

THE IDEALLY ACTIVE: FRANCES WILLARD'S PEDAGOGICAL
MINISTRY

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Abstract

This dissertation presents the teaching practices of temperance reformer Frances E. Willard. While Willard's work in temperance reform has been well documented, the pedagogical aspect of her life has not. I argue that Willard's form of rhetorical pedagogy enacted at two institutions—the Evanston College for Ladies and the Woman's Christian Temperance Union—retained the focus on creating a Christian citizen-orator often presented in histories as diminishing in importance in American educational institutions. Willard was positioned to continue this work despite its wane at the academy. She found that her form of pedagogy, which maintained an equilibrium between intellectual stimulation and ethical behavior, came into conflict with the late-nineteenth century academy's emphasis on purely intellectual endeavor and professionalization.

At the Evanston College for Ladies, which later became the Woman's College at Northwestern University, Willard began a teaching practice that she later continued at the WCTU, an alternative educational institution. This practice emphasized spiritual guidance, engagement in social issues of the day, and a public voicing of this engagement in school and city newspapers and debates. In both institutions, Willard emphasized the *means* of delivering this social engagement, encouraging her students to be self-consciously “womanly,” or in accordance with the expectations of middle-class Christianity. I present Willard's practice using the approach of historical ethnography. This inductive method does not provide a predetermined critical frame for the archival material. Instead, the documents are presented first, followed by conclusions driven by historically contemporaneous observations. Archival material is provided from Willard and her students in each institution—at the College and the Temperance Union—in an effort to create a dialogue of call and response, a voicing from both teacher and taught. I present an in-depth perspective of Willard's work in two different locations and provide context to these practices through Willard's speeches, books, journals, private letters, and autobiography. Those taught are presented in the Northwestern school paper, the *Tripod*, Chicago newspapers, meeting minutes of the school's literary societies and the Temperance Union, Union worker manuals, autobiographies, tributes to Willard, and private letters.

I conclude that Willard's approach, which emphasizes many of the educational practices of an earlier period, was maintained at the WCTU with great success because it created an intellectual culture ensuring that female rhetoricians would be heard on platform, pulpit and paper.

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Dedication

To My Daughters
Emma and Adeline

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Dear wonderful Miss Willard! What a faculty she had for touching the right chord when talking seriously to her girls! What a teacher she was and what ideals she impressed upon us! Do you remember the devotional exercises she conducted? It seemed at the time as if her prayers took us to the very gates of heaven.

Louise Hart, Student. Woman's College, Northwestern University, September 22, 1923.

Such broad views of life and destiny as she opened to our sight; such high ideals of character as she set before us; such visions of the heights to which we might climb, of the noble deeds we might achieve, and with it all, such a deep and weighty sense of responsibility for the use we made of life with its gifts and opportunities, I have never seen nor felt through the inspiration of anyone else. It was like living upon Alpine heights to be associated with her.

Isabella Webb Parks, Student. Woman's College, Northwestern University, 1898.

I would not have you only, or indeed chiefly, concerned with the evolution of your powers for your own sake. If you acquire, let it be that you may dispense; if you achieve, that others may sun themselves in the kind glow of your prosperity. The people who spend all their strength in absorbing are failures and parasites.

Frances Willard (*Occupations*)

“Ideals” and “noble deeds,” “responsibility for the use” of life, acquisition for dispensation—these were the gifts of literacy under Frances E. Willard. Celebrated as the most famous woman in America upon her death in 1898, Willard was an American educator, reformer and leader of the national and international Woman's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU). Willard believed that the best form of teaching was to instruct by precept and example. She used the methods culled from years of teaching to establish educational and reform institutions which encouraged women to become public, political beings. The product of female colleges in Milwaukee and Evanston, Illinois, Willard became the president of the Evanston College for Ladies (ECL) in 1871, where she taught all composition classes. She

continued to teach composition and additionally rhetoric when the college merged with Northwestern University. There she became dean of the woman's college, but she ultimately resigned in 1874 over administrative conflicts. The same year, she joined the woman's crusade for anti-liquor agitation, and a group of Chicago women asked her to become head of their temperance organization, the Illinois Woman's Christian Temperance Union. Willard was elected secretary of the state temperance society, and the following month, became the corresponding secretary of the national WCTU. In 1877 Willard left the organization over President Annie Wittenmyer's resistance to woman's suffrage. At this time, Willard lectured widely on suffrage for a year before becoming the president of the Illinois WCTU in 1878; the following year, she was elected the WCTU national president, and remained so until her death in 1898.

Under Willard's leadership of twenty years, the WCTU grew from a few thousand members to 200,000 by the 1890s. The organization mounted campaigns of public and political pressure; public speaking became Willard's primary means of support until the organization voted to allot her a salary. She endorsed the idea that in addition to temperance, the WCTU should work for woman suffrage, social purity, and other social reforms. She promoted women's choice to participate in the public sphere and to become ministers.

Willard was a catalyst for women's involvement in education and reform. My dissertation interrogates the "how" of Willard as social catalyst by recovering the literacy practices at both institutions under her leadership using a historical

ethnographic approach. In addition, I present Willard's form of education by recreating the daily literacy practices of her students and their effects. I conceive of literacy as Brian Street defines it, "an ideological practice, implicated in power relations and embedded in specific cultural meanings and practices" (1). Cultivating a sense of feminine religious identity was central to Willard's work throughout her life. Under her leadership, Northwestern and the WCTU were both locations in which women became literate by "joining a specific community through understanding the issues it considers important and developing the capacity to participate in conversations about those issues" in a specific social context (*Gere Writing* 119).

It is important to note the ways in which education and literacy were seen in Willard's time. As Sara Robbins points out, nineteenth-century educational theorists, women writers and leading political thinkers "conceived of literacy in more creative, interactive, and moral terms" than we do today. Robbins suggests that "social links between literacy learning and proactive citizenship were more explicitly valued than . . . many nineteenth-century writers advocated a national literacy nurtured by maternally managed literature study that generated a moral sense in readers and therefore encouraged appropriate social actions for the polis" (*Managing* 16).

Willard's entire pedagogical life was "maternally managed," from her childhood to her days as a young teacher of girls, to her later period as a WCTU leader, when the image of motherhood flowed more naturally from her senior position. The "literacy practices" under her leadership were regular patterns of literacy use linked to shared beliefs about social action (Heath 386).

Recovering Willard's practices in this way requires that I examine them on both the institutional and pedagogical levels for the dynamic relationship between everyday forms of literacy and the broader institutional and historical forces that shaped that literacy. Examining Willard's leadership at two different literacy sites allows me to discern some of the processes under which institutional and social change took place for a large group of nineteenth-century women. I hope to show how her form of education with ECL's young women was repeated in teaching practices later in the WCTU.

Willard is not only important as a rhetorician; she is also significant for teaching rhetorical education to others. I borrow the definition of "rhetorical education" from Walter H. Beale:

Rhetorical education is an attempt to shape a certain kind of character capable of using language effectively to carry on the practical and moral business of a polity. It is based implicitly or explicitly on ideals of individual competence and political well-being. Its dual purposes are the cultivation of the individual and the success of a culture. This is why thoughtful treatments and programs of rhetoric are inevitably cultural projects: they are either celebrations of a particular character type and a particular ideal or—at their most engaging moments— attempts to change or rehabilitate both character and culture. (x)

Shaping and rehabilitating the female "character" was central to Willard's work as both teacher and temperance leader. She viewed the female half of the human

condition as a necessary contributor to national, and ultimately, world reform. Throughout her career as educator and reformer, she continued to focus on both individual and cultural improvement. In order to form a rhetorical education, Willard created “pedagogical arguments”(Enoch *Women's* 23). I use Jessica Enoch's term to distinguish this aspect of Willard's work from that which has already been studied a great deal, her rhetorical strategies toward the temperance cause. Willard's “pedagogical arguments” were teachings that argued for a more activist, politicized and more public form of education than the traditional teaching of women in her day. These teachings began on the day of ECL's opening as Willard challenged her students to model the contributions of woman's entry into higher education.

Willard wrote in her late journals “I should have loved best of all to have been a Gospel Preacher” (Gifford *Writing* 411). Inside her copy of John Wesley's autobiography she wrote “How much more than glad I would have been had my church permitted me to enter her pastorates as a loyal Methodist Sister. I choose to know something of that grand old Mother Church whose ministry I would gladly have entered in my early prime if she had understood Christ's Gospel well enough to call me.”¹ Sadly, Willard probably did not find any evidence in the Wesley biography of women preaching in his time. As Catherine A. Brekus has demonstrated, some female preachers in Wesley's England had his blessing, but he never suggested that they be officially licensed or ordained. Later backlashes within the church excised these women from Methodist history.

In early nineteenth-century America, Methodist female preachers were quite popular, but in 1830 the church decided that female preaching was unacceptable under any circumstances. By the 1840s, the era of Willard's parents coming into adulthood, female preachers were denigrated as Methodism moved from a religion of the working class to a mainstream religion practiced by the upwardly mobile. Willard's father went to Oberlin College to train for the ministry in the early period of the clergy's professionalization, though he never completed his studies. Phoebe Palmer, a popular preacher whom Willard had seen and admired as a young woman, refused to call her work preaching, and distanced herself from the female "enthusiasts" of an earlier age (Brekus 338). For the most part, the early female ministers had neither demanded equality in ordination nor church governance. These demands came later in the century, and Willard had a voice in the debate.

Although Willard was raised in the Methodist church, and many of the institutions she taught in were Methodist, her pedagogical approach was more broadly Christian and evangelical than Methodist. Willard's methods hearken back to the philosophies of early female educators such as Emma Willard, Catharine Beecher, and, of central importance, her own mother, Mary Hill Willard. Her power was to embrace the feminine experience so often publicly shared within the evangelical tradition, to theologize without disrupting her "feminine" status, to assume the authority of male theologians, and to offer a new woman-centered and experience-based pedagogy of her own—what I call a progressive, pedagogical ministry.

Throughout her life Willard focused on the practical educational needs of women. What resulted from this sense of practicality was a concept of woman as “useful,” someone who contributed to a better life for her family and her nation, rather than someone functioning as a useless ornament. Women congregants in her time were seen as “daughters of the church” and Willard used this family metaphor throughout her teaching and leadership, casting herself as mother to her children or sister to her fellow organizers, at that time a common rhetorical position for women.

Willard’s form of ministry focused on the power of a Christian, communal identity rather than an individual one. Like other Christian reformers, she sought to spread evangelical ideals to other women and thereby to Christianize the nation, and ultimately, the world. This missionary zeal remained throughout her life, realized in the World’s WCTU in Willard’s last decade. In both the Evanston College for Ladies and the WCTU, Willard was part of institutions innovative for their female leadership: each site was entirely staffed and managed by women. It was only when Northwestern University changed this form of organization that Willard chose to leave and to instead cast her fate with the temperance union.

The temperance union under Willard became an “imagined community” (Anderson 49). Literacy practices under her leadership enabled nineteenth-century women to imagine themselves as participants in widespread activity, connected with multiple, invisible others who convened in yearly conventions and communicated through committees and publications. The WCTU was an “alternative public,” a place in which members could assume authority in a sphere usually dominated and

controlled by men, creating a voice countering the male-controlled mass market in which women could only rarely present themselves in their own terms (Gere *Intimate* 29). Membership in the WCTU under Willard was such a powerful source of education and inspiration that many members who were initially active in temperance became active in the suffrage cause. In temperance, they gained training in organization and confidence in their leadership abilities; several WCTU members became presidents of national and state suffrage organizations (Hardesty *Women* 126-127).

Scholarly Contributions

Tracing Frances Willard's teaching career provides important historical information regarding nineteenth century rhetorical history, changes in American higher education, and composition history. This dissertation traces one link between ministry and pedagogy in nineteenth century American women. Born in 1839, Willard inherited long-assumed beliefs in the importance of character in American life. As a life-long Methodist, she was raised in a strict, religious household. Her brother became a minister. Becoming a preacher was something she always desired for herself, but at that historical moment, it was impossible in her church and social position. Pedagogy was the closest a woman like Willard could come to the ministry. Like many other devout women, she carried her convictions and moral instruction into her life as a teacher.

Redding S. Sugg Jr. describes the way in which the nineteenth-century showed a movement of moral education from the ministry into pedagogy. "As behind the male teacher had stood the power of the male physique and the authority of the male Congregationalist minister, so behind the new female teacher was to stand the example, rather than the authority, of the mother" whom Catharine Beecher called "the minister of the home"(24). Horace Bushnell's *Christian Nurture* (1855), generally regarded as the greatest influence on the theory of Christian education in the nineteenth century, argued for moving Christian authority from father to mother, "electing the wife and mother as the primary party in the contract with God, and supplying the female sex with a revolutionary theological status"(Sugg 31). The concept of Christian nurture dignified "the functions of the mother in the home" and rationalized "the extension of those functions to the schools, where women, whether actually mothers or not, might be regarded as divinely called to teach"(Sugg 34).

Examining Willard's work articulates some of the political and social effects of nineteenth-century religion on pedagogy as females emerged as teachers. The promotion of women as teachers in the United States occurred in the 1820s and 1840s; by the time the Civil War ended, the country widely accepted the idea of woman as guide to the moral and intellectual life of children. It was widely assumed that rather than behaving as a strict disciplinarian and authority figure, a woman would play a motherly role in her teaching, nurturing rather than scolding, and helping to form character in her students, much as a mother would her child (Enoch *Women's* 23). Teacher diaries of the period demonstrate that this assumption of

motherly behavior was not always correct; in Willard's case, her early career shows evidence to the contrary. Among the expectations of the "motherteacher" was that she inculcate middle class values, such as frugality, hard work, punctuality and usefulness. Willard eventually took the concept of "usefulness" and urged her students to challenge and transform their world.

I agree with Carolyn A. Haynes' work that states the importance of looking at nineteenth-century religion as neither a mere "utilitarian force" nor a debilitating one. To do so is to "ignore its presence and effects altogether"(xv). Haynes points out the centrality of religion for identity formation in eighteenth and nineteenth century America, and the importance of not seeing religious attributes or effects as necessarily expressive of a conservative interior sentiment (xix). Instead we must ask why so many women of the period were attracted to Protestantism if it were merely stringent and sexist. Many scholars have seen Christian feminists as merely acquiescent prey to a socioreligious shift; to do so deprives these women of agency. Haynes argues that this stance in the scholarship of nineteenth-century feminism is due to the privileging of secular feminists and the promotion of the idea that Protestantism and feminism are fundamentally at odds.

Haynes argues that Christian feminists of the nineteenth century straddled two systems of thought, women's rights and evangelical Protestantism, and were thus able to "select tropes and knowledge from as well as to gain a critical and comparative perspective on both systems in order to create a familiar yet dissident rhetoric of their own, one that was both acceptable to large audiences of women and effective in

securing limited social and religious reform"(79). While some scholars of feminist movements have seen the use of religion as primarily limiting the scope of the woman's movement, Willard's sense of the "familiar yet dissident" created immense change in the movement from private to public worlds for thousands of women—a change difficult to discern for women of the twenty-first century. Only when confronted with the voices of the nineteenth century that condone a nearly suffocating domesticity is the power of Willard's new public world understood. Nor can the work of the WCTU be considered solely the work of Willard. As new history of the Temperance Union is written, we find that the organization itself was diverse in quality, and Willard herself often had more radical goals than those of its members (Haynes 97).

For these reasons, the ministerial aspects of Willard's literacy practices can hardly be ignored. Scholars such as Campbell and Johnson see Willard's legacy as either ineffective, or paradoxically destroyed by its own arguments, but such criticism ignores the immense positive influences Willard's students felt as a result of their literacy acquisition. By tracking Willard's pedagogical "stream," I hope to find what her pedagogy might have created in her students across time and location. Her work is an example of what Cheryl Glenn describes as "always already rhetorics that fuse religious conviction with self-consciously persuasive language and social action" (*Rhetoric* 33). Willard's religious and rhetorical practices go against the tide of accepted composition history tracing rhetoric's decline in the nineteenth century as a

movement toward literacy as self-improvement to the neglect of civic duty (Crowley *Composition* 114).

Much has been made of Willard's rhetorical skill, but her pedagogical skill has not been closely examined. Willard was able to maneuver comfortably in clerical circles because of her religious perspective; this is why she reached such broad audiences, and I believe this is the reason she was so thoroughly embraced by them. She became a public, historic figure because of her temperance and suffrage work; thus her biography, autobiography, and much of her political work is published and catalogued.² Her rhetorical methods have been recovered, but historians have concentrated mostly on Willard's WCTU leadership (see Gifford and Slagell). Haynes addresses the importance of Willard's evangelism, but does not look at her career across various sites. The specific results of Willard's methods have not been examined except to say that Willard's strategies failed because her organization lost its commitment to suffrage in her absence (Campbell 129). Jessica Enoch's recent work on woman's pedagogical history suggests that traditionally the female teacher was seen as a mere *reproducer* of values held by the dominant culture, rather than one who might change social norms and behaviors, an interesting view considering her "mothering" values as pedagogue. Enoch suggests that this perception of the reproductive teacher role—one which was created in the nineteenth century and still remains—may be responsible for the lack of scholarly attention given to pedagogues in general, the majority of whom have been women (*Women's* 23). I will address the way in which Willard's teaching changed social norms and behaviors.

The dissertation presents a single pedagogue's activity in two different institutions reflecting changes occurring in the nineteenth century with the emergence of coeducation. It complicates the notion that composition replaced rhetoric as a school subject because of women entering the university (Connors). Willard was involved in the frontier of coeducation, and her work in both academia and reform brings complexity to simple binaries of masculine and feminine rhetoric, agonistic and irenic performances. In the nineteenth century, the growth of industrialization required that women assist in educating the young, which changed the economy and education itself. Willard's career emerged just as this cultural shift in pedagogy was taking place: male leadership to female leadership, religious instruction to secular education. At Northwestern, a Methodist university, Willard faced a conflict between her adherence to teaching moral precepts by gender separation and the newly formed concept of coeducation. Looking at the ways in which Willard retained some of the same approaches to teaching and organization as she entered the WCTU, I trace what Caroll Smith-Rosenberg calls the "feedback loop in which women affect the processes and the institutions in which they participate," thus asking *both* how literacy changed women *and* how women changed literacy (*Foreword 3*).

In addition, I show the effectiveness of particular strategies Willard used in separatist institutions, thereby making a contribution to women's educational history and the history of coeducation in America. Susan Kate's study of Radcliffe demonstrates how "women who taught in separatist institutions often tailored their pedagogies to women's needs" and their "curricula diverged in important ways from

those of men's or coeducational institutions" (27). Willard began her tenure at Northwestern as president of the Evanston College for Ladies (ECL). As head of this college she worked in concert with Erastus O. Haven, President of Northwestern University, to further the interests of both institutions. From the opening of ECL, students were able to enroll in courses at Northwestern, and, along with male students, to become active members of the Hinman and Adelpic literary societies there. ECL ran into financial difficulties after the Chicago fire of 1871, and thus lost funding for a building of its own. Since ECL had furnished Northwestern with a good number of students, Northwestern proposed a merger. In 1873, ECL became the Woman's College of Northwestern University, with Willard as Dean of the College and Professor of Aesthetics. Unfortunately, Willard began having conflicts with the administration as the merger went into effect. She resigned her position shortly thereafter, only to assume a leadership position in the WCTU the following year. Recovering Willard's work in two different contexts will define what it was she retained from other female institutions as she entered WCTU leadership.

The WCTU has been acknowledged as a site important for the rhetorical education of women, but this perspective has focused solely on Willard's public documents, rather than the institutional practices within the organization. Carol Mattingly's *Well-Tempered Women* notes the importance of the temperance organization as an educational agency, but her book focuses on temperance rhetoric, rather than the intricacies of Willard's educational practices. Patricia Bizzell tells us that the most significant recent contributions in rhetorical criticism have come from

“work that explores the ways that women negotiated the assumption of the role of rhetor” (6). Tracing Willard’s career path from schoolteacher to organizational leader defines the “how” of teaching this rhetorical role to those who came under her influence.

A close examination of Northwestern University and the WCTU provides a means to define aspects of identity formation within each group. Frances Willard advocated communal discourse during a period in which inventive potential is claimed to have been displaced out of the communal and relocated within individual minds (Crowley *Methodical* 68). Creating a sense of cooperation through identification and consubstantiation was key to her success. She addressed her students and temperance followers as always holding positions similar to hers, though in reality they often did not. Within each space—an educational institution and a political organization— she would identify gender commonality, then present progressive ideas, only to assume them as commonly held goals.

As teacher and temperance leader, Willard enacted what Kenneth Burke describes as a “general *body of identifications* that owe their convincingness much more to trivial repetition and dull daily reinforcement than to exceptional rhetorical skill” (26). Although Willard was a leader with exceptional rhetorical skill, she also headed up institutions that helped to create an everyday, Christian identity for women as a group. Following Willard’s pedagogical path leads us to uncover the “ingredient of rhetoric in all *socialization*, considered as a *moralizing* process,” one in which the student completes the process “from within” (Burke 39). Tracing the “daily

reinforcement” of Willard’s work gives us access to the everyday processes that led to larger, significant choices nineteenth-century women made to enter public life. However, unlike Burke’s assessment of certain educational experiences as mere indoctrination, a study of Willard’s approaches complicates the notion of “character-building” to see it as more than a class-regulatory process. Instead, it researches the contributions of evangelicalism to teacher-student relations, and how this relationship again carried on between Willard and her followers to such great success in the WCTU.

Willard, I will argue, was an important historical pedagogue. Nan Johnson has suggested that “we gain in historical insight” when we enlarge what we call “rhetorical” in the work that “feminist revisions of the rhetorical tradition have generated” (*Gender* 9). Historians of rhetoric, she argues, should ask just who is missing from the map of rhetorical tradition, and why. Asking these questions is “to assume that cultural power and rhetorical pedagogy are inevitably tangled issues and that the investigation of that entanglement requires that we view rhetorical theories and pedagogies as a cultural field or site where the disposition of power is constantly being renegotiated” (*Gender* 10). Pedagogues in general are missing from the map of rhetorical history. A few from elite institutions have been covered in histories, such as Theodore Baird at Amherst, Edward T. Channing and Adams Sherman Hill at Harvard, and Fred Newton Scott and Gertrude Buck at the University of Michigan (Varnum, Paine, Stewart, Campbell), but generally the written work common to undergraduate students goes unrecognized as an important element in the creation of

that history. This is partially due to the challenges of finding student work from earlier periods, but recently expanded notions of literacy acquisition have enabled scholars to trace negotiations within writing sites outside the academy (Gere, Royster).

Willard's professional life involves complex historical intersections. Her work figures prominently in our understanding of nineteenth-century rhetoric and also contributes to our understanding of nineteenth-century composition. Composition histories have traced a nineteenth-century curricular move away from classical rhetoric with the work of scholars such as James Berlin, Robert J. Connors and Sharon Crowley, but have addressed composition only from the standpoint of secular forms of literacy and composition. Some scholars have noted that we need to pay more attention to the religious side of rhetoric and its influence in nineteenth-century reform movements (Bizzell, Glenn, Mountford). To do so provides us with an alternate vision of rhetorical pedagogy, one that shows a continued interest and emphasis on the value of oratory and public argument, but which did not see these as exclusively derived from classical rhetoric. Willard, by virtue of her pedagogy, exposed the web of social relations created through religious motives, and incorporated these relations into successful literacy acquisition.

Mattingly has discussed the reasons Willard may have been overlooked so long by scholars. She attributes this lack of attention to "contemporary scholars' discomfort with temperance women's religious/evangelical associations, despite the fact that many temperance leaders attributed their earliest rhetorical training to

empowering church-related activities." A closely related reason rests in our natural inclination to value the ideas and motives of those "most like us" such as Stanton or Anthony (*Well-Tempered* 58). In doing so we miss some major historical figures and take the histories of those we favor with blind acceptance. Willard's religious devotion was common in her lifetime; as Carolyn DeSwarte Gifford points out in her introduction to Willard's journals, when the Willards became active in the Methodist Episcopal church during the 1850s, "they joined nearly one million other Americans who belonged to what was, by that time, the largest single Protestant denomination in the United States"(8).

While Willard's approach was most often viewed contemporaneously as successful, it had its costs when she approached women less aligned with her views and position. Articulating the costs and benefits of Willard's approach is important, because as Joy Ritchie and Kate Ronald point out, "accommodation and subversion work together in important ways" and to explore the "ethical dimensions of women's relationships with 'others' is important work. In it, we can see the cost of erasing or ignoring differences" (xxiv-xxv). They argue that work addressing the connection between theory and practice "is the ground for the very newest and perhaps most important work in women's rhetorics" (xxviii). We know that in order to speak publicly women have historically conflated feminine sensibility with rhetorical and political power, because no other identity was acceptable for women speakers. But we need to look more closely at *how* capitalizing on cultural norms *worked*. With this goal in mind, archival resources provide the means to see Willard's form of

instruction *and* its reception by students. The voices of Willard's students and followers will allow us to see what Willard offered to those who were easily accommodated by her methods as well as to those who were not. Rhetorical historians have documented Willard's form of activism within the WCTU, but there are no studies which look at how that activism might have been shaped by approaches Willard used with students at earlier points in her life.

Among the important discoveries presented in the uncovering of institutional identity formation under Willard is that the ethical subject is retained in composition studies into the late nineteenth century. Written history marking changes in nineteenth-century composition tells us that when aesthetics ascended in the composition classroom, literary studies at mid-century were subsumed under the pedagogical heading of "taste" and the ethical subjectivity that was maintained and disciplined within classical rhetoric was lost (Berlin, Connors, Crowley). However, we know from recent studies that extracurricular societies were standard in the colleges and universities, and that students often received more practical experience in writing, debating, and speaking there than in the classroom, where recitation was the focus. Willard was always involved in both the classroom and extracurricular societies in her community, as were her students. Her work retained the importance of the ethical subject; for Willard, the ethical and the political were one and the same, because both were of divine origin. By giving particular attention to the religious aspects of Willard's methodology, I analyze "the form of rhetoric typical of the private and semi-public discourse which has been the particular province of women,"

argued as particularly important for study (Sutherland 120). I am specifically interested in the subtleties for both Willard and her students of asking for social change under the reaffirmation of religion; it seemingly extols tradition while encouraging alternative action.

By the time Willard became WCTU president, she had been an educator for nearly fourteen years. Anna Gordon, Willard's lifelong companion and secretary, stated that Willard joined the WCTU because she saw it as "a great educational agency for women" (*Beautiful* 106). We may begin to see how particular individuals changed literacy in different settings by looking at change in a woman's college as it comes under the auspices of a male-centered institution, and the changes and retentions made in the same leader's administration of an all-female organization. Taking this closer look at Willard's strategies through time will demonstrate the way in which she put her social vision into practice.

Method

Seeing both ECL and NU as literacy sites in a "specific social context" allows me to focus on the social dimension of rhetoric under the leadership of a very influential individual. *How* individuals experienced and eventually became part of a literate community under Willard will be more emphasized than what *products* that community created. Katherine H. Adams writes that in studying women's writing groups "we can learn not just from their products but from their process, from women working as individual writers and within a variety of groups as a successful means of

breaking through the accepted circles of earlier generations. For what these women really did was define collaboration for women” (185). These kinds of collaborations occurred routinely in nineteenth-century religious contexts, and were then carried into the university and public reform settings. As educator and reformist, Willard used a form of classical *paraenesis*, work that uses exhortation to shape a discipline of moral formation in a school or similar context. Willard’s particular vision of that moral formation was a universal, Christian one; her paraenesis was a way to link home, church, and reform, thus creating a private and public connection.

A comparison of the ECL and the WCTU may illuminate the reasons behind Willard’s commitment to gender-specific locations. As the leader of religious educational organizations, Willard easily merged her influence across private, social, and public spaces. The way in which institutional power, resources, and communication were distributed in those spaces is important historical information, and a means to examine how these conditions surrounding acquisition impacted the choices made in acquiring literacy (*Royster Traces*). Looking at Willard’s move from one institution to the other allows us to see how Willard’s practices developed over time, how practice responded to institutional context, and how religion informed connections between her pedagogy and her activism. In each site Willard worked to create a sense of identification among girls and young women; creating consubstantial space was central to her achievements as teacher and organizational leader. American motherhood, femininity and Christianity were her terministic screens, and while she achieved great success convincing conservative white women

to her causes, she conflicted with those who did not fit easily within those categories. Only by looking at the “‘contradiction’ between ‘discipline’ and ‘possibility’” in Willard’s pedagogy can we see how some voices were valued more than others (Johnson *Gender* 18). In addition, Willard’s evangelicalism enables us to see its influence on the teacher/student relationship, and of the relation of student/ rhetor to audience. Evangelicalism authorized certain social behaviors and privileged some behaviors over others. It also authorized a woman’s voice and the ways in which women used that voice.

My work on Frances Willard serves to reconstruct her “pedagogical arguments” and the way in which they spoke from and back to the dominant educational institutions of her day. Borrowing from Enoch, this dissertation illuminates Willard’s instructional activity by using a rhetorical analysis of each teaching site. I consider the kind of raced, gendered, cultural expectations Willard fulfilled and the ways she resisted or carried them out, asking questions such as how Willard fulfilled her educational role, how she conceived of the form and function of education, and how she countered the asymmetrical power relations reproduced in the institutions in which she served as she worked from the traditional, domesticated, and feminized position of the teacher. Of important note in the history of educational institutions is research looking at how the institutions themselves defined their goals and intentions, information I recover in my archival work.

In addition to reconstructing Willard’s pedagogical scene, my dissertation uses the methods of historical ethnography. I provide a detailed, in-depth descriptive

documentation of an historical culture—the daily life and activity within Willard’s two organizations, ECL and the WCTU. The values, practices, relationships, and identifications of women in these groups are presented and described. The ethnographic approach provides an “emic” perspective, or what might be called the “insider’s” point of view, to the extent that it may be reconstructed from archival sources. The goals and self-definitions of the groups under Willard will therefore emerge from the encounter with participant accounts, rather than from the imposition of existing or received models. To this end, I will examine how the groups under Willard labeled each other, how they found meaning in activities they cared about in their lives, and how they engaged in processes in which they individually and collectively defined their situations (Gold).

I attempt to place Willard as pedagogue and her students in context to find fruitful answers regarding the results or outcomes of her pedagogical legacy. Borrowing from the work of Jacqueline Jones Royster, I ask questions regarding literacy acquisition in these cultures: under what circumstances did they acquire literacy? What did literacy and learning mean to them? In what ways were they empowered to act in the world by their knowledge of language, and how might that knowledge be useful in achieving particular rhetorical effects? Most of all, after they acquired these tools and abilities, what did they actually choose to do?”(Royster *Traces* 257). In keeping with the historical ethnographic approach, I will intentionally shift perspectives throughout the dissertation, presenting Willard’s position and strategies alongside those of her students, and examining different kinds of text for

each group's habits and concerns. ECL and the WCTU will be investigated on both the macro (institutional) and micro (pedagogical) levels, with Christian evangelicalism as the theological background for both institutional contexts.

Chapter Sequence

Willard's literacy practices and the meaning-making processes of her students are examined in order to demonstrate the convergence of social, religious and institutional life between seemingly different spheres as those students become part of a literate community. My second chapter recuperates Willard's position as a Christian evangelist, and how her religion, upbringing and education formed her attitudes toward teaching. This chapter is an educational biography focusing on Willard's allegiance to Christian social issues, particularly as they pertain to women. I briefly introduce Willard's various educational environments, those in which she studied and those in which she taught. The chapter contextualizes women and education in Willard's period, as well as those educators affecting Willard personally. A central influence was Willard's mother, a highly esteemed woman of "character." Frances acknowledged Mary Hill Willard's importance throughout her life, even describing her as the "mother" of the WCTU. Many of Frances Willard's conceptions of woman's potential can be traced to her mother, whose beliefs about woman's possibilities were shaped by educators such as Emma Willard and Catharine Beecher, and evangelists such as Charles Finney. Frances gained from her mother a belief in the importance of "moral horticulture," or the cultivation of faith and morality in her

pupils. Mary Hill Willard was on the board of managers when the Evanston College for Ladies (ECL) was first envisioned, and she played a part in creating its curriculum.

This chapter presents Willard's religious, educational and teaching experiences prior to her arrival at ECL, experiences primarily at Methodist schools for girls. However, her strategies were not strictly Methodist in scope; instead, she advocated a non-denominational, Christian approach, believing firmly in creating the student as a moral, ethical subject, as was the dominant approach in the early nineteenth century. In addition, the importance of Willard's two-year world tour is introduced, as it affirmed her resolve to contribute to the "woman question" prior to her taking up teaching again as a profession. At ECL, Willard continually emphasized the importance of females cultivating a strong moral character. Later at the WCTU, she continued with this emphasis on the power of the female ethos, arguing that it demanded entrance to the public stage in an organization entirely run by women. Willard's conception of this female ethos was largely formed by her relationship with her mother. Along with letters between Frances Willard and her mother concerning the school's opening, the chapter addresses the journals Willard wrote on her trip to Europe, in which she began to look at what an ideal society for women might be, and the educational means to create this society. Finally, Willard's lifelong connection between ministry and pedagogy is seen as culminating in her work *Woman in the Pulpit*.

Chapter three moves away from the more sweeping chronological approach of chapter two and focuses on Willard's tenure at a single location, the Evanston College for Ladies (ECL). The chapter looks both diachronically and synchronically at this period. Willard's "pedagogical arguments" are presented along with the institutional context of her teaching. This context will be defined by looking at Northwestern Woman's College in relation to Northwestern University. To create a sense of dialogue among documents, the ECL administration's goals, purposes and conflicts will be examined. Willard's response to the school's religious-ethical context will also be addressed by looking at her fundraising speeches on behalf of the woman's college; her essay "Woman's Work in Education"; the student catalogue, in which she helped to create her arguments for student "self-government," and her journal and autobiography. In turn, I describe the female student population at ECL as it existed in Willard's period. Student responses to Willard's leadership and pedagogy will be given in student arguments on her behalf published in the Northwestern student newspaper, *The Tripod*; commencement speeches, classroom essays and speeches written for the literary societies at Northwestern; Chicago newspaper articles; published reminiscences of Willard by former students, and private letters.

Chapter four again focuses on Willard's practices at a single location, the Woman's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU). First I present the story of Willard's ascension to the presidency of the organization. Willard's speeches on education and organization within the union are examined, again by pairing Willard's arguments with the voices of those who followed her leadership. Willard's vision is recreated

through WCTU meeting minutes; *The Home Protection Manual* (1879); *Do Everything: A Handbook for the World's White Ribboners* (1895), called the lifeblood of the WCTU for its comprehensive program of women's reform; *How to Conduct a Public Meeting* (1895), and *How to Organize a Woman's Christian Temperance Union* (1895). In addition to the temperance union publications I discuss *How to Win* (1894), *How I Learned to Ride the Bicycle* (1895), and *Occupations for Women* (1897), all publications intended for girls and young women. In dialectical fashion, the chapter will then analyze the response of Willard's followers to her leadership, by looking at public tributes to Willard, newspaper accounts of her speeches, WCTU meeting minutes, various educational publications created by the WCTU, published biographies and autobiographies, and ECL alumni records.

In chapters three and four I borrow from Enoch, demonstrating Willard's pedagogy in the teaching context of the two institutions she headed. The two institutions are presented in context in order to ask what history surrounded each pedagogical institution, what the discourses of each institution prescribed, how they functioned, and what they promoted, concealed, ignored, or negated (Enoch *Women's* 23). I ask how Willard contributed to or subverted these prescriptions, and how she deployed specific pedagogical arguments and behaviors.

Chapter five concludes the dissertation as I articulate Willard's practices to create an account of a religious, pedagogical rhetorical tradition that is not an agonistic enterprise. Willard's approach was instead focused on promoting a cooperative discourse and creating a common religious identity for social change.

Looking at the teacher/taught documents in dialogue will uncover how Willard's leadership dictated and strengthened certain patterns of action and belief (Royster *Sarah* 257). Accessing the student voice and that of Willard's followers brings consideration to "what forces of cultural contestation can be detected behind the silences and blank spaces" of traditional historical accounts (Johnson *Gender* 11).

My concluding chapter compares the literacy practices under Willard in both institutions: one academic, the other a voluntary association; one ultimately organized under a male hierarchy, the other under female leadership. Such a comparison allows me to demonstrate some of the ways that the Evanston College for Ladies and the WCTU were experienced by individuals and constructed by social and institutional relations. Examining the process of identification under Willard and its results tells us something about how institutional and social change took place under the power of a greatly influential progressive leader. Willard's emphasis on "moral horticulture" went far beyond notions of turning out finished "ladies" who would remain firmly ensconced in the domestic world. Rather, she encouraged this cultivation in order to have woman's influence move from what many considered "private" space into larger and larger spheres of influence, in hopes that woman would ultimately triumph by encompassing all spaces with her moral presence. The subsequent chapter looks at the means by which Willard's upbringing and education cultivated this public/private linkage.

Chapter Two: The ‘Moral Horticulture’ and ‘Mental Acquisition’ of Frances Willard

Never forget that the only indestructible material in destiny’s fierce crucible is character; try for it; pray for it devoutly and then hammer away stoutly; say to yourself over and over again as you sail onward, utter it early, repeat it often, ‘Fail me not, Thou.’ And so I pass along the word given me a generation back by her whom I best loved. She has been gone for years, but wherever by voice or pen I have put forth a word of help or kindness, she has as truly spoken as if it were her words, not mine.

Frances Willard on her mother, Mary Hill Willard. (*Occupations* 10)

The above quotation demonstrates Frances Willard’s insistence that the force of character was the most essential element in a woman’s education, a notion very strong in the early nineteenth century. That Willard held on to this advice at the end of her life, sending it in a greeting to all of her friends and associates in the year before her death, demonstrates its dominance in her educational scheme. Willard was a devout Christian, and the connection between seeming and being was her most central conviction. She saw education as meaningless if it resulted in mere intellectual attainment, or, as she termed it, “mental acquisition.” Instead she used education throughout her life to improve her own moral grounding and those of the people she affected. This kind of education, one that points constantly at one’s spiritual state in addition to intellectual enhancement, is an education working to cultivate character. From Willard’s perspective and that of other evangelicals of her day, one could improve the world only from a position of moral strength.

This emphasis on woman’s moral contribution is a result of Willard’s Christian upbringing, influenced by the philosophy of evangelical thinkers such as

Catharine Beecher and the Methodist Episcopal Church, the social vortex influencing religious and educational institutions in Evanston, Illinois. The broader culture of evangelism served to make literacy powerful for many middle class American women. As men were charged with becoming professionals in their ministry, women began to augment and to eventually even replace the male ministerial function with their moral presence and exhortation. Evangelical thought and culture, especially in Willard's chosen congregation, were important sponsors in the shaping of Willard's literacy and her form of literacy education. Deborah Brandt's term "literacy sponsor" is used to describe "any agents, local or distant, concrete or abstract, who enable, support, teach, model, as well as recruit, regulate, suppress, or withhold literacy—and gain advantage by it in some way"(166). Brandt discusses the way in which we can trace a history of sponsorship as a way to find how an older generation passes its literacy resources onto another (178).

In Willard's case, this sponsorship seems to find its embodiment in the female as a distinct, superior moral presence. Mary Hill Willard passed on her sense of woman's contributions, with Beecher as an example of an authoritative sponsor. The Methodist Episcopal church inhabited many social institutions in Evanston, where Willard spent most of her life. As the church became more exclusive of women later in the nineteenth century, Willard responded by creating the WCTU as literacy sponsor, one which itself legitimized woman's entry onto the public and ministerial stages. Willard's generational shift was to move the female moral

presence from the home into the public sphere. She consciously cultivated this “character” of womanhood in order to enhance public discourse in speech and form.

This chapter will look at how Willard sees the concept of "character" as a means for continual self-assessment, and for the attainment of literacy in herself and others. I will trace the way in which this concept of character informed her educational life and generally motivated her as a woman's educational leader. In later chapters, I will focus more fully on the way in which character was cultivated in particular institutions she led, and the impact this mission had on her students and followers. Willard's power as a leader was in her work to seem and to be, to think and to perform, as the Christian lady of her day was defined—to the letter. Willard demonstrated that the "private" world of women was always already a public one, using this argument from her background as a Methodist. Though many scholars have lamented the transformation of rhetoric in the nineteenth century as one moving away from more civic concerns into the world of belles lettres aesthetics, the work of Frances Willard shows that an emphasis on morality in education could result in transforming the social world; Frances Willard never made a separation between moral and civic concerns in her educational work.

The leadership of Willard was a leadership of character. From her journals written as a young teacher, to her educational leadership in the university, and finally as head of the WCTU, the formation of character was the primary impetus. In tracing this concept through Willard's life work, we can see why she made the move from education to temperance. It allowed her to more fully achieve the ideas she had all

along, those of fulfilling her Christian mission of delineating female character, and fulfilling its political promise. Willard's journals demonstrate her continual striving to attain good character. Like many other nineteenth-century Americans, she used her journals for self-examination and self-assessment, at one point listing components of good character and putting marks beside those she thought conspicuously lacking, a Franklinian gesture with equally public consequences. On occasion she shared her journals with friends and family, something not unusual at the time. Eventually, she would publish some of them in her autobiography.

Frances Willard's argument for woman's entry into the public sphere is premised on the concept of character. She insisted that women be fully what they seem, to enact what already existed in the popular mind— which was at that time their moral superiority to men. If tapped, this superior contribution could transform the nation in the most public of ways. The results would necessarily be political results. The strength of woman's moral power is argued from Willard's schoolteacher beginnings to her national leadership in the temperance union. This chapter will focus on the ways in which Willard's religious upbringing and education were foundations from which to build character. This ethical formation, so strongly cultivated in Willard as an individual identity, was the result of both individual effort and social groups of which she was a part.

The Importance of Religion and Mothering in Willard's Methods

It is important to understand the influence of both Methodism and a broader evangelicalism in Willard's upbringing. Though she remained loyal to the Methodist church throughout her life, she always thought it important to be part of, and to lead, institutions that were non-sectarian. An understanding of the cultural force of evangelicalism is key to analyzing her identity, and her pedagogical approach. The importance of evangelicalism itself was central to blurring the notions of private and public experience in her time. As Carolyn Haynes points out, in the early nineteenth century "women, as the appointed proponents of conversion and religious fervidity were thus boldly traversing into a newly transforming public arena . . . Not only did evangelicalism help to shift public-private boundaries, it also embodied the potential to spur attacks on traditional authority." As one of the few public places where women had authority and influence, evangelicalism "proved a particularly enticing realm—both in terms of rhetoric and action—for women seeking greater power and mobility"(Haynes 102).

Also important for contemporary scholars to note in considering the history of American women is the lack of separation between religious and secular life. The perfectionist movement was an important one for the Christian feminists of the nineteenth century, because it viewed Christ's return to earth as happening only "when complete social harmony is achieved." Ever-perfecting individuals could aid in effecting this state of ultimate harmony, and thus the "millennial order was linked to secular progress—the advance of Christianity and the goals of civilization being

synonymous"(Haynes 104). This idea binding Christianity and a more perfect society is ever-present in Willard's pedagogical approach. Gregory Schneider's work on Methodist social religion points out that in the nineteenth century "family prayer and visitation . . . was a ritual not only of spiritual sociability but also of socialization, not only of religious instruction but also of evangelical recruitment. It was one of the chief means of involving the family in the organization and culture of Methodism. Another means was prayer meeting, which was usually a lay-led gathering of believers simply for the purpose of praying together. It too was naturally associated with the home of some prominent or conveniently located lay member"(72). Frances Willard was a leader of prayer meetings as a young woman in Evanston. These meetings were one of the steps toward building a congregation, and later a church, in burgeoning areas such as Evanston.

By far the greatest influence in Frances Willard's life was her mother, Mary Hill Willard. A devout Christian, she is portrayed by her daughter and others as a pillar of character. Mary Hill Willard was admired for following the path of her faith and convictions in childrearing rather than those commonly trod in her time. Throughout her life, she was widely acknowledged as a strong mother figure, not only for her own family, but also for women throughout the nation. A thorough understanding of Frances Willard's upbringing under this maternal figure is essential to understanding her educational goals and attitudes.

Frances was born in Churchville, New York in 1839. She had an older brother and sister, Oliver and Mary. Her great-grandfather Willard was a Baptist minister in

New Hampshire, her grandfather Hill a Free Will Baptist deacon in Vermont. Willard's parents, Josiah Flint Willard and Mary Thompson Hill, met in rural western New York, where they were schoolmates and farm neighbors. While in New York, Mary Hill taught school, as she was the only young woman there with any education. The area that they lived in was strongly influenced by the Second Great Awakening, spearheaded by revivalists such as Charles Finney. In the first decades of the nineteenth century, evangelical Christian revivalism was a move away from the rational theology of orthodox Calvinism and instead into emotional or evangelical theology. Evangelicals emphasized a loving God who forgave any sinners who chose repentance and might even help them achieve salvation, if not perfectionism. This revivalism influenced Josiah Willard to hear a call to the ministry, and in 1841 the parents moved the young family to Oberlin, Ohio so that he could study for the ministry and wife Mary could take courses at Oberlin College. They were drawn to the school because of its strong antislavery position.

When the Willards attended Oberlin, the president of the college was antislavery advocate Asa Mahan, a Congregational minister, author, and educator; Charles Finney taught theology there (Gifford *Writing* 20). Mary Hill Willard was said to have been influenced by Finney's ideas, but her daughter and niece noted, "She was not dominated as a weaker mind would naturally have been by his theology and methods. Her sympathies were too catholic, and her breadth of view too extensive to allow any one's way of thinking to overmaster her personal

independence.” Mary Hill Willard would later recall Oberlin as “a place where the ideal and spiritual predominated” (Willard and Norton 125,141).

Unfortunately Josiah began to have trouble with tuberculosis while attending Oberlin, and the family therefore decided to move into the country, where they could own land and Josiah might improve his health. In 1846 they moved to a Wisconsin farm, Forest Home, where the Willard children spent most of their time in the outdoors, taught largely by their mother. As an adult Frances Willard repeatedly looked back upon this frontier period as idyllic, a place where she was not burdened by traditional notions of play nor of femininity. She and her sister Mary were close friends and playmates, as they really had no one but each other. During this period, Josiah served in the Wisconsin legislature for several years. Willard writes how her father often “went to town” and she and her sister “with our Mother—the heart and soul of our plans and ‘goings on,’ proceeded with our work, studies and play. I never went to school until well started in my teens, and then only spasmodically”(Willard *Autobiography n.p.*). Despite the lack of formal education for her seemingly insatiable mind, Willard looked upon this time of her life as “the page in all my history most sunny, hopeful, mystical,” largely because of the strong relationship Mary Hill Willard had with her children, a relationship central in shaping Frances Willard’s educational views (Willard *Autobiography n.p.*).

Mary Hill Willard’s education at Oberlin and teaching experiences shaped her methods of childrearing. As a student she had been part of a mother’s group led by Lydia Andrews Finney, wife of Reverend Charles Finney and first editor of *The*

Moral Advocate. Lydia Finney is remembered for assuming “the role of moral educator to the young and advisor to adult women quite separately from her husband”(Solomon 38). Male and female undergraduate moral reform societies were started under her guidance (Solomon 40). Meetings that Mary Hill Willard attended “were generally held at the house of Mrs. Willard. She also was one of the more brilliant members of the Rhetorical Society, where her gifts of voice and pen were in demand. Added to this she studied and recited in college classes as home duties would allow” (Willard and Norton 24). Among the social changes advocated by these moral reformers at Oberlin were “a restructuring of moral standards, and an end to the double standard of sexuality . . . They sought to abolish this double standard not by having women act like men, but by demanding of men the same standards of virtue and passionlessness that society expected of women”(Ginzberg *Joint* 72). This work toward a feminine social transformation occurred while Mary Hill Willard was at Oberlin; many of these moral reforms concerning the sexual double standard would later reappear in Frances Willard’s work at ECL and the WCTU.

Lori D. Ginzberg’s history of early Oberlin shows that its evangelical worldview “demanded less that women perform on men’s level than that men live up to the standards of women” (*Joint* 68). A central purpose of the school was the “training of missionaries, teachers, and reformers of both sexes. Equally significant was Oberlin’s insistence on applying female virtues to community life.” The female model was “essential in the work of transforming society” (Ginsberg *Joint* 69). Interest in a mother’s providing moral instruction to the young occurred when

religion in the early nineteenth-century shifted away from an emphasis on original sin, instead to focus on the mother's part in shaping the character of youth (Ginzberg *Joint* 39). This "concern with the moral training of children soon expanded to a concern with the moral well-being of the whole society," and women who saw themselves as moral instructors in the classrooms extended their sphere of influence "to address problems of social deviance of their time, including prostitution and drinking" (Ginzberg *Joint* 39-40). These social problems later became a focus of the WCTU.

Oberlin had reinforced traditional ties of family upbringing by having the male students supervised by male professors, "while the Ladies' Department Board had charge of women. The 'lady principals,' themselves products of the New England female academies of Zilpah Grant (Ipswich) and Mary Lyon (Mount Holyoke), exerted a powerful influence for the maintenance of evangelical moral standards for the young women." Social rules clearly demarcated the access of students to the opposite sex: the library was not shared at the same time, but classrooms, dining and extracurricular activities allowed men and women to communicate under supervision (Ginzberg *Joint* 83).

All of this separation and supervision, however, was deemed essential to the success of coeducation, because "with its emphasis on propriety, Oberlin's mode of coeducation gave it an appearance of safety" (Ginzberg *Joint* 84). This equation of propriety and safety would remain central to women's institutions throughout the century, and later remain with the WCTU. Schools that followed Oberlin with the

coeducational model developed their own variations, most having a ladies' course and separate extracurricular societies. Oberlin became a highly valued source of information on how coeducation worked in practice, probably one of the reasons the Evanston College for Ladies sought Mary Hill Willard's help in serving on its board of trustees many years later.

It is clear from reading Frances Willard's biography that Mary Hill Willard was the moral authority in the household. Willard's mother was responsible for much of the religious instruction her children had, as she was a mother on the frontier without a local church. In fact, Frances later stated that her mother *was* "the religion of her children. What she did was right, what she thought was inspired, what she doubted was despised" (Willard and Norton 277). Mary Hill Willard's biography, co-written by Frances and her cousin, Mary Beth Norton, delineates the differences between Josiah Willard and Mary Hill when it came to raising children. Fortunately for Frances, her mother was the primary influence. She recalls that as a child, her father "would have set bounds" to Frances's ambition "had it been possible. He urged the acceptance of a woman's domestic duties, but with little effect" (Willard and Norton 141). Rather than pushing domestic work upon her children, Frances recalls that as far as her mother was concerned, if she and her sister "distinctly evinced other tastes that were good and noble, they should be allowed to follow them, and that in doing so they would gain most happiness and growth themselves, and would most truly help forward the progress of the world" (Willard and Norton 142).

Annie Burdick Knox, first teacher of the Willard girls, states that after meeting Mary Hill Willard she knew her to be her “crowned ideal of motherhood; more and perhaps better”(Willard and Norton 236). She recalls her “talks” on “memorable Sabbaths were such as might have been spoken from almost any pulpit, and that to instruction and spiritual uplifting” (Willard and Norton 237). Frances describes a typical day of learning in the Willard home as having regularly conducted family worship; stimulating conversation; training in usages and customs of polite society; gymnastics, in which her mother, too, participated, and lessons around “a common table” with children and servants in the early hours of the day “or after the labors of the day were ended” (Willard and Norton 140). One of these servants, a Swedish girl, lived with the family for seven years, and was later called by the Rest Cottage household their “Christian sister.” The Willards taught her how to read English and she participated in the Bible reading at the family prayers (Willard and Norton 151).

When the WCTU offered mother’s meetings to the general public decades later, Mary Hill Willard said, “You cannot too strongly emphasize the value of maternal meetings in the work of the WCTU. They give the aggregate wisdom and experience of many mothers as to the most successful methods of securing obedience to parental authority. Mothers are quickened, enlightened and impressed with a responsibility that without divine guidance they are wholly inadequate to meet. The mother’s own moral sense being thus aroused she will naturally appeal to the spiritual instincts of her children” (Willard and Norton 146). When asked later about her child-

rearing advice, she stated “should a child show a strong bias toward any laudable line of life that promises self-support and easy independence, I would encourage this tendency with all my power. Try to cultivate a tender conscience, a delicate sensitiveness to right and wrong. I would place the acquisition of character infinitely before that of wealth” (Willard and Norton 145).

Understanding the central moral and pedagogical influence in Frances Willard’s life requires that we look more closely at the educational ideas that formed the mothering style of Mary Hill Willard. In addition to her education at Oberlin College, she had great respect for Catharine Beecher, noted educational theorist and moral philosopher. Beecher, only five years older, was her contemporary. Mary Hill Willard’s sister and niece both taught at the Milwaukee Female College, a Beecher institution. Frances notes in her reminiscences that her mother had cherished Beecher volumes in the house at all times. A look at some of Beecher’s central philosophical works and educational arguments may therefore serve to show influences upon Mary Hill Willard’s approach. Beecher’s *The Elements of Mental and Moral Philosophy* (1831) argues that the Calvinist notions of submission, self-denial, and self-sacrifice are universally useful moral virtues, especially for social leaders. According to Beecher, the greatest social happiness is attained by promoting social virtue in others (Gardner 2). In this treatise Beecher does not consider it appropriate for women to enter into traditionally male spheres such as business or politics, but she claims for them a potential for moral influence— and a corresponding duty to exercise that influence— over the men who occupy them. This power was to be exercised in the

domestic and social circles, pure in motive because they lacked ambition and self-interest (Gardner 2).

In addition to having Beecher volumes on their shelves at home, the Willards ultimately sent their daughters to the Milwaukee Female College, an institution created under the supervision of Catharine Beecher, and for which she printed a copy of *The Elements* to promote the school. The treatise states that throughout childhood, the forms of behavior producing the greatest good for the many is learned by “the social influences of surrounding minds through the principles of love, gratitude, sympathy, and example”(qtd. Gardner 5). Catherine Villanueva Gardner argues that Beecher’s philosophy kept a Calvinist view of divine order and human subordination to laws, but rejected its notions of sin and moral education, thereby giving the educational role of salvation through education and example—a role for women—a prominent place (Gardner 6).

Rather than looking only at God as Father, in this treatise Beecher looks at God as teacher, therefore seeing the divine in maternal duties. Beecher is important in Willard’s world for conceiving that Christian benevolence is not just martyrdom; instead it pushes for seeing “a moral significance in the everyday” (Gardner 8). The subordination Beecher describes is not merely one of a traditional family in which women are subordinate to their husbands. Rather, a woman is asked to do “all in her power to secure a proper education for all the young minds within the reach of her influence” (qtd. in Gardner 10). Each woman will perform this duty differently, some teaching family, others teaching nearby children, others still to go on to the western

frontier to set up schools of their own. Mary Hill Willard did both, teaching on what was once the frontier of western New York, and later taking on domestic servants and field hands as students within her home in Wisconsin. Beecher's ideal woman for contributing to the social and moral progress of America is the economically independent, socially valued teacher combating childhood illiteracy and the social and moral evils that it produces, a role that Frances Willard filled early in her career (Gardner 11). Beecher sees moral power as particularly robust, power that "requires both education and economic independence, and is supported by an ethico-religious system." It is not merely about individual character; instead, Gardner argues, Beecher "frames sacrifice and subordination in terms of a general social usefulness" (12). Ultimately, Beecher sees the moral power of women in "their abilities to include others in a community of minds working together for the greatest happiness" serving to "undercut the economic and domestic power of men and to raise women up . . . in terms of their usefulness"(Gardner 13). This concept of utility based upon the moral power of women is central to Willard's pedagogy, from her days at woman's colleges to her leadership at the WCTU. Later, in the WCTU, Frances Willard recreated this sense of home community, collegiality and camaraderie among educated women, an environment that many of them had lost after marriage.

This sense of a robust moral power contributed to an overall social process domesticating literacy, in the home as well as in domesticated institutions, such as the WCTU. The work of Sarah Robbins points out that behind this social process was "an idealized, over generalized vision of the American mother," who was seen as "the

prime agent who could cultivate the nation”(Robbins 21). While Robbins focuses on the actual texts that embody this idealized figure, I will focus on the importance of this figure as a rhetorical one in Frances Willard’s pedagogical life. Though Mary Hill Willard embodied many of the traits in the motherly ideal, she herself spoke about the figure as an ideal powerful and necessary for the progress of women in her time. Robbins points out that Willard was not alone in using this rhetorical position to her advantage. Many writers of the time, such as Harriet Beecher Stowe, used “rhetorical techniques presenting themselves as mother-teachers” (Robbins 21).

Willard’s close relationship with her mother was not unusual. In the nineteenth century, it was common to have one’s mother at the heart of the segregated female world. Carroll Smith-Rosenberg’s study of nineteenth-century females shows that intimate mother-daughter relationships were typically places where each demonstrated “their closeness and mutual emotional dependency”(15). Smith-Rosenberg’s sample of families demonstrates mother-daughter relations of sympathy and understanding. They tended to spend a great deal of time together—“only sickness or great geographic distance was allowed to cause extended separation” (15). Four years after Mary Hill Willard’s death in 1892, Frances Willard co-wrote her biography. Her mother’s life, she writes, “was the life which springs from the primal seat of character, the will, and is nourished only by the highest truth” (Willard and Norton 12). Willard tells us that her “talent for motherhood . . . in the estimation of her children, amounted to positive genius” (Willard and Norton 23). Among her noted

gifts with children was her “moral and intellectual training” (Willard and Norton 43), a combination Frances would take up in her life’s work.

When given numerous tributes on her eightieth birthday in 1885, Mary Hill Willard was keenly aware of the mother ideal she represented to the WCTU followers. She stated in response to her accolades

I appreciate your kindness and the honor you do me; coming as it does from persons of exceptional excellence of life and character, and of rare discrimination and attainment, it will lend a halo to the sunset of my life. But I am aware that it is to an *ideal* that you show this loving courtesy and unfeigned respect. I, too, have had ideals from my girlhood, and I still pay homage to the creations of my imagination, just as others do. It does no harm when our friends put an overestimate upon us. It stimulates us to endeavor to be such persons as our friends charitably think we are. (qtd. in Willard and Norton 102)

Frances later recalled that when she gave her mother praise after returning from a long trip away, her mother responded “you make a business out of praising me, you have fitted yourself out with an ideal and apply it to your mother, like the dutiful daughter that you are”(qtd. in Willard and Norton 282). Mary Hill Willard appears to have seen the utility in using a motherly icon to create change in everyday existence.

Frances Willard always remembered the significance of her mother’s leadership style. She comments that “she did not drive, but led her flock; she won them by rewards and smiles, she did not frighten them by threats and punishments”

(Willard and Norton 135). When asked how she herself learned how to encourage other women, Frances answered, “If I have any special gift as a public worker, it is one I learned from my mother, that of developing the talents of others through warm appreciation and practical encouragement” (Willard and Norton 136).

Her father’s approach to childrearing, on the other hand, was very different. Josiah “desired to train his children after his own preconceived models; he would have planted and watered and grafted and clipped and primed character as he did the trees in which he delighted, making them to fit the places he chose for them”(Willard and Norton 138). Her mother, in contrast, had an instinct “less dominating and, for that reason, more influential. When a child was given her, the overpowering vision was of its inherent personality, its endless life, and the responsibility laid upon her as guardian and helper of its development, rather than as an architect to shape the young immortal according to her preconceived plans”(Willard and Norton 139). Mary Hill Willard saw the child as having to grow

free according to the law of its nature implanted by its Creator, and with the right to soil and sun, dew and shower and growth unhindered and untransformed; the work of the parent and instructor being to remove hindrances, to see that no deforming influences had power, and to feed and stimulate, never to repress or abridge its beneficent possibilities” (Willard and Norton 139).

In her lifetime work for the betterment of women, Frances Willard seems to have followed in the footsteps of her mother, working as gardener, rather than architect.

She presented many avenues and alternatives from which girls and women could choose after they had looked within themselves for the direction.

Frances and Mary Hill Willard's relationship was extremely influential in the WCTU. Their personal home, Rest Cottage, eventually became the organization's headquarters, and the two women shared their domestic and working space with many different organizational leaders throughout the 1880s. Frances's long-time assistant, Anna Gordon, later recalled, "Rest Cottage revolved around Mother Willard as its central luminary. We were all her satellites, and chief among us in that character was her devoted daughter. No question was so frequently on Miss Willard's lips as 'what would mother like? Let everything be as mother would wish'"(qtd. in Willard and Norton 234). When Willard wrote her late book *Occupations for Women*, she advocated this female lifestyle of cohabitation, saying, "The need of home is a vital one to every woman. Especially is this true of the woman who works, and above all, of the young woman who, more than her elder sister, needs the shelter and protection of a home roof during a most trying and critical period of her life." About setting up a house this way, she suggests a form modeled after her own, in which "there should be an elder one, who will take the position as head, and who will give propriety and dignity to the family" (66).

The temperance union grew to be a large enterprise, and Mary Hill Willard an important draw for the workers. As Anna Gordon later recalled of her,

Rest Cottage was becoming a famous shrine toward which the feet of many programs were tending. Like a vestal virgin, the mother-heart

kept there the altar fires ever burning. She looked in the faces, she clasped the hands of white-ribboners, and of their husbands, brothers and sons, from around the wide world . . . that her life was prolonged and her youth made perennial through her intense participation in the great work of reform, no one can doubt who has sat by that fireside, heard the blessing which she there implored upon the temperance work and workers at every noontide meal, and the prayers which every morning ascended from the family altar at which she was the high priest. (qtd. in Willard and Norton 88)

When Mary Hill Willard was unable to be present at the meetings, the WCTU would send her a telegram with greetings and “listen, as for the voice of a loved mother, for her reply” (Willard and Norton 88).

When Willard wrote *Occupations for Women* the year before her death at age 58, she showed the persistence of her mother’s influence in her ideas concerning women, their education, and their work. The book recalls the importance of young women living with ideals in comments that recall her mother’s iconic status. Taking the rhetorical position of older woman sage, Willard tells her readers “don’t hesitate, girls, to set your standard at perfection point. If you never reach it you will get much higher than those whose aims are lower. And write this sentence in your minds in letters of fire that they may brand themselves in, and become a part of your inmost consciousness: You will never be larger than your thought . . . A perfect thing must have a perfect pattern” (*Occupations* 87). In this book Willard notes the earlier

education pioneers Emma Willard, Beecher and Lyon for their “deep ethical influence,” and quotes kindergarten pioneer Elizabeth Peabody as stating that “moral education is the essence of all education”(Occupations 268). The persistence of a moral, womanly ideal of character standing before the classroom is to Willard more important than any curricular innovations that might have been made throughout her lifetime.

As She was Taught: Frances Willard’s Education

In 1857 Frances and her sister entered Milwaukee Female College (MFC), where their Aunt Sarah, Mary Hill Willard’s youngest sister, was a teacher. Aunt Sarah had gone to Oberlin with the Willard family to take classes for several years. MFC had been transformed according to the plan of Catharine Beecher, while the famed woman’s educator Mary Mortimer was the teacher who enacted this vision on the campus. When it first opened in 1851, the school had a male president, vice president, secretary and treasurer, with Mary Mortimer serving as its principal. Trustees of the school were both men and women. Mortimer had met Catharine Beecher when she had visited Harriet Beecher Stowe in Maine one year. In the fall season after the two had met, Beecher visited the school and delivered an address. When the Willards attended the school building contained no living quarters, so teachers and pupils boarded in private families. Frances and Mary boarded in the home of Dr. M.P. Hanson along with their aunt. Early biographer Ray Strachey, who knew Willard personally, states that this situation provided a “Christian atmosphere”

which “reminded them daily of Forest Home.” Under her aunt’s influence, Willard “now began to take a greater interest in religion, and even went to Bible classes with pleasure” (Strachey 61). Her relationship with her aunt, along with the Christian home environment, therefore combined to strengthen Frances’s faith. Later as an educator Frances continually emphasized the importance of creating this home atmosphere at educational institutions for women.

Willard’s cousin Minerva Brace Norton, herself a product of Beecher’s Hartford Female Seminary, wrote a biography of her teacher Mortimer. In the biography Norton states that Beecher “constantly enforced upon her teachers that education was not merely the communication of knowledge, but the formation of character. Each teacher had committed to her care a certain number of scholars whose character she was to study, whose affection she was to seek, and whom she was to strive, by all means in her power, to lead to moral and religious excellence”(Norton 112), efforts duplicated later by Willard and successful in her own religious growth. In addition, the school schedule was similar to that later created at the Evanston College for Ladies. Norton notes that “the first hour of every morning was given to a general religious exercise with the school, and the results of these exercises, and of the whole system of influences was such that multitudes can look back to the Hartford Female Seminary as the place where they received influences that shaped their whole life for their world and the world to come”(Norton 112). Later Willard would recall that before attending MFC “I was never in an institution where the moral atmosphere was so clear and invigorating” (*Glimpses* 94). Evidence of teaching as ministry at

MFC can be seen by the way in which a student's journals were used for self-examination and assessment of faith. Students had journals "in which every afternoon before leaving some note was to be made of desires awakened or hopes cherished, of bad defeats or victories gained. One room above became a hushed and hallowed place, as each week teacher and taught knelt after close of school, that deepest yearnings and new found purposes might have the seal of heaven"(Wight 6).

Mary Mortimer, aide to Catharine Beecher and instructor at the school, was in charge of the department entitled Government and Moral Instruction. Mortimer's letters, furnished in her memoir, indicate the all-consuming lifestyle of female teachers in the nineteenth century. Not only did they teach children their subject matter, they were responsible for their religious lives, and they often lived in the same homes with their students. Willard's cousin, who lived with Mortimer herself, indicates the intimacy with which students and teachers lived at that time. Willard's later Rest Cottage environment was apparently not so unusual for educated nineteenth-century women. "Every evening at nine o'clock the family assembled for prayers, which were usually led by Miss Mortimer's earnest voice and where it often seemed that we could feel her very heart-throbs"(Norton 166). Mortimer's own room, later shared by another teacher, "was on the opposite side of the hall, and back of both, the dining room where, usually to the number of six or eight, we gathered about the generous and home-like table, and the most stimulating and diverting talk, with many a witty sally and cheerful laugh, added piquancy to the viands" (Norton 166).

We see later in the memoir, however, that this all-consuming teaching life took its toll on Mortimer. She writes in a later letter that she is going to “resign housekeeping” (Norton 168). Catharine Beecher had earlier in her career been in charge of Hartford Female Seminary, and was therefore aware of the exhausting schedule of the schoolteacher’s life. Her pedagogical arguments seek to alleviate this easy home/school slippage and to insist on the teacher’s personal living space. Beecher writes in later bulletins for MFC that her goal is to build a cottage “in which the teachers can live so that they should have the quiet and comfort of an independent home, should not be forced to have a room-mate unless congenial, and should not be crowded into a great family of boarding scholars”(Norton 170). The difficulty of finding and getting a good boarding situation is named in a Mortimer letter as the reason for the Willard’s Aunt Sarah leaving the school. Mortimer herself left the school the same term that the Willards arrived, so they did not reap the benefits of her direct influence.

Among the marks students received at the school were those for punctuality, behavior and lessons (Norton 95). Fredericka Bremer had brought the Swedish method of gymnastics and calisthenics to the school. Willard states in reminiscence that at MFC “I joined the literary of the students, called ‘The Curious Society.’ It was composed of the most earnest and diligent among the students, who were supposed to have an insatiable curiosity, as every right minded person ought to have, concerning the problems of the universe, little and great. We wrote essays, held debates, recited poetry, and came always to each meeting armed with a sentiment from some great

author”(“Reminiscences” n.p.). At MFC Willard took courses in composition, and recited (examined orally) in history, geology and botany.

A catalogue from the year the Willards attended MFC gives a sense of the school’s regulations. It states “Parents and guardians are earnestly requested not to allow their daughters or wards, while pupils in this institution, to be in the habit of attending large parties or other places of amusement, calculated to interfere with their school duties. The results of the gaiety of another winter have more than ever impressed those who have charge of this school the incompatibility of late hours and excitement with health and moral and intellectual improvement”(*Annual Milwaukee* 15). This emphasis on female moral refinement continued into the next generation in the catalogue advertising the Evanston College for Ladies.

Willard’s later emphasis on the importance of being non-sectarian in religion seems to have been influenced by Beecher. In “An Appeal to American Women in their Own Behalf,” a pamphlet Beecher had published in order to advertise the MFC, Beecher sees the proliferation of women’s colleges as a way of fighting religious sectarianism. Beecher, however, was motivated by a desire to staunch the flow and success of westward moving Catholic educational institutions. She asserted Protestant commonality over difference, an approach Willard later assumed. “The grand difficulty in our newer settlements is the multiplicity of sects and the difficulty of bringing them to harmonize in the support of schools”(Beecher 2). Specifically, she notes the Episcopal, Presbyterian, and Methodist churches for establishing sectarian schools, suggesting that hers is an alternative.

The pamphlet states that the school will be organized “*on the college system*;
that is, that there should be a Faculty of co-equal teachers, instead of a Principal and subordinate teachers” (Beecher 2). The school would be governed by “a Board of Trustees created, in which most of the denominations of the place are represented and the pledge is given that every denomination shall have equal privileges and that the *peculiar* tenets of none shall be urged upon the pupils” (Beecher 2-3). Beecher states that “this plan aims to secure to American women the distinctive advantages now exclusively enjoyed by young men in the college system,” a system advantageous because it “is a faculty of co-equal teachers sustained by endowments, each being the head of a given department and no one having authority over the others. It is the opposite of what may be called the High School system, in which a principal assumes the whole responsibility of government and instruction, and employs subordinates entirely under his control.” Such a system, she argues, allows that a “professor is seldom employed more than two or three hours a day in teaching, and has the remainder of his time for self-improvement” (5). The central aim of the school, according to Beecher, is to educate women “for their profession,” which she delineates as “the care and development of the human body in the earliest period of life; the training of the human mind; the care and nursing of the sick; and the conservation of the domestic state”(6-7). Among her plans for the school is the creation of a normal department, where “the idea will constantly be sustained that to educate is a woman’s profession” (Beecher 8).

The Willard girls studied at Milwaukee only for one term, however. It is unclear why they left so suddenly, but some biographers state that it was because their Aunt Sarah left after that first semester and thus the girls would no longer have familial oversight. Formal schooling was very challenging to them because they had previously lacked educational structure, but the departure from the college was a profound disappointment to Frances, who enjoyed the stimulation tremendously. She stated in her autobiography “my heart ached when I left Milwaukee, and I was downright sorry to go home” (*Glimpses* 96). Willard later made sure that a sense of familial oversight reigned at the Evanston College for Ladies. It was her insistence upon its import that led ultimately to her resignation.

In 1858 the Willards entered the Northwestern Female College (NWFC) in Evanston Illinois, boarding while their parents remained in Wisconsin. The Methodist institution was more congenial to the religion of the Willard family. One of Frances’ first impressions of the school was its rules and regulations. She responded in her diary that year that there were “a good many, to be sure, but I guess we shall be able to keep them” (qtd. in *Glimpses* 106). NWFC was founded by Allegheny college graduate William P. Jones and his wife, a graduate of Mount Holyoke Seminary. About various teachers’ contributions to her spiritual state, Willard recalled that Mrs. Jones made “one of the deepest impressions” of her school life (*Glimpses* 98, 101). One evening Mrs. Jones visited Willard’s room and “asked if she might pray with me. I told her I would be very glad to have her, whereupon we knelt down beside my bed and with her arm around me she prayed earnestly that I might be led to see the light

and do the right. I am sure that every school-girl if approached as wisely and as gratefully as I was by that good and noble woman, would respond as gratefully as I did" (*Glimpses* 119). Professor Jones recalled of Frances "the many influences of the college had aided her, and the child of God had felt her way back to His arms. Father's and Mother's teachings were holy truths to her once more" (qtd. *Glimpses* 122). At NWFC, the school was seen as a path of return from pupil to parent, certainly a great departure from today's secular collegiate institutions. Willard's ECL would later attempt to retain this sense of home and spirit.

While the school seemed to have challenged Willard in terms of religious faith, she found disappointments regarding curriculum. She later recalled that "up to that time, my life had known no greater disappointment than the decision of my mother that I could not study Latin and Greek" (*Glimpses* 114). At NWFC Willard again took part in the literary 'Minerva Society,' where, she tells us "we each wore a little gold 'M' as our insignia, and our exercises were very much the same as those" in previous literary societies ("Reminiscences" n.p.). Willard would later emphasize the importance of literary societies in the education of her students at ECL.

In December of the Willard girls' first year at NWFC, Josiah leased his farm and he and Mary Hill Willard moved to Evanston, touted at that time as "the Methodist Athens of the Northwest" because the city had the largest Protestant denomination in the country, offered the Garrett Biblical Institute, and was the location of Northwestern University, founded in 1851. Accounts of the NFC commencement the year following Willard's graduation detail the presentation such

an evening afforded. Closing exercises for the term included oral examinations performed before an audience (recitation), musical concerts, and public exercises of the Minerva Society. Examinations were given in mathematics, natural history and philosophy, rhetoric, and astronomy (*Family n.p.*). The Minerva Society, of which Willard was a member, gave its presentation in the Methodist Episcopal Church, including essays and a debate “on the comparative power of prose and poetry to develop the emotional nature.” The debate, however apolitical, was noted in the Evanston paper as being “closely contested” and “there were few, if any puerilities on either side— sound logic and keen rhetoric were the rule” (*Family n.p.*). Frances received her diploma from NWFC in the scientific course in 1859. While studying at NWFC, she wrote in her journal about reading Frances Wayland’s *Elements of Moral Science*, a popular textbook designed to systematize basic rules of conduct and to suggest the most efficient way of cultivating one's moral character (*Writing 50*).

After moving to Evanston, Willard’s father Josiah ended farm life and commenced as a banker in Chicago. Beginning in 1860, he served on the board of trustees of the city of Evanston, eventually becoming president in 1867. After their parents moved into town, Mary and Frances continued at NWFC as day students, while Oliver Willard attended Garrett Biblical Institute to study for the ministry. Karin E. Gedge’s study of ministerial change in the nineteenth century indicates that Oliver Willard entered the seminary during a period of professionalization. It is important to understand the position of ministry in Frances Willard’s time because she was devoted to the idea of ministry, despite the fact that her church did not

sanction women in this position. In all the institutions she inhabited, both educational and reform, Willard combined teaching and ministry so that women and men might better understand woman's place in the Gospel. She served as teacher and minister to students and the larger public, even stating later "school teaching would not have been my first choice, but theology—always my dearest though most unconfessed and possibly half-conscious with—was then "'not open' to 'the sisterhood'"(*Reminiscences n.p.*).

At the time that young men such as Oliver Willard sought ministerial training, the ministry was being transformed from an earlier model of formal detachment to a newer model of informal familiarity toward congregations. Seminaries at this time aimed for a balance between the two forms. The new seminary paradigm of mid-century strived to create in a minister an "enterprising competitor in the masculine public sphere," who could be a professional accepted and respected for his training and skill. The new seminary curriculum "upgraded a student's preparation in classical languages, controversial theology, and rhetoric" in order to enhance expertise and professional credentials," while at the same time downgrading "practical pastoral duties and experience"(Gedge 112).

Instead, these practical duties "began to be entrusted to the female congregants" such as Frances Willard (Gedge 113). The result was that the seminary-trained minister was raised in status at the same time that the pastor's relationship to his parishioners was undermined, placed instead more firmly into the masculine public sphere and away from the feminine domestic sphere, and the largely female

constituency (Gedge 119). By mid-century, Christian denominations such as the Baptists and Methodists also increasingly adopted the new masculine model. Good character was no longer a sufficient qualification for the ministry; instead, “elevated intellectual character” was the ideal (Gedge 119). Willard’s self-cultivation of character is thus both self-motivated and can be seen as a result of the religious institutions of which she was a part, not only in the church, where she was one of the women responsible for some of the practical pastoral duties, but also in the institutions where she taught, as we will see later. Her frustration with a lack of classical training perhaps points to her knowledge of the discrepancy between the preparation of male clergy and the preparation of women for less-public endeavors.

Gedge sees the era of ministerial professionalization for men as a period that created a gap between ministers and their congregants at a time when women had become the majority of congregants. “The experienced relationship, as revealed in the private writings of pastors, fails to exhibit a specific mission to women or even any attempt to forge close spiritual relationships specifically with female parishioners” while the woman’s private writings show that they “were disillusioned, disappointed, and discontented with their spiritual counselors in a variety of ways resulting in a church divided, rather than a single, feminized church (Gedge 219-220). Willard was a part of educational institutions that seemed to be a form of resolution to this gap. Under her teaching and leadership, women among women watched and nurtured each other’s religious lives both in formal educational institutions and in organizations such as the WCTU. Women such as Willard, who had been largely educated at

women's seminaries and had experienced woman teachers practicing this pastoral role, went on to create their own seminaries of sorts in their schools and clubs.

Teaching in "Precept and Example": Cultivating Character in the Schools

Frances Willard seemed to believe that hardship due to various efforts at self-support would be character building. She stated in her autobiography "not to be at all, or else to be a teacher, was the alternative presented to aspiring young women of intellectual proclivities when I was young" (*Glimpses* 133). Before taking on her first teaching position in 1860, she wrote in her journal

If I become a teacher in some school that I do not like, if I go away alone and try what I myself can do and suffer, and am tired and lonesome; if I am in a position where I must have all the responsibility myself and must be alternately the hammer that strikes and the anvil that bears, but always one of them, I think I may grow to be strong and earnest in practice, as I have always tried to be in theory. So here goes for a fine character. If I were not intent upon it, I could live contented here at Swampscott all my days. (Gifford *Writing* 140)

This school that Frances did not like, where she went away "alone," was in Harlem Illinois, an area that is now western suburban Chicago. She took the job against the wishes of her family, "who would have preferred taking care of me, but who gave me their blessing when they saw I was 'bound to go'" (*Autobiography* n.p.). In her autobiography she states that she was late in requesting a position from the

superintendent of the public schools. He told her she might want to wait until the following season, as there was only one school left unstaffed, and “it was the least desirable of all upon his list, away on the prairie . . . attended almost exclusively by the children of foreigners” (*Glimpses* 134). At Harlem she taught Botany, U.S. History, Algebra, Arithmetic, and Grammar (Gifford *Writing* 70).

Willard described the schoolhouse in Harlem as “dirty beyond description, with broken windows, *baked* floor and cobwebs mingled” (Gifford *Writing* 68). Contrary to living the life of the “natural” motherly pedagogue, Willard writes that because these students are so unruly, “I’ve been obliged to ‘box the ears’ of two little reprobates—apply the ferule to the brown palms of four more, and lay violent hands on another still and coerce him into a measure that did not exactly meet his views,” sorry but feeling forced “to do so by the total depravity of their conduct” (Gifford *Writing* 74). While living in Harlem she boarded with the Thatcher family, befriending their daughter, Clara, just five years younger. Willard saw Clara as unreligious, and therefore took it upon herself to “exert a good influence over this new Friend of mine” (Gifford *Writing* 71). The experiences at Harlem were trying for Frances, for she had never been away from her family. However, she saw her homesick reveries as “not strengthening but weakening my character” (Gifford *Writing* 77), not exactly the goal she had in mind by taking on the hardship. One of Willard’s contributions to the Harlem “infidels” was to establish a “Sabbath school,” which 23 students attended. At this school was the first time Willard “prayed anything save ‘Our Father’ aloud in public” (Gifford *Writing* 81). She stayed at

Harlem for one term, but the experience was one in which she saw a large expanse distancing her own culture from that of her students. In this instance, Willard had insisted upon creating a Christian culture for young “infidels” where it had not existed before—much as she provided a culture for American women later in the WCTU.

Throughout her entire teaching and leadership career, Willard saw the cultivation of character as central. At the age of twenty-one she remarked in her journal

I fear I don't view the matter of teaching seriously enough. It is not easy to look at the stolid little faces—of a majority of my pupils—with their natural expressionlessness aggravated by the 'German element' in their constitution and education, and 'imagine' how they're to live on and on as long as God lives; how I'm to help them on to endless bliss and wisdom that lays hold on Eternal Life or leave them—at best—as I found them. It is the hardest thing in the world. (Gifford *Writing* 78)

In response to this classroom of the "uncultivated," Willard writes that about seven out of thirty-seven are “civilized, while the rest can respond only to physical discipline. Remembering how much influence I necessarily have with these 40 immortal souls under my care, I'll try to teach them well, and Thou, O God, wilt guide and teach me and make me useful to them”(Gifford *Writing* 79). Though Willard left the challenges of Harlem at year’s end, she remained committed to uplifting the spiritual life of her students, what she saw as education’s central aim.

The following term, Willard taught at the Methodist Kankakee Academy in Illinois, where she was assistant to head teacher Professor Woodruff. There she boarded at a house close to the academy, but her room had no carpet or stove (Gifford *Writing* 92). Kankakee seems to have been a more upscale school than Harlem; Willard writes in her journal at the time that she has “a cozy little recitation room all to myself, with carpet, stove, seat, curtains, paper”(Gifford *Writing* 91). Her employer, Woodruff, is “very obliging and gives me my choice of classes in most instances; I have no disciplining to do, but stay in my room & hear my classes. The pupils are highly civilized—so different from most of my Harlemites—& seem anxious to learn” (Gifford *Writing* 91).

Later, however, she becomes disillusioned with the school population, realizing that being “highly civilized” has its drawbacks. She calls Kankakee “a town of money-getters and fashion-worshippers,” noting its lack of religion. This lack, as Willard saw it, was not good for her spirituality. Instead she believed that living in Kankakee would make her “descend to their level” rather than bringing them up to hers. As a result, she said “I do not come up to the measure of nobleness of which even I am capable, in mind & heart & conscience . . . I adjust myself to my surroundings. I find it very hard to think of God & Christ . . . I am not morally strong and upright” (Gifford *Writing* 100). However, she sees that living among religious “nonprofessors” has caused her to be more open-minded about morality, for she sees “a thousand signs of nobleness & right-heartedness . . . It enlarges my charity— my faith in mankind as such, my catholicity— my cosmopolitan spirit. And this is a *gain*

surely” (Gifford *Writing* 101). This sense of judgment and criticism when others do not fit culturally within her religious lens is reiterated in Willard’s later European journals.

Willard’s journals of this period indicate that this was one of the most difficult times in her young life. As she was away teaching, Willard’s brother, Oliver, had courted her closest friend, Mary Bannister. Willard came to the realization that she would have to give up their passionate love. Her closest friend for a number of years, they had an intimacy that appears from the journal mutually affectionate. It is interesting to consider the way in which Willard's love for women was manifested. Willard sought the love of a man but was never able to truly feel it, and therefore was unwilling to get married. She saw her "fate" as being among women for a purpose. However, being intimately involved with other women was the predominant manner of living her entire life. As Carroll Smith-Rosenberg has described, many nineteenth-century middle class women had relationships that were both sensual and platonic (4). Such female relationships were frequently supported and paralleled by severe social restrictions on intimacy between young men and women. “Within such a world of emotional richness and complexity, devotion to a love of other women became a plausible and socially accepted form of human interaction” (Smith-Rosenberg *Female* 9). As Frances Willard and Mary Bannister grew in age, Willard's brother, Oliver, began to court Mary, and Willard saw the inevitable change that would occur in their relationship. Eventually, Mary Bannister married Oliver. The year 1861 was

incredibly difficult for Willard, who felt she had not only lost her best friend, but had to remain on these different terms for the rest of her life.

At the same time that this important friendship changed, Charles Fowler, a young seminarian who would eventually become president of Northwestern University, courted Willard. The journal depicts their relationship as a highly progressive one for the era: Willard tells him that she needs time, that she doesn't love him, and he gives her the space and respect that she needs. Willard really does try to love Fowler, recognizing in him a rare individual for the age, who affirms this extraordinary woman's rights. But pray as Willard does, her God does not grant her love for Fowler, and she tells Fowler that she can't marry him without it. When faced with her love for Mary and her lack of it for Charlie Fowler, Willard writes "I have suffered more tonight than ever before in my life. Why was it sent upon me? What lesson will it teach? What richer will it make my character? –O!! I don't know. I wonder why I need to suffer so"(Gifford *Writing* 135). Willard's religious beliefs are that God chose to have her live this life of love for women for a reason. She saw the "natural" course for most women as that of her friend Mary Bannister—to find a man who one loves, and devote the remainder of her life to family. That God chose not to do so with Willard, she believed, forced her to engage in a more public destiny.

For a short period of time she attempted to marry Fowler despite her lack of love, comparing her marriage to martyrdom, and trying to see some purpose in God's making her suffer. "Praying for the Love that might make Two Lives calm and rich and full of value. Feeling honor and kindness where I should feel the deeper

sentiments of vital love and sleepless care. Knowing what is best and beautiful . . . separated from feeling—as if I were indeed a paralyzed thing"(Gifford *Writing* 157). Ultimately, Willard decides that her emotions have a truth of their own which must be pursued, and she breaks off the engagement. Much later in life, in her book *Occupations for Women* (1897), Willard advised young girls on their attitude towards marriage. She counseled them to choose a relationship “not based, as it so often is, upon mere physical attraction, but upon the higher plane of mind and character. Marriage is a partnership, in which each partner has equal duties and equal rights”(486).

In 1862 Willard returned to Evanston, teaching at the Evanston Public School. This school she later recalled as “a thoroughly American type. There sat the sons and daughters of men cultured, distinguished, rich, beside the barefoot boy and girl from humble cabins” (*Glimpses* 164). In a diary at the time we witness the religious work still perpetuated in the public school; her religious disposition toward her students is not different from that in the religious schools in which she teaches. She reviews a day in which “at devotions in the morning, when I read and pray before them I feel their weight a little, and thrilling desire to help them toward eternal life. It is hard for me to conduct devotions, yet I prize this possibility of doing good” (*Glimpses* 164-165).

From 1864 to 1866, Willard worked at the Grove School, a private institution founded by Edward Haskin, an Evanston benefactor. At Grove they had students from toddlers to teenagers, and according to Willard “the problem of government” was a

bit of a challenge (*Glimpses* 186). There Willard began the program “The Bank of Character,” where students each had accounts with different values. “Every absence, tardiness, failure in recitation, case of whispering, was subtracted from the bank account” (*Glimpses* 186). Willard’s cousin who attended Beecher’s school, Minerva Brace Norton, was the first teacher at Grove. Kate Jackson, the woman with whom she later traveled in Europe and the Middle East, also taught there with her. Willard says that as a composition instructor, she had a list of tabooed subjects: “Home, Hope, The Seasons, Spring, especially, Beauty, Youth, Old Age, The Weather. I did not allow them to use ‘twas, ‘tis, ’neath, ’th’, e’en, though they much inclined to drop into poetry to this extent” (*Glimpses* 187). At the end of each session the university chapel would be packed for the school’s “exhibition,” and students got several awards. Willard states in her autobiography, written 23 years later, that she no longer believes in encouraging competition. Instead, she states, “I have become an ardent believer in cooperation as a principle destined some day to overthrow the selfishness of competition” (*Glimpses* 186). This cooperative stance proved tremendously successful in the WCTU, but the school closed the following year in order to encourage the success of the Evanston public school system.

Throughout the teaching days of the 1860s, Willard’s journal indicates her support for women’s right to vote. She also shows her desire to speak publicly, yet she retains her commitment to the convention that only men are allowed to do so. In 1861, Willard heard her first temperance lecture; Frances and Mary joined the Methodist Episcopal Church her family attended, and Frances taught Sunday school.

While still recovering from the crisis over her relationship with Mary Bannister, Willard's sister Mary fell ill with tuberculosis, and died one month later at the age of nineteen. Shortly afterward, Mary Bannister married Oliver and moved to Denver, where Oliver was assigned a church. The elder Willards, grief stricken, sold both Forest Home in Wisconsin and their home in Evanston. Mary Hill Willard went back to western New York to visit family for an extended period, and Willard's father boarded in downtown Chicago, near his office.

After the death of her sister Mary and the departure of her parents from Evanston, Frances remained to live and teach at her alma mater, Northwestern Female College, as "Preceptress of the Natural Sciences." When she got the job, she recorded in her journal "I was wild and wicked as a pupil; in the same building may I be consistent and a Christian as a teacher." In a single day at the school she records her schedule, one she writes down in order to justify her fatigue:

Rose a little after six, made my toilet for the day and helped to arrange the room; went to breakfast, looked over the lessons of the day, although I had already done that yesterday; conducted devotions in the chapel; heard advanced class in arithmetic, one in geometry, one in elementary algebra, one in Wilson's Universal History, talked with Miss Clark at noon; dined, rose from the table to take charge of an elocution class, next zoology, next geology, next physiology, next mineralogy, then came upstairs and sat down in my rocking-chair as one who would prefer to rise no more! (Gifford *Writing* 171)

When we see the schedule of a typical schoolteacher of the nineteenth century such as Willard, we can understand more fully Catharine Beecher's suggestion that teachers at the secondary level be required to master only one subject. Five academic fields and the student's spiritual life was daunting work for a single individual. While Frances was back in Evanston, her parents returned and began building Rest Cottage, but Josiah Flint Willard had to retire from banking that year because of ill health. Meanwhile, Frances became secretary of the Methodist Ladies' Centenary Association, a fundraising organization for the Evanston church.

The following year, Willard left Evanston to teach at Pittsburgh Female College (PFC), a Methodist secondary school where she stayed for three terms, teaching elocution, geometry, history, geography, and grammar at the preparatory school. At PFC Willard participated in The Browning, a literary society formed of teachers and students. A school catalogue of the time states that the society members "give entertainments to select audiences in the College chapel every six weeks. More public exhibitions will also be given by the pupils selected by the faculty at the close of each term." A prize would be given to "the young lady judged the best Reader at the close of the spring term—the award to be made by three literary gentlemen selected for the purpose" (*Annual Pittsburgh* 39).

As she teaches at PFC, Willard has a sense that she wants to play a role more public than that of teacher. In one of her journal conversations with herself at age twenty-four, what she calls her "soliloquies," she asks,

Frances Willard why do you plan to go on teaching ad infinitum—not to Pittsburgh it is, thence Cincinnati (in your plans) and thence some other where? Why do you content yourself with such a hedged up life—acquiring money so slowly—with such an obscure life. There is no need. You have abilities for something beyond this—don't cheat yourself of your rights . . . stir yourself—be determined to write—books if you please, why not? Be intent upon it—your field of usefulness may be much extended—God thinks it fit to have ambitions—you are on earth now, deal with the earth. (Gifford *Writing* 194)

Ironically, while Willard sees her life as a teacher as being "hedged up," it appears to this modern reader that she had a relatively open life as a teacher, being exposed as a single woman to different communities and cities with each teaching position she took. Yet it becomes clear that the preservation of character is what ties a woman down. While living on her own, Willard is escorted in most of her public movement, either by her father or a male member of the community. She writes in her journal with envy "Think of a man's career! Of his broader sphere than ours. Is it not so? In all this week I have not 'stepped my foot' outside this house. Have been just here. Yet I've been well and able to go out. What would a healthy man have thought of such confinement? *I'll extend my sphere some day!*"(Gifford *Writing* 206, Willard's emphasis).

A look at the school catalogue from PFC shows just how “homelike” the life of a female student was expected to be. The catalogue states that “with the facilities for acquiring a thorough and collegiate education, are combined those of the home circle of a well-regulated family. Their manners, their social habits, and associations, will be under the continual watch-care of the President and Governess” (39). Like the Milwaukee Female College, the PFC seeks to seamlessly adhere to childhood forms of disciplined governance. The school acts as a sort of parental surrogate, whose regulations “will rest less on penalties for the violation of law, than on affection and mutual confidence and the removal of temptations to do wrong.” In addition, “prompt obedience, strict order, correct deportment and industry, will be mildly but firmly insisted upon” (*Annual Pittsburgh* 41). As in other catalogues for woman’s educational institutions of the day, it assures parents that “it will be the constant aim” of the school authorities “to make their house the home of the young ladies committed to their care, and . . . to promote their mental and moral development” (42).

The school rules indicate strict control of student activity. Students can’t leave class without permission, boarders can’t attend parties or picnics to walk, ride, or correspond with any gentlemen other than their father, brother, uncle, or guardian; they cannot be absent on Sabbath except with parents and relatives, visit the city or country except with the permission of parents or guardians; all calls from non-residents must be in the office or public parlor; they must ask permission from the Governess to invite friends to their rooms; they can only receive calls on Fridays and

Saturdays but they can never receive gentlemen, other than near relatives, except by the permission of parents or guardians. All books read must be submitted to the President for approval. Correspondence between parents and children is unlimited, but all other correspondence is “liable to inspection” (*Annual Pittsburgh* 40)

Under “rhetorical exercises,” it states that each class is divided into sections in which they take turns preparing and reading compositions. “One of the more advanced scholars reads a composition every morning in the College chapel, and one hour of each Friday afternoon is devoted to the same exercises in the presence of the pupils and the Faculty”(39). The catalogue states that students may take a course in elocution, a subject Willard taught. Religious life at the school begins each day “with the reading of a Scripture lesson, singing and prayer. All the religious instruction of the college is based upon the broad principles held by all evangelical Christians,’ and as in Beecher’s school, “nothing of a merely sectarian character is permitted to disturb the peace and harmony of those gathered within its walls” (*Annual Pittsburgh* 40).

Pittsburgh Female College was founded in 1855 under the patronage of the Methodist Episcopal Church, Willard’s denomination. She taught there in 1863 and 1864. Willard’s colleague there recalled, “Miss Willard had a wonderfully magnetic influence over young girls. She believed in them, trusted them, stood by them often when others condemned. She sought out those who were shy and retiring and who had little confidence in themselves, praised them for their smallest efforts, and sought to inspire them with her own high ideals of life and character”(E. Hart 13). Among

the tools of instruction in society at PFC was “the development of poise and self-assurance,” taught at meetings each alternate Friday on “social culture,” in the “College parlor for the purpose of social intercourse, and also in order to instruct the pupils in the usages and requirements of good society”(E. Hart 20). “Leisure moments” at the college were spent in daily walks around the city, “chaperoned by one of the teachers” (E. Hart 21). If they were to run into young gentlemen at this time “they were not allowed to stop to talk. The route taken on these strolls was changed from time to time to prevent advance notice being given for a ‘chance meeting’ at any specified spot” (E. Hart 21). In this history of the college it is stated that reading was one of the few forms of entertainment approved by the school, “since the theater was frowned upon as a medium of education or entertainment,” but the reading matter was “first examined thoroughly by a member of the faculty whose power of veto was considered final” (E. Hart 20).

The college gave entertainments for some students who were permitted to invite their “beaux” to attend. The entertainment, if not a concert by music students, was usually the presentation of ‘tableaux’ or living pictures. Students and their dates would play charades between entertainments, “especially liked by the gentlemen because they provided an excellent opening for a display of wit and cleverness” (E. Hart 22-23). After the entertainments were over

there was no lingering about the departure of the gentlemen— the chaperones saw to that. The rules concerning the gentlemen guests of the students were ironbound and without exception. A boarding

student was required to present a letter of approval from her parents before she might even have a gentleman call to pay his respects.

Entirely too many handsome 'cousins' besieging the school made this ruling necessary. Notes from young men to boarding students were censored by school authorities before delivery, and the girls were forbidden to reply directly. (E. Hart 23)

The school's mission impressed upon its students "the greatness of religion and the need of it in their lives as citizens of a growing community" (E. Hart 70). Willard is listed in the faculty of the history as teacher of "belles lettres." In 1863, the first year Willard taught at the school, there were twelve graduates, seven in classical study and five in English (E. Hart 136). The following year, when Willard taught two more terms, there were 17 graduates, 10 in classical and seven in English. Reading Willard's descriptions of her teaching days, it is easy to see the way in which some nineteenth-century teaching was akin to a position in the ministry. In Willard's case there was no separation between church and school—the purpose of education was both scholastic and religious. As the catalogues of Willard's schools indicate, emphasis was firmly on the latter.

The next year, 1866, Willard was preceptress at the coeducational Genesee Wesleyan Seminary (GWS), the school that ultimately became Syracuse University. When she arrives and finds her work congenial, she writes in her journal that she has at last found her vocation, declaring, "I was meant for a preceptress!" (Gifford *Writing* 237). She looked forward to working there, because being from the West, she stated

that it was fascinating that the place had a history. “It was a co-education school and Oberlin life had proved to our folks that this was the natural, hence the wise, way” (*Glimpses* 190). Erastus Haven, later president at Northwestern, taught at GWS as well. His wife states in his autobiography that the school was very important in the movement toward coeducation, stating that it was “impartial to the sexes from the beginning.” Like ECL, it was a small college attached to a large academy. Haven states that it was the first to confer Bachelor’s and Master’s of Arts to women in the United States (71).

At GWS Willard taught one composition class and one rhetoric class—much improved conditions over her previous 5-subject assignments. Willard was also responsible for giving the girls “chapel talks,” stating that “I talked to them in a familiar, sisterly fashion about all sorts of things interesting to them and to me. It was an hour of genuine pleasure on my part, and they professed to like it, too” (*Glimpses* 194). She prepared the seminary’s graduating ceremonies and helped seniors finish their essays, coaching them for the public presentation of their work. At this school, Willard began to see the potential of female students as rhetors. She observes in her journal at the time “girls are ten times as quick as boys. In Rhetoric the last do wretchedly” (*Glimpses* 193). An example of a typical day at GWS shows that she is responsible for registration of new students, encouraging homesick girls with guidance and prayer, and conferencing with concerned parents (*Glimpses* 192).

As a teacher, Willard is often disappointed in the production of her pupils. After correcting student essays she groans, “there is in this Institution the least talent

for writing, that I have ever, anywhere seen. Their dreary inanities about Hope—
Summer and Home are mournful to contemplate"(Gifford *Writing* 239). We will later
see that Willard encouraged her students to write on more interesting contemporary
issues. She writes in response to the graduating ceremony "all went off finely—save
that the girls greatly vexed and disappointed me by their low reading," and the next
morning she "slept long and heavily" after the previous night's "tragic
performance"(Gifford *Writing* 248). Perhaps in cultivating virtue as well as speech,
Willard saw greater student potential.

The decade of the 1860s included Willard's experiences in formal education
and the years in which she became aware of injustices to women. Throughout this
period, she attended lectures by various speakers who advocated new freedoms and
contributions from women. Willard was able to combine such thinking with her
religious beliefs by characterizing Christ, the most public of the virtuous, as a
feminine character. Willard sees Christ as a spiritual body steeped in values declared
feminine: "Oh how kind and loving and gentle was Christ! He never was harsh; he
never was severe . . . He had sympathy and pity and compassion for us always! He
never was impatient, He never was tyrannical . . . How forgiving was his spirit, how
tender!"(Gifford *Writing* 55). In 1866, Willard attended the sermons of Phoebe and
Walter Palmer, and was greatly moved by them. Phoebe Palmer had a "domestic,
middle-class model of ministry" that endeared her to Methodist ministers in churches
such as those Willard attended in Evanston. "Instead of building on the work of the
women who had gone before her" such as those who preached to the working class,

“she tried to forge a new more genteel model of ministry”(Brekus 338). Willard considered entering the temperance movement after hearing the Palmers.

Also that year, Willard attended a lecture titled “The American Woman” featuring noted male suffragist Theodore Tilton. She responded in her journal “I never heard anything better— or that so much inspired me. Theodore Tilton is the bright, fearless Apostle of woman in the nineteenth century & doesn’t utter a word to which my heart fails to respond.” After hearing him speak, she declared “my purpose is confirmed—my object in life clearer than ever before. What I can do in large and little ways, by influence, by pen, by observation, for woman, in all Christian ways, that I will do. And may God help me!”(Gifford *Writing* 266). Speaking of woman suffrage in her journal again the next day, she writes, “all the educated men I know—with one exception . . . believe it, too. Well, let us work and pray for it then and the theory so nobly set before us last evening will become the everyday fact ten years hence”(26). As a teacher Willard was required to develop her speaking skills in order to promote and solicit school funding, acceptable forums from which women could speak. In 1862 she took three classes with traveling speech instructor Professor Tavernier, a man professing to be the greatest elocutionist in the United States (Slagell 32). Throughout the 1860s, Willard remained within the conventional boundaries for women speakers, addressing only female audiences or speaking within accepted feminine roles as a teacher, a member of a school literary society, or a Sunday school instructor (Slagell 36).

In 1868, Josiah Willard died in Churchville, New York after a protracted battle with tuberculosis. Following her father's death, Willard went on a long sojourn to Europe and the Middle East with her friend Kate Jackson, whose wealthy father financed the trip. The two traveled from 1868 to 1870, and returned to Evanston, where Jackson lived with the Willard family at Rest Cottage. While Frances was abroad, Oliver Willard and family returned to Evanston, where he became editor of the *Chicago Evening Mail* (later the *Post*).

The European Trip: Character and the "Woman Question"

From 1868 to 1870, Willard took a European tour financed by her friend Kate Jackson's father, founder of the New Jersey Locomotive Works. She spent an entire year in Paris, learning French and German and studying at the Sorbonne. She recalled later that on her tour "I studied language and the History of Art, visited every capital save those of Spain, Portugal and Norway—also 'went up the Nile,' made the tour of Palestine, visited Greece and returned by Constantinople and the Danube to Vienna" (*Autobiography* n.p.). She also took class at the Sorbonne from Eduouard Laboulaye, lawyer, liberal politician, and senator, noting that about thirty women stood outside the door on one side with males entering on the other, while the professor entered and "appeared upon the platform, took his seat before a table, pronounced the word 'Messieurs' & launched into his subject, being repeatedly interrupted by the applause that signalized his first appearance" (Gifford *Writing* 290). Willard's lack of comment on the division between the sexes in the classroom, with

no female address from the lecturer, indicates the atmosphere for a woman attending the university at this time.

During her European travel, Willard began her investigations of woman's situation on an international scale. She met Anna Blackwell, an American woman's rights supporter living in Paris, who arranged for Willard to meet French woman's rights supporter Julie Victoire Daubie, author of a book on poor women's status. Daubie sent Willard on for the remainder of the tour with addresses and letters of introduction to other Parisians who shared her point of view with copies of a new journal, *Les Droits des Femmes*. Her interaction with the Parisians caused Willard to add women's economic disabilities to her analysis of woman's situation (Gifford *Writing* 273).

At age thirty Willard declared her intent to go public with her ideas, "to study as far as possible by reading, learning of languages and personal observation, the aspects of the 'Woman Question' in France, Germany and England" and upon her return to "talk in public of the matter, and cast myself with what weight or weakness I possess against the only foe of what I conceive to be the justice of the subject—unenlightened public opinion"(Gifford *Writing* 292, Willard's emphasis). She continues to describe her hesitancy: "With 'encouragement' I believe myself capable of rendering services of some value in the word- &-idea-battle that will only deepen with years and must at last have a result that will delight all who have hastened it"(Gifford *Writing* 292). Amy Slagell points out that the European trip forced Willard to draw three conclusions regarding women's inequality: first, that the

problem could be approached optimistically, as the problem arose from “unenlightened public opinion”; second, that Christianity was a source of empowerment for women, rather than an impediment, after making judgments regarding the treatment of non-Christian women in other countries; and third, that the problem of woman’s role should not raise public indignation (Slagell 42-43).

Willard sees her travel in Europe as purely intellectual, and therefore missing moral strength. Throughout her career as student and teacher, she discusses the importance of educating both mentally and morally. For her, education is lacking—even indulgent—if it does not combine the two. She hopes that this lack of moral purpose in her European tour will be redeemed by her mother's maternal power: "I have lived a life so purely intellectual—so selfish and unconsecrated—since I came abroad, that I dare hope for so much happiness only because dear Mother is so good and prays so constantly for me"(Gifford *Writing* 322). She feels she owes something to her fellow women for the fortune bestowed on her, stating "I wonder if so much happiness is in reserve for me, as to give some honest help in the generous new crusade? To write or utter some earnest words for evolution, not revolution—for womanly liberty"(Gifford *Writing* 323). Willard sees that she must bring the feminine moral force in conjunction with her intellectual, masculine and public vocation.

In 1869 Willard, the child of the open prairie, visited the “gilded abomination” of the Jardin Mabille in Paris. The public park apparently was filled with colorful Parisian nightlife, where prostitutes danced the waltz with Frenchmen of the upper

classes. The connection between morality and economic power is not lost in her observations. Willard responds in horror that she has “a renewed resolution to *help women* if I can— to labor for their *financial independence* among other things— which will surely put them on a vantage ground against temptation—and to give them other ambitions— a true aim in life”(Gifford *Writing* 309, Willard’s emphasis). In response to the degradation of women she sees in Egypt, she responds "that two and two make four is not more capable of demonstration than that in every age and country, woman has been the stone around man's neck to sink him to the lowest depths or the winged angel to help him to the purest heights he has ever gained"(Gifford *Writing* 335).

At this point Willard begins to admire various speakers who advocate for the cause of women's rights, finding that "the men best educated—most gifted—liberated most from prejudice and the unilluminated past, think of woman as a human soul placed by a kind Creator on the earth to do and be all that she can—unfettered by any law or custom so long as her freedom touches on the just rights of no other human soul." She is moved to declare, "May I be brave enough to speak in a womanly voice my honest word in this behalf!"(Gifford *Writing* 298). Here Willard's theology points to a Creator who has given woman a place from which to transform the world through public voice. Upon returning from her world tour, Willard continued on the path she had created for herself in woman’s advocacy by training in public speech. She studied under Robert McClean Cumnock, Northwestern Professor of Rhetoric and Elocution, and Director of the School of Oratory. She worked with him daily for four months in

1877 or 1878. Cumnock's theory of elocution was atypical for the time because of its emphasis on a natural style, an emphasis which seems to have influenced Willard throughout her life in her own delivery as well as her advice to the women of the WCTU (Slagell 70-71).

While still in Europe, Willard frequently corresponded with her mother about Evanston's social happenings. Among the most interesting to her was the Ladies Educational Association of Evanston, which was in the beginnings of planning a college for women. Willard's mother and ten other women were part of this society, which had members prominent in Evanston and Chicago. The following year, the Evanston College for Ladies (ECL) was chartered by the Ladies Educational Association, with the aim of promoting education for girls directed and controlled by women. Shortly afterward, William P. Jones Jr., Methodist minister and principal of NWFC, agreed to transfer his school to the ECL. In addition, Northwestern University changed its policy to admit women. Students at ECL could take classes at the university, supplemented by a course of study in fine arts and history taught by the college's all-female faculty. The college provided its students with the supervision and protection at that time thought to be necessary for young women, with a dormitory and system of self-government unusual for the time. While these plans were being made, Willard continued her travel abroad, but recorded in her journal that she was committed to working for the cause of woman.

In 1871, after Willard had returned from Europe, Evanston donated the land for ECL. Northwestern Female College merged with the proposed school, and

Willard became its president. That summer, Willard, along with the Woman's Educational Association, started the campaign to raise thirty thousand dollars for the college. Before the school even opened, however, ECL became connected with Northwestern University, supplanting the Northwestern Female College, Willard's alma mater. That September, Willard began her tenure as ECL president. In this position she became known throughout the Chicago area for her fundraising efforts and her direction of the college. Tragically, one month after school began was the Chicago fire, and many who had pledged to support the new school were unable to meet their subscriptions. Willard gave her first paid lecture, "The New Chivalry," in which she argued for women to work alongside men for the moral improvement of the nation and the world. At the end of the school year Willard became the first woman college president to confer degrees at ECL's first and only commencement, held somewhat inauspiciously in the basement of the unfinished Methodist church in Evanston. In 1872 Charles Fowler, Willard's former fiancé, became president of Northwestern, a position he held until 1876. ECL merged its board of trustees and faculty with Northwestern the following year because of financial difficulties. The name of the college was changed to "The Woman's College of Northwestern University." Willard was elected to the presiding office at the Woman's College with the title of Dean and Professor of Aesthetics. More details of Willard's tenure at Northwestern will be examined in a later chapter.

The year of the ECL-NU merger, 1873, was the same year that the temperance crusades began in Ohio. Willard that year attended the National Women's

Congress, which introduced her to many eastern women's rights reformers. Willard also became a member of Sorosis, which formed a subgroup of women professionals, the Association for the Advancement of Women. At Sorosis, she was an honorary member and one of its sixteen vice presidents. The first meeting in New York City was important because it allowed her to become known by the eastern leaders of the woman's movement. She wrote a speech for the occasion, "A New Departure in Woman's Higher Education," delivered by someone else. The speech outlines Willard's disciplinary system at ECL, one which aimed to end the "repressive system of women's colleges" such as NFC with its many rules, instead asking students to be guided by their own consciences and by behavioral goals crafted by women faculty. (More analysis of this system will be provided in the next chapter). The following year Willard resigned her position as Dean and Professor at Northwestern because she believed that with Fowler as president, her position was untenable. Willard states in her autobiography that in hindsight "the concept of a woman's college did not adapt to the concept of a woman's department," a comment indicating her observation that education for women was not a central goal of the university.

The Woman's Christian Temperance Union: a Woman's Educational Agency

Only one year after Frances Willard left academic life, she said of temperance "I recognize this work as one which engrosses my most earnest sympathies and energies and believe that I am in just the work where laborers are most needed, and where I can do most good. The Gospel Temperance work has an unrivalled charm for

me because it is to take Christ's help to those who need it most and who will never come to our churches to find it. It is not more nor less than 'preaching the Gospel to the poor'" (*Autobiography* n.p.). The same year that the Evanston College for Ladies lost its independence, Willard had been involved in the woman's temperance crusade, which began in Ohio in 1873. The WCTU was launched the season following Willard's resignation from NU. Willard had been involved in the movement visiting women temperance leaders in New York City and attending the first Gospel Temperance Camp meeting in Maine. While in Pittsburgh on her return home, she joined a band of Crusade women as they knelt praying outside a saloon in an attempt to persuade the saloonkeeper to give up his trade.

Willard's entry into temperance began when she saw the impact of alcoholism on her brother, Oliver. Once a promising minister, he began drinking heavily and lost his position, only to have trouble with alcoholism for the remainder of his life. Willard had signed a temperance pledge at age twenty-seven. Now at age 35, she received a letter asking her to become president of the Chicago WCTU, and she accepted the offer with some hesitation, uncertain about her ability to support herself. As president of the state organization she spoke frequently to churches and held evangelical meetings for the downtrodden. While she immediately got involved with the organizational and leadership aspects of the temperance cause, the above quote demonstrates the continued centrality of female ministry in Willard's life work. The utility for which she continually strove as a female was almost always motivated by spiritual improvement.

As Chicago president Willard appeared at the first national WCTU convention as a delegate, where she was elected corresponding secretary and given the task of traveling throughout the country, speaking and establishing local unions. In this position she created her first plan of work for the organization in 1874. Willard saw in the temperance union a great vehicle to educate women and to ultimately better the nation. But in order to add woman's talents to the world of American politics, she saw the necessity of women having the vote. At the WCTU convention two years later, she spoke out for suffrage and was rebuked by other members. WCTU president Annie Wittenmyer was sure to let the audience know that Willard, not the organization, held these views. These differences regarding suffrage created a permanent rupture between Wittenmyer and Willard, with Willard's followers ultimately forming a more liberal wing of the organization that came to fruition under her presidency.

Early in 1877 Willard decided to put all of her energies into evangelistic work. She resigned as president of the Chicago WCTU and began to work for the famed evangelist Dwight Moody, ministering specifically to women and giving them daily gospel talks at their prayer meetings—ministry she had already performed as an educator. Again, she came as close to ministry as she possibly could, given the limitations of her time. She traveled with Moody that year to Boston, working during the day in her evangelical work, at night continuing to work for the temperance cause, work which at that time was also evangelical. Moody was not particularly happy about Willard's taking on two different jobs, but Willard refused to give up

temperance. She ultimately chose not to work with Moody after her Boston experience because she did not agree with his intolerance for some church denominations, demonstrated when he registered his disapproval of Willard's appearance on the platform with a Unitarian. The same year, she was nominated as WCTU president, but she declined.

Oliver Willard died the next year, and Willard took over his position as editor and publisher of the *Post* with his widow, her formerly intimate friend Mary Bannister Willard. Financial problems forced them to sell the newspaper the same year, but this experience was valuable for their later journalistic work in the WCTU. Mary Bannister Willard began to edit the WCTU weekly newspaper, *Our Union*, the same year. In later years Willard took on this position herself, and her relations with Wittenmyer were again aggravated because she continually published stories in support of woman's suffrage.

In 1879 the victory of the more liberal wing of the WCTU was consolidated as Willard was elected and accepted as president. Immediately, the organization became more efficient. The 1880s was a decade of organizational expansion—of territory and representation throughout the United States, and of the organizational mission. In the early part of the decade Willard and her secretary, Anna Gordon, traveled throughout the United States extensively. They encouraged the growth of local unions in the South and the West, and the temperance union became truly national. In the middle of the 1880s the World's WCTU was organized. The organization began opening unions for black members, including one in

Evanston. In 1881 Willard gave her “Do Everything” speech, which at this time applied to using a variety of methods for the service of temperance. Eventually the concept grew to show the greater compass of temperance in connection with other reforms.

As she grew in prominence, Willard became known for her feminine approach to audiences, an approach deeply influenced by her mother, Mary Hill Willard, whose phrase “womanliness first, afterward, what you will” became an oft-repeated favorite of Frances. Amy Slagell points out that in contemporary commentary on Willard’s temperance speeches, “the most frequent comment is that she was, above all, womanly. Time and again, year in and year out, observers commented on her womanliness and its appeal to her listeners” (45-46). Willard knew not to confront audiences. To do so would be to close the “open door” which had allowed women to speak. She knew that conciliation, rather than alienation, was key to her positive reception. Willard was influenced in this approach by her mother, whom she said “was of the habit of mind” to “study subjects from the point of harmony . . . Then she dwelt upon that harmony, and through it brought those about her into oneness of sympathy with herself” (Willard and Norton 283). Often in Frances Willard’s leadership and teaching she had the strategy to find this point of harmony in the small details, then to move that point into larger and larger arenas, as with her concept of home protection.

In her last decade Willard stated “words have souls, nay, what is worse, they have ghosts. Men are more frightened by words today than by ideas. If one can

but couch his thought in acceptable forms it will be received in quarters where, did he utter it squarely, he would be cast out as evil”(qtd. in Slagell 724). In the 1880s Willard began to see the temperance organization as a vehicle from which to teach other women to articulate “thought in acceptable forms.” She also saw the utility of woman’s dress as an important form. As she became known widely as a public speaker and was much in demand, she had friends advise her on the appropriate way to dress for these occasions. As her mother had taught her, Willard learned to forge new arguments for change by first ingratiating herself to her audience, working at the outset from a position of “harmony.”

In 1889 Willard celebrated her fiftieth birthday by publishing her autobiography, *Glimpses of Fifty Years*. That year the woman’s temperance publishing association was founded, with Willard serving on its advisory committee. Hannah Whitall Smith, famous lay speaker of the American holiness movement and WCTU founder, declares in the introduction that it is a book “written for the great family circle, and to be read around the evening lamp by critics who love the writer, and who want to learn from her experience how to live better and stronger lives.” It is an “object-lesson in American living and American development, and as such can not fail to interest all those who think American Woman worthy of a little study”(vii). Nearly seven hundred pages in length, the autobiography sold well, initially selling fifty thousand copies in only a few months. An 1894 version emerged in England while Willard was there promoting the World’s WCTU (Kimble 49).

Willard's autobiography teaches the proper way to educate a young girl. Conduct, Willard suggests, is central in a female's education. Willard discloses that as a young student her favorite role model was classmate Marion Wolcott. "Immaculate in character, conduct, and scholarship, I set her up as my standard at once, and, never rested until, like her, I heard 'Ten, Ten, Ten,' meaning 'perfect in punctuality, behavior, and lessons' read out each week after my name"(95). Again, as always, a female student's behavior at school is equally as important as scholastic achievement. *Glimpses* illustrates as well the intellectual role models available to a young woman. For Willard, Margaret Fuller Ossoli was central. In Ossoli Willard saw "what a woman achieved for herself. Not so much fame or honor, these are of minor importance, but a whole character, a cultivated intellect, right judgment, self-knowledge, self-happiness. If she, why not we, by steady toil?"(109). A "whole character" is Frances Willard's central goal in educating other women. Only by cultivating morals and intellect will women be fit to lead the nation to a grander destiny.

The same year Willard published her autobiography, she also published *Woman in the Pulpit*, her defense of women in the ministry. The piece argues for the strength of women as a moral force, a role she had been arguing and performing ever since she first began teaching women in the schoolhouse. *Woman in the Pulpit* demonstrates what the feminine character can bring to the pulpit and the larger American culture. Willard seems to have seen the power of the pulpit from her own experience as a guest speaker to many churches. The volume's title page gives the

quotation found so often in Willard's journals, from Galatians 3.28: "There can be no male and female: for ye are one man in Christ Jesus." Willard states that the volume is dedicated to "ministers and other thoughtful men" who have trouble reconciling the vocations of minister and mother. She argues that it is due to the higher moral ground from which women spring that they are well equipped to take on ministerial work. Interestingly, as we will see in my later chapter addressing the educational force of the temperance union, temperance leaders under Willard had been performing as mother-figure ministers for over fifteen years. The influence of these two exalted positions, mother and minister,

combined in one personality ought, by the laws of heredity and pre-natal influence, immeasurably to spiritualize and exalt the nature of her children . . . If the refinement, sympathy, and sweetness of the womanly nature, as men describe it, fit women especially for the sacred duties of the pastoral office . . . other things being equal, that woman who is a mother and a wife is, above all others, consecrated and set apart by nature to be a minister in the household of faith.

(Woman Pulpit 65)

Not only are women (note that she says "as men describe it") "consecrated and set apart by nature" to be morally superior, they are also those who are by nature forced by experiences of pregnancy, birth and death to undergo a Christ-like martyrdom. Willard asks "who should not say that she who had felt eternity's cold breath upon her forehead, while she suffered pangs untold that another life might be,

was, of all human beings, the one prepared and consecrated for a mission so divine?" Willard takes what was traditionally used as a biblical source proving woman's punishment for sin and weakness, and instead casts it as a Christ-like source of strength, arguing that "The more it is studied, the more it will be proved that our holy faith can have no human ally so invincible as she who, with strong crying and tears, has learned the sublime secrets of pain and pathos that only mother's hearts can know. The heart of manhood will be stirred to its most sacred depths by preachers and pastors such as these" (*Woman Pulpit* 66). As noted earlier, Willard conceives of Christ as a feminized figure who can love in ways perceived as feminine; likewise, the suffering of women becomes parallel to that of Christ. For Willard, these God-like human elements are sources of divinity untapped.

Willard argues that it is the previous "sheltering" of woman in the realm of the domestic which will make her the one listened to when she emerges on the public stage—a position she recognized for its power in the temperance movement.

The masses of the people have forsaken God's house and solace themselves in the saloons or with the Sunday newspaper. But the masses will go to hear women when they speak, and every woman who leads a life of weekday holiness, and has the Gospel in her looks, however plain her face and dress may be, has round her head the sweet Madonna's halo, in the eyes of every man who sees her, and she speaks to him with the sacred cadence of his own mother's voice. (*Woman* 48)

Willard points out that even if women aren't allowed to fulfill official ministerial positions sanctioned by the church, women will continue to function as ministers through the WCTU. These ministers, in effect, "make an aggregate of several thousands of women who are regularly studying and expounding God's Word to the multitude, to say nothing of the army in home and foreign missionary work, and who are engaged in church evangelism." All of them, she asserts, are all "quite beyond the watch-care of the church" (*Woman Pulpit* 57-58). Willard demonstrates that her organization has, in effect, created female ministers outside of church sanction.

In Frances Willard's final decade, she befriended English temperance reformer Lady Henry Somerset. They met at the first world's WCTU convention, held in Boston, where Lady Somerset visited America for the first time, and they became very close friends. This alliance became significant to Willard's life as her American ties began to weaken. Willard's mother, the last remaining member of Frances's family, died in 1893, when Willard was fifty-four. That month the grief-stricken Willard took up the writing of her journal for the first time since 1870, stating that "Perhaps it is because I am so utterly taken out of all dear Past, because this is the first New Year on which no Mother called out her cheery greeting or wrote it to her absent child" (*Gifford Writing* 356). Willard had lost her greatest spiritual and intellectual mentor. Her journals reveal that in the intervening five years between her mother's death and her own, the grieved and ailing Willard often hoped to join her mother and family in heaven. Mourning all the while, Frances and Anna Gordon sailed to England to be guests of Somerset, staying on to make England their

permanent residence. In journal entries of this period Willard shows the extent to which her Christian ideals have influenced her political positions. In England she joined the Fabian society, understanding herself as a "new Testament Socialist"(Gifford *Writing* 377). At the same time, she retained her belief in the importance of being what one seems, and acting in accordance to belief. She declares that "somehow all objective experiences of the last three years . . . have shown me how profession [of faith] mocks performance. Doctrines mean less and duties more with every added year. To be genuine—to be what one seems and to seem true and kind—this is the core of life"(Gifford *Writing* 381).

In 1896, Willard's health began to fail from pernicious anemia, a disease caused by a deficiency of vitamin B12 needed for the normal production of red blood cells (Gifford *Writing* 361). She had to spend time in a sanitarium in Castile, New York, to improve her health. Among her visitors was Susan B. Anthony. She spent some of that year in a wheelchair, but recovered sufficiently to again resume her duties as the head of the national convention in 1897; however, this was to be her last. She died in February of 1898 while visiting New York. Upon Willard's death there was a national outpouring of sentiment, and services for Willard took place at various cities between New York and Evanston as her body was brought westward. In 1903, a statue of Willard was placed in Statuary Hall in the national capitol, the only woman so honored.

As Willard's life drew to a close, she maintained the importance of character she had cultivated as a young girl. Four years before her death, she sent a

New Year's card to hundreds of friends and colleagues containing the statement "never forget that the only indestructible material in Destiny's fierce crucible is character" (Gifford *Writing* 14). In the last volume of her personal journal, she copied onto the front page a quotation from George John Romanes, a British biologist who studied the development of intelligence: "I have come to see that cleverness, success, attainment count for little; that goodness of character is the most important factor in life" (qtd. Gifford *Writing* 24). The following chapter closely examines the institutional environment Willard created to cultivate good character, presenting the perspective of her planning and leadership and its impact on female students.

Chapter Three: People Out of Whom Much was Made: Educating Girls and Young Women in Evanston

They talk about a woman's sphere,
As though it had a limit;
There's not a place in earth or heaven,
There's not a task to mankind given,
There's not a blessing or a woe;
There's not a whisper, Yes or No,
There's not a life, or death, or birth,
That has a feather's weight of worth,
Without a woman in it.
— *Occupations for Women*. (4)

Frances Willard's religious, learning and teaching experiences provided her with a strong background for educational leadership. She had been educated and had taught in public, private, single sex and coeducational institutions. In addition, she had experienced the European tour and schooling at that time available only to the wealthiest Americans, most of them male. Her commitment to bring the richness of these experiences back to Evanston placed her perfectly to head up a new institution in her hometown, the Evanston College for Ladies, or ECL.

In September 1868, an Evanstonian named Mary Haskin proposed creating an association for the advancement of women's education. She invited Mary Hill Willard to join the group for a discussion of the possibilities for such a project. Later that month, the group officially formed the Ladies' Educational Association and chose a board of managers. While Frances was in Europe, Mary Hill Willard wrote a letter to her saying that Haskins was creating a stir about a ladies' college, and she

instructed Frances to study the European models in order to sort out the best ways to educate women. Shortly thereafter, Mary Hill Willard let Frances know that the group had chosen Frances to be the mouthpiece of the proposed school. Frances wrote back that she still felt her vocation was to teach women, saying, “I ought to have had my own nest, long ago, but some how the twigs across failed to appear, and I have cheerfully directed my activities toward other occupations. For me, when I return, there will be ample work—among the class that I have always loved and that has loved me always—the Girls of my native land and of my time. I shall yet live to do them better service than I ever hoped to render . . . after the rich experiences of study and travel so wonderfully bestowed upon me” (Willard *Letter Paris*). From the outset, the Ladies’ Educational Association discussed the possibilities of ECL students reciting at Northwestern University.

The following month, Willard wrote in her journals about the educational association, noting that Mary Hill Willard was in charge along with ten other ladies. Later Willard would state that it was Haskin who was most important in determining the character of the institution, who argued that women should have a say in the governance and operation of a woman’s college. Like other women’s institutions, emphasis was placed upon the building as the centerpiece of the college life for women, giving them the supportive atmosphere the board believed necessary for women students to thrive at Northwestern (Gifford “Unpublished” 4). These meetings of the educational society were monthly, and Mary Hill Willard often wrote to Frances in Europe telling of the group’s plans. During this period, Mrs. Willard

attended conferences in Evanston with topics such as the coeducation of the sexes, elocution, and how to promote literary culture. In addition, she attended a talk by Erastus O. Haven, NU President, on parallel courses of study, describing the session as “exceedingly interesting” (*n.p.*).

Important to the creation of ECL were hallmark characteristics of Willard’s approach: accommodation and progressivism. In her book about Evanston, Willard states that the curriculum at ECL was designed to accommodate traditional views and to provide newer, more progressive ideas of woman’s sphere and education. From the tradition of female education were provided art, music, and modern languages; from the male college tradition, science, literature, and classical languages.

The Ladies’ Educational Association looked to the Methodist conference for support, arguing that the scheme of education at Northwestern was created for “the practical needs of men only,” and that there was therefore a need to provide for women’s “practical needs” in science and art (Gifford “Unpublished” 28). Carolyn Deswarte Gifford points out that there is in the early documents a goal to Methodize and evangelize, to send out its students to make a better Christian world—a goal reminiscent of early national and antebellum seminaries. Willard’s Christianity is a crucial factor in higher education at ECL, the foundation for her sense of social progress.

Models of Education

When Frances Willard became involved in ECL's formation, she was equipped with worldly knowledge of both American and European educational institutions and the status of women both at home and abroad. Domestically, at the time of the preliminary meetings for the creation of ECL in September, 1868, there had existed only a few Protestant colleges for women, the most influential of the previous generation headed by Emma Willard, Catharine Beecher, Zilpah Grant and Mary Lyon. Willard was in on the creation of the school just as the seminary model was being altered to accommodate greater focus on academic equality. The best seminaries "offered the English curriculum of the academy—history, philosophy, modern languages, and natural sciences—designed to prepare women for teaching. The most ambitious female seminaries carried some college level course work (Horowitz 1). She borrowed from the earlier forms as she included the strengths of European and American male colleges. From the earlier forms, she continued their ministerial nature.

Emma Willard's Troy Seminary was an extremely influential early model. Willard had noted the cultivation of female character as central to the nation's destiny, arguing in 1819:

If the improvement of the American female character, and that alone, could be effected by public liberality, employed in giving better means of instruction; such improvement of one half of society, and that half, which barbarous and despotic nations have ever degraded, would of

itself be an object, worthy of the most liberal government on earth; but if the female character be raised, it must inevitably raise that of the other sex: and thus does the plan proposed, offer, as the object of legislative bounty, to elevate the whole character of the community.

(5-6)

Much as Frances Willard argues later in her speech “The New Chivalry,” Emma Willard suggests that educating and raising up women in any nation pushes that nation to a higher realm. Emma Willard’s ideas were extremely influential throughout the United States: between 1821 and 1871 more than 12,000 women spent time at her Troy Seminary (qtd. in Scott 5).

Emma Willard was successful in part because she integrated new values with prevailing ones. As male colleges at the time spoke of students as “sons,” Emma Willard described the female student as a daughter—a metaphor that was to remain throughout the century in the work of Frances Willard. Like the men’s colleges of the period, Emma Willard’s plan emphasized the building of character as education’s chief aim. Among the early rules of Troy Seminary was the injunction “above all preserve feminine delicacy. Let no consideration induce any young lady to depart from this primary and indispensable virtue . . . Each pupil must be strictly careful to avoid the least indelicacy of language or behavior such as too much exposure of the person in dress”(qtd. in Scott 9). Emma Willard’s ideas spread throughout the country as graduates went on to found woman’s schools of their own, and “by regular correspondence and visits she bound the alumnae to her and provided support and

reinforcement for what, in many parts of the country, were seen as advanced or dangerous views about women's education"(Scott 9). Eventually there were thought to be 200 schools in America modeled after Troy Seminary.

Emma Willard's school sought to replicate the positive spiritual aspects of home life. Students would gather with her around the dining room table for Sunday afternoon scripture lessons. She gave weekly lectures and "Daily Conversations."

Students recalled her weekly lectures as

familiar, confidential talks of a motherly friend, whose omnipresent vigilance had noted many a shortcoming, sins of omission and commission which would not pass unrebuked. A careless toilet, a disorderly room, boisterous talking and laughing in the halls or on the street, rude manners at table, each and all of these were deemed by Mrs. W. fitting themes for advice . . . Nothing which helped to develop a delicate and refined nature was deemed unimportant by her, and she sought in all ways to supplement the culture of Christian home training. (Sage 29)

While Frances Willard's later methods of such training were limited to awards for good order and behavior, she still emphasized the importance of developing "delicate and refined nature," and her talks to girls were of great importance.

The work of Catharine Beecher was another important foundation for the Evanston College for Ladies. Willard's cousin, Minerva Norton, was one of Willard's first teachers at home. She was a graduate of Beecher's Milwaukee Female College

and returned there to teach with the Willard girls as students. She later became the superintendent at ECL, in charge of students within the college building. Beecher discussed the importance of forming moral character in education in 1829, considering it so important that “the formation and correction of the moral character and habits must be made into a separate department headed by one well-qualified person.” Like Willard, Beecher suggested a boarding home for teachers and students where real shaping of moral character would take place (Sklar 91). Kathryn Kish Sklar describes Beecher’s work combining upper and middle class virtues into a moral imperative as “patently designed to replace the role of the male clergyman with a female moral instructor”(93). Frances Willard would later see her role of moral instructor as her most important one. As Willard would later go on to do with the WCTU, Beecher envisioned her work becoming a national project, a training school for young women who would learn proper social, religious, and moral principles and then establish their own schools, what Sklar calls “a national system of morality and ethics” (79).

Willard’s vision for the ECL building seems to center on ideas similar to Beecher’s, in which students and teachers live in a Christian household, “a combination of home, school and church” all united in one building. The home for Beecher was not the place isolating women from the political and social fray, but was instead “the base from which their influence on the rest of the culture was launched”(Sklar 137). However, Sklar presents Beecher’s work as concerned with subsuming “individual diversity” for the sake of building “a commonality of

culture”(168). Willard’s work instead focuses on each student or temperance follower charting out her own path, with the organization functioning to provide a multitude of possible paths. Like Emma Willard and Catharine Beecher before her, Frances Willard’s duties as an educator required creating circulars, public speaking, and fundraising.

The self-reporting system, which Willard found so important to her teaching at ECL and NU, had its roots in Zilpah Grant and Mary Lyon’s educational system at Ipswich. Each student at Ipswich monitored her own efforts to abide by rules, ultimately ritualized in a daily public confessional called a section meeting. Self-reporting turned “external authority inward,” making Grant and Lyon’s system that of each student. As Grant stated it “the real authority of the Principal in the hearts of the pupils is government *in* them rather than *over* them” (qtd. Horowitz 15, Grant’s emphasis). Grant and Lyon were, in effect, ministers, scheduling two periods of “private devotion” daily and holding “communal worship” three times daily (15). At Ipswich students were placed under the moral and religious oversight of a teacher who had risen from the school’s ranks. In daily afternoon meetings with her section, the teacher received from each member an account of her performance of duties in and out of school during the day.

Mary Lyon went on to found her own seminary, Mount Holyoke, another school whose structure likely influenced that at ECL. Lyon offered her students the highest education then available to women, the curriculum of the seminary, and sought to alter student consciousness by influencing daily existence. She attempted to

recreate the mother-daughter bond by having teacher and student in one building, with students thus exposed to the teacher's daily example (Horowitz 4). The principal at Holyoke lived in the building with the teachers along the corridor. Daily, public self-reporting coupled with chapel talks and two periods of silent devotions broke the distinction between external and internal authority (Horowitz 24). Mount Holyoke designed its seminary building as a well governed home, its internal organization allowing the oversight within a strict family and its associations confirming the link between mother and teacher (Horowitz 25). Key elements of the Holyoke model were academic subjects to train the mind as an instrument of reason; domestic work and a carefully regulated day to meet material needs and to protect health; a known clear sequence of each day to lend order and predictability; a corps of transformed teachers who provided proper models for imitation, and a building shaped like a dwelling house as the proper setting for study, prayer, work, and rest. The hours outside the classroom went to monitoring student behavior, heading table in the dining hall, and counseling and advising students as special friends. Most of Holyoke's graduates became teachers and went on to give coeducational colleges their female leadership and to Vassar and Wellesley their first female heads (Horowitz 12).

Carol Mattingly asserts that in writing the history of Eastern American educational leaders historians have seldom "acknowledged the Catholic convent academies as the major force to which Protestants responded in promoting stronger education for women" (*Uncovering* 161). Mattingly demonstrates that "by 1860 the U.S. Catholic Almanac listed 202 female academies in the United States." The nuns

who ran these institutions often had European educations and were sent to the United States educated with tested pedagogies that were updated regularly (Mattingly *Uncovering* 164). Such institutions were patronized by the wealthy, and thus many Protestants began to drive efforts to build schools in response (Mattingly *Uncovering* 169). Grant and Lyon, she points out, were often overt with their Protestant zeal and “hostility toward Catholics”(*Uncovering* 170). Catharine Beecher forged her own missionary version of Protestantism, urged by her father to go west to fight the battle against Catholic infiltration of the west (Mattingly *Uncovering*173).

In her European journals Willard demonstrates a preference for Protestant religious practice when she visits Catholic religious monuments, often commenting on their beauty but insisting that this beauty has no real connection to faith. The growth of Protestant academies and public education in general “often measured the quality of their schools against that of the convent academies and garnered support for their schools by capitalizing on anti-Catholic sentiment”(Mattingly *Uncovering* 176). The strength of Catholic institutions may be the unstated motivation behind ECL wanting to be “preeminent” for its Christian influence, because college founders were faced with the emergence of a Catholic educational presence all over the continent. Mattingly’s work opens up the rhetorical nature of the ECL documents, showing that they take on new meaning with comments such as Willard’s insistence that woman’s schools should have no “monastic” qualities, and its emphasis on the school as “family” home rather than cloister.

In addition to consideration of religious matters in Willard's promotion of her school, Sarah Robbins's work addresses the rhetorical positioning of nineteenth century women toward literacy itself. Writers took a maternal stance toward readers, at the same time presenting literacy acquisition in the domestic realm within their narratives and encouraging it to take place "domestically" beyond the home—in turn domesticating the nation. Robbins concentrates primarily on the ideas of the American republic, noting how these early cultural forms influenced figures such as Stowe and Beecher, figures important in the educational experiences of Willard. Robbins points out that for nineteenth-century middle-class women such as Willard, literacy-based civic nurturance was seen as a key responsibility of middle-class mothers in the home (15). Robbins calls such gendered cultural influence "maternally managed literature study." Much of Willard's work could be described as "maternally managed." Willard took on the persona of sister, then mother, to her school "girls," and temperance workers. Her work, as Robbins asserts of other nineteenth-century women writers, "generated a moral sense" and therefore "encouraged appropriate social actions for the polis"(16).

However, Robbins does not address the role of Christianity in this form of literacy, while I will focus on the religious implications of Willard's work. Like her early century predecessors, Willard moves from a rhetorical/literal domestic space into an ever-widening, even imperialistic form. Along with Beecher, Willard worked to move domestic literacy to international, multi-class, and multi-race audiences in the temperance union. The union was, like early century woman writers, "a cohesive

group through shared social values, related, self-conscious work at nation building, and the use of print text to achieve their goals”(Robbins 28). In her autobiography Willard emphasized morality and appropriate civic action in her educational scheme, and she called it “moral horticulture.” She stated that moral horticulture “must always be the basis of success in developing Christian character among students, but participation in the government would place them in organic contact with the wisest and most parental minds among the teachers, and thus head and heart culture would go side by side”(Glimpses 241-242). Thus she unites the republican virtue and civic mindedness of her predecessors.

Later, more academically focused models for women’s education emerged with Vassar College, which opened its doors in 1865, just a few years before ECL. Vassar offered a full liberal arts curriculum, including the study of the ancient languages, taught by a faculty identical to the conservative men’s colleges, such as Yale, which defined for the age the collegiate standard and course of study. Vassar was patterned after Mount Holyoke in its special use and design, a single building housing all faculty and students and created space for classrooms, laboratories, chapel, library and museums (Horowitz 3-4). Vassar offered a true college curriculum, but its professors and president were male, with four male professors and their families living in separate apartments on one pavilion, while another side held the rooms of students and women teachers—a blatant inequality of housing. A separate lady superintendent had close control of the pupils (Horowitz 38).

The male-female structure at Vassar was promoted as a well-run duplication of home authority, with the president, “like the father,” having “final authority” and handling business affairs, while the mother, in the shape of superintendent, “governed the daily life of her pupils, regulating their conduct, shaping their habits, and guiding their religious life”(Horowitz 38). It was hoped that recreating this sense of “home authority” paternalism would prevent the perceived “otherworldliness” of students who had graduated from all-female institutions, something reminiscent of current calls to prepare students for the “real” world. The daily schedule at Vassar, with bells marking silent devotions, rules governing details of deportment, corridor teachers monitoring their charges, weekly self-reporting, and chapel talks, seems to have influenced Willard as she helped to create the social structure at ECL. However, Willard believed it essential that women run women’s education, from the daily life of the building to its administration. Wellesley, chartered in 1870, was supposed to be unique for having women trustees as well as men, although ECL had just women in charge of their administration. Wellesley founder Henry Fowle Durant hired only women as teachers and president. The president had her quarters on the first floor, and the faculty lived along the corridors, eating meals at tables with students.

Much of the controversy regarding female colleges was that they were not sufficiently patriarchal, and therefore didn’t follow “real world” convention. Institutions such as Smith wanted to “prevent the creation of a separate women’s culture “(Horowitz 75). Founders of Smith College saw Holyoke women as out of touch, unfit for the roles of wife and mother, and thus attempted to protect women’s

femininity. They wanted to appear as a college, not a seminary, by having a male president and faculty. As an alternative to the all-female seminary, students lived in structures designed inside and out to look like family dwellings (Horowitz 5). At the time of ECL's opening, the Smith model was considered the most contemporary. A perusal of the curricula at emerging women's colleges at this time demonstrates that Willard's curriculum and structure were similar to other institutions; the innovation was in its "independent but affiliated" status. Willard seemed to see the creation of "a separate women's culture" as an important step prior to women's integration in civil society, what she later created in the WCTU.

When Willard began teaching at ECL in the 1870s, women were entering seminaries and colleges in increasing numbers. The majority attended seminaries, with about a fourth of women students attending colleges. The distinguishing mark of a college, as opposed to a seminary, was that the curriculum included ancient languages and mathematics. Even fewer attended coed colleges and state universities (Horowitz 56). ECL was thus attempting to create an institution that was the most commonly attended by females while giving them the opportunity to experience a college curriculum along with male students.

Eight states had opened coeducational state universities when ECL opened in the 1870s, institutions that were clearly different from the female academies and seminaries of the time. Although only one in fifty women attended college in the late-century period, the women who did were the first to receive educations comparable to their brothers (Theriot 95). Female collegians were not the most rich nor elite of

women; rather, the rich tended to be educated privately at home, in boarding school, and through travel abroad, much as the middle class but fortunate Willard had been. The newly rich female tended to follow the same pattern, but dismissed the college education as a job preparation for teachers. Those who did attend were like Willard, middle class, from the professions, business, and agriculture. The middle class tended to look at college education as a means for both sexes to pursue a fuller intellectual, social and economic life (Solomon 65).

Oberlin became the most dominant model for the coeducational university. Some scholars have condemned Oberlin for its “conservative” values regarding gender roles, but this denigrates the very values Oberlin sought to emphasize. Lori D. Ginzberg points out that, rather than presenting education as a cloister, “Oberlin urged all people to reject ‘male values’ in the interest of a self-sacrificing, community oriented nation” (76). At Oberlin, women took English, history, moral philosophy, the sciences, and mathematics along with the men, but were excluded from study of classical languages—an exclusion Frances Willard experienced personally through her mother, who had encouraged her to focus only on modern languages. Some women who already knew classical languages took their degrees along with the men and thereafter they were not excluded from the more demanding program but they were not obliged to take it. Some, like Mary Hill Willard, took the Ladies’ Course (Ginzberg 83). Women at Oberlin took only reading and composition, while the men’s curriculum included writing, discussion, oration and public original declamations (Ginzberg 51). As we shall see, Willard’s pedagogy encouraged women

to take part in a much stronger rhetorical experience which offered modern and classical language options.

A New Beginning: The Evanston College for Ladies

In March of 1871, Willard signed a contract with ECL stating that she was to devote her entire time to the college in supervision, lectures, and conducting the department of compositions, where she was in charge of female college and university students. Students took her course every year, every term, for three years—quite a long time to be in charge of their compositions, showing the extent of her influence over their written personas. The senior year, no composition course was taken, because students instead took ecclesiastical history and theology, Butler's *Analogy*, and *Evidences of Christianity*.

Shortly after her employment, Willard made her public appearance in Evanston as spokeswoman for ECL, along with Erastus Haven, who had become NU president in 1869. One of the conditions of his acceptance of the presidency was that women be admitted to the university on equal terms with men in the fall of 1869. Mary Bannister Willard, Frances Willard's close friend involved in ECL's creation and later a WCTU ally, wrote in her history of ECL that when Haven came to Evanston, only Oberlin and the University of Michigan were known as schools giving equal education to men and women. Questions arose at the time of ECL's creation about whether merely opening the university to women was all that was necessary to bring out the most in women's development and what should be done to provide the

physical, mental and moral training “peculiarly belonging to women,” to supplement book learning (Bannister Willard 55-56).

In presenting the school to the public, Willard constantly brought up the importance of female administrators at the school and of women being treated as the equals of male administrators. A piece in her scrapbook quotes Willard as saying of the ECL-NU relationship:

We really believe that we’ve been gradually and strangely led to the solution of the problem of coeducation in its broadest and only true sense—i.e. where in the teacher’s chair, and in the deliberative halls of Trustees and Executive Committee, women are represented with as much equality and dignity as on the recitation bench, and where services rendered are considered a basis of financial remuneration, with which sex ought not to interfere” (*Family* n.p.).

The initial faculty included Willard as President and professor of history and fine arts, and Kate Jackson, her Evanston friend who hosted the European tour, French Language and literature. In her autobiography, Willard presented the circular that was given out “by the cartloads” advertising ECL. It was “addressed to all who are interested in the girls of the Northwest,” and suggested that supporting women’s education was a curative to female faults of “frivolity, lack of perseverance, and general shiftlessness,” presented as a result of defective training (*Glimpses* 204).

In hopes that constant research on educational trends would serve their mission, Willard and her friends and colleagues formed the “Ladies’ Committee on

Educational Methods,” cited in Willard’s scrapbook as a group whose object was to “investigate the most advanced systems of education, and to gain exact information concerning the methods of institutions at home and abroad, by reading, correspondence and personal investigation; to glean from the press and current literature items of value pertaining to education, and to preserve the same in the scrap-book of the Committee; to read essays and have discussion, written and verbal, all on themes connected with the subject; to hold occasional public meetings in its interest, to publish articles by members of the Committee, and to give ECL the benefit of such wise conclusions as it may reach”(Frances).

The larger public eventually perceived considerations for woman’s “peculiar” needs as backward. Haven had to respond to charges that ECL was a monastic institution suited to the dark ages—a charge tied to anti-Catholic rhetoric. He declared in the *New York Methodist* that the school was one in which

a President of that special college, a lady elected by the women trustees, together with certain other teachers or professors whom they employ, have especial care of the lady students in their college. At the same time, the students recite in the same classes, hear the same lectures, pursue the same studies, and receive the same degrees as the young men. Is there anything monastic or that smacks of the ‘Dark Ages’ about that? But is it not fitting that ladies, and authorities chosen by ladies, should have the social and moral supervision of ladies? Is it any backward step that women preside over the Ladies’ College, a

department of the University? . . . It is our intention to show that, to give ladies an equal chance with gentlemen means something more than to control a University wholly by men, select courses of study fitted only to men, give the instruction mostly by men, and then, forsooth, open the doors alike to both sexes! (“Family” n.p.)

Willard so heartily agreed with this comment that she quoted it repeatedly throughout her career.

When Willard took on her role as ECL president, she told her female students that they were part of a great coeducational experiment, and that they should rise to the challenge to make it a success. They were addressed as part of “an enterprise the like of which was never seen, a college with women trustees and faculty, a woman president and woman students. Up yonder in the grove is a first-class men’s college, and to every one of its advantages we are invited, on one condition—all of us must at all times be Christian ladies”(*Glimpses* 208). She tells her pupils that her character is on the line in the experiment as well, as “this is my own home town, and my good name is more to me than life. Besides all this, and greater, the destiny of this woman’s college, and to some degree that of the co-education experiment, rests with you young creatures, fair and sweet”(*Glimpses* 208). Looking back, Willard said that at ECL she had “one year free to work my will as an elder sister to girls—for this was then my idea of my relation to them; now, I would say, ‘a mother to girls’”(*Glimpses* 206). She thus maintains the importance of female moral example and the thinking that virtue is a necessity for public emergence.

Willard's first public address in Evanston, *The New Chivalry*, presents the possibilities for a change in gender relations to counter the oppression of history as evidenced in her European travels. European women, she argues in this speech, have the choice of "marriage or the cloister." Willard envisions the provision for woman's greater educational opportunity as creating a greater "intellectual sympathy" and a new and stronger bond between men and women. She presents in this speech the inadequate educational curriculum provided European girls—all arts and religion—and their limited choices to either stay at home or to marry. She also points out the European female's lack of economic power or opportunity. In the upper classes of Europe, she states, the family rarely raises its own children, and the institution of marriage is often seen as the only route to woman's "freedom," yet at the same time women relinquish all rights and independence as soon as this step is taken. Willard presents the severe limits of woman's social intercourse prior to marriage, and the lack of social interaction once married. She proposes as an alternative to longstanding tradition a "threefold tie" of religion, affection, and intellectual sympathy.

In this speech Willard presents her self-government plan at ECL, saying that it has been in operation since the school opened. She argues that the affiliation with NU meant that "rather than pitting men's rights versus women's, it places men and women versus human wrongs," again reiterating the early century emphasis on education for public service (Slagell 157). Present in this speech is an often-repeated dichotomy in Willard, the conservatism of the East versus the progressivism of the West. She points out that the schools of the West are pioneering coeducation, while

schools of the East have done nothing more than invite women to attend “with no thought of the special needs of that very special class known as young ladies.”

Willard asserts that while in Europe she had determined not to work in Europe for woman’s cause, but to instead foster it in America, in hopes that “some day the broader channels of their lives shall send streams of healing even to these far-off shores”(Slagell 141). It is thus clear from her address that ministry is central to her teaching purpose and she intends for it to have worldwide results, later realized in the temperance union.

In her position as the school’s chief promoter, Willard repeatedly gave a speech titled “People Out of Whom More Might Have Been Made,” which, unfortunately, no longer exists. A contemporaneous article from a Chicago paper, however, paraphrases her speech.³ Willard quotes Margaret Fuller Ossoli’s statement that “our only object in the world is to grow.” Willard states that it is not the duty of woman to retire from school at the age of eighteen, but to give herself the best opportunity possible for the fullest education. She notes the beginnings of coeducation in England at Cambridge and at the College de France. The advantages of coeducation, she argues, are preparation of the sexes for married life in the later years, “economy of means and forces,” and great convenience to parents by allowing them to send their sons and daughters to the same school, thus affording them greater protection by each other’s society (182). This emphasis on education for others in the promotional documents diverges immensely from her addresses to her students, demonstrating that Willard is aware that learning for others is the chief motivation for

the previous generation. In this speech Willard pairs domestic duties with intellectual challenges, declaring, “In the proper relation of education, croquet and calculus, Telemachus and tatting should go together. The taste for Homer should go hand in hand with the taste for home.” She points out that the creation, planning, and board of the school are made up entirely by a group of ladies. Such an argument is a hallmark of her style, presenting accommodation to serve and to domesticate while at the same time providing intellectual stimulation. Thus ECL “daughters” are not in danger of emerging with the “otherworldliness” marking earlier female seminarians.

Moral Horticulture: Frances Willard’s Chief Cultivation

The catalogue for the opening year of the Evanston College for Ladies lists Mary Bannister Willard, Oliver’s wife, on the board of trustees, Emily Huntington Miller, corresponding secretary, and Jane C. Hoge as President of the Women’s Educational Association. Mary Hill Willard is listed on the Executive committee. The catalogue notes that the students of the ladies’ college receive most of their instruction from university faculty, code for male professors. Apparently, the composition classes were separated by gender, as Willard is listed in charge of all lady students in all departments of the university and college in English composition. This instruction by Willard became very significant. The circular states “while it is true that many colleges and universities are now nominally open to women, it is equally true that without special provision *for convenient and economical residence, and for such studies as they may wish to undertake not found in the university*

curriculum, the advantage is often more nominal than real”(Circular 14, their emphasis). In other words, just opening the doors is not sufficient, a point Willard constantly repeats. In June of 1870 the ECL trustees submitted a proposal to the NU trustees to unite with the university. Haven voiced his support for the proposal in his annual report to NU trustees. Benefits of this affiliation were that ECL students could take NU courses; trustees of ECL would not have to raise large sums for a separate faculty and could instead concentrate on securing “special professorships of practical branches such as women most demand” (qtd. Gifford *Unpublished* 9).

Willard’s vision of education was strongly influenced by the kind of Methodist culture in which Evanston was steeped. Her minister, Randolph Sinks Foster, one time president of NU, encouraged the kind of expansive Protestantism implemented by the earlier pedagogues. As a young woman Willard found religious leaders as moral exemplars, people whose presence and lives she saw as presenting themselves as arguments for Christianity. In addition, as a young woman probationary member of the church, Willard attended weekly class meetings, in which a small group examined their religious progress aloud, encouraging one another to grow in faith. They prayed for each other during meetings and agreed to do the same in their daily private devotions, and would share very intimate details regarding their spiritual state (Gifford *My Own* 14). This kind of sharing seems to have been important to Willard’s background as both student and educator, and she encouraged it in her students. There are therefore limits to which one can conceptualize work of nineteenth century figures such as Willard in terms of “public”

and “private” dichotomies. The Evanstonian evangelical culture was one which, like other evangelical culture, sought to deconstruct private and public barriers, “understanding them in fact as interdependent, common borders of one problem. The idea that public and private could be separated was repugnant to their fundamental belief in accountability under a single Christian law and moral code, which was the means of all actions”(G. Clark 253).

Willard structured daily life at her school along the lines of her own Methodist existence; scholars such as Patricia Bizzell have discussed her “womanly spiritual ethos” as informed by Methodist women preachers such as Phoebe Palmer. Bizzell addresses the sermonic quality of Willard’s speech, arguing that she “reinforced her authority as a particular kind of Methodist preacher by adapting many of Palmer’s ethical strategies”(388). Willard often spoke in churches, created a religious atmosphere wherever the WCTU had meetings, projected a middle-class physical appearance, and combined moral earnestness and emotional restraint (Bizzell 388-389). Citing the contemporaneous observations of those attending Willard lectures, Bizzell notes their focus on Willard’s apparent lack of rhetorical art, giving her “audiences the impression that she was simply speaking from the heart.” Her oratory is seen as restrained and culled from reason, what Bizzell calls an “artless ethos”(390-391). This seeming lack of art was one of the rhetorical approaches at the time and the emphasis on “being as one speaks” seems to have greatly influenced her and to have inspired her students.

When a teacher at Genesee College, Willard had given weekly talks to female students, which she strongly enjoyed. These talks continued at ECL. Willard wrote in a later reminiscence that her “chief occupation” outside the classroom at ECL was visiting students in their rooms, “sweet and sacred times” in which she attended to each pupil alone. She says that at such moments she “heard confidences, and prayed with them”(“Reminiscences” n.p.). Student activities at ECL included prayer meetings each evening conducted by a teacher, evening lectures each Friday, a “Sabbath” girls meeting after breakfast, Sunday conversation meetings “intended for familiar religious instruction,” and prayer meetings on Sundays conducted by pupils.⁴

One of Willard’s students from ECL later described her first Friday afternoon lecture. Isabella Webb Parks recalls:

Her first Friday afternoon talk struck the keynote of her influence over us. In those days coeducation was still looked upon as very much of an experiment, and . . . there were many there who looked hesitatingly upon it and were ready to seize upon the slightest indications of evil . . . by the time she had finished every girl in her presence felt that the eyes of all Evanston were fixed upon our little band in anxious but sympathetic and kindly interest; that the cause of coeducation depended very largely upon our success as students and upon our loyalty to right; more that the whole cause of woman’s advancement was involved in the use we made of the opportunities now placed within our reach. (854-855)

She states that from the day of this first lecture “Christ began to assume a different character to us. We soon learned to look upon him as the all-powerful friend of woman claiming our allegiance, if for no other reason, because he was the leader in the work of woman’s emancipation”(858). Willard’s students were thus implored to cast themselves as exemplars, proving themselves worthy of their institutional endowment by showing their utility in greater public work. Parks writes that as a young woman she had been “utterly disgusted with the aimless, drifting life of the average ‘girl of the period’” and she had resolved to free herself of it by going to Evanston. She entered the preparatory department and “there through the influence of Miss Willard . . . I was led to consider the claims of Christianity upon me and in the religion of the Christian found the motive power of life and found too, peace”(Campus).

ECL also provided for Webb Parks the environment for a spiritual conversion. Apparently Parks was a religious doubter like Willard was once herself, and Willard counted Parks’ conversion as one of her chief joys. Willard stated later “among all the noble girls whom I had the happiness to see kneeling at the altar, none rejoiced me quite so much as my brilliant Belle Webb, who fancied herself an infidel, but who from that time steadily developed Christian character throughout her six years’ classical course”(Glimpses 220). Gifford has pointed out that the process of “reconversion” occurred in temperance women in the union (“Reconversion” 111). This text from a Willard student demonstrates that such conversions took place for Willard students just as they did in the temperance union. Willard’s influence was to

insist that God demanded more of women, further consecration which would lead them toward places and forms of activity formerly denied them. For students such as Parks, she was not a church member until coming into Willard's influence. Parks states of Willard that "her religious influence was all-pervasive. Her religion was so thoroughly a part of herself that she breathed it forth unconsciously"(857). Willard's act of "reconversion" not only shows the ministerial aspect of her teaching life, but the ways in which that conversion was an active part of her daily work to emancipate women, the goal she had before returning to America.

Willard encouraged other speakers to address the girls each Friday in the college chapel. One of the Friday talks given to the females at ECL was Mary A. Livermore, abolitionist, Civil War nurse, and suffragist, on "What Shall We Do with Our Girls?" The NU newspaper, the *Tripod*, notes the talk, saying that Livermore

strongly condemned the common practice they have of acquiring such shallow, artificial accomplishments as those to which they do devote their time, when such solid, paying acquirements are in their power. She ridiculed the idea of women being slaves to fashion, and having no higher ambition than to look stylish . . . Still her lecture was much too long, and we considered her style of argument in regard to the great wrongs of her sex as rather feminine and weak. In no country in the world are there such chivalrous laws for the protection of woman's true rights as in this.⁵

That “feminine and weak” are addressed in the same phrase in this critique shows the extent to which Willard countered such perceptions, insisting that “feminine” was a strength to be shared in public. Among other Friday afternoon lecturers at ECL were Emily Huntington Miller, Oberlin graduate, children’s author, and poet, on the advantages of a coeducational system; LH Bontrell, Esq., student of Margaret Fuller, on Margaret Fuller; Dr. Mary Thompson, first female physician in Portland, Oregon, and suffragist, on hygiene; the Reverend M.M. Parkhurst, on the Christian Idea of Woman; Dr. Mary A. Safford, “the most womanly and best educated physician in the United States;” Charles Fowler, on “How to Study,” “Your Opportunity” and “Our Ideals of Character”; other lecturers on “The Classical Course as a Mental Gymnastic,” “A Woman’s Charms,” and “Deficiencies in Girlish Character,” “The Arts of Home,” given by Willard, and “A Plea for Moderation,” given by physician Mrs. L. H. Stevenson (*List*). Willard also gave a talk to the students “Who Wins?” which may have been the source of her later book *How to Win*.

Unlike Emma Willard or even President Jones at NFC, Willard did not use the weekly lecture as a forum from which to present student shortcomings. Faults under her leadership became private information self-reported, while public presentation concerned student progress and success. Apparently, the Friday afternoon lectures for the ladies were heavily attended by the male students, and became somewhat of a social occasion. One such incidence prompted “Euphronia, of the Ladies’ College” to write to the school paper “is it quite the thing for young gentlemen, called students, to

crowd the entrance to our Chapel on Friday afternoon, so that we are unable to get in? Is the lecture especially provided for them, or for ‘us girls?’”⁶

When Willard later edited the *Chicago Post* in 1879, she ran a series called “Talks for Girls” which may have had their origins in some of the lectures she had given to students. Her talk “How to Win”(1886) suggests that those who win are those who “stick to their specialty and strike out from the center.” She states

God has called each woman to some peculiar work, and given some special aptitude or capacity. They should study themselves, to know what they could do best, and, having determined with fixed purpose aim to fit themselves for it, and accomplish it. They should get into their craniums some resolute aim in place of dreams and fancies; should not wait for some handsome prince to whirl by in his carriage . . . Lack of definite purpose leaves the skull filled with insipid brain soup, where a few lumps of thought swim in a watery gravy. To seek and achieve a definite and worthy object in life, would lift one above the world’s pity and to the level of its respect. (qtd. in Slagell 146)

Far from insisting that a woman’s accomplishments should be utilized only in the home, she states that with a “fixed aim, developed aptitude” and “achieved self-culture” women should “strike out from some radiant center of a self-poised heart, into the world about them, with a view of making the best of their powers for others’ good”(Slagell 146). Although she actively works to show exempla of woman’s

achievement in her own person and the modeling of others, it is still central to her thought that accomplishment must be paired with its dispensation.

Moral Horticulture: The School as Home

Willard's conceptualization of the domestic realm in the school setting itself is an important prelude to the nationalized domesticity in her temperance work. Willard is so wedded to the concept of school as a domestic space that she even goes so far as to say women should not enter coeducation without the home device:

I would not hazard the admission of young women on the same basis as young men, to Colleges hitherto open to men alone. I have great faith in human nature—and in girl nature most of all—but I do not desire to see an unformed character subjected to the varied tribulation here involved, without a guide . . . Among the inalienable rights of girlhood I recognize the right to the influence of home whenever this is compatible with the pursuit of the Higher Education, and earnestly believe we are in duty bound, so far as possible, to compensate Home's absence, where it is not. (Slagell 159)

Jessica Enoch's recent work on the rhetoric of school spaces is useful for analysis of ECL. Enoch places the "school as home" rhetoric as one that succeeded after rhetorics that placed the physical space of school as a "public, exposed, masculine space" (*Place* 276). Rhetorics of space, Enoch explains, are "those material and discursive practices that work to compose and enhance a space. Rhetorics of

space have the potential to make a space either powerful or diffused by giving value to the activities that happen inside that space and by suggesting or prescribing the kinds of occupants that should (and should not) move into and out of that space.”

These rhetorics are found in architectural plans, descriptions and observations of the school, proposals for school change, and schools as metaphor (Enoch *Place* 276).

Enoch concentrates on the period of educational transition from the 1830s and 40s.

She describes the work of figures such as Henry Barnard and Horace Mann as responding to the more Calvinist, masculinized early American public school model, in which the teacher acted primarily as critic and disciplinarian. Barnard and Mann advocated instead a more feminine practice, firmly placing woman in the role of teacher with an educational practice designed to instead provide “a moral education in which students were encouraged, cultivated and cared for”(Enoch *Place* 278). Early schools were criticized as being points of both physical and moral danger, places “public, exposed, chaotic, and possibly dangerous”(Enoch *Place* 280). With the feminization of the school, schools became a place of refuge, “separated from the profanity, bustle, and dirt of the outside world”(Enoch *Place* 281-282).

Willard felt that the importance of the school as a space was not considered sufficiently in her time. In her speech “A New Departure in Woman’s Higher Education,” given to Sorosis, a professional women’s club on October 17, 1873, Willard makes arguments for the ECL system of education. Regarding curriculum, she acknowledges the argument that women have different minds than men and therefore need a different curriculum. She says this is a wrong assumption. Both

sexes, she argues, need to dine “at the Banquet of Truth,” spread impartially from nature. She says that the important questions regarding woman’s education are as follows: “ought we to learn? Yes. What ought we to learn? The same things as men. Where and in what surroundings ought we to learn?” She calls this third question “the mooted point in educational ethics and economics at the present hour. Here the battle waxes hot, and many are slain”(New 151-2). She emphasizes the importance of school surroundings, stating “I then lay down the proposition, that the more thoroughly we can incorporate the elements of Home into the organization and administration of our institutions, from the smallest school to the tallest saltwater university, the more effective for good will they become; the more thoroughly will they cooperate with that Power, not of ourselves, which makes for righteousness”(New 153).

Willard goes on to argue similarly to other women’s educational models, that the school “home” should exemplify an ideal family structure. However, in her scheme, it should replicate an equal partnership, not a paternal order. Home should be the school model because of its qualities of nurturance; it should also present male and female leadership, just as the home has mothers and fathers who “modify and correct each other’s actions and opinions, and the result is seen in the more symmetrical development of their children”(New 154). Schools, she claims, should have in faculty and governance men and women in equal numbers. She argues that teachers need to be exemplars to their students, living out what they themselves counsel. “To carry out still further the fundamental idea of home, I would assign to

the especial care of each teacher a small number of students who should go to him or her as a parent, with all the details of their everyday life”(New 154). She calls this her system of “moral horticulture,” “practiced in a few of our best schools, and its importance can not be too strongly emphasized.” She would assign this care of students as counting in the “laying out of work as equivalent to a daily recitation, the superintendence of the study done by those under his care”(New 155).

According to Willard, this equal partnership should be seen from the student to the administration. She argues that the best schools are coeducational, co-jurisdictional, and co-administered. Students and teachers “should be associated with families. Homes of young men on one side, those of young women on the other and a central group of educational buildings.” She suggests that they should meet in a common dining hall, and home buildings should accommodate “one teacher and pupils under teacher care, or better, a teacher’s family besides a convenient number of students.” Teachers and students, she claims, should identify themselves with the Church and to some extent the social interests of the town, “thus obliterating the monastic character from the cloister’s influence on higher education”(New 155). Observation of Willard’s practices demonstrates that her students were far from the monastery.

ECL’s housing was planned to be in a single building, which contained home and reception parlors, the dean’s office, and a chapel. The second and third floors were suites of rooms for teachers and students. Two students would occupy a parlor and bedroom, and there were some sleeping rooms without a parlor. The fourth floor

housed the music rooms and art gallery. The separation from male culture seems in Willard's scheme necessary for the emergence. She constantly connects domestic and public space, in words as well as displays. Any member of the proposed female college could enjoy all the advantages of the university, entitling her to any course in any program. An article promoting ECL states that "the present special object is to provide a pleasant 'home' for young ladies from abroad, where they will be surrounded by the genial influences of Christian family life. This, it is believed, is all that is needed to render feasible the opening of all colleges and universities throughout the land to women."⁷ Willard seems to constantly push her students into society, but she feels it is important to guide them constantly, providing the "home" to which they return.

Catharine Hobbs writes, "literacy in its broadest sense denotes not only the technical skills of reading and writing but the tactical—or rhetorical—knowledge of how to employ those skills in the context of one or more communities"(1). This employment of skill in context was central for Willard, as she encouraged her students to move across communities; by creating one for them, she helps them to move beyond it. Hobbs also notes that many sources from women's colleges confirm the conflict of separating women from society, rather than initiating them into it (66), criticisms of institutions such as Holyoke that later colleges tried to avoid.

After the Chicago fire of October 9, 1871, financial pledges for a new woman's college building were mostly lost, but the college went on in the rented NFC building and was self-supporting. Some time the same month ECL contracted

with Minerva Brace Norton, Willard's cousin, to be superintendent of the home department, in charge of the building, finances, and oversight of the boarding and commuting students. A scrapbook article from this period shows a call to fundraising, pointing out that ECL "is the only institution in the world that gives young women a college home with university advantages. It proposes to append an industrial department, in which women may be trained in the useful arts, to earn a livelihood (*Family* 30.3.3). In addition to providing a homelike environment, ECL trained women how to work outside of it.

The issue of housing was not solely a female problem. An early edition of the *Tripod* discusses the problem of "cheap and desirable lodging" for the University. It says the school needs a dormitory, noting that those who believe dormitories encourage "primitive college behavior" don't know what they're talking about. Rather, the male authors give an argument reminiscent of those insuring women's domestication, stating that being housed in a dormitory "works upon the character of the boy, freed, perhaps for the first time, from the restraints of home, and thrown upon his own individuality. . . this true college spirit cannot, we maintain, be preserved, except where the students have easy access to each other in large numbers." Scattered about the town in families, "they consequently lost that interest for, and familiarity with, each other as a body, and confine themselves to narrow circles and cliques."⁸ These male students argue for the kind of domestication being offered to ECL students only, as a protection from a dangerous male individualism.

Sarah R. Roland was the first NU graduate, matriculating in 1874. Three women were in the class of 1875, and five in 1876. By 1890 there were twelve graduates (Wilde 104). Mrs. George O. Robinson, (formerly Jane M. Bancroft), Dean of the Woman's College from 1877-1886, stated that during her tenure

the largest number of girls who had been inmates of the college up to that time in any one season was 34. The Woman's College was really a home for young women connected in any capacity with the congeries of buildings at Evanston, music students and elocution students not especially interested in the severe studies of a strictly collegiate course of study, pupils in the prep department of 14-17 years, and a few women students from 18-25 or more years in regular college standing. These constituted a various company over whom the dean of the Woman's College had personal supervision. Girls of fourteen and fifteen in the preparatory department needed close personal and motherly care. It was not unusual for the mother of such a girl to write me to know if the teachers accompanied the young ladies on their walks; if the bureau drawers of the students were inspected at regular intervals, and if the Saturday's mending was under someone's supervision. It required a degree of adaptability to turn from the care of such young women, and from the questions concerning them, to meet some other independent young woman who might introduce herself by announcing with frank decision that she had come to

Evanston for college work only and desired no limitations to affect her, as a woman, that were not equally imposed upon the young men.

(94)

Robinson addresses the complex demands of overseeing students who were still adolescent and those of university age demanding independence, a conflict that came to fruition under Willard's tenure.

However, the model Willard had established became the ascendant model with the coming of the twentieth century. Robinson describes the dormitory model of 1905 as:

practically the same as is furnished by the majority of the large co-ed institutions of the Middle West and West, where a woman professor, or Dean holding the relation of special advisor and care-taker over the young women is provided. With human nature as it is and society as it is, the majority of mothers prefer to have their girls surrounded by the loving refinement and sensitive appreciation to conditions that come from living in the atmosphere of a well-regulated home. (97)

Willard's argument is later vindicated, her old-fashioned ways becoming the later norm, and proving her point that girls would not be sent away to school unless such "retrograde" provisions were made. The difference seems to be—and it is a crucial one—that this supervision is a matter of choice.

Moral Horticulture: “Parental” Discipline

An important aspect of looking at college students in Willard’s time was that students were considerably younger. In the 1870s when she was a teacher at Northwestern, students in the classical course had to be a minimum of 15 or 16 years old. Willard felt that character building of such young students was central to woman's education, and she developed an entire system devoted to its cultivation. Young women who made the honor roll at ECL were not necessarily those who had attained high academic status, but who had instead obtained high moral status. Scholarship did not even enter into the requirements of admission to the honor roll. Instead, Willard's description of the honor roll states, "character is placed above all competition here"(*Glimpses* 213). These "roll of honor girls" were those who were "examples to the flock," those who were "low-voiced and gentle-mannered, kind and considerate toward all, and just as much above reproach as any of their teachers"(*Glimpses* 210). Willard called this exemplary behavior that of the "self-governed," and those who had attained it took a pledge, to "cooperate with the Faculty in securing good order and lady-like behavior among the boarding pupils, both in study and recreation hours, in inspiring a high sense of honor, personal responsibility and self-respect, and especially conducting in this spirit the attendance of the young ladies at the literary societies and church"(*Glimpses* 211).

Willard felt that this "self-government" system was effective in removing the humiliating school discipline she had endured as a student and teacher. Her approach was that female conduct was to be “almost wholly in their own hands, to have no

rules except those that they and their teachers felt to be of vital importance”(*Glimpses* 208). She was not alone in this philosophy. NU president Haven had at one time stated that Americans were “the only people yet found competent to maintain self-government, to establish schools of their own, and to subject themselves to proper discipline.”⁹

As she did often in her teaching and leadership, Willard made the suggestion of “self-government” discipline and left the idea to student implementation. Students created a Roll of Honor Club, addressing everyday consequences for inappropriate behavior among students. Notes from Honor Club meetings show that Willard was not in control of the group; she attended only when the students themselves generated reasons to consult with her and asked her to attend. Describing the arrangement, she says “the girls were so delighted to have no rules that the older ones gave little comfort to the younger when they began misbehaving, which they did . . . After awhile, however, we would see the necessity of some one rule, then it would be announced”(*Glimpses* 211). Willard’s approach was to tell them that a problem, such as noise in the halls, had to be solved, then leave it up to them to solve it. Their response was included in her autobiography: “A pledge we will not congregate in the halls; will be quiet coming and going to the dining room and while at table; maintain order and example on the way to chapel and before exercises; during meditation hours, those in parlor will conduct themselves so as not to disturb teachers or those studying”(*Glimpses* 213).

This self-government system was considered so important that it was placed in advertisements for the school, which stated, “the general basis of government in this institution is that merit shall be distinguished by privilege. Any young lady who establishes herself a trustworthy character will be trusted accordingly” and “anyone on the Roll of Honor will be invested with certain powers and responsibilities usually restricted to the faculty. Those who during one entire term had not been “conditioned (by a single reproof) upon the Roll of Honor, are promoted to the Self-governed list” (*Glimpses* 213). Student names on the roll of honor and self-governed lists were posted in the school parlor, and the names of the group’s leaders were printed in the school catalogue. The Roll of Honor Club stated their goal:

to cooperate with the Faculty in securing good order, and lady-like Deportment among the boarding pupils both in Study hours and Recreation hours: inspiring a high sense of honor and responsibility, and self-respect, and especially in conducting in this spirit the attendance of the young ladies at the Literary Societies of the University and Preparatory departments. (*Minutes* 2)

There was an honor club for each literary society. Members of the club were elected by faculty and fellow female students in the club “and the eligibility of any young lady shall depend on her deportment”(*Minutes* 2). The club met once a week. There were chairs for various committees who were responsible for reporting each week on “the Department of the young ladies under its charge on Friday evening”(*Minutes* 5). After attending the literary societies, the other members of the honor club were

responsible for monitoring member behavior. If a student failed to attend the meetings for three weeks, her place would be filled by another student appointed by faculty to take her place. Any questions of order at these meetings were decided according to parliamentary rules (*Minutes* 6). ECL students noted teaching parliamentary order as important; later it became part of the WCTU curriculum.

Included in the Roll of Honor book is a letter written by Frances Willard to the members, in which she states

The reputation of the new College is largely in your hands. Known as you are to possess the measured confidence of your teachers, and to have been entrusted by them with intricate and delicate responsibilities, your conduct, your conversation, your scholarship, your manners will henceforth be carefully observed by your fellow students. Impressed as I am, most deeply, with these thoughts, I shall implore for you the guidance of the Supreme, in your new undertaking, and I especially urge you to do this in your private devotions and in each one of your committee meetings. When we begin with prayer we may be sure we are on the right track to a genuine success. (*Minutes* 8)

She then goes on to make suggestions on behalf of the faculty for their club, including suggestions for a weekly written report of student behavior, that students travel only together to literary societies, “unaccompanied by gentlemen” and that they return from society meetings by ten in the evening (*Minutes* 9-10). The pledge of the Roll of

Honor Club states “Roll of Honor girls must be examples to the flock. They will not of course disregard the smallest of our few regulations. They will not break study hours, enter rooms in study hours; keep lights burning after the bell; be late at meals or recitations; be noisy or uproarious either in or out of school hours. They will be low voiced and gentle mannered, kind and considerate towards all and just as much above reproach as any of their teachers.” The pledge of the self-governed, those who attained the highest level of exemplary conduct, is “to be an example of the flock. That is so to conduct myself that if every other pupil followed my example our school would need no rules whatever, but each young lady would be trusted to be a *law unto herself*. I promise to do the things that make for *peace*”(Minutes 12, their emphasis).

The first roll of honor, dated spring term, 1873, had five students on the list of “self-governed” and four on the roll of honor. The club had a chair, president, secretary, critic, and a chair representing each literary society. In a piece which addresses the privileges and responsibilities of the self-governed, it is stated “they must have the responsibility of proving to the community and to scholars in general that girls can govern themselves; of knowing that teachers and scholars are all observing their deportment—to see whether they use their privileges by not abusing them or whether they insult their own pleasure instead of being careful about the example they set to those less favored”(Minutes 36-7). Willard’s students were acutely aware that their presence at the level of university scholarship was on trial.

Mental Acquisition: Composition Class Under Willard

In the period of ECL's creation there was a transformation in the college subjects of Rhetoric and English. Rhetoric in the older American college before the late nineteenth century "was the center of the educational process, typically the only course students took all four years" and "the writing demanded of the class was preparation for speaking"(Russell 42). Professors of rhetoric spent most of their working day interacting with students, listening to and critiquing their speaking in recitation and oratorical performances, as well as reading the writing students did to prepare for those performances. David R. Russell explains that the early nineteenth century classroom was "a performance-centered, interactive place" where "students also learned through the public oratorical performances (rhetoricals) central to the life of the college community—debates, orations, declamations, forensics" and "through extracurricular literary societies in which students (often without a professor's supervision) read, wrote about, and discussed vernacular literature, as well as politics, religion, and other issues"(42). Russell states that from the 1870s on, English moved into a subject that became a pure study of text rather than a socially mediated activity. Willard's educational leadership runs counter to this observation. At ECL a strong rhetorical education was retained and expanded for female students.

Willard embodies the transition from classical to modern university, and in composition and rhetoric she maintains emphasis on the former, retaining the kind of training that focuses on oral performance for the edification of the non-specialist audience, rather than into written texts as an interpretation of literary works.

Historian Mary Kelley argues that women in the post-revolutionary and antebellum periods gathered in schools and literary societies to “apprentice themselves for roles as makers of public opinion. Engaging in critical thought and cultural production, polishing reasoning and rhetorical faculties, and deploying the vocabularies and values of civil society, they practiced the arts of persuasive self-presentation”(153). Under Willard the education of girls and women continued to foster this “art of persuasive self-presentation,” evidenced in the Roll of Honor. Students were encouraged to persuade simply by their very model conduct. In addition, they were taught the importance of addressing civic concerns beyond just exemplary behavior. Before the Evanston College for Ladies was in existence, students at Willard’s alma mater, NFC, wrote on apolitical topics, such as “Symbols,” “Victories,” and “Silence,” while male students at Northwestern wrote on topics such as “The Care of the Poor,” “Faneuil Hall and Anti-Slavery,” and “The Education of the People, in favor of Compulsory Education.”¹⁰

After Willard began teaching, there was no differentiation between the topics of her students and those of the males. Willard students wrote on contemporary issues and those that affected them personally, such as topics on school organization and governance. The school paper, the *Tripod*, notes that at ECL’s first commencement, Miss Vonja Hills read an essay entitled “The Roll of Honor,” in which she sustained the theory of self-government in schools, a theory Willard had implemented. “The essayist read scarcely distinct enough, otherwise the essay was a success, and very creditable to its author.”¹¹ The Chicago *Evening Mail* noted that this essay “took a

wide range, hitting off in a trenchant and slightly sarcastic vein the excesses and wild pranks of college students under the fast-waning regime of enforced restraint in the government of our literary institutions.”¹² From the beginning, Willard students began to suggest that a change in male behavior would benefit the college. President Haven, whose textbook was used in the rhetoric course, shared Willard’s emphasis on the rhetorician as moral subject. In Haven’s chapter entitled “Intellectual and Moral Elements of Elocution,” he states this rule: “True Eloquence Requires a Noble Character.” This rule requires that “A speaker needs to be respected by his hearers for sincerity, ability, earnestness, and power. He must be, or believed to be, what he seems. Otherwise he is only an actor, and though he may be eloquent as such, the people are merely amused or entertained” (371).

Willard stated that while teaching composition at Northwestern she saw the appeal of writing about current topics rather than ancient ones, noting that “they would be as well pleased and would gain more good if such themes were assigned” suggesting topics on temperance advocates such as John B. Gough and Neal Dow rather than Alexander the Great and Plato the Philosopher. “In their debates they would be at least as much enlisted by the question ‘Is Prohibition a Success?’ as by the question ‘Was Napoleon a blessing or a curse?’ (*Glimpses* 336). Willard had discovered the importance of engagement with current political events, a skill her students would later use to defend Willard herself.

Lucille M. Schultz’s work on reading the student compositions of past eras states that “it is particularly important to look at the students’ writing that was

produced at the edges of school or outside of school. It is here that students were most likely to write outside the lines”(108-109). She asserts that in student newspapers “students wrote with the self-declared authority of writers, enfranchising themselves to evaluate writing and to offer advice to others on the composing process . . . these student papers are a site where students read and respond to each other’s texts, reflect on or describe the writing process, or assume the persona of writer” (138-9). Reading the Northwestern University *Tripod*, for example, presents important information regarding public opinion at that time and what the students themselves valued in writing and school culture. Jill Lamberton’s work discusses college women’s writing as “a means for identifying their ‘self-reflection and self-fashioning’ in an academic context,” with composition as “a way of practicing identities and performing knowledge collaboratively”(320-321).

Willard’s composition course focused on public rhetoric that addressed important issues of her day. Barbara Couture defines “Public Rhetoric” as:

A speech that represents a private or personally held commitment to an idea, a proposed action, or a point of view that is expressed publicly with the intention that it be accepted, adopted, or supported by a public audience. Such public rhetoric, if effective in realizing the speaker’s intentions, is characterized by the mutual benefit of the speaker who accrues public support for a personal or privately held idea and of the public audience who gain a new perspective of potential value to them . . . the ethical practice of public rhetoric so defined brings the speaker

into a more fully responsible relationship with his or her audience and instantiates the personal responsibility of one for another that underlies all ethical social relationships. (123)

Willard arranged for all of the “young ladies” in her English composition classes to report for the Chicago and Evanston papers, a fact which certainly goes against the notion of composition as private enterprise (*Glimpses* 219). Her students repeatedly expressed their point of view in order that their audiences take action.

Students dubbed the form of composition teaching Willard enacted at ECL a “practical style of teaching the art of expression.” Students noted that Miss Willard’s composition classes had “live questions” as the “order of the day.” Topics included “The Hoilly Water Works; Reports of the Literary Societies; Summary of Weekly News.” The “latest question for debate is ‘Are the Literary Societies, as conducted in our School, beneficial to Young Ladies?’” Students seemed to think so. “Journalistic talent is being developed, we learn, among these young composers. Subjects are worked up into descriptive articles . . . Then these reports are offered for publication in the daily journals of a city not a thousand miles away. We like this practical style of teaching the art of expression, and shall have more anon to say concerning it.”¹³

One of the “live questions” addressed by Willard students was the disastrous Chicago fire of October 1871, which affected many student families and the school. The October 9th 1871 *Chicago Mail* has a piece on ECL students debating the question “Is it a Blessing to the World?” Willard students also debated on the topic “resolved, that

it is advantageous to all concerned for our young ladies to belong to gentlemen's literary societies as conducted in our schools"(*Family*).

The following month's paper notes that the college composition classes have increased in number and that students are enjoying the class, where "this exercise, which girls usually pronounce 'awful' and 'horrid,' becomes a pleasant duty."

Students argue that

Essay-writing is not the only mental work accomplished by these enthusiastic laborers; debates on various and interesting themes are carried on, aiding greatly in the cultivation of readiness of thought and speech, ease and self-possession, and an acquaintance with parliamentary ways. Reportorial talent is also being stimulated and developed, as Chicago papers can greatly testify. Sometime, just when this scribe knoweth not, there is to be a prize contest, in which two members of the advanced class, and one from each of the other classes, are to compete for the prize. ¹⁴

As this form of composition was proven to be successful, advertisements for the university began to present NU as providing a strong rhetorical culture for women, where "nearly all have availed themselves of this opportunity, and the offices and literary appointments have been distributed impartially between ladies and gentlemen"(*Catalogue* 123).

Mental Acquisition: Literary Societies at the Evanston College for Ladies

One of the most important aspects of Willard's work at NU was her insistence that the work of rhetoric be shared among males and females. As a consequence, she opened up the literary societies to both sexes. The successes and conflicts of this approach are evidenced in the school paper. Willard observed that allowing young men and women to create literary culture together "helped to keep out secret orders and greatly stimulated the interest of our young people in all the rhetorical exercises both within and outside the literary societies. I have never known so keen and sustained devotion to composition, debate, speech-making and the study of parliamentary usage, as during this interval"(*Classic* 166).

Jill Lamberton's work argues that student texts "contained the very building blocks of social and institutional change"(241). She looks at "Performances of intellectual identity" as "acts of persuasive self-presentation," moments in college texts where "college women experimented with and displayed methods of presenting their own knowledge and education to others"(242). Female students had to demonstrate that they belonged at college and that they could do the work of their male peers, and their texts "were the discursive sites where college women first responded to the actions and opinions designed to encourage or discourage them and others to pursue collegiate studies. These texts transformed women's ways of being in and relating to the academic world and the communities they joined after leaving college"(262). Lamberton's work concerns students at affiliated colleges such as Girton and Newnham at Cambridge and Radcliffe at Harvard. At NU, Willard's

students presented themselves as living up to the moral requirements demanded of them, and in turn, they cast their judgment rhetorically upon the conduct of their newfound intellectual male colleagues.

In January of 1871 the first issue of the *Tripod* was published under the control of the Hinman and the Adelpic literary societies. In this issue, the education of women was a topic of discussion, and it advertised the literary society occasions and invited women to attend as audience members. Not long after women entered the university, their strength in academics was duly noted. After their first year of their attendance, students commented

Many of the girls exhibited a degree of scholarly proficiency fully equal to that of the young men, and it is a noteworthy fact that in one department, numbering several hundred, in which the young ladies recite with the young men, a lady student—Miss Sara Heston, of Niles, Michigan—attained the highest average for successful scholarship, standing 79 on a scale of 80. In fact, in every department and in every class in which both sexes recite together, the record of the young ladies compared very favorably with that of the young men. The rivalry in scholarship between the two sexes is a marked feature of this institution, and the results impress us very favorably with this system of coeducation. (“Family” n.p.)

Students often argued the importance of literary societies in the school paper. The societies were extremely popular with students—especially after females entered

the fray. “Literaries,” as they were called, drew the attention of the entire Evanston community and the greater Chicago area. Presentations were noted in both Evanston and Chicago papers, along with evaluations of their quality. One issue notes that the literary societies have so many applicants that they are “knocking at the literary halls for admission, as to bring up the question if there is not an immediate demand for a third society.” The societies are presented as

places of pleasant recreation, appropriately closing the week’s arduous labors, crowning it with profit and happiness. As a means of social culture, the Society has good advantages. It does away with caste, except that which is based on merit. There we all meet on a common plane; the contest is free—neither blood, nor rank, nor previous connections grasp the prizes and wear the crowns, but these are impartially awarded to deserving excellence . . . The work of a college is not simply to send out into the world acute thinkers, but it wants to furnish effective public speakers . . . if necessity should compel the choice between a poor recitation and a failure in Society hall, with due respect for the Professor’s opinion to the contrary, we would say let the text book lie shut. Better know less and be able to use it, than to be filled with learning and lack the ability to make it available. If you would be able to use most effectively the discipline and knowledge acquired by school life, make the most of the Literary Society.”¹⁵

Clearly the students at NU, both male and female, express a preference for oratorical culture over textbook knowledge.

In another instance, students declared that participation in literary societies was worth the time commitment, stating

We come to college that we may make the most of ourselves by the use of the recitation room, the library, the literary societies and the public lectures. All should be used faithfully. No one to the exclusion of the others. The seven or nine year's work should be occupied in digging and gathering. Gathering the best thoughts from classmates in literary societies, and the most carefully prepared ideas from professors and distinguished teachers cultivates taste, corrects style, aids judgment and gives the student a fullness and readiness that the recitation room alone cannot give. ¹⁶

Rhetorical strength is not seen here as a means to serve, but instead as better positioning for individual success, something far from the uses for rhetorical skill Willard advocates.

Willard's allowance of special freedoms to access the coed literary societies offered up new, important forms of literacy they would not had had otherwise. Mary Kelley argues that student experience in such public forums allowed for "experimenting with subjectivities, which were informed by the advanced education they were pursuing. For some of the members, the books read and the essays written in response sanctioned subjectivities they were already fashioning for themselves. For

others, reading and writing together were catalysts as they set about crafting alternative selves”(118).

Females competed along with males for literary prizes, but competed only with other women in debate. One topic publicly debated by Willard students was whether women should be allowed to preach. Students writing in the school paper noted that “Although the validity of their decision might be questioned, yet the debate was interesting and worth the attention it received from all.”¹⁷ These all-female debates took place on Friday evenings instead of the lectures; on occasion students in the *Tripod* responded that they preferred the student debates, stating “they were exceedingly well written, well read and delivered, and well received. On the whole we thought that the ladies did rather better than the gentlemen.”¹⁸ Eventually the paper noted that students were becoming reformers in their oratories: “An excessive carping and fault-finding seems to be the most prominent characteristic of our youthful orators. Nothing is just as it should be . . . the ease and self-complacency with which they extemporize new moral, social, and political theories, is instructive, and somewhat amusing. Verily, the most radical reformers will not want for eloquent advocates in the future!”¹⁹ Willard’s students were becoming noted for their public potential.

Willard allowed her students to take part in this public activity, but only on the condition that it be performed with proper conduct. In April 1873, only a few months before Willard’s resignation, a committee was instructed to confer with Willard to ask for relaxation of the Ladies’ College rules to accommodate ladies in

the Hinman society. The group did not adjourn until after ECL's curfew. Faced with this conflict, males debated the addition of ladies to their societies, and resolved to keep the invitation open and to dispel rumors to the contrary. At that time faculty requested that the society exclude women, and the society wrote a letter to President Fowler saying that they refused (Rech 42). In the fall of 1874, the term following Willard's departure, the NU faculty voted to exclude women from the literary societies. *Tripod* articles at the time contest the move, and it is clear that it is the faculty, not the students, who want this change. A student notes the following year that "Young Ladies" have been excluded from the literary societies:

Why such a backward move in the policy of our institution? Did the Faculty see that the 'experiment' was a failure? Such are the questions naturally arising in view of the late action of the Faculty, and an answer is surely demanded. And first, let it be understood that this is not written in behalf of the young women; they are abundantly able to speak for themselves . . . But the societies feel aggrieved, and desire to explain fully their position and the circumstances attendant on the removal of a part of their membership. To begin with, the societies have had a mixed membership for more than three years, and by almost universal testimony they were never so prosperous as during this period. The societies feel that the presence of the young women has contributed to their efficiency continually. The Faculty admit that the 'experiment' has succeeded beyond all their expectations. It is

admitted that the entrance of the young women has not lowered in the least either the moral or literary tone of the societies. It is admitted that they—the young women—have borne themselves as becometh ladies, and they have fully sustained their share of the burdens of the societies. Why, then, in the face of these facts, have they been excluded from the halls within which they felt they had a legal right?²⁰

The faculty argument against coed literary societies seems to be the possibility of impropriety at meetings; ironically, concern about the improprieties seems to have grown because of faculty lifting supervision from the female students. Willard's insistence that females participate required supervision, a responsibility that the faculty disdained. The dean following Willard, Ellen Soule, later stated that this change was her demand, as gender separate societies were her experience at East Coast institutions. Willard's successor as dean may have seen the implications for her own career had she made the same demands. The easiest option, according to the mostly male faculty, was to separate the societies. The year following Willard's departure saw a big decline in the literary societies. The change is attributed in the history to a rise in the Greek system, but this is only one year following gender separation, and one wonders whether students were frustrated by this faculty intrusion into a successful student enterprise.

The following month's *Tripod* has faculty response to the conflict:

Is it not very clear to every thinking mind that the judgment of some of these enthusiasts is wonderfully influenced by their feelings and

preferences greatly to the disparagement of the fact? Their liberality would carry them so far that they would adorn even the top stone of the University with calico . . . It is not conducive of a high degree of scholarship to have sociables as often as once a week when favored and recognized by the Faculty.²¹

This faculty member seems to be saying that the literary societies had turned into sociables, and were therefore no longer educationally significant. This certainly goes against what the students seem to have gained from them. The writer argues that the university is not a pioneer institution, as Willard had suggested. Instead, Northwestern seeks to appear as a continuation of the past, shorn of “feelings and preferences” and carrying on with presumptions of hard “fact.” Rather than adorning “even the top stone of the University with calico,” as Midwestern innovators, they are part of a long university heritage, making claims to historical educational precedent—a precedent whose apex is a gendered male, transgressive if topped in calico.

Willard’s Self-Report System: Employing a Shard of Early Woman’s Culture

When Willard became president of ECL, the school had many subscribers who had pledged to donate funds for the school building. After the Chicago fire, however, they lost this source of income, and were therefore forced to rent the old building of the Northwestern Female College (NFC). The owner of the building eventually wanted to sell the property, and ECL was thus faced with the necessity of financial survival. Becoming a department of Northwestern university meant that

ECL would no longer have to rely on its own finances. ECL merged with Northwestern University in June of 1873, and Willard became Dean of the Woman's College and a member of the university faculty. This change in administration soon became a source of great conflict.

After the woman's college lost the NFC building, which they were renting while awaiting construction of a new home, Willard issued "self-report" forms to girls who were forced to board throughout Evanston. Willard saw this form as a way to maintain her system of compliance with the ladies' college. This insistence on oversight became an issue, because males at Northwestern were not subject to such supervision. The self-report forms had fifteen questions asked of the girls regarding their behavior each week. Questions on the form ask about students being in their rooms during study hours, having permission to leave the dormitory to leave town or to receive calls and invitations; whether students, if they do leave, are accompanied by at least three other students; whether they make it back for their ten o'clock curfew, and finally, whether they show the appropriate quiet behavior in class and chapel (*Self*). Students seemed to have the most difficulty with following all of the hours marked out for study time, given that they were often sick. One student jotted out a note to Willard on the back of a self-report form about missing her Latin class: "I think in remaining away from the Latin Class yesterday, I violated the spirit of the law. Although you kindly excused me, yet I think my excuse was insufficient. My conscience hardly justifies my absence" (*Alice*). Additionally challenging was not whispering, a fault to which many students confessed.

The self-report form prompted an article in the Chicago *Tribune* titled “Unequal Privileges Allowed Male and Female Students—the ‘Self-Report’ Imposed on the Ladies . . . That Horrible ‘Question Nine.’” Question nine asked “Have you left your boarding place without permission, unless to attend recitation?” (*Self*). The article notes that the proposed boarding hall for female students at Northwestern never came to fruition because of subscription loss due to the fire.

The Woman’s College is, therefore, a department of the University, and all departments are supposed to be under the government of one man. The result has been a peculiar and very complicated state of affairs. All of the lady students are subject to the rules of the Woman’s College; the gentlemen are virtually without rules, being placed on their good behavior. But, as it is claimed to afford the young ladies equal privileges with the gentlemen, it is reasonable to ask that such privilege be allowed or that the claim be withdrawn. At present, a young man attending the University enjoys perfect freedom—being only required to keep up with his class and behave like a gentleman, while his sister, who is, let it be supposed, in the same class, is required to have a retentive memory, so as to correctly fill up her weekly ‘self-report.’ While such rules are considered necessary for the government of students in one department, some restrictions be also placed upon those in other departments . . . (*Unequal*)

Later that spring the paper responded to a write-in about the self-government plan. The paper asserts, “Self-government, is a mild form of modern college and boarding school nonsense. The most approved method of carrying it out is to put a boy’s or girl’s hands in manacles, their feet fast in the stocks, and then have a Professor or a Professoress say: ‘Now dear do just as you please and if you don’t I’ll lick you.’”²²

The female student point of view was written in a Chicago *Tribune* response titled “What the Girls Say,” defending the self-reporting system. The “girls” state:

Those in the Woman’s College, who are under the jurisdiction of those ‘odious rules’ about which so much has been said in the public prints, do not seem to be as indignant as their chivalrous and would-be defenders. The following resolutions were gotten up by the young ladies of their own sweet will, and were signed by nearly all of them before Miss Willard knew anything about the matter. As an evidence of the fact that the ladies are not restive under those terrible restraints, all that could be reached, in the limited time, of those who are subjects of the rules, have signed them except two. The ‘girls’ most heartily approve of the policy of Miss Willard. Resolved, that in the rules for the government of the Woman’s College we find nothing to call forth complaints, but, on the contrary, we as a body adopt them and believe them to be salutary in their effects . . . that in Miss Willard we find an efficient teacher, a kind faithful friend, and one who, forgetful of self,

is unwearied in her efforts to promote our intellectual and moral interests. Resolved, that a copy of these resolutions be printed in the *Tripod*, the *Chicago Tribune*, and the *Evanston Index*.²³

Willard's endorsement of female participation in the literary societies and of journalistic writing in composition class assured that there would be healthy public debate about rules and personal behaviors.

In response to the *Tribune* article, two additional Willard students write that the *Tribune* doesn't know what it is writing about, and that, on the contrary "young lady students" at NU are "more nearly free . . . than in any other boarding school in America." They provide a copy from the college catalogue on the roll of honor, stating that "we challenge the Tribune to prove that any other similar American Institution has so few rules or that there is any other so liberal and advanced . . . The Tribune insists that girls and boys in the school shall be placed entirely on an equality. So long as society is organized as at present, and so long as even a few girls will be silly, it very well knows this cannot be."²⁴ In the communication section of the same paper, students of Willard write in "we think the roll of honor and self-governed system marks a decided advance in school discipline and the one who introduced it need yield to none in the liberality of her views concerning the equality of gentleman and lady students. We earnestly desire to see and hope it is not far distant when society shall have the same high moral standard for both gentlemen and ladies and then there will be no rules." This is signed S. Rebecca Roland and Amy C. Kellogg, students who were enrolled at NU before the women's college assumed

oversight of all female students. They are therefore likely candidates for agreement with the *Tribune* article criticizing Willard's policies. This is another instance in which Willard students suggest that demands on conduct are reasonable and should be extended to the male population at the university.

In the *Tripod*, female authors again rise to Willard's defense. The article, "Our Government," explains the self-government system, and argues that it may look severe on its face, but that it is at the tail end of an entire system that has been successful for two years. "The chief objection" in the papers criticizing the plan

is to our having any rules whatever. Granted, that it is the wisest plan to allow the young men unlimited license, which is by no means a settled question, and it does not necessarily follow, that the young ladies should be granted the same. Society has placed certain restrictions upon one class which do not affect the other. This is unfortunate, not because the required standard in the one class is too high, but because it is not equally high in the other.²⁵

Here Willard's talks about demanding equal virtue from males, demands going back to her earliest public speeches, have influenced her students. Included in this issue is a declaration of support for Miss Willard's methods, signed by "49 young ladies" of "our own free will."

This female commentary on male conduct runs throughout issues of the *Tripod* during Willard's tenure there. Whereas before male students may have been able to conduct themselves without a great deal of notice, the *Tripod* presents cases

where female students began to suggest that their conduct rise to their level. In one instance, the Hinman and Adelpic literary societies gave their usual joint literary and social meeting. At the meeting's close, the chairman announced that a sociable would be held in the society rooms. On arriving at the rooms the floors were cleared, and everything arranged for a dance. The writers admonish:

Now we do not intend to enter in to a long-winded discussion of the immoral qualities of the foolish amusement. We will grant that it was perfectly right in itself; but this much we will say—for a vapid, conceited few to turn the hall of a debating society into a ball-room . . . was conduct which could not have been expected from persons calling themselves ladies and gentlemen. It must be remembered that this was done in the presence of the society members; and the dancers knew very well that fully three-fourths of those members were opposed to dancing from principle.²⁶

Another female student wrote complaining of male behavior in a letter to the editor. She talks about “rowdies” misbehaving at a literary society meeting:

Upon entering the hall, one young imp of Satan, from the Freshman class, began in the presence of the ladies and all others present to behave in a manner decidedly rude, and challenged a respectable member of the society, who, in his attempt to lead home out where he might get a breath of fresh air, mistook his shirt for his coat collar, and left the young rascal ‘nude as to the breast’ . . . But during the whole

entertainment the most disgraceful conduct was carried on. It is a stigma on the institution that young ladies and gentleman cannot attend our literary societies without being grossly insulted by the indecent language and ungentlemanly conduct of these young monkeys.²⁷

The emergence of female students into the intellectual arena of the university was accompanied by demands for their proper conduct. When such conduct emerged from the domestic space of the woman's college home and into the public, male arena of the literary societies and lecture halls, the calls for conduct became mere spinster finger pointing.

Even long after Willard's departure, her students continued to defend her policies. In her article in the *Methodist Review* written fifteen years later, former student Isabella Webb Parks stated that Willard had given no specific direction as to how her girls should conduct themselves toward young men or anyone else. "It was assumed that a self-governed girl had good and sufficient reason for her actions, so long as her conduct did not belie the confidence reposed in her," and the sense of loyalty to Willard "which was so strong in our schoolgirl days, the fear that she would be disappointed in us if we fell short of being our best self, has spurred us on to higher endeavor in these later years, even as in the old happy days when we were one of her 'girls'"(857).

The Turning Point: The Fowler Administration

In October of 1872 when Haven resigned as president of Northwestern, Charles Fowler, Willard's former fiancée, took his place. An ironic result of the

merger was that Fowler in effect became Willard's supervisor. A rising star in Methodist circles, known for his fundraising ability, he was immediately elected president upon Haven's resignation. Willard says in her autobiography that she wanted the mission of ECL reaffirmed after the merger, "making our faculty responsible for the young women in all cases save when they were in the recitation room"(*Glimpses* 227). Willard eventually found it impossible to continue her special form of education with the reemergence of her former fiancé. Fowler's views on education were pitted against Willard's. Fowler, earlier depicted in Willard's journal as extremely progressive in his views toward women and in his private relationship with her at an earlier period, saw the means to cultivate woman's education differently. Whereas Willard saw the centrality of morality and manner in woman's education, Fowler stressed equal opportunity. As a result of Fowler's presidency at Northwestern, women were allowed to attend and to teach at Northwestern, but they were no longer seen as a separate entity from the male students. The Woman's College became the College of Literature and Art, with Willard as its dean. Willard therefore became a professor to male students for the first time, and this position was received with a demonstrated lack of respect from her male students through student pranks, such as placing a cat in her desk drawer and deliberately opening and closing squeaky classroom doors during her lectures.

Fowler perceived Willard's self-government system as "incompatible with the dignity of the great institution wherein our Women's College was but a minor fraction"(*Glimpses* 231). Willard writes in her autobiography that Fowler "took the

ground that the young women would get on very well with very little supervision, and I, who had thought myself an emancipator of college girls, saw myself designated 'a female Bluebeard' by the press"(*Glimpses* 231). Willard felt so strongly about the need for emphasis on female character that she resigned her position over the issue when faculty and students voted for "practically equal freedom for all students and the method of self-government disfavored"(*Glimpses* 231). As preceptress, Willard felt that the cultivation of character was also central to the school's public image, and she argued that without attention to moral instruction there was the danger of a discrepancy between the school's "advertised oversight of females and the reality"(*Glimpses* 235). Writing fifteen years later of the ordeal, Willard stated, "the clashing of my theory of a woman's college against our president's theory of a man's university was the storm center of the difficulty"(*Glimpses* 241). Central to Fowler was that "the university idea, as distinguished from the college idea, was everywhere gaining currency at this time. It was Dr. Fowler's ambition to transform Northwestern from a college into a university"(*Glimpses* 272).

The central issue in the conflict was over administrative control of female students. In his drive to address women on equal terms, Fowler admitted women to NU who were not subject to the rules of the Ladies' College; Haven's requirement that they enroll in the ladies' college was dropped. Fowler wanted a totally coeducational university, with a majority male faculty in charge of the school and a female dean to *enforce* faculty—or male created—rules. The autonomy of the ladies' college as agreed upon in the merger was therefore lost, and put under the governance

of the university. The female dean therefore became much like a teacher under a male principal, an administrative structure Willard had avoided. Willard had wanted ECL to function as an associate, or affiliated college such as Radcliffe, where women were in charge of themselves. The main issues were therefore residence, spiritual guidance, moral oversight and governance. In an address to the board of trustees dated June 1873, Willard stated, "I earnestly seek such a solution of the problem, which I now present to you, as shall most directly tend to fulfill the hopes and expectations of those who have stood by our enterprise from the beginning. But I frankly acknowledge that I can not, with self respect, longer sustain relations so undignified as the last few months have witnessed." She says in closing that she is not opposed to "a closer union between the two schools, providing always that the advanced positions we have gained for woman be not sacrificed" (*Glimpses* 228). These "advanced positions" to which she alludes are likely female student academic achievement and engagement in rhetorical culture.

One of the changes with Willard's new title was that she heard male student recitations; these very students accused Willard of running freshmen "like a pack of girls" (*Glimpses* 231). The pieces in the *Tripod* seem to indicate that this might mean she began to call for higher standards in male behavior as she taught them. Willard biographer Mary Earhart points out that the chief duty of ladies college teachers was disciplining within the college building, suggesting that this job was much less exalted than Willard might have claimed, but Earhart seems to look at what the position later became (115). The focus on everyday life and influence seemed to be

much more important to Willard than has been given attention before. This seems to be the crux of what Willard wants so badly to retain, and it's clear that it is important to her because of its daily religious content and moral environment. In her WCTU work, Willard found a way to maintain this kind of dedication in an institution outside the university.

Willard states in her autobiography that when conflicting with Fowler over school issues, "with but two exceptions, my generous girls stood with me and declared that they would gladly submit to any rules I might think best" (*Glimpses* 232). One of the most important positions she played, that of religious leader, was taken away, and rather than conducting evening prayers with her students, a male "steward" for the Woman's College was sent to do so, "while I sat by on the platform and my girls looked whole encyclopedias of rebellion and wrath" (*Glimpses* 232). Willard describes the time of her resignation and departure as giving her a "sense of an injustice so overwhelming that no other experience of mine compares with its poignancy" (*Glimpses* 239). This conflict appears to be that under the changed circumstances with no daily institutional and social control, she can no longer create this Christian influence. It also becomes clear that Willard, in creating ECL, is responding to her period's demands for women's education. The fact that the coeducational university in America later chose a boarding house model as the norm seems to affirm Willard's earlier thinking.

Shortly before Willard's resignation was a public outcry over allegations printed regarding male boarders at the woman's college and their behavior. The

school paper alleged that one female student was late reporting back to the college and was with a young man while doing so. The paper states:

There is not another Seminary for girls in the land that would have been troubled for half an hour by such an escapade, yet the college seems to color the situation as throwing innocent females aged 18 to the wolves. Truly this is terrible! The most 'insidious temptations' to the young ladies of 10! Name them, and the Trustee Board, the Advisory Committee, and Faculty of oversight must see to them. Are their pinafores soiled by the unseemly pulling of molasses candy? Do sage college seniors 'insidiously tempt' them to injure their juvenile constitutions in too lavish repasts on peanuts? . . . The fact is that this hue and cry about the new rules and womanly supervision is not the main point at issue. (L.E.X.)

The real point, according to this contemptuous writer, is that Willard no longer has control over the female students. The writer notes that Mary Bannister Willard presented an amendment placing females back under the control of the Dean and her female teachers.

This preposterous amendment, had it been carried, would have made College faculties, throughout the entire country, open their eyes at this new departure in co-education, and slam their doors in all haste against the invasion of the audacious sisters . . . it was a serious mistake to demand that the jurisdiction of the ladies' Dean, who herself, must be

a member of the University faculty, be independent of that faculty, or in other words, that her power be derived from the Trustee Board direct, and not received from the Faculty. (L.E.X.)

The student doesn't seem to know anything about the original agreement between the two bodies, which says that Willard does not serve under the faculty, although the logic of his argument holds. Fear of what might happen in other coeducational institutions was probably a driving force behind relinquishing Willard of her supervisory duties.

In Willard's final letter to the University, she presents the principal points in the issues concerning woman's college rules, points which insist upon the relation between seeming and being. These issues are as follows: one of the first questions parents ask when sending their daughters to college is "about the extent to which acquaintances and social attentions will be regulated by those placed over their daughter's care" (*Last n.p.*). She notes that one father asked her about this with anxiety, and she understood, given that female students were being given greater freedom of movement without oversight. "In view of these facts I have found it impracticable to answer, truthfully, such questions as I have referred to, and at the same time to secure the patronage of the inquirer" (*Last n.p.*). Willard also notes faculty suggestion that within the college building itself, social relations be left determined by the girls themselves, and she is thus left to give them a freedom they have no where else.

Finally, she states that the school needs to be plain with the public on where it stands, as it is “universal and natural that a school with a ladies department undertakes special supervision of this clan of pupils, particularly in regard to their social relations. The public mind is fully persuaded that this is the policy of the Woman’s College,” as was in previous practice and the previous semester’s newspaper controversy (*Last n.p.*). Willard claims she must in good conscience tell mothers they are wrong if they suppose it a strict school. Thus the advertisement claiming that the school is “a home for young women, where the morals, health, and manners can be constantly under the special care of women” is no longer the case. Willard states that the school has a choice: they can either remove all of these supervisions and be frank about it, or provide “a systematic oversight of the daily travels and associations of those boarding within the college walls” so that the school “will replace, so far as it can be done, *the influence of Home*” (*Last n.p.*, her emphasis). She urges the school to carefully review the issue and to allow whoever succeeds her to again have control over the daily devotional exercises, and to openly state to the public, especially parents, whatever policy is determined (*Last n.p.*). Willard finally asks that the school be what it seems.

After Willard had moved into national work with the temperance union, she was still always revered as an educator. In her memoir of Evanston, Willard states that at the time of the ECL and NU experiments there was still a wide diversity of views as to what college for women should be. Writing in 1891, she notes that “the successful experiences of Vassar, Smith and Wellesley have shown that a college of

high grade can be combined with a more immediate care and personal interest in young women students than is wont to be exercised at colleges for men only”(Classic 199). Willard suggests that she still believes in separate institutions for women, reiterating her earlier statement that the coed university is a school for men. Willard states later that she sees coeducation as what could be the “bright, consummate flower of a Christian civilization,” but it is to her a goal yet to be reached (Classic 366).

Later, when Willard resigned from the university, it was said by her contemporaries that the Evanstonians sided with Willard, probably because they knew the inner workings of ECL’s creation. Addressing the consequences of this system falling into disfavor, Willard’s friend Mary Bannister Willard stated that “later, with continued good results, this unique method of self government was held to be incompatible with the dignity of university education as a too childish system for young women fit for coeducation, but its very simplicity was akin to that which makes for the kingdom of heaven within, and which is known as character” (M.B. Willard 69). Apparently, alliances throughout the conflict separated along gender lines. Male students, faculty, and trustees sided with Fowler (Trowbridge 70). The fall term after Willard’s resignation, the *Tripod* notes that under the new dean, Ellen Soule, the circumstances for the woman’s college have changed. The dean is responsible only for those students living in the college building. “It is the duty of the Dean to see to the proper classification of all the young ladies, to regulate their habits of life and study, and to impart to them moral, social and spiritual instruction . . . They are not held under continual surveillance, but they are made to feel that they are

regarded as young ladies having some judgment of their own, and who are abundantly capable of conforming to the rights and privileges of a lady.”²⁸

Eventually the Dean of Women was a greatly diminished position. One of the later deans states of her position that she is

little more than the head of one of the halls. She does not register women students, or assign boarding places or residence to new comers; she does not confer with delinquents or treat them independently with women students needing advice or reproof. She has no administrative office on the University campus or elsewhere, no provision is made for her to call the women students or any part of them to general conference and require their attendance. The office of dean of women is susceptible of being made vastly more useful to the University than it now is, and it is to be hoped that either the name will be changed for something less deceptively glittering, or that such means will be taken as will aid the one who holds the difficult place to fill out its possibilities of influence and power . . . from a distance it looks like a door of great opportunity; and thus it makes a great appeal to the heart that is ambitious for a chance to serve. A view of the actual situation, however, calls for some readjustments before such expectations can be met. (Crow 109-111)

The dean position, it seems, became a mere superintendent of the building, much as Willard's cousin had been.

The administration at NU eventually took on the structure Willard had dreaded from the traditional school—male administrators with female faculty serving under them as disciplinarians. However, her students went on to become active in many public arenas. Nettie A. Cowles worked for the WCTU in Wisconsin. Amy Cornelia Kellogg became a high school teacher, lectured and contributed to periodicals for the WCTU, and became president of the Wisconsin chapter. Amy Frances Wheller became an instructor in French and went on to graduate study at Bryn Maur. Jessie Brown, the first student who had entered NU as a regular classical student, urged the girls to sit with their class along with the male students in chapel, and debated on the Chicago fire, became the state superintendent of evangelistic work in the Nebraska WCTU in 1891, the Illinois State Superintendent of Mother's Meetings in 1895, national WCTU secretary in 1896, and national WCTU lecturer in 1898. Anna Amelia Davis, who won the Kedzie Prize for declamation at NU, became a teacher, president of the Alabama WCTU, editor of a WCTU column in the Decatur, Alabama newspaper, and eventually organized a seminary there. Elizabeth Roxana Hunt used her rhetorical and speaking skills to become head instructor in the English Department of the Cumnock School of Oratory (*Campus* 43).

Isabella Webb Parks, president of the Philomathian literary society, became a state superintendent in the WCTU purity department, press reporter for the Georgia WCTU, and a contributor to the WCTU *Union Signal* and *Methodist Review*. She named her daughter Frances Willard. Carrie Stolp returned to Oberlin after her freshman year at NU. "Partly through Miss Willard's influence, I turned toward

newspaper work and my senior year at Oberlin received and accepted an offer from Chicago publishers to edit a trade journal”(*Campus* 43).

Earlier histories of women’s education present the idea that equal access to education is a progressive move (Woody, Newcomer). The subtleties and losses of change from earlier models—losses to which Willard constantly pointed—were not addressed. Opening the doors to schools, Willard said, merely allowed women to enter a space created for someone else. Frances Willard is a figure both progressive and anachronistic. Her emphasis on equality in governance in the school is the same emphasis she creates in the temperance union for suffrage. This emphasis on equality is one embraced by historians as a move toward progress. Historians like Jill Conway have addressed the fact that having females around men while educating served a compensatory effect, with women taking up labor while males studied at institutions such as Oberlin. While such labor for males doesn’t seem to have been practiced at ECL, females at ECL are presented as having a “civilizing” influence on the males because of their attendance. Ironically, it seems that this attempt to “civilize” was the very point on which school administrators, male and female, had to contend. Conway states quite rightly that “it is essential to grasp that contrary to what educational historians have had to say up to now, it is not access to educational facilities which is the significant variable in tracing the ‘liberation’ of women’s minds. What really matters is whether women’s consciousness of themselves as intellects is altered”(9).

The preponderance of rhetorical and later reform activity on the part of Willard students serves to show that their sense of their own intellect was, in fact,

altered. Conway argues, however, that “there can be no question that the development of coeducation in the United States during the mid nineteenth century deprived women students of the opportunity to experience a self-supporting and self-directing female community” because “experience of a female controlled and directed world is essential, if women are to discover a sense of their own potential for self-directing activity”(10). This experience of a “female controlled and directed world” in which women discover their potential for “self-direction” is precisely what Willard fostered at the Evanston College for Ladies. When this world was abolished with the creation of the school as a department under male administration, Willard sought to recreate this world elsewhere. She saw the potential for such a world in the Woman’s Christian Temperance Union.

Chapter Four: Extending Woman's Moral Compass Through the WCTU Radius

“Husband and wife are one”
 Says the perfect law divine
 That one's the man, ' says human law
 With its distinctions fine;
 But in the WCTU
 New realm of law and life
 Husband and wife are often one,
 But *that* one is the wife.
The White Ribbon Birthday Book (104)

Under Frances Willard's leadership, the WCTU took her earlier ideas of “moral horticulture” and extended them to an overarching female “husbandry” tending American social ills. Willard had been involved in the temperance union from its beginnings, at the same time she was still teaching at Northwestern University. Only a few months after Willard's resignation from Northwestern, the temperance crusaders decided to organize a permanent temperance association. Many of the early temperance leaders were members of the Evanston community: Emily Huntington Miller, the only woman on the NU executive committee during Willard's tenure, was the secretary of the original temperance association at Chautauqua in 1874; her brother-in-law, Lewis Miller, was cofounder of Chautauqua with John H. Vincent; Jennie Fowler Willing, sister of Charles Fowler, was an early female Methodist minister and a WCTU founder. She taught English during the day, and held religious services on Sundays—probably the kind of model Willard herself sought to emulate. Willard had that summer visited temperance leaders in New York City and the first

Gospel Temperance Camp Meeting in Maine. Upon her return home, she joined a band of Crusade women as they knelt praying outside a saloon in Pittsburgh.

In the temperance crusade, Willard saw the potential for woman as a religious and political leader—the kind of leader that the earlier American colleges tried to create in its male students. As Charles Fowler had demonstrated, the model of the college-educated man had changed from one of religious service to one of professionalization. Eventually, Willard was to create in the temperance union the kind of civic, religious orator once seen as solely male. Nan Johnson has discussed the conservative ethos created in nineteenth century parlor rhetorics, stating that in the antebellum period “the rhetorical construction of the white middle-class woman continued to be a complex and ambiguous one as the century ended. To look directly at the role rhetorical pedagogies played in the construction of gender identities and to weigh the complicated ways that rhetoric dispensed power is to read the history of nineteenth-century rhetoric as a multilayered text”(127). Looking at Willard’s role in the authoring of the WCTU “text” is to present one layer of a rhetorical pedagogy created by women.

Willard had already experienced woman’s collective powers in educational organizations such as the National Woman’s Congress, which she attended in 1873, as well as Sorosis, an organization for woman professionals. Willard served as one of the organization’s sixteen vice presidents. The temperance movement, however, suited Willard’s motivations exactly, as it demonstrated the political power of women working through the strength of faith. As she had shown earlier in her career, Willard

was never happy working solely within the realm of intellect. As an educator Willard worked to shape the intellect by transforming the moral power within and then providing it with opportunities. As a Christian, Willard would stand by the views of Augustine, that no one owns or originates the truth or a voice to speak it with, because the truth and the words expressing it are always already written and are potentially the common property and resource of all. Her work was aimed at letting the “truth” out of women’s mouths. This chapter traces Willard’s arguments regarding female education throughout her life after teaching, and then follows how these arguments came to concrete fruition under Willard’s leadership in the WCTU.

Willard served as corresponding secretary for the Illinois WCTU from its beginnings in November, 1874. Just a few months later she was elected to serve as national corresponding secretary. Serving in this capacity gave Willard an insight into the national needs of such an organization. As secretary, Willard was responsible for communicating between state and national unions, creating new unions, and making sure that the directives from the national center were properly distributed among the states. In addition, she had to lecture a great deal, since the new unions needed someone to help them to get started and the existing unions needed encouragement. In the early days of the WCTU, work was supervised by national committees, who planned the work of their department and then gave instructions to the corresponding committee of the state, who then passed these instructions down to the local union (Earhart 150). In short, Willard was in charge of the entire national field of

organizational work. This experience proved very useful for her leadership. Four years later, Willard was elected president of the Chicago union.

Perhaps what drew Willard most to temperance reform was its potential for creating and presenting women as a powerful political presence. Throughout the time of her tenure as WCTU president, the organization presented its own history. Willard encouraged the writing of such histories and the documentation of WCTU activity in scrapbooks. Each time this history is retold, the origins of the union are found in the temperance crusade in Ohio. Willard herself wrote a *Crusade Classic*, a temperance crusade history reprinted in many WCTU publications. She describes the crusade origins as follows:

the whirlwind of the Lord began in the little town of Hillsboro . . .
There the Pentecost of God descended, and seventy women, without the slightest preconcerted plan, lifted their hands as silent witnesses, when asked by the good ministers and the famous lecturer, Dr. Dio Lewis, if they were willing to go out from their homes and pray in the places where their husbands, sons, and brothers were tempted to their ruin. There the Crusade Psalm was read; a rallying cry, 'Give to the Winds thy Fears,' was sung; and the first silent, prayerful procession of wives and mothers moved along Ohio streets. (*Woman and Temperance 2*)

The named Crusade Psalm and hymn were taken up at WCTU meetings throughout their history. Central to Willard's depiction of the crusade scene is the uncalculated,

gentle demeanor of the women involved. She recalls, “to my mind, the strongest confirmation of their deserved pre-eminence is the quiet, gentle, peacemaking spirit that they have shown from the beginning” (*Woman and Temperance* 3). In addition to her gentle bearing, Willard praises the early temperance leader Elizabeth Thompson, or “Mother Thompson,” for her ordinariness:

To hear her tell the story of the way in which the movement broke out in Hillsboro is an experience to be cherished for a lifetime. Her quaint, refined presence; her mild, motherly face, framed in its little cap; her soft voice; her peculiar manner of utterance combining remarkable originality with the utmost gentleness and good breeding; her inimitable humor; and most characteristic of all, her deep abiding faith in God and in humanity—all these have made an indelible impression, and helped, beyond what we can at all estimate, to form the character of the White Ribbon Movement. (*Woman and Temperance* 3-4)

The terms “quaint, refined presence,” “soft voice” and “gentleness and good breeding” could all be descriptions of Willard’s own public presentation and oratorical style. Such traits, described by Willard as an “indelible impression” forming the White Ribbon “character,” indicate the model Willard had created throughout her leadership. Willard often called the temperance union a place where women created a new female ideal, and in Mrs. Thompson, she found the ideal’s original mold. Such a non-threatening, loving messenger acting according to divine

compulsion parallels the gentle, feminized Christ to which Willard often alludes in her journals.

The WCTU shaped women to fit this mold by self-conscious presentation of self as Christian example. The moral strength demonstrated in the early crusaders had allowed those gentle and ordinary women to gain a public hearing. Sarepta Henry remarked of the first crusade gatherings “a great many different plans were proposed. The women talked freely. Women who had never before expressed themselves in any public assembly were so enthusiastic that they spoke with fluency. I think we were all astonished at each other when we found our tongues were loosed. I remember how there came in upon my own soul a sudden touch of inspiration, which caused me to spring to my feet, and to speak as I would never have supposed it possible.” Henry goes on to describe the group’s consultation of biblical text “that we might act intelligently concerning the great questions which had been sprung upon us”(M. Henry 140-141). Willard seized upon this early crusade voicing as the place to resume the work for women she’d already started—within what would later become a literal world of women. In fact, she often called the temperance crusades “the modern Pentecost,” a day celebrating the apostles’ encounter with the Holy Spirit after Christ’s death, in which they began to speak with tongues in utterances brought to them by the experience. The loosened tongue and consulting mind of the temperance evangelist had been formed.

Early temperance leader Henry Blackwell wrote of the implications for women in the early temperance crusades, noting “the beneficent educational influence

of the movement upon the women themselves.” He stated that “hundreds of women who a month ago would have trembled at the sound of their own voices in a public meeting, are today making eloquent extempore addresses to crowded audiences”(qtd. in Earhart 142). As noted by Willard biographer Mary Earhart, the crusade’s Christian affiliation meant that the movement had the approval of the church, and therefore the endorsement of wide public opinion. Having this form of sponsorship meant that the group had access to churches in which to speak and to congregate, as well as publication in important church newspapers from which they could write of their cause.

Willard used her mother’s methods in her cultivation of WCTU members. Along with underscoring woman’s public potential, Willard had often praised her mother for her progressive child-rearing ideas, shown in her ability to see something promising in the child and to encourage what is within that child, rather than “pruning” and clipping according to the tastes of the adult. As a temperance leader, Willard was repeatedly addressed as a mother to her followers, and noted for precisely the same mothering style. Hannah Whitall Smith, one of the organization’s founders and a popular Christian writer, states “although never an actual mother, she ‘mothered’ humanity, and all humanity that came into contact with her rejoiced in her mothering.” Smith asserts that Willard “did more for the cause of womanhood than any other human being has ever achieved. Someone has said that Frances Willard created a new order of women, and nothing could better express what she accomplished”(Somerset and Smith 23). Smith notes that Willard “took the ordinary

commonplace woman, whose sphere had been bounded by the four narrow walls of her home, and taught her that the world was only a larger home, and that as such it needed her ministrations as truly did her nursery, or her kitchen, or her drawing room”(23). Lady Somerset stated that Willard was always “presenting people in a new light to themselves, and what she believed them to be, they became”(7).

Willard had her own ideas regarding the future of the WCTU. Annie Wittenmyer, the first national WCTU president, disagreed with Willard on three key organizational points: first, she did not agree that the temperance organization should commit to the suffrage cause, believing that temperance should be its single purpose. Willard saw temperance as a focal point from which to move into ever widening circles of influence, having as the goal the general reformation of the entire nation’s womanhood, and then the greater populace. Willard advocated the inclusion of all interests pertaining to the economic, social and political well being of women—all positions that she held as a leader at ECL. Second, Wittenmyer did not agree with Willard’s ideas on the method of organization. She preferred that the organization continue to be moved from national directives delivered to the states. Willard, in contrast, believed in a national organization which provided national plans and methods but which allowed for greater independence from the states. Third, Wittenmyer wanted the organization to remain centrally located, and did not feel that the work involved in getting more members was worth the commitment (Bordin 106). Willard saw the need to create a truly national group. These points from which the two leaders diverged became Willard’s great strengths.

Willard's way of leadership emerged victorious over the more conservative Wittenmyer in 1879. In her autobiography she characterizes the differences between the two leaders, remarking of the ascension of East over West that "the principles of the liberal wing of our society became dominant not so much by specific declaration as by the choice of leaders who incarnated those principles" (*Glimpses* 369). Willard presents the East as more conservative, holding the states and local unions to a strict account to maintain strong central power, and against the ballot for women. She contrasts the West as a liberal region, with a laissez-fair attitude toward the unions, few requirements, and in favor of the woman's ballot.

Among the changes Willard implemented when becoming WCTU president was replacing the committee system with departments, headed by superintendents. Willard endowed each superintendent with the authority to travel the country, speaking on behalf of the organization and the cause as an expert in her particular area. One such department was called "On Influencing the Press." Just as she had done as a teacher at ECL, Willard saw the strength of having a public, published voice. Each local union was urged to appoint a representative as a newspaper contact to obtain regular space. In the state of Illinois, Willard had secured fifty papers to regularly print a temperance column. In addition to seeing the utility of a national organ, Willard constantly urged a greater distribution of WCTU pamphlets and leaflets, frequently writing them herself. She also urged each union to have its own "literature committee," charged with creating its own literature and finding the very best temperance literature to be shared in a list for members.

The conventions and WCTU publications were the means through which Willard presented her organizational and educational ideas to the union. She found in the WCTU a way to retain her focus on both faith and academics, which she saw as impossible to cultivate in her previous educational position. From the beginning of her position as corresponding secretary, Willard created publications on how to do various kinds of work for the organization. First, I will address Willard's educational publications, followed by those temperance workers wrote following her suggestions.

Authorizing the Woman "Text"

Throughout her tenure as temperance leader, Willard continued to focus on both the "moral horticulture" and the "mental acquisition" of temperance workers, but she never urged her followers to take advantage of these opportunities for the mere sake of self-pleasure. Developing one's abilities was always done for the purpose of bettering the society and the larger culture. Doubtless Willard saw the necessity of presenting woman as a moral authority whose purpose was to domesticate the larger society. Without this authority, women might find themselves received as the radical fringe, much as the suffrage leaders had been. To maintain their relationship with the larger American church culture, WCTU women had to exude a "natural" womanliness, which was actually cultivated in WCTU manuals.

Members of the temperance union culture performed acts of continual mimesis: women teachers schooled other female students, who then went on to educate new female students. The fact that so many temperance workers took on roles

in which they spoke publicly only added to the opportunity for imitation. Much like female students in the early American women's colleges noted by Mary Kelley, temperance union members showed that "those who taught performed the womanly gentility" taught to them (264). Like the ancient rhetoricians, the temperance union created handbooks from which they shared best practices, documenting "habits" of success in temperance work. Temperance workers, just as the ancients, listened and read not merely for ideas, but for finding useful strategies and techniques of leadership.

Cheryl Glenn has posited that the rhetorical model of the citizen orator "declined in the face of nineteenth century individualism, economic competition, and professionalization" (*Rhetorical* xv). Willard's conflicts at Northwestern certainly demonstrated the conflict between the citizen and professional ideals. However, following Willard's career to the temperance union shows how the civic orator model was maintained outside of the university. The temperance union became an adult alternative to the male-oriented, professionalized university; as an institution it was much like an early woman's college, which Kelley describes as an institution designed exclusively for women with a "clearly articulated mission, a faculty that offered inspiring role models, and a curriculum that introduced them to female exemplars" (276). Willard's genius was to continue this model outside of the university.

At the height of her powers as president, Willard described the changes in female culture encouraged by the Temperance Union. She stated:

The value of a trained intellect never had such a significance as since we have learned what an incalculable saving of words there is in a direct style, what value in the power of classification of fact, what boundless resources for illustrating and enforcing truth come as the sequel of a well-stored memory and a cultivated imagination. The puerility of mere talk for the sake of talk, the unworthiness of ‘idle words,’ and vacuous, purposeless gossip, the waste of long and aimless letter-writing, never looked so egregious as to the workers who find every day too short for the glorious and gracious deeds which lie waiting for them on every hand. (*Beautiful* 131)

Willard constantly advised young girls and women to move away from the stereotypes of silly girlhood and into a form of life more purposeful and contributory.

In addition to creating a culture more demanding of women, Willard argued in a style she learned from her mother. In *Woman's Work in Education*, a speech presented to the National Education Association in 1884, Willard continued to speak to her audience with an assumption of agreement between herself and her listeners—a Mary Hill Willard strategy. Addressing her audience as “Dear Friends,” she continues to speak about how glad she is that the focus of the symposium is women and education. That there is such a focus, Willard claims, shows “we have reached up to a certain height on the great mountain of truth, and as I look out from my point of view, I inevitably, necessarily, by the laws of things, see a certain landscape, and that is my view, and I would just like to have you come around and stand where I do, and you

will likely see just as I do. So we are always coaxing people to come around and see our view”(*Woman’s* 161). As her mother had taught her earlier, Willard always assumed agreement existed between herself and her listener. It just may not have existed at the moment of utterance.

Willard addresses the fact that the better technology of the home has allowed more women to enter professional activities:

Women have made up their minds that the whole world shall be homelike; that we will go out into social life and try to make that more homelike; that we will go out into the professions and try to make them more homelike, and in the wide sphere of government to try to prove that you need two heads in council as beside the hearth. So, if you think that it is a wandering from the sphere of woman, remember that women, by becoming teachers, have made the school-room far more homelike, and the little ones happier than they were ever made before. (*Woman’s* 163)

Willard describes the work of the educator in classic WCTU terminology. Teaching is just one more platform from which to domesticate the larger society.

Encouraging her educator audience, she continues to point out the necessity of presenting a moral education: “There is interdependence between the soul and its environments; and what the body is and what its nutriment, determine what the soul shall be, and you are those who work upon the instrument of thought, you are those that care more for the brain than for any other organ”(*Woman’s* 164).

She continues her speech arguing for the greater educational system to combat alcoholism by teaching temperance to the children in a loving, motherly way. In closing, she states

And I say to you, dear teachers, that only as we have that tender love for everybody are we fit to be the teachers of the little ones; only as we look into their eyes with the tenderest gentleness do we reach the true crown and the highest degree of a teacher's possibilities . . . God grant that with all the scintillating brain of womanhood in this age we may each and all take for our motto, 'Womanliness first, afterwards what you will. (*Woman's* 167-8)

Willard uses her mother as the example of the model educator, and her work for the temperance union in no way conflicts with the vision she has for American education in general. One can only wonder just how many men were part of this audience. This assumption of pedagogy as a motherly profession continues to this day in the field of composition, considered historically the "mothering" province of the university, as it has been concerned with pedagogy "rather than for the development of abstract knowledge through research" (Holbrook 207). Compositionists have at times seen their work as in some sense domesticating the university by preparing students for the larger academic world.

In addition to her educational speeches, Willard published other books with general counsel to her female audience. Willard remains very consistent throughout the years. In her piece *How I Learned to Ride the Bicycle* (1893) late in her career,

Willard presents herself as an example, a woman who, at the age of fifty-three, is still willing to try something new. Her experience learning to ride is used as a metaphor for general life learning. She advises:

Two things must occupy your thinking powers to the exclusion of every other thing: first, the goal; and second, the momentum requisite to reach it. Do not look down like an imbecile upon the steering wheel in front of you—that would be about as wise as for a nauseated voyager to keep his optical instruments fixed upon the rolling waves. It is the curse of life that nearly everyone looks down. But the microscope will never set you free; you must glue your eyes to the telescope forever and a day. Look up and off and on and out; get forehead and foot into line, the latter acting as a rhythmic spur in the flanks of your equilibrated equine; so shall you win, and that right speedily. (22-23)

Always the progressive educator, Willard constantly advised women to look and to act beyond their present limitations.

One interesting aspect of Willard's teaching approach was that she never presented her educational ideas as simple progressions in a single direction. She instead constantly talked about woman's place and her influence on the world in terms of circular motions, compasses of radiation rather than lines. In this particular piece, she says that she has noticed that progress itself does not work in lines; instead, with women's activity "this seems to be the law of progress in everything we do; it

moves along a spiral rather than a perpendicular; we seem to be actually going out of the way, and yet it turns out that we were really moving upward all the time” (*How I Learned* 38). Willard herself seems to embody this spiraling idea with her insistence upon earlier American forms of education for women while calling for public use of such an education. Similarly, Willard seems to place herself as a speaker in a non-linear fashion: she does not speak as though she is from a different viewpoint and wants to change the audience’s mind. Instead, she assumes agreement and moves that assumed point of agreement into ever-widening circles. When Willard wrote *How I Learned*, the union had already demonstrated their successes in moving the organization in this ever-widening fashion.

One year before Willard’s death, she wrote a huge volume titled *Occupations for Women: A Book of Practical Suggestions for the Material Advancement, the Mental and Physical Development, and the Moral and Spiritual Uplift of Women* (1897). The title alone of this work demonstrates the sweeping nature of Willard’s educational ideas and goals, many she had from her days at ECL: practical knowledge for woman’s financial independence, mental development, physical well being, and above all, moral and spiritual counsel. Written only one year before her death, the book demonstrates the culmination of Willard’s educational ideas.

In the introduction, Willard notes the differences in expectation between male and female students, cautioning that one should never ask less of a girl.

When we see a boy the question instantly springs up, ‘What are you going to do?’ but when we see a girl it is ‘What are you going to be?’

The whole of life and destiny is bound by these two interrogations, and the mistake of the world has been that it did not put both queries to the boy and girl alike, for when we fail to look upon the boy as a son and the girl as a daughter of God, whose birthright involves the full development of each one's powers of brain, heart, and hand, we do them an injustice that can only be forgiven on account of our ignorance, prejudice and hopeless conventionality of thought and action. (*Occupations* 5)

Willard goes on to discuss the importance of women having examples to imitate, arguing for the kind of standard she has created in the union:

To each new-comer the world is unknown, and her estimate of what can be accomplished in it, depends almost wholly on what she sees accomplished by those of her own guild. To my mind the highest merit of 'Occupations for Women' is that it does not deal in theories, but shows how things can be done and helps inspire girls and young women to try to 'go and do likewise.' (*Occupations* 8)

The *Occupations* volume has a brief description of almost every kind of work available to women in the late nineteenth century. Willard describes traditional work for which women could be paid, such as dressmaking; newly emergent industrialized work, like stenography, and purely intellectual employment, such as architecture.

Some parts of the book seem to be culled from lectures Willard may have presented to her college students. Under the section “What is Life For,” Willard again urges young girls to pursue realities, rather than dreams.

In the past, girls who are quicker of wit, swifter in mental process, less unwieldy in judgment, and every bit as active in mind, have not been taught the power of concentration. They have been allowed to sit down and wait for the handsome prince to descend upon them, lay all his fortunes at their feet, and carry them off in a golden chariot to some castle in Spain. To-day this is all nonsense. In fact, it always was, only today we are finding it out. ‘Paddle your own canoe,’ has come to be just as much the motto of the girls as of the boys, only you want to be sure that you are paddling it in the swift current of your strongest and noblest inclination. (*Occupations* 22)

The way to ensure the strength of independent “paddling” is to

Set the goal of your ambitions, and then climb to it by steady earnest steps. In this way you cannot help accomplishing something in the end, and instead of dreaming and hoping and longing indefinitely for a life of romance wherein impossible heroes shall give all and demand nothing, you will become a strong factor for good in the sum of human happiness. Even when this impossible hero does appear in the background of your dreams he will resemble the actual man; and when you marry . . . you will marry not an impossible man, not the hero of

the silly girl's dream, but a man whom you will love and respect, and who will cherish you all the more because you have a practical knowledge of the world's needs and have not been afraid to demonstrate it by earnest endeavor. (*Occupations* 24)

Willard encourages young women to move away from dependence on romantic fantasy just as she demanded that they move away from other girlish stereotypes.

In addition to cautioning young females not to put their aspirations into the figure of a man, Willard declares that anything they gain by self-cultivation should be used for the betterment of the larger society. She insists that rather than seeing the world as owing the girl a living, "you own the world much more than a living; you owe it a duty. You owe it the best part of your life either in one way or another. In the evolution of your powers do not think of yourself alone. If you acquire, let it be that you may share your talents with others; if you achieve, let it be that others may enjoy the glow of your prosperity"(*Occupations* 24).

Willard also discusses the importance of female reputation, or character, the focus of so much of her life's work for herself and for others. She suggests, "Some sort of reputation you must have, whether you will or no. In school, in church, at home, at work, or in society, you carry ever with you the wings of a good or the ball and chain of a bad reputation. Resolve to make it beautiful, clear, shining, gracious. This is within your power, though the color of your eyes and hair is not"(*Occupations* 40). Throughout the temperance literature, this point is made repeatedly, though Willard is not quite so dogmatic in speaking of it. Instead, temperance manuals

constantly state the need for national workers to be of solid reputation before they traverse the country representing the temperance organization.

Willard also cautions her readers to present their womanly side, rather than thinking that they can gain points by manly behavior. She argues:

if only every girl who is setting out to make her own way could be imbued with the idea that she would get on better and win more genuine respect from those she comes in contact with by keeping her refined femininity than by aping men in dress or manner, a valuable lesson would be learned. Boldness is not independence; self-assertion is not success. Be content to be what you are, and assume nothing else. Gain respect for your sex by the respect that you win for yourself, by your honest, fearless, but sweet and true womanliness. You will find your influence will be more far reaching than if you try to be in manners and conversation like the men with whom you are associated. The world likes a womanly woman, and this you can be, no matter how far afield you go in the world of personal endeavor”(*Occupations* 154).

In Willard’s view, female rhetors must accommodate audience expectations for female character of the type found in the first temperance crusades. Woman’s influence will, like Willard’s, “be more far reaching” if she speaks in the voice of custom. What the rhetor says may be progressive, but, as in Willard’s utterances, that progressive message must be delivered in a manner which allows its hearing.

One of the suggestions Willard makes for woman's greater independence is cohabitation with females, something Willard practiced throughout her own life, first with her mother and later with other temperance workers both in Evanston and in England. She states that women "have recently been trying the plan of making homes for themselves on the principle of co-operation. They have learned its value, and by combining forces, have made comfortable and pretty homes for themselves, where they are quite independent and live in a most common-sense fashion" (*Occupations* 60). Willard states that cooperative housing may be especially important for the working woman. Her experience with WCTU co-workers living and learning under the same roof reproduces the teacher/student coexistence of early nineteenth century educators. Cohousing while doing philanthropic work often allowed the work to be accomplished, as these women may not have been able to afford living alone.

Just as she counseled her early students and her temperance followers, Willard advised that a young woman must:

keep abreast of the time, sharing its best thoughts, understanding its important movements, and learning her own attitude toward the world and her duty toward it. She must read her daily paper, selecting with the utmost care the one that she should read regularly, and choosing only the one of clean, pure tone, that makes little of the social sensations, gives small space to the chronicling of crime, but deals with the living questions of the day, honestly and fearlessly, and stands for what is sweet and good and strong in life. She must not omit her

own weekly religious paper. These, with a good standard magazine that will be both entertaining and helpful and give her the best literary thought of the present time, and a few well-chosen books, should constitute her mental bill of fare. (*Occupations* 67)

This advice is consistent with what she earlier counseled students to read at ECL; students had commented on her composition class addressing “questions of the day.” Throughout her WCTU leadership Willard asked members to have their pulse on current events and to maintain their own voices as a journalistic presence. She cautions against reading a lot of fiction. Her first reason is delineated in her earlier remarks—fiction may lead young girls to seek a life of romance, which means seeking a future in the body of a man. Sensational fiction, she argues, may temporarily lead young girls to find their reading “very exciting,” but it leads to “distorted and unnatural views of life” which don’t prepare readers for “the reality of living” (*Occupations* 69). Above all books is “the book that you must make your daily guide, your closest companion your best beloved teacher, the book which must be the ‘guide of your feet and the lamp to your path’—your Bible” (*Occupations* 71).

Just as she advises her temperance workers, Willard advises the larger female readership to search within themselves to find a suitable career, suggesting to “let no girl dream that this question will ever be adequately and conscientiously answered except by her own heart. No time is ever more uselessly employed than in listening to advice on this subject” (*Occupations* 84). Although she has presented a volume in which hundreds of occupations are described for her reader, Willard points out that it

is the unwritten occupation which may yield the most success, claiming that “the girl of to-day choosing a career finds herself still between two fires: one, the traditions of her sex; the other, that which guards the door to desire and achievement. The majority of those women who are deemed successful, who have been the successes of the past half century, have made their own way, have cut their own road through untried paths and have thus opened the way for others”(Occupations 129).

At the same time, what one wishes to pursue professionally must not be based upon mere interest. One should do one’s research before continuing the pursuit, because “to be guided solely by one’s fancies is the greatest folly. If you really have an idea that you would like to enter a certain calling and make it your life work, first find out all you can about it, the preparation and the time required to attain proficiency, the average and the highest pay to be done in it, the effect of such work upon the health, the hours of constant work involved”(Occupations 496). As always, Willard encourages her readers to aspire higher, but not without some grounding in concrete realities. Important to her work, however, is that “reality” is continually changing, even due to the actions of women.

Willard presents a multitude of professional options for women, but she cautions them against entering those already saturated with the female sex. She points out that teaching, university professorships, journalism, lecturing, public reading, music, and the modern languages are all professions where “these ranks are overcrowded, and without decided talent, some experience or rare influence, you risk much in making the choice of teaching as your field of labor”(Occupations 182). She

presents philanthropy as a newly opened arena where “a moderate income, sufficient for current needs, is certain to all faithful and efficient workers. A noisy fame is not to be attained, but a thousand homes will be your own and ten thousand hearts will bless and shelter you. Growth of brain, heart and conscience is nowhere more certainly assured”(*Occupations* 182). Continuing her self-image as horticulturalist, she describes the WCTU as “a home-like place for a woman’s soul to dwell in, this golden harvest field of Christian work”(*Occupations* 178). Willard presents philanthropy as the fertile ground from which her public-oriented form of literacy can be shared.

In the section of the book titled “Woman and the Pulpit,” Willard talks about various ordained women ministers in the Methodist church and those who evangelize for the WCTU. She argues that “the entrance of woman upon the ministerial vocation gives to humanity just twice the probability of strengthening and comforting speech, for women have at least as much sympathy, reverence and spirituality as men, and they have at least equal felicity of manner and of utterance. Why, then, should the pulpit have been so long shorn of half its power?”(*Occupations* 207-208). Willard again argues for woman’s important gifts to the ministry that have been ignored.

Although Willard encourages her readers to aspire to professions other than teaching, she does discuss the profession in some detail. First, she attempts to show the reality of teaching rather than the ideal. She explains that it takes tact,

limitless patience, and that its practitioners lack free time. Most importantly, the teacher must embody the ideals she seeks to cultivate in the student:

Every girl who would teach successfully must be in herself all that she desires to communicate to those in her care. The traits of her own character stand out far more clearly to the intuitive minds before her than the chalk marks on her blackboards . . . A teacher cannot be one thing and teach her children to be another . . . The new education lies rather in the spirit of the teacher than in the subject taught; for, underlying all, permeating all, and paramount to all else in the school is the character of the teacher. The great aim of the teacher should be to develop character. (*Occupations* 267-268)

Just as she had always claimed from the beginning of her work in education, Frances Willard focused on what she saw as the most important element of an educational scheme—the creation of character. She had always been aware that the model of the teacher or WCTU worker was a source of example for imitation, often more important than educational content.

Along with character, Willard gave her readers advice on quality writing. In her section on newspaper journalism, she claims that good writing is not the same as “fine” writing, which is “not wanted.” “Fine” writing, according to Willard, is “the tendency to the use of excessive metaphor, flowery language, and long words of foreign extraction.” Willard claims “the simplest mode of expression, that which is elegant and refined in its directness, is the most difficult of attainment. If you watch

yourself, you will find that the tendency is to amplification and redundancy of expression rather than to simple conciseness”(*Occupations* 287). Simple expression added to the presentation of what Willard saw as spiritual “truth.” Just as she encouraged the female orator to maintain the cultural expectation of “natural” womanliness, so is the female writer to express herself in clear, unadorned language that will draw attention to the message, rather than to the artful messenger.

In her characteristic efforts to be all-inclusive in her advice to American women of the future, Willard presents a section entitled “Chances for Colored Girls.” Willard says that black women have greater opportunities before them than at any other time in history, but she acknowledges that prejudice still exists. She claims that the professions offer more opportunities for black women than other avenues, because “with broader education comes a broader view, and the men and the women who are met in professional life are more courteous than are those in the lower strata to these new invaders of the field of endeavor”(*Occupations* 377). Examples of black female college graduates and lawyers are presented, along with a black lawyer’s assessment of white employers, critical of both North and South. Willard quotes Lutie Little, a lawyer of Topeka, Kansas as saying “the South discriminates in punishment for violations of the law as between the Caucasian and the Negro. If a poor Negro is suspected of a capital crime he is immediately lynched; if a white man is convicted of a capital offence he is given a slight jail sentence. That is not right; both should be justly dealt with and punished with equal severity”(380-81). Carol Mattingly has discussed the limits to which Willard entered the dialogue about southern lynching

begun by Ida B. Wells (*Well Tempered* 75-95). Perhaps because of her own class prejudice, or, as I suspect, because of her desire to engage with the southern portion of the United States, Willard herself never made such a statement critical of southern culture. Rather, she left it to a professional black woman to make this criticism and authorized the statement by providing it in her book.

In *Occupations* Willard addresses the young women who still choose to make marriage a career, again attempting to accommodate all kinds of female readers. This all-encompassing provision of advice, however, is not provided without criticism. Willard suggests that women in relationships with an overly domineering husband may be partly to blame:

When a young girl awakes one day to the knowledge that there is one face in the world which makes all the sunshine for her, one person whose presence makes her happiness compete, her first impulse is towards self-effacement. She desires only to echo his opinions, to model herself by his ideals. This may be all very touching and pretty in theory, but it is the greatest mistake in practice. It is putting a direct bid upon selfishness and conceit, and a man must have a remarkable degree of common sense that does not become a real tyrant. (489)

Willard does suggest that in marriage the man is “the bread-winner, the woman the care-taker,” showing that much of her earlier advice addresses the single woman. Just as in the WCTU, she wants her readers to be aware of their many options outside of tradition.

Willard's Women: Creating the Ideal WCTU "Text"

In addition to her more generalized work for an American female readership, Willard created specific strategies for cultivating the WCTU womanhood. As corresponding secretary for the union, Willard saw the need for greater communication between the state and national organizations. One of the tools she created was a series of manuals from which she illustrated how to both start and maintain local unions. Included in these manuals were suggestions on how to present oneself as a temperance worker and how to create WCTU "ambiance" during presentations. In short, in these documents Willard was creating the WCTU ethos. Throughout the 1880s, Willard put her "womanly" stamp on her followers in order to accommodate their entrance into the public sphere. From the beginning of her participation she encouraged women to act rhetorically by speaking publicly and writing public documents for circulation within and outside the organization, including organizational meeting minutes, manuals, readings, and recitations. Early on she was a member of the WCTU publishing committee as part of a corps of contributing editors.

Important to Willard's strategy was the notion that it was men, not God, who had given women their subordinate status. In keeping with her philosophy as a teacher, Willard suggested that the Christian religion demanded the best of women, and leading a passive existence was not up to the standard. Just as she had always done, Willard presented this new ideal as one that did not confront or lash out against

the norm. She instead constantly pointed out that this new ideal was always latent, but it needed revelation. The WCTU story was always presented as having its origins in the temperance crusade, again showing that this work was consecrated from a force stronger than any societal one. Temperance crusaders, and by extension, WCTU members, were merely performing acts directed by God and deepening their ties to religion and church. Willard herself claimed in her autobiography that she had experienced a personal call from God to advocate for woman suffrage. Early on in her involvement with the temperance union, she claims, she knelt down in prayer and “there was borne in upon my mind, as I believe, from loftier regions, the declaration, ‘You are to speak for woman’s ballot as a weapon of protection to her home and tempted loved ones from the tyranny of drink,’ and then for the first and only time in my life, there flashed through my brain a complete line of argument and illustration”(Glimpses 351).

Later the WCTU would lead its own evangelical training institutes encouraging women to seek scriptural endorsement of their religious leadership. Sarepta Henry, the leader of these institutes, described them as

occasions of great spiritual growth and power. They were not confined to members of the Union. Ministers, teachers, members of churches, and all who were interested in philanthropic work would come and study methods with us. Many times, beginning in a small room in some church, we would be obliged, after two or three sessions, to take our school into the auditorium, and not infrequently it

would develop into a regular Gospel work in which souls would be converted, and workers brought out into a rich experience, such as they had not known before. (M. Henry 236)

Often when there was a national temperance meeting, the pulpits of the host city would be filled with women preachers leading services in crowded sanctuaries. As they stood in front of the crowds, they shared their alternative vision of scripture.

In addition to generating female spiritual leadership, the WCTU continued its focus on publishing. In 1876 the union decided upon creating a newspaper, with Willard as a contributing editor, and in the following year the paper *Our Union* was created. In 1883 this paper was consolidated with *The Signal*, a temperance paper owned and published in Chicago by the Woman's Temperance Publishing Association, thus becoming *The Union Signal*. One year before becoming WCTU president, Willard in 1878 advocated the discussion of the ballot for women in *Our Union* in order to strengthen the fight against temperance. Fearful that this would lead to the use of the paper for political purposes, many women argued against such advocacy, but Willard won the fight. In fact, some have argued that she used the paper as a means to advance her liberal agenda (Dyer), something that readied the organization for her leadership in contrast to that of the more conservative Wittenmyer.

As Willard began working for greater political activism on the part of WCTU workers, she created a plan for this kind of work in her *Home Protection Manual*, written in 1879, the year she became president. Part of Willard's agenda, of

course, was to urge temperance women to perform this kind of political work at all. Willard calls upon members to be part of the public voice changing the mind of the country toward alcohol. She states that “the quiet house-to-house canvass of an army of women who could not speak in public has brought home to the fireside and the wife and mother, with little time to read, reasons enforced and practical illustrations taken from everyday life; and thus hosts of friends for woman’s temperance ballot have been raised up where all were passive and inert before”(*Home* 19). From this early document Willard demonstrates her intent to place the temperance reform in a much wider arena. She advocates the “steady and widespread influence” of temperance interests, continuing with her ever-present gardening metaphor that the “falling of dew is more effectual for the growth of our gardens than the spray of a hose-fountain”(*Home* 19).

In addition to suggesting a larger temperance scope, Willard proposes that the local WCTU meetings themselves become more public, by offering a table at the front for reporters who “should be especially invited to attend,” and arranging “with editors for full reports and with city papers for special telegrams giving news of the convention”(*Home* 20). She also suggests at this early point the importance of presenting temperance literature at each meeting, with a table offering the WCTU newspaper, manuals and leaflets, and other temperance papers as well as the publishing catalogue of the National Temperance Publishing House (*Home* 20).

One very important aspect of Willard’s ethos is that she focuses on means, rather than ends. Perhaps this is because of her religious outlook that the work must

never be done in a non-Christian manner, or perhaps it is also due to her knowledge that the women who followed her were under constant scrutiny, but she insists that behaving in a Christian, ladylike fashion allows the worker to “compare the work done by those equipped in this way with that of the general run of our societies, and learn once more that God has chosen in this world to work by means”(Home 21). In this sense, Willard draws attention to what WCTU women *become*—the transformational power of women *performing* Christian acts rather than the acts themselves. This emphasis on means is Willard’s way of drawing attention to the importance of woman as instrument of God, one that has been an underutilized means to perform divine purposes.

The 1879 meeting minutes show the beginnings of WCTU training for evangelists. Sarepta Henry, head of the “Evangelistic” department, discusses the plan for Gospel Union work, saying that each state committee should appoint a gospel worker. This worker will hold Gospel meetings in every place possible in the district, “and visit the families of reformed men and drinking men . . . she is to hold and appoint college meetings, and have personal charge of and do the work of bringing the Gospel to the perishing in her district at very possible point; and provision shall be made for her support by the WCTU and people of her district”(M. Henry 147). The temperance union urges that this form of work not interfere with regular church work, so the organization can maintain church sponsorship. “Every woman thus sent out shall pass through a course of study and training for her work, and shall be a member of and responsible to the Gospel Union of her state”(M. Henry 147). Options

for home study in WCTU certification became important hallmarks of Willard's leadership. Henry remained in charge of gospel training for many years, and her manual will be presented later.

Writing, Speaking, Organizing: Preparing "The Persuaders of the Race"

When Willard spoke to her readership about women entering the field of public lecturing, she stated that "many women are trying to get before the public who are poorly equipped . . . it is suicidal to a woman's best interests to venture without a thorough equipment" (*Occupations* 277). As WCTU president Willard labored to provide such an "equipment." In her first presidential address in 1879, Willard gave a list of important teaching tools for a proposed WCTU training school. She lists handbooks by various WCTU members, general questions answered about the WCTU, her own *White Cross Manual*, collections of model platform speeches, a course of reading selected by WCTU members, a child rearing manual by a union member, and *Duties of Women*, a favorite of Willard's by suffragist and anti-vivisectionist Frances Power Cobbe. The union was to later look upon the 1880s as a time of great opportunity for female speakers, stating that "speakers for our cause seemed to spring up spontaneously and those were the days when a temperance meeting, especially a temperance meeting addressed by a woman, demanded and found an audience" (*Brief* 46).

One means Willard saw for increased educational opportunity was to change the various areas of work from governance by standing committee to

governance by department. Willard envisioned the WCTU as a kind of university, with members specializing in their particular fields of work and then sharing their expertise with others. WCTU members looked upon this change as one that “prepared the way for the development of specialists in our varied activities and thus made possible the broader work of the later years”(Brief 32). Nine departments continued from this period into the twentieth century: evangelistic, juvenile, young women’s branch, unfermented wine at Sacramento, the press, legislation, Sabbath school, penal and reformatory, and literature (Brief 27-28). Throughout their history, the union declared that the evangelistic work underlay all the other work in the union.

As has been demonstrated from Willard’s previous experience as an educator, she always urged her female students and followers to write in public forums. In her first address, Willard urged the greater use of the temperance papers, asking members why they didn’t do this more often:

Is this because women as yet read the newspapers but little themselves? Dear friends, suffer a word of exhortation here. We must all keep for ourselves a seat in the parliament of public opinion, but this we cannot do unless we know what the opinion of the public is, and it is the journals of the day that hold the mirror up to the eloquent and changeful countenance of that splendid Everybody who knows so much more than anybody. No temperance woman can afford not to be a reader of the newspaper. In every large city ladies should be appointed to keep our work before the religious and magazine reading

world. Church papers will gladly give place to well-written articles and news items. We must enlist the larger and less alert audience which, though it stays away from temperance meetings, can be made to hear with its eyes, can be moved upon although it does not move”(*Annual 1880 12*).²⁹

Willard saw the union paper as a tool for members to educate themselves on parliamentary usage, to learn how to conduct meetings, to develop their own writing talents, to inform the public, and to circulate lists of readings appropriate to the temperance cause. In this address she suggests lists of readings for monthly WCTU meetings and the study of parliamentary usage (*Annual 1880 13*).

Sarepta Henry, temperance evangelist and founding temperance crusader, said that in the early days of the WCTU temperance workers “were feeling their way through mists, out of desuetude and narrowness, into things that already rose like mountains and spread out like seas before them; and among these mists was the parliamentary fog, so that it was not an easy process to arrive at a conclusion in such a manner as to keep everything ‘straight on the minutes’”(M. Henry 167).

Parliamentary procedure was considered so important that it eventually became an educational department of its own.

Willard saw the development of departmental expertise as a new, paying profession. Her first address suggests that workers who gain a national level of expertise in their chosen department of work should be paid workers (*Annual 1880 19*). Professional reform work, she argues, is ideal for what was formerly called the

“spinster,” empty nesters, and teachers. Teachers are noted as an especially rich source of workers for the cause:

Hard as our work is, a teacher’s occupation is harder still. Though I could point you to a score of women in our work who speak on an average once a day all the year round, who organize, write, and travel without respite, and nearly all of whom were teachers once, their concurrent testimony would be that they are stronger, healthier, and in better spirits than ever in their lives before. The breezy life, the tonic of change, the inspiration of variety have much to do with this. Moreover, if one is in earnest, and has something to say, the average audience need have no terrors for a woman who can instruct and hold the interest of a high-school class. Indeed, the former requires more stress of nerve, for your class instinctively matches its united intellectual vigor against its teacher and is full of questionings; while an audience is in receptive rather than combative mood, is also to the last degree good-natured, and cannot answer back! Let the voice of invitation go forth, then, to the teachers and the young women in our colleges, certifying to them that in delightful service to Christ a new vocation is open to the persuaders of the race. (*Annual 1880 20*)

Much of the WCTU leadership was derived from the ranks of teachers. Mary Allen West, the eventual superintendent of the School of Methods, had been both a teacher and a school district superintendent.

In her first presidential address, Willard counsels that women who do not want to work on temperance may find other interests within the WCTU framework. She suggests a variety of departments for work, and argues that any member can find a place which suits her—much like her earlier pedagogical days in which she asked students to find their best selves within and to look for the avenue which that self asserts. Appended to the meeting minutes for Willard's first presidential year is her "Schedule Showing Various Methods of WCTU Work." Under "educational work," Willard lists the circulation of temperance literature, including the WCTU organs, the study of temperance literature topics in the local unions, and the distribution and lending of temperance communications (*Schedule 146*).

Under each line of work Willard lists the superintendents necessary to carry it out. Under education the superintendents are that of temperance literature work; public school and college work; Sunday school work; juvenile work; a publishing committee for *Our Union*, and an understanding that all National and State superintendents and organizers will act as special agents for the paper. Willard suggests that for educational work there be a group to introduce WCTU work before influential bodies, a duty of the national and state corresponding secretaries (*Schedule 146*).

Under evangelistic work, Willard suggests preparation for temperance Bible readings for regular local unions, and Gospel Temperance Institutions at WCTU conventions for the training of women in methods of conducting evangelistic services. She recommends that union members lead temperance prayer meetings at

churches throughout the country once a quarter. To carry on this work, she proposes Gospel Temperance Institutes for the National WCTU and a Superintendent of Evangelistic Work for each state. In her first address as president, she states that “man is the most persuadable of all created beings; with his heart full of aches and his heart full of tears, he can be won by kindness . . . how shall our women be trained so that they may rightly provide the word of God to these hungry multitudes who come to hear?” (*Annual 1880* 14). Sarepta Henry, in charge of the first gospel temperance institute in Lake Bluff, Illinois, stated that in doing this form of work “I never received the impression that I was doing public work. It seemed like a home work among my own people. It was a long time before I had any idea that I could in any sense of the word be considered a public speaker. I suppose, such were my prejudices and my conservatism at that time that if I had dreamed of such a thing I should have been very much embarrassed” (M. Henry 170). Henry was in charge of evangelistic training for many years. Her perception of evangelism as “home work” sustains Willard’s concept of woman taking home with her everywhere.

Willard eventually introduced her ideas around a concept that the WCTU “Do Everything,” a phrase first introduced in 1881. Willard served on the publishing committee of *Our Union*, and on the committee for the Chautauqua plan of study, something she planned as an instructional source for temperance workers. At the Executive Committee Meeting of that year, a plan was presented and laid over for consideration for a training school for temperance workers (*Minutes 1881* 17). In her annual address Willard stated that the national superintendent model was working

very well but that these leaders needed clearer role definition (*Minutes 1881* lxiv). Willard suggests in this address the creation of a department of hygiene to teach the effects of tobacco, alcohol, and drugs, and a department of temperance literature. She asks that the union publish more of its own work as well as that of other temperance writers, and that the organization start a lending library, something that came into fruition in later years. She provides a list of the best temperance literature she has found (lxvi), and suggests that the superintendents of hygiene, temperance literature, the press, and legal work be made a committee to furnish a list of topics for study and discussion through all the leading temperance papers. Willard is therefore asking not only that her followers be informed themselves on current topics, but that they in turn inform others.

Willard suggests that the department of evangelistic work should “continue to be the starting point of our work, and to this end I ask your careful thought to the plan for Gospel training institutes” later presented by Sarepta Henry, which she had begun in Lake Bluff, Illinois the previous year. Willard argued for more uniformity between the national and state levels in methods. She believed that a uniformity of forms was important for bylaws, order of business, and parliamentary rules. This desire culminated in a series of manuals by various department leaders and in training on these very issues at the national training institutes. She suggested that there be an editor at large for the organization who would supply articles for leading journals in response to attacks on prohibition efforts (*Annual 1881* lxxii).

Willard recommended a summer training school for temperance workers, in Chautauqua for the East and Lake Bluff, Illinois, for the West. She presented the outline of the plan for the Chautauqua training school as follows: first, the origin, history, aims and methods of the temperance reform were to be systematically taught in a series of studies to be determined, and lectures to be given by a faculty appointed by the union; second, the studies were to extend through one year and to be pursued at home, the lectures to be given in the summer at Chautauqua. Written examinations were to be held there, on the entire course, and certificates given in accordance with the results. Third, a model WCTU, with young ladies' and children's branch, was to be organized at Chautauqua, led by officers of the Training School, and made, so far as possible, to illustrate the methods taught. Fourth, the faculty of the school was to be chosen by the executive committee of the WCTU and authorized to select and employ specialists in physiology, hygiene, medicine and different branches of philanthropic and legal and political work. The goal was to send out into the local, state and national work "the largest possible number of women, specially trained in our system and methods"(Annual 1881 cxxiv).

Because there was some dissension regarding Willard's policy of including a multitude of social causes under the temperance umbrella, she prefaced her *Do Everything* publication with the following response:

Some bright women who have opposed the 'Do Everything Policy' used as their favourite illustration, a flowing river, and expatiated on the ruin that would follow if that river (which represents their Do One

Thing Policy) were diverted into many channels; but it should be remembered that the most useful of all rivers is the Nile, and that the agricultural economy of Egypt consists in the effort to spread its waters upon as many fields as possible. It is not for the river's sake that it flows through the country, but for the sake of the fertility it can bring upon the adjoining fields, and this is pre-eminently true of the Temperance Reform. (*Do* vii)

One of the “fields” Willard doubtless proposes to till is the intellect of women in general. She never suggests, however, that the fertile ground of intellect and ability ever be cultivated for self-interest. Women are continually called upon to self-develop so that they can propagate. Mere book learning without presenting the WCTU ethos, however, will not serve the organization. Willard states that in evangelistic work “we believe in the inward call that leads to personal consecration and divine enthusiasm, and that this call is always attested by character and conduct, adaptation to the work, and success in it. Not until all these agree in one would our Superintendent of Evangelistic Work give an Evangelist's certificate to a graduate, no matter how brilliant, from university and theological school. We believe that holy women of God ‘speak as they are moved of the Holy Spirit’ to-day even as they did in ancient time when Miriam sang, Deborah ruled, and Anna prophesied”(Do 39). Willard enjoys her followers to take up biblical types and to in turn project new ones.

Willard outlines a model WCTU in *Do Everything*, something that eventually became a part of the institutes—the practical side of the educational

scheme for temperance work. She presents this model union as though she is a young male theological graduate from a city that needs to introduce WCTU work. Willard presents the imaginary scenario:

‘Tap, tap, tap,’ comes a hand firm but delicate upon my study door. In walks the ‘Superintendent of Evangelistic Work’ in our WCTU and invites me to speak at the next Gospel Meeting, down in the waiting room of the railway station. Beside her is the Superintendent of Temperance Literature who puts a fresh copy of that racy paper *The Union Signal* on the table with her compliments, pointing out that additional literature she is providing comes from women writers, and last a WCTU vice president from the man’s own church hands him temperance leaflets, remarking that she wants his opinion of it. The bright, kindly trio retire, not having consumed more than three minutes of my time, and not having wounded my ecclesiastical dignity, for what fault could I find with down-right ladies whose practicality was only equaled by their tact? (*Do* 76)

These ladylike, informed workers would be united under the leadership of the model state union president, a woman “altogether quiet and considerate in manner as in speech. She must be a born harmonizer, for if not, she will hardly become one by practice”(Do 78). Without this ability to harmonize, she will not “be able to do justice to the conflicting opinions and antagonistic individualities of which ‘this present evil world’ is full”(Do 78). The ideal WCTU worker asserts herself and calls

for the contributions of male workers to her cause, yet it is always of singular importance that this request is made without disturbing the male listener's prior cultural assumptions. Ask, but do not disturb. Focus upon the *means* of making the request, and the request may be granted. Persuading others to one's point of view *without antagonism* was a key element of Willard's own rhetorical success.

In *Do Everything* Willard presents the avenues through which the "womanly" worker may transform the larger public. She states each of the departments of work and their purposes. The Department of WCTU School of Methods and Parliamentary Usage aimed "to establish schools at all summer assemblies and camp-meetings where the society's work is brought to the attention of the people, where the aim and needs of each Department may be studied, and the best methods brought out by competent teachers, to the end that trained workers may take the places of those now unskilled" (*Do* 87). A chapter of the publication titled "the white ribbon question box" continues one of Willard's early pedagogical tools. One question presented asks the advantages of affiliating with the WCTU, to which Willard answers, "the literature of the WCTU has become very specific and invaluable to every local worker. It has newspapers, books, pamphlets, leaflets, responsive readings, constituting a manual of arms which every soldier must learn in order to be efficient in the peaceful war" (*Do* 98). Again, Willard iterates the necessity of the "armour" for a rhetorical "battle" won by "peaceful" means. The battle, she seems to always insist, is laying siege upon social ills, not the WCTU audience. To the question "What is a Model Union?" Willard answers that many societies hold a

monthly model meeting to let the public know what their methods are and “these meetings can be made very instructive and amusing as well by introducing Parliamentary usage and having a debate”(Do 110). Temperance workers were trained with the same educational tools Willard provided for her female college students.

Willard believed that a battleground created by women must also reflect her domesticated, peaceful space. Willard counsels WCTU workers to present their conventions and meetings as a visual alternative to those run by men. In the section entitled “how to conduct a convention,” Willard advises that “home thought” be concretized in Union decor. She argued that the platform should “present the aspect of a parlour, rather than retain the bare, forlorn look usually noticed in conventions of men. Make it attractive with clear light, graceful ferns, flowers, fruits, pictures, mottoes, banners, bannerettes, and flags. The White Ribboners have brought this branch to such perfection that it is the charm and wonder of those who attend”(Do 135).

In *Woman and Temperance*, written in 1883, Willard suggests the importance of ingratiating an audience as a household guest. She cautions that “an audience very properly criticizes those who bungle with it. An audience is the guest of the WCTU for the time, and everything should be made just as lovely and pleasant for this guest as possible . . . a well-appointed meeting is a work of art. Treat your audience as carefully and charmingly as you would a guest in your own home”(Woman 627). After many pages of detailed instruction on how to carry out

the temperance work, Willard exhorts her readers with a challenge very close to that presented to the first female students at ECL: “Dear Christian sister who reads these lines, you are one of the ‘living epistles’ by which this critical age is deciding how it will answer the question, ‘What think ye of Christ?’ You are a leaf out of the world’s Bible. It wants facts. In God’s name, give it the shining fact of your loving, helpful life ‘hid with Christ in God’”(*Woman* 632). As in her challenge to young students, Willard urges WCTU workers to metamorphose into the latent womanhood of Christian potential.

In 1883, Willard pushed to make the temperance union truly national by consolidating her efforts in both eastern and western unions. It was this year that she organized the World’s WCTU and moved that the educational policies be set forth by the national union. Her *Plan of Work* for that year states that the temperance literature department served the purpose of educating the union and the larger public. Department leaders were to “prepare and circulate books, papers, leaflets, etc. for the general education of public sentiment, but especially for topic study in all the departments of WCTU work, that our local meetings may be made interesting and profitable, and our members thoroughly educated in all branches of Temperance Reform”(*Plan 1883* 642). Willard assigned the various bodies of work to a national superintendent, who worked to secure a state superintendent, responsible to secure a local superintendent for that particular line of work. Superintendents were responsible for presenting and distributing all needed information and documents relative to their departments. Willard classified the departments of work as the following: preventive,

educational, evangelistic, social, legal and organizational, for a total of 28 departments.

In a *Union Signal* of 1883 Caroline B. Buell, head of the temperance literature department, stated that a list of readings would take up the discussion of the temperance reform under the headings of “Scientific, Educational, Religious, Economic and Legislative,” and that “each week under a special topic the reading will comprise one or two small pamphlets, with two tracts as ‘Additional Readings.’ These are to be read at home during the week and at the regular weekly meeting; thirty minutes or more should be devoted to the discussion of the topic.” Buell advises that “in order to secure an intelligent presentation of the topic it would be well always to have a lady appointed at the previous meeting to open the discussion by a short paper or by pertinent remarks prepared for the occasion.” She suggests that “while in adopting and following this systematic course of reading you will derive great benefit, and I venture to say the course will be better promoted because you are intelligent and better fitted to work and to meet opposing arguments, while those you can reach by special invitations to these discussions will be those who in turn will become workers and educators” (Buell 13). Buell submitted a list of readings for that year’s training school, which included Willard’s manuals, Henry’s evangelical work manual, political temperance titles, and scientific temperance literature. The books were available in New York and Chicago, along with the publisher’s addresses.

Along with the literature department, “Influencing the Press” aimed “to keep the press, both religious and secular, thoroughly informed concerning the movements

of the WCTU by means of a weekly bulletin from headquarters, also to set forth wisely and steadily the history aims and methods of our work, securing editorials and editorial paragraphs helpful to the education of public sentiment in favor of every department of our work”(Plan 1883 642). Willard recommended that there be a special WCTU correspondent for each large city. From the beginning of her WCTU activity Willard saw the importance of the organization creating a WCTU literature of its own. Despite the negative response of some workers, she insisted that there be a WCTU newspaper in order to disseminate information and create unity, as well as simple instructions for workers. She also suggested the creation of reading lists from which temperance workers could be educated in temperance issues and intellectually stimulated. Willard served as an editor of the WCTU paper and later as chairman of the national committee on supervision of *Union Signal* publications.

In addition to the above advisement on educational work, Willard formed a department of training schools from which WCTU workers could learn both the theory and practice of temperance work. She proposed that “theory” be taught through “a course of study and reading, to be pursued at home, upon which written examination will be based.” “Practice” would be taught by conducting “model” meetings of types of unions, departments, and conventions. In this school, Willard proposed, organizers, corresponding secretaries, and superintendents of departments would be trained and certificates of proficiency awarded. At first this would be a summer training school, but Willard hoped that eventually it would become

permanent, “and attract hundreds of earnest women who desire to enter on a Christian vocation”(Plan 1883 643).

While the training institutes follow Willard’s early educational vision directly from the beginning, the WCTU evangelical work continues her concerns with developing and maintaining women’s religious ethos. The department of evangelistic work was the one most connected with the earlier temperance crusades. This department existed for the purpose of evangelizing to those most affected by alcohol “to carry the Gospel cure to the drinking classes by holding evangelistic services” in various public places such as reading rooms, depots, and theaters. The evangelistic work went through various changes in time according to the particular populations targeted. Willard initially had the work designed for work among the Germans, prisons, and police stations, intemperate women, railroad employees, soldiers and sailors, ending the use of wine for church services, and “securing a day of prayer to be devoted to the temperance reform”(Plan 1883 645).

Willard addresses the WCTU as a great educational success in her 1885 speech. She declares “Our WCTU is a school, not founded in *that* thought, or for *that* purpose, but sure to fit us for the sacred duties of patriots in the realm that lies just beyond the horizon of the coming century”(Glimpses 478). She notes, “*The quick and cordial recognition of talent* is another secret of WCTU success. Women, young, or old, who can speak, write, conduct meetings, organize, keep accounts, interest children, talk with the drinking man, get up entertainments, or carry flowers to the sick or imprisoned, are all pressed into service”(Glimpses 476). She also claims one

of the most significant features of the organization as an “immense amount of digging in the earth to find one’s own buried talent, to rub off the rust and put it out at interest. Perhaps that is, after all, its most significant feature, considered as a movement”(Glimpses 476). The temperance union, she maintains in this address, is of great importance as an alternative to male institutions. “Nothing has helped us more than the entire freedom of our society from the influence or dictation of capitalists, politicians, or corporations of any sort whatsoever. This cannot be too strongly emphasized as one of the best elements of power. Indeed, it may be truly said that this vast and systematic work has been in nowise guided, moulded, or controlled by men . . . we women have from the beginning gone our own gait and acted according to our own sweet will”(Glimpses 476). The WCTU had become the educational institution Willard had longed to create at ECL.

The first national WCTU training institute was assessed at the 1886 convention. The superintendents of the WCTU training schools, Mary Allen West in Illinois and Mrs. SW Tudor in Maryland, stated “Of this thing we are sure: the training school idea is spreading through our ranks, and is making itself felt noticeable in the smaller gatherings, county and district conventions”(West and Tudor clxxxviii).³⁰

In 1893 the department of Schools of Methods was combined with Parliamentary Usage (*Brief* 43). There had been four national institutes that year. The institute in Mount Lake Park, Maryland, devoted to training eastern workers, had on its schedule a presidential address, a class in parliamentary usage, a discussion on the

best methods of organization and kindergarten work, and ten-minute talks on topics including “The Best Methods of Influencing Public Opinion,” “The Press,” “The Platform” and “Literature.” Finally, a discussion occurred on the “model union.” Each afternoon of the institute featured an address, given by temperance leaders outside the organization.

The Lake Bluff, Michigan institute, designed for western workers, lasted eleven days, taking up late mornings during the annual national meeting of the Temperance Convocation, a national temperance group. Each department of work had a woman “representing that department with proven success.” This able worker had two-and-a-half hours “accorded to her in the best possible manner” to help women do the work in their local unions. Superintendents stated that this open style modeling “led to pleasing variety in method of presentation, and much practical work”(West and Tudor clxxxix). This emphasis on the practical was seen as a great strength of these institutes. “They did not spend much time in theorizing, or even in telling how work ought to be done, but told, and drew out others to tell, what had actually been done”(West and Tudor clxxxix).

The agenda for the institute proceeded with national temperance leaders speaking on organization and each variety of department work. Each day featured two political experts, with the exception of Sunday, which was devoted to religious services and Willard’s address. “So great was the interest aroused that the Lake Bluff Convocation Association voted unanimously to make the Training School a permanent institution.” Plans for the following year included those for speakers on

parliamentary usages, vocal utterance, and hygienic cooking (West and Tudor clxxxix). The superintendents recommended that they introduce the training school idea into all levels of WCTU meetings “and to all our women, careful study of methods of work with the aid of the national leaflets” and various WCTU written manuals. They then went on to recommend particular sites for the next year’s training schools, saying “we close this report with the earnest request that you work and pray for a permanent WCTU training school, where our increasing army of workers can be thoroughly furnished with every good work”(West and Tudor clxviii-cxc). Workers saw great value in these training opportunities, which were always offered free of cost.

Willard told her fellow temperance workers in 1887 that she had been advised to create more opportunities for intellectual culture in the union. Willard thought that this kind of material could be furnished by a course of reading to run throughout the year, carried on by the same methods followed in the Chautauqua circles. Mary Livermore had outlined how she had provided temperance workers in her Massachusetts union debates following lectures and books treating the topic of the lecture, stimuli which had resulted in the growth of Livermore’s organization. In response to this suggestion and the demands of workers throughout the country, Willard charged the literature department of the Woman’s Temperance Publishing Association to prepare a course of reading and to submit it at the annual conference. Frances Power Cobbe’s *Duties of Woman* was the first publication Willard suggested for the course. She introduced the piece as having as its main argument

“individuality, balanced and benignant, as the prerequisite to successfully fulfilling all of life’s sacred relationships and solemn trusts”(Annual 1887 ccxi). Other titles on the course of reading were *Free Rum on the Congo* by William T. Hornaday, and Mary Allen West’s *Childhood, Its Care and Culture*, which Willard stated “covers a wide range: the history of childhood, illustrated by notable examples, emphasizes the need for both work and play for the development of symmetrical character, and gives good suggestions for employments and amusements”(Annual 1887 ccxi).

That year there were institutes held in each region of the country. Willard stated “the idea that efficient workers are not simply born, they must be made, has taken root in the minds of our women, and is bringing forth fruit abundantly”(Annual 1887 xc). Institutes were held at already existing Chautauqua assemblies. One topic generating great interest was that of “voice culture.” Willard stated:

these drills had none of the objectionable features so frequently characterizing elocutionary performances, but were practical helps in learning how to stand before an audience, how so to carry the body that it will aid the voice in giving expression to thought, how to use all the organs of speech from the lips to the diaphragm, so that our speaking will come up to the Bible standard, ‘speaking distinctly and giving the sense.’ (Annual 1887 xcii)

She suggested that particular emphasis for the coming year be on training in evangelistic work to “especially emphasize practical directions for conducting gospel meetings and winning souls to Christ”(Annual 1887 xcii).

Probably because of a desire to create uniformity among unions in general terms of basic political and public activity, Willard recommended that in addition to emphasis on practical successes, half of each institute time should be spent “drilling” in WCTU manual books, on subjects such as methods, and evangelistic work. She states that this will “make the work systematic, the textbooks will furnish skeletons of work, clothe these with flesh and breathe into them the breath of life from experiences of enthusiastic, successful workers”(Annual 1887 xciii). Willard seemed to be asking for nothing less of the WCTU than to create a new genesis for women. Willard that year saw her focus on newspapers developed in two new WCTU papers. In addition to the nationalizing and unifying work of the *Union Signal*, there now existed the *Young Crusaders*, a juvenile weekly, and the *Oak and Ivy Leaf*, a young woman’s newspaper.

Willard’s plan of work for 1888 shows her continued goal of creating a WCTU correspondence course in order to train WCTU evangelists. She announces that there will be an evangelistic institute course of reading in every local union, conducted by correspondence with the national board, including a systematic course in the Bible, temperance and history, and studies in WCTU history and all lines of department service. She plans to establish an order of WCTU deaconesses as well, to be commissioned after “passing examination in all required intellectual and spiritual gifts, and for whom recognition shall be asked from all ecclesiastical bodies, and who shall be subject to call and appointment for pastoral service whenever needed”(Plan 1888 51). In her presidential address for that year she chastised the Methodist and

Baptist churches for refusing equal treatment of women within the church and proposed as an alternative the “Church Union,” which would serve to be open to men and women willing to take on the temperance pledges and “to be on terms of perfect equality,” to be “regularly licensed and ordained”(Plan 1888 45). Just as she envisions the union as a place to create a new form of education for women, she presents it here as a place to train women as ordained ministers when the other churches will not. The evangelistic training at this point is separated from the rest of the institutes.

The evangelistic department report of 1888 details the evangelist training program. It states that “the drill of both the School of Methods and the Institute will be required to make a qualified evangelist. The Institute is to the School of Methods what the Theological Seminary is to the University”(S. Henry 95). The superintendent’s recommendation for the course is as follows: a four years’ course during which the student would spend a lot of time in actual service, being employed where she is most needed; a system of Bible study, and a course in New Testament Greek under the leadership of Dean Wright, dean of the Chautauqua School of Theology, to be presented to the national board for approval. The Union hoped that by offering such training, every county, union and town of considerable size would have a regularly appointed evangelist to “teach God’s Word to the *unpastored, unchurched* masses—and especially those portions of the Word which are not taught by the pulpits, and upon which the perpetuity of our home, the church, and the nation depends”(S. Henry 95). In her presidential address of that year, Willard argued for the

creation of salaried positions for the state, district presidents and secretaries of the unions, and asked the members to all donate one dollar to make this possible.

By 1889 the educational departments included the School of Methods, headed by Mary Allen West of Chicago, and a department titled “Practical Training of Public Speakers,” headed by Anna B. Curry of the Boston School of Expression (*Minutes* 1889 10). In this year Willard proposed that the School of Methods have a permanent home in Chicago, as well as a course of reading and study (*Annals* 1889 166). The School of Methods report for the year indicated that the WCTU leaders had all been trained well, and that those who needed it most were at the county level, suggesting that those trained go back to the states and train the others (West *Superintendent* 1889 clxxxii). At the Lake Bluff School of that year they had the “usual drills” in department work but also included “lectures on the effects of alcohol and tobacco upon the human system, as well as on economic temperance (West clxxxiv). West proposed that the city unions hold special schools for training leaders in city work. Willard proudly stated that it was “curious to watch the development of the women who entered the saloons in 1874 as a gentle, well-dressed, and altogether peaceable mob. They have become an army, drilled and disciplined”(*Glimpses* 472).

Eventually the WCTU received a gift enabling them to fund a six-week training school. The plan for the school included four hours of daily instruction in methods, three hours in “object lessons and other general exercises,” and examinations with certification for passing the course. The object of the training school was to “give systematic training in WCTU departmental work.” The “theory”

was taught from departmental manuals and other published “helps.” “Practice” was to come in the form of fieldwork and observation of methods adopted by various organizations in Chicago. In addition, “Bible Study and How to Use the Bible” would hold a prominent place. The goal was to create better work in the local unions and to train teachers to serve in county and district schools of methods. The national superintendent of the schools of method would supervise instruction and call in department experts. Ideas from the school of methods were seen to be “permeating the mass” thanks to a School of Methods Manual created in 1890. Ideal candidates for the school were “earnest Christian women, not less than 25 nor older than 40, well educated, possessed of grace, wit, and gumption”(West *Superintendent 1890* 50). West recommended that the unions have a methods drill once a month, but stated that rather than a correspondence school, there should be a study of department manuals. The superintendent’s report for 1890 indicates that there were 26 state schools, with 165 county and inter-county schools, and an estimated attendance of over 15,000. This was based upon only a partial response for information from all of the state presidents (West *Supplementary* 289).

Workers surveyed reported that attending these institutes “aroused thought and led to study,” creating “more interest and intelligence among our workers and more respect for the WCTU among outsiders; it has made our work deeper rooted, our members more decided and confident; has increased membership, made the WCTU more influential in the community; more temperance papers are taken and read because of the school; increased interest evinced by assemblies; quickened

consciences generally, and knowledge of better methods; greater interest in all forms of temperance work, broadened views, renewed consecration and determination to work” (West *Supplementary* 292). Just as the professional organizations of today, the WCTU saw the need to continually inform and to reinvigorate its members.

In 1891 Willard presided over the first World’s WCTU convention. There she presented a Declaration of Principles, a statement of the organization’s key beliefs and methods, accompanied by explanations and further reading provided for each. She suggests:

Obviously it should be the duty of every WCTU woman to familiarize herself with the nature and the source of those articles of faith which form the foundation of the WCTU structure. She should know where she stands and for what. The purpose of this series of ‘Readings’ is to emphasize the breadth and comprehensiveness of WCTU principles, and by a brief study of the official declaration of the same, to aid the white ribboner to be ‘ready always to give an answer to every one that asketh a reason for the hope that is in her.’ The readings are intended as suggestive merely, not by any means as arbitrary or dogmatic interpretation. (*Brief* 99).

The readings presented and interpreted by Willard are the WCTU Creed, the pledge, and methods. One part of the creed states “We believe that God created both man and woman in His own image, and therefore, we believe in one standard of purity for both men and women, and in the equal right of all to hold opinions and to express the same

with equal freedom”(Brief 101). Willard’s analysis of this point argues “the mistake of mankind through the ages has been to regard one-half as inferior to the other half, an error consequent upon judging according to appearances, according to the standard of the merely visible, which is not righteous judgment. That man and woman rise or sink together is more than poetic sentiment; it is a law of being”(Brief 102). Under the section titled “Our Methods,” Willard states “we white-ribboners *teach*. Through the public school, through platform, pulpit, and press, we educate and agitate”(Brief 106). From the beginning to the end of her career, she taught women principles of gender equality in ethics and education.

A history of the WCTU written on the occasion of its seventieth anniversary in 1949 recalls:

The conventions brought many a woman to the platform or onto her feet on the floor with little or no knowledge of parliamentary usage and almost afraid of the sound of her own voice in public . . . Training women to think logically on their feet and to conduct organization affairs according to correct parliamentary procedure became a WCTU objective, and the society soon received much commendation for the acumen and efficiency which quickly became evident in its local and national meetings. To the standard set by this body in its infancy is due much of the proficiency with which most women’s clubs function today. (Tyler 43-44)

The history highlights education as the organization's major function since "practically all of the early leaders were or had been woman of noted standing in the educational world"(Tyler 50).³¹

As Willard continued her leadership throughout the 1890s, department superintendents implemented her ideas on training women for civic involvement. The temperance union continued to create a strong presence in the public press, in public schools, to cooperate with other organizations, and to educate women on practical life tasks, with outreach to those most affected by alcohol and drug abuse. The conventions themselves had become schools for political training: how to speak in public, to conduct meetings, to work under parliamentary rules, and to become educated on contemporary issues. In addition to training for general temperance work, the WCTU provided its own certification programs for national evangelists and lecturers.

Women who desired to perform official evangelical work for the WCTU had to meet specific requirements. They had to be members in the local WCTU, forming one if one did not exist in the woman's region; work with the local union long enough to have their ability known and then ask the evangelistic superintendent and the president for an endorsement, and finally, send the endorsement to the state superintendent of evangelistic work, whereby that individual would correspond with the local union before adding her endorsement. This endorsement was then forwarded to the national superintendent for her national endorsement, when it was returned to the individual in question. The successful candidate's name and address was then

published in the *Union Signal* as one of the accredited workers. The national superintendent stated “every woman seeking to work for the Lord in this department should be entirely consecrated to Him, body, soul and spirit, and should know experientially the baptism of the Holy Ghost. If you have not already entered into this experience, let me beg you to make it the first point in your preparations”(Smith *Certificate* liv). The certificate of endorsement for the successful evangelist, a copy that is furnished in the meeting minutes, states that in 1884 there were 1500 women endorsed for evangelical work (Smith *Certificate* liv-lv).

Sarepta Henry’s manual states that in order to prepare for the institute the reader should have at least one hour of drill on her manual for each session, morning and afternoon, and to request examinations on the Union Temperance Library course of reading. Henry states that evangelistic temperance is needed because the normal route to training through the church has been corrupted. Like Willard, she chastises the church for not living up to Christian standards. Henry declares that the church has been tainted “through her money interests as well as her membership, with the evil of drink,” and therefore new evangelists are “unable to get in position for direct and radical work against it”(S. Henry 6). By “church” Henry means “the ecclesiastical origination as a whole irrespective of all denominational distinctions, Catholic or Protestant—the church as the world knows it, instead of the church as God beholds it”(S. Henry 6).

The temperance evangelist must model herself after Christ, by going where the people are, adapting their methods and words and selves to the condition of the

afflicted, and forgetting all distinctions interfering with direct work for souls, such as denominational, social, political, and race differences. Henry counsels that “We must learn to see the soul only through all degradation, filth, and sin,” and “We must lose all fear of contamination and all anxiety about our own reputations, trusting Christ to care for us and our interests while we do His work”(S. Henry 24). In answer to the question of how to best reach the drinking man, Henry responds

He must be sought after . . . You must find him in the saloon or gambling den to reach him with the warning and the invitation that will touch and awaken his soul . . . Invite him to the Gospel temperance meeting, and be there yourself to see that he accepts your invitation . . . Talk to him about the pledge and the possibilities of a sober and Christian life. Pray for him, and let him know that you do so. Visit his home and encourage and help his wife and children. Many a man has been reached through this means when everything besides has failed. (S. Henry 28-29)

Henry insists that there be no dogma presented, no argument for a particular denomination, and no criticism. Like Willard, she encourages an emphasis on a positive, listening presence and using only the Bible as authority.

Included in the manual are forms for use by workers similar to those created in Willard manuals. One is a request for a prayer supportive of the WCTU temperance work at church meetings, another a form requesting pastors in the churches to preach on and hold temperance meetings (S. Henry 38-39). Enclosed is a

course of home readings, three for each month of the year. They are a combination of temperance literature, prohibition strategies, and pieces on the physiological effects of alcohol. Henry urges women to form a “Temperance Library Circle” in the local union, to examine the class on the first of every month by written examination, and to send these tests to Henry at the WCTU headquarters in Evanston.

Mary Allen West also wrote a manual advising members on how to conduct schools of methods. The manual includes information on the “Temperance Course of Study,” which, she claims, was designed “after the Chautauqua plan,” and coeducational. This course is created “to assist in making men and women intelligent in regard to both economic and scientific temperance”(Manual 16). Those who complete the prescribed course are to be examined and given a diploma. Each course has a list of required and suggested readings. The “Economic Course” includes books on political economy, prohibition, government and liquor traffic, child labor, and Cobbe’s early feminist title (*Manual 17*). The recommended reading includes Bellamy’s *Looking Backward*. Under the “Scientific Course” are titles on physiology and hygiene, alcohol, and tobacco and under recommended readings titles on heredity temperance teachings, alcohol and the brain (*Manual 17*). All of the titles were available through the Woman’s Temperance Publishing Association.

Willard’s Text Inscribed

Beyond presenting Willard’s vision for creating the female citizen orator, how did the WCTU members see the organization? Did they feel that the WCTU

prepared them for intelligent and responsible participation in public life? Lady Somerset recalled that Willard's greatest accomplishment was her ability to present "people in a new light to themselves, and what she believed them to be, they became. It was impossible to be praised by her without a great longing to be all she thought . . . It was this divine alchemy that changed the dross to pure gold, and that educated an army of women all bound to the best in themselves and to the good in each other"(Somerset and Smith 7). Willard told Somerset that her strategy of engaging an audience from the point of harmony was to take them into her confidence and treat them as "just one, great kindly, good natured, responsive and sympathetic soul"; not as an antagonistic crowd, "but just as an aggregate of all I would like them to be"(Somerset and Smith 7). Throughout her life, Willard continued to use Mary Hill Willard's harmonious approach.

Lillian Stevens, president of the WCTU in the early twentieth century, stated that "we believe that the need which called for separate organizations of women still exists, and that the training and experience which come to women through WCTU methods are fitting her as nothing else fitted her to take her place side by side with man in all relations of life"(Gordon *What* 35). Stevens learned from Willard the essential difference between having allies and merging with them. As Willard had learned to so much disappointment in her teaching years, it was important to preserve the organization's female focus. Stevens stated that the WCTU gladly cooperates with other organizations, but "This co-operation does not call for any compromises, any merging, any receding, any relinquishment of our vast WCTU

structure and its machinery, all of which we have created because it was necessary to have it to carry out our organization plans and purposes”(Gordon *What* 35).

The suggestion that WCTU members should persevere through difficulty despite cultural sexism as well as the occasional backbiting by other members is a discrete layer under some WCTU teachings. Mary Livermore, a longtime ally of Willard and worker for the WCTU, later recalled her ten years’ experience with the temperance cause as demanding:

my faith and patience were taxed to the utmost. The hostility of the liquor traffic, which recognized in the organization a new element of danger to its interests—the jealous sectarianism of the women, most of whom had never before engaged in any work except for their individual churches—the fear of many of the clergy that this aggressive work would absorb too much of the money and time of their women members—the ignorance of parliamentary law, which led many women, when voted down, or compelled to abide by the adverse decisions of the chair, or the house, to consider themselves aggrieved or insulted—the lack of money to carry on the work, and the faintheartedness of the workers, when means were devised for the raising of funds—all these, with many lesser annoyances, rendered the office of president of the Massachusetts Woman’s Christian Temperance Union, during its first ten years, anything but a sinecure. (Livermore 582)

Livermore's description accounts for Willard's continued insistence that the WCTU workers labor in a spirit of generosity, patience, and nonsectarianism.

The emphasis on inclusion and agreement to propel women forward did have its drawbacks. Willard's educational plans provided a coherent, useful project for the majority of her white, middle class organization, but they did not always lead to the Christian tolerance and understanding she sought. Instead, the call for tolerance seemed to guarantee the ignoring of hostile factions within the union itself. Frances E.W. Harper, who lectured on behalf of the organization to create unions in black communities, pointed out that the Christian inspiration which motivated so many in the WCTU was coming short when it required extension beyond individuals most like the majority of members.

In *The WCTU and the Colored Woman*, Harper notes that racism within the southern unions still exists. She acknowledges that some union members have responded to "the colored question" in a "liberal and Christian manner; others have not seemed to have so fully outgrown the old shards and shells of the past as to make the distinction between Christian affiliation and social equality, but still the leaven of more liberal sentiments has been at work in the Union and produced some hopeful results"(205). Social equality demands only simple identification, whereas Christian affiliation, Harper asserts, requires the coexisting union of Christians to do work which helps to build up the kingdom of Christ. She states that "Believing as I do, in human solidarity, I hold that the WCTU has in its hands one of the grandest opportunities that God ever pressed into the hands of the womanhood of any country.

Its conflict is not the contest of a social club, but the moral welfare of an imperiled civilization. Whether or not the members of the farther South will subordinate the spirit of caste to the spirit of Christ, time will show”(Harper 206). Harper seems to urge that the southern members requiring separate unions be aware of their unchristian behavior, suggesting that they “look at the question of Christian affiliation on this subject, not in the shadow of the fashion of this world that fadeth away, but in the light of the face of Jesus Christ”(Harper 207). Harper calls upon WCTU members to conduct themselves as generously as did their divine exemplar.

Belle Kearney was a daughter of the South whom Harper likely targeted in her criticism. Kearney, leader of youth unions, wrote her own autobiography, *Slaveholder's Daughter*, detailing her life with the Mississippi WCTU. Kearney lauds the effect of the organization on her life, claiming that it “was the golden key that unlocked the prison doors of pent-up possibilities. It was the generous liberator, the joyous iconoclast, the discoverer, the developer of Southern woman” (118). Kearney recalls being appointed superintendent without really knowing in which direction to move, even as she was told that she would be met by snubs. Kearney details her training for WCTU leadership by studying Willard’s annual addresses and WCTU publications on scientific temperance. This information gave her a “comprehensive idea of the scope and purpose” of children’s organizations, her focus of work. “From this store of valuables sufficient information was culled to enable me to prepare two speeches—one for young women, the other for children. I had never taken an elocution lesson and knew nothing of voice culture. My unprospected field was

entered literally without training. The state president urged me to go at once into the work of lecturing and organizing” (149-150). Kearney claims that at her first speaking engagement she addressed a house “packed with people who had come from far and near to behold the novelty of a woman speaker”(152). She only referred to her manuscript once, and “the transport of enthusiasm, the inexplicable fervour, the exquisite joy, the utter abandon that often comes to public speakers in appealing to the intellect and stirring the emotions of an audience descended upon me”(153-4).

Kearney states that her success at gaining an audience was largely due to the church, which helped advertise her engagements and to transport her to various churches. The fact that Kearney had such strong church support may have been one of the motivations behind Harper’s accusations of unchristian behavior. If Harper herself could have unlocked the prejudice in the churches, she would have had a much wider support network. Kearney argues in her life story that the South has a new woman, because the southern woman, once a “non-entity,” now, thanks to the WCTU, has a voice “swelling into louder, deeper tones, and is singing out from pulpit and from platform the glad songs of freedom, of advancement, of human rights and privileges”(170).

It is a testament to the racist attitudes of writers such as Kearney that she has highly contradictory material in the same self-penned volume. While in her chapter on the temperance union she proclaims her full involvement in a freedom-filled, progressive movement, she also encloses a racist chapter. Kearney discusses the fate of the southern black people, in which she presents quite condescendingly the

Christianity of the slave with comic dialect, and states that the “negro problem” will be slow to resolution because “the thickness of his skull and the length of his under jaw, the relative smoothness of his brain and the amount of gray matter at his nerve centres” must be considered (65). Despite the progress Kearney claims for southern women, she certainly did not consider the former slave in her thoughts on “deepening and broadening the outlook for young womanhood”(154). The figure of Belle Kearney, seemingly progressive while harboring such racist sentiments—all the while standing as a leader for the next temperate Christian generation—shows the lengths to which tolerance was demanded in the temperance union.³² Willard refused to be overtly critical of any southern cultural practices, even racist ones. While it is true that the WCTU offered an entirely new world from which middle class women could enter the American public and work to change it, the means for making this transformation does in some sense determine the limits of its possibilities. The broad compass Willard sought to create left some women outside of its circle.

Chapter Five: Conclusion

Frances Willard is a born leader; but with this genius for direction and leadership, she unites another quality utterly diverse from leadership—that of the most impressionable, the most plastic, the most sympathetic and responsive person that can possibly be imagined. Her temperament is as delicately susceptible as that of an Aeolian harp; one can hardly think in her presence without feeling that she intuitively perceives the thought.

Lillian Whiting, 1891.³³

Frances Willard was praised for innovative leadership that sent women in new directions. She had the vision to create new avenues on which women could travel, intellectually and spiritually. Her “genius for direction,” however, was accompanied by her ability to resonate with a student or audience. Described as “impressionable,” “plastic,” “sympathetic” and “responsive,” she was shaped by her students and workers as she worked to shape them. Willard’s students and followers repeatedly commented on her ability to see their strengths, and to invoke their utility. I intend to address the issue of what it means to be this responsive as an orator and pedagogue, because it is an important part of Willard’s religious methods. Reception of spirit and divine motivation call upon the religious individual to listen to a calling and to respond.

I have described Willard’s teaching as a progressive, pedagogical ministry; her work was ministerial in that she often performed the functions of a minister and she gave aid and service to her students and the greater culture. Willard learned how to respond to her spiritual inclinations and to foster them in others. This element of her work is probably the one most lauded in her own time and most ignored in the present, because in order to fully understand it one must fully consider Willard’s religious,

ministerial positioning. My final chapter evaluates Willard's practices in two institutions: one a woman's college and the conflicts it had in trying to accommodate its mission in a university setting, the other an all-female institution which actively sought to distinguish itself from male institutions. I consider how her work can enrich present day discussions of rhetorical history, American higher education, and composition history. Finally, I address the pedagogical contributions and limits in Willard's approach and those of my own methods.

The Alternative Institutional Placement of Rhetorical Education

The study of Frances Willard provides a mapping of various educational practices taking place simultaneously. Tracing her professional career as an educator shows how institutional changes were not as linear as many historians have suggested. The experiences surrounding the creation of the Evanston College for Ladies and the formation of educational practices in the Woman's Christian Temperance Union show how two institutions accommodated and resisted dominant and residual forms. As a young woman Willard was sponsored by the Methodist Episcopal Church. This sponsorship allowed Willard entrance to the public stage, providing church financial support, publicity, and access to church space for educational and temperance reform activities. While this connection fostered her leadership at the woman's college, Willard's practices at ECL eventually came into conflict with the larger culture's move to emphasize professional graduate programs and to admit women to the university on equal and unaided terms. At ECL, students

could attend classes in the more traditional training of the Christian orator, with classical languages and participation in literary societies. In addition, the school offered forms of practical knowledge designed specifically for women, including the skills necessary for house holding. Women who attended the school learned how to cook more healthful meals and to cultivate physical health. As ECL merged with Northwestern University and began to accommodate the new university demands, NU downplayed Willard's position as a moral and spiritual guide to her students—a position she saw as central to her mission. She therefore moved on to create an institution that would always put equal emphasis upon the development of intellect and spirit.

The WCTU maintained this equilibrium as Willard encountered difficulties even within her church affiliations. Eventually these connections came into conflict with her feminist goals. In 1888 the Methodist Episcopal Church prohibited women from attending their most important leadership conference, and refused to license female ministers. Willard therefore went outside church institutional sanctions to offer alternative ministerial training in the WCTU. She presented her organization members aspects of the earlier classical model and those of the new university. Along classical lines, the WCTU offered studies in Greek and oratorical training. From the newer university model, Willard provided credentialing for those interested in evangelical work, and departmental expertise as an avenue for others. The oratorical, Christian education of the earlier American college was

maintained in an alternative institution for women in whom the skills acquired were repeatedly demonstrated in public discourse.

The students at ECL were encouraged to enter an intellectual realm partly because it had been domesticated for them; they had a school “home” from which to enter and depart providing the Christian atmosphere thought necessary to guide young women throughout their educational years. But in some sense Willard’s students also sought to domesticate the university, calling upon the same standards of Christian behavior for male students in hopes that the university would become a place fit for both ladies and men. Likewise, in the WCTU members were asked to domesticate any space they entered by providing homelike décor, and a friendly Christian demeanor. Members demonstrated their “radiating” female power by transforming the male-sanctioned public space of church, or railroad depot, or street into a female one, with WCTU banners, flowers, and temperance information. The “school as home” model of ECL was therefore transformed into a “home as school” model for the WCTU, with the “home” being any public space inhabited by a female worker. Staying separate from male institutions was one source of the WCTU’s power, but paradoxically, power was also derived from its constant engagement in social problems afflicting either gender. The boundaries between home, school, church and public were interrelated and permeable, more metaphorical than literal. They shifted according to convention, and—in Willard’s case, because of concerted efforts to alter them.

Studying the life of nineteenth-century American pedagogues reveals the immense cultural differences between their assumptions about public and private space and ours. Ironically, the divergence of public and private seems to be much greater for today's teachers. Female pedagogues from the beginning to the end of Willard's century were asked to spend their entire lives as teachers, modeling intellectual and behavioral selves at all times. Early in the century they lived with students when retained at small schools for which there was no housing, and at century's end, they still lived with students, in buildings designed just for that purpose. Living as an exemplar was an understood part of being a teacher. Because so many in the WCTU leadership had been teachers, they seemed to move well from one form of all-encompassing work to another, in which they lived and worked side by side with other women.

Our twenty-first century notion of the difference between public and private lives has caused some conflict at the level of the university. We live at a time when the academy is perceived by some as a neutral intellectual territory, a place from which purely intellectual information is to be dispensed to students—what we might see as the ultimate outcome of the system being reconfigured in Willard's time. At this historical moment, if teachers outwardly voice their personal beliefs, they are often seen as entering a space that should be confined to the home. When these beliefs are voiced, the private has invaded the perceived neutral territory and the space of the student is seen as damaged or threatened by what is considered to be this more appropriately private voicing.

As we in the present are asked to keep aspects of our lives outside of the classroom distinct from those within it, Willard experienced no such separation. Rather, she asked her students to integrate their personal, educational and public lives. One student described her as having broad views, high ideals, and expectations for the responsibility women had to use their lives. Students at NU noted that Willard's "enthusiastic laborers" were writing essays, performing debates on contemporary topics, and reporting in the newspapers. Willard was known for sending out sharp thinkers and effective public speakers—goals any male student at that time would have been advised to meet.

Paradoxically, as Willard was noted for her efforts in raising the bar spiritually and intellectually for female students, she was at the same time denigrated for running the male NU college freshmen "like a pack of girls" (*Glimpses* 231), a comment on her moral standards. Willard's efforts to keep female students within the moral compass of the earlier female college were seen as too childish and unsophisticated for the university. The new movement toward becoming an American university did not embrace the means she had for guiding her students spiritually and morally. Vestiges of the older woman's college remained beyond Willard's tenure, however, until the early twentieth century. Female residence hall "deans" took charge of their female students without any of the administrative or curricular control Willard had had thirty years before. Interestingly, the public/private merging of religion, intellectual material, and ethics was ultimately separated, the spiritual and ethical fully domesticated under the dean's care, and no longer central to the

university's mission. Even as rhetors, NU women were harbored in all-female societies at the beginning of the twentieth century.

This concept of engagement and refuge is an interesting one, important for considering institutions of learning that cater to special populations, such as women's institutions, or traditionally black colleges. It was essential to Willard that women occupy the space of the public prepared with male-gendered skills, but in the university and the WCTU she draws attention to gender, rather than arguing its irrelevance. The work of Jeanne Halgren Kilde considers the early Chautauqua meetings, meetings which hosted many WCTU events, including its founding. Hilde presents the Chautauqua as a female gendered space. Writers such as William James and Rudyard Kipling commented on the domesticating qualities of being in such space, complaining that when entering Chautauqua, men's behaviors were subdued (Hilde 451).

Similarly, when Willard entered the university, the female presence attempted to gender the university female, calling upon both male and female students to model exemplary moral behavior. As Willard did so she was mocked for domesticating students. Kilde asserts that "built spaces provide the context within which meanings are developed and also represent and reproduce those meanings" but "because of the diversity of users, the meanings associated with a specific environment are contested and negotiated rather than merely imposed, as people behave in ways counter to intended standards, resisting and modifying the meanings of the space"(455). From the moment that she participated in her first temperance saloon protest, Willard

understood the significance of woman's entry into new spaces and marking territory as feminine. Chautauqua countered the "binary model of gendered spatial meaning from the outset, evolving as a landscape that was neither predominantly 'public' like a city nor 'private' like a domicile; elements of both kinds of spaces were intertwined" (Kilde 460). Likewise, Willard's movements and those under her educational influences moved constantly between landscapes considered home, school and public. Her work showed women the permeability of space and she advised them to keep divergent spaces "intertwined" in her advice for woman to take home with her everywhere.

Willard resisted the assumption that acquiring the tools to "fit" into "the world" was the best educational approach. The world was to her a Christian project, in need of constant reformation, especially from the female side. As noted by her students, she was impressionable and susceptible, capable of being changed and of changing. Willard's approach responded to criticism that the best early women's seminaries sent out "otherworldly women" who couldn't adjust to "real" life. She sought to do just the opposite, with her students in some sense embodying that "other" divine world as they entered the human one through multiple avenues. To be sure, there were obvious points of visual contact. When she stood in spaces gendered as masculine, such as the pulpit, the railroad depot, or the saloon, she was conspicuously present in locations that were traditionally forbidden. But the WCTU radiated both horizontally and vertically in terms of social space. Temperance workers moved horizontally, radiating their widespread involvement in multiple

social causes. Vertically, they occupied the same space as those above them in terms of status, such as male political and religious figures, while at the same time they occupied space with those below, praying alongside people they perceived as most needing the temperance message, such as the alcoholic or the prostitute.

One of the dominant metaphors examined in this dissertation is that of parenting and home in the educational scheme. ECL followed early female seminaries in placing faculty under the same roof as students; many in the WCTU national leadership were housed in Rest Cottage, the Willard home in Evanston. In the history of composition, this literal placement of teacher/student intimacy has become a metaphor for classroom relations. JoAnne and Leonard Podis have addressed the issue of parental stewardship in the university, seeing it as a residual effect of *in loco parentis* from ancient times. They argue that “pedagogical *in loco parentis* is a deeply embedded but often overlooked principle within the teaching of composition, one that merits more attention than it has received, especially since, in one form or another, it is likely to remain an influential pedagogical model”(122). Podis and Podis suggest that one strain of this pedagogy asserts itself as a “*stern or disciplinary form of parental control*”(123). Willard created controversy by asserting disciplinary control at NU. When viewed from our historical perspective, or even from that of the male university model, Willard appears to be reactionary in her positions and values. But from the vantage of traditionally female institutions, she was quite progressive. Willard set a standard for female behavior and then asked the students to monitor it

themselves, an approach she saw as a great improvement over the public scrutiny and humiliation characteristic of the earlier woman's college.

One of the outcomes of a parental stance toward students is the perception that their work is perpetually childlike and is therefore not given the respect of an adult communication. Although she positioned herself as a maternal figure, Willard constantly pushed her students and followers to be part of the adult conversation, both at the university and at the temperance union, and continually asked that students seek out what they could contribute to the world—a request more challenging than infantilizing. Podis and Podis suggest that one way out of an obvious parent/child power struggle with the student is to highlight the role of mentoring, one of Willard's practices. But even with mentoring there “may be a troublesome one-way character if wisdom, guidance, and authority are presumed to flow solely from the mentor to the mentored”(Podis and Podis 136). As the horticulturist rather than the pruner, Willard planted seeds in many places, but didn't dictate the manner of growth. At ECL she made suggestions for the societies but did not attend them, and responded to student concerns by creating the means for them to solve their own conflicts. In the WCTU, members were given avenues from which to cultivate their expertise, but they became the experts. At each institution, Willard provided the *structure* and *conditions* for activity that was later practiced by students and workers.

Another aspect of *in loco parentis* at work in Willard is that of “exemplary influence”(Podis and Podis 218). People who knew Willard repeatedly spoke of her as a Christian and intellectual exemplar. A very accomplished writer and speaker, she

strove to have her students and followers be active writers, effecting change with their words. This public writing was not ultimately accepted at NU, but it came to great success later in the temperance union. Podis and Podis state that “writing teachers who write and who teach writing from a sense of their own immediate struggles with the challenging, rewarding, and often frustrating enterprise of writing, we believe, have the power to influence and motivate their students in a way that is likely to elude traditional *in loco parentis* instructors who rely on the power of their parental positions to cow their charges into compliance with the rules and regulations of their composition or English studies classes”(137). While subscribing to a certain kind of *in loco parentis*, Willard did not embrace a conventional or traditional idea of that concept. She constantly shared her process with followers at the WCTU and the larger reading public, talking about her own writing struggles, ways to improve, and how to address an audience.

Willard’s work made access and authority transparent by its focus on means and method. The WCTU wrote and rewrote its own history and that of other women by creating collections of good literature by women, short biographies of women throughout history, and the history of their own institution. In turn, the writing was created in order to be used, an instructive means to an activist end. Historian Mary Kelley has pointed out that the early American female colleges had a clearly articulated mission, faculty that offered inspiring role models, and curricula that introduced them to female exemplars (276). Later in the century Willard offered all of these things in both institutions she headed. The question of what the student

would do when she had departed from Willard's institution was also central to her pedagogical style. She always stated that students had an obligation to contribute something to the larger American or international culture.

Beyond the obvious tools of knowledge and method, Willard had the ability to enhance a student's self-understanding. Students and followers acknowledged that they did worry about Willard's judgment of them, but it seemed to always be communicated by an assessment about how well they had lived up to their own individual promise. Guilt seemed to arise not from a sense of disappointing Willard, but instead of lowering the bar for women in general; as students saw the exemplars provided by each institution, they reevaluated their own contributions.

Willard's Work: Progress and Recurrence in American Higher Education

The Evanston College for Ladies was structurally innovative in its ideas for the education of women and conservative in its regulations. Coming out of the sponsorship of both the Methodist church and the newly forming ideas of the American university, ECL leaders found themselves eventually in some sense rejecting their church sponsors. As has been discussed in an earlier chapter, Willard's literacy sponsors helped her to access the public rhetorical stage, but she encountered conflict with some of them when she demanded to be on terms of equality. Deborah Brandt states that "Although the interests of the sponsor and the sponsored do not have to converge (and, in fact, may conflict) sponsors nevertheless set the terms for access to literacy and wield powerful incentives for compliance and loyalty"(166-

167). Frances Harper's criticisms of racist WCTU behavior certainly provided a means to critique church behavior as well. Throughout its short history ECL presented itself as an institution providing a way for women to remain within compliance regarding female social behavior while at the same time offering new, male-sanctioned forms of intellectual endeavor. This compliance was necessary, Willard understood from her own experience, to facilitate female entry into the school. Unless the school could make the promise to the parent that a young daughter would remain within the "homelike" parameters of middle-class behavior, and have that behavior ensured, she might not attend. ECL's alignment with early nineteenth-century models allowed women access to the more male-dominated, academic form of the university.

However, when Willard's female students actually began to perform more public, male-sanctioned behavior in the form of published articles, criticisms of male behavior, self-defense and academic success—thereby threatening this male space—their entrance into the university came into question. The student at ECL was welcomed and celebrated at the university as long as she made no demands. Reading student commentary on female success and display of intellect in the school newspaper, one notices very little demonstrated criticism. It is only when the female presence demands change on the part of the male students that females are seen as overstepping their bounds.

Concern about the public argument over private behavior ultimately caused Willard to resign. She saw that the moment had come for the college to become a

university. Rather than seeking the formation of a character that should be left on the public stage—the model of the Christian orator—the new university graduate was to instead emerge with professional qualifications. American colleges sought to replicate the successes of German universities. Retaining the ECL emphasis on the earlier seminary model would have made Northwestern look retrograde at about the time that the school found itself competing with other developing coeducational universities throughout the United States.

In the WCTU Willard creatively worked to accommodate the new, dominant demands of higher education while at the same time holding on to the residual classical model. She continually pointed out that her organization was different from male institutions and pointed to this difference as a source of its power. If the WCTU was an institution outside of the mainstream, she argued, it was less corrupt, and could thus be used as an impetus for the improvement of the life outside. This sense of “inside” and “outside” in Willard’s terminology is often repeated and very complex. Of the WCTU individual—and other women and girls she advised—she insisted that her “being,” or inner spiritual state should correspond with the “seeming,” or external appearance. That higher state of being was then called upon to move from “inside” the Union to move “outside” into ever broadening fields of public work. Just as she had done at ECL, Willard placed emphasis on both the *ethics* and *practice* of intellectual work and the importance of demonstrating each publicly.

In this sense of the practical Willard never fully assimilated the new ideas concerning the university intellectual as primarily a researcher. Instead she focused

upon the importance of women modeling their literacy as speakers, organizers, and political voices. This may be a reason for her being perceived as “sympathetic and responsive,” not only to union members but to the calling of the society as a whole. A young woman debating successfully in the literary society or preaching before a large, mixed congregation was a powerful image. At the WCTU Willard maintained the model of the Christian orator, but she made that ideal embodied in the female form, and to a great extent, she performed it herself. It seems central to understanding her power, though, that she was not seen as simply one doing the speaking; instead, as I have pointed out in earlier chapters, she was always listening herself. This listening resulted in changes to accommodate or to counter the world outside of the WCTU, such as becoming more inclusive with member diversity in black and Catholic populations, or offering lifestyle alternatives for women who might otherwise turn to the street out of financial desperation. As president, Willard saw the need for specialization among members, and she urged them to publish and to distribute materials in their areas of expertise, in a sense generating a discipline.

The issue of accommodation and receptivity created conflict for Willard when she attempted to create a truly national union. Ultimately, the WCTU became a literacy sponsor itself. Willard had to reconcile the positions of white southern women and women of color. The union became an example whereby “pragmatic, instrumental, ambivalent, patron-client relationships integrated otherwise antagonistic social classes into relationships of mutual, albeit unequal dependencies” (Brandt 168). To encourage growth in the South, Willard limited her criticism of white members’

racist practices. Black members saw the hypocrisy in a Christian social reform movement that did not interact with the Americans who needed its help the most, but they saw the union as a forum from which to enter public speech and political activity. Willard constantly reinforced the view that women were capable, even necessary figures on the public stage, but she always cultivated that public persona alongside the individual's own spiritual self-scrutiny, advising women to follow their own inclinations and then providing the means for that following. She focused extensively on the *means* by which women achieved political ends. *How* a woman did what she did to make the world a better place was equally important as the goal achieved. She came short of her own expectations, however, in her hesitancy to speak out against union members, preferring civility to true dialogue among the races. In this matter her noted receptivity was limited to the white WCTU majority.

Composition History: Archival Determinations

Archival collections reflect what documents are valued at any given period in history. As writing instruction has not held a prestigious position in the nation's universities, documents tracing instruction, and the student writing generated from it, have been historically devalued. As I began research into Willard's teaching practices, I was dismayed that there were no evidences of her classroom teaching materials from ECL or Northwestern. What do survive are lectures to young girls, which she probably wrote while a teacher, but there is no documentation to prove this. There are no collections of student writing, either, except for those found in *The*

Tripod and other Chicago newspapers. Student newspapers are a very informative way to trace changes within the university, to see what students valued in their education, and to find actual compositions. Some compositions written for Willard are referred to in city newspaper articles describing literary societies and debates, and were later featured in the student paper. The *Tripod* contains student commentary on woman's entrance into the university, curricular, and institutional changes, and is therefore a valuable source for recovering student evaluation of educational practices. Most important for composition history, this evaluation exists in various forms of student composition.

The *Tripod* demonstrated female student writing on contemporary social issues affecting the nation, the city, and the school. If Willard had not pushed her female students to become part of the literary culture at ECL and Northwestern, female student voicing in the papers may not have existed. However, because of the period's emphasis on anonymity and *nom de plumes* in some cases, it is not always easy to place the writer to the piece, but in particular conflicts gender differentiation is clear. In student defenses of Willard writers always signed with their full names. There is no indication that Willard encouraged her students to write on her behalf, but her methods certainly persuaded students to publicly voice positions on issues affecting them.

Ironically, it is precisely because of Willard as a public rhetorical figure—rather than as a pedagogue—that we have any of her history at all. Most of the information on her career focuses on the WCTU period of her work, because this is

what made her famous, and because this is the history she insisted that the WCTU create. Evidence of her work in two educational institutions demonstrates how amazingly consistent she was in her approach. Willard pushed the temperance union to publish extensively in myriad forms so that members could enter the public dialogue. The temperance union library, created under Willard's direction, still exists in Evanston, but because the contemporary WCTU has so few members, there has been no financial means to properly organize and catalogue its vast materials demonstrating organizational culture. The Frances Willard Historical Association assumed management of the library and archives in January 2007. Currently the library is not staffed and relies on Association members, interns and volunteers to assist outside researchers and respond to reference inquiries.

Historians make judgments, which then affect the archival materials and the librarians themselves. Mary Earhart Dillon, probably the most thorough biographer of Willard, stated that Willard "made no notable contribution to college education, nothing certainly comparable to Mary Lyon, Emma Willard or Catharine Beecher"(127). She seems to have assessed Willard's pedagogical work through the lens of NU's later female deans. Willard's creation of a college integrating the practical studies typical of women's colleges with the rhetorical education given to its men, in the same literary societies, was significant. But seemingly as a consequence of this historical judgment, NU has not given much attention to the college/university period in Willard's work. Most of the archival material, even housed there, emphasizes the controversy over Willard's resignation and move to the temperance

union, rather than what she accomplished while at the school. It is due to the continued generosity of Evanstonian women that I was shown important materials and allowed to tour Willard's home in Evanston, inappropriately named Rest Cottage. The Frances Willard Memorial Library is housed in a twentieth-century building behind Willard's home.

Willard therefore lived, worked and published within the confines of her family land in Evanston, with the goal of altering the American and world landscape. Her attempt to harmonize divergent thoughts and practices was a consciously feminist one. She repeatedly presented women's work as radiating, rather than moving in a single direction. Willard once wrote a short piece called "Woman as a Harmonial Philosopher," in which she argued the differences in male and female methods. She stated that male temperance workers

took up the temperance movement on a straight line, beginning with the first society in 1808 on the basis of moderation, following along until they came to the total abstinence pledge, following that by prohibition, but the WCTU has forty distinct departments covering all phases of reform, showing its correlations with every other form of philanthropy. This is wherein the white ribboners have proved on a grand scale that woman is indeed a harmonial philosopher. (n.p.)

The WCTU took on temperance as just one symptom of a variety of social problems, and they treated the problem from multiple points, including prevention in the form of education, and cure in the form of spiritual healing. Prevention was worked upon

through all of the educational departments for both children and adults. Cure was enabled by helping individuals who might be under threat of a turn to alcoholism or prostitution. The Christian position from which the union delivered these services worked from an assumption that each individual was a soul to be saved, acknowledged, and developed.

The “correlations” and “covering of all phases” of reform to which Willard aspired is therefore presented here in a frame that does it some injustice. Because of the limited archival material accessible to the scholar today, critical views of Willard are hard to come by. Obituaries and WCTU publications are necessarily appreciative. The few pieces of criticism available regarding Willard’s methods from those who had more of an outsider’s view were found in the student newspaper. Older students who did not appreciate being part of Willard’s ECL approach are merely an allusion; those who did not live up to the WCTU model are silent; individuals who were the subjects of temperance reform, such as the alcoholic or the prostitute, are voiceless. Testimonials abound from those involved in the cause who were transformed by Willard’s organizations, but the dissertation comes short in presenting those who were taught by Willard and the WCTU from outside the temperance world. In this sense my research compass is much narrower than the work of the organization; it does not cover the complex interrelations between WCTU education and reception by anyone directly affected by its work in the society at large.

How Willard's Practices Resound in the Twenty-First Century

Under Willard's leadership, ECL and the WCTU took on a "publicist rhetorical orientation"(Ervin 412). This form of education works under the principles of "*mutuality*, or a sense of shared destiny or goals, *accessibility and commodiousness*, which imply an openness to cohabitability; and *expansiveness*, a commitment to 'disseminating one's discourse into ever-widening arenas'"(415). Elizabeth Ervin proposes this kind of orientation as a means to teach composition students. Instead of pushing students to work on a specific political issue, she suggests that a composition course generating an "interested publicism" avoids the domination that might be complicit in such a move. She argues that composition instruction can instead cultivate "personal commitments to publicism itself," or a "public-oriented agency or subjectivity"(419). Willard cultivated publicism in both of her institutions; students and workers voiced their positions for institutional and social change on pulpit, podium, and paper. Women were approached as subjects rising to the same challenges, assuming the same goals. In both institutions, many shared the same roof, living and breathing their life work. Willard challenged girls and women to move into the world together and to imagine that goals were set for them by the divine—latent, yet not capable of being materialized without woman's action.

Frances Willard's work in both ECL and the WCTU demonstrates that there was a large group of women who countered the nineteenth-century decline of the citizen orator. Cheryl Glenn states in her introduction to *Rhetorical Education in*

America that the ancient model of the citizen-orator links rhetoric, civic life, and democracy, but that this model “declined in the face of nineteenth century individualism, economic competition, and professionalization”(vii). Glenn asks that as we rediscover past practices in our histories, we assess what might be kept and developed. Willard’s practices took on multiple forms to evaluate. One question I ask regards the negative and positive consequences of Willard’s rhetorical positioning—the strengths and limits of assuming agreement, even if that agreement is assumed to be unrealized, beyond the point of utterance. Additionally, I explore the notion of “relational stability” and identification affecting Willard’s students and WCTU members. How does one perform mimesis when one is not easily identified with the one doing the modeling? Is the notion of the exemplar limited because it only follows one type, the “Christian Lady”?

Assuming Agreement

Evaluating Willard’s teaching approach requires a consideration of how to make an argument from the starting point of agreement. How would the outcome of communications be affected by this strategy? In Willard’s case, she was successful in making such assumptions of agreement with (predictably enough) audiences most like herself, such as the temperance organizers. The public newspapers all over the country generally embraced her approach, calling her eloquent and effective. On the other hand, people such as Frances Harper found this tool to be quite useful as a means to criticize the behavior of the audience: if the WCTU agreed that Christian

behavior was required, Harper was holding them to their shortcomings in this regard. Ida B. Wells asked Willard to voice disagreement with her followers, to be critical of the violent attacks against black men and women in her time. But Willard felt that benignancy should be maintained. In keeping with the stability of her organizational structure, she refused to require that the southern unions change, allowing them the state option to remain separate from black unions.

Trish Roberts-Miller has discussed the implications for addressing a classroom from the standpoint of accommodation, and its limits. Just as Willard refused to critique the behavior of those in her organization, we as educators often “want, somehow, not to censor a student yet neither to have the class dissolve in rancor. While the teaching of writing, especially argumentative writing, requires disagreement, the general perception is that too much conflict can threaten ‘the community of discourse’ in the classroom by leading to a breakdown in civility”(537). Teachers often measure the success of classroom practice by the level of its tolerance. But we should be asking, as Roberts-Miller does, whether civility itself is always a triumph. Do we want students to merely negotiate among different sets of values—maintaining an “American standard of civility,” or do we want something more? Roberts-Miller raises the possibility that in accommodating rather than confronting the bigoted responses of students we ostracize members of the community most affected by those prejudices. Willard’s refusal to speak out against her southern members accommodated their racism, and trivialized the black WCTU experience. Roberts-Miller points out “to the extent that a theory (or pedagogy)

assumes that a good community has minimal conflict, it is almost certain to founder on the problems of inclusion and difference”(545-6). The WCTU attempted to avoid this conflict by encompassing so many social causes in its work, but the very attempt to be comprehensive opened its work up to conflict.

Willard’s WCTU was an example of an “irenic and deliberative public sphere”(548). Such a public sphere, Roberts-Miller argues, presents a “discourse that hopes to reach perfect agreement on issues of policy”(548). Difference is “fatal” in such a public sphere, because members “must necessarily imagine an extremely homogeneous community and/or one in which major disagreements are evaded,” conflicting because “a vision in which calling for more argument and more community is contradictory, unless one imagines perfect conformity on morals”(Roberts-Miller 548). On this point of “conformity on morals,” Willard was by no means flexible. Morality was the basis from which her followers acted. Without this basis, Willard saw that her students and followers would not be heard. Roberts-Miller asks if today’s alternative to such consensus on the points of moral behavior is the liberal answer, one which avoids moral discourse altogether. The problem, she points out, is “the more that the communitarian answer assumes that an irenic public sphere is both necessary and good, the more that it assumes that discourse can only be productive among people who share moral systems, and thus, the more argument from, rather than about, morals.” In such a community “the moment that one fundamentally disagrees with the group, the community no longer exists”(551).

Willard's ECL "girls" argued both from and about morals when they applied them to males. When WCTU members disagreed with Willard's fundamental views in support of woman's vote they separated to form their own organization. The fact that there is almost no ability to access negative critique of the WCTU as an organization demonstrated that there were what Roberts-Miller calls "discursive inequalities" within it (539). She asserts that "when civility prevails, no one wants to bring up such a divisive topic; when the topic is finally brought up, the issue becomes the behavior of those who violated the code of civility rather than their concerns regarding the injustice. Thus, attempting to have a public sphere without conflict means that one loses the ability to argue about central issues"(552). Willard's two organizations, with their seamless movement from private commitment to public life, were communitarian in nature, working from an assumed code of civility to address social problems. Like other marginalized groups, the newly emergent female college graduate and WCTU orator strove to present a united front, a front requiring perceived agreement on its contours.

Relational Stability/Identification

While touring Europe Willard experienced the early conditions in which women entered the university. Woman's entrance caused a change in "relational stability" between faculty and student. The easy mimesis from male professor to male student was no longer possible. Willard realized this, and worked in her institutions to create ways for mimesis to take place, providing women lecturers and teachers. At

ECL both female and male students were addressed each week with lectures on topics about woman's place and contribution to society. Willard was well aware that upon entering the academy women needed to be self-conscious about their identities; she repeatedly called attention to the fact that at the university women were entering a man's world.

As the putative destabilizers, female students and faculty actively developed their self-presentation. Melanie Kill's work discusses the problem of students who are in a position of renegotiating their identities as they emerge in the university world, much as Willard's students emerged into new arenas. She suggests that "the work renegotiating classroom identity cannot fall to students alone. It is because of our reliance on relational stability that challenges to traditional relations and divisions of power in the classroom provoke resistance in defense of the stability of all identities involved"(232). This "defense of stability" is precisely what happened at ECL: Male students rose in defense of the stability of prior relationships with male faculty, relationships that had no bearing upon private conduct. Willard was a spectral mother insisting upon the male student's domestication.

Willard herself depended on a form of relational stability: that of the mother of a culture, leading her Christian daughters into enlarged moral and civic capacities. The maternal relationship would suggest to the average reader that Willard's positioning in relation to those she counseled was therefore always a position of authority, perhaps even condescension. However, details regarding Willard's attitudes toward parenting and teaching show that this wasn't the case. Willard talked about

listening to the child, and letting a child's inclinations be noted before providing opportunities. In the evangelical WCTU work, listening to the afflicted without passing judgment was crucial. The element of authority between Willard and student or follower was moved to God, rather than the teacher, or expert. Bowing heads in union before each meeting was a way of continually centering the source of power somewhere else. When students and followers commented on Willard's power, they constantly referred to her ability to see and to hear something in them, to find what they could contribute to the world. Yet the aspect of mothering in Willard's educational scheme in the WCTU has a strong regenerative element. Knowledge is always disseminated, shared, spent and therefore, ultimately reproduced.

Willard had moved seamlessly from the female Methodist context of her own education into a similar one at ECL, so there was little conflict in enacting and demanding that students take on such an identity; it was the generalized expectation for females in the Evanston community. However, when Willard moved from ECL to NU she was in a different, male-gendered institutional context, and applying the same normative procedures failed. Willard attempted to bring the female educational context to a male one. Followers such as Frances EW Harper seemed to be successful in assuming the identity of the Christian citizen orator. Harper presented herself as an educated, articulate supporter of the temperance cause. As she took on this mantle, however, she also called upon the other Christian women surrounding her to behave in accordance with their own model, asking that they—as Willard continuously suggested—place their being along with their seeming. A worker could not help but

realize the precision in what Harper said, culling the necessary religious truth out of the member's pontifications. Bringing the same identification to new inhabitants challenges the strategy itself.

Such a disjunction between identity and place occurs in classrooms of today when professors move out of the perceived "neutral ground" of the university. Students often see a teacher's voiced political positioning as an imposition on what they perceive to be "neutral" intellectual space. When students see this political voicing "imposed," they often stop listening to the teacher. Karen Kopelson asks the crucial question of "*How might we speak, as whom might we speak, so that students listen?*"(142). She suggests that we take up the current student expectation of the pedagogue in order to facilitate classroom activity, much as Willard facilitated activity for women by upholding the middle-class standards for women of her time. Of course, Willard's philosophy required that there be no disjunction between what her mentored women *were* and what they *appeared* to be. Her Christian faith required that the two be conjoined. Kopelson, on the other hand, makes no such requirement, calling upon the use of rhetorical cunning, or *metis*, to effect classroom purposes. Like Kopelson, Willard was keen to present a self-conforming to the expectation of her audiences, or students. Kopelson, though, is confronted with having to address the contemporary student's expectation of neutrality, and she must therefore discover ways to perform such neutrality rhetorically (142). Frances Willard likewise performed too, but her performances met the expectation for the woman speaker of *her* time—the Christian "lady," and as a result inspired thousands of middle class

women to become politically active and strongly voiced. Willard's performances did not require a division between her purposes and her strategies, between her seeming and her being.

Perhaps because she was so thoroughly attuned to her audiences, Willard's speaking and listening were intimately connected features of her rhetorical performances. Students under Willard's instruction and leadership referred to her as someone who had the ability to hear and to see their potential, much as a musician hears the quality of an instrument. The quality is latent, waiting to be played. Student Louise Hart, who said that Willard had "a faculty for touching the right chord when talking seriously to her girls," again voiced this metaphor of instrumentation. Willard was described as having a temperament as "delicately susceptible as that of an Aeolian harp." These comments suggest that she also presented herself as an instrument, sounding the perceived needs and demands of her religion and her time. Facilitative rather than authoritarian, she advised her students to see their lives as God's instruments, looking within to find in what capacity they might play upon the world's demands. Once a woman had found this capacity, Willard conducted her into a group orchestrating methods to alleviate major social problems. Students in the NU paper declared that participating in the literary societies provided a means to use knowledge, rather than being filled with information without the ability to make it available. This practical dispensation of knowledge was central to Willard's efforts at both ECL and the WCTU.

Willard students encountered conflict when they applied their literacy practices to the new academy of her day. Similarly, current composition theory has attempted to confront the conflict students face when their literacy backgrounds conflict with the new university surroundings. Julie Lindquist has discussed the fact that while compositionists have worked to create student awareness of their own cultural locations, the tools with which to do so have often been given without due attention to the student's emotional landscape. Lindquist points out that issues of student background such as class have "been treated as a problem of rational inquiry in composition theory and pedagogy—a situation that not only ignores work in other disciplines that might teach us how class operates as culture, but also brackets off matters of affect in thinking about how class identifications operate relationally in the classroom"(188). Critical pedagogy, however, often operates from a position of faith in the power of moral commitments while at the same time "teachers often deny students access to the very forms of affective experience that have produced the teachers' own beliefs"(191).

Because Willard could assume a Christian foundation in the lives of her students, she could access them emotionally and intellectually by calling upon a greater authority to guide their lives. In both institutions she headed, religion provided a means to combine the overlapping spiritual and intellectual "selves" constructing students' political identities. Lindquist suggests that today we direct pedagogy away from looking at class tensions "as rational problems to be solved" to instead look at such tensions as "affective positions to be engaged." Seeing the teaching position as

more than one of purely intellectual culture then demands teacher recognition “that the implications extend not only to what teachers need to do” in order to engage positions of student/teacher tension, but also to also engage in questions regarding “*who they should be*” (193).

This issue of *who one should be* was essential to Willard’s ways. Her positioning was never that she was the one with this information, but rather that knowledge should come from within the student, or WCTU worker. Her restriction was that once this sense of purpose was found, the *means* of performing that purpose must be conducted in a Christian manner. Lindquist suggests that composition classrooms consider the construction of teacherly identity as a primary focus if a teacher wants to make students the focus of the work, arguing that it is “appropriate and ethical” to draw attention to how we as teachers create our own personae (195). Because Willard moved within a Christian context, her constant admonition was to look within and to be guided spiritually in action. Her insistence that the Christian within must be also experienced without, that match between seeming and being, transparency between private and public, caused her to ask much of people. As those transformed by her work always noted, she asked just as much from herself.

Willard’s self-presentation as a Christian “instrument” “susceptible” to the needs of her students and followers has parallels with current theory regarding teacher empathy. Lindquist suggests that, much as neutrality can be a rhetorical positioning, so might be the staging of empathy. As we *seem* empathetic, we may eventually *become* empathetic. “Teachers must listen even when they are not interested, must

appear to care about things that bore or annoy them, in the expectation that such attentiveness will become genuine concern”(Lindquist 201). In short, our current conversations seem to be asking for a return to a conscious identity cultivation of our own. Whether or not Willard’s seeming to be emotionally committed to her students and followers matched the actuality of her being committed, this sense of emotional involvement seems to pervade her work and her influence. This sense of focus and trust would have been an integral part of having a spiritual relationship with the student, a major aspect of Willard’s practice. Like a mother in the home, she asked her students and followers to be conduct vigilant, as they represented other women in each moment. Willard lived a philosophy with a devoutly held Christian identity, calling upon her students and workers to perform and enact it in order to conform to Christian cultural expectations. Students and temperance workers continually performed what Kelley calls the “art of persuasive self-presentation” (153), a field our current theorists still call upon us to till.

Method: Texts, Contexts, Future Text

Throughout this dissertation, I’ve tried to present Willard’s teaching approaches and their effects. My effort was to work from both physical instructional texts *and* knowledge of the physical person or “text” inscribed by the practice—the emic, or insider perspective. Because I concentrated on Willard and her methods, however, this dissertation necessarily constructs pedagogue and learner as normative subjects. Willard herself exemplified a certain model of behavior and expected all

who followed her methods to follow that model. She knew that assuming the identity of “Christian lady” would be the means to be heard—and her students and followers were heard and read by the thousands. My research evidences the great success she had in creating this model and providing the means to have it function in a public context. Missing from the presentation are the voices from whom there was undoubtedly dissatisfaction or failure. This absence can be partially attributed to the fact that most of the information on Willard’s life and practices is furnished by her own organization, one which in part has depended upon its most luminous leader for its survival.

Frances Willard performed the expectation for the woman speaker of her time and as a result inspired thousands of middle class women to become politically active and strongly voiced. My intent was to focus equally upon student work. In presenting student writing composed under Willard, I attempt to account for the extent to which their practices constitute a tradition of participation in public discourse. Information from Willard students at ECL and NU comes from student newspapers, private letters, published biographies and obituaries. Few present Willard in a bad light. Students and union members constantly emphasize Willard as a spiritual leader, and it is this aspect of her leadership that has thus far been given little scholarly emphasis, with the exception of the work of Carolyn Gifford. Presenting student work in the context of the institutions in which they were created was an attempt to show, as in the work of Jacqueline Jones Royster, the dynamic relationships in which women “come to voice amid an environment that is influenced by socio-political

constructions of race, gender, and culture, and affected by the implications of power, privilege, authority, and entitlement”(*Disciplinary* 159). Reading student newspapers demonstrates that those most critical of Willard’s approach at NU were those least under her influence—the male students and faculty at the university. In fact, the threat of being asked to move within Willard’s moral compass seemed to be the motivation behind their criticism.

I have focused upon the form of education Willard offered to the peers and young women most like herself. Her few journals written during the time of her early teaching demonstrate that Willard was entirely frustrated when confronted by students of a different social class or who did not perform life’s challenges within a Christian framework. As a young woman, her response to these students was condescending. Her solution was to offer these students a Christian perspective like her own, found in her creation of a Sunday school. Throughout her life, she found fault with worldviews which did not match her own, but she never interposed her view. Instead, she presented it as an offering. Those who sought the stimulation or the help of the WCTU knew that they had entered Christian territory, and submitted to Christian religious precepts.

It was beyond the scope of this project to focus as well upon the literature written for temperance prevention or other literature written for social groups most targeted for aid by the WCTU. Such a project would be fruitful, as the research could determine the type of communication the WCTU used to cross class, race, and gender lines. Further work on the reception of Willard’s methods in these populations would

be beneficial, such as that experienced in the departments of Colored Work, American Indians, and Social Purity. It would be illuminating to focus on comparisons between the white and black temperance unions in the South. In addition, scholarship has yet to address the great publishing accomplishments of the temperance union. The *Union Signal* has been studied to write various histories of the WCTU, but no one has focused exclusively on the organization's publication thrust. The Woman's Temperance Publishing Association was responsible for publications created by the WCTU and literature on temperance and feminism penned by others. Owned and operated by union member Mathilda Carse in Willard's time, the WCTU took ownership in the twentieth century.

Tracing the history of the WCTU as written by WCTU members would also be edifying. Such work would provide a means to see how the organization's "persuasive self-presentation" found its way into its histories. Frances Willard continues to be the organization's most highly regarded historical figure, but there were hundreds of others who dedicated their lives to the temperance cause and who made a difference in the lives of others. More should be written documenting their contributions. Tracing a single individual's educational experience in the ECL or WCTU would provide a multi-dimensional perspective on this social experience and perhaps illuminate some of the difficulties of living up to Willard's challenges. History has recorded Frances Willard's ability to resonate with the problems of her time. It is hoped that further research will document more of the dissonance.

Frances Willard and her students engaged in the world to orchestrate progress for the world's most maligned. Willard cultivated and presented a Christian citizen orator recast in the female form, with skills repeatedly demonstrated in public discourse. Like any pedagogue of today, she borrowed from the teaching successes of an earlier period and those of her contemporaries, borrowings that led to both victory and failure. As we reassess the contributions of past pedagogues, we have also begun listening to student voices of an earlier time. Willard students described her work as transformative because of her belief in their dormant, unrealized female power. Underlying the teaching of Willard's day and ours is the element of faith in students and their ability to transcend the limitations of their respective historical moments. This hope for new, beneficent emergences is the perennial and timeless aspect of our work.

Notes

¹ Book in Willard Library, Frances Willard House, Evanston, Illinois.

² See Bordin, Trowbridge, Earhart, and Gordon. The Earhart biography is the most thorough in covering Willard's life. Gordon's biography, which borders on the hagiographic, contains many important historical documents. As in many WCTU publications, such as Willard's autobiography *Glimpses of Fifty Years*, it is a compendium of work put out by the organization, rather than a simple, linear narrative by a single author. For an emphasis on Willard's rhetoric, see Campbell, Mattingly, and Leeman. For autobiographical text on Willard, see Gifford, *Writing*; for Willard's published autobiography, see *Glimpses*.

³ *Chicago Tribune* (11 April 1871), p. 182.

⁴ *Tripod* (2 February 1873).

⁵ *Tripod* (2 February 1873), p. 21.

⁶ *Tripod* (20 January 1873), p. 10.

⁷ "Evanston College for Ladies." *Chicago Sun Post* (11 April 1871).

⁸ *Tripod* (20 December 1871), p. 117.

⁹ *Tripod* (20 May 1872), p. 51.

¹⁰ *Tripod* (June 1871), p. 8.

¹¹ *Tripod* (25 June 1872), p. 69.

¹² 25 June, 1872.

¹³ "Ladies College Notes." *Tripod* (20 January 1873), p. 5.

¹⁴ *Tripod* (20 February 1873), p. 22.

¹⁵ *Tripod* (October 1873), p. 96.

¹⁶ *Tripod* (December 1873), p. 128.

¹⁷ *Tripod* (20 April 1872), p. 47.

¹⁸ *Tripod* (23 April 1874), p. 42.

¹⁹ *Tripod* (20 November 1872), p. 102.

²⁰ “The Exclusion of Young Ladies from the Literary Societies.” *Tripod* (22 October 1874), p. 84.

²¹ “Mixed Societies.” *Tripod* (19 November 1874), p. 97.

²² “Answers to Correspondents.” *Tripod* (20 April 1873), p. 43.

²³ *Tribune* (5 October 1873).

²⁴ *Tribune* (29 November 1873).

²⁵ *Tripod* (December 1873), p. 130.

²⁶ *Tripod* (20 November 1872), p. 107.

²⁷ *Tripod* (4 December 1872), p. 135.

²⁸ *Tripod* (22 October 1874), p. 84.

²⁹ WCTU Annual Meeting Minutes were published the year following each meeting.

³⁰ In 1889 the department name changed from “Training School for Temperance Workers” to “School of Methods”; in 1899 it was changed to “WCTU Institutes.”

³¹ Eventually the institutes were in the twentieth century called “Clinic” or “Workshop.”

³² Kearney later presented the threatening possibility of black male political power to argue for the enfranchisement of white women in a speech to the National American Woman Suffrage Association (NAWSA) in 1903.

³³ Quoted in Caroline E. Merrick, *Old Times in Dixieland*. New York: Grafton Press, 1901. p.152. Journalist and author Whiting was art and literary editor of the *Boston Traveler* and the *Boston Budget*, to which she contributed literary reviews and a column. She was noted for her writing, criticism, and spiritual influence. Merrick was a leader in the Louisiana woman’s suffrage and temperance movements, taking on the presidency of the New Orleans WCTU and later state level activity in the organization.

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