

Mitchell Santine Gould. "Walt Whitman's Quaker Paradox."  
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## *Walt Whitman's Quaker paradox*

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### **Introduction**

The life and works of Walt Whitman [1819-1892], the author of *Leaves of Grass*, pose many challenges for the serious student of American history. One of the most intractable problems has proven to be his lifelong, conspicuous affiliation with Quakers —with their theology, values, heritage, and their many social reforms, as well as with their distinctive dress and speech.[1] At various times in his life, Whitman also maintained close friendships with many individual Quakers. On the other hand, as a young man, he decided *not* to become a member of a Quaker meeting (almost certainly Flushing Meeting, when he taught school at nearby Whitestone, New York, during his early twenties). Over the years, while studying this longstanding problem in Whitman scholarship, I have called this puzzle “Walt Whitman's Quaker paradox.” [2]

In 1888, Whitman, at the end of his life, began to talk to biographer Horace Traubel about those days, in the context of his Elias Hicks essay, “Notes (Such as They Are) Founded on Elias Hicks.” He was still hesitating on including it in his book *November Boughs*.

I knew the habitats of Hicks so well-my grand-parents knew him personally so well-the shore up there, Jericho, the whole tone of the life of the time and place-all so familiar to me[.] I have got to look upon myself as sort of chosen to do a job as the Hicksite historian. I have seemed, to myself at least, to be particularly equipped for doing just this thing and doing it as it should be done-have felt that no one else living is exactly so well appointed for it.  
... Now it threatens to go up in smoke! ... just that sort of [Quaker Meeting

for Business] debate is going on in my mind now, whether to send it to the printer or throw it into the stove—a debate not to be put into figures or votes, but real, with a decision pending which I must abide by at last. Tell the printer to give me till Monday—this is Thursday: till then it will be a life or death struggle. For thirty years [since 1858] I have had it in my plans to write a book about Hicks.... Now here I am at last, after all the procrastinations, stranded, with nothing but a few runaway thoughts on the subject to show for my good resolutions. Well—if I can't do all I started off to do I may be able to do some little towards it—give at least some hint, glimpse, odor, of the larger scheme....

Then he turned to the subject of Quaker membership:

Did you know (but I guess you did not) that when I was a young fellow up on the Long Island shore I seriously debated whether I was not by spiritual bent a Quaker?—whether if not one I should become one? But the question went its way again: I put it aside as impossible[;] I was never made to live inside a fence.

When Whitman claimed he was never made to live inside a fence, he was referring to the Quaker “hedge.” This was described in a typical twentieth-century Book of Discipline as a singular sort of social barrier:

It is in some respects like a hedge about us, which, though it does not make the ground it encloses rich and fruitful, yet it frequently prevents the intrusions by which the labor of the husbandman is injured or destroyed [3]

This social barrier—a kind of cultural “force-field,” if you will—was deeply-rooted. In 1768, John Roper of Norwich (England), described it in *An Epistle to Parents*:

Although to the eye of natural wisdom the cock of the hat, the cut of a coat, the form of a cap ... may appear insignificant ... yet the spiritual eye can see they are all mercifully designed by infinite Wisdom to build a separation, to form, though by such despicable briars and thorns, a hedge that pricks on both sides to prevent an improper, unsafe communication, association and intermarrying with those among whom we dwell. [4]

Whitman was an outsider, then. Indeed, we don't know how many Meetings for Worship he attended; the only service that his readers can actually witness him

attending is the farewell sermon of Elias Hicks in 1829, delivered in the Brooklyn of his childhood. [5]

The most perplexing aspect of this aggressive flirtation with Quakerism is the essential difficulty in reconciling Whitman's role as the nineteenth century's pre-eminent voice of sexual freedom with the strictness-sometimes amounting to oppressiveness-of Quaker polity. To make this clear, here is a striking example of the Poet-Elder divide: In his 1860 poem, "City of Orgies," Whitman extolled a "City of orgies, walks and joys... [where I]overs, continual lovers, only repay me." His credo, in "Song of Myself," is in part described by the phrase "I believe in the flesh and the appetites." [6] Actually, any number of erotic passages from the *Leaves*, far more breathtaking in their boldness, could be cited. [7]

By contrast, the 1806 *Book of Discipline* for Philadelphia Yearly Meeting proscribed that Quaker elders would "deal with" men and women "unlawfully or unseemly keeping company with each other, or any other scandalous practice; and where any are guilty of gross or notorious crimes, or such other disorderly or indecent practices as shall occasion public scandal." [8] And, of course, disownments due to "marrying out" (marriages between a member and a believer in some other faith) are such a staple of Quaker history that they require no further mention.

Because Victorians were generally (though not always!) far more reticent about sex than modern Americans, we may never be able to gather enough facts to clearly see all the subtle interworkings of Whitman's culture. The era's articles, books, diaries, and records have endured a century or more of assault by generations of silent censors. [9] At the heart of the Quaker paradox, however, we will argue that Whitman's unique openness about sex and sexuality is not only consistent with, but indeed derived from, the moral implications of Hicksite principles.

This approach to Whitman's Quaker affinities involves four ideas:

1. Like Whitman, many radical reformers were culturally recognized as “Quaker” without being members. This trend reflects a general diffusion and secularization of Quaker testimonies into society.
2. Like Whitman, Quakers could sometimes be sexual liberals.
3. Like Whitman, Quakers based their liberality upon “liberty of conscience.”
4. Like Whitman, the Hicksite schism itself defended the sanctity of human “passions or propensities.”

Let us now proceed to address each one of these principles. In doing so, we shall eventually trace Quaker testimony on human sexuality farther into the past, from Whitman's dying pronouncements to the sermons of Elias Hicks.

### **1. The diffusion of “Quaker” values**

Over the years, we have expanded this inquiry into Whitman's Quaker affinities to accommodate all those who, like Whitman, chose not to submit themselves to the tyranny (for such it often was) of elders in Oversight, but who were nevertheless self-identified as Quakers and who were identified as such by their contemporaries, for reasons not always yet clear to us.

Historically, reformers' efforts on behalf of justice and equality too often conflicted with the elders' admonition to avoid “the world's people.” In order to enjoy the manifold benefits of membership in one of the nation's wealthiest and most admired societies, nineteenth-century reformers had to choose between keeping their activities “inside the fence” or collaborating with like-minded citizens, at the risk of disownment. This pattern is usually noted in the long history of abolition, which was characterized by more than a century of Quaker leadership before the occasions for Quaker/worldling

collaboration became too frequent and too compelling—and resulted in enormous tensions within meetings.

Walt Whitman's publication of *Leaves of Grass* was in and of itself the act of a radical reformer, for it stood as a strong, naked affront to the general unspeakability of sex. His effort to redeem the fact of sex should be understood as congruent with other prevailing Quaker advocacies, such as female suffrage and abolition. Throughout the nineteenth century, these values of equality and essential dignity were championed not only by actual members of Meeting such as Elias Hicks, Lucretia Mott, and Susan B. Anthony, but also by reformer allies who were culturally identified as “Quaker.”

The great humanitarian Isaac T. Hopper is considered an appropriate subject for Quaker history because he attended First Day services until he died in 1852. He was, however, formally read out of meeting in 1841. [10] Was he a Quaker—yes or no? Neither “yes” nor “no” is nuanced enough to describe his life story. It's closer to the truth to say that it was his allegiance to Quaker values which caused him to be disowned. Likewise, firebrand suffragist Abby Kelly Foster is an example of those who deliberately relinquished membership in order to carry out Quaker testimonies on racial and gender equity to their logical conclusion. [11] These carried her far beyond the restrictions imposed by elders (notably, the restriction that Quaker reformers must not collaborate with reformers of other faiths). Whitman's Quakerism must be understood in the same light—a case of taking Quaker values to their logical (radical) conclusion, or, as Whitman himself put it, “We must go outside the lines before we can know the best things that are within.”

Beyond the examples of Hopper, Foster, and Whitman himself, what would such a “diffusion into American culture” or “secularization of Quaker values” look like? First of all, one would expect to encounter many individuals who befriended Whitman who were in fact Quakers—or, if they were unable or unwilling to submit to the strict polity,

persons who nonetheless deliberately portrayed themselves as products of Quaker culture.

In America, the list of people described by this “friend-of-Whitman” = “Quakerish” rule includes include author Henry Clapp (about whom more later); the successful travel writer and failed poet, Bayard Taylor; [12] the flamboyant poet Joaquin Miller; [13] the amateur historian of Nantucket, Henry David Thoreau's warm friend, Daniel Ricketson; [14] writer Logan Pearsall Smith and his siblings; [15] anthropologist Daniel Garrison Brinton, M.D.; [16] abolitionist William Ingram; [17] Richard M. Cooper, M.D.; [18] William Reeder, M.D.; [19] Nantucket-born anarchist Benjamin Tucker; [20] suffragist Lucretia Mott; [21] Bryn Mawr president M. Carey Thomas; [22] and Haverford professor Pliny Earle Chase. [23] In England, this group includes author William Howitt [24] and the painter of nude young men, Henry Scott Tuke. [25] In addition to people known vaguely as friends or champions of Whitman, the era also boasted some influential Free-Thought/anarchist sex radicals who advertised their youthful involvement with Quakerism, such as Mary Gove Nichols [26] and Elmina Slenker. [27] By implication, their readers were supposed to understand that these radical outsiders had been culturally shaped by a Quaker tradition. More specifically, I argue, their contemporaries were supposed to understand that Quaker culture provided an inspiration for their advocacy of the right to sexual self-determination.

We have neither the space nor the inclination to thresh out here which of these were members of Meeting, which were disowned, which left the faith, and so on. Indeed, we cannot stress enough the cultural and biographical complexities that are normally glossed over in historians' references to “Friends” versus “non-Friends”—especially since membership status often changed during a lifetime. Rather, we view such cultural references to Quakerism in the context of a public stance on human progress as an indication of a general diffusion of pioneering spiritual testimonies into America's secular understanding of civil liberties—and, in fact, the codification of Friends' testimonies on dignity and equality in our way of life.

In many cases, the historical record prior to *Leaves of Grass* furnishes only tantalizing traces. For instance, in 1846, the famous painter-preacher Edward Hicks, a co-traveler with Elias Hicks and Isaac T. Hopper, painted an obscure work, *Jonathan and David at the Stone Ezel*, whose early provenance is unknown. This crude image depicts the two friends in a fond greeting—men united, according to *The Book of Samuel*, in “a love that surpasses the love of women.” [28] Hicks does not portray them as fierce, muscular, swarthy Hebrew warriors, but rather as pale, slightly rouged, smooth-featured, long-tressed chums in billowing tunics. [29] Probably about the time the oils were still drying on this canvas, Isaac T. Hopper's domestic boarder, Lydia Maria Child, penned a queer but sentimental story about a love triangle between two Quaker brothers—Jonathan and David—living in a household with only one wife. [30] Gay historians today commonly view references to “Jonathan and David” as possible coded signals for advocacy of same-sex love.

## **2. Sexual liberalism mong Friends**

Even before the Quaker schism known as the Friends of Human Progress, Hicksite Quakers could be quite radical. For instance, some of them joined Transcendentalists and Unitarians in investigating the utopias inspired by that contemporary of Elias Hicks [1748 - 1830], Charles Fourier [1772 - 1837]. One of the most scandalous aspects of Fourier's socialist scheme was its advocacy for same-sex love. Fourier wrote:

... if nothing were forbidden or suppressed anymore, there would be a bridging of sexual identities, of sapphistic and pederastic [that is, gay] loves, and this bridging of the less common sexual preferences is necessary for Harmony [31]

Although passages such as this were usually suppressed in popular treatments of the subject, one cannot argue that all socialists were unaware of it. After 1840, the implications of Fourier's doctrines on “passional attractions” were a poorly-kept secret, and bourgeois America's alarm over them was captured by Nathaniel Hawthorne in *The Blithedale Romance*. Just as Hawthorne was in fact a denizen of the utopian Brook Farm, his hero Miles Coverdale was a denizen of fictional Blithedale Farm. Hawthorne/

Coverdale tells us that he began reading Fourier's works during a slow recovery from illness. He was attracted to Fourier by an “analogy which I could not but recognize between his system and our own,” and tries to talk about the theory with his friend Hollingsworth:

I further proceeded to explain, as well as I modestly could, several points of Fourier's system... and asking Hollingsworth's opinion as to the expediency of introducing these beautiful peculiarities into our own practice. "Let me hear no more of it!" cried he, in utter disgust. "... To seize upon and foster whatever vile, petty, sordid, filthy, bestial, and abominable corruptions have cankered into our nature, to be the efficient instruments of his infernal regeneration! And his consummated Paradise, as he pictures it, would be worthy of the agency which he counts upon for establishing it. The nauseous villain! ... Take the book out of my sight," said Hollingsworth with great virulence of expression, "or, I tell you fairly, I shall fling it in the fire! And as for Fourier, let him make a Paradise, if he can, of Gehenna, where, as I conscientiously believe, he is floundering at this moment!" [32]

Judith Wellman has recently shown that Benjamin and Sarah Fish's family, members of Rochester Monthly Meeting, lived for a brief period at a utopian community in Sodus Bay, north of Rochester. Albert Brisbane, the chief architect of American Fourierism, spoke in August, 1843, to a “large and highly respectable audience,” composed in part of the Quakers at Seneca Falls. [33] A few years later, Brooklyn philanthropist Marcus Spring (who served in New York's prison-reform society alongside Isaac T. Hopper) became an important Quaker financier of a Fourierist utopia. This friend to Ralph Waldo Emerson, Henry David Thoreau, and Margaret Fuller helped establish the Raritan Bay Union commune in the early 1850s. [34] It's not easy to define Rebecca and Marcus Spring's precise status in regard to Quaker membership. They held their own worship services, inspired by Friends' meetings, at the Raritan Bay Union, to which Henry David Thoreau was once invited. [35] The Fishes, by contrast, were presumably still members of Rochester Monthly Meeting when they tried socialism. The embrace of Fourierism by some Quakers as well as ex-Quakers raises the question of whether its abhorrent sexual implications were necessarily considered a threat to the tenets of Hicksite theology. In the section on Elias Hicks, below, we shall argue that they were not.



In 1989, with *Radical Spirits*, Ann Braude revolutionized our understanding of the historical role of some western New York Quakers (including members of the Fish family) when she traced the rise of an "ultra" radical Hicksite offshoot called The Friends of Human Progress. Braude described the Friends of Human Progress as important instigators of the First Woman's Rights Convention at Seneca Falls, as well as an important conduit for the cultural transmission of that religious pandemic, spiritualism. Braude further revealed two reasons that the important role of the Friends of Human Progress was forgotten: (a) it was deliberately suppressed in turn-of-the-century histories of the women's movement, because its close entanglement with spiritualism proved extremely embarrassing; and (b) while the Friends of Human Progress conventions were critical in the first wave of consciousness-raising about women's rights, the movement soon proved, politically speaking, to be a hopeless dead-end, dissolving into a bedlam of crank anarchism. [36]

On rare occasions, Victorians stripped off the kid gloves and flirted with blunter speech. One of the most revealing reviews of *Leaves of Grass* was also among the earliest. In November, 1855, Rufus Griswold connected the dots between the spectacle of Whitman's forbidden sexuality emerging from the darkness of the closet, the shocking liberalism of the Friends of Human Progress, and the Quaker notion of "inner light." Griswold charged that people like Whitman, "bloated with self-conceit,"

now commonly strut abroad unabashed in the daylight, and expose to the world the festering sores that overlay them like a garment. Unless we admit this exhibition to be beautiful, we are at once set down for non-progressive conservatives, destitute of the "inner light".... These candid, these ingenuous, these honest "progressionists;" these human diamonds without flaws; these men that have come, detest furiously all shams; "to the pure, all things are pure;" they are pure, and, consequently, must thrust their reeking presence under every man's nose.

Griswold added that he felt morally impelled to be this candid. "The records of crime show that many monsters have gone on in impunity," he intoned, "because the exposure of their vileness was attended with too great indelicacy" [he meant to write:

“delicacy”]. *Peccatum illud horribile, inter Christianos non nominandum* [the horrible sin not to be named among Christians]." [37] The reader should ponder well the analogies between the cultural standards which forced Griswold to hiss his warning in a dead tongue and the modern principle which is today called “don't ask/don't tell.”

Research allows us to finally place Griswold's review in its full context. It has only recently become clear that while Griswold prepared his review for publication, New York was experiencing a fierce backlash against sexual liberalism, beginning within three or four months of the publication of *Leaves of Grass*. One volley in that backlash was a stinging burlesque of women's rights and spiritualism entitled *Lucy Boston*, published anonymously in September, 1855 [38] An anti-hero of this novel, Friend Badger, was delineated in the book's illustrations with a vague likeness of Quaker bachelor John Greenleaf Whittier—a reformer whose involvement in women's suffrage was eventually relinquished, possibly due to a fear of ridicule. [39] *Lucy Boston* lampoons Friend Badger with a persistent desire to dress in women's clothing. A Quakerish spiritualist, Amos Funglehead, is ridiculed even more strongly in a clever scene that manages to suggest sodomy in a very graphic, yet highly encoded/ambiguous fashion. Of interest to Whitman scholars should be the way the novel implicitly ties Whitman's doctrine of “Adhesiveness” (same-sex passionate friendship) to a distinctively spiritualist brand of sodomy.

At the same time (October, 1855), the New York newspapers began to print scathing exposes of the Free Love movement, featuring the arrest of socialist impresario Albert Brisbane and his right-hand man, a so-called “Bohemian” translator of Charles Fourier named Henry Clapp. [40] Whitman scholars have generally been ignorant of this important role played by Henry Clapp, usually thinking of him in his other guise as sidekick to Walt Whitman in the 1860s. This is because in later years, both Whitman and Clapp strictly avoided speaking about Clapp's Free Love scandal. All Whitman said was: “You have to know something about Henry Clapp, if you want to know all about me.” [41]

Henry in another environment might have loomed up as a central influence

... he had abilities way out of common... Henry was in our sense a pioneer, breaking ground before the public was ready to settle... he seems to be forgotten ... I have often said to you that my own history could not be written with Henry left out. I mean that—it is not an extravagant statement [42]

Henry Clapp, a lifelong bachelor, was born on Nantucket. [43] By virtue of being a part of the island's prolific Coffin clan, Clapp was a distant relative of Quaker suffragist Lucretia Coffin Mott and the lesbian minister Phebe Ann Coffin Hanaford. [44] A recent study of Clapp's own writings has uncovered evidence of his own diplomatically-couched advocacy for same-sex love among Quakers, years in advance of *Leaves of Grass*.

In an 1846 essay, Clapp begins by stating that during a Nantucket vacation, he is reminded frequently and with great force of the difference between the icy hearts of mainland America and the thousand-fold concentration of mutual attachment found “in the sweet [S]ociety of these loving [F]riends.” Let's pause for a second to parse the missing capitals in Henry's coy account. By their very absence, they demonstrate that just how close one could get to plainly spelling out the culture of manly love among Quaker whalers, and yet there was a fine line that couldn't be crossed. It's a thin encoding, but just enough to reduce the likelihood of objections from the Society of Friends.

Intimate fraternity (likely with nautical friends whose lives and personalities were probably much more rugged than his own), he explains, has softened his scolding, sarcastic nature. He indicates that it felt great to “take down”—or “leap over”—the bars which conventional society places between bodies, and to give one's “favorite flower” a “good hearty embrace.” (Compare the descriptions of sailors ashore sleeping together as portrayed in Melville's Ishmael and Queequeeg in *Moby Dick*, or Edgar Allan Poe's “The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym of Nantucket.”) The result? Clapp enjoyed his island sojourn, “[h]and locked in hand, heart locked in heart... soothing ourselves with pleasant love...” In the romantic afterglow, he turned his thoughts to the transformative potential of this social intercourse. Men need to get out more, concluded Clapp, away from their familiar surroundings, in order to establish these “heavenly unions.” If this

were to become an international commonplace, the occasion for war would be lessened. [45] (Compare “make love not war,” in the 1960s, or, better yet, Whitman's poem, “This Moment Yearning and Thoughtful.”) [46]

### 3. The implications of “liberty of conscience”

During the 1855 Free Love scandal, an investigative reporter captured an unidentified spokeswoman (Mary Gove Nichols, perhaps?) justifying Free Love using borrowed Quaker theology. Freely transcribed into a script format, the exchange reads:

Investigative Reporter: “There is a class of people, and some of them come here, who are not capable of understanding the spiritual principle, but would take in at once a gross idea.”

Spokeswoman: “That is true; but they can be educated into it; and we have confidence in the power of Good and our own strength of purpose.”

Reporter: “Ah! Why do you not say confidence in God?”

Spokeswoman (gently): “That is the truest confidence in God. God within US.” [47]

It's time to reconsider the 1806 *Book of Discipline's* provision for eldering “scandalous practice.” The *Discipline's* section devoted to civil government contains the following assertion: “Liberty of conscience being the common right of all men, and particularly essential to the well-being of religious societies, we hold it to be indispensably incumbent upon us to maintain it inviolable among ourselves ...” [48]

Note also the subtle hedge in the wording of the previously-cited discipline regarding personal morals: “such other disorderly or indecent practices *as shall occasion public scandal*” (emphasis added).

Suppose some Jonathan and some David—or, to be more concrete, Henry Clapp and his favorite flower; or Walt Whitman and his copiously-documented lover, Peter Doyle—were really, unmistakably clear within their souls that they were meant to keep a bachelor's hall and furthermore to kindle their love behind closed doors—but took due diligence not to “occasion public scandal?” Would Friends have been “indispensably incumbent to maintain” that this, too, was “inviolable?” The question may have never before been entertained—at least, probably not in our times. On the other hand, historians have long known about the evening in 1856 in which abolitionists Lucretia Mott, Pliny Chase, and Morris Davis appreciatively read aloud from the *Leaves* at the home of a Quaker poet named B. Rush Plumley. [49]

To suppose that Lucretia Mott was incapable of detecting the crime *not to be mentioned among Christians* in *Leaves of Grass* implies that she was neither as intelligent nor as wise in the ways of the world as Rufus Griswold. On the contrary, Mott was the product of the Nantucket-New Bedford culture sketched by Poe, Melville, and Henry Clapp; her father was a Nantucket sea captain in an era in which the remarkable licentiousness of sailors was a cultural given. [50] Throughout much of her life, she had a tolerant, inclusive relationship with Hicksite suffragist Susan B. Anthony (a regular speaker at the Friends of Human Progress), for whom plenty of evidence exists which is consistent with a lesbian orientation. [51]

What was Mott's view of human sexuality, in reality? She brazenly admitted that she was “a believer after the manner that many deem infidel ... the kingdom of God is within man ... as the moral sense with which he is so abundantly endowed, or the animal propensities which are bestowed for his pleasure, his comfort, and his good. I believe man is created innately good, and his instincts are good.” [52] Thus we know that: (a) Mott believed man's instincts are good, and (b) she personally found no reason to be unfriendly to Walt Whitman. On the contrary, he knew her well enough to describe “her majestic sweet sanity” and her fond smile: “Oh! It was sweet, winsome, attractive. It drew a fellow nearer and nearer.” [53] Although Whitman displayed her photograph in his home, his biographers have strangely failed to register the significance of this

prominent icon. If Mott had believed *every* man instincts are good *except* Walt Whitman's, he would never have enshrined her photograph in his parlor. Indeed, even though she was a married woman, Mott was criticized not only for “old maidish” eccentricities but also for her “socialist violations of Christian dignity.” [54]

The analysis so far has yet to address the chief difficulty which has traditionally prevented us from investigating Quaker liberalism about sex: the famous Quaker prohibitions against music, art, theater, dancing, fiction, and, above all, “marrying out” (marrying someone of another faith, or being married by a hireling minister). Clearly, these harsh disciplines were the “briars and thorns” described by John Roper of Norwich. These privations were “the hedge that pricks on both sides to prevent an improper, unsafe communication.”

On the other hand, we've already shown that some Quakers took liberal positions on sexuality, and will have much more evidence to present. Moreover, we already know that Quakers were radical exponents for the human rights of slaves, women, and the mentally ill. We know that Friends resisted government coercion in regards to religious freedom and war, and paid heavy penalties for their convictions. It follows that recognition of liberty of conscience in sexual choices would be congruent with their other fierce advocacies on human rights.

We therefore propose that the fundamental motives for maintaining Quaker strictness may have evolved throughout the history of the society. Quaker asceticism is always understood as a kind of prudery akin to the strict family values of the Amish. But Walt Whitman's Quaker references rather suggest instead that in some important fashion Quakers may have been less strict, not more strict, than their neighbors. And if indeed they were tolerant about sex, they would have needed a protective shield from criticism by a more conservative society. Thus their hedge was not woven from “thorns” so much for punishment as to create a barrier that would prevent such “unsafe communication.”

Indeed, Walt Whitman dedicated himself to the vision of a *new* Quaker City which would be “invincible to the / attacks of the whole of the rest of the earth:”

I DREAMED in a dream, I saw a city invincible to the  
attacks of the whole of the rest of the earth,  
I dreamed that was the new City of Friends,  
Nothing was greater there than the quality of robust  
love-it led the rest,  
It was seen every hour in the actions of the men of  
that city,  
And in all their looks and words. [55]

In his *new* Philadelphia, some particularly rugged, indestructible sort of love —“robust love”—would be on display round the clock. But isn't everybody in favor of love? Why would these new, more visible, more public “Friends” need to be more immune from universal “attack?” *Answer:* Because Quaker liberality produced in some the visions of the Devil—as we shall now see.

#### **4. The ugly serpent of Hicksites**

In 1888, the suffering, dying poet struggled to assemble "Notes on Elias Hicks (Such as They Are)," his great (though greatly flawed) eulogy to Elias Hicks. [56] Volumes 2 and 3 of *With Walt Whitman in Camden* preserved for posterity Whitman's profound regret for not taking up this lifelong goal before his mind had been ravaged by decades of major and minor strokes; his determination to see the project through to the very best of his ability; and his conviction that no one, anywhere, was better qualified to tell the truth about Elias Hicks. We are privileged to glimpse the author at work thanks to the superb reporting skills of Horace Traubel, a devotee who was arguably Whitman's greatest lover. [57]

Unfortunately, although the Hicks essay provides some truly priceless spiritual insight, Whitman failed to shape his “Notes” into the clear, accurate perspective he intended. For one thing, it promotes the simplistic view, now a common one, that the only issue behind the Hicksite schism was Hicks's liberal theology of God and Christ,

atonement, and miracles. It doesn't cover another, deeper, cause of the crisis: the struggle to grant monthly meetings more autonomy, and to reduce the degree of control by elders in Yearly Meeting, as shown, for instance, by H. Larry Ingle. [58]

There are actually too many important facets of the schism to be exhausted even by a book-length treatment such as Ingle's. Modern treatments of this subject, for instance, fail to examine the possibilities behind Lydia Maria Child's interesting claim: "As the adherents of Elias Hicks at that time represented *freedom of conscience*, of course Isaac T. Hopper belonged to that party, and advocated it with characteristic zeal. In fact, he seems to have been the Napoleon of the battle." [Emphasis mine.] [59] Specifically, our history has so far failed to address another issue that horrified the Orthodox: Elias Hicks's potential for abandoning Friends to the temptations of the flesh. By 1836, one Philadelphian, described only as "Dr. E.," had a dream of the late Elias Hicks and followers "existing in misery amidst the boiling brimstone." [60]

So far, historians of the Hicksite Schism have attributed such condemnation to only one cause: the charge of blasphemy—which even Walt Whitman described in his own Hicks essay. But the historical record also shows that conservatives were terrified by the sexual implications of Hicks's liberality. Alma Braithwaite explicitly warned against Hicks's "standard of morality." She said it would lead to "the commission of acts, which under the influence of christian doctrines and principles, it would have turned away from with horror or disgust." [61]

"Perhaps even more than Anna Braithwaite," Larry Ingle writes, "Ann and George Jones most irritated the reformers associated with Hicks." One Hicksite testified that in 1826, Ann Jones believed the Hicksites:

had been led astray by wicked and designing men—that she had preached the gospel to the fishermen, the sailors, and the miners, in her country-men that we would disdain, as she said, to set with the dogs of our flocks and they would even blush at our conduct. And among other things, I think she charged us with denying or undervaluing the scriptures... [62]



The astute reader will notice that the charge of making sailors blush ranks first and foremost in this dispute, and the charge of blasphemy is inarguably a secondary consideration, merely an ancillary skirmish, “among other things.”

Now, this is all very suggestive, but we haven't proved that the disgusting behavior in question was directly related to Hicks's theology. However, we can do just that. “Not long after we were married,” wrote farmer Thomas Townsend in 1849, “there became a great stir in society in regard to Elias Hicks.” While plodding behind his plow-horses, he agonized over whether to join all his family and friends in following Hicks. He was suddenly struck by a life-altering premonition of great evil:

I stood still and prayed in this manner: “Lord God, almighty, as I have no other in Heaven, nor in all the earth, but thee alone, be pleased to show me where thou wouldst have me to go.” This came from the very bottom of my heart. I then started my horses; but I think I had not gone more than 2 or 3 rods before there came a strong feeling over my mind, and I stopped the horses to pay attention to it.

My eyesight was directly turned inward, and I had a clear view of my own fleshly heart, with a huge serpent twined several times around It, so as to have it in complete possession. Its head (with great fiery looking eyes, with a mouth half-open, showing its teeth) stuck up some distance above all the rest of It. I took a view of it without being terrified. It then gradually unwound Itself and banished from my sight. My eyesight then became natural, and I drove on, feeling as light, seemingly, as a feather, greatly rejoicing to think that I had got shut of such a disagreeable companion.

(I believe that I had let in some doubts at times of there being any evil Spirit separate from man's natural propensities; but it being so contrary to Scriptures that I had never fully adopted it. I am not so sure but It was on this account that such a view of the ugly serpent was given me. I have not for a moment doubted it since.) [63]

Notice how Townsend's use of “propensities” mirrors that of Lucretia Mott's use of that term in the speech to medical students, previously cited. We have just shown that the Hicksite Schism was about something more than Christology or even ministerial power. Decades before Lucretia Mott, Elias Hicks affirmed God's wisdom in giving to humanity what Mott called “the comfort of animal propensities.”

Hicks's argument begins by rejecting any role for Satan in human affairs. Students of Whitman will not be completely surprised by Elias Hicks's views on sin, given the well-known footnote at the tail-end of "Notes:" "He said once to my father, 'They talk of the devil—I tell thee, Walter, there is no devil worse than man.'" [64] Because scholars have invariably focused on Hicks's Christology, however, we have yet to appreciate the profound cultural implications of Hicks's rejection of Satan. Indeed, Hicks is today viewed as an itinerant preacher and a firebrand advocate for reform in Quaker governance, but not as a philosopher and teacher in his own right. One author relegates him to the former role with a simple, dismissive, "Hicks was no theologian." [65]

But this is not how Walt Whitman saw Hicks, perhaps because Whitman's conception of theology had little to do with the traditional task of issuing apologetics for centuries of evangelical tradition. Whitman, rather, claimed that Hicks emphasized the "fountain" of all knowable truth: the psychological engine of the self. Others talked of Bibles and canons apart from man, but Hicks, said Whitman, spoke of the religion intrinsic to human nature. He constantly labored to educate and strengthen that faith—making him "the most democratic of prophets." [66]

Hicks's views of the Devil were consistent with his rationalist views on Jesus and the Christ (the latter two, of course, being quite distinct in his mind), and his conception of divine and infernal impulses sprang alike from a profound humanism and psychological sophistication. This is shown in the following 1824 sermon, delivered at Byberry, entitled "Let Brotherly Love Continue:"

But people too generally, looking outwardly to find God and in this outward looking they are told about a devil, some monstrous creature, some self-existing creature, that is terrible in power. Now, all this seeking to know God, and this devil, the serpent without, is the work of darkness, superstition, and tradition. It hath no foundation; it is all breath and wind, without the power. We need not look without for enemies of friends; for we shall not find them without. Our enemies are those of our own household; our own propensities and unruly desires are our greatest, and I may almost say,

our alone enemies. And yet, in themselves, they are all good; because man could not give himself propensities or desires; and therefore, as there is but one being who creates, and as he is perfect in wisdom and holiness; and as he is nothing but pure and undefiled love, he could create nothing but that which is good. [67]

Hicks's teaching about the Devil represented a significant cultural innovation, quite apart from his well-known scandalous view that Jesus was a man, not a God. His philosophy of sin is actually the point of departure for a conclusion that would sooner or later have important liberalizing consequences for antebellum sexuality. If “propensities” and “desires” are neither induced by the Devil nor created by humans, then they can only be gifts from the Creator. And if they are gifts from God, they must be necessary for man's quest to know God. Thus the problem with any human desire is not that it exists, but rather than that it is indulged to extreme:

Here we find that we are possessed of desires and propensities of various kinds, and a great many of them; and yet they are all absolutely necessary, as our being is necessary... We see that it is not in the animal body to reason. No: it is not in bones to think, or flesh to reason. It is the immortal soul only that is accountable to God....

Here now we see where sin begins; here we see where devils are created, by man himself; he is the author of them all; as he is the only fallen angel upon earth. What produces the glutton, the adulterer, the fornicator, the covetous, the liar, the thief, but an excess in the indulgence of propensities, which lead us to seek for that which is necessary for us? We should always keep within the limits of truth and wisdom, and never suffer our propensities or desires to carry us beyond what God in his wisdom intended to our limits; and thus all our passions would [be] kept in their proper allotments.

And as man could not give to himself these propensities and desires, we have the evidence along with them, that they were given to us by our Creator, as the best possible medium, through which to effect his great end .... He gave us passions—if we may call them passions—in order that we might seek after those things which we need, and which we had a right to experience and know... [68]

There is no question about the nature of these passions or propensities, because Hicks has the courage to name their symptoms: gluttony; adultery/fornication, lust for goods or wealth; lying; and thieving. In the very act of creating this list, Hicks abolishes

the special stigma traditionally accorded to sexual sin, and fixes it as the equal of other common sins.

Had Hicks stopped there, he would already have laid the foundation for a liberal acceptance of the realities of human sexuality. However, "Let Brotherly Love Continue" goes on to explicitly make a revolutionary assertion, which may be paraphrased as follows: it is ungodly to exert any kind of moral slavery over the free ethical choices of another human being:

How then shall we undertake to give a brother or a father a belief? If we do it, what wicked and presumptuous creatures we are, because we take the place of God. We assume the place of God when we tell our brother, this is the right way; my opinion is just right, and if thou do not come into it, thou art a heretic....

Here now, contention and discord would enter, and every evil work prevail: but on the contrary, were they under the influence of brotherly love, they would be willing to say, each to the other, "mind thy own business; thy Father hath given thee thy portion, and let it be what it may, be thou faithful. Do not mind me; I am not to be thy teacher; I am not to be an example to thee, any further than my example corresponds with what God commands thee to do." [69]

In Hicks's view, by relinquishing the evangelical drive to shame and to harass one's fellow man, one can trust that following the light one was given, and the application of steadfast and gentle encouragement, are more likely to lead to a more peaceable and just world. Here Hicks is actually applying the "first, do no harm" or Hippocratic principle to the healing of souls:

Let us encourage each other, in pursuing the path of duty, as laid out by our Heavenly Father; and none else does know it. As long as we believe in the light, and continue to walk in the light, our intentions become settled and firm; that we will do nothing but that which is right. We shall endeavour to pursue the right way in all things; to do all the good we can, and as little harm as possible, in the world. These are resolutions which the divine light brings the soul into, when it comes under its regulating influence. It brings the soul into its own nature, to do nothing but the right thing. [70]

It is only natural to wonder whether there is any historical connection between Hicks's 1824 thesis—namely, that all human passions are necessary in God's plan for salvation—and its close analogue in Fourier's contemporary writings (which were also quite religious in sentiment).

Perhaps further research will turn up something unexpected, but at present, this doesn't seem likely. Fourier's defense of love outside of marriage, including male and female same-sex love, first appeared in an unpublished 1818 paper entitled “Amorous Anarchy.” [71] During the 1820s, his work was known, even in France, only to “a small band of provincial devotees.” [72] Albert Brisbane did not begin to effectively promote Fourier in America until 1839. [73]

The claims about Hicks will be the most provocative part of this paper. But that should not detract from the need to more generally understand how other Quakers (such as the Fish family, for example) would have come to terms with same-sex love or with the more popular, heterosexually-oriented agenda of the Free Love movement (whose actual foundation was a liberalization of divorce and more autonomy of women in marriage). As shown by *The Blithedale Romance*, even before *Leaves of Grass*, the rise of Fourierism challenged thinking Americans across the board to define their position on these subjects. Furthermore, the Quaker and socialist traditions of human equality need to be considered in tandem, because they were woven together in Whitman's poems. Whitman's Quaker references, such as “Fourth Month,” [74] “the new City of Friends,” [75] “I with thee and thou with me,” [76] and “I cock my hat as I please,” [77] are today seen as paired with other lines of his poetry which were possibly inspired by such Fourierist phrases as “The Law of Attraction rules the universe, from the blade of grass, from the insect, to the stars revolving in their appointed orbits.” [78]

## **Conclusion**

Had Walt Whitman supposed Elias Hicks stood in the way of his own spiritual testimony on manly love, he would never have made it a lifelong goal to write about

Hicks. He never would have pushed himself to complete this sacred task, through his terminal pain, weariness, and debility. On the contrary, it is precisely because Hicks laid the theological foundation for *Leaves of Grass* that Whitman's breathtaking claim must be fully accepted as the truth:

I have got to look upon myself as sort of chosen to do a job as the Hicksite historian. I have seemed, to myself at least, to be particularly equipped for doing just this thing and doing it as it should be done-have felt that no one else living is exactly so well appointed for it. [79]

Only by taking Whitman's claim seriously, can we—at long last—meet his Quaker paradox head-on. To succeed, we must refuse to relinquish either horn of the dilemma: Walt Whitman was simultaneously the voice of the fundamental human right to sexual self-determination *and* the voice of Long Island Quakerism.

Like Nantucket captains Peleg and Bildad in Melville's *Moby Dick*, Whitman retained “in an uncommon measure the peculiarities of the Quaker.” [80] He dressed in Quaker grey (recall he was known as the “Good Gray Poet”), cocked his hat as he pleased indoors, and adopted Quaker speech patterns; he was surrounded by passionate Quaker supporters in his old age; his parlor contained a portrait of Lucretia Mott and a bust of Elias Hicks (which he commissioned from sculptor Sidney Morse); he revised his poems to include Quaker plain-speech; he wrote deathbed essays on Elias Hicks and George Fox; and, above all, he incorporated Quaker testimonies on dignity, peace, equality, and faith into his poems, religiously, throughout a lifetime.

The answer to Whitman's Quaker paradox is therefore to found in a close, thoughtful reading of Whitman's own reply to Traubel's point-blank question: “If you had turned Quaker would *Leaves of Grass* ever have been written?” The poet replied:

It is more than likely not-quite probably not-almost certainly not. I guess you are right, Horace: you have hit the nail on the head. We must go outside the lines before we can know the best things that are within. [81]

Traubel *hit the nail on the head*—according to the poet's own words—for

in the metaphorical “hour” in which he committed himself to publishing *Leaves of Grass*, Walt Whitman declared himself “loos'd of limits and imaginary lines.” [82] But today we can finally understand that it was precisely *then* that he made evident “the best things that are within” an enduring legacy of Quaker faith and practice.

## Notes

[1] At various times during Whitman's life, his involvement with the canonical Quaker reforms included: opposition to corporal punishment in the classroom; prison reform/convict advocacy; opposition to the death penalty; anti-slavery advocacy; temperance; perennial testimony on women's equality; defense of prostitutes; anti-sabbatarian agitation; nursing the Civil War wounded of both sides; and voicing the concerns of the underclass and the mentally ill. For an intimate view of Whitman's Quaker friends and conversational references, see the nine-volume oral history of Whitman's last years: Horace Traubel's *With Walt Whitman in Camden* (Various publishers, 1906-1996).

[2] Mitchell Santine Gould. "Whitman's Sailors and Other Friends." *The Gay and Lesbian Review Worldwide* XI:2 (March-April, 2004), 19-22.

[3] *Ohio Yearly Meeting Discipline*, 1922, 79.

[4] Cited in: A. Neave Brayshaw. *The Quakers: their story and message*, third edition (London: Allen Unwin, 1938), p. 189.

[5] Walt Whitman. "Notes (Such as They Are) Founded on Elias Hicks." *November Boughs* (1888).

[6] Walt Whitman. "Song of Myself," a poem in *Leaves of Grass*.

[7] The third [1860] edition of *Leaves of Grass* introduced two clusters of poems:

*Children of Adam*, which unabashedly celebrated male-female sexuality, and *Calamus*, which celebrated male-male love in a more ambiguous fashion, Just shy of overt sexuality.

[8] 1806 *Book of Discipline for the Yearly Meeting of Friends Held in Philadelphia*.

[9] Significantly, it is commonly known that Whitman acted in great part as his own censor. Here are three cases of self-censorship that are relevant to the present paper: (1) In the 1855 "Song of Myself," Whitman speaks of his Self's capacity to be found incarnate in a variety of human forms, including a "sailor, lover or quaker." By the final 1892 version of the poem, he can only be incarnate as a "sailor or quaker." (2) In the 1855 "Song of Myself," he boasts a kind of Quaker defiance of conventional "hat honor:" "I cock my bat as I please indoors or out." In 1892, he weakens the power considerably but gingerly avoids any connotation of the phallus when he writes, "I wear my hat as I please indoors or out." In the original [1860] version of "Calamus 34," he announces, "I dreamed that was the new City of Friends." In the final 1892 version, now entitled "I Dream'd in a Dream", he slightly obscures the Quaker reference with a sly change of case: "I dream'd that was the new city of Friends."

[10] Lydia Maria Child. *Isaac T. Hopper: a True Life* (1853).

[11] Dorothy Sterling. *Ahead of Her Time: Abby Kelley and the Politics of Antislavery* (New York: Norton, 1991).

[12] Mitchell Santine Gould. "Bayard Taylor" in: *Walt Whitman: an Encyclopedia* (New York: Garland, 1998),703-704.

[13] For instance, Joaquin Miller's poem, "To Walt Whitman," contains lines such as: "Thou sweetest lover! love shall climb to thee,! Like Incense curling some cathedral dome..." Joaquin Miller. "To Walt Whitman." *The Galaxy* (Volume



23, Issue 1, January 1877),29-30.

[14] In February, 1863, New Bedford Quaker Daniel Ricketson recommended that Walt Whitman be invited to write the biography of Henry David Thoreau, who had succumbed to tuberculosis. Knowing that Walt Whitman was a great hero to Thoreau, but knowing also that so many people in Concord were bitterly opposed to Whitman, Thoreau's sister Sophia tactfully declined, saying only, "Mr. W., whom you suggest, had a very slight acquaintance with my brother." (For what it's worth, she believed it would take the combined effort of a number of Transcendentalists to assemble an adequate portrait of her noble brother.) Daniel Ricketson. *Daniel Ricketson and His Friends* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin 1902),155. '

[15] Robert Allerton Parker. *The Transatlantic Smiths* (New York: Random House, 1959). Joann P. Krieg. "'Don't let us talk of that anymore': Whitman's Estrangement from the Costelloe-Smith Family." *Walt Whitman Quarterly Review* 17 (Winter 2000),91-120.

[16] Horace Traubel. "Dr. Daniel G. Brinton on Walt Whitman." *The Conservator* (Vol 10, November 1899), 132.

[17] William Ingram was a dear friend of the old poet, but a very tedious visitor, as shown in various volumes of Traubel, *With Walt Whitman in Camden*.

[18] Horace Traubel, *With Walt Whitman in Camden* (Volume 8), 338-339.

[19] Traubel, *ibid*.

[20] Benjamin Tucker dared the nation's censor, Anthony Comstock, to arrest him for selling *Leaves of Grass*, but Comstock ignored him. On August 19,1882, Tucker was forced to issue a press release that simply declared, "I have offered to meet

the enemy, but the enemy declines to be met. ..." *Benjamin R Tucker and the Champions of Liberty: A Centenary Anthology*. Michael E. Coughlin, Charles H. Hamilton, and Mark A. Sullivan, editors (St Paul, MN: Michael E. Coughlin [privately printed], 1986).

[21] Margaret Hope Bacon. *Valiant Friend: The Life of Lucretia Mott* (New York: Walker, 1980), 159.

[22] In a letter to her mother, Thomas wrote, "He is a great poet undoubtedly... our greatest living genius." Martha Carey Thomas. *The Making of a Feminist: Early Journals and Letters of M. Carey Thomas* (Kent State University Press, 1979), 268-9.

[23] Pliny Chase's appreciation of *Leaves of Grass* dates from the second edition of 1856. (Bacon, 159.) Chase may have transmitted his enthusiasm for Whitman to young Rufus Jones.

[24] Howitt is generally believed to be the author of an anonymous and significantly positive early review of *Leaves of Grass* which coyly makes reference to the poet's "inner life:" "He will soon make his way to the confidence of his readers, and his poems in time will become a pregnant text-book, out of which quotation as sterling as the minted gold will be taken and applied to every form and phase of the 'inner' or the 'outer' life; and we express our pleasure in making the acquaintance of Walt Whitman..." [William Howitt?], *London Weekly Dispatch* (9 March 1856), 6.

[25] Walt Whitman. *Walt Whitman, the Collected Writings, vol 5: the Correspondence* (New York: New York University Press, 1989), 180-181.

[26] Jean L. Silver-Isenstadt. *Shameless: The Visionary Life of Mary Gove Nichols* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002). Thomas Low Nichols knew

Whitman personally. It's possible that his wife, the prominent Free Love advocate Mary Gove Nichols, also knew Whitman, but she never publicly acknowledged it.

[27] Sherry Ceniza. *Walt Whitman and 19th-Century Women Reformers* (Tuscaloosa: U Alabama, 1998), 125-126. Elmina Slenker specifically praised Whitman's pioneering stance in a letter to the poet.

[28] 2 Samuel 1:26.

[29] Alice Ford. *Edward Hicks, Painter of the Peaceable Kingdom* (Philadelphia: U Pennsylvania, 1998).

[30] Lydia Maria Child. "The Brothers." *The Cyclopedia of American Literature*, Evert A. and George L. Duyckinck, eds. (Philadelphia: William Rutter & Co., 1880).

[31] Charles Fourier, English translation cited in: Saskia Poldervaart. "Theories about sex and sexuality in utopian socialism." *Gay Men and the Sexual History of the Political Left*. Gert Hekma, et al., eds (New York: Harrington Park, 1995), 49.

[32] Nathaniel Hawthorne. *The Blithedale Romance* (1852), Chapter 7.

[33] Judith Wellman. *The Road to Seneca Falls* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2004), 103-104.

[34] John McAleer. *Ralph Waldo Emerson: Days of Encounter* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1984), 478-479.

[35] Walter Harding. *The Days of Henry David Thoreau* (Princeton: Princeton U, 1992), 37.

[36] Ann Braude. *Radical Spirits* (Boston: Beacon, 1989).

[37] [Rufus W. Griswold]. *Criterion* 1(10 November 1855), 24.

[38] [ Fred Folio, pseudonym.] *Lucy Boston, or, Woman's Rights and Spiritualism* (New York: J.C. Derby, 1855).

[39] Whittier was once an officer of a suffrage convention but subsequently told Julia Ward Howe that, while he was in sympathy with the movement, he could no longer attend. Roland H. Woodwell. *John Greenleaf Whittier: A Biography* (Amesbury, MA: Whittier Homestead, 1985),477. During the 1880s, Whittier became a friend to Sarah Orne Jewett's rather anti-suffragist coven of Boston marriages in Boston and Maine. Paula Blanchard. *Sarah Orne Jewett: Her World and Work* (Reading, MA: Addison Wesley, 1994), 112-113. Whittier was also a lifelong believer in Spiritualism. Blanchard, 189.

[40] "The Free Lovers. Practical Operation of the Free-Love League in the City of New-York. An Evening at Headquarters," *The New-York Daily Times*, October 10, 1855: 1-2. "Free-Love in New-York. Individual Sovereignty Realized. Secret Society of the League. Its Origin, History and Organization. Principles and Practice of the Free-Lovers," *The New-York Daily Tribune*, October 16, 1855: 5-6. "The Free-Love Meeting. Immense Attendance. Interference and Arrests," *The New-York Daily Tribune*, October 19, 1855. "A Rich Development. Free Love Nowhere. The 'Club' Broken Up by the Police. Intense Excitement. Albert Brisbane in Prison. Three Others Keeping Him Company. A Series of Speeches That Made a Serious Row. Full Details of the Explosion," *The New-York Daily Times*, October 19,1855.

[41] *Cited in:* David Reynolds. *Walt Whitman's America* (New York: Knopf, 1995), 576.

[42] *Cited in:* Albert Parry. *Garrets and Pretenders*, rev. ed. (New York: Dover,

1960),43.

[43] "Bohemianism: The American authors who met in a cellar." *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*. May 25, 1884.

[44] Lisa M. Tetrault. "A Paper Trail: Piecing Together the Life of Phebe Hanaford." <http://www.nha.org/HNhanaford.htm>. Accessed December 02, 2004. Nantucket Historical Association. Was Phebe Ann Coffin Hanaford a lesbian? Yes, clearly. In 1874, she was forced by her congregation at the Universalist Church of the Good Shepherd in Jersey City, New Jersey to choose between her pulpit and her "wife." She chose her "wife," and founded a second Universalist church in the town. There is no need to document sexual activities in her bedroom—her identity as a lesbian is defined by her *choice*, as documented in suppressed newspaper clippings. Her choice, in 1874, was no different from the essential choice facing many contemporary lesbian and gay citizens.

[45] Henry Clapp, Jr. "Letter from Nantucket." *The Pioneer: or Leaves from an Editor's Portfolio* (Lynn, MA: JB Tolman, 1846).

[46] Over the course of the past decade, the prevalence of sexual bonding between sailors during the Age of Sail has evolved from well-founded speculation to established historical fact. The original case for sexual bonding among sailors was made by Katz, by subjecting the frequent hints in period fiction to a bold gay reading. Jonathan Ned Katz. *Gay American History: Lesbians and Gay Men in the USA* (New York: Meridian, rev. ed., 1992). Documentary proof came in 1994, with Burg's study of an enormous diary kept by a U.S. Marine. Barry Richard Burg. *The Erotic Diaries of Philip C. Van Buskirk. An American Seafarer in the Age o/Sail* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1994).

[47] "Free-love by a female visitor," *New-York Times*, Sept. 30, 1855. (Note that the original account has been reformatted into a sort of script format for emphasis.)

[48] 1806 *Book of Discipline*.

[49] Bacon, 159.

[50] For one view of the exclusion of sailors from Christian society, see Gilbert Haven and Thomas Russell. *Father Taylor, the Sailor Preacher*. (San Francisco: BB Russell, 1872).

[51] Katz, *Gay American History*.

[52] Lucretia Mott. "Sermon to Medical Students, Cherry Street Meeting House, Philadelphia, 1849." *Lucretia Mott: Her Complete Speeches and Sermons*. Dana Greene, editor (New York: Edwin Mellen, 1980), 83-84.

[53] Cited in: David Reynolds. *Walt Whitman's America*, (New York: Knopf, 1995), 219.

[54] Bacon, 129.

[55] Walt Whitman. "Calamus 34," *Leaves of Grass*, third edition (1860), 373.

[56] Walt Whitman. "Notes (Such as They Are) Founded on Elias Hicks." *November Boughs (1888)*.

[57] Horace Traubel. *With Walt Whitman in Camden*, Vol. 2, 3.

[58] Ingle, *Quakers in Conflict: the Hicksite Reformation* (Wallingford, PA: Pendle Hill, 1998), 111-112.

[59] Child, *Isaac T. Hopper*.

[60] Sarah Hoding. *The land log-book: a compilation of anecdotes and occurrences*

*extracted from the journal kept by the author during a residence of several years in the United States of America: containing useful hints to those who intend to emigrate to that country.* (London: Simpkin, Marshall and Co., 1836), 184-186.

[61] Anna Braithwaite. *A Letter from Anna Braithwaite to Elias Hicks, on the nature of his doctrines. Being a reply to his letter to Dr. Edwin A. Atlee; together with notes and observations.* (Philadelphia: Printed for the Reader, 1825).

[62] H. Larry Ingle, 34-35.

[63] Thomas Townsend. "The Life and Religious Experience of T. Townsend." Unpublished manuscript, 1849. <http://users.ipfw.edu/abbott/family/TTownsend.htm>. Accessed April 13, 2006.

[64] Whitman, "Elias Hicks."

[65] Ingle, 41.

[66] Whitman, "Elias Hicks."

[67] Elias Hicks. "Let Brotherly Love Continue." Byberry Friends Meeting, 8th day 12th month, 1824. *A Series of Extemporaneous Discourses, Delivered in the Several Meetings of the Society of Friends, in Philadelphia, Germantown, Abington, Bybeny, Newtown, Falls, and Trenton, by Elias Hicks, A Minister in Said Society. Taken in Short Hand by M. T. C. Gould.* (Philadelphia: Joseph & Edward Parker, 1825), 154-184.

[68] Hicks, "Brotherly Love."

[69] Hicks, "Brotherly Love."

[70] Hicks, "Brotherly Love."

[71] *The Utopian Vision of Charles Fourier*. Jonathan Beecher, and Richard Bienvenu, translators and editors (Boston: Beacon, 1971), 169-173.

[72] Carl Guarneri. *The Utopian Alternative: Fourierism in Nineteenth-century America* (Ithaca: Cornell U, 1991),20.

[73] Guarneri, 32.

[74] "There Was A Child Went Forth" and later editions of "Song of Myself."

[75] "Calamus 34" [1860].

[76] "Passage to India."

[77] "Song of Myself."

[78] William Hall Brock. *Phalanx on a Hill: Responses to Fourierism in the Transcendentalist Circle* (PhD dissertation).(Chicago: Loyola University, 1996).

[79] *With Walt Whitman in Camden 2*: 18-19.

[80] Herman Melville. *Moby Dick* (New York: Harper, 1851), chapter 16.

[81] *With Walt Whitman in Camden 2*: 18-19.

[82] "Song of the Open Road," [1856] a poem in *Leaves of Grass*.