

Humans are storytelling animals. Our worldview and identity are created and shaped by the stories we tell about our experiences, our history, our culture, and our beliefs. Several of the articles in this issue of QHE pertain to the role of story and storytelling in the history and culture of the Society of Friends.

[Ed Higgins](#), professor emeritus of English at George Fox University, has studied the ways in which Quakers have appeared in Science Fiction stories. How do our testimonies play out in fantastical settings with alien creatures or when confronted with the ethical dilemmas of time travel? He shares with us here some comparisons of four authors' visions.

[Marva Hoopes](#), Christian Education specialist at Malone University, teaches in educational ministry and theology. She has also been a pastor for 26 years in the Evangelical Friends Church. She shares with us an example of storytelling with Quaker Journals through the amazing life story of Susanna Morris.

[Rebecca Mays](#) teaches in a U.S State Department-funded program on religious pluralism at Temple University in Philadelphia, PA. [Ron Rembert](#) teaches in the Religion/Philosophy Department at Wilmington College. Together they have compiled an article that combines the story of the life of Hannah Whithall Smith with an unusual analysis of conflict. They use queries to challenge

us to turn our obstacles into assets to overcome cultural conflict.

[Donn Weinholtz](#), Professor of Educational Leadership in the Department of Education at the University of Hartford, and [Diane Weinholtz](#), science teacher at Watkinson School in Hartford, CT, share with us a report on a program to teach conflict resolution skills to teachers in Rwanda. This exciting project is in its early stages, and the Weinholtzes tell us how it came about, and where they hope it will go.

Finally, writer and Assistant Professor of English [Mylène Dressler](#), of Guilford College, shares with us a piece of story from the American Southwest, reminding us that when we learn how to look, we can find treasure in unexpected places. Mylène has published three novels and is hard at work on number four.

Submissions: *QHE* is published twice a year, in the spring and the fall. Articles submitted for possible publication should be sent as Word documents to: either dsmith4@guilford.edu or to adams@ccsu.edu. Since *QHE* is not wed to any particular referencing format, you may use the professional style of your choice. If you would like to discuss an idea that you have for an article, our telephone numbers are: 336-316-2162 (DS) and 860-832-2616 (AEA).

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Mark your calendars now for June 16-19, 2016. FAHE will meet at [Woodbrooke Quaker Study Centre](#) in Birmingham, UK, to consider *Educating for Action*. The call for papers with queries and conference registration is available [at the FAHE web site](#) and at [this site](#).



Quake Trek: Friends in Contemporary American Science Fiction

Ed Higgins
George Fox University

Since the mid-70s considerable academic interest, including a growing body of scholarly-critical work, exists in science fiction studies. A major explosion of feminist science fiction criticism in particular has emerged. My own interests combine the interdisciplinary fields of feminist science fiction criticism and Quaker studies. Perhaps surprisingly to many, in contemporary American science fiction there are three well-established feminist novelists as well as a highly-praised debut novel by author David Morse that are Quaker-informed, three quite directly. All four authors directly appropriate historical Quaker values, themes, and motifs as central to their respective storylines.

Joan Lyn Slonczewski's several award winning science fiction novels make extensive use of overt and implicit Quaker elements: *Still Forms On Foxfield* (1980), *A Door Into Ocean* (1986; reissued 2000), *The Wall Around Eden* (1989), and her three sequel novels based on *Still Forms On Foxfield* are significant examples. Below in fuller detail I will examine her much regarded *A Door Into Ocean* as an illustration of how she embeds her Quaker elements as essential story building blocks. Slonczewski is a professor of biology at Kenyon College specializing in genetics and is an active member of Granville Friends Meeting.

Judith Moffett's award-winning novel *Pennterra* (1987; reprint, 2009) brought her much critical praise as an up and

coming science fiction writer. A subsequent science fiction novel with its sequel earned her further praise. Moffett, too, is an academic and taught for many years a popular course on science-fiction writing at the University of Pennsylvania. Moffett and her deceased husband were active at Swarthmore Friends Meeting.

Pennterra's story explores imperialist-ecological themes, featuring a pioneering group of Quaker settlers who have landed on the planet Pennterra. However, they are restricted to a prescribed enclave and allowed to use only passive technologies by the native Hrossa, a mysterious group-minded amphibious species whose pheromone-emitting sexuality produces some unsettling and rousing sexual explicitness among the human settlers. A major crisis devolves when a second non-Quaker expedition arrives on Pennterra with no intention of changing behavior that had exploited and polluted Earth's resources and ecology. Nor will they respect or abide by the Hrossa's warnings that their planet itself will punish any disregard for its environmental laws. While clearly didactic in its eco-fable, *Pennterra's* narrative and Quaker ethos engage characters and a storyline with both imaginative and thoughtful writing skills.

David Morse is a member of Storrs Meeting in Connecticut, a respected journalist-writer, and long-time activist Friend. Morse's *The Iron Bridge* (1998)

is a time-travel tale in which the heroine, Maggie Foster, is beamed back to 1773 Coalbrookdale, England from a dystopian Earth of industrial pollution and ecological collapse. Morse's protagonist is tasked to stop the building of the nascent Industrial Revolution's first iron bridge across Severn Gorge in an attempt to alter the outcome of Maggie's future world. She becomes part of the Quaker family of iron foundry owner Abraham Darby whose factory is crucial in the Iron Bridge project. Maggie's growing care for her Quaker family (she eventually becomes a Quaker herself), as well as some unsettling sexual encounters, is fraught with moral-ethical conflicts while she is trying to sabotage the bridge's construction (which will ruin the Darby family). Despite her actions, she faces a growing sense that her future ruined world cannot be saved anyway.

Molly Gloss is the one writer among the group with no direct connection to Friends, but Gloss has done her homework superbly. Historical Quaker distinctives are explicitly and integrally a part of her character's lives, replete with Quaker special vocabulary and Quaker held concerns supporting her story thematically. Gloss's *The Dazzle of Day* (1997) traces her Quaker characters' interior/exterior lives aboard a space ark as they face a decision to halt their multi-generational voyage from Earth to adopt and adapt to a new home planet. Gloss's narrative tracks her Quaker voyagers' hardships, the elegant mechanics of their space-voyaging torus-shaped ark and their Quaker evolved cultural context beginning with their departure from earth through their arrival at their new home planet several generations later. Gloss's lucid prose

describes the lives of her spacefarers—their religion and politics, quarrels and friendships, loves and disdains, illness and death. At times this science fiction setting feels homespun as the gentle but very human Quakers strive for consensus in their community during a time of wrenching change.

All four writers explore character, plot, and themes extrapolating contemporary social concerns through extensive use of Quaker-related material and values. While a full examination of all four novels need not be accomplished in this short essay I hope to at least demonstrate some primary ways in which all four authors achieve a central narrative strategy integrating historical Quaker ideology as core content and thematic underpinnings. Slonczewski's *A Door Into Ocean* will provide my major focus, while indicating how such Quaker superstructure applies also to the Moffett, Gloss, and Morse novels as well.

Slonczewski, Moffett, Morse and Gloss all offer a typology for contending mythic forces of good and evil; the stakes are more than simply the temporal colonial invasion of outsiders or other issues. The stakes are intensely moral-ethical-spiritual as well. On Slonczewski's Quaker-like Shora and for Moffett's Quaker colonists on Pennterra the invasion conflicts are not to be met by force but rather countered by spiritually-based values of non-violence and passive resistance. For Gloss's multi-ethnic space voyagers the novel's ending crisis is both spiritual as well as practical: they must resolve through a spiritually-tested community-wide "sense of the meeting" whether to disembark on an uncomfortably chilly

new world after years of interstellar travel. In similar Quaker terms, “the prospering of Truth” is the thematic and spiritual polestar of Morse’s *The Iron Bridge*.

Distinctive Quaker practices and spirituality are explicitly a part of each of these novels. Their narrative lines engage and educate the reader in the eccentric beliefs and practices of these fictionally extrapolated Quakers, depicting the complex workings of non-violent, gender-equal, and ecologically attuned societies dependent upon Friends-based worship and governance. Such visions are neither utopian nor dystopian as Quaker aspirations but are tested through humanly flawed characters and their various plot crisis events. Protagonists in all these novels face complex and ambiguous struggles regarding themselves, the future, and their especial communities’ core values focus of “enacted Truth.” Few readers, of course, will come to any of these Quaker-infused novels with more than a passing knowledge of Quakerism’s basic tenets.

While lacking overtly Quaker-identified characters, Slonczewski’s *A Door Into Ocean* centers on historic Quaker moral-ethical tenets of non-violence, gender equality, and idiosyncratic spirituality as her principal themes. The essential Quaker notion of inner spiritual space (Inward Light) pervades and ontologically shapes Slonczewski’s narrative. As a tale of moral struggle, the story presents a case for “acted Truth” and “speaking Truth to power” through spiritually-based witnesses to her fictional world’s crisis story. But Slonczewski’s novel (as with Moffett, Gloss, and Morse in their respective

stories) is not merely Quaker superstructure or ideological tract but rather enstoried attempts at positing a Quaker world view as a valid encounter with human folly, misdirection, and evil.

A Door Into Ocean is frequently cited as a feminist utopian parable. Undeniably the author is a feminist SF writer, yet her underlying thematic ideology remains very much Quaker-based utopian in its values and ethical imperatives, even when these are reflective of particular feminist concerns. *A Door Into Ocean* appropriates many lightly veiled Quaker typologies as central story elements in the lives of her all-female aliens. They practice an activist non-violence, Quaker-like governance, and a values-based eco-science on their sea-covered moon-world that has allowed them to peacefully prosper for eons past their long-ago separation from genetically compatible human ancestors. Peacefully prospering, that is, until the coming of the nearby planet’s trader-extractors who, although initially welcomed, have cast serious doubt on their humanity through their destructive actions and exploitation of Shora’s waterworld ecosystem and its inhabitants.

An intriguing emblem throughout the novel is that the women of Shora go unclothed, in all their amethyst-skinned glory. Not that this is a particularly erotic nudity, though Sharers (as they call themselves) are clearly sexual in their same-sex society. As fundamentally water-adapted humans on a temperate world, clothing holds no practical value—in fact it seems a bit foolish, if not suspect, to them. Symbolically there’s an obvious Edenic resonance here. Sharers are innocently naked and unashamed as they are

likewise guileless in their dealings with outsiders. By contrast, the novel's clothed Valan antagonists emblemize all that is cloaked outwardly in guises of patriarchal power, with its hierarchy of rankings, duplicities, and oppressions.

Disconcerting nakedness offers an interesting historical Quaker analog. Early Quakers practiced a kind of turbulent witnessing they called "going naked as a sign." Nudity became an extreme public enactment, challenging conventional norms and attracting attention to their prophetic warning to repent and reform their ways. Such naked semiotic truth, however, was generally ill-received by their seventeenth century English audience and roundly maltreated even when understood as shock-effect parable (Bauman 92-93).

Slonczewski's Sharers employ "witnessers" in much the same way as moral enactment and empowered reproof. Fundamental to Quaker belief is the notion that all human beings can be responsive to Truth because of a universalizing Inward Light in each person. Friends seek to "answer that of God in every one," indicating both motive for action and that which calls forth in others an acknowledgment of the divine Light in themselves (Childress 18). Through this central linking theme Slonczewski's Sharers use their alien science to confront their off-world invaders while seeking to answer their antagonist's presumed soul-deep humanity.

Sharers govern themselves through the Gathering, reflecting the Quaker Meeting for Business. Gatherings are based upon similar Quaker-like effort to

discern right action in unity. Such Gatherings are central to the novel's plot movement as well as thematic development. We first experience a Sharer Gathering where the crucial struggle over Valan humanity is raised. Speaking in Gathering against those who now wish to respond with force to Valan brutality by releasing a virus, the novel's matriarch "wordweaver," Merwen, offers a Quaker-like solution more in keeping with peaceful Shoran efforts: "In the stillness, Merwen reminded herself that as a wordweaver she had to weave not just her own words but those of all others into a truth that all could share" (976). Nevertheless, the Valan brutality and misappropriation of planet resources continues. Ultimately Shora's pacifist resilience sees the collapse of a military effort to subdue the planet as the troops' aggression turns to open sympathy. As one Valan officer declares: "A fool's war it's been, with no army to fight and no land to fight for" (373). The cost however has been enormous in terms of dead sisters and Ocean's shattered environment. All, soul-heavy, realize that the human impulse toward killing and hatred can destroy trust in the presumptive good at the center of human identity.

Yet as readers we have also witnessed a triumph of right over might, seen violence unraveled in the face of Quaker-echoing non-violent activism—we've witnessed prevailing feminist autonomy, and embraced a non-coercive view of community. Aesthetically and narratively, *A Door Into Ocean* envisions and demonstrates enacted ways in which Quaker values can inform human choice and action. All four Quaker novels are fables that offer us believable human choices and

consequence. Even if we are not thoroughly taken up by the Quaker empowerment these novels offer, we still come away as readers better understanding what has been given a story presented alternative vision through various characters overtly and covertly proclaiming an unapologetic witness to an inwardly empowering “Light” of radical Christian experience that impacts one’s outward commitment to personal and social change.

Critic Wayne C. Booth in *The Company We Keep: An Ethics of Fiction* characterizes values-imparting story as: “I am thinking the thoughts of another” in the company we keep with fictional characters (139). As readers of these Quaker-values novels we keep company with imaginative inner and outer space narratives through memorable characters. They artfully proclaim a viable moral drama of enacted Truth, inwardly empowered, outwardly diffused. These four novels are eminently readable stories with a clearly underlying witness in their confluence of Quakerism and science fiction.

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The Power of Story: the Quaker Journal of Susanna Morris

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Story is a wildly popular theme in Christian education today. An abundance of Christian educational materials from numerous publishing companies have made their way onto the shelves of Christian bookstores and to online sources. People love stories; they read them, listen to them, watch them, and are entertained by them. But surely there is more to a story than mere amusement. Does a story have transformative power and if so, what gives story its power?

A story is understood as an account of the experiences of a certain character or characters in a chain of events moving through time and space, facing conflict and reaching resolution (Steffen, 2005). In the church setting, stories told are often from the Bible, but may also include mission stories, modern day dilemmas, stories from history, and even classic stories from literature.

As stories and their effects are analyzed it can be seen that stories have such great influence because of the way they impact various domains of human learning: cognitive, affective, behavioral, social, and spiritual. As stories are internalized and understood, they take root in these domains and as a result become transformative in their effect. Story has the power to affect the whole person – an influential medium indeed (Hoopes, 2013).

The Quaker Journal as Story

A person may tell his or her own story, and thus derive meaning and significance in the sharing. By the same token, a story may also be a historical account of a person's life experience, such as that of a person in history. In Quaker history, these often took the form of a journal in which the writer described experiences, lessons learned, and thoughts developed through the medium of the written word. Howard Brinton describes the development of Quaker journals as religious autobiographies in which the journalist's writings reflect an inner personal experience charting stages of spiritual progress through life situations. Journal writers shared their thoughts and their stories and connected them with a biblical perspective, leaving them for future generations to ponder.

Susanna Morris (1682-1755)

One such journal writer is Susanna Morris, Quaker minister of the Gospel on both sides of the Atlantic in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Born in England, Susanna was the oldest of five daughters of Susanna and Robert Heath. Moving to Pennsylvania in 1701, the family settled near Philadelphia and joined Abingdon Meeting. The family gave high priority to their Quaker faith as can be seen in the fact that four of the five daughters became ministers of the Gospel. In 1703 Susanna married Morris in a Quaker ceremony at the Abingdon Meetinghouse in the presence

of their families. Their first son was born a year later, and the couple eventually had twelve children, although four died when quite young.

Susanna's call to ministry began at age 29. With the blessing of her husband and the Quaker meeting, she traveled among Friends meetings in the colonies and Europe. She recorded a journal for her children and grandchildren, expressing deep faith and gratefulness, declaring it a testimony of God's goodness. She proclaimed her purpose in writing, stating:

And now to my own travels, and good experiences of the Lord's help and many deliverances He has wrought for me herein are worthy of some note, yet I may not be able to set them forth as their worth is, but here and there a little as it is brought to my remembrance, I hope for the good of some weak ones (Bacon, 29).

Susanna writes humbly and attributes her successes and escapes from harm to God. Her story is recorded in *Wilt Thou Go On My Errand? Three 18th Century Journals of Quaker Women Ministers: Susanna Morris (1682-1755), Elizabeth Hudson (1722-1783), and Ann Moore (1710-1783)* by Margaret Hope Bacon. Susanna's journal is not only a riveting tale but is one from which many spiritual lessons can be learned.

Shipwrecked!

At 40 years of age Susanna answered God's call to visit Friends in Carolina, Virginia, and Maryland. Accompanied by Ann Roberts, they sailed across the Chesapeake Bay in 1722, but met with "hard and boisterous winds" and were driven out to sea. "... Had not the Lord

avored us by an outstretched arm we had likely perished all of us that were in that vessel, for it was an open boat" (Bacon, 42). They were driven across a sandbar, and the sea washed over them mercilessly. All their provisions had been soaked in salt water resulting in the loss of food for the people and horses on board. The captain having lost his bearings did not know where they were. In time, land with a grassy area was spotted nearby. One man on a horse was dispatched to survey the area to see if there were any inhabitants nearby and if it was an island or the mainland. The man returned saying it was indeed an island and recommended they let the other horses graze on the grass as well. Strangely, upon leading them out, the horses galloped off in the opposite direction, disappearing from sight.

Three days later, Susanna laid down on the deck in stillness and in prayer. She was suddenly prompted to get up and look around. Surprisingly two canoes were laboriously approaching. When they finally reached the ship, one man agreed to take them to shore. He told them that there was a house six miles away where a poor widow lived but he could not take them there or stay with them. The weary travelers were becoming quite weak from not having eaten for the five days marooned on the shipwrecked vessel. But Susanna and Ann were undaunted and set out, determined to find the widow's house. Trudging through footpaths, often washed out, they finally found the house. The widow met them saying, "Good women, how come ye hither? Was it to do the will of God?" She brought them into her home, where they spent the next several days under her nurturing care.

Susanna and Ann discovered that their horses were a mere quarter of a mile from there. The women rode the horses bareback in return to the ship to collect their saddles and clothing. Susanna blithely recounts that this “at other times might have been a great hardship but surely the Lord makes hard things easy for those that are willing to serve Him well” (Bacon, 45). God had delivered them from a dangerous and life-threatening crisis. God is faithful and trustworthy.

Ministry to bring unity and reconciliation

In 1729 Susanna and Ann traveled to Europe to minister to Friends in Ireland, England, and Holland. In Holland they could not speak the language and had to work through interpreters, which they found quite tedious.

In the Twisk area of North Holland the ministers were distressed to find a great problem of disunity among Friends. Although there was but one meeting, it was divided between two different leaders. For over ten years each minister had gathered half of the meeting at their respective houses. The interpreter had tried to hide this fact from the visiting women but Susanna recorded that a “solid man full of grief (as we were)... told us his trouble” (Bacon, 53). He felt the women could be instrumental in reuniting the people.

Susanna and Elizabeth traveled to Amsterdam to meet with one of the ministers involved. After much convincing, they were able to accompany him to Twisk in order to seek reconciliation. Several successful meetings resulted in the Friends sensing

forgiveness, peace, and love with each other, glad that the women had been sent to them.

Susanna’s clear point from this encounter:

I write this account for the future so all of us may beware of letting in anything of that kind that would separate but rather as pillars of God’s house suffer and with patience bear until his holy hand may turn things that seemed to go across to our minds into order again (Bacon, 53-54).

Peace and unity are crucial in God’s perspective. God had used Susanna and Ann as agents of reconciliation.

Praying for their enemies and experiencing God’s protection

When Susanna was 62 years old, she felt another calling by God to return to the European continent on his errand. The grueling journey took just over two months to cross the Atlantic. Sailing from Ireland to England in April 1745, their route took them past the Isle of Man. Suddenly another vessel appeared, looking very much like it could be an enemy ship as it menacingly sailed around them several times.

At first Susanna was quite shocked at this, but then was prompted to pray and believe that God would discourage the potential enemies. She was overwhelmed by a concern for these people she did not even know, and prayed that God would give them grace and would “influence them with His Holy Spirit to do justice and love mercy for His name’s sake” (Bacon, 65). The other ship never did attack them. After arriving safely in England, they heard

reports about nasty pirate attacks that had occurred in the area and realized they had indeed been spared.

In 1746, Susanna was returning to Pennsylvania from London. It would have been safer to avoid sailing past Scotland, since enemy French ships had taken over 25 ships there. However the winds were more favorable to sail in that direction and the captain decided to take that route “without council of any man.” Susanna however claimed that she trusted in “a far better arm than all the contrivance of men and all that the arm of flesh can do for them” (Bacon, 81). Twice they encountered French ships and the crew readied guns on the ship. But the ships turned away and they were saved from danger. Susanna gave all the praise to the goodness of God who cares for his servants. God can be trusted in precarious situations. Praying for those seen as enemies is what pleases God.

Saved from danger at sea – again!

On another voyage, Susanna traveled in December with several British Friends ministers, who were returning to England. During times of meditation and prayer, Susanna had several spiritual impressions of being shipwrecked. At first she did not want to believe it but when the “dream” came again and yet again, she was convinced it was from the Lord. Shaking with fear from the memory of previous shipwrecks at sea, Susanna experienced God’s peaceful reassurance that the waves would not hurt them and God would preserve them. Hesitantly she shared her vision with the startled captain, but assured him that she also saw him safe on shore in the end.

When the weather turned foul and storm conditions overwhelmed the ship, the captain valiantly tried to maintain its course but it was run into rocks off the coast of Ireland and thrown on its side. The survivors all hung desperately onto parts of the ship, trying to find the highest place to avoid being swept away by the waves and water.

Suddenly Susanna sensed they should all move to the lower side of the ship. Although it took much convincing, when the survivors moved to what seemed like the more precarious side, huge waves crashed on the high side of the ship and destroyed it. No one was lost because they had moved to safety. Nine long hours were spent in the dark and angry sea. When morning came the townspeople appeared and rescued the surviving crew and passengers. Since this was a Catholic area, some felt fearful of harm, but the local priest had declared that they should treat the survivors as respectfully and honorably as they might treat the Holy Father Himself. The gracious rescuers sent letters to Friends in the surrounding area who came with provisions and offers of shelter. When Susanna’s role became known, she was hailed as a hero and spiritual authority. Many came to hear her speak as she made her way through the towns and provinces in Ireland and England.

Strength and wisdom through difficult times

At 70 years of age, Susanna felt drawn to make one more trip to England to minister in some of the places she had not yet visited in the southwestern area. She visited nearly 50 different meetings from May 1752 to September 1753.

Travel was not easy. She writes:

I visited all down the south parts of the west of England from Portsmouth to Land's End, though a very hilly country and bad roads, I thought it was very hard for me to get up and down the hills, for some of them were more like to stairs in an house than any other thing, and so stony that my creature threw me off many times, but (forever blessed be my great Master and preserver) I was never much hurt and sometimes not hurt at all; for the creature bowed herself so low with me that it was like laying me down and the last time it was in the soft mud (Bacon, 98).

On this trip Susanna was constantly speaking Truth to Friends as well as to those not yet convinced. She shared the Gospel with all who would listen, and many did listen to this courageous woman who spoke with authority and wisdom. She was not afraid to speak out against worldly temptations, such as use of tobacco and liquor, and urged people to be filled with the Spirit instead. She encountered disbelief that the Lord would use females to labor in the Gospel and affirmed that God is willing and able to use women to go on his errands.

At times she battled homesickness, being away from her family for as many as three years at a time. But she did not allow herself to wallow in pity, but desired to remain a faithful witness to God's strength and help.

And then my mind began to go a little too fast home, for I was ready to say in my heart, O let me go home again if I must come back again but I can well think it was not good for me to think so, therefore let none that would do the best they can take example by me in that (Bacon, 61).

Honor is constantly given to God in each difficult situation. As Susanna relates her story, the reader is continually encouraged to place trust in God.

Therefore let my soul bless and praise the living God who has been pleased to do for me a poor unworthy creature than ever I could either have asked of Him or thought of. Although I have had many, yea, more than common deliverances both by shipwreck at sea and various trials at land in my pilgrimage thus far through time, yet I find it still safe for me and I believe all the children of my Father's house to think little of themselves, for all the good that any of us are capable of doing from the ability that the God and Father of all our mercies bestoweth on us for His own honour's sake only (Bacon, 64).

The Power of Story – As Seen through this Quaker Journal

Susanna's story is a legacy of an amazing woman who trusted God and was mightily used for His sake. She reports that through the Lord's goodness she was able to experience "victory over all wrong spirits and hope [that she] had some good service amongst them" (Bacon, 99).

Susanna's story is powerful. Her words are used with intentionality and have significant influence in shaping values, spiritual development, and faith. As her children, grandchildren, and all who come after her read her journal, they are struck with the power of her experiences and her words.¹ Readers are immersed in her story, and faith and service to God are prompted. The whole person is touched. In the cognitive realm, ways of

¹ See e.g. the story of Susannah's son Samuel and his traveling ministry at ushistory.org

thinking about God are expanded and deepened. In the affective realm, the personal relationship with God is enriched and enhanced. In the behavioral realm, ways of responding to crises and difficult situations are modeled. In the social realm, ways of relating to fellow women and men are practiced and displayed for the reader to emulate. And in the spiritual realm, the thanks, praise, glory, and honor are always directed to God. The reader is swayed to follow Susanna's example of humility and devotion to the Savior through her powerful testimony. Susanna's shared experiences allow the reader to live them through her words and descriptions. Insight into God's character, actions, and design for life is gained. In reading Susanna's journal, we see how she finds her place in God's grand story, and we find ours as well.

Read the journals of other courageous and outstanding Quaker women in:

Wilt Thou Go On My Errand? Three 18th Century Journals of Quaker Women Ministers: Susanna Morris, Elizabeth Hudson, Ann Moore, edited by Margaret Hope Bacon. Pendle Hill Publications. 1994.

Hidden in Plain Sight – Quaker Women's Writings (1650-1700), edited by Mary Garman, Judith Applegate, Margaret Benefiel, Dortha Meredith. Pendle Hill Publications. 1996.

Strength in Weakness – Writings by Eighteenth Century Quaker Women, edited by Gil Skidmore. AltaMira Press. 2003.

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Becoming Broader: Risking Boundary Changes

Rebecca Mays (Temple University) & Ron Rembert (Wilmington College)

Hannah Whitall Smith, as a young Quaker woman, wrote in a letter to her sister Sally about the friends who disparaged her religious experience: “They met every day one summer to pray that I might not become ‘Broad Church’ and I kept on getting broader and broader, and finally they got broader themselves.” Hannah’s life story (1832-1911) exemplifies a significant shift in the religious culture of the Religious Society of Friends in Philadelphia. In that shift, the individual self takes precedence over a more corporate communal identity, the value placed upon emotion in religious experience increases, and the practices that made for “a peculiar people” begin to crumble. The questions that arose as Hannah became more “broad” and the ways in which her broadening was seen as a threat to her community are still relevant today: how open-hearted, inclusive can a religious person be without succumbing to a rampant relativism that would make corporate identity impossible?

This article unites two authors’ work on the impacts and processes of “becoming broader”: Rebecca Mays’ reflections on her reading of Hannah Whitall Smith and Mays’ work with the Dialogue Institute’s international religious pluralism project, and Ron Rembert’s development of several queries through a close reading of *Separations, Their Causes and Effects*, (Studies in Nineteenth Century Quakerism), by an English Friend, Edward Grubb.

Rebecca’s Story

I have witnessed this need to have a clear individual identity and yet maintain a sense of corporate religious identity as a central question among the two hundred international students who have come to study religious pluralism at the Dialogue Institute where I work. Over six years cohorts of twenty each have come from the Middle East in summer and Southeast Asia in winter. They come from a variety of religious traditions: Hindu, Buddhist, Druze, Muslim, Yazidi, Evangelical Christian, Catholic, and indigenous traditions. Based on their experiences of “becoming broader” and my reading of Hannah Whitall Smith, I am ready to risk some of my points of reference for the sake of “becoming broader,” for owning a global identity while still maintaining devout local and personal identities that can respect profound religious difference.

Hannah’s Story

Hannah Whitall Smith, like many of the international students I have met, faced maturation of her spiritual experiences. Into what context was Hannah born? In 1832 she entered the world as a child from a long line of prominent and influential Quakers in New Jersey. Hannah Tatum Whitall was the daughter of John Mickle Whitall and Mary Tatum Whitall and one of four grown children. She saw her parents as exemplars of the Quaker community, reserved and not prone to speak of religion, but living a

daily faith that was a testimony to lived experience of the divine.

Her autobiography identifies major characteristics of the corporate Quaker identity at the time: “it was a very sober, quiet sort of religion that remained, which allowed of but little expression, and was far more entirely interior than seems to me now to have been wise.” The perceptible guidance of the Holy Spirit, meaning the distinct and conscious voice of God in the heart; and a loyal devotion to what “testimonies,” outward expressions of the convictions of inward truth were the mainstays of the practice, complete with actual “quaking” or “trembling” of the body that Hannah noted as the bodily measure of the perceptible guidance within of the “inner Light” first revealed with greater fervor to Fox, Fell and their followers in 17th century northern England. No Bible study, no Sunday schools such as were practiced among “the world’s people” would disturb the quiet in which the guidance could be felt, heard, sensed, or known.²

The very asceticism of the outer prohibitions for Friends though had left Hannah somewhat empty of experiences of Divine presence. While attending a Methodist camp meeting, she trusts her impulse to “broaden” her experience:

I shall never forget the first time I was present at one of these Camp Meetings, and the first Prayer Meeting I attended. It was an early morning meeting in a tent. I knew nothing of Methodist Meetings, having never attended any

² Hannah Whitall Smith, *The Unselfishness of God* (Uhrichsville, Ohio: Barbour and Company, 1993), p. 26.

except those little ones in Millville, and had no conception of the emotional atmosphere into which I had come. I found when I got into the meeting that I had forgotten my handkerchief, but having never in my life shed any tears in a meeting, I was not troubled. But in this meeting the fountains of my being seemed to be broken up, and floods of delicious tears poured from my eyes. I was reduced to great straits, and was obliged surreptitiously to lift up my dress and use my white under-skirt to dry my tears. I have never since been to any meeting without at least two handkerchiefs safely tucked away in my pocket, although I believe I have never since been so overwhelmed with emotion, and I revelled in it.³

I cite this experience at length because it is pivotal in Hannah’s choice to leave the Quakers in 1858 with her husband, Robert Pearsall Smith. She leaves behind the asceticism of outer practice: the “sugar-scoop” bonnet, plain speech that used “thee” and “thou” as forms of intimacy, no longer as challenges to a social hierarchy, and no reading of fiction, seeing plays, or listening to music. She discovers a vibrancy in the Holiness movement that excites her passion for God and she begins to see the asceticism as the empty form Quakers originally eschewed.

So what is happening in the broader community into which Hannah is growing? In 1834, two years after Hannah is born, Charles Finney, a founding mover with Phoebe Palmer of the rise of evangelicalism in America, preaches and writes: “A ‘Revival of Religion’ presupposes a declension. Almost all the religion in the world has

³ Smith, *The Unselfishness of God*, p. 180.

been produced by revivals. God has found it necessary to take advantage of the excitability there is in mankind, to produce powerful excitements among them, before he can lead them to obey.”⁴ Phoebe Palmer’s influence is to add a strong Biblicism that transcends denominations.⁵ Added to this mix are Jonathan Edward’s early New England endorsement and methodology of revivals and the earlier European Protestant movements that transcended national borders, risking affiliations that moved beyond political ties of governments.⁶

By the time Hannah went to her first Camp Meeting, the evangelical movement was in full force with its emphasis on a personal experience of conversion, biblical inerrancy, and a possibility for perfection in this life, often referred to as the “higher life” movement. As Hannah preached, she found some of the deeper convictions of Quakers to come alive with these additional emphases. Hannah Whitall Smith and Robert Pearsall Smith as preachers in the Holiness movement introduced many Quaker phrases and practices into the Holiness movement. Friends in Britain became involved with the Higher Life movement, with Robert Wilson, a British Friend from Cockermonth meeting, helping to found

the Keswick Convention⁷ (which continues to meet annually to this day promoting higher life theology, a theology at base that is consonant with all branches of Friends). That consonance resides as well in the experience in which Hannah discovers “Universalism,” a section that is deleted from many of the publications of her autobiography.

One day I was riding on a tram-car along Market Street, Philadelphia, when I saw two men come in and seat themselves opposite to me. . . . [she experiences an anguished thought about sin followed by new knowledge]. If I were Christ, nothing could satisfy me but that every human being should in the end be saved, and therefore I am sure that nothing less will satisfy Him. And with this a veil seemed to be withdrawn from before the plans of the universe, and I saw that it was true, as the Bible says, that "as in Adam all die—even so in Christ should all be made alive." As was the first, even so was the second. The "all" in one case could not in fairness mean less than the "all" in the other. I saw therefore that the remedy must necessarily be equal to the disease, the salvation must be as universal as the fall. I saw all this that day on the tram-car on Market street, Philadelphia—not only thought it, or hoped it, or even believed it—but knew it. It was a Divine fact.... My heart was at rest about it forever.⁸

⁴ William McGloughlin, *The American Evangelicals, 1800-1900* (NY: Harper, 1968), p. 87.

⁵ Melvin Easterday Dieter, *The Holiness Revival of the 19th Century* (Lanham, MD and London: Scarecrow Press, 1996), pp. 37-40.

⁶ Dieter, *Holiness Revival*, pp. 15-16 and Sweeney, Douglas, *The American Evangelical Story: A History of the Movement* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Academic, 2005), p. 29, 45.

⁷ Edwin B. Bonner, “Moderates in London Yearly Meeting 1857-1873: Precursors of Quaker Liberals,” *Church History* 59 (1990): 356-371; Bebbington, David William, *Evangelicalism in Britain: a history from the 1730s to the 1980s* (London: Unwin Hyman, 1989), p. 157.

⁸ <http://www.tentmaker.org/books/unselfishness-of-god.htm> (excerpt from unpublished Chapter 22)

In her experience of Christian Universalism Hannah offers contemporary Friends a model for comity among differences. Near the end of her life, she rejoined Friends. Today she might be considered a “convergent” Friend. Robin Mohr coined the phrase in early 2006 in her post “Robinopedia: Convergent Friends.” She wrote: “It describes Friends who are seeking a deeper understanding of our Quaker heritage and a more authentic life in the kingdom of God on Earth, radically inclusive of all who seek to live this life. It includes, among others, Friends from the politically liberal end of the evangelical branch, the Christian end of the unprogrammed branch, and the more outgoing end of the Conservative branch.” A radical relationship grows between the boundary and what lies beyond the boundary when religious experience brings one closer to the center of one’s own tradition.

Hannah Whitall Smith’s experience is mirrored in those of the young adults in the Dialogue Institute’s five-week program. Their context is one in which they look to be part of a global community where the fervor for connection through the Internet drives a sense of belonging. Is such fervor analogous to the revival movement of the 19th century? Certainly the need to belong is a shared human drive; what to belong *to* is a question that can both intensify and challenge their own experiences of the transcendent.

At the Dialogue Institute, a young Muslim man left a meeting for worship in tears, filled with what he called the “joy” and “love” he felt for all his colleagues, even those most different

from him. A Buddhist young woman shared how her experience of Buddhism felt for her was like what she witnessed in a Catholic communion. Others resisted a “unitive” experience. A young Muslim man questioned how Allah could be the same God as he saw worshipped in the Christian church. Those with more tribal roots argued for the distinction of a boundary as preserving the community. They argued that without a strong boundary, the deep faith could be eroded. The truth I heard in each experience, combined with my Quaker assumption that lived experience is the foundation of religion conviction over and above religious creed, helped me toward my own working definition of religious experience.

Robert Scharf and Jonathan Z. Smith have offered an advisory caution to those who study religious experience. No definitions of experience or of religion allow for common usage.⁹ The terms are forged from cultural specific assumptions. These assumptions often are those of the dominating culture whose members do not know or respect minorities. For the sake of assessing how to relate as a Quaker to profound religious difference, still I risk a working definition in which I identify my own assumptions about religious experience. In studying narratives of change attributed to religious experience, I am using this definition: religious experience is the narrative accounting for a moment in time when a person (insider or outsider) records a new

⁹ Robert Sharf, “Experience” and Jonathan Z. Smith, “Religion, Religions, Religious” in Mark Taylor, Ed., *Critical Terms for Religious Studies* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), pp. 94, 98, and 281.

insight of self-awareness that increases empathy for someone other than one's self. At times a temporary collapse of boundaries accompanies the new insight and can raise serious doubts and questions. A time of "cognitive dissonance" occurs. As this new experience is met with critical thinking and emotional intelligence, boundaries can be re-negotiated. One's own particular and the constraints of language (needed to communicate) can lead one to generalize one's own experience to encompass the fullness of experience for all people.

As Hannah Whitall Smith grew "more broad" in accepting that the love she felt embraced all persons, she also defined that love in the particular terms that for her signified the transcendent. I observed in the international students that where doubt and questions were safe to entertain, each could deepen their own understanding of their faith tradition, not homogenize it with other traditions. Where the experience included "becoming broader," a fusion occurred between affect and will, often with a "universalizing" component. Based on a deeper understanding of their own tradition, the person was freed to expand respect for the other who was different.

For example, as one conservative young Muslim woman encountered the transgendered person in her cohort, she at first recoiled. Then upon reflection, she saw in her own freedom of choice to wear a head scarf (even though the Qur'an did not dictate it) that this other person should also have freedom of choice about how she wanted to live. The two women became supportive of one another. The Quaker approach to

interfaith relations includes deep listening with a devotional humility that allows for a "universalizing" experience that does not need to surrender distinctive patterns of behavior so long as "that of God" in each person is respected.

Courtney Bender, religious studies scholar, identifies three indicators for effective narration of these experiences: temporal ordering, social ties, and a feeling of not knowing. Narratives unfold in linear fashion; they reveal social ties; and then tears and bodily sensations emerge as signs of pure experience.¹⁰

Marie Griffiths, another religious studies scholar studying the experience of evangelical women, describes the cycles of regression and renewal that pervade spirit-filled women's accounts of transformation. She names the conjoining of will and emotion as a marker¹¹ for what Hannah Whitall Smith would call the experience of "becoming broader" yet retaining devotional integrity in practice. These markers from Bender and Griffiths help me find a way to work with religious prejudice. Where boundaries are built, maintained, released and re-negotiated, the effective conjoining of will and emotion create new boundaries that are both more inclusive and still distinctive. Corrigan and White trace this renegotiation of

¹⁰ Courtney Bender, *The New Metaphysicals: Spirituality and the American Religious Imagination* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2010), pp. 63-67.

¹¹ R. Marie Griffiths, *God's Daughters: Evangelical Women and the Power of Submission* (CA: University of California Press, 1997), pp. 106-107.

boundaries in the era in which the Smiths lived.¹² Much remains to do to see how the relation of emotion and will allow for the successful negotiation of healthy boundaries which, in religious experience, can relax in trust within a community of support.¹³

But for the purpose of naming the Quaker contribution to interfaith dialogue, the stories of lived experience and queries become paramount. In 1993, Robert Wuthnow claimed that the reconciliation between individual religious identity and a religious communal one would rest with how each individual person managed to do so.¹⁴ Hannah Smith achieved a productive

¹² Christopher White, *Unsettled Minds: Psychology and the American Search for Spiritual Assurance, 1830-1940* (CA: University of California Press, 2009), pp. 79-81; John Corrigan, *Business of the Heart: Religion and Emotion in the Nineteenth Century* (CA: University of California Press, 2002), p. 23.

¹³ Many strands of Hannah Whitall Smith's story therefore deserve further study: the influence of the Keswick convention on the Richmond Declaration, a document originally intended to preserve the balance that in the extremes now poses a divisive threat to the corporate identity of Friends; the transition from a full journal tradition that emphasized corporate identity over individual into an individual memoir tradition; further placing of Quakers within the Second Great Awakening to understand mission activity that means the majority of Quakers now are Kenyan and Bolivian; the ongoing struggle to find a balance between individual and corporate identity in this new context; the Hannah's understanding of the "Motherliness of God" as a contribution to gender studies; and the exploration of the phenomenon of "celestial flesh" in the work of Richard Bailey and Michele Tarter.

¹⁴ Robert Wuthnow, *Christianity in the 21st century: Reflections on the Challenges Ahead* (NY and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), p. 40.

reconciliation. In her move from identifying as Quaker to holiness preacher and back to Quaker we see the successful negotiation of boundaries. In her story there is not simply the usual argument of cultural adaptation to the holiness movement, but rather a narrative that exists in the complex phenomenon of religious experience.¹⁵ So, too, can the stories of self-acclaimed religious young adults under the press of globalization.

How does one though deal with the cognitive dissonance that can be threatening? One young Shia Muslim woman in a Sufi mosque weeps and does not understand her former prejudice; a young Christian woman, minority in her own country, finds she does not know quite how to handle the experience of being in the majority in the U.S. What are the queries and advices we can use in this interreligious dialogue that make such moments of cognitive dissonance safe for reflection and the formation of new insights? How do we in relating to religious difference sanction personal identity yet ask for respect for profound differences that threaten that very identity?

Ron's Reading:

Quaker Queries and Conflicts

Ron Rembert has used Quaker queries to think seriously about the attitudes and assumptions that precede such experiences of "becoming broader," of opening to new insights and re-negotiations of boundaries. A query in

¹⁵ Carole Dale Spencer, *Holiness: The Soul of Quakerism* (Oregon: Wipf and Stock, 2008), p. 192.

the best Quaker tradition forms an open-ended question, asked at varying intervals in a person's life, which helps one reflect on the learning and growth that is the basis of a maturing faith. His queries derive from a close reading of an insightful work, *Separations, Their Causes and Effects, (Studies in Nineteenth Century Quakerism)*, by an English Friend, Edward Grubb.

While offering essential historical analysis of the separations among Friends in the nineteenth century, Grubb also offers commentary that helps us consider causes of separation from a more spiritual perspective that Ron explores in terms of barriers. His assumption is that learning more about the separation can turn barriers that keep Friends and persons of differing faiths apart into cornerstones that hold them together.

Barriers Within Oneself

Barriers within oneself include those in the heart and the mind—fear, distrust, lack of patience and charity and oppression and disownment.

Regarding fear, for example, he notes this emotion arising in reaction to “dangers of liberty” or, more specifically, freedom with no boundaries that served as a premonition of a separation worrying many Friends (14).¹⁶ Grubb notes that between 1817–1824, some Quakers known as “New Lights” approximated Ranters in their irresponsible, public behavior:

¹⁶ All quotations, unless otherwise indicated, are from Grubb, E. *Separations, Their Causes and Effects (Studies in Nineteenth Century Quakerism)* London: Headley Brothers, 1914.

A considerable number of these ‘New Lights’ were disowned, and set up meetings of their own, which, however, were not ‘in the life’ and soon broke up through quarrels among the leaders—whose names, happily now forgotten—it is not worthwhile to revive. The chief reason for mentioning this discreditable episode is that it did much to intensify the fears of the timid and conservative as to the dangers of liberty, and to bind yet tighter the bonds of traditional beliefs and practices (14 – 15).

Fear not only affected meeting life on its fringes, but also at the center. Grubb describes fear on the part of some leaders “to use the mind” in challenging themselves or each other:

There was no one who could stand up to Gurney, and meet him on his own ground of scholarship. All his opponents could do was to appeal, almost mechanically, to passages in the writings of the early Friends, as if the language of the seventeenth century provided a final court of judgment for Quaker thought. Friends repeated the ancient formulae, but had almost ceased to drink at the spring of fresh inspiration from which the founders drew. They had been trained to fear to use their minds, and the result was inevitable poverty (75).

Queries for turning Barriers into Cornerstones

Does fear of extreme possibilities necessarily inhibit openness to moderation?

Is fear of any change congruent with a life of faith?

Is fear around ignorance often expressed as pride rather than humility?

Does fear of appearing wrong inhibit the need to act right?

Distrust can prevent reconciliation from even starting as illustrated by Grubb's description of a proposed meeting between Elias Hicks and Elders of Philadelphia Yearly meeting in 1822:

After visiting Baltimore in the autumn of 1822, he reached Philadelphia towards the end of the year, and encountered opposition from the Elders there. A deputation from a meeting of Elders requested a private interview with him, but he at first declined, on the ground that he was accountable to his own Meeting and not to them. Eventually he acceded to their request, but took care to have several of his friends present. He doubtless wished to have witnesses, not only of what took place at the interview, but also in order that their version of what he had said on particular occasions might be available. To this the Elders objected, and declined to proceed with their business (28).

When colleagues need to play the role of "witnesses" whose "versions" of a meeting might be required in defending oneself, a climate of distrust prevails, leading, not surprisingly, to a rebuff of each side by the other before any exchange even starts.

Queries for turning Barriers into Cornerstones

Does distrusting others before they prove trustworthy seem more reasonable than trusting others until they prove untrustworthy?

Does distrusting someone you know and share a connection seem more difficult than distrusting someone you don't know and do not share a connection?

Is trusting an act of faith?

Besides distrust, a lack of patience and charity derailed the proposed meeting between Hicks and his opponents. Judgments about "unsound" views can so easily escalate into judgment about "persons" holding them, igniting the impatience and lack of charity that a judgmental spirit can generate without contributing to the finding of truth:

Unfortunately a good many of the revivalists while making the highest profession of sanctification, showed little of this Christian tenderness and humble willingness to learn. They too often rode rough-shod over those who could not fall into lines with their methods, assuming that, being 'fully consecrated', their way was God's way (107).

Queries for turning Barriers into Cornerstones

Is there a clear difference between loving an idea and loving a person?

Does it make sense that we are what we think?

Is patience an essential part of faith?

Is patience a practice or a gift?

Final signs of barriers within Friends seemingly left unresolved showed forth as acts of oppression and disownment. There are many reasons for the split among Friends that may still be questioned, but, according to Grubb, some tactics used in enforcing it need reevaluation:

But whatever faults and deficiencies we can now see on both sides, nothing could excuse the harsh and arbitrary and unscrupulous methods that were used by the leaders of New England Yearly Meeting to get John Wilbur disowned.

Such methods as were then employed always recoil on those who use them; and they left a seed of bitterness which did much to provoke further divisions and from which we are suffering today (88).

Queries for turning Barriers into Cornerstones

How do you distinguish between subtle and overt forms of oppression?

When does discipline become oppressive?

Can justice and forgiveness be achieved at the same time?

Barriers of the Mind arise also in the form of presuppositions, assumptions or other hindrances to understanding and as issues surrounding the use of reasoning.

In any controversy like the separation among Friends, presuppositions and assumptions, revealed or unrevealed, shape the interaction as much, if not more, than publicly stated views. An Evangelical Revival in the British Isles influenced many Friends and their views leading toward the separation:

And an outcome of this awakened life was a more earnest desire to defend and propagate Evangelical views of Christianity as being, it was supposed, necessary for salvation (17).

Such a supposition gelled into a presupposition about salvation theology, biblical authority and religious practice that defined the mindset of many Friends during the separation controversy. Articulation of these suppositions created tension and anxiety on the part of other Friends who did not evidently share them.

Since suppositions underlie our views of truth, it is extremely important to acknowledge and explicate them, but even more significant to avoid assuming that others will understand, appreciate and accept them as a result. The differences among our views of truth may start with our misunderstandings or disagreements about our suppositions.

Queries for turning Barriers into Cornerstones

Are members of a community likely to take suppositions, assumptions about truth for granted?

Is it more difficult to set aside an assumption underlying a view or a view itself?

Do we assume it to be true that we do not see all the truth there is?

Barriers Beyond Oneself

Barriers beyond oneself are not easily separable from the barriers within, but they originate from other sources: scripture, the history of early Friends, and the generation of labels in a social setting. Overcoming barriers arising from these sources may prove more challenging than avoiding those within.

One of the difficulties with scripture is its partisan use, leading to situations where selection and interpretation of passages prove disagreeable. Grubb refers to “the impossibility of deciding the differences among Christians by the Scriptures alone, seeing that all bodies use them in support of their own views” (54). Similar partisanship supported appeals to the writings and traditions of

early Friends as another authoritative source upheld by some Friends:

In short, though he (John Wilbur) understood Quaker theology as Gurney never did, his eyes were fixed on the past; he had no sense of progress, hardly any vision for the future; his only remedy for the blind struggles after liberty, which the Society was passing through, was to bind ever tighter the bonds of traditional belief and observance (87).

Whatever the differences in views among Friends regarding religious authority, the labeling of one group by another likely discouraged reconciliation within or beyond each group:

Those who were divided from the “Orthodox” body were called by the latter “Hicksites,” but they never assumed the name themselves, and never as a body formally accepted his opinions (19).

Queries for Turning Barriers into Cornerstones

When facing disagreements in views about religious authority, can the practice of open worship serve as an agreeable authority transcending differences?

Is it possible that some authoritative sources are most helpful for addressing some issues, but not others, but that all might be helpful in one way or another?

Why are labels so powerful and so impotent in trying to understanding each other?

Ron’s queries help provide the space for reflection on the part of the individual person whose story is under consideration. These queries help to

make safe the “cognitive dissonance” in the sincere answering of them for each individual. In telling our stories of lived religious experience with awareness of our fears we create substantive dialogue among persons of differing (or no) faiths. At the heart of the tradition(s) of Friends across our differences there is comity and a model for interaction with “the other.”

George Fox, 17th century Quaker minister, exhorts Friends in the ministry “to awaken the witness, confounding deceit.... Then you will come to walk cheerfully over the world, answering that of God in everyone.”¹⁷ The use of queries, together with the narration of stories and a consequent re-negotiation of boundaries based on lived experiences of the transcendent and respect for individual persons, become practices for creating intra- and interfaith harmony. These practices open a path not only for facing our internal differences within the Quaker community, but also for joining in the interreligious dialogue movement.

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¹⁷ John Nickalls, ed., *Journal of George Fox* (Philadelphia: Yearly Meeting, 1985), p. 263.

Helping Increase Peace in Rwanda

Donn Weinholtz (University of Hartford) & Diane Thistle Weinholtz (Watkinson School)

This article has two purposes. The first is to provide a straightforward description of our involvement teaching peace-building and conflict resolution skills within the Rwanda Teacher Education Program. The second is to offer insights into the unusual circumstances that led us to do so, in order to highlight some of the challenges that might be encountered trying to expand the program beyond Rwanda's borders.

We educators strive to create effective, innovative programs that we often hope to replicate across wide-ranging settings. For example, recently, a well-meaning and highly accomplished colleague, after hearing a brief description of our Rwandan project, sincerely suggested that we spread it throughout Africa, an effort that he offered to assist. While this idea had appeal, over the years we have noticed how difficult it is to widely replicate programs. In Quaker terms, we think that perhaps this is because "Way Opens" idiosyncratically, rendering replication much more difficult than it appears on the surface. We certainly don't mean to imply that HIPP's diffusion is impossible. Rather, we hope to show there are many unseen variables, beyond our control, working against rapid program dissemination.

After all, how do you replicate serendipity?

It is such a cliché to say that "life is a journey," but it really is; and you can never be sure where that journey will lead. Take the two of us for example. We are in our mid-sixties, and we have been married 43 years. We work in adjoining schools, we raised three children who went to those

schools, and our lives evolved into comfortable routines. Four years ago, we would never have predicted that we would become part of a partnership between the University of Hartford and the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Rwanda, and that we would begin teaching peace-building and conflict resolution skills to hundreds of Rwandan teachers. However, that's what happened, and it has been quite a journey.

The story as to how this occurred is long and complicated, too complex to explain in great detail, here. However, while briefly describing our involvement in the Rwanda Teacher Education Program, we will provide glimpses, via italicized "*Asides*", into how this process began and how it has unfolded. By doing so we hope to provide insight into the unusual circumstances involved; thereby illustrating why this innovative educational program might spread slowly, if at all, beyond Rwanda.

The Rwanda Teacher Education Program

In partnership with the Rwandan Ministry of Education and the Rwandan Education Board, the University of Hartford's College of Education, Nursing and Health Professions (ENHP) established the Rwandan Teacher Education Program (RTEP) in the summer of 2014. The RTEP's main goals – to increase the effectiveness of Rwandan teachers and develop a new cadre of local educational leaders—are pursued under the guidance of University of Hartford faculty and master teachers from throughout the eastern United States. Logistic support is provided by ENHP's [Institute for](#)



Figure 1: Diane role-playing active listening with a Rwandan teacher

Translational Research. (Rwanda Teacher Education Program, 2016.)

RTEP’s initial pilot phase (2014-16) brought 40 Rwandan teachers to the University of Hartford for training in teaching English as a second language (ESL)¹⁸ and instructional planning, in preparation for Rwanda rolling out its new competency-based curriculum in 2016. The pilot also incorporated peace building and conflict resolution, which we taught. The program now has instructors traveling to Rwanda biannually to provide expanded professional development to large cadres of teachers. The agreement between the University and the Ministry of Education was recently extended through 2026.

¹⁸ Rwanda adopted English as its official instructional language six years ago. Consequently, the nation is in great need of ESL assistance. The mother tongue, Kinyarwanda, is generally spoken in homes, and most of the current teaching force was taught in French.

As of December 2015, training sessions involving over 300 Rwandan teachers were conducted over three weeks. Immediate plans call for expanding these sessions to include up to 600 teachers, with clusters of Rwandan teacher leaders increasingly taking on expanded facilitation roles.

The program’s director, Dr. Joseph Olzacki, previously served as director of arts education in Connecticut’s Bloomfield Public School district and developed close ties with the government and people of Rwanda through his award-winning Identity Project, a program focused on using lessons from the Holocaust and other genocides to strengthen student identity. Aware of Joe’s work, the United Nations sent him to Rwanda as an educational ambassador. While there, he began making the connections that would allow him to return to Rwanda on several occasions and foster the creation of the current program.

Aside # 1: Donn served as Joe Olzacki’s doctoral dissertation adviser over a decade ago. Although the two stayed in touch during the intervening years, they did not collaborate on any projects until Joe asked Donn, about 4 years ago to begin sitting in on local discussions, as well as Skyped meetings with Rwandan Ministry of Education officials, about what a version of the Identity Project tailored for Rwanda might look like. Over time, the idea of anything remotely resembling the Identity Project disappeared, as did most of the original U.S. collaborators. The current program emerged around a clear demand from the Rwandans for ESL skills; Joe’s recognition that Rwandan teachers did not possess the planning and instructional skills commonly taught in the U.S.; and Donn’s stubborn insistence that all teachers, in fact all people, would benefit from training in the peace building and conflict resolution skills taught in the American Friends Service

Committee's Help Increase the Peace Program (HIPP.)

Donn had become aware of HIPP because Diane, introduced to HIPP by Fred Pfeil and Mary Lee Morrison from Hartford Friends Meeting, had been conducting HIPP workshops for teams of Watkinson Middle School students, along with their Hartford (CT), urban public school counterparts, for many years. He was so impressed by Diane's stories of the inter-racial collaboration and emerging leadership skills among participating students, that he sought out HIPP training himself. While engaging in HIPP workshops, Donn recognized the content overlap, with some leadership skills that he had been teaching to undergraduate and graduate students, for years.

HIPP Modified for Rwandan Teachers

HIPP was created by the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC), “a Quaker organization devoted to service, development, and peace programs throughout the world...” whose “...work is based on the belief in the worth of every person, and faith in the power of love to overcome violence and injustice.” HIPP evolved from AFSC’s successful, adult-focused [Alternatives to Violence Program](#) (AVP), teaches non-violent ways to prevent and resolve conflicts and is used in schools across the world to help students learn peace-making skills.

The series of workshops that we developed for use in Rwanda do not constitute a complete version of the Help Increase the Peace Program (Weinholtz and Weiholtz, 2015). However the skills that we selected to focus upon are those that we believe are most important for the Rwandan teachers to emphasize when teaching peace education and conflict resolution skills to their students and faculty colleagues. We are willing to



Figure 2: A Rwandan teacher facilitating his colleagues' participation in small group conflict resolution exercise.

[share our manual](#), free of charge, with anyone requesting it. The complete HIPP Manual (Mattingly, 2009) can be purchased from the [American Friends Service Committee](#).

HIPP has certain ground rules that workshop participants are expected to faithfully follow. They are: 1) Listen carefully; 2) Look for the good in others; 3) Don't interrupt; 4) Participate fully; and 5) Show respect. It is important to follow these rules because peace and conflict resolution skills are best learned in a supportive community. The mantra that we adhere to is: *It's about working together.*

Our program is organized into four separate sections, all of which are laid out in the instructional manual. **First**, there are explanations of the three communication skills that lie at the heart of the conflict prevention and resolution approach that we advocate. They are: active listening, I-messages, and Win-Win problem solving. When teaching these skills, we place a heavy emphasis on learners observing and participating in role play activities, so they can witness the skills as well as practice them.



Figure 3: Rwandan students attending a “Peace Festival” organized at their local school by an RTEP teacher leader.

Second, there are descriptions of several fun activities used in HIPP workshops in order to build community among the participants. These games, with names like “Elephant and Palm Trees” and “Big Wind Blows,” are interspersed throughout the workshops as community building events.

Third, there are brief overviews of five topics, suitable for presentations and discussions, that can foster a richer understanding of peace building efforts. These mini-presentations address: *Kingian Non-violence*, drawing on the teachings of Martin Luther King; the *Social Causes of Aggression and Approval*, as explained by social psychologist George Homans; William Ury’s recommendations regarding the role of *The Third Side* in resolving conflict; Robert Greenleaf’s ten principles of *Servant Leadership*, as well as the concept of a Pyramid of Hate and the Pyramid of Hope and Peace.

Fourth, there are the objectives and agendas for five, three-hour workshops combining all of the materials appearing in the instructional manual. At the conclusion of these four sections there is an evaluation

form to obtain participants’ perceptions of the HIPP workshops’ effectiveness. (Weinholtz and Weinholtz, 2015)

In the four training sessions that we have conducted so far, while making minor revisions to adjust to shifting circumstances, we have kept the overall program very consistent. By doing so, we have ensured the increasing comfort of the teacher leaders that have been with us since the beginning, as well as that of the new leaders that we have picked up over subsequent sessions.

Aside #2: Although HIPP was well received by the Rwandan teachers, from the beginning of the Rwanda Teacher Education Program, there were people within the Rwandan educational bureaucracy who were interested in eliminating the HIPP component of the overall RTEP effort in order to reduce costs. On several occasions, Joe reported that he had really had “to fight to keep HIPP included.” Then a very interesting thing happened. Our December 2015 training occurred during an annual “national dialogue” conducted in the Rwandan Parliament building and presided over by President Paul Kagame.

The dialogue provides a forum for people throughout the nation to speak their minds on what they perceive to be the country’s needs, as well as to offer suggestions about implementing solutions. The lengthy event is concluded by a speech delivered by President Kagame. Joe attended the final day of the event. When he returned to where we were teaching, about an hour outside of the capital, Kigali, he delivered unexpected news; President Kagame had focused a major portion of his speech on the need for the entire nation to become skilled in conflict resolution techniques. Suddenly, opposition to HIPP’s inclusion evaporated.

Next Steps

Currently, we have worked with approximately 750 Rwandan teachers, about 30 of whom are now designated as “teacher leaders.” It appears that we will be working with another 600 teachers this coming summer, due to the Rwandan government’s desire to dramatically ramp up the impact of RTEP in conjunction with the implementation of the country’s new performance-based, national curriculum, which includes conflict resolution as a core component. Frankly, we are wary of expanding the program so quickly. Having recently commissioned the first systematic evaluation of RTEP, it would seem wise to carefully collect data and make revisions as needed, rather than plunge ahead. However, it appears that political considerations will trump prudence in this instance.

Aside #3: *We are also conflicted about our future involvement. The teacher leaders with whom we’ve worked over the last 21 months are increasingly impressive, and seem capable of sustaining future trainings on their own. Under their guidance, HIPP in Rwanda will continue to morph into a more local variety, which is fine.*

We are searching for a way to smoothly make this transition. As yet, the path is not clear, but we are dedicated to not fostering continued dependency on us. Yet, again, politics are involved. Although the Rwanda Ministry of Education and the University of Hartford have agreed to a 10-year partnership, RTEP’s funding is still being pieced together, year-by-year. Under such circumstances, where long-term funding is sought, maintaining a stable core faculty can be an important factor. Our loyalty to all those with whom we have worked dictates that we stay involved until the appropriate time arrives; or as we are fond of saying, until “Way Opens.”

Conclusion

Interestingly, the Alternatives to Violence Project that spawned HIPP, has evolved into a world-wide movement with active involvement in 35 states within the U.S. and 40 different nations, including Rwanda. AVP operates in “prisons and jails, churches and businesses, homeless and family shelters, youth clubs and alternative schools.” (Alternatives to Violence Project, 2016) AVP’s success shows how effective program dissemination can, indeed, occur. HIPP, however, has not experienced AVP’s widespread diffusion; perhaps because it is associated specifically with schools, institutions too often separated from each other and the rest of the world.

Nevertheless, Rwanda and East Africa seem to be providing fertile ground for HIPP. Already, our Rwandan teacher colleagues have created 10 peace clubs at different schools throughout their nation, as well as conducted many HIPP trainings for their students and fellow faculty members. Furthermore, working with David Bucura, Central Africa Coordinator for the African Great Lakes Initiative and Clerk of Rwanda Yearly Meeting, sojourning New England Friends Minga Claggett-Borne and Jonathan Vogel-Borne recently initiated HIPP trainings among Quaker youth in Rwanda. They are seeking funding in the U.S. to expand this effort, and report that Quaker Services Norway is entertaining a Rwandan HIPP proposal for \$10,000 (Claggett-Borne, 2016).

Meanwhile, the American Friends Service Committee-Kenya (AFSC-Kenya) has provided \$30,000 to the African Great Lakes Initiative’s partners, Friends Church Peace Teams (FCPT) and Alternatives to Violence Project-Trust, to initiative the Help Increase

the Peace Program in high schools in Kenya (Zarembka, 2015).

We have no idea how large this nascent effort will grow. We find that this experience supports an argument for scaling up programs in a slower manner that allows for serendipity, new connections and ownership. However, if HIPP continues to expand, in Rwanda and beyond, we are sure that it will do so in unique and distinct ways.

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The Point

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Yesterday, near Round Mountain in Utah, I found a jagged stone struck by many tiny blows, leaving behind the trace of the human being who had met and shaped it. It wasn't a perfect arrowhead--part of the bottom was missing--but still I held it in my hand, wonderingly. All my life I've hoped to find arrowheads, or "points" as they are known by those who study them seriously; but rarely have I had much luck. In fact, I've noticed that I am luckiest at finding points when I'm not really looking for them.

Now let me tell you a story:

Many years ago, around the turn of the millennium, I was living on a large ranch in the Texas hill country near Austin. The ranch had been set aside by the university there as a place for writers to be left in peace to do their work, and I had been lucky enough to win a fellowship which allowed me to live in the ranch house and on the grounds for half a year, all alone but for the limestone cliffs and the blowing grass and the animals that came to peek in at the windows. When I wasn't writing, I wandered the hills and bluffs and creeks, my nose pointed downward, because I knew Native Americans had once lived on the land, and there must be signs, artifacts. But all I found were jagged bits of rock that could have been anything, that looked more like accidents than intention.

One day as I sat at my desk writing, a pickup truck crossed the creek, pulling up to the ranch house, and two men in workers' jumpsuits jumped out and came knocking on the door. One was small and polite and explained to me that they had come to check on the well. (Writers are not expected to care for the Paisano Ranch; most would

have no idea how to do so.) The other man was tall and bitter-looking and rudely crushed his cigarette out under his heel on the porch right in front of me, giving me a look that said, plain as day, *Yeah, you arty types. You think you're special, look down on the likes of us, I bet, but you can't even take care of your own backyard.*

I tried to undo his thoughts, thanking both men profusely for the work they were about to do and smiling and explaining how appreciative I was; but the taller man turned a cold shoulder on me as the smaller man walked to the well house. I went back to writing for a while, and then came out to see if they needed anything. The polite young man was still there, by the well pump, but his angry partner was nowhere in sight.

"Is your friend okay?" I asked.

"Mike? He's fine. He went off looking for points."

My heart jumped. I stayed inside until I saw him coming back, then ran out.

"I hear you know how to look for arrowheads!"

He looked stealthily at me. "No. Can't do that here. Wouldn't be legal for me."

"Oh," I slumped, disappointed. "It's just . . . Well, all my life I've wanted to find an arrowhead. I've been looking since I was a kid. But I've never found one. And I've looked and looked and looked all around here, too."

His face changed slightly. "Oh yeah?"

"Yeah . . . You find them, sometimes?"

"Sure, all the time. You just have to know where to look," he said, a little superior now.

"I envy you. I've found a few things, but I don't think they're anything. I keep them on the desk. I don't suppose you'd be willing to look and tell me if . . ."

"Well. I guess I could come in and take a look."

He sifted through my little pile of chipped agates. "No, these ain't anything. But this here could be a scraper." He held it up to the light of the window, impressed. "It sure could. You should keep looking."

"Really? If only I knew where to look, *how* to look."

He put the stone down and left the house, quickly. "You just go look along the limestone bluffs. By the creek. Look for old fires. Signs of burning. Look for middens. Piles of waste. That's all I can tell you."

"Okay. Thanks."

They left, and for days, for weeks, I did as he instructed. I looked along the creek, I tried to find signs of work and habitation and discard. I scoured the earth--but I couldn't find anything. I could not see what he clearly saw.

A week or so before I was, sadly, scheduled to leave the ranch, the two men came again to look at the well. The polite one came to the door, but the gruff one, Mike, did not.

"Oh, he's off lookin' for something again," his partner said. "Cheers him up."

I went back inside. A little while later I heard a knock on the door, and opened it, and tall Mike was there.

"So here," he said. "See?"

And he held out the most perfectly sculpted, elongated, bone-colored spear point I had ever seen.

"Oh," I said wistfully. "Oh. That is so beautiful. Wow."

"It's for you."

"Excuse me?"

"You take it."

"What?"

"Take it. It's a good one. It's about 10,000 years old. It ain't from around here," he said quickly. "I brought it for you."

"What are you talking about? It's yours. You found it."

"It's no big deal. I got hundreds. I brought you something else, too."

He reached around, and from his back pocket took out a neat yellow bandanna, unfolding it. On it was printed the outline and shape of every kind of major point to be found in Texas, he explained to me, along with the proper name written underneath. So now, he said, when I went out point-hunting, I could wear it, and check the stones I found, to see if I had really found anything at all.

I was speechless. I stared at his sun-worn, smoke-worn face.

"These are the most beautiful gifts anyone has ever given me," I said, and I meant it.

"Nah."

"I have to hug you now. Get ready."

We held each other for a long moment, two seekers.

"Okay. You just keep going," he said roughly as he left. "Don't give up, now."

The truck pulled away. I left the ranch the next week. And I never saw the point hunter again.

I keep the stone he gave me on my desk, and the bandanna in the drawer beside it, ready.

Not long ago, hiking in the desert at Joshua Tree, in California, I had given up again. I climbed over a little bluff, and at the crest of it a gust of wind blew up and knocked dust into my eyes. I had to stop and duck my head and wipe the grit out. As I bent, I saw something lying on the ground. A spear tip, long, bone-colored, pointed to where I had not been looking.