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LEAVES of GRASS

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savage,
A farmer, mechanic, or artist a gentleman, sailor, lover or quaker,
A prisoner, fancy-man, rowdy, lawyer, physician or priest.

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Walt Whitman, circa 1865

Forgetting "Friend Walt:"

Whitman and Hicksite Amnesia

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April 2013

Whitman was in his real disposition the most

candid, but also the most cautious of men — Edward Carpenter

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Moncure Conway

01. INTRODUCTION

The proof of the poet's Quakerism is that his religion absorbed his sexual orientation as affectionately as he absorbed it — at least, during his lifetime. But after Walt Whitman's death in 1892, Friends' grasp of this unmentionable relationship between love and faith decayed swiftly. The Age of Sail that had sustained it was gone with the wind, ushering in a cruel new Age of Oil, with its world war, world pandemic, and world Depression — not to mention world Freudianism, with its condemnation of “homosexuality,” on the heels of the 1895 Oscar Wilde trial.

To recreate the course of this spiritual devolution, LeavesOfGrass.Org reveals a candid eulogy published by Moncure Conway in an obscure journal shortly after Whitman's funeral, Whitmania (in the literary sense of the term) embraced by the journal *Friends Intelligencer*, praise for the late Whitman among Haverford alumni, and the sale of *Leaves of Grass* by self-styled “Quaker Infidel” Elimina Slenker. None of these items have previously been considered by either Quaker or Whitman scholars. In the context of the evidence previously offered in “Walt Whitman's Quaker Paradox” [\(1\)](#) (WWQP for short), the new findings bolster my claim that *Leaves of Grass* — although cast in

the radical format of Tupperian poetry — was understood, at the time, by supporters, detractors, and Friends themselves as an eloquent expression of Hicksite morality. (2) This hardly contradicts Whitman's famous claim that he was outside "the fence." On the contrary, it justifies the theme developed previously: Whitman was, ultimately, *too good of a Quaker to be a Quaker*. (3)

By analyzing the rise and fall of cautious, encoded, or ambiguous references to Whitman's Quakerism, we can begin to see how the coy, winking understanding of the Good *quakergray* Poet decayed with the end of The Age of Sail, resulting in the critics' dilemma now known as Walt Whitman's Quaker Paradox.

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Elias Hicks deathmask, 1830

02. NEW CITY OF FRIENDS

"[F]our thousand filed through the house to look upon the dead poet," Conway recalled. "Near by was the large bust of his spiritual father, Elias Hicks, founder of the Hicksite Quakers. Large histories found some connection with this little room where Walt Whitman lay." (4) In terms more blatant than the cagey Whitman or any of his inner circle had ever used, Conway then spelled out what he meant by this: (5)

That any one could find a trace of prurience in his pages was a thing Whitman could not conceive. Those who have censured him on this score cannot, on their side, conceive the completeness with which the popular transcendentalism of the Hicksite movement revolutionised the minds trained in its atmosphere. It

was a sort of mystical naturalism to which nothing in nature — literally nothing — was common or unclean; and it was accompanied by an hereditary tendency to write with what Emerson used to call “biblical plainness.”

While Whitman had cherished Rev. Conway's remarkable loyalty and drive, he had regarded this disciple as almost a frenemy. Conway, an on-again, off-again Unitarian minister and prolific Freethought author, published frank Whitman anecdotes without sufficient central oversight — in a fashion that must have seemed reckless to the white-knuckled media spinners behind this “fight of a book for the world.” “Be radical — be radical — be not too damned radical,” (6) Walt cautioned. During the 1880s, perhaps he could see the storm clouds gathering over Oscar Wilde's head. It was clear that no “new City of Friends, invincible to the attacks of the whole of the rest of the earth,” (7) was to be seen on the horizon.

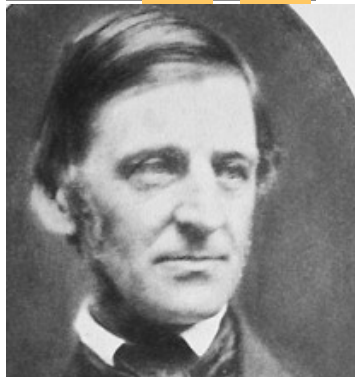
Fortunately, until *Leaves of Grass* came along, the “attacks” on Hicksite morality had been confined to internecine criticism from Orthodox Friends. In addition to the Orthodox jabs at Hicks's liberal morality previously covered (8), further research has turned up only one additional parry: “[Elias Hicks] took occasion . . . to introduce the doctrines of infidelity, as to gain admiration of the licentious . . . It will not seem strange that the doctrines of Elias Hicks, should be congenial to the feelings of those who are disposed to the free indulgence of their corrupt propensities and desires . . .” (9)



period print: *Calamus acorus*

Coming a generation later, the appearance of *Leaves of Grass* did not trigger a resumption of the epistolary Orthodox-Hicksite feud, but something worse: the possibility of a forbidding new front in the antebellum culture war over Free Love. To some, it appeared that Whitman offered a new outrage — an implicit assertion of rights for “Calamus” love. He was charged with destroying the institution of marriage. (10)

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Ralph Waldo Emerson

03. TWO QUAKERS TOGETHER

It is interesting that Whitman's decision to quakerize *Leaves of Grass* may have occurred during a period in which we know he was actively soliciting “all quarters” for guidance on the third edition. Less than a month after the second edition of *Leaves of Grass* appeared, in September, 1856, Bronson Alcott and Henry David Thoreau appeared at Whitman's home, almost as if they were diplomatic emissaries. The shockwave generated by Whitman's display of the Emerson blurb on the book's spine — *I Greet You at the Beginning of a Great Career / R. W. Emerson* — had by this time reached much of the English-speaking world, and it's likely that they negotiated some sort of public-relations ground rules with this young upstart, who “lived to make pomes,” and for nothing else in particular.” Although Alcott was generally regarded as a failure as a philosopher, at the time he was the ranking Transcendentalist in the room. Alcott noted, “He is very curious of criticism of himself or his book, inviting it from all quarters . . .” (11)



Bronson Alcott

Conway, Alcott, Fuller, and Emerson had all recorded life-altering encounters with Quakers, (12) and an early issue of *The Dial* approvingly reprinted two anonymous personal endorsements of an Inner Light philosophy: one, oddly enough, from a “Calvinist,” as well as from a Quaker. (13) Perusing the second edition of the *Leaves*, Emerson would have recognized in the new “Poem of the Road” a passage: (14)

*Out of the dark confinement!
It is useless to protest — I know all, and expose it.*

.

*Behold through you as bad as the rest!
Through the laughter, dancing, dining, supping, of
people,
Inside of dresses and ornaments, inside of those
washed and trimmed faces,
Behold a secret silent loathing and despair!*

*No husband, no wife, no friend, no lover, so
trusted as to hear the confession,
Another self, a duplicate of every one, skulking and
hiding it goes, open and above-board it goes,*

.

Speaking of anything else, but never of itself.

which spoke to the coming-out challenge he himself issued in 1841, in “Self-Reliance:” (15)

*Say to them, O father, O mother, O wife, O brother, O friend, I
have lived with you after appearances hitherto. Henceforward I*

am the truth's . . . I shall endeavour to nourish my parents, to support my family, to be the chaste husband of one wife, — but these relations I must fill after a new and unprecedented way. I appeal from your customs. I must be myself. I cannot break myself any longer for you, or you. If you can love me for what I am, we shall be the happier . . .

🔍 John Burroughs

As John Burroughs pointed out two years after Whitman's death, in the pages of *The Conservator* (16):

The inward voice alone was the oracle he obeyed : "My commission obeying, to question it never daring" . . . In many ways was Whitman, quite unconsciously to himself, the man Emerson invoked and prayed for — the absolutely self-reliant man.

In regard to this "appeal from customs," Emerson's encounter with unspeakable love is securely preserved in the historical record. (Moreover, Fuller's torrid love affair with the beautiful Quakeress Anna Barker is also securely preserved.) His redacted diary records a long season at Harvard during which he was transfixed and paralyzed by an obsession with medical student Martin Gay. "Why do you look after me? I cannot help looking out as you pass." (17) In "Poem of the Road," Emerson's experience found yet another echo:

*Here is adhesiveness — it is not previously
fashioned, it is apropos;
Do you know what it is as you pass to be loved
by strangers?
Do you know the talk of those turning eye-balls?*



Ralph Waldo Emerson

Or, as Whitman said in one of his early anonymous self-reviews, "We shall cease shamming and be what we really are." (18) In any event, Emerson was not merely interested in the Inner Light; he secularized it as "Self-reliance." "Trust thyself," he urged, "every heart vibrates to that iron string." "I am more of a Quaker than anything else," (19) Emerson declared, and Whitman echoed, "I am a good deal of a Quaker," (20) adding elsewhere, "We were like two Quakers together." (21) We can only conclude that even if Whitman may never have conducted the 19th-century version of a "focus group" for New York Friends, the quakerization of the *Leaves* occurred in the context of guidance from Transcendentalists who were no more and no less outside "the fence" than he was.

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Walt Whitman

04. HICKSITE HISTORIAN

But another financial panic roiled the nation in 1857. Whitman was forced to return to journalism, and he defaulted on a large loan from the successful author "Fanny Fern," meant to subsidize publication of

the third edition. In 1858, although at some point debilitated by a "sunstroke," (22) he began to dream of writing a biography of Elias Hicks. (23) That year, in a reminiscence for the Brooklyn *Daily Eagle*, he very accurately characterized Hicks as a "moralist and teacher . . . a wonderful compound of the mystic with the logical reasoner." (24). This is the most astute assessment of Elias Hicks ever written.



Elias Hicks

When the next (the third) edition of *Leaves of Grass* appeared in 1860, previously-published poems were deliberately altered to incorporate blatant Quaker phraseology, or "plain speech," such as "thee" for "you," and "Fourth Month" for "April." These changes remained throughout several decades of Whitman's poetic tinkering, despite objections from some ardent whitmanauts. The "Calamus" poems of manly love which appeared in this edition prophesied a new "new City of Friends, invincible to the attacks of the whole of the rest of the earth."

As previously shown, Whitman felt himself "sort of chosen to do a job as the Hicksite historian . . . no one else living is exactly so well appointed for it." (25) It's even possible that Whitman had literally been chosen by Quakers to export their liberation theology "outside the fence," but by way of evidence, all I can offer are the following suggestions: namely, that his acts of unity with Friends, detailed in the previous paper and in this one, are consistent with this proposition. For instance, an etching of Elias Hicks was respectfully mailed to him for use in his Hicks essay by "Mrs. E. S. L." of Detroit. (26) Near the end of Whitman's life, William Roscoe Thayer claimed that Whitman had told him of "going to the annual [Hicksite] meetings," (27) and indeed, Whitman expressed a

familiarity with the polity of Meeting for Worship for Business. (28)
He was also known to haunt "some Quaker bookstore" (evidently without buying anything) while researching his Hicks essay.

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Walt Whitman

05. GOOD QUAKERGRAY POET

During the long-lasting financial panic of 1857, it would have seemed impossible for things to get any worse, but in 1861, the success of the third edition, and Whitman's dream of a national lecture tour, were derailed by the horror of a Union rent asunder. Alcott's 1857 diary, previously cited, reported that Whitman had threatened to report on the "pigmies [sic] assembled there at the Capitol" (29) for the newspapers, but he did not actually feel summoned to Washington until his brother George was wounded at Fredericksburg. In referring to Whitman's wartime years, his contemporaries often pointed out that his decision to avoid combat and instead serve in the army hospitals was consistent with a fundamentally Quaker identity. His correspondence, furthermore, reveals that those who knew him best addressed him in precisely that way.



James Redpath

It is during the Civil War that we first begin to see his personal and editorial correspondents address him as “Friend Walt” or “Friend Whitman,” just as we see John Greenleaf Whittier, an Orthodox Quaker in impeccable standing (and, like Whitman, a lifelong bachelor), being addressed as “Friend Whittier.” I hasten to add, however, that most of Whitman's correspondence prior to the war was deliberately burned, so it's impossible to know when his pen-pals first began to regard him as — to use his own term — “a good deal of a Quaker.”

Currently, the earliest usage of this honorific known to me is by a journalist for the *Brooklyn Standard* in 1863, (30) and the latest occurs in 1877, by his friend and lover John Townsend Trowbridge. (31) In between we encounter letters from four soldiers in the army hospitals (1863-6), (32) a letter from abolitionist James Redpath (1863), (33) a letter from the editor of the *New York Citizen* (1867), (34) and two published poems by Robert Buchanan which transatlantically glorify “Friend Whitman” (1872). (35) In other words, during his years as an Army nurse, he was recognized by journalists, patients, and reformers as the moral equivalent of Friend Whittier. After the war, while living across the river from the City of Brotherly Love, he was considered a Quaker by a British poet and an intimate disciple.

JG Whittier

By the war's end, “Friend Whitman” was long overdue for a proper makeover, but it would have seemed like a virtual trademark violation to refer to himself as The Quaker Poet, since that brand

was effectively pre-empted by Whittier. The same ingenuity that Whitman employed in his poems to simultaneously affirm and deny same-sex acts, and to simultaneously affirm and deny Quakerism, would have to be applied to forge a catchy but highly-ambiguous nickname. William Douglas O'Connor — or perhaps Whitman himself — succeeded, when he formulated “The Good Gray Poet.” Any reasonably alert American could immediately decode this: “good” and “gray” were universally recognized cliches for Quakerism. Quakers were commonly called “good” because of their tolerance, kindness, and commitment to human rights and human dignity. The “goodest” of them all, of course, was Whitman's acquaintance, Lucretia Mott. The “gray” referred to the drabness and plainness of Quaker attire, such a commonplace that “Quaker gray” had already come to serve as a literal color specification in period architecture, painting, and clothing. Best of all was the sheer coincidence that Whitman's hair had turned prematurely gray. (36)



Lucretia Mott

This is another instance of the way Whitman had his rhetorical cake and ate it, too: if someone wanted to exploit the term “Good Gray Poet” to harm Friends, everyone concerned could have pointed out that the name meant nothing more than hair color. On the other hand, in Whitman's final years, writers would come to exert more and more of a blatant emphasis on his Quaker manner of dress. It is particularly touching and amusing to witness him oscillating awkwardly between cocking his hat and doffing his hat in his own home during an interview with Hamlin Garland. (37)

Throughout his later years, Whitman continued to flaunt his Quaker affiliations, but at the same time, he constantly undercut and trivialized them, too. For example, he usually referred to

himself as “half Quaker” or merely affirmed that he came from “Quaker stock.”

Elmina Slenker

WWQP furnished an extensive directory of the more or less prominent Quakers who in one way or another lent their support to Whitman or *Leaves of Grass*. (38) A recent look at the radical sex educator Elmina Slenker finds her literally selling copies of *Leaves of Grass*: “I — Elmina, the Quaker Infidel — Ask You to Take into Your Homes a Volume.” (39) Any Quaker or Whitman scholar over the past century could have found documentation for Quaker acceptance for Whitman by perusing *Friends Intelligencer* to see how Whitman was generally received among the Children of Light. So far, in addition to the appearance of various Whitman poems, the following examples have surfaced:

- A reprint of “The Quaker Traits of Walt Whitman,” from *The Conservator*. (40)
- “An extract from a book just published that will be of especial interest to Friends, the ‘Life of Walt Whitman,’ by Henry Bryan Binns, the young English Friend . . .” (41)
- An approving mention of Whitman’s spirituality in a decidedly realistic essay on immortality, showing how “the words we speak are spiritual life . . . Their influences are indestructable. They will survive us.” (42)
- The anecdote about Whitman’s chat about death with a child at a funeral: “‘You don’t know what it is, do you, my dear?’ said he, adding, ‘We do not either.’” (43)
- A mention of Whitman’s essay, “Father Taylor and Oratory,” along with the rumor that Whitman would publish an essay about Elias Hicks. (44)
- Alfred Cope Garrett addressed Friends at the Alumni Association of Haverford one year after Whitman’s death (the day before Whitman’s birthday), claiming that he found “the right spirit of peace, of the gospel of comradeship” arising from the underclass where he situated Whitman, and for proof he recited Whitman’s

“new City of Friends” poem. (45)

It stands to reason that if Friends' morality condemned Whitman's sexuality, such pieces could never have been included in the Hicksite journal of record, nor would he have been honored by elites at Haverford. But precisely how Friends' amnesia erased their own history of solidarity with Whitman will be harder to understand.

The paradox of the 19th century's most vocal exponent of sexual self-determination in intimate association with such a notoriously rigid, ascetic, and moralistic reputation as that of Quakers' finds its solution in the proposition that it was more of a Quaker paradox than a Whitman paradox.

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Walt Whitman and Peter Doyle

06. ALL IS TRUTH

A century ago, we all should have paid much closer attention to one of the most neglected poems in all of Whitman's writings: “*Leaves of Grass 18*” [1860], renamed “*All Is Truth*” [1871] (46). It is exceedingly curious that during this time, Whitman's faith in the sacredness of lies, if you will, was specifically corralled under a cluster-title that explicitly referenced *Leaves of Grass* itself. Presumably scholars have perennially passed over this work because no one ever wanted to bother with its abstruse Transcendentalism, and neither do I. To me, the enormous significance of the poem lies in the possibility that it represented a

warning that as Whitman was “meditating among liars, and retreating sternly” into himself, he decided that “there are really no liars or lies after all . . . but that all is truth without exception.” (47)

This reverence for the holiness of liars puts the greater burden of paradox on Whitman's many beloved Quaker friends. How did their religion manage to maintain a general reputation for rigid heterosexual family values while “revolutionizing” “the minds trained in its atmosphere?” As suggested in WWQP, the “fence” may have been less useful in protecting Friends from the temptations of a hypocritical culture known for a high rate of adultery and prostitution than from attacks by a homophobic bourgeoisie. The “dangerous communications” with “the world's people” which the *Book of Discipline* warned of may have been precisely the kind of “attacks” that “Calamus” referred to. (48)

To repeat, prior to *Leaves of Grass*, the only attacks on the “licentious” legacy of Hicks in print had been confined to Quaker newspapers, and these ceased after 1831 — probably because they were considered at risk of generating dangerous public notoriety. WWQP pointed out how the *Book of Discipline* stressed the importance of not allowing scandal within “the fence” of Yearly Meeting's oversight to escape into the notice of “the world's people.” Further study reveals that in 1719, Quaker overseers had formulated a more strenuous protocol to manage such a breach of security: the offending parties were required to “acknowledge the offense, and condemn the same in writing,” and then publish the confession in a venue broad enough to make the confession “as public as the offence hath been.” (49) After 1831, scandal-averse Friends invariably debated the Hicksite Schism solely on two other points: Christian theology and Meeting polity.

 Rufus Griswold

Since Whitman periodically received hate mail, which apparently included death threats, it follows that he, too, was obligated to avoid a reckless degree of candor about Hicksite morality. This

should hardly come as a surprise, because even his fiercest critics avoided the same thing. WWQP showed that Rufus Griswold's infamous "not to be named among Christians" book review following the debut of *Leaves of Grass* blamed the "inner light" theology of "progressionists" — a thinly-veiled reference to the Friends of Human Progress. (50)

Griswold may have taken care to focus his wrath on these ex-Quaker ultras, eschewing explicit mention of either the Orthodox or Hicksites. A review of the third-edition *Leaves*, which has only recently become available, also attacked Whitman's theology, although, again, the anonymous reviewer took pains to divorce enlightenment-enlightenment immorality from any explicit mention of Quakers: (51)

Nothing is more notorious than the fact that when any individual claims to have some light superior to that revealed in the Bible, whether that light be the "light of nature," simply, or the light of new and direct revelation or inspiration, then that individual almost invariably develops himself towards libertinism. Perhaps this fact is more notorious when we find men in masses, as in the various sects that spring up from time to time. [examples follow . . .]

As you can see, instead of directly addressing crimes against nature, this reviewer used the generic term "libertinism." Instead of Quakers, the three examples are: a messianic crank in Massachusetts named William Dorrel [1752-1846], Mormons, and spiritualists. (52)

One senses the possibility of Hicksite pushback to that edition of the *Leaves* which exposed Friends to the most danger: the third (1860). In the third edition of that poem which would ultimately be entitled "Song of Myself," Whitman's soul is still able to incarnate in a long list of personas, including — critically — "sailor, lover or quaker." By the time of the fourth (1867), the embarrassing "lover" has been suppressed. Likewise, in the third edition, Whitman is still flaunting his Quaker lack of hat-honor with the 1855 phrase, "I cock my hat as I please," while in the fourth, it reads "I wear my hat as I please." (53)

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Whitman's funeral, 1892

07. QUAKER AMNESIA

As the Gilded Age wore on, Walt Whitman faced increasing pressure to issue denials of the implicit, ambiguous sex in *Leaves of Grass* that so enraged Griswold. Whitman first began to gingerly divorce his “Calamus” poems from an endorsement of same-sex acts in 1883, when he ghost-wrote Richard Maurice Bucke's *Walt Whitman: (54)*

 Richard Maurice Bucke

“Calamus” presents to us . . . an exalted friendship, a love into which sex does not enter as an element . . . “disgusting” to fops and artificial scholars and prim gentlemen of the clubs — but sane, heroic, full-blooded, natural men will find in it the deepest God-implanted voices of their hearts.

Proof of Whitman's all-important reliance upon simultaneously affirming and denying a gay reading of his poetry is the fact that the early gay-rights advocate John Addington Symonds wrote to Whitman repeatedly, asking for confirmation that he blessed same-sex acts. After agonizing over the matter for years, Whitman finally answered with a vehement denial of a sexual implication for “Calamus” and a whopper of a sailor's yarn about fathering six children. Edward Carpenter, another English gay-rights activist who, according to legend, made love to Walt, believed this “most candid, but also the most cautious of men” had lied for strategic



reasons. (55)

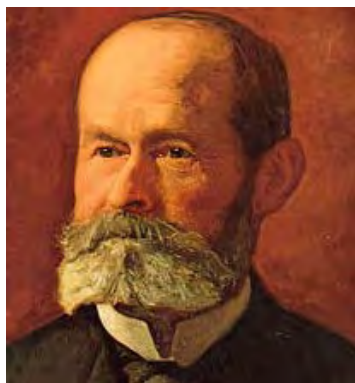
Personally, having known Whitman fairly intimately, I do not lay great stress on that letter. Whitman was in his real disposition the most candid, but also the most cautious of men. An attempt was made on this occasion to drive him into some sort of confession of his real nature; and it may be that that very effort aroused all his resistance and caused him to hedge more than ever.

🔍 Horace Traubel

Shively has presented easily the most compelling reasons for Whitman to keep the vindictive, unstable, closeted Symonds in the dark. (56) Indeed, Quaker scholar Michael Robertson quotes Symonds as telling Carpenter, “Did not quite trust me perhaps.” (57) In any event, in his treatment of the unmistakable love affair between the dean of whitmanauts, Horace Traubel, and the president of the Walt Whitman Association, GP Wiksell, Robertson has amply shown that contemptuous homophobia was — somehow — perfectly consistent with erotic, mystical “Calamus” love — especially when that affair was conducted while married, with children. (58)

“[H]ow different, the atmosphere on all these matters was then (especially in the U.S.A.) . . . [whereas] . . . you can nowadays talk as freely as you like, and where sex-variations and even abnormalities are almost a stock subject of conversation,” explained Edward Carpenter in the 1920s. (59) And yet, the familiar Victorian horror of orgasm-as-suicide lingered into the 20th century, when it was still deemed, by some, capable of exhausting the body, causing every disease, and leading to apocalyptic degeneracy of the entire human race. (60)

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Daniel Brinton, eminent Quaker Whitmanaut

08. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, there may be several interrelated reasons that Friends forgot "Friend Whitman:" Harsh official retaliation against sexual deviance steadily increased since *Leaves of Grass* was banned in Boston in 1880, reaching a fever pitch with the Newport Sex Scandal of 1919. (61) The 20th century became an age of "science," including "sexual science," and of the certified specialist, and the opinions of poets were no longer given any credibility. Transcendental romanticism generally appeared laughable against the grim catastrophes of the early 20th century, and the new schools of literature in particular dismissed it. The "fight of a book for the world" had been ceded to the jurisdiction of the Walt Whitman Fellowship and other dedicated partisans. Quaker culture's ability to influence American social values — or perhaps, rather, its need to influence — receded following Alice Paul's suffrage triumph in 1920. Liberal notions championed by Hicksites, previously classified by Victorians as *ultra*, as "Freethought," were now mainstream, and the protective "fence" around Quakerism had been dismantled by 1900.

As if all these pressing reasons were not reason enough, the central fact is that Whitman, like Traubel and Kennedy, had officially damned a gay reading of *Leaves of Grass*. This act buried Whitman's contribution to gay liberation under something of a cloud for decades. One can hardly blame Friends for their failure to enter into Carpenter's public debate on "sex-variations," citing Friend Walt as a spiritual authority. Given the retrospective

embarrassment over Sailortown's extreme debauchery in the era before the rise of speedy steamships, no one had the inclination to observe that the powerful *sailorloverquaker* society which birthed, nourished, and finally buried Walt Whitman had utterly vanished, leaving behind only Whitman's elderly disciples — the last of whom were dying out in the 1930s, in the unremitting gloom of the Great Depression.

(1) (Close this immediately after reading — click on the orange number again) 01 Mitchell Santine Gould. "Walt Whitman's Quaker Paradox." *Quaker History*, 96 (2007), 1-23. Referred to as "WWQP."

(2) (Close this immediately after reading — click on the orange number again) 02 Many would have agreed with Emerson and Thoreau that Whitman's religious message was seriously contaminated by inclusions of vulgarity. This view is underappreciated by modern critics, who implicitly take Whitman's side in the debate.

(3) (Close this immediately after reading — click on the orange number again) 03 WWQP.

(4) (Close this immediately after reading — click on the orange number again) 04 Moncure D. Conway, "Walt Whitman: My Little Wreath of Thoughts and Memories." *The Open Court: A Weekly Journal Devoted to the Work of Conciliating Religion with Science*, 6 (1892), 3199-3200.

(5) (Close this immediately after reading — click on the orange number again) 05 In all honesty, the reliability of Conway's revelation is tainted by faulty assessments elsewhere in the eulogy.

(6) (Close this immediately after reading — click on the orange number again) 06 Horace Traubel. Monday, May 28, 1888, *With Walt Whitman in Camden* 1, 223.

<http://whitmanarchive.org/criticism/disciples/traubel/WWWiC/1/med.00001.61.html>

(7) (Close this immediately after reading — click on the orange number again) 07 "Calamus 34," *Leaves of Grass*, third edition (1860).

<http://whitmanarchive.org/published/LG/1860/clusters/110>

(8) (Close this immediately after reading — click on the orange number again) 08 WWQP.

(9) (Close this immediately after reading — click on the orange number again) 09 ["From *Bates' Miscellaneous Repository*"] "Summary of Elias Hicks's Doctrines," *The Friend*, January 1831, 245.

(10) (Close this immediately after reading — click on the orange number again)

10

*I hear it is charged against me that I seek to destroy institutions;
But really I am neither for nor against institutions,
(What indeed have I in common with them? -- Or what with the
destruction of them?)*

*Only I will establish in the Manahatta, and in every city of These
States, inland and seaboard,
And in the fields and woods, and above every keel little or large,
that dents the water, Without edifices, or rules, or trustees, or any
argument,
The institution of the dear love of comrades.*

"Calamus 24," *Leaves of Grass*, third edition (1860).

<http://whitmanarchive.org/published/LG/1860/clusters/100>

(11) (Close this immediately after reading — click on the orange number again) 11 Milton Hindus. *Walt Whitman: The Critical Heritage*, (London: Routledge, 1971), 65.

(12) (Close this immediately after reading — click on the orange number again) 12 Moncure Daniel Conway. *Autobiography, Memories and Experiences of Moncure Daniel Conway*, vol 1 (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin and company, 1904). Frederick C Dahlstrand. *Amos Bronson Alcott, an Intellectual Biography*. Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1982. Jonathan Ned Katz, *Gay American History*, second edition, (New York: Meridian, 1992). Charles Daniel Gelatt. "The Quaker Influence on Emerson." MA Thesis, U Wisconsin, 1939. <http://leavesofgrass.org/gelatt1.htm>

(13) (Close this immediately after reading — click on the orange number again) 13

"Transcendentalism." *The Dial: A Magazine for Literature, Philosophy, and Religion*, 2 (1842), 383-384.

(14) (Close this immediately after reading — click on the orange number again) 14 "Calamus 24," *Leaves of Grass*, second edition (1856).

<http://whitmanarchive.org/published/LG/1856/poems/12>

(15) (Close this immediately after reading — click on the orange number again) 15 Ralph Waldo Emerson. (1803–1882). "Self-Reliance." *Essays and English Traits*. The Harvard Classics (1909 –14).

<http://www.bartleby.com/5/104.html>

(16) (Close this immediately after reading — click on the orange number again) 16 John Burroughs.

"Whitman's Self-Reliance." *The Conservator*, vol 5, no 2.
(Philadelphia:Horace Traubel, 1894). 131-134.

(17) (Close this immediately after reading — click on the orange number again) 17 Katz, cited above, documents same-sex episodes for Emerson, Thoreau, Fuller, Whitman, Carpenter, and Symonds.

(18) (Close this immediately after reading — click on the orange number again) 18 [Walt Whitman] "Walt Whitman and His Poems." *The United States Review* 5 (September 1855): 205-12.

(19) (Close this immediately after reading — click on the orange number again) 19 Gelatt.

(20) (Close this immediately after reading — click on the orange number again) 20 Hamlin Garland. *Roadside Meetings of a Literary Nomad*. (New York: Macmillan, 1930), Chapter 11.

(21) (Close this immediately after reading — click on the orange number again) 21 Horace Traubel. Monday, April 23, 1888, *With Walt Whitman in Camden* 1, 61.

(22) (Close this immediately after reading — click on the orange number again) 22 Joann P Krieg, A *Whitman Chronology*.(Iowa City: U Iowa, 1998), 37.

(23) (Close this immediately after reading — click on the orange number again) 23 "For thirty years [since 1858] I have had it in my plans to write a book about Hicks." Walt Whitman. "Notes Such As They Are, Founded on Elias Hicks," *November Boughs*, 1888.

(24) (Close this immediately after reading — click on the orange number again) 24 Walt Whitman. "Old Times in Brooklyn. Our City Just 33 Years Since." *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*. July 3, 1858.

(25) (Close this immediately after reading — click on the orange number again) 25 WWQP.

(26) (Close this immediately after reading — click on the orange number again) 26 Walt Whitman.

"Reminiscence of Elias Hicks," (in *Specimen Days*). *Prose Works*. (Philadelphia: David McKay, 1892). <http://www.bartleby.com/229/>

I've not yet identified Mrs E.S.L., but I have found one period Quaker in Detroit named A. B. Lyons, MD. "The Enemies of Our Profession." *Detroit Lancet*, 3 (1879), Detroit: E.B. Smith & Company, 241-5.

(27) (Close this immediately after reading — click on the orange number again) 27 William Roscoe Thayer (not to be confused with *Leaves of Grass* publisher William W Thayer), "Personal Recollections of Walt Whitman," *Scribners* 65 (1919), 674-6.

(28) (Close this immediately after reading — click on the orange number again) 28 WWQP.

(29) (Close this immediately after reading — click on the orange number again) 29 Hindus, 66.

(30) (Close this immediately after reading — click on the orange number again) 30 Garland.

(31) (Close this immediately after reading — click on the orange number again) 31 Walt Whitman.

Uncollected Poetry and Prose, vol 2. Emory Holloway, ed.
(Gloucester: Peter Smith, 1972), 24.

(32) (Close this immediately after reading — click on the orange number again) 32 WWWC vol 2, 224.

(33) (Close this immediately after reading — click on the orange number again) 33 Charley Shively.

Calamus Lovers: Walt Whitman's Working Class Camerados. (San Francisco: Gay Sunshine Press, 1987).

(34) (Close this immediately after reading — click on the orange number again) 34 Letter from James Redpath to Walt Whitman, 28 October 1863.

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(35) (Close this immediately after reading — click on the orange number again) 35 WWWC 1, 259.

(36) (Close this immediately after reading — click on the orange number again) 36 Robert Buchanan.

"Faces on the Wall," (a sequence of 12 sonnets). *Saint Pauls Magazine*, May 1872. A revised version was included in *The Poetical Works* (London: H. S. King & Co., Boston: James R. Osgood and Co., 1874).

(37) (Close this immediately after reading — click on the orange number again) 37 WS Kennedy thought Whitman's premature gray was a Dutch trait. William Sloane Kennedy. *Reminiscences of Walt Whitman with Extracts from His Letters and Remarks on His Writings*. (London: Alexander Gardner, 1896), 87.

(38) (Close this immediately after reading — click on the orange number again) 38 WWQP.

(39) (Close this immediately after reading — click on the orange number again) 39 Elmina Slenker.

"Suggestions and Advice to Mothers." *The Iconoclast* (November 11, 1882).

(40) (Close this immediately after reading — click on the orange number again) 40 W.S. Kennedy.

"The Quaker Traits of Walt Whitman." *Friends Intelligencer* 47 (1890), 672.

(41) (Close this immediately after reading — click on the orange number again) 41 "Walt Whitman,

Elias Hicks, and The Friendly Principle." *Friends Intelligencer* 63 (1906), 83.

(42) (Close this immediately after reading — click on the orange number again) 42 Henry M. Haviland.

"Enduring Influences," *Friends Intelligencer*, 65 (1908), 195-6.

(43) (Close this immediately after reading — click on the orange number again) 43 The submission

was printed with editorial reservations about a forged poem attached to the story, attributed to Whitman. "The Two Mysteries." *Friends Intelligencer* 48 (1891), 798.

(44) (Close this immediately after reading — click on the orange number again) 44 "Walt Whitman and Elias Hicks." *Friends Intelligencer* 44 (1887), 221.

(45) (Close this immediately after reading — click on the orange number again) 45 Alfred Cope Garrett, "Signs of the Times in Literature: an Address Delivered May 30, 1893, Before the Alumni Association of Haverford College." [Privately published.]

(46) (Close this immediately after reading — click on the orange number again) 46 The title "All Is Truth" could have been derived from Shakespeare's alternate title for *Henry VIII: All Is True*.

(47) (Close this immediately after reading — click on the orange number again) 47 The fog of confusion that blindsided Whitman scholarship throughout the 20th century was largely caused by Whitman's essential policy of issuing denials to questions he found obnoxious (or sometimes alternating these denials with affirmations). Had Whitman read Emerson before *Leaves of Grass*? Had he read "oriental" books? Had the "Children of Adam" cluster originally marked a calculated alliance with leaders of the Free Love movement, such as Henry Clapp, in defiance of Emerson's advice? Had he ever really been in love with any woman? Did he have any children? Was he gay, and was "Calamus" gay poetry? Was he a Quaker? Were his disciples William Douglas O'Connor and Bram Stoker felled by syphilis? Was the poetic form of *Leaves of Grass* totally unprecedented, or did it in fact represent a dazzling success in perfecting the innovative conventions previously established by Martin Farquhar Tupper? Was his early fiction mere sentimental claptrap, or did it contain potent premonitions of his future themes? Was he merely a "solitary singer," or had his poems been more like collaborations with thinkers such as Ralph Waldo Emerson and Henry Clapp?

Such questions have flummoxed scholars since Whitman's last decade in Camden, but I believe some of them have fairly straightforward answers — and furthermore, these are usually the opposite of the main impression manufactured by the reformer-poet's spin machine. In other words, many apparent Whitman

paradoxes disappear when we candidly admit that Whitman frequently felt it necessary to lie — an admission the field has traditionally been far too reluctant to baldly state.

(48) (Close this immediately after reading — click on the orange number again) 48 WWQP.

(49) (Close this immediately after reading — click on the orange number again) 49 “Yearly Advices.” *Friends Intelligencer* 46 (1889), 501.

(50) (Close this immediately after reading — click on the orange number again) 50 This was a feminist-friendly, spiritualist-friendly reformist offshoot of Hicksite Quakerism, recognized today as an important venue for Susan B. Anthony's women's-rights advocacy. Ann Braude. *Radical Spirits: Spiritualism and Women's Rights in Nineteenth-Century America* (Boston: Beacon, 1989).

(51) (Close this immediately after reading — click on the orange number again) 51 “‘Leaves of Grass’ —Smut in Them.” *Springfield Daily Republican* (June 16, 1860), 4.

(52) (Close this immediately after reading — click on the orange number again) 52 The claim that spiritualists were partisans of Inner Light is consistent with what we know today about that movement, but I have no way to verify whether the other two religious phenomena were indeed related to Quaker theology.

(53) (Close this immediately after reading — click on the orange number again) 53 To make it plain why Whitman made this change for the insipid, consider the following remark from a British review of the third edition: “. . . it is startling to find such a poet acquiring popularity in the country where piano-legs wear frilled trousers, where slices are cut from turkeys' bosoms, and where the male of the gallinaceous tribe is called a 'rooster.'” [Anonymous]. “Leaves Of Grass.” *The Saturday Review* 10 (7 July 1860): 19-21.

(54) (Close this immediately after reading — click on the orange number again) 54 Richard Maurice Bucke, *Walt Whitman*. (Glasgow: Wilson & McCormick, 1884), 166-7. (The copyright page shows an etching of a sunflower, *alá* Oscar Wilde.)

Note, however, that the disavowal of sex was somewhat contradicted by more positive verbiage. The “God-implanted voice in the heart” is a trope which can be traced in Whitman's writing all the way back to the year 1842, in an essay for the *Aurora*:

And part of the life of the soul is love . . . Things of surpassing fairness are there . . . benevolence — innocent and holy friendship . . . [and] like rays of sunshine, lurk a hundred promptings and capabilities for delight. They are planted by God — and he who would stifle them is a bigot and a fool . . . Ever faithful, too, there is the monitor conscience . . . [and] the pure fountain of affection, the sweetest and most cheering of the heart's affections.

Here the lusty young author is reassuring his readers that all hidden promptings for love were planted by God, *ala* Elias Hicks (WWQP), and are subject to “monitor conscience” — like Emerson's Self-reliance, the secularized equivalent of the Inward Light of Christ. Any Christian who would shame and disparage these impulses can only be “a bigot,” because a bigot disrespects the religious freedom of others. The same critic can only be “a fool” to boot, because what God hath planted, Whitman is effectively saying, let no man attempteth to uproot — or else

unless they are fostered, they will lie entombed forever in the darkness and their possessors may die and be buried, and never think of them but as baubles . . .

Since surely Whitman is not afraid that heterosexuals are going to forget to get married, it follows that he is worried about peculiar youthful love impulses that adults dismiss as counterproductive, mere “baubles.” Before the piece reaches this conclusion, it cites what Whitman viewed as Hicks-like lines from Coleridge's poem “Love” which stress that “all passions”

*Are but the ministers of love,
And feed his sacred flame.*

Walt Whitman. “Life and Love.” *Walt Whitman of the New York Aurora*. Joseph Jay Rubin, Charles Brown, eds. (State College, PA: Bald Eagle Press, 1972), 129-130.

(55) (Close this immediately after reading — click on the orange number again) 55 Edward Carpenter.

Some Friends of Walt Whitman: A Study In Sex Psychology. British Society for the Study of Sex Psychology, 1924.

<http://www.edwardcarpenterforum.org/web-books/some-friends-of-walt-whitman.html>

(56) (Close this immediately after reading — click on the orange number again) 56 Shively, 25-9.

(57) (Close this immediately after reading — click on the orange number again) 57 Michael Robertson. *Worshipping Walt* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 2008), 165.

(58) (Close this immediately after reading — click on the orange number again) 58 Robertson, 268-272.

(59) (Close this immediately after reading — click on the orange number again) 59 Carpenter.

(60) (Close this immediately after reading — click on the orange number again) 60 Walter Hunt. *Are We a Declining Race? An Old Sailor's Verdict*. (London: Frances Riddel Henderson, 1904.)

(61) (Close this immediately after reading — click on the orange number again) 61 Lawrence R. Murphy. *Perverts by Official Order: the Campaign Against Homosexuals by the United States Navy* (New York: Harrington Park Press, 1988).

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Citation Information: Mitchell Santine Gould, "Forgetting Friend Walt: Whitman and Hicksite Amnesia." (Portland, OR: LeavesOfGrass.Org, May 2013). <http://LeavesOfGrass.Org>. © 2013 - Mitchell Santine Gould