</i>
9	0:08	<i>after about six months .. I then .. in the light .. it seemed to me .. that no longer was it a wet insect with wet .. well whatever .. the wet wings lying there in the sun ..</i>
	0:28	<i>it was an over-heavy .. sort of caterpillar .. sort of .. that was in danger of getting heavier and .. sinking him sinking itself and sinking us .. letting the water in.. sinking the lily as well yes</i>
	0:49	<i>and that was .. a .. I did .. what I took away from it .. was .. first of all that .. it had its use, but neither of us .. it was not good for .. we were in a self .. it was</i>

APPENDIX D1: i16 interview transcript

		<i>in a mutually destructive .. situation</i>
	1:13	<i>.. but what I took from it was a trust .. I had a trust that .. something would come .. the time was to move on .. and .. that we .. well, I .. it was a trust [laughs] .. it was more of a hope [laughs] that something would appear</i>
	1:39	<i>something would .. would become apparent what that should be .. and it all .. because of .. something .. he was just getting worse and worse really .. things went horribly .. horribly wrong .. not at this house but .. so ..</i>
10		<i>it was .. forced really .. although I don't .. I don't know .. I'm still in a process of .. of working this out .. but .. and I do have regrets of what</i>
	0:20	<i>I did, but I think it was more of how I did it rather than .. what .. I didn't .. I wasn't able .. to get through to him .. what it was was he was on probation .. no, on bail, here .. and .. he needed professional .. well, he needs professional help.. everybody</i>
	0:50	<i>I mean, so many people it's not just my unprofessional opinion .. it's his doctor and things .. I mean, he desperately needs help .. and he wasn't getting it</i>
11		<i>.. living here .. I mean I don't just mean he wasn't getting it from us, he wasn't in a position .. you mean because he was housed .. and .. yes .. and yet there was, he had .. I found out about bail hostels which ..</i>
	0:15	<i>seemed to me to be .. well, it just seemed like an answer, so I don't know why I didn't work out .. you know, he would've, there would've been a structure, but he'd've had a certain amount of .. it wouldn't have been a complete .. you know,</i>
	0:36	<i>he would have had some autonomy but the expectations of him .. and counselling was available .. I mean, I'm sure they're not ideal, but it just seemed ..</i>
	0:53	<i>so I explained it to him, I did explain .. I did .. well I tried .. but I know it didn't .. it just didn't go in .. and he did .. he basically did a runner and</i>
12		<i>and .. so he jumped bail as well .. mm .. he's only just been caught, sort of three or four months later .. and he's at present waiting trial, so we don't know what's happening</i>
	0:15	<i>.. but .. I know what I think .. now .. that basic thing was right, but I should have taken .. I wish .. I had .. I thought I'd got the answer .. I thought I'd got the answer whereas</i>
	0:36	<i>there was a lot more to do, I should have taken a lot more .. I wish I'd taken a lot more .. into the process ..</i>
	0:47	<i>so that's really jumping from that first thing .. to here, but</i>
13		<i>.. the EwL also helped me at a time when I was due to .. there's time when it would be alright to retire and there was a question of when ..</i>
	0:12	<i>.. is this the sort of thing you .. yeah, yeah.. tell me a bit more about the nut and the kernel, [i16's name] ..</i>
	0:16	<i>.. right .. well .. how I interpreted it then and how I .. because it is something that, you know, how I interpret it now is slightly different .. did it actually happen at Charney, at the first one .. yes, yes, yes ..</i>
	0:35	<i>.. a very strong feeling that .. there was some essence, some essential .. bit of me, I think I thought of it at the time but now I .. I would say it was sort of access to this</i>
	0:48	<i>.. there was some essential bit of me that was .. firmly in .. there was a hard .. case, casing around it, that was constricting it as well as .. stopping access to it,</i>

APPENDIX D1: i16 interview transcript

	1:05	<i>stopping access to it and .. stopping it coming out .. that .. that was me in there ..</i>
	1:27	<i>and that resonance .. has a resonance with the seed and .. all sorts of .. I mean .. and lots of .. and .. meditations later .. there's been a very strong run of that. I need to .. the hidden part, the putting down of roots .. that without that .. even a tall tree can</i>
	1:54	<i>can fall .. that strength .. the strength lies almost in the .. not lies in it completely, but is based upon, is nothing without that</i>
14		<i>strong putting down of .. of roots .. and all that's needed to do that, which at times is to lie fallow ..</i>
	0:10	<i>I don't know if that makes sense, but .. no, it does, it does .. so I think that's got .. you know, the nut .. I don't know whether I've said enough about that</i>
	0:22	<i>how does, how does, how does, how does the image come to you .. is it something that you see .. or is it .. yes, but I'm in it .. it's an exp.. I experience it rather than a film in front of me ..</i>
	0:36	<i>so where do you feel it in your body, then .. oo .. I suppose</i>
14	0:47	<i>when .. at times when .. I don't always feel it in my body, maybe I am seeing it .. like the nut time, I really did strongly feel it here .. it was a .. a breathing thing almost</i>
15	0:08	<i>so that breathing, I think you used the word that the nut was constricting the kernel as well .. mm, mm, yes, whether it was because it was going .. I think it was more because the .. the kernel was trying .. it was stopping it</i>
	0:23	<i>getting out .. stopping its seed ..</i>
	0:29	<i>and at what point in the meditation does this come to you? .. at different times, it depends a lot .. I mean at times when .. because we have it here,</i>
	0:42	<i>at times when my husband, I can hear him and .. so that takes ages if at all whether I get into it</i>
	0:51	<i>.. it does depend .. we've come ..</i>
16		<i>we used to catch up on news beforehand and we've had to stop that .. because that .. it does .. and another thing which holds it back is if ..</i>
	0:14	<i>is if I've had a long gap .. so it seems to be a habit .. it seems to be something that .. to get into</i>
	0:30	<i>how long have you been a Quaker, [i16's name]? .. I'm still only a member .. an attender I've been going, yes, for about ten .. I don't, I don't .. I think it might be ten years .. eight years I've been going .. fairly regularly ..</i>
17		<i>workshops apart from Charney? I've been .. [i15's name] did a lot of going around to .. to new groups .. and she used to ask for volunteers to go .. with her .. as .. you know, so that there were people who had experienced it, to give a</i>
	0:30	<i>but that's all, really .. I haven't been involved at the same level</i>
	0:39	<i>what are the differences between and similarities with workshops with [i15's name] and your own Light group's Experiments?</i>
	1:04	<i>I don't think there was a difference in the actual .. meditation .. it was good to go back .. in fact [i15's name] would remind of the roots .. where it came from .. you know, the ..</i>
	1:20	<i>I've never done the .. we've only ever done for the individual, we haven't done for the .. I haven't done .. which .. 'cos there's two there's, aren't there</i>
	1:28	<i>.... the world and the group ..</i>
18		<i>what difference to you/your life generally?</i>

APPENDIX D1: i16 interview transcript

	0:15	..
	0:25	<i>it's made me aware of the need to .. get in touch with .. that truth which is in me .. and that is in me ..</i>
19		<i>.. which I don't always .. you know, I .. I need to relearn it so many times ..</i>
	0:21	<i>it's .. I can see something as a problem .. I take that problem .. to the Light group .. and sometimes there's an answer, but more often it's a seeing it in a different .. seeing what it is in a different way</i>
	0:46	<i>.. in a whole way, I mean, some of my .. quite a frequent thing is I'm .. flying over a landscape .. and to see .. so to see it in a different way, to see it</i>
	1:10	<i>.. in context .. no, that's the wrong word, but to see it .. whole .. from outside? .. from outside, yes .. but</i>
20		<i>it's more than that, it's more than just from a non-personal .. I can't put it into words, really ..</i>
	0:15	<i>so, is what you're saying to me, then, [i16's name], that .. you .. you deal with everything differently because you can take it to the Light, or is it that the experience of taking it to the Light helps you to deal with everything differently?</i>
	0:29	<i>yes, that latter it's a constant lesson to me .. to take things to the Light</i>
	0:41	<i>.... that that is the way that I can know .. because .. I'm always not, I'm just going ahead and getting into ..</i>
21		<i>so when you say that you take it to the Light do you mean to the Light group or is there something that you do in between that's like a ..</i>
	0:10	<i>.. it's much more powerful and much more meaning .. I find it's .. if I do do it in the group ..</i>
	0:18	<i>but I will try and .. and .. I will try to .. yes .. to do it then</i>
	0:26	<i>so you</i>
		<i>follow the tape</i>
		<i>do all the time .. in everyday life?</i>
	0:35	<i>no I would like to .. it's something I would strive to do .. but in all honesty, no</i>
	0:46	<i>would you say your behaviour's changes as a result of it?</i>
		<i>behaviour mm .. I don't know ..</i>
	1:17	<i>yes, I think it has, I think so, yes, I think .. I think I can accept</i>
22		<i>.. in this one instance I think it has, really .. I .. I used to live .. oo it's something I didn't put down, but in .. I had once had an image of a mirror ball ..</i>
	0:20	<i>and each facet of the mirror ball was .. somebody's .. view of me .. and that that was what I was .. and I think I'm less that now .. I'm less .. I see my .. I see myself less as a reflection of other people anymore as somebody that has</i>
	0:43	<i>within me .. access .. ability to access ..</i>
	0:58	<i>does it feel like something external or internal? .. when you access the Light</i>
	1:05	<i>.. in the Light group</i>
23		<i>internal .. but I've also had something else that's happened since the Light group has, has .. and not just in the Light group .. outside as well, greater experience of the inter-connectedness with ..</i>
	0:15	<i>with everything .. time, space .. others, everything</i>
		<i>is that something that goes on all the time or are there particular instances of that?</i>
	0:29	<i>I've had very, very powerful experiences, two very, one particular very</i>

APPENDIX D1: i16 interview transcript

		<i>powerful experience of it</i>
		<i>could you describe those to me?</i>
	0:40	<i>.. the most powerful was when .. I was with a group, I was on holiday, I was with a group of people .. and .. we'd gone for a .. night time .. look at the caiman on the .. a river, a tributary to the Amazon, and .. we'd gone up, oh I don't know, we'd gone against the current with the motor on seeing them .. and then .. we were given the experience</i>
24		<i>of cutting the lights, he wanted us to be in silence as we drifted back .. and .. just how .. gradually more and more you became aware of the connectedness</i>
	0:19	<i>.. you know, it was just .. there was .. a sound came, you know, there wasn't the .. your initial hearing and sight .. expanded and expanded .. and .. the stars and ..</i>
	0:40	<i>and then of time itself .. that, you know these caiman were, had been on the earth .. were, were descendants of .. about how they .. I mean, thousand millions, I don't know how long many years, but, you know, going back</i>
25		<i>of the .. you know, the Ama.. .. this was coming from .. we were near the Pacific .. that this water was, that we were on, was .. connect.. .. right through to the, eventually to the .. Atlantic and .. and the star .. I, I don't know .. just the ..</i>
	0:24	<i>and .. I mean it wasn't .. I remember as a teenager looking and feeling very insignificant .. and it wasn't the feeling of insignificance but it was .. although it certainly wasn't of significance, it was just .. it was a feeling of being .. part .. of it all</i>
	0:46	<i>.. timeless, really .. and .. and .. one of the moving things about it was .. getting, talking to an American couple who .. I mean there weren't many, there was about ten of us on the boat ..</i>
	1:02	<i>who had .. the same .. sort of, I mean they'd ... anyway, but we'd had the same depth of .. experience and been able to talk about .. that .. I mean, that was something as well</i>
26		<i>in the middle of it .. where were .. where were you, [i16's name], when you were having this, this experience of connectedness?</i>
	0:07	<i>not anywhere particular .. but also .. the two things, really, very firmly there .. a small part of it, but almost indivisible from that .. the whole</i>
	0:23	<i>just .. but, but at the same time .. separate .. separate and part .. both at the same time ..</i>
	0:38	<i>and the other time it's happened?</i>
	0:40	<i>it was just a .. a feeling of being .. it was a lesser experience, but it was just .. the feeling of ..</i>
		<i>were you, were you outside at the time?</i>
	0:55	<i>no, I was inside .. it was sort of like playing with the dust coming in the .. on the .. you know, on the sunbeam</i>
27		<i>and just being as that really, that .. that wasn't such a .. but the other was very, very powerful ..</i>
	0:17	<i>and how does that affect you everyday?</i>
	0:20	<i>.. well I</i>
28		<i>forget it [laughter] .. it's very hard, isn't it .. here I am running along, doing my busy-ness and ..</i>
	0:09	<i>has the experience of the Light .. sorry, both of those experiences, the motes of dust and the Amazon, that's since you started Experimenting .. yes ..has the</i>

APPENDIX D1: i16 interview transcript

		Experiment .. affected what you do externally, you touched earlier on the time you were going to retire .. has it changed your job or anything like that?
	0:30	<i>.. I, I took .. the whole .. there were problems .. I loved the job absolutely .. I worked with young children, absolutely loved it .. it was becoming very top heavy with paperwork ..</i>
	0:50	<i>and it wasn't that I didn't like the paperwork, there was .. I mean, I .. I was .. I used to love getting everything all neat and tidy and beautifully; I'm a great</i>
	1:00	<i>perfectionist and it was to the detriment really .. but that was getting in the way of the, the job, I felt, and the demands of .. the demands of the job ..</i>
	1:17	<i>which conflicted with .. what I felt children .. of that age needed .. and .. and .. so there was a conflict in there ..</i>
29		<i>and .. quite a difficult head, in that she wanted everything to be .. I felt, she was more concerned of how things looked .. than the intrinsic ..</i>
	0:14	<i>view of what we were providing .. and .. and links with .. I developed a thyroid problem at that time, so I was really shattered .. and it needed .. it took quite a while to get</i>
	0:27	<i>.. to get the dosage of thyroxin .. sort of balanced at the right amount .. and .. and that was, that was one of the ones that I remembered .. it was an image of a .. a donkey, a horse .. walking up .. quite a steep .. a steepish hill .. and the struggle, it was straight path</i>
	0:52	<i>pulling this load .. it was blinkered .. but looking down anyway because that was the only way to concentrate was .. one step at a time .. up, up .. and not being able to stop .. because if you .. if .. if lost the momentum, the weight would pull the donkey back</i>
30		<i>.. and that was the feeling and then .. oh, I .. I don't know, but the end bit of it was .. that the donkey noticed there was a side .. it was more than a lay-by it was a .. it was a piece of</i>
	0:17	<i>land .. it was beaut.. .. it was a field with .. with flowers and .. you could get onto it because it was sideways and .. could play there .. and ..</i>
	0:34	<i>so that was a big thing about .. that's .. that may. .. yeah, maybe I could, maybe I don't have to carry on in this path .. so that was a .. a big sort of .. influence</i>
	0:53	<i>for a .. that's what I meant about seeing .. you go along with .. you know, I went along with this problem .. and, as I saw it, the solution I wanted .. the answer I wanted was a way of pulling this load without</i>
	1:07	<i>.. whereas the .. you can see .. I found I can see things in a different way</i>
31		<i>a sideways step, why not .. so what did you do with your job, then?</i>
	0:05	<i>I decided to retire .. I decided I would retire .. I saw there was an Ofsted inspection coming up, so I stayed until that .. which was a nice end, really .. you know, I felt it brought .. the job to a conclusion and</i>
	0:21	<i>.. you know, that's to a stage .. that it would be a good time for the next person to .. to carry on .. and .. or to .. to start and .. I was able to keep my links in with the children .. I used to go, I followed the same group up, which was nice .. that was just ..</i>
	0:42	<i>.. then the thing was what to do next .. and I have .. that's .. I was .. I knew with my head I wanted to avoid .. just filling, doing .. doing things to fill, just to fill the time .. and then finding I was committed to something</i>
32		<i>so they .. and .. but I've been sort of aware that .. maybe I've .. been too protective of myself .. because it's been quite a while now .. every time I take it</i>

APPENDIX D1: i16 interview transcript

		<i>to the Light</i>
	0:17	<i>.. what should I be doing .. it is .. I get this some .. variation on this theme of putting down the roots of .. of doing, that's what I ..</i>
	0:31	<i>and do you see the roots or do you feel them in your body at all? how do you know it's about roots? what's telling you?</i>
	0:41	<i>oh, I don't .. I don't know .. I don't know .. I think it's a combina.. .. I think I see the tree, but feel the putting down of roots I think it's a combination</i>
	1:01	<i>is it a sensation in your body or is it just something that you know?</i>
	1:08	<i>.. I think it's a sensa.. .. I think .. it's a sensation .. of taking in the nutrients to feed the roots ..</i>
33		<i>to spreading wide, to .. taking in the .. and .. that it .. that needs .. that roots need</i>
	0:13	<i>you know, it's not the thing, putting down the roots is not a conscious thing, I will put down roots .. but the nurturing .. of that part .. yeah ..</i>
	0:30	<i>gosh, I wish, I should have asked these questions themselves .. because they make me think [laughs] they make me think</i>
	0:38	<i>most people I've seen have said the questions do that, [i16's name], so your experience is like many other people's there aren't right there aren't particular answers or right answers it's just an exploration</i>
	0:50	<i>no, it's not knowing what .. what the experience really .. you know, not being able to ..</i>
34		<i>how important would you say the Experiment is to your Quaker life?</i>
	0:08	<i>.. there was a time .. I must admit, when .. because it seemed more .. because it .. you know, it was more intense to me ..</i>
		<i>the Light was more intense than meeting?</i>
	0:30	<i>mm .. that I was .. that it was habit .. and .. to go to the Quaker meetings .. and plus .. you know, I wanted to see my friends ..</i>
	0:47	<i>so it affected it in that way ..</i>
	1:05	<i>I think it's made me question more, or .. define more in my own mind the difference, I've had to look at that .. what is the difference</i>
35		<i>you know, am I .. what is the difference in the experience of meeting and the Light .. and .. as, you know, the group at meeting ..</i>
	0:13	<i>.. and .. you know, one is very much .. focusing on the .. the personal, focusing on the self, focusing on .. the personal ..</i>
	0:27	<i>.. and although .. it begins with letting go of everything .. it's still going .. it's still going to focus ..</i>
	0:41	<i>so I think I very .. I really do try .. I make a more conscious effort .. when going to meeting .. to try to let go of everything</i>
	0:55	<i>to leave my self at the .. I try to .. yeah .. more than you did before the Experiment? .. yes .. yes, I didn't see the need, I mean I didn't .. I mean, I ..</i>
	1:10	<i>your awareness has changed, hasn't it .. yes .. yes ..</i>
		<i>what drew you to Quakers in the first place?</i>
	1:17	<i>.. a whole c..</i>
36		<i>the thing at the front of my .. I mean, the reason I'm hesitating is .. because with hindsight I can see .. a lot of things had been leading me that way</i>
	0:15	<i>but the thing .. at that moment was .. my son was in Africa .. on the same time zone as me .. and .. he happen.. .. his girlfriend happened to mention that</i>
	0:30	<i>she went to church at that time, because she knew that he was in church and so I thought, oo, yes .. so that was the .. that was the thing that took me at that</i>

APPENDIX D1: i16 interview transcript

		<i>moment ..</i>
		<i>why Qs rather than CofE or Methodist or the Baptists or whatever?</i>
	0:50	<i>because .. I knew .. I'd experienced .. I'd been brought up as a Methodist and had .. in and out .. I'd even .. when .. this same son was younger .. we'd gone to the Salvation Army .. drawn in through his cornet playing, you know</i>
37		<i>not for the .. so I tried that with my younger daughter .. and, no, it just wasn't .. but that had been at other times, I mean I didn't ..</i>
	0:15	<i>I had .. I'd seen the .. the notice as I'd walked past .. I've forgotten what it was now ..</i>
	0:30	<i>because they've changed the notice board, I mean the .. something that connected me with .. I'd seen .. I don't know what the notice was, but it connected me with</i>
	0:45	<i>something .. an experience I'd had on Tenby beach .. when I'd been .. I'd been going through a .. I'd been teaching and had given up with a .. I don't know what I'd had, sort of .. I'd been unable to continue</i>
	1:00	<i>and .. and on Tenby beach .. I had this experience .. of .. I was with my daughter, my husband had gone off to get the car mended ..</i>
38		<i>.. and I just felt I had to get off because I felt .. assailed on all sides by noise and light, I just, I felt I couldn't see .. it had been a very .. explosive moment</i>
	0:16	<i>and .. I just had to yell to [daughter's name], I'm going .. I mean, she was only young ..</i>
	0:23	<i>and .. sat on the cliff .. so that I could see again .. and then .. I mean with .. I was more in control than .. than I sound</i>
	0:44	<i>.. but my husband met .. we all met up .. and we walked .. out .. but I was very dazed and very confused and very .. well, I felt I was not there at all in my .. you know, I was in danger of losing myself ..</i>
	1:01	<i>and then saw this .. there was a sign up, be still and know that I am God .. and .. and</i>
	1:13	<i>well, it went in and .. has stayed with me ever since and even now I mean I love to just dwell on it, you know, put stresses on different .. each word</i>
39		<i>and all the .. the meanings that can .. all the .. it can bring, you know .. still, or .. and I think there must have been something on the front of the Quaker .. that .. was going past that had a reson..</i>
	0:19	<i>it wasn't that, because I'd have remembered .. that had a resonance of that .. and .. so I just seemed to be .. lots of things coming together</i>
	0:30	<i>which pulled me in, really .. and .. at that time and that was .. and it felt .. it did feel right .. I mean I loved the .. I loved .. initially, that feeling that ..</i>
	0:46	<i>oh, I can be me .. I'm me here and .. I mean I actually did think coming home, but I don't use that now because Gerald Priestland did .. but it felt like that ..</i>
	0:59	<i>.. it felt, to myself it felt like that, yeah .. yeah ..</i>
		<i>has the experiment made any difference to your involvement with Quakers?</i>
40		<i>with the meeting or with anything wider than the meeting?</i>
	0:05	<i>I don't think so, I don't think it has .. I mean, it's .. I once put .. quite a long while ago .. why don't I feel ready to become a member and .. I don't know, I just got a feeling</i>
	0:27	<i>that it's alright at the moment .. maybe I'm a bit complacent now .. the time has come to .. maybe I should .. be questioning that again, but .. at that time when I put it to the Light it just seemed that it was fine .. just as it was ..</i>

APPENDIX D1: i16 interview transcript

	0:48	do you minister in meeting at all, [i16's name]?
		<i>very very rarely .. twice in the time, yeah ..</i>
		<i>is that since the Experiment or before or ..?</i>
	0:59	<i>.. both since the first time, I mean it's not ministry is it, but the first time I did ever speak about anything it was .. at that initial .. at [name of place]</i>
41		<i>when, you know, the sharing of the experience .. if you so wish, but I mean I know that's not ministry, but that was the first time I'd shared anything</i>
	0:14	<i>and when you've ministered in meeting, how do you know it's right for you to minister?</i>
	0:21	<i>.. it's a sort of .. like a butterflies, really, I don't .. and yet I've felt that and .. and it hasn't been, because then somebody's got up and said .. not exactly what you were going to say, but a develop.. .. you know, something from it and you think, oo, good,</i>
	0:46	<i>I don't have to get up and do it, so .. and the second time .. it felt exactly like .. the first time .. it felt, you know, like .. ooh, ooh, I've got to get .. you know</i>
	1:07	<i>I mean, it was a reluctance almost .. whereas other times I've been thinking, oh, should I or, you know, this is ..</i>
42		<i>but the second time I felt exactly the same .. didn't plan it out in my head first, not that I had the first time, but I felt I've got to get up and say this and trust that the words, because I'm not .. as you've gathered .. I am not articulate it's</i>
	0:17	<i>the bane of my life that I'm not, but .. I've got to trust that this will come out .. right ..</i>
	0:30	<i>now, whether .. and from what people have said .. it didn't .. somebody who I really respect a lot .. as a very .. deep .. Quaker .. told me she didn't know what I was saying, meaning ..</i>
		<i>and did you explain it to her when she said that to you?</i>
	0:55	<i>no because she went on to something else, no I didn't .. and maybe I couldn't have explained it to myself .. maybe .. maybe I didn't wait long enough, I don't know, but ..</i>
43		<i>.. I don't know, so ..</i>
		<i>and when somebody else has said something, has ministered, and they're at more or less the same point that you are, does that feel like you've been part of getting there?</i>
	0:22	<i>yes, yes, I mean, that is what I love about meeting, that feeling that when it does, well it doesn't always happen .. do you find that? mm</i>
	0:32	<i>.. but a truly .. well, as they say, you know, a truly gathered meeting is ..</i>
	0:41	<i>how many are you on a Sunday?</i>
		<i>it varies, but it's a large meeting .. I don't know, I don't know last week was the lowest we've been and .. it can be forty</i>
	0:57	<i>it's.. I gather it's quite .. I mean, I don't have vast experience of other meetings, but I gather it's .. fairly .. you know, it's up there with the .. larger ones ..</i>
		<i>and how many of the people do you know out of the people who come regularly on a Sunday?</i>
44	0:04	<i>.. lots socially, you know, lots on a more superficial level ..</i>
		<i>is that through doing things through the meeting?</i>
		<i>through the .. yes, yes .. about .. ten .. I would say at a deeper level .. let's see, maybe not as many as that .. five</i>
	0:27	<i>what do you mean by a deeper level?</i>
	0:33	<i>.. that I communicate with them at more than just how are you ..</i>

APPENDIX D1: i16 interview transcript

	0:45	<i>I mean, we had .. we've had .. you know, the five .. I feel I know the five that .. the Light group .. we had a .. a bible study, a lectio de vi .. group which</i>
	1:00	<i>.. reading passages from the bible .. several times .. sort of like a meditating on that .. and that group I would say .. I mean, some of them overlapped ..</i>
45		<i>and my overseer .. so it's, yes, about .. ten ..</i>
	0:11	<i>and, of those ten, you said five of them are the Light group, how would you describe your relationship with the other members of the Light group vis-à-vis your relationship with the other five that you know very well? is there any difference? is it the same? what is the difference, if there is any?</i>
	0:33	<i>.. I think they .. they both .. well .. I think .. no, they know me and I know them that .. where what's going on in the part of their life that they've shared .. at the current level .. more ..</i>
	1:01	<i>than with the others .. it's not .. I don't .. I feel I would go to them and .. but have more catching up to do .. I don't</i>
46		<i>meet them regularly .. at the deep .. at a deeper .. level .. as regularly</i>
		<i>and how do you feel about them? do you feel .. the same .. or is there ..? because knowing is one thing and feeling is a different thing, isn't it?</i>
	0:21	<i>.. yes, I feel about them as .. yeah, the same ..</i>
	0:33	<i>how .. you've touched a bit on how the Experiment .. is different from MfW .. but that it's informed MfW for you in terms of .. I forget exactly what you said, but .. why do you think the Light is necessary .. the Light group is necessary in addition to MfW?</i>
	0:57	<i>.. I find it has .. more direct .. I find it has a more direct .. input, influence</i>
	1:25	<i>.. on .. my living at that moment .. rather than .. a more general .. I find it more general .. although the general can be then .. insights .. or</i>
	1:47	<i>.. can be brought .. I do bring in .. insights from meeting to what is happening in my life at that moment ..</i>
	2:03	<i>there's just more of a spotlight .. spotlight ..</i>
		<i>so what would you say it is that makes you remain involved with firstly the meeting and then the Light group?</i>
47		<i>.. that I need.. I just know I need.. .. I just know that I need .. that touching base .. that I know or .. I don't know if that's .. I don't know, even know that that's the right expression that I mean,</i>
	0:16	<i>but .. maybe I do .. I just know that I'm so capable of running off and .. just .. just doing and .. and it not being .. and it not being anything</i>
	0:35	<i>.. and that's being a side by side existence to what .. to .. to me, to the truth, to .. I just need to ..</i>
	0:59	<i>.. that that's the whole .. that is the whole .. and without it .. I'm just liv.. .. I'm just .. living a .. I'm not living at</i>
48		<i>the .. the whole .. the whole .. does that make sense? yeah .. yeah, yeah, yeah</i>
	0:06	<i>you know, perfectly capable, I'm living and breathing and .. and on one level .. it's just that .. but diminished .. a diminished ..</i>
	0:10	<i>existence .. diminished living .. quite possible and .. and when you're in it .. if you're really in it and not .. looking outside you .. you .. I even lose .. lose sight</i>
	0:32	<i>that it's possible to lose sight, that there is ..</i>
	0:37	<i>one of the .. one of the .. things I ha.. .. one of the things I .. images I had ..</i>
	0:45	<i>which .. which brought this home was .. the circus elephant .. and it began as me seeing the circus elephant and it began .. and it ended as ..</i>
	1:00	<i>.. and this goes back to the kernel as well, which I hadn't thought of .. inside</i>

APPENDIX D1: i16 interview transcript

		<i>that circus elephant ..</i>
	1:13	<i>was a smaller elephant, which was pure elephant .. and .. the bigger elephant was .. was filled up with .. all the things that .. the circus trainer .. that his trainer at the circus and .. the audience and everybody expected it to be</i>
	1:35	<i>and it was doing all that, but the .. real elephant was mu... .. was inside .. and it's .. and that's what I would compare it with, it's quite possible for me to be ..</i>
	1:55	<i>although .. it's quite possible .. it's quite possible to go on living and .. being highly regarded .. because, you know, the audience claps and the trainer rewards or whatever .. but to be this thing that an elephant is not, never supposed to be</i>
	2:16	<i>.. which is contained .. and a feeling of .. filling up the sp... .. filling up the skin with elephantness</i>
	2:30	<i>they're very powerful images, [i16's name]</i>
49		<i>well, this is why it means so much to me and why .. do you know if there's groups in [name of town]?</i>
		<i>there is, yes</i>
	0:10	<i>what Experiment with Light groups? oh, right.</i>
		<i>I was wondering if that might be holding you back from moving, actually, as you were talking to me about how profound this is for you and the question of roots, as well</i>
	0:26	<i>mm .. mm .. yeah, I mean I did .. whether, 'cos there's doubts about going and .. and I got the image then .. when I actually brought that in was ..</i>
	0:35	<i>I mean, there's real advantages in going, I can .. and going was a lovely warm cow that I was .. really comfortable and lovely</i>
	0:45	<i>.. but what I was leaving behind were all these .. was knitting, which hadn't been cast off and all the bundles of wool ..</i>
	0:54	<i>.. and if I put them down .. the wool would all tangle and roll, run away and the knitting might come undone .. which was more, I think it was, not more than, but not just the Light group</i>
50		<i>but friendships and .. and everything .. there are lots of things to leave behind .. but .. and it just left with the .. I mean, what I got from that Light group .. was just .. was just that</i>
	0:15	<i>.. I was, I think, just sort of being able to see .. what's .. see more clearly .. how I .. the ambivalence .. you know .. what the ambivalence was ..</i>
	0:28	<i>.. but knowing that there is .. because, I mean, quite honestly this last, that six months I described when you came in, I don't ..</i>
	0:43	<i>.. I think personally I would have .. had big doubts about .. such big doubts about myself and about failing this lad .. that .. well, I don't know</i>
	1:00	<i>that I personally would have found it really difficult .. and maybe wouldn't have been carried on as long as I did which .. you know, I think it came sort of to .. an end when it should have, you know, it was</i>
51		<i>although it was only at the very end bit that .. I don't know .. but it helped me anyway .. I wouldn't have liked to have been without that help ..</i>
	0:12	<i>you've said you've used the tape on your own as well, [i16's name]</i>
		<i>yeah, I'd like to do it more, but I don't</i>
		<i>how does that compare with doing it in the group</i>
	0:21	<i>it's .. I'm more c... .. I don't centre down as well, I don't .. it's not as .. it's not as powerful, it's not as ..</i>
	0:32	<i>.. I mean, it's a discipline and it's a .. it's not to .. decry .. I'm not, it's not to</i>

APPENDIX D1: i16 interview transcript

		<i>decry it, the experience .. by comparison</i>
	0:48	<i>you know, by making the comparison .. a negative, you know .. by comparing them ..</i>
	0:59	<i>because I do f.. .. feel the need to have something and .. to .. well, this .. I feel this is what this putting down roots is .. to do more .. I mean, I don't ..</i>
52		<i>you must be getting something from it</i>
		<i>I feel a need to do more than I do .. it's a discipline that I feel I .. would like</i>
		<i>but you continue to do it on your own as well as</i>
	0:11	<i>yeah, but not .. but .. I don't do it often .. it's hit and miss and ..</i>
	0:17	<i>did you have any meditation practice before you came to the EwL?</i>
	0:20	<i>no .. no .. only, you know, one-offs, sort of .. no none to speak of</i>
	0:26	<i>and do I gather from what you're saying now that you don't have a daily practice, you don't do a daily meditation, whether it's the Light or anything else? no.</i>
	0:35	<i>these experiences that you've described to me, they're .. obviously they're very strong images .. does the .. resolution is probably not the right word, message perhaps and that's probably not the right word either .. does that always come to you in the Light meditation in the group or sometimes does it occur to you afterwards?</i>
	0:56	<i>both, really, because .. this is another part of the Light group which I find invaluable is .. insights from other .. from the other members</i>
	1:07	<i>.. they can shed light on something or they can give .. and sometimes it's not that .. but sometimes it .. you know, it's an extra dimension</i>
	1:20	<i>and also it's .. something we have found .. more than once, well, quite often, is</i>
	1:33	<i>.. a .. a .. it's not that they're the same, but there's a common element .. so, I mean, other people's .. images .. I think, as much as ..</i>
	1:50	<i>their insight, meaning, but .. find useful as well, I carry theirs around with me as well ..</i>
	2:00	<i>so that part of it, the sharing afterwards is a big part.. is a huge part of it..</i>
		<i>and days afterwards? anything further come to you then? or is it all contained in the event?</i>
	2:15	<i>.. sometimes, yes .. sometimes afterwards .. more often than not .. in the event, but something to carry .. with me .. into</i>
53		<i>the rest of it, that you know, the ..</i>
	0:02	<i>can you pin that to a .. is it possible to pin that to a specific experience?</i>
	0:08	<i>what, the carrying it with me? mm .. well, yeah .. yes, yes .. well, one thing is, let me think ..</i>
	0:19	<i>I mean alway.. .. I mean often .. always .. well, this young lad ..</i>
		<i>oh, you did tell me earlier, yes, you carried the image of the lily</i>
	0:30	<i>yeah and .. and .. so you knew that was what you were doing when you ..</i>
	0:36	<i>and when .. you know, when, when .. he did the runner .. and it's .. and .. both the criticism from his mother, but also from other people, a lot of people</i>
	0:52	<i>.. most people that have spoken to me have said "you did all you could" and .. which .. was not the point ..</i>
	1:04	<i>it made .. you know, and .. made it .. you realise that what they are thinking .. they're either thinking that .. you didn't do .. I mean .. there's an implied thing in there that you must, that I must be feeling guilty ..</i>
	1:27	<i>but you expressed, when you were talking about it earlier, your own feelings about what if .. you said 'in the manner' so maybe you were transmitting that to</i>

APPENDIX D1: i16 interview transcript

		them ..
	1:41	<i>yes, maybe it does come from me .. but it's a way of dealing with that sort of ..</i>
	1:49	<i>I'm, I'm .. because it came from that place .. I .. what .. the manner in which I did .. yes, as you said, I might have .. I've got regrets</i>
54		<i>not regrets, not regrets so much as .. how I did it, but regrets that I didn't put .. yes, regrets that I didn't .. I .. I .. because it seemed so right, that image ..</i>
	0:14	<i>I think .. that if I'd put the manner, in which I did it, to the Light .. I would have been shown a way .. I would have been ..</i>
	0:28	<i>I acted from my head, that was what I was telling him, acted from my head .. projecting lots of worries, whereas .. I think that's .. and that's a re.. .. and that's the regret, but .. and it's helped ..</i>
	0:42	<i>but it's helped me with the, you know, implied criticism in that thing "oh, you did all ..." that reassurance that they think I need .. that it helps me deal with that</i>
	0:54	<i>you still call on that image when people are saying 'well, you did all you could', is that what you're saying?</i>
	1:02	<i>and, and .. I call on the image .. but more .. not so much the image now but the feeling .. that it was .. 'cos that time has passed, but .. the feeling that .. yeah, it was basically down, right down .. the instinct was right, the right one .. at that time ..</i>
55		<i>.. so I suppose that's, that's the main thing, but ..</i>
	0:15	<i>do you think the Experiment goes beyond .. the psychological or .. beyond just discernment of what to do .. would you describe it as anything more than just .. a tool? is it in any way spiritual or religious .. or whatever word you want to put around it?</i>
	0:39	<i>yes, that's the question, I mean it's been</i>
		<i>it doesn't matter what the word, it's just the concept of beyond, really</i>
	0:44	<i>yes, yes I .. yeah .. and .. I mean, I .. experience it as .. God ..</i>
		<i>you do</i>
	0:55	<i>yes, that's how I experience it, but, I mean .. from all sides at this moment .. is this question, we've been to the literary festival and the big theme that I've taken from it has been ..</i>
	1:15	<i>is it in man .. is it in... .. mankind, individually and collectively .. brain, or what.. .. mind .. or ..</i>
56		<i>outside, from outside ..</i>
	0:01	<i>my son is, is a human.. has just become .. well he's a human... .. prof.. .. a humanist .. I mean, he lives in Belfast, which is a nuisance, but .. we've, we've really comm.... .. you know, we've, we've start..., this has been,</i>
	0:16	<i>this is a son that I haven't really communicated with .. and it's a, it's a real way of .. I mean, it's, it's wonderful because it's a way of communicating, but that sort of,</i>
	0:26	<i>I mean, he's given me pamphlets and .. and .. noth... .. it doesn't reson... .. it seems, there seems to, there seems to be a full stop .. whereas .. but, but, I mean, I mean, it is a ..</i>
	0:46	<i>at this moment I am content .. and .. to call what I experience .. God ..</i>
	0:56	<i>so, what do you mean by God?</i>
	1:00	<i>.. both .. both .. that access that, to s... .. the truth .. within me deep in .. and the interconnectedness ..</i>
57		<i>so it's something external and internal</i>

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		<i>yeah .. and it, which, which is .. in s... .. two, two-way flowing .. yeah ..</i>
	0:14	<i>would you say there's an intentionality about .. the flow from outside</i>
	0:30	<i>I'm sorry, I'm not really .. I mean I understand the words, but not the</i>
		<i>is it .. well, my word is intentionality .. is it personal, is it a relationship or is it more abstract</i>
	0:46	<i>.. you see, I'm not sure .. I'm .. I don't know ..</i>
		<i>how is it for you?</i>
	0:54	<i>possibly .. I don't know, because, no .. definitely I don't know, because I haven't .. I haven't thought .. I haven't</i>
58		<i>no, but what have you experienced, [i16's name]? I mean, you have something here</i>
	0:04	<i>.. the most direct experience of something outside myself .. having it .. was .. just a year ago when my mother was dying .. and ..</i>
	0:18	<i>she did it .. oh, she did it so .. wonderfully, that it .. it was an uplifting experience ..</i>
	0:27	<i>but, but it was not in the best of circumstances, she'd been in hospital for ten, ten weeks .. so she nee... .. in effect needed as much help as possible to .. to die ..</i>
	0:45	<i>without anything ex... .. any nitty gritty detail .. external .. bluh .. impinging, impinging on her and ..</i>
	0:58	<i>my sister .. and brother-in-law .. it .. it must have thrown up in them .. a whole lot of issues with me ..</i>
	1:17	<i>and .. so, some very strong .. there was the potential to have a huge row, a huge falling out ..</i>
	1:30	<i>where we haven't fallen out since we were children .. and ..</i>
	1:39	<i>because [name], my husband, was here and I was staying there .. and I was able to st... .. stay in the hospital, staying in there nights</i>
	1:50	<i>.. and my sister was having to go back and look after family and .. go to work, in fact, at times .. I mean, not at the very end ..</i>
	2:03	<i>.. there wasn't the opportunity for us all to have .. outside, to resolve ..</i>
	2:17	<i>any issues we had .. had the potential to be brought in .. and .. I needed ..</i>
59		<i>.. well, it wouldn't have been good .. it wasn't .. at that time three days, it was three days before my mother died .. and she was dying, you know, well, you know, she ..</i>
	0:13	<i>.. I needed to, I needed to .. I needed personally .. to, well, to rise above it, to .. to not be involved with it .. to not bring it in .. and I given, I was just given the strength to do that</i>
	0:31	<i>I was given the phrase .. let it up and let it out .. let it up, yeah, let it out .. I don't know, bring .. I've forgotten it now, but .. I was given that phrase and it .. and it just went</i>
	0:46	<i>.. all the yuck would just go out the top of my head, you know all the .. the yucky feelings .. that had been .. brought into me could just go</i>
	1:01	<i>.. at that time I was have ex, had a very bad rash .. that was .. and that just went: I was just given s... .. it was very a sort of pure, focused time .. I mean, really sad to lose my mum, but .. it wasn't the s... .. it was a really uplifting time</i>
60		<i>.. and I'm so grateful that I had it .. and that was an exp... I d... .. that came from .. that came from outside myself ..</i>
	0:19	<i>how important for you, [i16's name], is the .. the link with early Friends and</i>

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		the Experiment
	0:28	<i>well .. on a personal .. I mean second hand, I suppose .. more than .. first hand</i>
	0:39	<i>.. you know, second hand through .. I mean .. you can feel the link, you know, you experience the link .. all the while</i>
		experience it with the Experiment .. or at meeting
	0:55	<i>and at meeting, both, but especially at, because, you know .. especially with the EwL because .. the way it came about .. the way Rex Ambler came about .. but it is second hand ..</i>
	1:10	sorry, what's second hand
	1:14	<i>I haven't actually studied yes, yes, oh, no I didn't .. I didn't mean that you should have done, I just</i>
		<i>you know, I'm conscious of it</i>
	1:22	<i>because Rex talks about it when he does the presentations, doesn't he .. and .. the question is really whether that's a central part of the experience of the Experiment or whether it's incidental .. the fact that it comes, Rex has drawn it from early Friends' writings</i>
61		<i>oo, it's very important to me that it has come from ..</i>
		in what way
		<i>I mean I say I haven't, well, I hadn't studied George Fox's writings and .. but I have a real sense of .. of .. can't think of the word, but ..</i>
	0:24	<i>of the essential .. message .. the c... .. the .. I mean, I've got a very real sense that the source of his .. of the, of that .. early Friends' writing ..</i>
	0:42	<i>writings and lives .. came from .. what I would call G... .. you know, what I call God ..</i>
	0:56	<i>that was at the</i>
		so we're living, we're still living their experience .. you're saying
	1:05	<i>mm .. I think so .. yes .. I think so ..</i>
		and supposing that wasn't there and Rex had just come across the method, wouldit have so much validity?
	1:18	<i>I don't know .. I don't think .. so .. especially .. because there are, there are, there have been other members .. Quakers in our meeting .. I mean, I'm thinking of one in particular ..</i>
62		<i>.. I've forgotten what the Quaker expression is for people that are real ..</i>
	0:06	weighty
	0:09	<i>pardon? weighty oh, weight .. weight .. weighty .. weighty, yes, as in weight .. who I would, I can .. you know, feel is a weighty .. who just .. who .. has just .. called, you know, it's the meditation .. connotations, I think with it ..</i>
	0:30	<i>I .. well, I don't know why, but .. he .. he .. he .. is suspicious of it ..</i>
	0:39	sorry, this is a weighty Friend in [name of town] meeting?
	0:42	<i>yes, so .. sorry, I've forgotten what the question was .. oh, so</i>
		about the link
	0:47	<i>yes, so I think that link .. helps me to get over that question ..</i>
	0:57	<i>I think I would have ..</i>
	1:01	so it gives it authority and authenticity
	1:02	<i>I think my experience, if I .. of it would have ... led me past that initially, it was more .. I think it .. I think .. I'm pretty certain, yes, that I would trust it .. trust through the .. having the experience</i>
	1:16	<i>of it .. but .. but it .. it's good to know ..</i>
	1:24	so is what you're saying in relation to the particular weighty Friend in the

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		Meeting that you can say: ah, but this goes back to the origins and therefore it is authentic and it does have authority
	1:35	<i>I haven't argue... .. I mean, I haven't discussed it with him, but .. because .. he's weighty in my mind as well as other people's and .. he is somebody that I would .. anything that he said .. I would use that as a filter for my own</i>
	1:55	<i>oh, is it then .. can I trust it, then ? ..</i>
63		obviously you came across Rex at [name of place] .. and if you've been a .. an attender for eight years, that would have been about three years into your link with the meeting, [name of place], right .. how do you see Rex in relation to the Experiment or was it just that he was the introduction .. do you have any concept of his position in relation to the Experiment?
	0:30	<i>I don't .. actually .. think about .. him a lot .. I mean, obviously .. I mean .. I think he was a big part in .. no, I think obviously.. but .. he's quite a charismatic character, isn't he</i>
		<i>he's very charismatic</i>
	0:57	<i>very charismatic .. which eased .. the going into .. very much so .. and .. it was easy to .. I mean, at that initial weekend .. there .. there was a certain .. that .. element that you had to trust this man .. that you weren't going to .. I mean, you ..</i>
	1:26	<i>I mean, it felt easy because you were with Friends anyway .. but .. and in that lovely setting, but .. but ..</i>
64		<i>he was taking you somewhere where you hadn't actually been before and .. you needed to t... .. and I felt that trust in him .. a sense he was .. of his generosity .. huge generosity ..</i>
	0:17	<i>.. but that's as .. far as it goes, really ..</i>
	0:30	<i>did you say you also work in pairs as well as in the Light group?</i>
	0:35	<i>no</i>
	0:37	<i>can I just talk about your .. what happens round your group .. you use the tape always?</i>
	0:45	<i>yes, we've, we've varied it, we've tried different tapes .. because our first one was Rex's, which we used .. which came about .. was a .. was a directly from that Charney weekend .. and .. because .. it was so .. it was quite full .. quite a bit of talking on it .. of Rex's talking .. I mean, it had to be ..</i>
	1:12	<i>.. then another member .. of [name of town] Meeting .. did hi... .. ver... .. did one</i>
65		<i>which he felt was the e... .. kept to the essence of it .. and .. and we used that .. quite a while .. for quite a while .. and at the moment what, I mean, it's partly habit .. now .. I think it would be quite good to use</i>
	0:15	<i>.. but we use .. we've got the Diana Lampen .. and we use .. we don't use the bells .. we have .. we've used it once .. but, bec... .. but I must say it's more through habit than anything else .. the side with speaking ..</i>
	0:34	<i>and .. you don't have a particular leader then, if you use the tape ..</i>
		<i>no</i>
	0:44	<i>and how many of you are there? six?</i>
		<i>there are six of us .. we're .. we're often not .. six ..</i>
		<i>no, no, out of the group of six</i>
	0:54	<i>there's a seventh member whose .. very much that .. I mean .. she was with us when there weren't .. others have joined since .. but there was .. we always speak of her at the end and .. she's just unable to come at the moment, but ..</i>

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	1:10	so she's still in [name of town] at the meeting
		<i>still in [name of town] .. no, she doesn't come to meeting now</i>
66		<i>but .. and we don't have .. I mean, I think [i15's name] has contact with her but .. it .. the circumstances are such that we don't have contact with her .. but very conscious of .. that she's still with us</i>
	0:16	is that because of something that's happening in her life
		<i>yeah, yeah, I don't want to go into it</i>
		no, no, sure .. and what's the balance between men and women in the group
	0:29	<i>oh, all women</i>
		<i>all women</i>
		<i>yes, when we were .. the initial .. the initial three .. at one stage there was a man, but that's the only one</i>
	0:39	<i>that I've experienced .. with other groups in [name of town] .. men have been in the minority .. but there have been men</i>
	0:52	and what about the age range in your group?
	0:57	<i>.. I don't know [laughs] .. from forty to .. I'm the eldest at sixt... .. just sixty three .. nobody younger .. the young chap who came was much younger, he was in his twenties</i>
67		and what's the balance of the ages, then? .. in terms of retired, working life
	0:10	<i>.. yes, more retired .. yeah</i>
		and you meet fort...
	0:19	<i>yes, in fact one, well two, working</i>
		and you meet fortnightly .. here
		<i>in theory, yes .. the aim is fortnightly, yes</i>
	0:30	<i>here because it's .. a conve... .. from convenience</i>
		you're pretty central, aren't you, yes
	0:36	<i>yes</i>
		and .. you said there's the two of you who are the core members of the group, so people have come and gone .. from the group
	0:49	<i>nobody's gone apart from one person .. I've mentioned .. plu...</i>
		who moved away
		<i>who moved .. yes, yes, we haven't .. pe... .. people come because they sense .. this is what they .. I think, and .. and .. that they, that they keep</i>
		and how is it that they've come if they weren't there at the beginning?
68		has it been notices? .. is it .. do you talk about it in meeting?
		<i>apart from recently .. we've had these .. regeneration .. meetings from time to time .. so through that ..</i>
	0:13	<i>there's only . but we haven't lately 'cos [i15's name] was the initiator and nobody taken .. to our shame, taken it up .. from .. from her ..</i>
	0:25	<i>.. I would say from [i15's name] .. talking about it .. the .. the one person .. I think it's just one person, maybe two .. the one person that's come from .. since we've had the, you know, initial .. explanatory talks</i>
	0:45	and .. what's the format of the evening.. then .. you say you used to do chit-chat and now you don't
		<i>we don't at all, no</i>
		so people arrive, here
		<i>we pretty much go .. the silence</i>
		is it here, in this .. where we're sitting now?
	0:59	<i>yes .. we pretty much go as soon as everybody, as soon as everybody's arrived</i>

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		<i>.. go into a silence .. and then .. the tape .. then ..</i>
69		<i>then .. the time of .. five out of the six of us will write down .. there's one person that .. just .. just uses the time ..</i>
	0:12	<i>really to .. with .. and .. doesn't .. the five of us will .. will write down .. usually jot down something ..</i>
	0:23	<i>and then .. to share it .. having .. and mak... .. we make .. we've had to make a conscious .. we got into a stage of ..</i>
	0:41	<i>discussing .. to, to try .. we've had .. we had to sort of pull ourselves up a bit and .. bring ourselves back into sort of trying to ..</i>
	0:53	<i>listen .. I don't know what the expression is .. I've forgotten .. not making it a discussion .. but .. so t... ..</i>
		<i>but you reflect back to each other because you said</i>
		<i>we do</i>
		<i>found that helpful</i>
		<i>definitely, yes</i>
	1:11	<i>yes</i>
70		<i>so, when you say you've had to pull back from discussion .. how did that come about</i>
		<i>we were getting into .. it was somebody new .. that came in .. who hadn't .. experienced .. it a lot .. and we were getting into the same .. as I was picking up at ..</i>
	0:26	<i>what we tried to do .. I think .. I'm speaking myself .. is .. to listen .. and to sort of ..</i>
	0:38	<i>try and bring an extra .. first of all not feel .. not feel the .. necessity to jump in with ..</i>
	0:47	<i>.. I mean, there was one, I must te... .. the person that doesn't usually .. well, somebody .. this pers... ..</i>
	1:01	<i>yeah, this person sort of .. just brought an observation ..</i>
	1:13	<i>and .. we ju... .. no, nobody spoke and that was .. I mean, it didn't .. it didn't need</i>
	1:23	<i>a .. a comment, it didn't .. it didn't nee... .. and it wasn't a problem, it was an observation ..</i>
	1:32	<i>.. it was an observa... .. well, what it was, was .. [name] had brought in some n...</i>
	1:42	<i>for us a bowl of nasturtiums .. with just one lovage flower in it and .. and .. this person had .. it was more like ministry ..</i>
71		<i>what that had meant to her .. and .. we received it in the same way .. as we</i>
	0:10	<i>sorry, that's off the point .. to try and not just jump in with head things .. to hold it .. sort of .. to hold .. it .. and to, to make responses .. from a slightly deeper place</i>
	0:29	<i>if you've got somebody who's wanting to have a discussion .. this person who came in .. how does the group contain that, then? how does the group stop that happening?</i>
		<i>I mean, I know this is confidential .. I mean I know it is and so .. but would she recognise herself if ..</i>
	0:45	<i>it . it .. we had discussions behind her back .. because .. so... .. I f... .. is this alri...?</i>
		<i>yes, fine, fine, it's totally between you and me, [i16's name]</i>
	0:57	<i>yes, I know .. I mean, we did have .. there was discussions behind her back .. I</i>

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		<i>mean, it was .. that sounds .. more sinister than it was .. there discussions one time when she wasn't able to come ..</i>
	1:08	<i>because .. there were two, two .. one person with grave doubts about whether she could carry on .. because it wasn't what .. she felt it should be</i>
	1:21	<i>.. and another who had grave doubts as well .. but we sort of came ..</i>
	1:33	<i>.. it was discussed, but also .. sort of a half way between putting it into the Light ..</i>
	1:42	<i>.. that we should hold this .. person in .. with us .. and it's ..</i>
72		<i>and it .. I .. I .. she still sometimes will come in with .. anecd..., oh, that reminds me, you know .. an anecdote, it reminds me of a friend who's got the same ..</i>
	0:11	<i>or a book .. you know, the sort of, the sort of .. thing that doesn't feel right in that setting ..</i>
		<i>so you didn't directly address it with her but you kind of</i>
	0:21	<i>I didn't</i>
		<i>dealt with it</i>
		<i>whether .. I didn't pers... ..</i>
		<i>but somebody might have done</i>
		<i>I have not .. somebody might have done without, you know ..</i>
	0:26	<i>.. in a very loving sort of way .. which I wouldn't have been able ..</i>
		<i>it is very difficult, I mean it is .. it is for meetings as well, where you have somebody who ministers inappropriately, for example ..</i>
		<i>yes .. yes .. yes ..</i>
	0:42	<i>yes, one needs to be .. it is very difficult, because one needs to be tender and not off-putting, but yet the discipline needs to be maintained, doesn't it, yes</i>
	0:51	<i>.. I've f... .. I mean .. I don't .. we haven't .. nothing's been said .. I feel it's, it's r... .. we're much more of a .. it felt like a group and her .. and now it feels like she ..</i>
		<i>she's been brought into it</i>
		<i>I think .. I think .. that's my experience, I don't know ..</i>
73		<i>and where this reflecting back works well, where you say you found it helpful .. can you give me an example of what somebody might have said that has added to your experience of the group.. that evening?</i>
	0:14	<i>.. it could have been s... .. something that they've experienced that ..</i>
	0:30	<i>with this young lad .. advice .. which led to insight .. that had ..</i>
	0:48	<i>.. that .. their young person's .. path .. was their own .. that what you could bring into that was .. to be strong .. yourself ..</i>
	1:08	<i>but .. letting go .. of directing .. being .. and thinking that you're responsible ..</i>
74		<i>for the outcome .. was a .. was .. the only way .. that you had to let that person .. live their path ..</i>
	0:13	<i>.. but the outcome might not be .. might very well not be .. as you .. would wish, you know, it might end in .. well, what you would consider the worst ..</i>
	0:28	<i>.. and that was really .. helpful ..</i>
	0:40	<i>.. that's the most direct, I would say ..</i>
	0:47	<i>oh, just an insight, like when I had the .. shall we move to [name of town] or not, you know .. this lovely comforting cow ..</i>
	0:57	<i>that .. whereas I was focusing on my balls of wool and, you know, everything that would be .. could unravel here ..</i>
	1:08	<i>just a .. to look at .. the feelings of the cow ..</i>
75		<i>they're just two examples, but really .. I mean, they're .. I feel bad that I'm not</i>

APPENDIX D1: i16 interview transcript

		<i>thinking of more, because .. every single time .. it's an enormous help</i>
	0:15	<i>.. sometimes just to reinforce what you've .. your fee... .. that I'm feeling .. sometimes to give an extra dimension to it .. or sometimes to bring you up short</i>
	0:29	<i>.. you know, I've been challenged at times and .. I haven't liked it and .. but .. you know, you take it on board ..</i>
	0:45	<i>you .. have to separate then the .. the truth of what they've said from .. ooh, the hurt feelings ..</i>
	0:54	<i>is there anything else in your journal or your notes that we haven't touched on that you think it would be .. appropriate to share</i>
	1:01	<i>well, I don't think so really, I just I pulled out the images that obviously meant the most to me .. I thought they .. because they'd been</i>
	1:11	<i>do you record in words or do you draw pictures?</i>
		<i>no, I record in words ..</i>
76		<i>note form, yes .. scribble, really ..</i>
	0:03	<i>and then, finally, [i16's name] is there anything around the EwL or any thoughts you have about the EwL or anything you think it would be useful for me to look at or consider that I haven't already asked you?</i>
	0:18	<i>no, I don't .. no, I can't .. no .. I don't .. I'm sure that your v... .. overview is going to be so much wider than .. I mean, I've restricted myself to the personal</i>
	0:32	<i>no, not at all .. I mean, you've given me some wonderful stuff, [i16's name], it's, it's .. I feel very privileged that you've told me these images that have come to you and .. you've used .. or the Light .. to you .. and, you know, as other Friends have</i>
	0:51	<i>done .. and .. yours is equally as valuable, if not more than some, because you've .. you .. it strikes me you're quite a visual person and the images are quite .. quite striking with me as well, as you've described them, so, no, this is exactly what .. what I'd hoped you'd .. you'd share with me</i>
		<i>I .. oh she's come all this way .. I knew you were seeing other people, but .. you know</i>
	1:18	<i>no, that was lovely, thank you .. it's possible that I might think of something .. later on .. and equally .. if you think of something later on, would you come back to me and either drop me a line or give me a call .. and if I might do the same .. if something else occurs to me?</i>
	1:36	<i>you're not on e-mail are you?</i>
		<i>no, I used to be, but my computer has died</i>
	1:43	<i>no, that was lovely, thank you very much, great</i>
		<i>lunch?</i>
		<i>lovely</i>
	2:05	<i>ends</i>

APPENDIX D2: i13 interview transcript

A	B	<p>Legend A: track number on minidisc B: time reading on track <i>i13's speech in italics</i> interviewer's speech in ordinary text <i>(interviewer's notes, taken during the interview)</i> .. pause/hesitation/silence/may represent interviewer saying 'yes' or i16 saying 'um' (etc., etc.) xx... the end of the word is not actually spoken text omitted because not heard or only much hesitation which does not add to the transcription</p>
1	0:00	<p>Yeah, it is, it's, it's Experiment with Light. <i>Are you doing some sort of research?</i> Yes, I'm doing the MPhil at, um, <i>Woodbrooke</i>, Woodbrooke, yeah <i>right</i> yeah, yeah. Er, and, um, er, the, the purpose of the disc is just so that, um, you know, my notes are completely accurate, as it were. <i>Right, ok.</i> so, I'm probably not going to transcribe them, <i>no, no</i>, but, um, but already I've found it quite useful, to, to go back to them, um, but anything that you say will be anonymous. <i>Oh, that's right, yes.</i> So, um <i>As with the group.</i></p>
	0:32	<p>Yes, well anonymous in the sense that it won't be attributed to you <i>that's right</i> but not anonymous in that sense – it would form part of, it would form part of what I'm writing. <i>Well, we're assuming that I can be of help to you, of course.</i> Well, I hope you can. [laughs] [laughs] <i>Yes. Well see.</i> Um, I've, I've, I've got various questions about the Experiment with <i>right</i> with Light, um, but I think that the questions that I had in the back of my mind when I started probably won't be what I end up doing, because things will emerge <i>yes</i> and already are emerging as I'm talking to people <i>yes</i></p>
	1:10	<p>Um, if, if you would like, when I've, when I've finished it, and if I do the MPhil it will be, um, March next year, if I convert to PhD it will be a bit longer, <i>right</i> but I'll make that available to everybody who's helped me. <i>mm</i> Um, and I've, I've got a series of areas to sort of talk, talk about, um, and, er, so that I don't capture my interpretation, on occasion you might, you might feel that I'm pushing you a bit for something that you'd expect me to understand, because I'm a Quaker too, <i>mm, mm, mm</i></p>
	1:40	<p>and I probably will, but I'm <i>yes</i> asking you so that it's as explicit as, as, as possible <i>assuming I understand as well</i> [laughs] yes [laughs] [laughs] and if there's anything <i>a lot of assumptions</i> if there's anything you don't like that I'm asking you, just stop me, you know, 'cause <i>yes</i> I don't want you to feel <i>obviously there'll be periods of just thinking about what's going on</i> Yeah, sure</p>
	2:01	<p>Yeah, yeah, yeah, um, how, how did you come to Quaker., oh, sorry, there is just one thing I should say, occasionally you might say something that I want to come back to and I, I want to, I want you to carry on at your own time <i>mm, mm</i> so that I'll just make a note and come back to that, but <i>right</i> yep</p>
	2:20	<p>How did you come to Quakers in the first place, [i13's name]? <i>Um, quite simply, it was the nearest Sunday School.</i> Right, so, so all your life, then? <i>Well, since I was about six, is what I would guess</i> <i>mm</i> <i>My parents began, took on the job of looking after a Meeting House and [laughs] so</i></p>
	2:40	<p>So, were your parents actually wardens of the Meeting House, then? <i>They were caretakers, caretaker, cleaning and so on, yeah, and there was a cottage with it, that was part of the attraction, so</i> Yeah, yeah, and was that here in the [name of the region of the country] <i>Well, yes, South [name of the region of the</i></p>

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		<i>country],[name of a city] Oh, right, yes, yes, I've got friends who live quite near the Meeting House there, but I've only seen it from the outside, but it's as nice old one, isn't it yes, it is, I mean, things have changed lots since I was there, of course. You've been into the grounds? Yes, just walked through. Well, one of the cottages, Yeah the first cottage as you go past the, er lovely Meeting House Yeah yes yeah</i>
	3:15	<i>Well, [name of city], like everywhere else, is very busy now, of course, yeah mm Um and how did you come to the Experiment with Light first? Oh, well, a member, [name of first Friend], um, of our Meeting, she got involved and, er, I was very interested and tried it. I don't know how long it had been going before I came in, but I'm guessing that it was early .. 2000 right something like that. Um, I don't know when Rex first started it, y'know</i>
	3:52	<i>Um, well, that's something else I should have said, actually, I've spoken to, Rex and Diana, um, I've had a couple of conversations with Rex and one long one with Diana. I guess Rex sort of started thinking about it in, doing something with it in '96 mm but, er, lots of groups started at a.., a.., at about that time, in the late '90s That's what I thought, yes. Yeah, yeah. I would have said five or six years, but maybe seven, then, from what you're saying mm, mm, mm.</i>
2	0:00	<i>And do you have another meditation practice? Other than, um Other than Meeting for Worship and Experiment with Light. Not really, no, no. We've just had somebody move into our district, into our Meeting from Scotland who's been going to a different discipline and it will be interesting to find out what it is Yep</i>
	0:31	<i>Um, do you have, do you have a daily practice in terms of prayer, or Meeting for Worship, personal Light me.. no, no, other than, um, I should say other than, than, how's the best way to phrase it, um, I tend to be a person who, of few words, and I've moved away from the idea of, of formal prayer, um .. as long as I remind myself throughout the day .. of God's presence .. of God .. of God being there, that seems to be .. right mm hm</i>
	1:16	<i>um, it was a practice at one time, throughout the day, quiet prayer, whatever, rather than being formal prayer, er, not even, that wasn't extensive, um, I, I don't know how your questions going to be, but the reasons for it may become apparent, necessary yeah .. well, why, why don't you tell me now .. if that's ok</i>
	1:40	<i>well, if something's been addressed during the Experiment with Light, my early experience of, er, religion, and I went to a jun..., boys', junior school attached to an Anglican church and with a</i>
	2:00	<i>once weekly commitment to go to the church, to the service .. and the priest used to come into the .. um, school once a week .. I may be wrong on once a week, he used to come into the school, let's put it that way, um, for some sort of religious instruction .. and I found that I was having great difficulty with it, um, I had some sort of .. I suppose about eight or nine I became conscious of .. something beyond myself .. that I had, that I couldn't formulate, to put it, er, I associated then with people talking about</i>
	2:50	<i>God. .. But the formal religion, particularly, I find incredibly difficult, particularly when, um, er, I finished up in, er, mortal fear, as a result of, um, the sort of scriptural things that we were told at school .. as a way of disciplining boys, I think, at the time mm</i>

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	3:14	<i>but, er, I seemed to be sensitive, and I guess many kids the same age suffered, still do, probably, um, it led to great difficulty mm</i>
	3:25	<i>and I was, confounded, puzzled, when .. going into the church with the school .. some of the servers, boys from the school, were right little [laughs] toe-rags, to say the least, as we might say nowadays, but, and I can never equate this, you see, it doesn't, that in itself, doesn't bother me now. And also I remember that, er, we had to recite the creed and whatnot and there were hymns, whatever there were, and .. I believe that such-and-such and I'd read it, and I, I, I would be saying it .. and I don't know whether I believe this as a statement</i>
	4:11	<i>if I'm saying it when I don't believe it and God's listening, I'm in for it. You know, you're in this sort of cleft stick situation. So, that, that, that in a nutshell is at the root of it, I have great difficulty mm</i>
	4:27	<i>I have revisited it in, er, the Light meetings. Physically I tried to go back to that church, er, I, some years ago back in [name of place], visiting, and I thought, well, I'll go in to .. sort of sort this out. The school's gone, it's been demolished .. And, steeling myself up, and I went to the church, only to find it locked. Well, that's, that's a good start, and I enquired and found they keep it locked nowadays, which I understand</i>
3	0:00	<i>Um, so I entered it in a Light meeting, on one occasion, .. relaxed, and took myself in .. what I remembered of it and I, it was a dark, dismal place, that I visited .. and .. I sat myself in the pew and I knelt down, I went through the processes and tried to understand it, .. and it remained dark</i>
	0:30	<i>.. and then in the meditation I sort of almost felt myself physically moved from there into somewhere lighter, and I thought, no, I'm going back, I want to sort this and I started trying to .. I sort of heard, as they say, something to the effect</i>
	0:53	<i>'it's only an edifice' .. And I just relaxed then, and, er, but that came with me, that, that school, coincided the move to Quaker service, prior to that I'd been in another school, which I was very happy at. Mind you, I was only there a term, or something, because I was only six,</i>
	1:16	<i>maybe six or seven, when we moved .. um, that school was an unhappy experience, was it seven, no, it must have been nine to fourteen, something like that, plus the mm .. yeah, very difficult mm</i>
	1:39	<i>And I still struggle with it, even now, um, and my parents, my mother particularly, and my brother, and my, the younger of my two sisters are much more evangelical in the way they talk. And I find myself freezing and my mother died suddenly, and my brother died suddenly, my younger sister's there .. And, um, whenever she comes, it's evangelical whatever's happened in her life mm and .. it's a sort of imposi..., what I thought in the Light meeting, it is it's a, sort of, um, morality imposed on you</i>
	2:19	<i>rather than from within yourself, as it were Yeah Well, that's how it felt. And I still feel that. As though you haven't, you .. I .. obviously Quakers have for a long time, I like the idea of my own way and .. um .. other experiences out of Meeting for Worship</i>
	2:44	<i>and being out in the country sort of all reinforce that mm</i>
	2:50	<i>Do you, do you keep a journal [i13's name]? I'm not, I'm not one for journals no I, I'm better since I've got a bit of a word processor, but I always struggle with writing, it's a, it's, it's because I'm, er .. unkind to trees if I'm writing, because I write and then rewrite and rewrite, and I get fed up with myself</i>

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	3:16	So you're a man of few written words as well? <i>Yes, indeed. And I do surprise myself when I do sit down to write, as I say, using the word processor is much easy because you can juggle things around .. but, er .. I'm looking for sort of an exactness that doesn't exist, I think mm I just think it exists, when writing, I suppose</i>
	3:44	<i>So, no, I don't and my notes from the Light meetings are very scrappy I keep. Right. So you keep notes. Yes, I do, immediately afterwards. I've been looking at them this morning Oh, great! And I think to myself, what on earth did I mean by that?! [laughs]</i>
	4:02	<i>some of them I recall and the stronger ones, of course, but .. Yeah. So did, did [name of first Friend] bring the Light group into your, er Preparative Meeting? No, we're part of [name of second Friend]'s group. Right Yeah, so I still go to [name of second Friend]'s group. Right. They were, they were here last week. oh, right so, yes, come up here about twice a year</i>
4	0:19	<i>most of them are in [name of city] or [name of town] with [name of third Friend] Yeah I knew [name of third Friend] from [name of organisation] so Yes, before they went</i>
	0:33	<i>Um, so [name of first Friend] invited you to join [name of second Friend]'s group. [name of second Friend] and [name of third Friend]'s group. [name of first Friend] invited me along when the meeting was at her house in, er, just on the edge of [name of town]. A day in early, early 2000, I think</i>
	0:46	<i>Right. It would be. Right. So you don't have a group in your own Meeting? We tried, no, we haven't in our .. we're a comparatively small Meeting. We've tried the Monthly Meeting, I think I held a couple of sessions with a group at [name of Meeting]. It's too big a group. mm And, um, .. I suppose out of a dozen people .. three or four said they would like, to perhaps continue, but it didn't get going mm And probably distance travelling mm getting a group regularly, but, um,</i>
	1:20	<i>we're always looking for the opportunity, of course, mm get it going Which is your PM, then? Um, [name of town], formerly called [name of another town], but now Meeting is in [name of town] here And you, what's your Monthly Meeting? [name of MM] I was going to say it's not [name of another MM], yeah. Yeah. It's a scattered, but fairly small Monthly Meeting. Yeah, a bit like mine, I guess. mm</i>
	1:52	<i>Um, so you haven't actually been to a workshop, then, that [name of second Friend] or anybody's given you, you've just gone straight into that one group, have you? Uh, no, um, I went straight to that meeting .. um .. [name of first Friend] then gave a, a workshop at [name of Meeting]. I think, I think, let me be absolutely sure about this. She gave some sort of an introduction, and I think a workshop, I should have to confirm that.</i>
	2:29	<i>Um, which, again, people from the Monthly Meeting came to, which I did. Um, but that was after I'd started going. Yeah. I've been and I helped [name of another Friend] once, with a workshop. Oh, right. That was in [name of place]. Right, right.</i>
	2:39	<i>But I've never presented one myself. Except when you tried to get it going in the Monthly Meeting. Well, that again was, er, er, [name of first Friend] and I trying and I went down to [name of town], but it, it was really [name of first Friend] had already given her introduction. Right. And so on. So we went down to actually try a, um, a meditation. mm</i>
	3:08	<i>What difference would you say it's made to your life, [i13's name]? ..</i>

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	3: 27	<i>I'm hoping it's made me easier to live with [laughs] amongst other things. Um .. it has certainly made life .. I don't want to use the term, easier, I don't mean, I mean, life isn't easier, in a sense, but you know what I mean. .. I've, it's encouraged me to deal with hang ups outside, you know, not just while I'm in the Light meeting.</i>
	3:57	<i>It's helped me to .. try and look directly at fears, rather than, sort of, shelving them and so on .. face up to them. I've been heading that way for a long time. mm But tackling them. Um .. I .. attended for a whole year one of these .. um .. what do you call it now .. hmm .. it was a foundation year in psycho .. what's it called .. it's towards .. I can't remember what the, there are disciplines to do with um, art .. and drama .. and when you sit in your group what do you call it? The word's gone completely.</i>
	5:03	<i>Um, psychotherapy? Psychotherapy, that's right. My other word's gone. Therapy. It was therapy I couldn't find. Yes, I did a foundation year in psychotherapy and,</i>
5	0:00	<i>er, .. with the idea of possibly taking on counselling Mm, hmm. .. That was a tough, tough year. There were some residential weekends as well. So, er, .. I remember .. coming back from my first residential weekend .. almost in mortal terror again, because what had been, um, for many years had been .. a controlled memory, if you like, is probably what you would, of how you would .. of the fears, and so on, of adolescence, and all that sort of thing .. and, er, earlier</i>
	0:50	<i>during that first residential weekend, that came alive again mm and it was horrendous, coming home, oh, for a whole week or more, I was really in .. quite a state mm but I stuck it out and it was very beneficial mm .. but at the end of the year, I .. realised that analysis was no good without synthesis yes</i>
	1:14	<i>and there didn't seem to be any synthesis involved at all mm And, um .. so I, I declined to go further with it. I was very grateful for having stuck it through .. um, .. and other things. I mean, Meeting for Worship, often, has been also a very secure place to be dealing with things</i>
	1:43	<i>When, when you say, um, it's made life easier, or made you easier to deal with, can you give a specific example of something that something that was a problem, or an issue for you before the Light group, that isn't, and how it isn't, now?</i>
	2:01	<i>.. it's difficult to pinpoint it mm it's a whole cloud of .. issues. Um .. Relationships, relationships with .. certainly my mother at one stage, and my brother, and my, and my sisters .. I still have an inclination not to want to be involved with them mm, hm um, at one time I wanted to up roots and move right away .. um .. we seem to be .. poles apart in so many things .. that are utterly .. particularly if we talk about religious matters, there was a certitude that was required for most of the time</i>
	3:27	<i>.. there are other things as well, it's very difficult to pinpoint .. I, I .. started work as an apprentice in engineering and when I first, an indentureship and, um, the very first day there I knew wrong, wrong, wrong, wrong. I was a sixteen year old with five years indenture mm out of you mm it's pretty daunting .. and the problem</i>
	4:04	<i>being there was no .. nothing in my mind to tell me what alternative there was right .. although I had had dreams of being an architect at some time, but education wasn't there, that sort of thing, um, .. and</i>

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		<i>I st., I finished the apprenticeship, I stayed on in industry for.. it would be .. trying to get my years right</i>
	4:34	<i>1963 another three years, moving from [name of city] up here .. and I met my wife, she was at Meeting, and she was a teacher at the time. I got to meet some of her colleagues and I got to help in the school in the evenings, with youth club, and there the people were forever talking about, well, what the jobs they do, you see, I never want to talk about my, so that was the interest, so that [laughs] [laughs]</i>
6	0:00	<i>was an incentive, so I made, I wanted to make the move. Well at first, certainly, from my parents' point of view, I could understand it, no, you've got a good job, you've got a trade, that was the way, their experience, a trade and a good job, if I stayed there .. and my grand., my maternal grandmother, quite a strong personality, had no concept at all of why I wanted to change and make a move from this .. again, from their life experience uncertainties in, um</i>
	0:34	<i>work. There was a sort of difficulties, though I must say, once I've committed myself to the change, my parents became very supportive mm .. that was ok</i>
	0:46	<i>And what did you change to? To go into teaching into teaching, right, yes special needs, eventually .. But it was a long. long haul .. but, er, as I say, at twenty six I set myself the target of thirty two, and I thought, well, if I haven't done it by thirty two, I can say I've tried mm if I fail, I've tried, sort of mm that has been a philosophy mm I'd rather fail trying mm than not try. And I try to get others to think that mm</i>
	1:19	<i>I used to look around at the men in the workshop and some of them highly intelligent .. were operating, part of the machine, as it were, .. think to myself 'why can't you do something?' mm And I challenged them sometimes .. they'd say, 'well, I'm' as it was then 'in my thirties, I've got a wife and I've got children' Yeah, they had that sort of.. worry. But I think it's such a waste.</i>
	1:51	<i>mm, mm. You say that, um, Experiments helped you to become easier, so that's, kind of like, something in you., in you.. the way you are, is there anything ex.. I think facing up to things, it's easier, I, I'm less likely to blame other people, amongst other things right, mm I check myself much more now, things stop, or slip by sometimes, but I check myself more</i>
	2:25	<i>Um, .. I suppose I've always tended to be sympathetic to other people's point of view, but that can be very frustrating sometimes, so then when you do react it's a .. even more of an over-reaction, perhaps. .. Yes, I think I'm much more tolerant than before .. I haven't solved that problem of my sister yet. I tend to keep quiet there. And we don't enter any discussion or argument ..</i>
	3:04	<i>but, um, .. And is there anything external, apart from that, kind of, way you behave, sort of, um, whatever, relationship side, side of things, is there anything, I mean, I guess you're retired now, but has it changed anything you do, in terms of what you do with your, your time, or, your activities, or whatever?</i>
	3:31	<i>My time's pretty full, really .. um, but I have one day or, sort of, er, relaxation classes, and then I do one day teaching .. visiting, and the routine, we've got family, grandchildren, um, there's meetings at the Meeting House, there's a play reading society, there's a discussion group, um</i>
	3:56	<i>And has the Experiment made any difference to how you spend, how you do that kind of stuff, does that, just, carry on more or less the same</i>

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	4:06	<i>.. Yes, I think .. I'm a, I'm a better listener, still got a long way to go, but I'm a better listener, um, within groups, and .. it's, I think, it's enabled me to be more helpful to other folk, I can just possibly discern what their difficulty may be mm at a particular time, and be able to deal with it that way, advise, I should say, mm rather than deal with it ..</i>
7	0:00	<i>I'm, again, exp., various experiences, Experiment with Light or outside of it have .. for me have been indicative of times when you've got to do the work yourself .. and when you've done the work, then the help that is needed for the next bit comes along.</i>
	0:24	<i>Um, I know that isn't possible for everyone. But I try, to see that's something an individual can do, deal with this bit by yourself mm and when we looked to what we can do, or what might the next stage mm</i>
	0:41	<i>Um. .. In the deeper moments, I have been, again, using the expression, told that, or I've heard that, inwardly, very recently the Light, the Light, the last Light meeting here last week, the same sort of idea came up, which led along</i>
	1:04	<i>in the imagery .. um, I finished up in a situation where I've been left to deal with it on my own, before you're shown, if you like mm the next step.</i>
	1:19	<i>Can you talk me through exactly what the experience was, then, [i13's name]?</i>
	1:23	<i>Um, yes, er, the .. it came up once, er .. before .. a couple of years back, in the early hours of the morning, I dreamed I'd lost my sight. I was blind, ok. It was quite profound. I was asleep, and I woke up with it. It was a bit disturbing. mm But it's also because I, er, partly triggered .. I think because I work with people who are blind. But .. the Light meeting last week .. in the quiet, I was .. it was .. what ha., I hadn't any specific thing that I want .. to bring into it and yet there were .. shadows of other things that we've done before.</i>
	2:17	<i>Um. I'm quite often make, see images ... It isn't very often I hear anything. But see things .. But on this occasion I suddenly recalled an exercise that we did, it may have been on our psychotherapy year, I'm not certain .. where it was accompanied to music, it was an exercise in trust where one of, you were paired off, and one would be blind and one would be sighted</i>
	2:50	<i>Yes, I know the sort of thing You may have heard, well, the blind person just rests the finger on the palm of the sighted person Oh, no, I haven't done that one and they are led around and right now, it can be very simple, but it can be quite a lot mm up, down, round and so on. And that came into my mind. It's an exercise I've used with blind youngsters with learning difficulties and things like that</i>
	3:20	<i>And I was thinking of it in terms of me holding my hand out, like this, and suddenly the whole thing reversed .. they got my hand .. resting in a hand, because I was blind there was, er, no concept of whose, or whatever, and it took me in the, in the meditation, it took me on a longish journey</i>
	3:44	<i>It was odd to start with .. it became a spiralling motion as I was taking my hand round, like this, in a clockwise direction .. um, .. which was an unwinding, in a sense, because of one of my childhood foibles was always to turn clockwise .. and, in later life, I felt I've got to compete with this, and deliberately turn anti-clockwise</i>
	4:14	<i>because it became so ingrained, you see, .. and, er, and this was happening in the, in the, er, mediation. I thought, 'oh, perhaps I've wound myself too tightly [laughs] the other way [laughs] that was what I was thinking. Peculiar. But, anyway. Okay, so and then eventually it</i>

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		<i>slowed down, it got smaller, smaller, and smaller, and then I started to drop, my head down, and, I mean, I went down with it and then wherever I landed, we then started walking .. I assumed the guide was going backwards or perhaps sideways on, I was walking forwards slowly and then eventually up some steps and it was a steep,</i>
8	0:00	<i>like I imagined I was going up from one deck to another on a ship, it was that sort of thing, and for a moment I thought I glimpsed .. like a, a bright, not gold, but a bright rim that might have been the toe on somebody's shoes or the heel of somebody's shoes</i>
	0:21	<i>going up ahead of me, just momentarily, got on to this so-called upper deck or whatever it was. Forward again. Stop. .. And then, let me try and get the sequence right, .. I can't remember whether it was there, it was there that the hand, that the guiding hand disappeared, or a moment or two later, but there was a definite stop. The next stage I went forward .. I think on my own</i>
	1:00	<i>.. not a lot of steps, but it transformed suddenly, that I was aware that I was in a vast, vast arena. I couldn't see it, but I felt it, the, you know, that sudden open air feeling yeah you know, the ambience, the whole ambience changed, that was what I felt it was.</i>
	1:22	<i>And so I stood there .. 'what am I doing here, what's this?' and then just a flash of light and then what came through my mind, somebody's taken a spotlight across and then it's gone again, sort of thing, and, er, practising, whatever.</i>
	1:41	<i>I then proceeded slowly forward .. and as I proceeded forward .. my vision started to return in part and I found myself faced looking down the barrel of a big gun, pointing straight at my face.</i>
	1:59	<i>Of course my instant reaction was to want to back up from that .. now I had that book on there I'm reading at the moment, partly read, and I'd been reading about that the same morning and he mentions Tiananmen Square and the tank and the gun, you see, so that had worked its way into yeah this somewhere. But, the author, Jamploski,</i>
		<i>(Lee Jampolski. 'The Art of Trust: Healing Your Heart and Opening Your Mind', based on principles found in 'A Course on Miracles')</i>
	2:28	<i>said, when he first saw that, it was very profound moment, he, er, saw it as being, um, a metaphor .. for facing the ego .. and that's what I'd picked up, you see and, er,</i>
	2:46	<i>I mean, one of the things that I've been aware of during this .. last fifteen, twenty years or more was dealing with the ego, the ego that will, you know, take control either by .. being very negative or whatever mm, hm all this poise. And that seems to be.. So, I was left alone, that's what I'm coming to again, there's a period now where I've been left alone .. to deal with a situation</i>
	3:18	<i>.. um .. it occurred in the mid '70s, too, when I had a very difficult time, I'd been teaching .. ten years or more, I couldn't change, I wanted to move schools, to change, things were not so good .. um, I was in, not in depression, .. but I suddenly felt myself to be in the, in the slough of despond mm that's how I described it, that's how it felt.</i>
	3:50	<i>And this went on for some months, I mean, these things do take a long time hm [clearing throat] and, um, .. again, Meeting for Worship one day, thinking about this and thinking of it in terms of slough of despond ..</i>
	4:12	<i>.. again I heard .. the instruction, if you like, 'get yourself out of this' .. and</i>

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		<i>then I'll give you my hand or I'll offer you my hand, so, there's a period again, if you can deal with, if you can deal with something yourself, then the res., then the .. other help comes out of it</i>
9	0:00	<i>And in this Light meeting last week yes where you, where you were eventually faced with a gun, you said your instinct was to back off , but yeah, but I didn't but you didn't say I, I, I think, I think that in the, in the meditation I backed up a couple of steps yes and then made myself stand still and even go forward another step. So, I'm still looking at it, I'm still dealing with that. So the meditation ended while you were still facing the gun? Yes. Right. Yeah mm mm mm</i>
	0:30	<i>.. [laughs] And, and is that common that you're, I mean, I think it is, this is what you said to me, that, um, something happens in the meditation and then subsequently you work it out. mm Yeah. Yeah. And do you work it out consciously or do you just let it bubble up? .. I suppose in the Quaker sense, I .. wait in the silence. Yeah. I've learned not to force the issue. Yeah.</i>
	1:31	<i>.. um .. A physical effect, many years ago, being on a camping holiday with the school, and one of the boys was somewhat disturbed .. and it turned out he'd got a, a knife, a scout knife with him. Um .. quite a big bladed thing .. and, of course, the kids were coming to me and saying, because I was in charge of the group, so-and-so's got a knife .. And I knew that he had these strange moods. And we were dressed for the sun, stripped to the waist, you see. He came out of his tent, I don't know whether, I think I called him, and he came out of his tent, anyway</i>
	2:10	<i>with this knife in, right up to, he was sort of pointing there [laughs] and that was a similar sort of situation, I had to wait for a while, just to know how to deal with, deal with it quietly .. um .. and it did, the situation disarmed mm if I'd have been aggressive or anything like that yeah I think it'd have been entirely different yeah</i>
	2:36	<i>So, I feel much the same about this gun, at the moment. .. If I do something stupid, it's going to discharge. [laughs] Yeah. So, yes, I tend to wait in the Light.</i>
	2:50	<i>Is it very present with you, this image? It is now I'm talking about it. Yes, but it hasn't been until now? Um, it's crossed my mind once or twice. Yeah. Yeah. mm mm</i>
10	0:00	<i>And .. how important is the Experiment with Light to your Quaker life?</i>
	0:05	<i>[silence]</i>
10	0:25	<i>.. In the sense that there may be .. skills is not the right word, but it is a transfer of skills from the Experiment of Light mediation then I can take that into Meeting for Worship mm um, I was going that way in Meeting for Worship anyway. I like the idea of wordless prayer and, of the, um, .. no matter what I say, whatever words I use is never inadequate in those circumstances, so I feel that's important.</i>
	1:02	<i>So, yes, a transfer of skills is the best way to put it .. from that point of view. In terms of .. in the broader sense .. I g., you know in the, er, broader sense I can't really pinpoint any .. significant difference, but .. I, I think it's one of those questions that someone else would be better answering, rather than I. Um</i>
	1:50	<i>.. there's a sense in that it's refreshed Meeting for Worship. For so many years in the Meeting there were times when you doubt, what are you doing here .. that type of, I've asked that question occasionally, er, not only from</i>

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		<i>your own point of view, but, you know, what good are you, sort of thing, to anyone else, or what good is it being in Meeting, and so on</i>
	2:22	<i>er, and then, .. along with the Society there's all this questioning about what you mean when you say something and .. great difficulty, I mean with my own experience .. I've now reached the point where I say .. don't listen to the words, listen to the message .. and hope that people do the same for me, but I've still not been able to do it with my sister [laughs] [laughs]</i>
	2:59	<i>We're too close. mm It's very difficult, it's odd, isn't it, how you can deal with lots of relationships, but if you have a difficulty within, with peer mm relationships, it can be, mm with sibling relationships mm can be difficult mm</i>
	3:17	<i>But we get on, I mean we don't have any problems, but as far as that's concerned yeah I think I anticipate too much [laughs] as well, probably, so, instead of being relaxed in the situation, I tend to be .. tensed up. But, yeah, as far as Meeting is concerned now, what would have been a time, when I might have .. 'what do you mean?', or 'why do you use that language?' whatever, I don't know, I try to listen to what is being said, rather than the words. So that, yeah, that's a, a in part to do with, um, the Experiment in the Light</i>
	4:03	<i>Is that what you mean by trans..., transference of skills? Yes, yes, yes. mm</i>
11	0:00	<i>Has it made any, has the Experiment with Light made any difference to .. er .. your involvement in Meeting?</i>
	0:11	<i>It's helped me to back off a bit. Has it? mm Yeah, um, being a small Meeting, again, you find yourself on a, sort of, like the Forth Bridge, you know, you've walked across it [laughs] then you've got to go back and start again, or whatever, it's that sort of situation. And, um .. I've learned not to feel that I have to do things .. time to step away.</i>
	0:45	<i>I knew, we did month..., having difficulty with monthly Meeting clerking, in places, and for three, not this last year, the three previous years, um .. different Monthly Meetings took it on, different Preparative Meetings took it on for a whole year, collectively and we did ours two years ago .. and that was tough going, um .. and I felt afterwards that I really was in need of a sabbatical mm, mm Plus the fact there was also the problem that, when you've had a responsibility, particularly clerking, or something like that, that when your term of office is finished, you don't let it go mm</i>
	1:34	<i>That's something else I've had to learn, you know mm that somebody else can do the job, let them do it, although little things in the Meeting House that I would have busied myself with, because I was Clerk, I had to discipline myself away from that mm and again, Light meeting has helped mm hm considerably mm hm</i>
12	0:00	<i>Um, how do you think the Experiment with Light sits with Meeting for Worship? ..</i>
	0: 16	<i>.. If I say that I try to enter the Experiment of Light prayerfully .. and I try to enter worship prayerfully, that is where the similarities are. Um. It's this sense of danger that if you don't, if you don't, if you're not prayerfully into these situations, you, you'd be perhaps in difficulty, in that environment, I don't know. How does it sit with the Meeting for Worship? .. For me, by and large, fairly easily ..</i>
	1:01	<i>.. If .. there were two or three of us from Meeting in one of these Light groups, whether that would make any difference .. mm I don't know</i>
	1:18	<i>I know [name of first Friend] is, but her commitments are such that we don't ..</i>

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		<i>she's not very often at Meeting .. but we understand one another very well mm anyway. It's very difficult to answer that mm</i>
	1:32	<i>Why do you think Light is necessary, the Light group is necessary in addition to Meeting for Worship for you, [i13's name]? .. It gives me .. a space .. that's not constrained by, I'll use the word 'ritual', by the rituals of Quaker meeting .. I think that's the simplest way of putting it.</i>
	2:04	<i>.. that term's just come to me [laughs] as you've asked me the question [laughs] Some Quakers would have a fit, but I know exactly what you mean. .. uh, yeah mm. So yes, you feel free of the subsequent constraint, um, the group's been long, long enough together now, not to feel any sort of real great .. um, restriction between any of us yeah yes. In fact, there's a sense that even if you, if you're shy with someone or you don't, er, find it so easy to talk, and so on, within the silence of the Light group .. all that goes, in a way that it doesn't always disappear in your Meeting for Worship</i>
	3:00	<i>more trusting, I don't know. mm I mean, there has to be trust there, that's the main thing.</i>
	3:13	<i>Why do you think that doesn't happen in Meeting for Worship? Well, er, it's partly to do with the sharing in Light group, isn't it right well, very much to do with the sharing, in you're opening your soul, your, to the, er, to the people in the group and this is, isn't this where Rex is coming from, isn't it, that early Friends knew one another mm at all levels, if you mm like to put it that way mm</i>
	3:38	<i>And so, then .. it's not that there isn't a sense of trust in Meeting for Worship, but, as others have often said, we don't know one another all that well. In social occasions at Meeting for Worship, not, not in the same way that the peo.., the folk in the Light group mm hm</i>
13	0:00	<i>Do you think it would be different if the Light group were, were made up of the same people from your own Meeting? .. Not necessarily all of them, obviously, but .. From those that have expressed interest, if we could get a, a, a, a, a regular time, I don't think it would be a great difficulty, it tends to be .. I think, those that are really interested, you have some sort of .. rapport there already. I don't know what it is. Do you know why, why it might be? No. No, I mean, I've never considered the question 'til now. mm No</i>
	0:43	<i>But the people who have, is what you're saying that the people who have expressed interest, you feel more empathy with? Yes than with some other people in Meeting? That's right. And, oddly enough, the .. the one attempt to, I think it was only one attempt at [name of Meeting] was that the three or four .. yes, perhaps four who were keenly, not keenly interested, but had followed it through, again, I felt that .. closeness mm rather than with the others, some of them are strangers to me .. anyway mm</i>
	1:26	<i>Did [name of first Friend] actually do this thing actually at a monthly meeting or was it a special occasion? It was a special occasion at our, at our Meeting House, but, um, Monthly Meeting were invited. Right. So, the people with whom you feel maybe slightly less empathy still came to that? So that you wouldn't have had everybody from Monthly Meeting, but some people came to find out and weren't attracted? They're not the kind of people you're Yes, it was a long time ago, it's a good crowd who were there, I can't remember exactly who was there, but I think there would probably be a, a bigger representation of those who were genuinely yeah interested yeah there'd be some curiosity</i>

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	2:08	When you say a good crowd, we're talking about 50? 100? Sorry? Are we talking about fifty people, a hundred people? Oh, no, no, by our <i>Monthly Meeting standards</i> , we're talking about perhaps 25 yeah or 30. ok Yes. Yes. No, our Meeting is averaging about, somewhere round about fifteen mm attendance mm, hm so
14	0:00	<i>Our monthly meeting was 20-odd this last week and that's about usual mm for monthly meeting mm</i>
	0:09	Does, does your Meeting know that you go to a Light group? Yes. And do they have a view about it? Never heard anything expressed at all mm It's a question that's And no one's ever asked me any questions about it No. No, that's not, no, wait a minute, wait a minute, no, sorr..., .. couple of times the lass that's just come in from Scotland, that we were talking about meditation, she's asked me about it. And I think one other person's asked me about it. But those folk that I know well, very rarely mm have I had questions
	0:48	So what, what makes you remain involved in the Light group, [i13's name]?
	0:59	.. If I say it's a silken thread. .. That's just how it felt, as I tried to react to your question. ..
	1:28	.. Yeah, it's a sort of silken thread that's helping to maintain .. connection that may be difficult sometimes .. mm hm. A silken thread to the other people? Or to things in yourself? Both. Right To yourself and to the other people and to the, um, .. ah, the mysterious, if you like Right the mystical, the mysterious, to the mm to the beyond, shall we say .. yeah .. It seems to offer, to sort of offer that opportunity
15	0:00	When you, um, .. when you get these indications, you said sometimes things come to you, you hear them, you've mentioned God, you've mentioned something beyond yourself and now 'mysterious' and 'beyond', how, how do you experience that, what, what does that feel like, when you come to that .. encounter?
	0:21	<i>It is varied, the experience, um .. physical experience. The two nature experiences that have happened within the last ten years .. quite profoundly, driving to meeting one Sunday morning .. [sighs] having one of these, and what a psychoanalyst or psychologist would make of it, I don't know, hearing the trees singing to..., singing, hearing the trees singing, that was one of them ..</i>
	0:53	<i>And more recently, walking along this, er, lane, that's behind me, um, a couple of years ago, early morning walk, ah, there'd be the rosebay willow herb, down the side of the path, stream on the other side, and blue sky behind it, and the light was such, and just a gentle breeze and, um, there was a gap in the hedge, so just the willow herb and its lovely colour against the pale blue sky, and the breeze was just taking it gently side to side .. and suddenly I was transported, so that I wasn't intellectually aware of it, but the, it was a dance of joy, and it was a profound dance of joy, this, um, [sighs] the angels singing, sort of, it was that sort of feeling and, you know, thinking about it now, you feel [laughs] er, er, just split seconds and</i>
	1:58	<i>afterwards you think, well was I dreaming that, at long time removed you, you wonder whether you were dreaming it.</i>
	2:06	<i>I know the hearing trees singing, I've ministered about it, that very morning. It was so strong. So that, sort of, that's the two sort of nature experiences.</i>
16		<i>Sometimes if I say 'Dear God' .. and I'm not .. being too intellectual about it, then I feel a, a, a, a something welling up inside me, very sort of .. almost into</i>

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		<i>tears, it's very strong and powerful and, um</i>
	0:20	<i>Yep, um .. There have been quite profound visions. I've had one, one, one vision, as opposed to an image with my eyes closed, and that was in meeting. We're going .. back to the 1960ish when I was still in this problem of where, what do I do, I'm still in industry, sort of thing, I'm sitting in Meeting for Worship, um, I've no idea what .. was going through mind at the time, but, instead of it being an image, it was clear as looking at you, I was suddenly on a pathway</i>
	1:05	<i>looking at a wall. I'd been walking that way and I must have stopped and turned to look at what I was passing and there was a wall, I looked at it, it was a high wall, unscaleable, hedge or something behind me, and I turned round and looked at the way I was going .. and the wall was getting higher and higher and higher and higher and higher, dismal and dark and everything else,</i>
	1:28	<i>so I turned round and looked back the way I'd come and the wall was getting, it wasn't perspective, the wall was getting lower and lower and lower and so in the far distance I could see over the wall and it was a maze of golden fields and beautiful trees, you know, and that idyllic sort of rural .. countryside image</i>
	1:51	<i>and .. I was devastated because I realised it was such a long journey back .. but I was being told I could get back, you see, go back, and that, that, I think that was a turning point in dealing with, first of all, my work situation and everything, but that's the only time I've had a .. vision mm like that mm sort of experience</i>
17	0:00	<i>Um .. very powerful .. and, er .. you know, there's a tendency to think, oh, help, I'm giving up here, you know [laughs].. um .. I, I s'pose, um, although I've lacked co., like many youngsters lacked a lot of confidence, still do lack confidence, I've got a stubborn streak in me, that makes me press on, I think. Er, I see it in our daughter as well.</i>
18	0:00	<i>.. Other experiences .. [sigh] imagery more than anything else. Whether you're talking about them being on the same level as the, um, where you're transported, if you like mm onto, onto the edge of another dimension of this mm perhaps less so ..</i>
	0:30	<i>Yeah, yeah, there was lots of images over the years mm One And.. one, one of the interesting ones, soon after I joined the Light group was, er, um, in Meeting for Worship, I was learning to face unpleasant images .. wherever I was, I would tend want to push them aside, not even look at the image .. um, and for me images tend to drift in, like that, either from that side, or from that side mm they never just appear in front of me, very rarely. The, the vision did, I was immediately there. But images tend to drift in. ..</i>
	1:20	<i>And so, I was in Meeting for Worship .. fairly well settled, and suddenly from this side I was aware of what I've described as a griffin's claw, a griffin's but with great talons on it. And as I remember it, very grey, unpleasantly grey, and my first I, I, my reaction was to sort of want to, I don't want that. And I thought, 'No, I've been taught to bring them in, focus on' Things you read tell you to do this as well, um.</i>
	1:55	<i>So I let it, brought it up, dead centre, and it was a great, a great cl., resting on a grey piece of slate, very Welsh, I s'pose you'd say. But anyway, like that, and it drifted in and one of these great talons. And as soon as I got it into focus there, the talons dropped off. And it was quite harmless. That was quite</i>

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		<i>a profound mm sort of a image as well, you know, facing up to it and</i>
19	0:00	<i>that's why I'm prep., partly why I'm prepared to stay with this gun barrel thing as well. mm</i>
	0:09	<i>Do, do these things always come from outside, [i13's name], or do they come from inside? Where, where do you, where do you perceive them as coming from, are they external or are they internal coming up?</i>
	0:21	<i>What I'm actually seeing, or, or, or the The the motivation for them? The whole experience. On each occasion. Or maybe it's different on different occasions?</i>
	0:38	<i>.. The very profound experiences .. occurred when for some reason I was .. [sigh] momentarily unawares, momentarily between thoughts. .. So I wasn't expecting anything other than the walk or the drive to meeting mm And in fact I was concentrating on driving mm</i>
	1:06	<i>.. Um, probably [wife's name] and I, probably we were talking about something as well. We often comment what a lovely drive it is back into [name of town] we enjoy that, um, and this one here. The [sigh] one I've just described with the claws .. I'm not aware .. of .. anything within myself, and yet it .. must have come from the subconscious ..</i>
	1:43	<i>I'm not aware of any external reason for it at that time .. the .. Sorry. Um, you've, what I'm asking about, what I'm trying to explore is when you use words like 'God' or something beyond yourself or 'mysterious' or 'beyond' is, is that something transcendent or is it something? Both. mm Yes, I, I, I, my, um, .. feeling about God, that He, He/She/It um .. um .. is both transcendent and immanent.</i>
	2:28	<i>And years ago, I gave the, when we were talking about this, I thought of the, as I sort of .. little metaphor, if you think of a simple cell floating in some sort of fluid .. if it is – I forgot the terminology now - .. you know, it lets fluid through both ways .. oh, dear, never mind .. um, that's how God is, both outside as a life support and both inside. mm</i>
	3:06	<i>If you're semi- .. permeable. Permeable mm is the word. If you're semi-permeable then you're going to be like that and if you're impermeable, then you're going to be collapsed in, and everything. You force God or whatever on the outside of yourself. So that's how I look upon it, and look upon God, um, I have no picture and image of God mm um, .. I .. oh, I've heard people talk about life force, I've more recently, there was somebody on Thought for Today, was it recently, he was talking about the .. I don't know what words were used</i>
	3:54	<i>.. the Spirit of the Universe, something like that, you know, this was a minister mm and he was using this, again, as an alternative expression ..</i>
20	0:00	<i>So, yes, er, since, ever since, as I say, a child I was aware of something .. long before I was presented with the formal .. doctrines of the mm hm church mm hm and so on</i>
	0:18	<i>I think I've been .. in that sort of situation with it ever since, you know. mm hm mm. ..</i>
21	0:00	<i>Trying to think, now .. there was somebody writing about the Cloud of Unknowing ..</i>
	0:10	<i>Well, in simple terms, he was saying it doesn't matter what your language, the greatest praise you can give, doesn't reach, doesn't .. match, doesn't mm cannot express .. And is so profound, deep and wonderful that if you say nothing .. but feel, then that is .. just as valuable</i>

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22	0:00	And, and when you feel, when you're having these .. understandings or visions, what does it physically feel like?
	0:09	<i>Well, the images and there's no physical feeling. Right No, there is no physical feel.. But these it is a picture image Right Yeah, picture images. Um, I suppose almost like daylight dreams, in a way, except mm they're not narrative in that sense, I mean dreams, when you tend to remember them there seems to be a beginning and end .. mm in a timescale, whereas</i>
	0:31	<i>Mind you, no, that's not true, though. Even, even with the images .. um, and they do last over a period of time, some of them .. Not continuous mm</i>
	0:54	<i>Again, it ma.., we're not at Meeting, we're at Meeting for Worship, so much of this has happened, you see. Um, Meeting for Worship .. suddenly finding myself alighting, getting off a sailing ship, old square-rig ship in the dark and the ship pulled away .. and at the time I thought, oh, what am I doing, am I leaving the Society of Friends, or any of that, these questions, yeah, it was probably through one of my more difficult times at Meeting. But anyway</i>
	1:30	<i>Um, .. and I thought about it for a while, then I let it be .. I, I, I can't discern anything really in that, I, I have landed here, and must go on, what happens here [sighs] I think it must have been a year or more later, again, back in Meeting for Worship, I was back on that, um, landing stage,</i>
	1:57	<i>dock, or whatever it was, and there was a galley there, an old Greek or Roman galley, I was being invited aboard, I went on board and I was greeted on the High Deck as captain. 'Welcome aboard, captain' he said, those words. [laughs] one's ego immediately starts to, it's so odd, because you're sitting in Meeting for Worship, with your eyes closed, and this adventure's going on [laughs]</i>
	2:25	<i>Um, and, er, I was just given time to sort of puff my chest out, er, and accept the welcome and then suddenly whoever it was welcoming me pointed down and there was a vacant oar, you see [laughs] and I even know that, in terms of the boat, it was on the port side, on the left hand side and on my right hand side, the way I was facing the boat. I went aboard and looked around and lots of folk around and, er, I was puzzled by this for a long time.</i>
	3:00	<i>And I don't remember at the time getting underway, that was the situation. End of image. I've thought about that a lot recently. And on another occasion, it occurred to me that, ah, yes, they're all captains, and there was folk with their, with the oar, they're captain, yeah, and if they all have their own way [laughs] this boat's going nowhere, sort of thing, you know yeah that was, that was the story behind that</i>
23	0:00	<i>Ok, so I'd sorted that, so we'd go on .. and Meeting was having a difficult time as well, and, um, oh, yes, everybody's got to get their oars in synch and pick up together as best they can</i>
	0:14	<i>And I was talking at our discussion group .. talking about some of the things, I was going over this with them again, I thought they'd heard it ad nauseam, but never mind. um, going over it again. And suddenly I said 'They're going to the drumbeat, we have to go to the drum beat.' And I seemed to remember that some of the galleys probably had a drummer mm on board to keep time on the oars mm And I suddenly realised, 'Yes, you've got to listen to the drumbeat, it's the heart of God' mm That's what came over.</i>
	0:53	<i>Perhaps over a long period of time. mm Coming off one ship, getting on to another, why a sailing ship? Whether I'd been doing a nothing on the sailing ship, just a passenger, I don't know. Suddenly I was a working, working on</i>

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		<i>the galley ..</i>
	1:15	<i>The other odd thing about this is .. if you're sitting in the galley you're looking towards the helmsman mm hm helmsperson, whatever, and throughout this I've never been able to see who the helmsperson is. I'm trusting that helmsperson mmm but I've never been able to make out a face or sometimes,</i>
	1:40	<i>I mean occasionally, I, I try to .. er, create it out of my own imagination .. mm</i>
	1:50	<i>Did you, did you share this with the people in your Meeting? Yeah. Yes. Yes. And, and did they all listen to the drumbeat as well and did it work out, then? Things have been much easier since, yes. mm</i>
24	0:00	<i>So, yeah, the.., the.. So, although I may have images in the Light meeting, I, I, I, I now .. [sigh] I get them more often now because I now accept them Right. I mean, there was a time, and they say that most people do this, that if they gave, I can't remember what, that if they gave, what's the word they use, now, there's a term.</i>
	0:29	<i>Anyway, because we use language all the time mm people don't see things. And it's partly because they don't .. recognise that they're having image that they're yes and that in fact it's a part, an important of our lives mm that you start to – acknowledge is the word that I wanted - you know, if you acknowledge them, then they will come more often, that is certainly true mm</i>
25	0:00	<i>Yes, images can be unpleasant of course, that's why I tended to, and lots of people tend to push them away. mm</i>
	0:10	<i>Can I turn now to the group itself. Um, you, you go, but your wife doesn't? mm Is that because you were invited and she wasn't?</i>
26	0:05	<i>No, no, no, um, .. I, I, I can't answer for her, obviously, as to why she doesn't, she's just coming in as you say She's gone upstairs upstairs, has she? I think – the ceiling, yes. Oh, right, yes. Um, no, she doesn't, it's not to do with whether she's invited or not. Her inclinations don't lie there, let's put it that way. mm</i>
	0:40	<i>And so how do people join, then, [i13's name]? In my experience, because they've known someone else in the group. Right. Yeah. And is there discussion in the group before a new person's invited to join? Because you've been long enough now that presumably people have joined. They have, yes. It's, um, so far I've not been aware of any dis.., prior discussion. Right. So you give, you give But that doesn't mean that it may not have happened, because the others are much closer together in Yeah [name of city], [name of another town], there may have been some, or, more likely, the person that's joining has already known to follow them</i>
	1:26	<i>Right, so it isn't the case that you give each other permission to invite anybody you like along, it's just somebody I suspect that, um, in my case, I know [name of first Friend] asked [name of second Friend] while he was, er, seemed happy for that She may also have asked other people? That's right, yes mm This Scottish lass that's joined us, if she were interested, I would certainly ask the group, because I don't know her either, at the moment mm she's new to us mm but, um.</i>
	2:00	<i>How many people have joined since you joined? .. Try to think when I joined the group. .. Two. Two. mm I mean, it's not a big group. Um, half a dozen at the most. mm [name of third Friend]'s husband who attends occasionally, but, um, we've had others from outside attend occasionally others that were known to the, to members of the group mm who were interested or involved</i>

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	2:40	<i>We had, um, we did have a third one, on our last doings, a year at [name of place] and she was keenly interested and she joined us for a short while. mm Yeah.</i>
	2:56	<i>And do you use, er, the tapes, or? Well, yes, just a meditation tape. Like this last week, there's one with just bells on yeah at intervals, so we used that. mm</i>
	3:12	<i>So, if you're using the tape, is there, is there no leader as such? No, there, even the one with the bells has just a little introduction to relax and prepare yourself and And is that one Diana's done? Yes. So it's Diana's voice on the tape. Yes. All that I have are Diana's, yes. Because some of the early ones and then, I think it's tape 5, which is based on Klaus Huber's work, are a man's voice, which I, I assume it's Rex. mm. We have those as well. I have one of Rex's, yes. I think there's one of his earlier, no, I have two of Rex's, sorry.. Yeah, I think one of his is just his initial talk. mm</i>
	3:59	<i>And what goes well in the group, and what goes not so well?</i>
27	0:00	<i>In terms of the tape, you mean. In terms of the whole Experiment that you do together. .. [sigh] It's very difficult to answer that. I think if there's any sense of it being well or not well, it's usually within oneself rather than in the group mm. mm hm. ...which is true of Meeting for Worship as well mm, hm</i>
	0:31	<i>um, so, I, I'm not quite certain about that. So what actually happens in your group? You know, in terms of coming together, settling down, having the tape Yes, yeah, well all that stuff well, there's about half an hour of relaxing together, cup of coffee, or whatever Right And generally us all catching up on things. And then we have the meditation mm hm and the, um .. then the quiet time mm hm after the meditation and the gathering, sharing if you wish mm hm we have lunch together mm hm and then there's another</i>
	1:11	<i>I think we do the sharing after lunch, more often than not mm hm try to have the meditation, a quiet period, then lunch, then the sharing after lunch</i>
	1:21	<i>And does that tend to be, sort of like, one person speaking out of the silence as happens in Meeting for Worship or worship sharing in the sharing, yes Or is it a conversation? The sharing is an opening up, of the Ex., if you wish, of what you've experienced in the, during the mediation mm hm .. it's not, er, intended to be a discussion, um .. if other people speak, or, or responding to you opening up, it is only in the positive sense of.. trying to bring forward what the experience is, or, yeah, that's what it is really, helping you forward in the experience, or perhaps helping you to see, um, perhaps another aspect of the experience mm hm</i>
	2:27	<i>So there shouldn't be any discussion at all mm hm. Well, if you're doing the sharing after lunch, how does that work, if you, sort of, if your wife's, for example, not part of the group, does she join you for lunch No, [wife's name] is out most of the day, if she's visiting Right. so, it's So you do the lunch? In fact she met them last week for the first time mm Well, it's a bring and share lunch Oh, right Well, people bring their own sandwiches, we only provide liquid refreshment. Right, I understand. Um, you know, if you've got a specialism and you want to show off, then you find that, but, no, you provide the tea, provide the fruit if you wish or whatever</i>
	3:07	<i>It's a good idea, yes, deals with difficult people like me [laughs] I'm a vegetarian Yes, so we, we, um. And you said there are six in the group and how does that, at most, how does that break down between men and women? What's the gender balance? Three and three. Oh, right. Yes, well we try. I</i>

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		<i>can be definite about it being six .. um .. if [name of third Friend's husband]'s there, it's seven, you see. Um. This last week .. it was three men and two women .. so we're talking You're more or less equally balanced then. Mm. So, if [name of third Friend's husband] were there, it would be three, plus four men, three women plus four men maximum Often, the, the, third, a woman, how long she's going to be with us I don't know, she di.., she didn't appear this time, and she's only been with us this year, so whether that's going to continue I'm not certain. mm</i>
28	0:00	<i>And what about the age-range, [i13's name]? .. I don't know what ages are, I mean, [laughs] [laughs] Well, 20s? No, there's no one that age, we're all sort of, um, .. very near or retired, one or two are retired I would have said. I don't know how old [name of second Friend] is, I don't know whether he's older than he looks, he has a slightly youthful appearance, um, and [i10's name], I think is probably in his eighties mm</i>
	0:35	<i>.. And how often do you meet? Er, normally once a month, but, um, it doesn't always work out. It didn't work out, this year we didn't have one in August. But we try to make it once a month. If you say, like monthly meeting, perhaps ten times a year. Not that any of us are able to attend every one of them No, sure. There being a scattered crew.</i>
	1:08	<i>And you meet in each others' homes, as you Yes, in turn You take it in turns. Um, is there anything else about the mechanics and the domestics of the group that I haven't asked you about? .. No.</i>
	1:20	<i>Do you always do the meditation on the individual or do you do the meditation on the group and the world as well? Yes, we, er, the [sigh], there's been no .. prescription, so it's just, it depends on the individuals, yes, each of us at the given time have focused beyond ourselves</i>
	1:45	<i>There are, there are three actual meditations .. most of the versions of the meditation are on the individual that's right but Rex has done, there's a tape of the meditation on the group and there's another tape of the meditation on the world. Oh, I've not heard those then. No, so you always do the meditation on the individual. Yes, but within that it has broadened out. Sure, sure. The focus of them – I must listen to them again, because it's a long time since I've listened to them I'm not aware of these others then ok</i>
	2:15	<i>Um. So you don't do the Experiment on your own, at all, you don't use the tape on your own? .. No, I spend a lot of time in quiet mm so it's the equivalent of, and imagery does tend to come, so mm Do you, do you notice any, any difference between when you're on your own and when you do the Experiment in the group? Does the other people add any dimension to it? Apart, obviously, from the sharing. But the silent part of it.</i>
	2:54	<i>Its, I think it's the sheer fact of the discipline .. mm adds the extra dimension mm hm I mean, I don't discipline myself to do it, at, er, at any particular time or any particular place. It's like Meeting for Worship, a certain discipline, .. mm in the actual gathering, but .. um, I s'pose it must help you to focus in some ways</i>
	3:21	<i>Do you notice any commonality in what people share? In other words, do, do things emerge in the sharing, or do similar things come up for different people in the same Experiment? There have done, yes. Always? No, a, a, I mean [sigh] if you look for threads you can find them mm This is one of the difficulties answering a question like that. Um .. occasionally very specific commonalities. Um, sometimes it's in a broader sense .. Things are</i>

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		<i>transferable, if you like, across the experiences ..</i>
29	0:00	<i>I, I, I, I wouldn't like to say how mm often specific .. commonalities occurred</i>
	0:08	<i>What do you mean by things are transferable across experiences? Yeah, what I was saying, you can find threads ok that are in common yeah ..</i>
	0:20	<i>Would you describe .. the experience as .. er, religious or spiritual? .. In so far as I would describe Meeting for Worship religious or spiritual, yes. Religious is a word I don't No, Quakers don't like it accept [laughs] subscribe to. Um .. religion tends to me to sound like a construct yeah, yeah rather than that's why I said spiritual that's right, yes [laughs] yes, um, yes, spiritual mm</i>
	1:12	<i>So it goes beyond the psychological? .. [laughs] Now, how do you discern that? I don't think there's, in a sense that you, that your psyche or psychological aspect to well-being is separable from the spiritual in any sense at all. I mean, as we feel that we ourselves, that we separate ourselves from the spiritual, yes, but in the strictest sense, we're not separate from it, so our psyche's not. mm mm</i>
	1:45	<i>So I don't know where you can mm whether you can split the two mm in that sense, even in our profoundest moments, the psyche's involved .. mm</i>
30	0:00	<i>How important to you, or to your practice, or your Experimenting with the Light rather than your practice of the Light, if you like, is the link with early Friends?</i>
	0:11	<i>How far is it? How important is that to you? .. If it was one of these, um, things that came through the door asking with a checklist the important, very important, important, it would be towards the less important. I suppose that's the best way of putting it.</i>
	0:38	<i>Um, when the question's arised, I'm aware of it .. and .. if it was as widespread amongst early Friends as we're led to believe, then mm we have lost an awful lot mm so, if I feel any connection, I feel it in the sense that they would feel sorrowful for us mm so in their sorrow, if you like mm ..</i>
31	0:00	<i>I have this peculiar .. it's p'raps not so peculiar, feeling of now is the moment mm and though I don't live my life like that, I'm very much of this idea that we should live in the now. Now is the moment. mm Then, something that's outside time. I feel we're interconnected across past, present and future, it's all connected in the present moment, so, in that sense, yes.</i>
	0:33	<i>But I don't .. it's not a concern, it's not a worry, or anything like that. mm The worry and the concern is that we are .. falling short at this present time mm You mean we Quakers? People generally, Quakers .. in particular, probably</i>
	1:03	<i>Falling short in the sense of..? .. Going back to your previous question .. about connectedness with all the Quakers in the past. mm The way I described it there, their sorrow for us, they would perceive us as falling short .. of their experience mm hm .. I've a feeling that .. perhaps we're too intellectual about it mm hm at present. Think that they lived much more on .. their feelings in their Quakerism .. no, feelings is the wrong word .. on their spiritual awareness .. if you like, of the Light within mm and I think that's where we fall short.</i>
32	0:00	<i>In other words, we shouldn't be experimenting on a monthly basis, you know. You asked me on that, my daily or other meditation .. I don't know .. We excuse ourselves that we have busy lives, whether it is a valid excuse or not, I don't know. ..</i>
33	0:00	<i>Um, what about it being a stepped process? As opposed to .. um, Meeting for</i>

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		Worship? I mean, I know you used the word 'ritual' around it and I understand exactly what you mean by that, but, er, Meeting for Worship is sitting waiting, but Experiment with Light has different steps that you go through, doesn't it.
	0:19	<i>In the sense that you bring, consciously bring, if you like, a concern. mm, hm. to your Light meeting, or it may arise during the Light meeting .. I'm not certain that isn't part of a conditioning process .. Which is part of a conditioning process? When you sit in your Light meeting yeah your focus almost automatically comes towards a concern mm of some kind, whether it be personal or external, internal or external .. And I suppose likewise going into Meeting for Worship, there's a conditioning in a sense mm the way we enter there and .. but perhaps that's a different sort mm conditioned in a different way mm</i>
	1:15	<i>.. [draws breath] Occasionally I have used the processes of the Light meeting in Meeting for Worship right and occasionally the other way mm mm .. Like many Friends, whether it's a majority or a minority, I've no idea, centring down, it's called centring down for worship, is a .. a gargantuan task. And there are the rare occasions .. er .. reasonably successful, when it is maybe successful mm as an individual, that's me, as an individual mm</i>
	2:07	<i>And I hear others say the same mm but it is trying to wait patiently in the Light and trying to make yourself listen ..</i>
34	0:00	<i>I, I've done the very thing I said I wasn't going to do at the beginning, I said I know what you mean by the 'ritual' surrounding Meeting for Worship, I may, I may have a different [laughs] understanding from yours, I should, I should actually ask you what you mean by the rituals surrounding Meeting for Worship</i>
	0:13	<i>The proc., the literal processes of going into the Meeting House, physical process of going into the Meeting House, um, the way the processes of being welcomed, um, the processes of, um, the fir., ideally the first person in, sitting mm in quiet, meeting formally has started, Meeting for Worship has started, the ritual of closing meeting, um, .. the ritual of welcoming people, the ritual of notices mm</i>
	0:54	<i>.. um, they're necessary steps mm but it is a ritual mm and if it, if it goes out of synch there's going to be somebody in the group that's going to notice it, isn't there That is what I thought you meant, actually, [i13's name], yes yeah, that's right, yes [laughs]</i>
35	0:00	<i>Um, is there anything else that I haven't asked you that you think would be .. useful or relevant to .. what I might be writing? Or finding out about Light, Experiment with Light?</i>
	0:18	<i>It would be interesting .. to know .. what Friends, other Friends do think, really think about it, that have asked about it, mm that have perhaps tasted it .. um, one of the qu., things that are said to me sometimes is that, there are so many subgroups mm within the Society of Friends, although they haven't used that terminology mm I've used that, um, they question what is the Universalist Group? Um, mm New Foundation Group mm um, then you get the politi., more politically biased groups mm isn't there like a Quaker Socialist group? mm, hm um, and so on and now you've got this Light group and there, there are others that I just can't call to mind and they, they question me about this, why should we be asunder?</i>
	1:21	<i>Now .. when they ask me that I find it very difficult to .. other than say, yeah, people are interested, that's their particular interest, so it becomes a Quaker,</i>

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		<i>whatever it might be. ..</i>
	1:40	<i>If .. what Rex is having to say about us being, not us, but about the Experiment with Light seeking to under.., to find, to know early Friends' experience, then .. and I know it's gone round the world, or part way round the world now, [sigh] .. If it is of real value, why is it not, perhaps, speaking to other Friends? And what do those that have sampled it .. think that of somebody and not continue. I've heard little bits from the group that have been in touch with others, where people have been frightened off by the psychological aspects</i>
	2:30	<i>mm hm facing up to things mm hm I can understand that [sigh]but it does require a supportive Meeting, a supportive group and a supportive Meeting, and that's what we're hearing that early Friends.. politically there were also supportive in their, in their period anyway, they had to be. Um, they didn't isolate themselves, they were isolated by the um .. time, er, the time, at the time of the political situation and the religious situation, although it was a time of great unrest, I know. ..</i>
36	0:00	<i>Have you picked any of that up, [i13's name]? Why people might not come back and continue with the Experiment and why they might not like it?</i>
	0:07	<i>Yes, from [name of Meeting] people were quite saying, er, simply saying 'it's not my scene' yeah .. um, for those that are being, particularly if they have some .. er, mental health problem mm or if they have any psychological, really deep mm psychological mm hm problem mm and they're not ready to face up to them or whatever, then they've said 'that's not for me' and</i>
	0:29	<i>.. you know, we know of them in most Meetings mm that people have those sort of difficulties, their difficulties 'it's not for me'. Someone said, well, .. in effect was saying, .. these things are sorted out for me in my everyday .. life mm</i>
	0:58	<i>the work I do. The person who was saying that was a .. a caterer, with a roadside, I think he and his wife do it, and they're very good, they're very good outreach, I can tell you, it's one of the best, mm because I've been and they do whatever's inside, then they let out mm and they listen to what mm and sometimes what a lorry driver sometimes mm are saying things mm in no uncertain terms</i>
	1:26	<i>So I can understand from their point of view mm they perhaps are, they are living mm outwardly in a very great way mm It might be an idea for all Quakers to do that [laughs] [laughs] mm</i>
37		<i>[i13's name], thank you very much, that's absolutely wonderful, that's been very, very helpful. And if anything else occurs to you afterwards, you know, that you haven't said today, could you get in touch with me? Yes And similarly, if I think of anything else to ask you, can I come back Please. You can, yes.</i>
		<i>Are you on e-mail? No Or is it just a word-processor? Just a word-processor. Well, it's a computer, but I'm not on e-mail. Right. It's just very handy if I'm sat there, just a sentence or two. Yes. But there's still snail mail. Still snail mail, yes, that's right. There's the 'phone as well. No, that's great. Thank you. Pleasure.</i>
		<i>Would you like another drink? Yes, I'd love one. Cup of tea? Yes please. And I'll pop to the bathroom as well.</i>
		<i>(ends)</i>

APPENDIX D3: Context of participant observations

Group A met on a weekday evening twice a month (or occasionally three times when the month included a fifth instance of that weekday) at Meeting A's Meeting House, in the Meeting Room where MfW was held on a Sunday.

The room was light and airy, with windows on three sides. In winter, the overhead lights were used, but in summer the room was light enough not to need artificial light as well. In spring and autumn the evening began without electric light, but at some stage, when it became necessary (usually after the meditation), someone would turn the electric lights on.

There was a mixture of seating available: benches, upright chairs of different sorts and armchairs. The room was re-arranged for each Light group meeting, so that a small circle of chairs was ready for Friends' arrival (whoever arrived first or the designated host might arrange them; the group just got on with whatever was necessary).

Friends arranged the chairs in accordance with their expectation of who was likely to attend – often they had e-mailed, spoken to each other by telephone or in some cases texted their apologies by mobile 'phone. Initially the group all used armchairs, but as the Experiments continued over time, a2 and a4 tried upright chairs, and then lay on mats on the floor.

The circle was maintained for the meditation (including the mats), but a2 and a4 sat in chairs at the beginning and for the sharing. Friends sat in different places in the circle each time and the circle size and location would vary to some extent, although it was usually in the same part of the Meeting Room, where there was most natural light. Sometimes there had been a letting during the day so that the furniture had been in a different configuration when the Light group arrived.

The evening would begin as the group's members (and I) arrived. The designated host (a volunteer from the previous meeting) or the first arrivals would gather the tea- and coffee-making ingredients and the kettle from the Meeting House kitchen and take it into the Meeting Room on a tray. (The Meeting House was let to another [non-Quaker] group on the evening the Light group met, and the other group used the kitchen, as well as another meeting room.) The designated host would also arrange the tape-player and would have chosen the version of the meditation to be used on the particular evening.

As the group decided that all who were likely to attend that evening had arrived, they settled into the chairs and I sat in an armchair away from the group, outside their circle, but within sight and earshot. As they settled, I placed the minidisc in a convenient spot, either on the floor under one of the chairs or on an adjacent table, and returned to my chair outside their circle. Some Friends (particularly a4) might remove their shoes or otherwise make themselves comfortable.

The host would either begin a discussion about a matter relating to the Light group or invite the others to say what they had been doing that day. After the matter was dealt with or when all had spoken, the host turned the tape player on and the 40-minute meditation began.

APPENDIX D3: Context of participant observations

At the end of the meditation, Friends would sit still, get up and go out of the room, walk around the room and look out of the windows, sit at a table and write or draw, or sit in their chairs and write or draw. Mostly they did not speak to each other during this time, although a6 was in the habit of uttering comments. Sometimes one Friend would return and another go out. After a while, one of them would turn the kettle on and either make drinks for the others or make their own drink and let the others help themselves later.

As they finished writing and all returned, they would gather again and begin to share if they felt so moved. Sometimes a Friend would speak a second time, if another Friend's sharing prompted them to do so. After all had had a chance to share, the group might discuss something relevant to its meeting. Finally, the host would invite the others to volunteer to host the next time they met. Hosting duties were not onerous and consisted only in ensuring there was milk for drinks, and that the drink-making equipment was in the Meeting Room, and in choosing the version of the meditation.

Appendix D4 is a transcript of a typical Group A meeting.

APPENDIX D4: Record of one Group A participant observation

V	X	Y	Z	Legend V: time (on the clock in the room) X: track number on minidisc [65 tracks of 2 minutes each; total recording duration 130 minutes] Y: time reading on track Z: person speaking [a1, a2, a3, a7, all, R=researcher] – only noted when speaker changes [Clerk]: name of Clerk of Meeting A and of MM Elders [Warden]: name of Warden of Meeting A [other]: name or thing – details anonymised so that less risk of identification of Meeting, group or person .. pause/hesitation/silence/may represent speaker saying 'yes' or 'um' (etc., etc.) xx... the end of the word is not actually spoken text omitted because not heard or only much hesitation which does not add to the transcription
				Notes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This appendix has been compiled from handwritten notes on the evening and transcription of minidisc recording; • names of members of the group are replaced in the text with their code: a1, a2, etc; • a5 & a8 were Elders of the MM, but worshipped at Meetings in the MM other than Meeting A; • present on the evening of the p.o. were a1, a2, a3 and a7; • during the meditation itself, a2 lay on a mat on the floor (but within the circle); the others remained in their armchairs in the circle; • (text in brackets records non-speech sounds); • <i>researcher's notes in italics (what members of Group A are doing) [personal reflection] – silence. [Names of people included in the reflection who were not otherwise mentioned are replaced with series of letters: Zzzz, etc];</i> • guided meditation words in quotation marks: 'This is the Experiment with Light'.
	1	0:00		(muffled sound)
		0:19	a3 lying and then me standing and then me sitting
			R	(laughs)
			a3 stand here
		0:50	R	I think a1's coming as well
			 turn that off
		1:06	a3	well we'll call it a day at that

APPENDIX D4: Record of one Group A participant observation

		a2	yeah we'll see what
		a3	see what happens
			I can't remember whether I said I'd lead it this time
	1:19		I think I did
			(various sounds off)
2			(sound of click ticking)
	1:09		(someone comes into room – sound of footsteps and rustling clothes – more footsteps)
3	0:00		(sound of click ticking and traffic outside)
	1:00		(sound of footsteps and glasses clinking)
	1:45	R	are you alright, a7?
		a7	got no coffee or tea, it's completely disappeared
		R	oh
		a7	I think [Warden] has hidden it all
		R	there wasn't any tea last time, actually
4	0:00	a7	I think we've got .. the [name of group] people have been in all week for [word] exams, so possibly she's just tucked it away somewhere so that they don't just help themselves all day, you know it was all there on Sunday, we had a great big so I brought water instead
	0:28	R	(laughs)
	0:39		(footsteps)
	1:26	R	how're you doing, a3?
		a3	not too bad .. rubbing along
		R	heard any more about the operation?
		a3	don't ask – too painful a subject
	1:39		it's like wading through treacle, getting free of the machi.. machinations of the [name of organisation]
		R	and you're somebody who knows how it works
	1:52	a3	doesn't help (laughs), well I suppose it helps a bit, but not had any luck so far
5			(footsteps)
	0:24		there're only three of us here, mind you, it's ..
		R	well, I spoke to a1 earlier and she said she was coming

APPENDIX D4: Record of one Group A participant observation

			a3	oh, right
				(footsteps)
			R	a7 was saying a6's away because he's had a [name of body part] operation
				<i>I'm telling a2 & a3 that a1 will be here & a6 won't & about cat</i>
			a2	oh, right
			a3	(laughs)
			a2	muddy in the garden, there's all this mud on them
		0:57		in fact you can see where the cat's had a go at it there, [male name], the other [male name], not a6
			a3	no, I don't, no he's not a cat, is he
		1:15	a2	(laughs)
			a3	(laughs)
			R	your cat's called [male name]?
			a2	yeah, well there's a story attached to it, in't there, because we, we adopted a dog from a rescue home and she'd already been called [girl's name] by then, and we've a niece called [girl's name], so we decided we'd better, when we got the cat, we'd better call the cat after her brother, [male name].
			R	(laughs)
			a2	(laughs)
		1:42		because we didn't want him to feel left out
				(laughs)
				and when, when, when he first arrived, we weren't sure what sex he was, were we, so we thought, well [male name]-y, would do for either anyway, so
			R	(laughs)
			a2	(laughs)
			a3	hmm
	6	0:01		yeah .. could have called him 'flea-bitten' or something like that
			a2	in practice
			a3	covered in fleas
		0:15		arrived off the street at two o'clock in the morning
			R	mm, hmm

APPENDIX D4: Record of one Group A participant observation

		a3	just wandered in
	0:30		(sound of footsteps and rustling)
		a3	we've an over-ambitious layout of chairs
		a7	yeah
		a2	(laughs)
		a2	so is a4 not going to be here, then?
	0:40	a7	I'm not sure, I don't know, not seen him
		a2	and, um
		a7	a1 was aiming to be here, I think
	0:50	a2	I don't know about a5
		a7	lost track of, I know she was going away for three or four weeks, not quite sure
		a3	not sure where we're up to
			ah, ha
7:26			<i>(a1 arrives)</i>
		a7	hello
		R	hi
		a1	not started then
		a2	no, no, none of us have
	1:13		are you on e-mail, a7?
		a7	I am, yes, I am now, yes
		a2	right, I thought it might be useful sometimes. It's not in the book, I don't think
		a7	no, I've only just got it sorted
		a2	right
	1:24	a1	keeps it a deep, dark secret, a7, don't you
		a7	(laughs)
		a1	a5's not coming, because she's away, but she has been in touch
			<i>a5 away, but been in touch</i>
		a2	mm
		a1	and so she does want to come – um – she didn't indicate when she'd next be available

APPENDIX D4: Record of one Group A participant observation

			a2	a8's got her granddaughter staying
			a1	a4 said he would be coming
	7	0:00		well, I haven't heard that he isn't, but you never know with him, his work
			a2	no.
			a7	And a6?
			a1	he's
			a7	of course, he's having his operation
			a1	yeah
			a7	a [name of body part] operation, so ..
		0:20		he's had cards and things, but not heard directly from him
			a1	has somebody brought some tapes?
			a2	yeah
			a1	oh, good
			a2	what we haven't got is any, um, tea or coffee
			a7	no
			a1	why's that
			a7	well
			a1	oh no
			a7	(laughs) I don't know whether – it was all there on Sunday. Nothing's in the cupboard, no tea or coffee or anything. My only surmise is we've got [name of group] in all week, so whether [Warden] has kind of hidden them, so that they don't just help themselves to coffee on line, sort of thing
			a1	oh
			a7	but I've looked in any secret hiding places I know of, so we've got a jug of water
			a1	oh, what a blow
			a2	have we got the jug of water up here
			a7	yes, I've put it on the, the, um, bench, actually
			a2	oh, yeah
		1:14	a7	no, no, we've gone through every cupboard, haven't we, a2? In desperation.
			a1	that's terrible, isn't it

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		a2	well, we've brought milk, so you can have milk if you like (laughs)
		a1	(laughs)
		a7	(laughs)
		a2	oh dear
		a1	I suppose I could whiz down to the [shop] and buy something, it's a bit
		a2	I wondered about that, but I wondered if that was a bit
		a1	it's a bit extreme, isn't it
		a2	yeah
	1:37	a3	we're not that desperate, are we
		a7	because there was definitely loads there on Sunday, there was a great big tub of coffee
		a1	yeah
	1:52	a2	I was speaking to, um, [Clerk]
		a1	mm
		a2	er, actually about Quaker Quest, but Light group came up
8			um, and she seemed to feel that she hadn't had any feedback, although a8 has been to Elders
		a1	I know, she's written to me, [Clerk] has
			I think that a4 has the letter now, because it was a letter, a letter about the Light group and I shared it with him and, and he felt quite cross about it
	0:32		I felt uncomfortable about it, and he said that he wanted to talk about it at the next Light group
		a2	oh, right
		a1	well, particularly if a8 was here
		a2	yeah
			because [Clerk]'s account is very different from what a8 said
	0:55	a2	and no minute was made, apparently
		a1	but I (sigh) now you've raised it
	1:05		I do feel a little bit concerned about [Clerk]'s concern
			because I, I have been unable to engage her in a discussion about it
			but I, she keeps saying to me that there's concern in Elders
			and that, um, a lot of concern that we had booked, well she said that to you apparently

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			a7	yes
			a1	that we'd booked over the whole year, um, and although she, she knows from a8, she must know from a8, and she knows from me, too, um, that [a2/a3/a8's Meeting] offered a venue
				it's like, there's a big misunderstanding .. and sort of view in Elders
				that I can't work out whether it's [Clerk]'s view,
9	0:00			or somebody else, she keeps saying 'discussion in Elders is confidential, I can't say any more'
				but I sense that [Clerk] herself is very concerned, without wanting to pursue that
				and, and that there seems, you know, she seems to indicate that Elders thought this group would come to an end and I don't think that that was ever
			a7	mm
			a1	said, so I'm sorry a8 isn't here really
			a2	mm
			a1	um
		0:36	a2	well, I just said to, I've said, I've told [Clerk] that you'd, that you'd written a piece for the [name of MM publication] but unfortunately it hadn't, you know, been in time for the latest one
			a1	yeah, although looking at the [name of MM publication], he asked [name of another person in Meeting A] for an article about prayer group and me for one or somebody, and she (<i>indicates a7</i>) volunteered me for the Light group
				and (laughs), and neither of them, well the prayer group one didn't get in and [name of the other person in Meeting A] had written that well before I'd written mine, so
			a2	it does sound like we could do with another issue of the [name of MM publication] quite soon then, for those two things, doesn't it
		1:15		well, I don't, I hope I didn't speak out of turn, but I said I, I didn't think you'd mind if [Clerk] saw the thing that you'd written
			a1	oh, no, I, I, I'd be very happy to send it to her
			a2	yeah
			a1	yeah, yeah, yes
			a2	and we've all agreed that, you know, that that's um
			a1	well, I was going to ask if you were happy that I put all our names at the end because, because, I mean, that means that everybody's names are there, but

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				because it's 'your' Light group, she says to me, and, and it's not 'my' Light group, I feel that she's not saying 'your' Light group, she's saying 'your' Light group, and I don't know whether you get that same
		1:56	a7	I've got negative, negative vibes, um
	10			and, again, I don't know how much is as Elders and how much this is [Clerk]'s understanding of it, I don't know,
				because there's also an issue of, um, what's it called, Hearts and Minds, that just hasn't managed to get done for various reasons and there's always been this thing, 'oh because of the Light group, we haven't done it'
				and yet it's never ever been that at all, we've made it very, very clear
				I mean, most of the people who are in Meeting A who are involved in the Light group have put their names forward for Hearts and Minds, saying, we know it's a demand of time, but if need be, we'd even juggle round dates, we've made it very clear that we, we wouldn't, er, we weren't blocking it all
		0:43		I'm concerned about it a bit, because I talk with her a lot about things, but there seems to be something
				I mean, again, I've said in private conversations with her that
		0:52		why this is kind of a group as it is, but all of us are open to talk with other people about it
			a1	and want to
			a7	we want another Light group if possible
			a1	we want to share it
			a7	if there are other people in the Meeting, in the Monthly Meeting, who want to Experiment like us, this is, we're not saying no to that at all, we want to enable people to do it really
			a1	yeah, well she knows about the offer from [name of a2/a3/a8's Meeting]
			a7	mm
		1:18	a1	and I feel if she's so confused as Clerk of Elders, that's really serious
				and I feel, I suppose I feel disappointed because I'd hoped from the discussion
				when I went, albeit fifteen months ago, they'd understood
			a2	mm
			a1	and we said we'd wanted to come back and then when I asked for us to come back, [Clerk] put us off and then said 'and you've never reported back.' So she didn't say, well, could you report it in writing. She just said, 'Oh, no, we haven't got time for it, we've got to discuss, and then we've got to discuss all these groups that are going on,' as though there were a lot of sinister groups going on, that somehow Elders ought to be able to pull together. Well, this is my interpretation, because that's how I felt, a bit.

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	11	0:00		And, um, as I say, a4 read the letter and then he went off on one and I had to calm him down (laughs)
				(general laughter)
			a3	what letter was that?
			a1	well, a letter that [Clerk] had sent to me about, er, the Light group. I thought well I'll have I had it?
		0:20		I must have had it, wait a minute, we've had three weeks since the last Light group, haven't we, so it was after that
				and I thought, well, I'll share, share it
7:34				but I think a4 snatched it off me and said, um: 'leave this with me, I'll take it to the Light group' (laughs) - fine
		0:50	a2	oh dear. I do, I wonder if it would help to do what we did and just, if people want to at, at Meeting A, for you to talk with Meeting A about it
		1:11	a1	I think, yes
			a2	if they're feeling that there's some sort of, you know, split going on
			a1	well I think there is somebody in our Meeting who does feel excluded and doesn't really understand, don't you
			a7	mm
			a1	yeah and possibly because
			a2	but the impression I got from [Clerk] was that people who were interested when [name of a Friend] came to talk at the [ordinal number][day] talk then couldn't go to [name of place where workshop held] for some reason
			a1	mm
			a2	and then felt left out when we started
			a1	well, yes, it has to be said that you, that it needed to come but that our intention was, after we'd been going some time to come back and
			a2	yeah
			a1	share our experiences, which is what we've tried to do
		1:54		but we tried to do it through Elders
			a2	yeah
	12		a1	and [Clerk] did say to me: 'Well you're not an Elders group, you know' but
			a2	no, we didn't think we were, did we
			a1	no, we just thought it would be helpful for Elders to understand what we were doing and that's what they seemed to do when I went and
		0:16		and that's how a5 came because she, she wrote to me and said we did absolutely the right thing. By the way, I'd really

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				like to come. And she got on a course at Woodbrooke before we got together
			a2	mm, mm
		0:35	a1	so, it's puzzling, isn't it
			a2	mm
			a7	mm
			a2	I was wondering whether we should, whether it's, we want to go ahead and arrange something at [name of a2/a3/a8's Meeting], though, um
			a1	you mean some sort of event
			a2	an event to invite people from Monthly Meeting to explain about what it is
		0:57	a1	well, given that we can't get a thing at [name of another Meeting in the MM], can we, or can we?
			a2	well
			a1	is that what you meant? or
			a2	yeah, well, you know [name of a Friend]
			a1	yeah
			a2	well she said she'd laid down the [day] group for the time being, it wasn't very well attended
				I mean, I asked [Clerk] while we were talking about it, whether she thought it appropriate to have an extra one and she thought not particularly
				so I thought, well, perhaps we should just invite everybody who wants to come to [name of a2/a3/a8's Meeting], you know, to hear about it, and decide whether they want to join one
		1:40		but I think they should have opportunity to read this piece first
			a1	yeah, yeah, I mean I'm happy to circulate it, I could, I dunno, on behalf of this group I could send it out to PMs with, with an invitation to a
			a2	yeah
			a1	how does that
			a7	yeah
			a1	does that seem like a good idea?
	13	0:02	a3	well we got quite a positive reaction from other Friends at [name of a2/a3/a8's Meeting] when we explained what was going on
				and, I can remember, a couple of people said, 'Well, that's nothing to worry about, then, isn't it' or something, you

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				know
			a1	mm
			a3	as if their fears were put at risk
			a1	yeah
			a3	at rest
			a2	and a lot of, there was this, what you'd expect really, which is, quite a few people would sort of quite like to do it, but not sure if they've actually got the time, which is
			a1	yeah
			a2	you know, or if that's what they feel they can devote their time to
				well, we said, I mean, you could decide to meet once a month if a new Light group started
			a1	yeah and you can meet in the day, if you're retired
			a2	yeah
			a1	you can, and you could meet in people's houses, it's just ...
			a2	yeah
			a1	convenient, I suppose,
			a2	mm
		0:47	a1	but it's interesting, I've met [name of a Friend] at, I've just been to QPSW conference
			a2	right
			a1	and [name of Friend] is from [name of a Meeting outside the MM]
			a2	right
			a1	and you know they've set up a group there
			a2	yeah
			a1	which quickly became two groups
			a2	right
			a1	and I saw her this weekend, and said 'How's the Light group going'
		1:05		and she said: 'well actually we've laid it down'
			a2	oh
			a1	she said it was causing a division in the Meeting, not – we didn't feel it was - but the Meeting, some of the Meeting did
				and then she said, 'But actually, to tell you the truth, there were tensions in the Meeting anyway' and, um

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			a2	Right. Yes.
			a1	She said: 'We've thought about re-establishing ourselves in meeting in somebody's home and thought that may just inflame the situation.'
			a2	mm, yeah
			a1	but they obviously miss it
				and that to me just seems terrible, really
			a2	yeah
			a1	really, so sad
		1:40	a2	I think, I think, that really hit the nail on the head, if there's tensions anyway
			a1	yeah
			a2	and it's p'raps becomes, it could become a scapegoat
			a1	yeah
			a2	yeah
			a1	so that's very disappointing, really
	14		a3	well, because it's secret, you can have all these wild imaginings, but, about what goes on, can't you, and all your fears or disgruntlements about anything to do with Friends just get
			a1	yeah
			a3	can get focused on this thing that's secret, these people that are plotting to overthrow the
			a1	(laughs)
			a2	(laughs)
			a1	well, I suppose, because, I mean, it's very difficult to talk about what happens, because it's so personal, isn't it
			a2	yeah
			a1	and so you just sort of say well it's really good and been really helpful and
			a2	yeah
			a1	and grin and, and
			a2	(laughs)
			a1	they misinterpret that - or like, you know
		0:35	a7	it's a sort of thing, you know, of sort of therapies going on
			a1	yeah

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		a7	all your secret divulgements or
		a1	mm
		a7	you know, it's really got
		a1	so, well, if you're planning something at [name of a2/a3/a8's Meeting]
		a2	mm
		a1	do you want to say what you have in mind, or what?
	0:53	a2	we thought you (to a3)
		a1	yeah
			and a4 might do it, didn't we
		a1	what you gonna do?
		a3	well, we're gonna invite people, given that they, people, they, people will have read your piece in the ..
		a1	yeah
		a3	thingy, um
		a1	or if I just circulate it
		a3	we were gonna say that, that this Light group would facilitate the formation of another Light group, as there had seemed to be a demand
		a1	yes
		a3	and say we would
		a1	yeah
		a3	we would, um, two peop..., one or two people from this Light group would help to facilitate that by starting the group off, if that's what they felt they wanted us to do .. and, and so that's what we felt we'd do, but bas.. it could be based in [name of a2/a3/a8's Meeting] because we're, you know, we could offer the, you know ..
		a1	mm
		a3	it seemed a good idea to have a base, then people had a focus on what they
		a1	mm
		a3	what they were going and what they were doing
			so that was it, really
	1:52	a2	and presumably the idea is to invite people to, sort of, hear about it

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		a3	yeah
		a2	possibly experience it and then decide whether they want to set up a group themselves
		a3	yeah
	15	a2	or even two groups, if they want
7:43		a3	we can ask people to read any literature
		a2	yeah
		a1	yeah
		a2	yeah
		a3	before they come and then we could do an Experiment with the Light with them, if people were
		a1	yes
		a3	well, this is what you do, you know, now you can do it on your own and take it from
		a1	yeah
		a3	where you want to take it
		a1	yes
		a3	(coughs) but presumably people who are interested in Light groups know what, it, do they know
	0:30	a1	well, I don't know, you see, I don't know, I don't know whether they do or don't, I mean, there may
			your Meeting had a chance to understand where the whole idea, kind of starts, um
		a2	yep
			I wonder whether we should mebbe go to the other ones and do it with each Meeting or something, do the same sort of thing before having the thing at [name of a2/a3/a8's Meeting]
		a1	well, why don't, I mean, [name of a Friend] has laid down her group, but why we don't we book [name of another Meeting in the MM]
		a2	right
		a1	or somewhere, I mean [name of other Meeting in the MM] could be because it's central, I suppose, and just say we'll, we'll do a talk for anybody who's interested
	1:10	a3	well that's what we were gonna do, really, at [name of a2/a3/a8's Meeting]
		a1	oh, well, do that, right, but it's, it's, it's doing the two isn't it, it's having the talk with everybody who's interested and then

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			a3	yeah
			a1	building an actual group, isn't it
		1:20	a2	yeah, I think you may need two different, two separate meetings, don't you
			a1	yeah
			a3	well, I don't know, you, it seems to me that it would be, it would be much more to have instructive to have an Experiment with the Light rather than just talk about it
			a2	mebbe
			a1	yeah
			a2	yeah
		1:40	a7	when you think back over, we were there for a weekend, but quite a part of it was [name of Friend] leading us into Experiment with Light, wasn't it, although he gave quite a lot of background, he did, kind of, lead us through, trying it
		1:57	a2	(to a3) you need to get together with a4, really, if you two are going to do it, don't you
	16		a3	well, it doesn't, well, I mean, it's in the conceptual phase, it's not really
			a1	(laughs)
			a3	in any sort of planning phase, is it
		0:10	a2	well, I feel, I just feel it's time we did do something about it
			a1	yeah
			a3	yeah
			a2	people are feeling like this .. I mean, I don't mind doing it, I don't mind if you and I do it again, but it's just, it seemed politic, really, to have someone
			a1	have someone .. yeah
			a2	to have someone from a different
			a1	yeah
			a2	(laughs)
			a1	yeah
		0:27		and maybe that's what we should do, is to say we would talk after meeting sometime, you know, we don't have our [ordinal number][day] talk, but we could after meeting if anybody's in..
			a7	yeah
			a1	interested, we'd just do it for an hour

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				after meeting
				some time when, um, at least two of us are there
			a7	yeah
			a1	you and I and a4, and a6 if he's available
			a7	mm, yes
	0:50		a1	would you be happy with that?
			a7	mm, yeah
			a1	and what I can do, I'll send [Clerk] the paper
				I hav..., I still haven't done the, the, sort of, the revisions because waited for a4, that was one of the things
			a2	right, yeah
			a1	we did when he was round, it was only a couple of words and I could, that last paragraph, I could just say we want to share the, the experience and then put all our names at the bottom, so it's open for people, they know who they are, they can talk to them if they know them
			a2	yes
			a1	can't they
			a2	yeah, yeah, that's fine, yeah – and we'll go, we'll talk with our lot about putting a date then for a, er, um, you know, meeting for everybody
			a1	for anybody
			a2	that wants to
	1:30		a1	across the Monthly Meeting, yeah
				and if you do fix a date, then what would you do, send the paper out with, with, to all the PM Clerks with a sort of flyer about
			a2	yeah
			a1	yeah
			a2	yeah
			a7	mm
	1:50		a1	and, thinking about it, if we were thinking about, I was wondering, doing, actually having a meditation
	17			then others of us could be on hand, couldn't we, for talking about it afterwards, maybe, I don't know
			a2	I mean, we could all go, you know, as many as can go there, could go, it doesn't, maybe

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		0:16	a3	I think it would be better if the members of this Light group didn't outnumber the other people who are there
			a1	(laughing) yeah
			a2	true
			a7	true
			a1	that's right
			a7	yeah
			a2	yeah
			a3	yes, it's a fascinating sociological phenomenon this, isn't it, of
			a1	yeah
			a3	socio-political phenomenon almost
				of people being frightened, jealous
			a1	yes
			a3	whatever it is
			a7	it's a strange thing to analyse what's going on here
			a1	yes
			a7	in quite a small group
			a1	yes
			a7	you know, and, I mean, those of us who are active in this group are pretty well known in the Monthly Meeting in other settings
			a1	yes
			a7	in so many other settings, , whatever
		0:58		it's not as if, you know, we are a secret sort of people
			a1	yeah
			a7	you know, we're very much involved in the life of
			a3	do people know who, who's in this Light group, I mean, it's not really
			a1	well, our Meeting do
			a7	mm
			a1	but I don't, I mean, we sort of
			a3	our Meeting does, doesn't it, it does now

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			a2	it does now, I don't know whether they did, I don't know how interested, whether they were interested even before, particularly, so we should
7:47		1:40	a3	yes, this discussion is
			a1	we did
			a2	we did need to do it, didn't we
			a1	yeah
			a3	yeah, well I let it go, because
			a1	yeah
			a2	yeah, you're right, yeah
			a3	and, er, you know
			a1	yeah
			a3	I'll just turn the tape on and then we can relax, assuming I've got the tape in the right position
			a1	(laughs)
			a2	(laughs)
				(sound of scuffling with tape)
7:48		1:57		'This is the Experiment with Light meditation using words as close to early Friends as possible, and with fewer words than on the other tape' [5/2?]
	18	0:13		(a3 sits)
		0:20		'Be still, sit comfortable, breathe slowly several times. Relax and Be still'
				[I was thinking about Clerk and Warden's opposition to Light group earlier on]
7:50				(a2 glasses off)
				[I uncross my L leg from R]
7:52				[I need to be more relaxed when faced with food]
	20	0:19		'Wait and be receptive, turn to the Light' [4/1]
				[thesis needs to discuss the tape versions]
7:53				(all 4 v still tonight)
				[I'm doing Exp re my issues – I know I have to let this fantasy go, but I don't want to]
				[someone needs to facilitate a1's relationship with E Clerk]
				(sound of traffic outside)

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7:58				<i>[AA noises off]</i>
	22	1:40		'Let your real concerns be revealed by the Light' <i>[it is 4/1]</i>
				<i>(a3 shift up in chair)</i>
				<i>(he's more upright and relaxed than usual)</i>
				<i>[a7 asked me about my Light group and I said it may be laid down because 2 have withdrawn and 2 not committed]</i>
7:59				<i>(a1 cardigan off)</i>
				<i>[and they cancelled when I didn't go]</i>
				<i>[I feel myself sinking to my solar plexus and the pain of my mild depression melts]</i>
8:02				<i>(a3 hands forward on knees & back)</i>
				<i>[I've missed meeting 2 Sundays]</i>
8:03	25	0:26		'Be cool or keep a little distance as you focus on something which is significant for you. Let the Light show you what is really happening there. If feelings or questions arise, hold them in the Light. Wait for clarity.'
				<i>[I'm thinking about food – I need to watch this & think about emotional needs instead – but I was trying to let my ego go & now it's in the forefront. Wwww said we go forward & then plateau (or to that effect) & not to worry]</i>
				<i>I may feel better after Lancaster</i>
				<i>The stabbing/heat in my upper left palate has gone now</i>
8:07				<i>I sigh</i>
				<i>[a7 told me about a6's relationship with Xxx, whom he calls his girlfriend. They talk on 'phone very evening at 6 – she lives within the city suburbs]</i>
8:09	28	0:17		'Open yourself to what is being shown. Wait and trust the Light. Let the understanding come.'
				<i>[beginning to get dark now]</i>
8:10				<i>(a2 scratches ribs – L hand)</i>
				<i>[I should tell Zzz I feel physically awakened, but I think I should talk to Wwww about not going on holiday]</i>
				<i>The room feels v warm. My face feels hot</i>
8:11				<i>(a1 R hand up – chair makes 'crack' noise)</i>
				<i>(a2 scratch R side chin R hand & sigh)</i>
				<i>[I should tell Zzzz I've been feeling sad – maybe mildly depressed & treating it w rhodiola & rescue]</i>
8:13				<i>(a3 leans fwd – this usually signals a pain attack)</i>
8:14				<i>hands up & head in them – I think it is an attack)</i>

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				<i>(a3 hands down now</i>
				<i>R fingers tap against left & still</i>
				<i>jerks to R & back</i>
				<i>fingers tapping)</i>
8:15				<i>(a2 moves feet – legs now down)</i>
				<i>(a3 looks up slightly)</i>
	31	0:39		'Submit to, or accept, what is being shown. Welcome it. Continue to wait in the Light'
8:16				<i>(a3 forefingers tensed – curled against each other)</i>
				<i>(a2 sigh & yawn) [she brought book in from library to put under head]</i>
				<i>(a1 L hand to nose & down again)</i>
				<i>(a3 upright in chair, pushing back against back – hands on end of armrests)</i>
				<i>(a2 rocks head)</i>
				<i>(a3 moves feet v slightly)</i>
8:19				<i>[I rub my L cheekbone w left hand – sthg mvng in my body in this Exp</i>
				<i>I sigh again</i>
				<i>tension going]</i>
				<i>(a1 push back in chair & slow sigh)</i>
8:20				<i>(a7 crosses feet – R over L feet moving)</i>
	34	0:01		<i>[radiator clicks behind me]</i>
8:21		0:31		'Allow yourself to be open to new possibilities. Accept and be thankful for your experience, whatever it has been.'
				<i>[how does DL think this is near early Fs' words?]</i>
				<i>[I scratch L side head on top & rub cheekbones]</i>
8:24				<i>(a7 feet moving)</i>
				<i>(a3 feet back & head fwd then back again)</i>
				<i>[the L side of my face is hot – nearer radiator, but c/b Exp]</i>
				<i>[I can feel sthg on my L side – gentle surge of power]</i>
				<i>(a3 hands palm out to inside armrests)</i>
8:26				<i>[I shift back in chair & sigh]</i>
				<i>[DL says it does go on afterwards]</i>

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8:27				(a1 head back slightly)
				(a2 knees up again)
				(a3's head is fwd – hands on end of armrests
				head up & to L – feet tapping, then still)
8:29	38	0:01		'When you feel ready, open your eyes, stretch and bring the meditation to an end.'
				(a2, a7 stretch
				a1 out of chair & out of room
				a3 out of chair & tape off
				a2 rolls to R & glasses on & up off mat onto knees & upright & to chair
8:30				shoes on)
				[my L hip is prickling again]
8:32				(a1 back in & sits in chair – to bag -
				a2 out of room
				a7 to bag – pencil case & diary
				a1 notebook & pen & starts w date then writes
8:33				a7 takes loose sheet from diary, folds it & starts writing
8:34				a3 out of chair & out of room
8:35				a1 glances at clock
				a2 back in – to tray (jug & water)
				a3 back in)
	41	1:23	a3	I should've brought a flask
				(a2 box of pencils (crayons) & draws on pad
				a3 is only one not writing (incl me) – grimaces & goes out again: out of chair & out of room
8:40				a7 out of chair & to tray)
				[If I discuss that versions are so different, what else is at work in the Exp?
				I stretch]
	43			(sound of water being poured)
				(a7 asks if I want water & I say no I'm ok thanks
				a3 back in & to original chair

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8:41				<i>a7 back to chair & starts writing again</i>
				<i>a1 still writing – the only one now)</i>
				<i>[I told a7 over meal about joke at J&J's about whisky/sherry & me & that I wasn't fit for lunch after D's party</i>
8:44				<i>I do have an issue over drink]</i>
				<i>(a1 still writing</i>
	46	0:15		<i>a2 colouring in now</i>
8:45		1:20		<i>a1 pen down & notebook away</i>
				<i>out of chair & to tray</i>
		1:38		(sound of water being poured)
				<i>asks me if I want water & I say no I'm fine thanks</i>
				<i>looks at book a2 has been using for head & laughs quietly</i>
8:47				<i>a2 sketch book away & sips water)</i>
8:48				<i>- silence -</i>
				<i>(a2 has eyes closed)</i>
8:50	48	1:20	a1	I'd like to, um, share my meditation, really, because it's, it's been really interesting. Because, um, I think she starts out, doesn't she say 'wait in the Light', is that what she says
			a2	I think so
			a1	Yeah, and I always have such trouble, sort of, with the process and thinking about it and trying to kind of access the Light. And for some reason
	49	0:00		I think, when I was at QPSW conference I went to a workshop on testimonies and the person leading it, um, there were a lot of new people to Friends who were at QPSW conference, which they had wanted to encourage, so these would be people who didn't know very much about Quakers. And he, he, sort of introduced it by saying our testimonies come from our real fundamental roots. And he'd written it, on, on the flipchart and it said at the top: 'waiting in the Light reveals' and then on the next line 'the Truth' and then on the next line 'about ourselves, about our relationships with others and about our world.' And then he just went on and talked about the testimonies.
		0:40		That, that had really somehow sort of struck with me about him starting with that real emphasis. And I was thinking: all this time I've been waiting for the Light
		1:20	all	(laughter)

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				and it's so funny this
			all	(laughter)
				and it's about waiting in the Light
				and then I had this really, sort of, strange, sort of, realisation: well, the bloody Light's been there all the time
			all	(laughter)
			a1	and I felt suddenly, sort of, really grounded in myself, which I hadn't felt before, and, and then I thought about
				he, he got us, this guy, to do an exercise, once he'd talked about the, the, er, testimonies, he said, 'right', he handed out the sheets of paper
	50	0:00		just for five minutes on your own, think about a testimony, um, that means something to you and then say what you're trying to do about it in your life and what's happened, and why you thought that, and what help you've had, either from your Meeting or others
		0:21		and one I thought about was Truth and integrity, because that's been such an issue for me with work, particularly because that's what I felt had kind of challenged my whole sense of Truth and integrity. And this sense of being grounded, kind of felt, um, I feel integrated, I feel like all the bits have come back to myself, er, which was a, sort of, another kind of realisation
		0:57		And then I had a momentary flash of an image I've had at least twice previously in meditations, of this, of being in the middle of this wood with this deep dark pool and standing looking in and trying to see what's down there. And once, I think, the moon was illuminating it, but I'm still trying to stand there, looking in and I had this momentary image. And then I realised I wasn't looking in, I was in that pool and that pool was in me and it was like that was integrated and it doesn't, you know, I don't have to look in any more, it's there, kind of thing. It sounds really poorly, doesn't it, I know. At the same time, like you do, you sort of – well, I do anyhow – I flop in and out of waiting, if you like, and being there and other thoughts come crashing in
8:54		1:53		and I've had this, I sang in Elijah, Mendelsohn's Elijah, before Easter and there's a really
	51	0:00		funny chorus, I mean it's lovely music, but the way the words go are really funny in it, it says about there remain, when Elijah's really down, he thinks he's completely failed and he's saying to God, you know, take my life, I've failed, you know, I've been a complete flop and I've achieved nothing
				and there's this chorus, and that's where you get the angels singing, but then you get the chorus saying, um, that there remains, despite what he's thinking, there remains in Israel, seven, seven thousand in Israel
				knees which have not bowed to Baal, is how you sing it, which is an absurd expression

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				I mean, three and a half thousand people or fourteen, fourteen thousand knees
			a2	(laughs)
			a1	I can never take it seriously
				(laughter)
			a1	it is wonderful music and (laughs)
			a2	(laughs)
			a1	and suddenly into my head, this, this, because of the way it scans with the music, this seven thousand knees, which haven't bowed to Baal, have been going round and round in my head most of the day, for some reason, but I got the first two bits of that, which is, um, oh, I've forgotten it now, um: 'go, return upon thy way, for thy Lord hath spoken' and it's what's to bring Elijah back to, to Israel where he's eventually, sort of, absorbed by chariots and up into heaven
		1:36		you know, so he gets his request for death, but rather gloriously, instead of being a complete flop as he .. But it was this 'go, return upon thy way, for thy Lord has spoken'
				made me feel like you do when you're about to minister
				it felt like a real message and it's ..
				I, I, I felt really reassured about the whole thing
	52			because I felt I have come together and I have a clea.., a much clearer sense now than I did when I first came
				off work and I was feeling so awful, of what I should be doing, and, and it was a very reassuring kind of experience, really, which [giggles] it's been wonderful, yes
			a2	yes
		0:25	a1	and, you know, I thought am I just deluding myself
				but doesn't feel like that
				it just feels like something's really all clicked into place
				(sigh) so that's good, and then I thought, when she says something about, you know, accept how awful it is or something
			a2	(laughs)
			a3	(laughs)
			a1	it wasn't awful, have I done something awful
			a2	(laughs)
			a7	(laughs)

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			a1	(laughs) – it was nice
			a7	(quietly) that's fantastic
8:58		1:00		- <i>silence</i> -
8:59	53	0:54	a7	I had a strange thing really: one of the situations when quite a lot happened in the meditation
				but the physical act of trying to write something about that .. brought a .. a very powerful image (laughs) later
			a1	mm
			a7	after the meditation, which was a bit odd, because I was trying to work it out
				and I'm still very confronted by it really, but
				it was the usual thing during the meditation of, kind of, all the day buzzing round and, er, er, lots happened at work today and different things and just letting that settle, which, which it did do, and that felt very calming and, er, there was kind of um .. a physical shift of focus, I felt almost, that, sort of, I managed to distance myself, which, again, is something that she said at one point, sort of standing back. And, and then, then it was kind of strange because an awful lot of events in the day were buzzing in my head
	54	0:00		mainly to do with pupils and schools and things. But I had a conversation on the stairs at some point in the middle of this afternoon, with a colleague I've worked with many years. And she was telling me that she'd actually applied to go part-time after the summer, um, she's in her late fifties and it's this usual dilemma she's in one of these situations where she's caring for elderly parents and also her daughter who's a single parent with her child, so she's absolutely sandwiched in the middle, but she was saying, being very calm about it, saying that, er, for her own sanity, really, she needs to let go of work a little bit, but also giving time to her family. And it was that that kind of really resonated with me that just seemed to sort of stand out in lights really, a sort of time for your family, amidst all your commitments, um, and that was all sort of going round and round, you know, the sort of usual things we sort of talked about a lot recently
				<i>[sense of group's awareness of my writing and not looking]</i>
		0:59		um, but when I came to write it up, there was this thing, sort of, things slotting into place and, although I go to the theatre, I've never been involved in amateur dramatics or anything particularly, but I had this really strong image, a visual image of, kind of, backdrops (laughs) and you know how they kind of slot one down, then lift one up
			a1	mm
			a7	and bring the other one down and I've still got to mull that over, 'cos as I sort of was writing I thought, well, gosh, am I centre stage, then? (laughs)

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			a1	(laughs)
			a7	Which isn't my natural stance to be at all
9:02		1:34		but I actually came away with the impression that I wasn't (laughs) at all, and I kind of, again, although I'm not involved in drama, theatres,
				I kind of felt I was all tangled up at the side in all the sort of muddle that goes on at the ba., in the wings (laughs)
				and that's, kind of, just given me a lot to think about, really, it's just ..
			a1	mm
			a7	I can't make sense of it, but it was just such a powerful visual image
	55	0:00		that's come through the writing of it and I've got to, kind of, work out what's going on there, but it was such a strange thing
			a1	yes
			a7	and it's so atypical of what I deal with and what I think about, really, so it's what I would call
			a1	mm
			a7	out of left field
			a1	mm
			a7	you know, it's not something I think about
			a1	no
			a7	all the .. it's come out of somewhere, it has tonight, it's given me something to ponder on, really
			a1	mm
			a7	do you know what
			a1	mm
			a7	but something wouldn't have happened, I don't think, if I'd just been sitting quietly
			a1	mm
			a7	at home
			a1	mm
			a7	or something
		0:30		I feel something's gone on tonight

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			a1	mm
			a7	I can't work it out, quite
			a1	mm
			a7	but something has happened, so
		0:39	a1	while you were writing it afterwards
			a7	yeah
			a1	or drawing it
			a7	trying to
			a2	yeah
			a1	afterwards
9:03		0:46		- <i>silence</i> -
9:04		1:44	a2	I had a, um, er, er, a thing about tangled and confusions as well
				mine was, er, I suppose this is typical of me really, it was like loads of strands of all different coloured wool, all tangled up together
	56			and I do very much like untangling wool
				but then, then what I, what came to me was that once you've done it, it's not there any more
			a1	mm
			a2	once you've untangled it
			a1	mm
			a2	so perhaps
			a1	mm
			a2	it's alright as it is
			a1	mm
			a2	so that's something to ponder on a bit isn't it
9:05		0:33		- <i>silence</i> -
				(<i>a3 sigh</i>)
9:07		1:55	a2	again it's that, it's that, that thing that you were saying really, that, you know, I have a tendency to think that once I've untangled, then I can wait in the Light
			a1	mm

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			a2	(laughs)
	57			- <i>silence</i> -
9:08		0:57	a7	a1, you know that the Lampens are coming to do a study day at [name of Meeting]
			a1	oh, are they?
			a7	[date], I just feel I want to meet her, having heard her voice (laughs)
			a1	yes
			a7	so many times
				it's your 'Woodbrooke on the Road' sort of study day, isn't it, when I went to it was mentioned at the I sort of let somebody know that I'd like to go, because they've opened it up to PM
			a1	oh, great
			a7	so I wondered if you'd be interested in going
			a1	yeah, I would, very, I'd be really interested
			a7	it's not exactly the Light group topic, but it's spirituality in the Meeting, isn't it
			a2	yeah, same nurturing our spirituality or something like that
			a1	mm, mm. When are they coming then?
			a7	[date]
			a1	right [day of week]
			a2	[name of Friend] was telling me all about it
			a7	did she
			a1	yes
			a2	I know she mentioned, she said to me about you'd expressed an interest
			a1	yes
			a7	it was announced at PM on Sunday
			a1	oh
			a7	yes
			a1	what time will it be, is it an all day thing
			a7	is it about 9:30 to 4 [name of Friend] said they were just going to buy a sandwich, or something, but a very brief lunch, it's not a sort of long lunch, it's quite a sort of an intense day
			a2	anyway that'll become

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			a7	it just struck me that you may have missed out on word about it
			a1	yeah, yes. Thank you for that.
			a7	yeah, but, you know, hearing her voice, I just think I want to see her
			a1	yeah
			a7	I mean they've obviously written a lot, haven't they .. like to share
	58	0:50	a1	they've spent time at Quaker House in Belfast, or Derry, they were in Derry
			a2	somebody, somebody lent me her book, Facing Death, just soon after me mum had died and I found that really helpful
		1:22		yeah, I don't know whether we're going to be able to go .. might go to some of it
				- <i>silence</i> -
				(<i>to a3</i>) have you had a pain, a3?
9:11		1:54	a3	yeah, it keep.., I've got it now, actually, had it on and off, for an hour or so
	59	0:06		my new trick is not to let it show (laughs)
			a1	well, you did very well
				- <i>silence</i> -
		0:27	a3	it's like somebody pulling your teeth out
				amazing what you can get used to really (laughs)
				- <i>silence</i> -
		0:49		I didn't get anywhere really
				I was, I've been having some really difficult dreams lately
			a1	mm
			a3	and I was stuck in dreams, I've been thinking about dreams, I just kept on thinking about ..
				I didn't manage to open it up into the Light
				I was just stuck, stuck in what I've been thinking about before
			a1	mm
			a3	but it's
9:12		1:25		- <i>silence</i> -
		1:48		I'm really missing the coffee (laughs)
			a7	yes
			a1	oh, yes

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		a7	well, next time we'll have to make sure we've got a little emergency supply tucked away, it never occurred to me that that would happen
		a1	I was wondering whether perhaps that was what we ought to do is have our own supply
	60	a2	yeah
		a1	of tea and coffee and
			I wondered actually, if it was a sinister message
		a7	I must admit
		a2	that crossed your mind
		a2	(laughs)
		a1	ok, well let's do that
		a2	yes
		a7	mm
		a1	I'll bring some coffee next time and I'll bring some herb tea
		a7	mm
		a2	can we keep it here, or?
		a1	I was going to say, we'll put it in a tin and mark it 'Light group – keep off' (laughs) and that will get them going, won't it
		a7	(laughs)
		a3	yes, for the use, exclusively of
		all	(giggling)
		a1	yes
		a2	I've counted the grains
		all	(laughing)
		a3	this is special coffee
9:14	1:00		- silence -
	1:20	a7	you know about what's happening [weekday] night
		a1	yes – I hope I'll be there
		a7	yeah
	1:30	a1	I think dreams often, um, illumine things like, like the Light does

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				in different ways, sometimes
				similar messages somehow
	1:53	a3		yeah, I don't, well .. this dream, well these dreams are about being ill, being .. paranoid, having paranoid delusions
61				and not being able to separate reality from unreality
				so they're very frightening, very .. disturbing
				and various characters appear from my past,
				a girlfriend I had, I'd had, you know, when I was at school, appeared at one point .. in a, in a funny guise
				and I've no idea what that meant, really
				quite painful
	1:05	a1		do you write them down?
		a3		dreams?
		a1		mm
		a3		no
		a1		I write my dreams down
			
			 it helps to clarify
	1:17			- <i>silence</i> -
	62			<i>[a2 looks troubled now (the ball of wool she has to leave)]</i>
9:18				(sighing and settling)
	1:19	a1		volunteering next time
		a3		yeah, it feels like it's coming to an end in a way, doesn't it
		a1		yeah
		a3		I suppose with fewer people it's ..
		a7		I, I haven't done it for a bit, so I don't mind
		a3		that tape was awful, it started off quiet, and then gradually got louder, didn't it
		a1		and that, I thought it was that copy of the tape, but apparently it's on all of them
		a3		is it?
		a1		of that particular one, yeah, and they've put them on CD now, so, I think they've tried to do something about it
	63	a7		I keep meaning to send for those, I'll try and

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			a1	these are the Meeting A tapes, so
			a2	there's a problem with one, I mean, we were a bit last minute trying to listen, weren't we, but one of them we couldn't get to play, and I think that's what happened before when we had a panic here
			a1	which one is it?
			a2	I think it's the one with, with Rex starting off with 'the pearl is within you'
			a1	oh, really? That's number five.
			a2	tape – yeah – 'The Fifth Tape' um, so I don't know if, if you've got a few, a bit more time
			a1	yes
			a2	you could just have another go with it and see
			a3	I'd experiment with the Experiment with Light ..
			a2	it just wouldn't
			a1	(laughs)
			a2	it just wouldn't seem to play, would it, and we then thought it was our machine and
			a3
			a2	and then we tried another tape and it was all right, so
			a3	they need to be, it's a very tedious process, but they all need to be gone through and ticked which, you know, if they work or not
			a1	yes
			a2	yeah
			a3	difficult thing to do at the last minute, 'cause you can have
			a1	yes, yes, yeah, that's true
		1:09	a2	I, I mean, I went, I've been through, when I first borrowed them, and written down a little bit of what each one was, you know, I've got me own notes of them, but, um, I'm sure, I'm sure it was this one, wasn't it
			a3	it would be worth getting the CD if they're on CD
			a2	this tape, they're easier, CDs, to follow, and find the place and everything, as well
			a1	I suppose so, yeah
				(rustling paper)
			a3	and this is a CD thing
			a1	this is a CD player as well

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			a3	yeah
			a1	oh right
			a3	if we got the CD, we could play it on there, it's much simpler
		1:48	a1	mm
			a3	you don't have to rewind it, do you
			a2	I think we'd contribute something to it, couldn't we, 'cos we've not, I mean, we've not paid any money at all
64	0:00		a1	ok, well, we bought those, actually, for the Meeting, so
			a7	yeah
			a1	we might, if something starts at [name of a2/a3/a8's Meeting], [name of a2/a3/a8's Meeting] might want to get some and, I suppose, you know now, that it's probably better to get the CDs
			a2	CD, yeah – are they on different CDs then?
			a1	yeah, there're five different CDs
			a2	oh, right
		0:24	a1	I can't remember what price they are, so
			a3	it must be the most expensive CD per, because most of it's silence, isn't it
			all	(laughter)
			a3	expensive silence
			a1	well, I think, are those £2.50, I can't remember
			a2	I don't know
			a1	yeah, I think they, yeah, I think the whole lot was twelve-fifty and, I can't remember, but I
			a7	where do you find the details, only
			a1	well, yes, um, the details are on here, actually, they actually say where you get them from, I think, yeah, Diana Lampen Gardens, Stourbridge, yeah, two tapes cost five pounds, including postage, and then there's tape three, which cost two pounds fifty
		1:20		(paper rustling)
			a7	ok
			a3	well, we'll bring the tape player, as usual
			a1	well, yeah, if you want to bring the tapes, I'll bring some tea and coffee
			a7	ok, right, thank you, I'll bring the milk, thank you for bringing the milk, although it was just to take it back with you

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		a1	oh, I know what I was going to say, in [month] there's five [day of the week]s and five, yeah, one, three and
65			five, the fifth one being the day after holiday and I know we said, you know, when we went to a5's
		a3	yeah
		a1	we might
		a3	do the fifth
		a1	do, do the fifth
		a3	well the fifth one last week didn't happen, did it
		a1	no, no, no
		a3	maybe the fifths don't happen
		a1	yes
		a7	I'll be away, certainly, that week in [month]
		a1	yeah, yeah
		a3	it means you've got two right next to each other, really
		a1	yeah
		a7	I don't think we'll, have we, succeeded in doing any of those, have we, I mean, it was a nice idea at the time
		a1	well we did the [ordinal number] of [month] didn't we, that was when we went to a5's, I think we have done one other, I can't remember
		a2	yeah, I've a feeling
		a7	(yawns)
		a1	anyway, it was just something to think about
			(sounds of moving about)
		a1	I'm very impressed with the book you brought to put your head on
		a2	I know, well, it's the, it's in the
		a1	oh, I see
		a2	last time I was here I just
		a1	(laughs)
		a2	picked it up by chance and that was what it was, it just looked the right sort of size and shape
		a1	yeah
		a3	yes, don't measure a book by anything other than its thickness

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			a3	it's a fantastic book, it's one point three four centimetres
			a2	it's not, it's a bit too hard and
		1:30		(laughter and moving about)
		1:42		<i>(recording finishes)</i>