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Ross E. Martinie Eiler

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Luxury, Capitalism, and the Quaker Reformation, 1737–1798

Ross E. Martinie Eiler*

The leaders of the mid-eighteenth century “Quaker Reformation”¹ in America had money on the mind. They repeatedly tied the perceived spiritual decline of the Society – which inspired them to travel, preach, and reinforce sectarian discipline – to the new realities of wealth and prestige amongst Quakers. Samuel Fothergill once quipped about Pennsylvanian Friends: “Their fathers came into the country in its infancy, and bought large tracts of land for a trifle; their sons found large estates come into their possession... They settled in ease and affluence, and whilst they made the barren wilderness as a fruitful field, suffered the plantation of God to be as a field uncultivated, and a desert.”² Leading Quaker reformers viewed the levels of comfort and material wealth enjoyed by many Quakers as problematic – not inherently bad, yet somehow connected to the Society’s perceived spiritual decline.

But why the fuss? The eighteenth-century Quaker “grandeers” were not the first Friends with wealth and prestige. Indeed, three of the brightest stars in the Quaker sky – George Fox, Robert Barclay, and William Penn – were themselves affluent and important people.³ Earlier generations of Quakers could both count their money and flourish spiritually, and yet the reformers feared that the wealth of their own generation was essentially linked to the Society’s spiritual decline. How and why was the increasing wealth of the Society a cause of concern for the Quaker reformers?

This paper is a study of the reformers’ understanding of and response to luxury⁴ from 1737 to 1798.⁵ I will make four distinct but connected points. First, the new realities and values of emergent market capitalism generated the reformers’ concern about luxury and material vice. What rattled the reformers therefore was not so much an increase in luxury amongst Friends, but rather a redefinition of luxury in the world around them. Second, the new ambiguities that infiltrated categories such as “superfluity” and “vanity” confounded the reformers, causing them to search their quietist theology and Quaker heritage for a response. They unanimously agreed that, since all luxury is caused by the “spirit of the world,” the solution would be to attack that spirit directly. Third, the reformers had a diverse spectrum of ideas about how to best confront the “spirit of the world.” Fourth, the reinforcement of sectarian discipline, so well associated with the mid-eighteenth century Quaker Reformation, was employed as the principal solution primarily because it could be agreed upon by men and women with diverse

* Ross E. Martinie Eiler is a Catholic Worker and PhD dropout living in Chicago. His first child, Paul Alyosha Martinie Eiler, was born in the summer of 2007.

ideas. In the conclusion, I will explore why this response proved an ineffective weapon against the onslaught of change brought by burgeoning American capitalism. This is a useful study for better understanding both the context and motivations of the Quaker Reformation and also the wider Quaker response to capitalism.

The Changing Definition of Luxury

Abuses and vice connected with money or material possessions had always been on the Quaker radar. As early as 1648 George Fox railed against the desire for money.⁶ Soon afterwards he complained that the resources spent on luxury, if properly redirected, would ably feed the poor.⁷ The most striking thing about the writings of seventeenth-century Friends on luxury or material vice is their confidence in knowing their subject. Early Quakers had a confident working definition of luxury or material vice that reflected former Supreme Court Justice Potter Stewart's famous definition of obscenity: they would know it when they saw it.

Robert Barclay, in his influential *Apology for the True Christian Divinity*, depicted the sin of vanity or superfluity in two ways. The first was when men and women "not content with what their condition can bear... do stretch to have things, that from their rarity... seem to be precious,"⁸ in other words, when individuals attempt to possess or flaunt status symbols beyond their actual station in life. The second was when people add to the things necessary for life "things merely superfluous, such as is the use of ribbands and lace, and much more of that kind of stuff, as painting the face, [and] plaiting the hair."⁹ The interesting thing about Barclay's definitions and condemnations is the confidence by which "sober men" could and would recognize such superfluities as "unlawful." He finishes his section on superfluity¹⁰ by saying "And though sober men, among all sorts, will say that it were better these things were not, yet will they not reckon them unlawful, and therefore do admit the use of them among their church members. But we do account them altogether unlawful, and unsuitable to Christians."¹¹ Quakers, who were infallibly aided by the Inward Light¹² to recognize good from evil, did not have the gray areas afforded by people of other "sorts." Though superfluous items may be deemed lawful by others, they were plainly and simply unlawful, and quickly recognized as such by Quaker eyes.

This Quaker moral confidence quickly translated into explicit condemnations of specific items. Quakers spelled out elaborate rules about which types of dress, for example, were appropriate and which were not appropriate.¹³ The stress of these "Advices" was on simplicity and plainness more than uniformity.¹⁴ Uniformity was not at this time necessary because

Quakers were confident that “simplicity” would be easily recognizable and unlawful violations of superfluity would be equally discernable. Material items, such as clothes and furniture, were divided into two categories: the functional (lawful) and the superfluous (unlawful), and there was no fear or anxiety about the two being confused.

Early Quakers also trusted that their discipline, which guarded the purity of both individuals and the Society, would effectively ward off the sin of luxury as much as any other sin. Since the beginning of formal discipline and order in the Society (beginning with Fox’s release from prison in 1666 and culminating in the Wilkinson/Story crisis of 1676), Quakers had trusted in the disciplinary process as a beneficial one for the soul and direction of the society.¹⁵ The first generations of Quakers trusted that the unlawfulness of material vice could not gain in the Society if they had the purity that accompanied solid “advices,” order, and discipline. Quakers would be able to identify the presence of unlawful things, condemn them, and expel them.

Times change, however, and the world of the mid-eighteenth century knocked holes in the wall of Quaker confidence. The intrusion of war into Quaker America, starting with King George’s War in 1741, unnerved the comfortable tranquility of Friends.¹⁶ Smallpox, yellow fever, poverty, a high death rate and poor sanitation plagued Philadelphia.¹⁷ Quakers were aware that they lived in a changing world, the results of which were often unsettling.¹⁸ Perhaps the most deeply unsettling changes, however, were those in the marketplace. In America, the importation of British manufactured goods exploded in the 1740s,¹⁹ while Britain was riding a wave of imports from the Far East.²⁰ It was also a time of increasing class consciousness, with individual and social identification more and more becoming tied to one’s income and accumulation of capital.²¹ In short, one’s social standing was dependent less and less on traditional stations of deference and more and more on economic realities and displays of wealth, resulting in the increased importance and application of status symbols for all colonists.²² The advent of widespread choice in the consumer marketplace “had begun to uncouple status and class,” resulting in a widespread “undeniable sense of instability.”²³ Being “high class” no longer meant “well-bred” but increasingly meant “well-moneyed.” In addition, the massive proliferation of material goods in the colonies radically changed the accessibility of materials and status symbols previously reserved only for a minority elite. These changes, brought about by the emergence of capitalism, created concerns for a variety of people on both sides of the Atlantic.²⁴

These same changes in the marketplace also had a curious but undeniable effect on Quakers by radically destabilizing their attitudes towards luxury and material vice. Before, if a Quaker wore a cloth or material not readily

made in one's area, it would have been recognized as a sure sign that he or she was violating Barclay's first rule against vice: do not stretch beyond your given social setting to have an object that, from its "rarity . . . seems to be precious." After the 1740s, however, one could have clothes made from unique, imported material and claim to be making no reach for vanity or prominence. The proliferation of status symbols complicated their possession. Having imported or fine materials, even for a person without much money, was no longer an open-and-shut case of social-station violation. Likewise (continuing to use the example of dress) a man could be a good upstanding Quaker in following the "Advices," never having worn an extra button a single day of his life; and yet could still be clearly recognized in the new class-conscious society as "rich." Many outsiders recognized that, though plain in style, Quaker clothing was made from the most expensive materials available.²⁵ People would have recognized such Friends as luxuriously enjoying unnecessarily costly items, and yet they would be violating no written code of discipline and participating in no explicitly condemned behavior. By the letter of the "Advices," Friends were exemplars in simplicity, but by new realities and social perceptions they clearly were not. It is not a coincidence that the Quaker Reformation began in the late 1740s and 1750s. The rise of capitalism and new realities of class and goods directly destabilized Quaker conceptions of luxury and vice. Being "luxurious," "superfluous" or "vain" suddenly, due to the advance of market capitalism (and the Quakers' success therein), became much more difficult to identify. Friends could no longer quickly recognize luxury when they saw it.

Such changes were threatening but ambiguous, and it was the ambiguity that confounded elders, reformers, and others concerned about moral and spiritual purity within the Society. Had the problem with luxury been an infiltration of fancy carpets, or something else tangible and specific, they simply would have condemned fancy carpets (as they in fact did in 1719)²⁶ and made sure no Friends owned any. But the problem was larger than carpets or any other item or rule. It was a problem facing every material possession, including those encouraged and deemed "necessary" by Quaker founders.²⁷ Early Quakers trusted that Friends would discern between lawful things, which would be accepted as morally neutral, and unlawful things, which would be rejected as morally inappropriate. Suddenly, however, in the 1740s, the primary threat of luxury came not from "unlawful things," but from the new danger of the unlawful *use* of *lawful* things; or, as John Griffith put it, the threat of "worldly enjoyments, good in themselves."²⁸

This new anxiety over the unlawful use of lawful things was expressed

in many ways. When speaking about the spiritual decline of the Society, reformers would often use images of a slippery slope. John Griffith complained of “undue liberties” that were “creeping in” to the Society.²⁹ John Churchman warned how vanity had “subtly crept in.”³⁰ The rhetoric of the slippery slope suggests that Friends recognized that the problems surrounding luxury were gradually changing over time and were connected to new social expectations brought about by changes in market capitalism.³¹

More directly, Friends often spoke plainly of their concern about the threat of “worldly things, good in themselves” and objected to the “undue liberty” taken with “things deemed lawful.”³² *The Life and Travels of John Pemberton* contains these words of caution from Thomas Ross: “Beware of lawful things; these lawful things are the strongest baits Satan ever laid for our Society. O, these lawful things, they have hurt many.”³³ Some cautioned specifically against the “unlawful love of lawful things.”³⁴ This was quite a change in Quaker thinking about morality. Earlier generations knew superfluity when they saw it, and when they saw it they were quick to label it “unlawful.” And that, Quakers presumed, was that. After the market revolution of the 1740s, however, it was suddenly things always trustingly deemed “lawful” – items like carriages and cloth – that became the battleground against vanity.

When reading the reformers’ jeremiads about the Society’s decline into vanity, superfluities, and the world’s customs and fashions, one must therefore keep a mind on context. Though many Quakers were without doubt prospering monetarily, it was not violations of the old stable definition of luxury that bothered the reformers. There were remarkably few recorded disciplinary violations of dress, speech, gaming, titles, or other charges you would expect if the Society really were rushing headlong into the vanities and fashions of the world.³⁵ On the contrary, Quakers were abiding by the letter of the traditional received censures against material vice and luxury. But meanwhile it was *luxury* itself that was changing. Due to changes in the market, “what was perceived at one moment as a luxury could within a short time be seen... as a necessity.”³⁶ The reformers were not reacting against actual violations of luxury but rather against a changing ethos that undermined Quaker safeguards against luxury. The influx of goods and the new realities of class consciousness that arose in the 1740s meant that a Quaker could buy only things deemed “lawful” and “necessary” and still be recognized by all – Quakers and non-Quakers alike – to be luxuriously rich. The leaders of the Quaker Reformation were responding to this new reality. Their protestations against vanity, superfluity, custom, and the unlawful use of lawful things were all connected to a quiet realization that the specter of worldly luxury had transformed and was coming in through the unguarded

door of “worldly enjoyments, good in themselves.” The leaders of the Quaker Reformation were moved to act because they perceived a spiritual decline in the Society, a decline that was caused by an increase in luxury, which was in turn caused by the market revolution and the new realities of luxury. In this way, the rise of market capitalism and the changes it brought can be viewed as a direct cause of the Quaker Reformation.

The Reformers’ Response

The tricky thing about defying the new reality of luxury was its ambiguity. The problem was one of individual action, but yet it could not be stopped by a simple rule. None of the many Quaker social protests – against carpets, the rum trade, children’s toys, powdered wigs (which they attacked relentlessly),³⁷ or even slavery – could begin to encompass the nature of the problem. The infiltration of goods and market consciousness was a unique and pervasive challenge to Quaker restraints of pride and vanity. In response, the reformers collectively set out to eradicate the trouble by (like any good gardener) aiming for the root. And (like any good quietist) the reformers understood the root of luxury to be the “spirit of the world.” In response to the redefinition of luxury, Quaker reformers launched a campaign against the spirit of the world, or “carnal spirit,” that was understood to be its cause.

A paragraph explaining the basics of Quaker quietism would perhaps be beneficial. All public Friends of the eighteenth century were quietists, which meant that they believed in a very intense kind of spiritual dualism. They believed that there are two spiritual powers at work in the world: one is from God; the other is evil and stands with the flesh and the world.³⁸ Just as there were two such powers in the universe, there were also two such powers in the individual. Quaker worship allowed for a time when the fleshy self would be put down and the divine Inward Light lifted up. They did not mix. John Griffith wrote: “I have, by experience from my childhood, found two spirits or seeds striving in me for mastery or rule: I have discovered them to be irreconcilable enemies one to the other; and that I could not serve them both at the same time.”³⁹ A primary result of the spirit of the world is self-love. Self-love, by stemming from the wrong spirit, is the opposite of Christian love, resignation, and virtue. The selfish spirit in the person is the source of all sin and thus “the greatest of all tyrants,” and the “great enemy to our advancement in godliness.”⁴⁰ Fortunately it can be subdued and, by the power of the Light of Christ within, slowly annihilated, wiping out one’s will and desires along with it.⁴¹ Quietist Quakers also believed that external actions were a reflection of the spirit in which a person acted. If one was abiding by the Spirit of God, their actions would necessarily be righteous.⁴²

Likewise, if one acted from the carnal spirit, their actions would be evil. Holiness should be and always will be demonstrable and external.⁴³ It is simply impossible to be living in the right Spirit and performing or persisting in any type of sin.⁴⁴

The Quaker reformers, then, believed that the ambiguous problem of luxury was a direct consequence of the presence and increase of the carnal spirit within the Society.⁴⁵ As Joshua Evans wrote, “new fashions in dress, house furniture, sumptuous tables, costly vessels and other things” were mere evidences of the presence of “the corrupt root of pride.”⁴⁶ They also believed that, if they could right the spirit which operated within the society (which was indeed possible) they would fix and remove all problems of vice, including luxury.⁴⁷ In the words of John Pemberton, “Were the professors of the blessed truth more generally redeemed from the spirit and friendship of the world, and did they live and appear more conformable to their profession, light would spread and truth prosper more.”⁴⁸ By attacking the carnal spirit that was the source of luxury, the reformers believed they would effectually change the outward realities and practices of Friends.⁴⁹

John Woolman was exceptional in his trust that efforts to change the internal spirit of people would result in fundamental changes in social structures and realities. Like George Fox, Woolman had an optimistic economic theory which maintained that, due to God’s benevolent ordering of the natural world, there are plenty of resources on earth to abundantly feed, shelter and care for every person.⁵⁰ The problem that prevented this utopia was the inequitable distribution of resources caused by pride and self-love. Woolman trusted that, just as the Spirit of God has the power to quash the carnal spirit within the individual, a perfectly equitable world was realizable if the Spirit gained ground in enough people. If individuals responded to the Inward Light, they would have no other path than to limit their own business and not demand labor from others.⁵¹ The true Spirit will lead to contentment with only the natural necessities.⁵² Though it might be a difficult “baptizing” experience, the Truth will lead people to “set aside all self-interest and come to be weaned from the desire of getting estates.”⁵³ In Woolman’s mind, the process was inevitable: People would, by the assistance of the Holy Spirit, gradually subjugate their own wills and grow in the Spirit of Truth. This would predictably cause people to limit their own business, their own desires for material possessions, and to cease from demanding unnecessary labour from any worker or employee.⁵⁴ Once this natural, right way of living began to spread, the unequal distribution of resources would stop and God’s benevolently ordered utopia would come into reality. Slavery, the exploitation of workers,⁵⁵ and the realities of poverty would have no cause or chance for existence. All would have

enough and none would desire more.⁵⁶

All Quaker reformers were in agreement: The solution to the new ambiguities and realities of luxury was a quenching of the carnal spirit. They were also unanimous in an optimistic hope that such a spiritual reformation would have sizable structural changes in the economic status quo. But how does one go about quashing the carnal spirit?

Confronting the Carnal Spirit

Here it helps to make the uncomfortable realization that, despite the temptation to lump them all together, there was no real body of “the Quaker reformers.” Indeed, it is not entirely appropriate to speak of “the Quakers” either.⁵⁷ Instead, we should see that the group of reformers – let alone the whole Society – was a collection of men and women with different ideas, different emphases, different backgrounds, and different interests. And, in fact, those differences led to different ideas about the best way to confront the carnal spirit. I have identified three main strategies.⁵⁸

First, there were those who believed new testimonies against specific vices were needed to combat the elusive carnal spirit. In the tradition of distinctive Quaker testimonies such as those against day names or hat honor, these Quakers offered new bans on the instruments of luxury. The best representative of this camp was Joshua Evans, though John Woolman is most often associated with the idea. That Woolman blanched at using certain place settings, resisted war taxes, wore undyed clothes, and would walk or sail in steerage rather than use vain forms of travel is well known. Less known is his testimony of reducing his business, intentionally dropping a potentially lucrative merchandise opportunity to avoid business “cumbers” and practice true resignation to God’s will.⁵⁹ Woolman’s neighbor in Mount Holly, Joshua Evans, took such testimonies to an even higher level. He wore all his clothes a bright shocking white, both to stand against clothing dye and also to showcase the symbolic color of innocence. He was particularly adamant against the consumption of tea,⁶⁰ lamenting that there were plenty of local herbs and delicacies to be enjoyed. Due to the rum trade, he refused to give rum even to the workers at his farm, a gift that was expected in his day. Evans recognized that facial hair was part of God’s design and so grew out a long beard. This is remarkable since, due to their rise in the English Revolution, “a time when smooth faces were universal,” Quakers had always thought shaving to be natural and beards to be an ornament of vanity.⁶¹ If we believe his description, his beard had a shock value for his Quaker peers similar to that of a giant pink mohawk today. Perhaps most surprisingly, Evans concluded that, in the Garden of Eden – where all was naturally ordered – the “devouring nature” had not yet entered, and so Adam

and Eve must have been vegetarians. Thus, and with great difficulty to Evans personally, he gave up eating meat.⁶²

There was also the unique figure of William Boen, an African-American Friend who was a contemporary and neighbor of both Evans and Woolman in Mount Holly. Not much is known of Boen, but it is recorded that he also wore undyed clothing, grew out a “venerable” white beard that “impressed people [with] awe” due to the “singularity of his dress and appearance,” and believed that the “spirit of war... stands in connexion [with] the love of money.”⁶³ It seems that perhaps there was an entire movement of “singular” testimonies amongst the Quaker men of eighteenth-century Mount Holly!⁶⁴

The new testimonies of Mount Holly did not sweep the Society by storm, however. Evans, it seems, was not usually much more than tolerated. His initial requests to be given a certificate to travel in the ministry were denied on the grounds that his many testimonies were too unusual.⁶⁵ It was only because the spirit of the Reformation was sweeping through the Society that he was not rejected like the eccentric Benjamin Lay before him.⁶⁶ But Evans was in fact accepted and influential in his own right. Though not a popular method, his inundation of new specific testimonies was one strategy to combat the carnal spirit.

A second strategy was a forthright critique of the accumulation of wealth. Exemplified by Anthony Benezet,⁶⁷ a few leading Quakers tried to argue that the dual possession of substantial wealth and the proper Spirit was a contradiction. It was a paradox to believe that you could “live in... ease and plenty” and still be a good religious steward.⁶⁸ Benezet wrote: “That a man should labour to be rich and amass wealth, a state which ... proves the ruin of so many thousands – is this keeping clear from defilement[?] Now, that such a person shall esteem himself, and be esteemed, a religious man, and perhaps be the more regarded, even by religious people, is a mere paradox; yet it is too often the case.”⁶⁹ Now, it is important to point out that such counsels were never radically absolute. No eighteenth-century Quaker I have come across advocated voluntary poverty, and every example of exegesis on the pericope of the Rich Young Man⁷⁰ suggested that we mustn’t take Jesus’s advice to “sell all you have” too literally.⁷¹ Nonetheless, a few Quakers felt the need, in light of the increasing carnal spirit, to assert that the simultaneous possession of wealth and the Spirit of Truth was paradoxical – an assertion that is always bold.

The third and most notable strategy for combating the carnal spirit was an attack against “formality,” “hypocrisy,” “lukewarmness,” or other forms of spiritual pretense in the Society, especially in worship and amongst the ministers. John Pemberton complained that “Many of the professors of Truth in this day, attend meetings for form, and because it is looked upon as

disreputable to forsake going to places of worship; many content themselves with going once a week, and by reason of these, our meetings are covered with heaviness, dryness, and gloom.”⁷² Some reformers accused these “formal” Quakers with sullying the intense purity of worship and thus being the principal cause of the increase of the carnal spirit. After all, formality was a “relaxation of spirit,” and “relaxation of spirit... is the time Lucifer arises.”⁷³ Thus the reformers set off on a campaign of “warfare against lukewarmness [which] brings darkness and death over a meeting”⁷⁴ by stressing the eldering of ministers, strictly admonishing any vocal ministry that was not rooted in the proper Spirit, and stressing the priority of Meeting for Worship, especially the expected midweek Meeting.⁷⁵

This third strategy for resisting the carnal spirit – countering spiritual formality and lukewarmness – is most notable not for itself but because of its particular omissions and advocates. Unlike the first and second strategies, the third offered no direct challenge to the possession of wealth or status symbols.⁷⁶ Being very internal in its direction, the attack on formality insisted that “the greatest enemies to the truth were the professors of it, who did not observe the instructions of truth, or grace of God in their own hearts”⁷⁷ rather than those who drank tea or accumulated piles of money. A person could be a wealthy Quaker grandee and, while fully advocating against formalism, not experience any threat to his own comfort or wealth. Indeed, it seems that a reformer’s own personal wealth was directly proportional to her emphasis on “formality” rather than specific critiques or testimonies against wealth.⁷⁸ John Pemberton, for example, spoke frequently about “lukewarmness” and “formality,” but in his *Life and Travels* words like “vanity” or “acquisition” rarely make an appearance. John Pemberton was also one of eighty-four carriage owners in the city of Philadelphia, carriages being the most conspicuous status symbol of wealth available at the time.⁷⁹ By stressing formality, with its strongly internal emphases, this group of Quaker reformers clearly undercut any attempts to actually threaten or redistribute their own luxury items. In other words, their strategy accommodated the rise of market capitalism.

This is, of course, not a startling revelation. There is nothing new or unfamiliar about people with wealth criticizing its negative aspects in ways that protect their own interests. What I hope to underscore is how the reformers were a diverse bunch, each tackling the problem of the carnal spirit with different ideas and each emphasizing different strategies. Though united in their fear and recognition of the encroaching spirit of the world, the reformers’ own individual interests colored and affected the ways they understood the path before them. They were united in their identification of the carnal spirit as the source of the problem of luxury and united in their

belief that it must be attacked. They were diverse, however, in their strategies, methods, and understandings of what attacking the carnal spirit would mean. Yet, as a religious Society, they next had to agree upon a concrete way to proceed.

Discipline as the Common Ground

The unique Quaker manner of business meant that some kind of harmony had to be achieved, and there was only one method for combating the increase of the carnal spirit that all the reformers could agree upon: sectarian retreat by means of increased discipline. Both John Pemberton in his carriage and hairy Joshua Evans could concur with that line of attack.

The Quakers' dualist conception of spiritual reality of course contributed to their sectarianism. The carnal spirit was associated with things external. The purity of the true Spirit was associated with insularity. All reformers could agree that, like any encroaching external enemy, the carnal spirit could be halted with a solid enough wall or "hedge." For Quakers, that wall was discipline.⁸⁰ The reformers thus viewed themselves as a remnant raised up "that the breaches made in the excellent hedge of discipline might be repaired."⁸¹ The reformers were united in their belief that, by removing themselves from the world and remaining a "peculiar people," their Spirit would be guarded and safe.⁸² The social reformation of Quakerism, then, which drastically increased the disowning and disciplinary hearings of the Society (especially in terms of marriage violations, drunkenness, etc.)⁸³ swept through the Society with such force because it was the one point of unity, the single flag around which all reformers concerned about spiritual decline could unite.

All the reformers shared the received Quaker trust in the spiritual benevolence of the disciplinary process. None of the reformers could have (or would ever have wanted) to argue that increasing the discipline would have no effect on the spirit of the Society. John Griffith believed discipline to be the key to the good order and health of the society and called it the "means to restore ancient beauty."⁸⁴ The reformers viewed discipline and spiritual death as inversely proportionate: when one increased, the other decreased.⁸⁵ Discipline was a surefire method of beating off the carnal spirit. John Griffith, one of the first champions of discipline, stated that it was no problem convincing Quakers about the benefits of discipline: all of the Society agreed that increased discipline would increase the Spirit of Truth. The problem was getting people to enforce the necessary rules that would result in a disciplinary increase.⁸⁶

Unity around discipline allowed the Pembertons and the Benezets of the Society to stick together in the cause for reform. Individual differences and

emphases could be set aside in the common pursuit of discipline. The rich did not have to give up their riches and the “singular” radicals did not have to give up their eccentricity. Discipline was a compromise that preserved both Quaker involvement in market capitalism and the Quaker protest against luxury. So long as the discipline increased, thought all parties, the carnal spirit would decrease; and so long as the carnal spirit decreased, all other external problems would sort themselves out. By trusting in the efficacy of spiritual reform, both the richest and the most radical Quakers set aside their differences with full confidence that their own particular hopes would be fulfilled.

Conclusion

Changes in the market through the 1740s and 50s destabilized the Quaker definition of luxury, shaking the Society’s moral security and creating a sense of spiritual decline. All of the Quaker reformers agreed that the best (and only true way) to stem the tide of decline and luxury was to attack the source: the carnal spirit of the world. Differences among the reformers led to different ideas on just how the carnal spirit could be countered, but one method could be agreed upon by all: the reinforcement of sectarian discipline. In other words, the rise of capitalism led to a spiritual crisis which led to a crackdown on non-capitalistic immoralities such as exogamous marriage and drinking.

This is admittedly odd. Did the reformers really respond to the problems brought up by emergent capitalism by cracking down on things like marriage and drinking? Yes. The key adhesive to the story line is the reformers’ optimism about the efficacy of changing the internal spirit. According to their rhetoric, a tightening of such things as marriage discipline would result in a more purified Spirit, which would in turn fix the subversive problem of luxury. Given their outlines of spiritual reality, it was in fact impossible for a disciplinary increase *not* to fix the problem of luxury. The Reformation of American Quakerism happened in response to an increased concern about the carnal spirit, which was itself a response to changes in the marketplace.

Afterthought

The relationship between market changes and the sectarian reinforcement of discipline contributes to our understanding of the wider relationship between eighteenth century Quakerism and the rise of capitalism. Though it definitely lends support to the traditional picture of Quaker accommodation to capitalism, it simultaneously complicates that picture. The optimism of Friends regarding the potential of their reforms suggests that their critique

of capitalism was not merely therapeutic but, at some level, was a fundamental challenge.

First of all, those who believe that Quaker interests in profit short-circuited any effectual resistance against the rise of a socially destructive industrial capitalism have much support in looking at the reformers. The best and most cutting example of this line of argument is David Brion Davis's *The Problem of Slavery in the Age of Revolution: 1770–1823*, in which he argued that Quaker efforts at real social transformation were sabotaged by their own subconscious class interests.⁸⁷ Indeed, most Quaker reformers coupled their crusade against the carnal spirit with affirmations of the Weberian Spirit of Capitalism.⁸⁸ John Griffith, for example, wrote to the youth of the Society, "I know of no advice better... than that of our Lord's, viz. 'Seek ye first the Kingdom of God, and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you.' Those who have happily, by seeking, found this kingdom, and live therein, which consisteth in righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost, have great advantage, even in outward things, above all others; as the blessing of God, which maketh truly rich, attends all their worldly affairs."⁸⁹ In other words, several of the reformers insisted that they could have their cake and eat it too; that business success and the Spirit were not paradoxical. They set out to prove it by keeping their carriages while working for spiritual reform.⁹⁰

Yet, at the same time, a careful look at the reformers also complicates this picture. The reformers were a diverse group of men and women and, though it is beyond the historian's grasp to speak confidently about their sincerity, the rhetoric of at least some of the reformers reveals an optimism that the course of the Reformation would change the root of economic behavior, and that the market would consequently be transformed. According to the beliefs of all of the reformers and the system of theological laws they perceived in the world around them, a change in sectarian discipline would indeed affect a change in people's motivations, which by necessity would transform all economic exchanges. The rhetoric was not one of blind hope, but rather of hopeful confidence. Convinced of both their power to correct people's motivations and of the link between motivation and action, at least some of the reformers were confident that the world would become, as Woolman dreamed, a place where people were "weaned from the desire of getting estates," where property was equitably distributed, and where no one labored more than they had to; and it would happen because of the reforms they instigated. In this way, Quakers did not separate chattel slavery from wage slavery, as David B. Davis suggests.⁹¹ They were optimistic that their efforts would solve *all* social ills, slavery and capitalism included. It is therefore problematic to describe the protests of the reformers as merely

therapeutic. A protest aimed at universal structural reform is not just a token if you actually believe that it will effect the desired change. Quakers were not just rubber-stamping the arrival of industrial capitalism. Some of them were optimistic that, because of their efforts, it might be replaced with an ideally equitable alternative.

Unfortunately (and rather obviously), it just didn't happen. The Reformation of Quakerism did not stop the Society from absorbing new realities of luxury, let alone did it bring capitalism to its knees worldwide. But failure to stop evil is not exactly the same thing as complicity with evil. Like the Puritans in Mark Valeri's study of usury in seventeenth-century America,⁹² the Quaker reformers recognized the problems of emergent capitalism and tried to correct it. Their method simply did not work.

Why didn't it work? The reformers were spurred by new realities of the market and new definitions of luxury. In response, they reinforced the old conception of discipline and presumed that it would amend the Spirit of the Society and thereby create an adaptation in the Society that would solve and eliminate these new threats and ambiguities. They were hopefully confident that the old square peg of discipline would fit into the scary new round hole of market capitalism. They remained hopeful as the century progressed. From the first stirrings of the Reformation in the 1740s, John Churchman had praised the "younger sort" as the most virtuous and promising members of the Society. More than fifty years later, Joshua Evans was still looking at the "tender" children as the remnant to remove the "stumbling blocks of the elders" – elders who were once the youth of Churchman's hope.⁹³ Though discipline improved, luxury continued to prevail. I leave the reader to develop her own spiritual or constructive conclusions, but I will suggest that the Reformation would have been more transformative had the reformers updated their concept of discipline. New realities of luxury required new understandings of discipline and testimony, not just a reinforcement of the old.

In that light, I would offer Joshua Evans (1731-1798) and, to a much lesser extent John Woolman, as the ideal Quaker anti-capitalist of the eighteenth century. Recognizing the moral problems of luxury caused by emergent market capitalism, Joshua Evans worked to stop the spread of the carnal spirit and the desire for money with scores of specific new testimonies that directly challenged new assumptions about consumption, all with a flourish of good Quaker self-denial. Like all the reformers, Evans agreed that an increase in discipline and monitoring of external behavior was the way to remain in the Spirit of Truth. For Evans, however, discipline had to take new forms in new testimonies which, despite their unpopularity, removed his participation from the trade of meat, rum, dye, tea, and many

other of the new purchasable items that were increasingly accessible. Evans recognized that removing oneself from the spirit of luxury would require actual physical disconnection from the items of luxury.

In their critique of luxury, Quakers realized that the capitalism which emerged in colonial America would bring bad news. They collectively tried to stop it with old forms of discipline and failed. Perhaps, had more embraced the radical testimonies of Joshua Evans, the story would be different.⁹⁴

Notes

¹ The term “Reformation” comes from the definitive work on the subject, Jack D. Marietta, *The Reformation of American Quakerism, 1748–1783* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1989) and refers that phenomenon of eighteenth-century Quaker history when Friends re-entrenched themselves into sectarian discipline, disowning many members of the Society and changing their public presence in the process. The withdrawal from Pennsylvania politics was one of the most notable results of the increased sectarianism. Though the effort of reform was highly self-conscious, contemporary Friends did not commonly use the term “reformation” themselves. Nonetheless, the historical moment identified by Marietta is important, so I gladly borrow his term.

² Samuel Fothergill, *Memoirs of the Life and Gospel Labours of Samuel Fothergill, with Selections from his Correspondence*. . . , ed. George Crosfield (New York: Collins, Brother & Co., 1844), 281. The original source was a letter to James Wilson of Kendal in 1756. A similarly encompassing quote is found in the *Journal* of John Woolman, where he recounts the ministry of an “elderly friend,” who recounted the spiritual decline of the Society, testifying that as with “the Society increasing in wealth and in some degree conforming to the fashions of the world, true humility was less apparent [and] the powerful overshadowings of the Holy Ghost were less manifest in the Society.” John Woolman, *The Journal and Major Essays of John Woolman*, ed. Phillips P. Moulton (Richmond IN: Friends United Press, 1971), 139.

³ Fox’s sizeable will (as well as his wife Margaret’s estate) is discussed in James Walvin, *The Quakers: Money and Morals* (London: John Murray Ltd., 1997), 30. Barclay’s lifestyle and political connections are discussed in Elton D. Trueblood, *Robert Barclay* (New York: Harper & Row, 1968). Penn is, of course, the icon of wealthy aristocratic Quakers, and was the role model for many of Philadelphia’s Quaker grandees, as was pointed out in Frederick B. Tolles, *Meeting House and Counting House: The Quaker Merchants of Colonial Philadelphia, 1682–1763* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 1948), ix.

⁴ In this paper, I use the term “luxury” as my blanket term for material vice or immoral acts regarding the possession of wealth. Though not a term often used by the reformers, I use it for many reasons. First, because it appeared in a quote by Sophia Hume that early caught my interest: “Luxury, which has its Rise from pride, is inconsistent and contrary to the humble, lowly . . . Spirit, of Christian-

ity,” Sophia Hume, *An Exhortation to the Inhabitants of the Province of South-Carolina, to ring their deeds to the light of Christ, in their own consciences* (Philadelphia: William Bradford, 1748), 83. I also use the term “luxury” because of its role in the famous comprehensive condemnation of John Woolman that “luxury and oppression have the seeds of war and desolation in them.” Woolman, *Journal*, 228. Last but not least, “Luxury was no less than the keyword of the [eighteenth century],” according to Maxine Berg and Elizabeth Eger. “Luxury” was a key term and concern for all of the Atlantic World in this period. Maxine Berg and Elizabeth Eger, eds. *Luxury in the Eighteenth Century: Debates, Desires and Delectable Goods* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2003), 1. Other common terms used by the reformers include “vanity,” “superfluity,” “worldliness,” “desire for money,” “plainness,” “custom” (see footnote 31) and “undue liberties” with lawful things (discussed below).

⁵ The dates are admittedly rather arbitrary. 1736 was the setting for my first citation, from the *Journal* of John Churchman. 1798 is the last entry in the *Journal* of Joshua Evans.

⁶ Isabel Grubb, *Quakerism and Industry before 1800* (London, William & Norgate, Ltd., 1930), 20-32. Grubb derives the date 1648 from one of Fox’s pamphlets *A Warning to All the Merchants of London . . .* which can be found in the fourth volume of *The Works of George Fox*.

⁷ *Ibid.* Here Grubb primarily uses the 1656 pamphlet *A Cry for Repentance, Unto the Inhabitants of London...* also found in the fourth volume of Fox’s *Works*.

⁸ Robert Barclay, *An Apology for the True Christian Divinity*, comp. Licia Kuenning (Glenside, PA: Quaker Heritage Press, 2002), 447.

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ In “Concerning Salutations and Recreations, &c.”

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 447. He also wrote that he is speaking of “singular things, which most of all our adversaries plead for the lawfulness of... which we have found to be no ways lawful unto us.” *Ibid.*, 432. I use Barclay as a “baseline” both because of his preeminence among early Quaker thinkers and his impact on Quaker thought, especially in the eighteenth-century; see e.g. William C. Braithwaite, *The Second Period of Quakerism* (Cambridge: University Press, 1961), 534. Though I recognize of course that there has been diversity of thought on issues and definition of luxury and sin amongst Quakers throughout their history, the basic ideological framework presented here was extremely influential and wide-reaching.

¹² Thanks to the anonymous scholar whose advice kept me from using the anachronistic phrase “Inner” Light!

¹³ Braithwaite, *The Second Period of Quakerism*, 512. Quaker tailors in 1672 released a statement condemning lace, ribbons, buttons, and other clothing features.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 516.

¹⁵ On both Discipline and the Wilkinson/Story debate, see Robert Barclay, “The Anarchy of the Ranters,” in *Early Quaker Writings: 1650–1700*, edited with an introduction by Hugh Barbour and Arthur O. Roberts, 512-545. See also Braithwaite, *Second Period*, 251, 297-305. Quakers believed that regulation

would help ward off all sins, including those involving money. The sentiment was best put into words by a later Philadelphia Meeting for Sufferings: “To have our thoughts and actions regulated... is to be free indeed; to know a happy dwelling in the liberty of truth.” Marietta, *Reformation of American Quakerism*, 82. For more on the increased role for and trust in discipline in the early eighteenth-century, see Rufus M. Jones, *The Later Periods of Quakerism* (London: Macmillan and Co., 1921), 105–91.

¹⁶ Jack D. Marietta, “Wealth, War and Religion: The Perfecting of Quaker Asceticism 1740–1783,” *Church History*, Vol. 43, no. 2 (June 1974), 230–241.

¹⁷ Billy G. Smith, *The “Lower Sort”: Philadelphia’s Laboring People, 1750–1800* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1990).

¹⁸ Samuel Fothergill wrote that “the world is a sea of glass we walk upon with God’s help... We live in a benumbing climate, and every hour brings with it a torpedo to stupefy our right hand.” Fothergill, *Memoirs*, 25, 278. Joshua Evans compared troubled eighteenth-century America to a stormy sea or boiling pot. Joshua Evans, *A Journal of the Life, Travels, Religious Exercises and Labours in the work of the ministry of Joshua Evans*. . . (Byberry: Published by John & Isaac Comly, 1837), 41.

¹⁹ T. H. Breen, *The Marketplace of Revolution: How Consumer Politics Shaped American Independence* (Oxford: University Press, 2004), 33–72.

²⁰ Berg and Eger, *Luxury in the Eighteenth Century*, 1, 7.

²¹ Gary B. Nash, *The Urban Crucible: Social Change, Political Consciousness, and the Origins of the American Revolution* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1979), 383–4.

²² *Ibid.*, 215.

²³ Breen, *The Marketplace of Revolution*, 158, 151.

²⁴ The Quakers were not alone in facing the moral implications of emerging eighteenth century luxury. Debates on the nature and appropriateness of luxury were “the defining issue of the early modern period.” Maxine Berg and Elizabeth Eger, “The Rise and Fall of the Luxury Debates,” in Berg and Eger, *Luxury in the Eighteenth Century*, 7. In Britain, debates on luxury reached an especially heightened pitch during the Seven Years War, due to cultural associations between things “luxurious” and things “French.” *Ibid.*, 14. Perhaps not coincidentally, the timing of these debates coincides with the Quaker Reformation.

²⁵ Frederick B. Tolles, *Quakers and the Atlantic Culture* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1960), 88.

²⁶ Amelia M. Gummere, *The Quaker: A Study in Costume* (Philadelphia: Ferris & Leach, 1901), 23. No original citation given.

²⁷ “Necessary” items included, but were not limited to, food, clothing, homes, functional furniture, books, mathematic and scientific tools, and gardens, the last of which were encouraged as “innocent diversissements” by Barclay himself. Barclay, *Apology*, 453. See Tolles, *Meeting House and Counting House*, 135–190.

²⁸ John Griffith, *A Journal of the Life, Travels, and Labours in the Work of the Ministry, of John Griffith* (London, 1779), 229.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 3, 106. See also Evans, *Journal*, 61, 163.

³⁰ John Churchman, *An Account of the Gospel Labours, and Christian Experiences of . . . John Churchman* (Dublin: Reprinted by Robert Jackson, Sign of the Globe, Meath-street, 1781), 215. John Woolman blamed a good deal of the Society's problems on the fact that, though early Friends held the Truth in their dealings with superfluities, "for want of some faithfulness some gave way, even some whose examples were of note in Society, and from thence others took more liberty. Members of our Society worked in superfluities and bought and sold them, and thus dimness of sight came over many . . . Many look at the example one of another and too much neglect the pure feeling of Truth." Woolman, *Journal*, 184.

³¹ The reformers' cautions against "custom" also demonstrated that the new realities of the market and the ambiguities of luxury unsettled Friends. "Custom," for the reformers, meant the world of external social expectation and fashion. It was a "tyrant" that "entangles man." There was a threat of being "blinded, and bound to prevailing customs." By fearing the rise and enticement of worldly "customs" or fashions, the reformers were indicating their concern about the pull and allure of new material realities and expectations on Friends. See Hume, *An Exhortation*, 68. See also Evans, *Journal*, 26, and Woolman, *Journal*, 119.

³² Griffith, *Journal*, 218 and Hume, *Exhortation*, 98.

³³ John Pemberton, *The Life and Travels of John Pemberton, a minister of the Gospel of Christ...* ed. William Hodgson (London: Charles Gilpin, 1844), 211.

³⁴ E.g., Evans, *Journal*, 99. Samuel Fothergill warned a friend about the spiritual danger that could come from the wrong use of a lawful activity: his business. Fothergill, *Memoirs*, 301.

³⁵ The most common cause for disownment for use of "unlawful" things was drunkenness—a crime rarely named or complained about by the reformers. Marietta, *Reformation*, 19.

³⁶ Breen, *Marketplace*, 184.

³⁷ Wigs were condemned in 1717 but, due to their persistent prevalence among Friends, continued to be the object of much protest. Gummere, *A Study in Costume*, 97-99. See e.g., Pemberton, *Life and Travels*, 235.

³⁸ A good extended example of quietist dualism is John Woolman, "Considerations on Keeping Negroes, Part Second," in *Journal*, 210-237.

³⁹ John Griffith, *Some Brief Remarks upon Sundry Important Subjects, necessary to be understood and attended to by all professing the Christian religion...* (London: W. Richardson and S. Clark, 1765), 27.

⁴⁰ Woolman, *Journal*, 252 and Pemberton, *Life and Travels*, 18.

⁴¹ E.g., Evans, *Journal*, 15.

⁴² Woolman, *Journal*, 211. See also Barclay, *Apology*, 197.

⁴³ E.g., Hume, *Exhortation*, 66, 149.

⁴⁴ E.g., Churchman, *Account of the Gospel Labours*, 265.

⁴⁵ On the growth of the carnal spirit, see Woolman, *Journal*, 83.

⁴⁶ Evans, *Journal*, 172. On the connection between pride and the wrong spirit, see

Woolman, *Journal*, 142.

⁴⁷ That Friends blamed a carnal spirit for the problem of luxury and trusted that reforming the spirit would wipe out luxury is also supported by the curious and persistent glorification of the youth of the Society. Almost every reformer lifted up a remnant of the youth as the hope and best part of the Society, glad that they were not trapped in “old forms and customs” like the “gray hairs.” This, I believe, is because youth, by not being as established in business or property, must have seemed less tied to the source of the carnal spirit. Joshua Evans explicitly tied the youth’s virtue to their lack of money when he complained that “parents,” because of their riches, would not listen to his doctrines, while “the children are sometimes more tender.” George S. Brookes, *Friend Anthony Benezet* (Philadelphia, University of Philadelphia Press, 1937), 229; Churchman, *Account*, 275; Fothergill, *Memoirs*, 206; Evans, *Journal*, 110.

⁴⁸ Pemberton, *Life and Travels*, 123.

⁴⁹ The reformers also believed in the possibility of spiritual progress, that their understanding of the Inward Light could gradually improve over time and eventually be superior to generations past. This confidence in the possibility of progress encouraged their belief that internal reform and discernment could result in external reforms and improvements. See Hume, *Exhortation*, 43 and Woolman, *Journal*, 147.

⁵⁰ E.g., Woolman, *Journal*, 120, 125, 247.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 32.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 167.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 92.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 247.

⁵⁵ That Woolman considers the abuse of poor workers on the same level as chattel slavery is evident in his discussion on the “depth of [revolt]” of those “employed in factories.” Woolman, *Journal*, 185.

⁵⁶ Interestingly, Woolman’s optimism about the uniform redistribution of resources made him the poster child for the shortly lived Socialist Quaker Society, launched in London in 1898. T. A. B. Corley, “Changing Quaker Attitudes to Wealth, 1690–1950,” in *Religion, Business, and Wealth in Modern Britain*, ed. David J. Jeremy (London: Routledge, 1998), 143–148.

⁵⁷ Speaking of “the Quakers” is perhaps easier than speaking of “the reformers.” All public Quakers had to pass a strict test of censorship, both in their writing and speaking, making most published texts an “official” voice of the Quakers. J. William Frost, *The Quaker Family in Colonial America: A Portrait of the Society of Friends* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1973), 6 and Barbour, *Early Quaker Writings*, 513. Of course, even with the presence of homogenizing censorship, individual emphases and opinions remained.

⁵⁸ In all of these strategies, as I will discuss later, there is overlap. These are not meant to be concrete distinctions.

⁵⁹ Woolman, *Journal*, 32.

⁶⁰ Quakers and tea are an interesting case study, as the advent of tea was the supreme example of fashion and custom of the day. Imported from afar, tea was so

fashionably Anglo that colonists would buy it before they knew how to brew it. Understandably, the most radical Quaker reformers stood against the drink, including the eccentric Benjamin Lay, who staged a public demonstration of smashing teacups in protest. Breen, *Marketplace of Revolution*, 171, 183.

⁶¹ The full pointed beard of James Nayler being an exception. Gummere, *A Study in Costume*, 93.

⁶² Evans, *Journal*, 22-35.

⁶³ William Boen, *Anecdotes and Memoirs of William Boen, A Colored Man...* ed. anon., probably John Comly (Philadelphia: John Richards, 1834). Many thanks to Stephen Angell for pointing me towards Boen.

⁶⁴ It is my hope that someone will dedicate a study to this if one does not already exist.

⁶⁵ Evans, *Journal*, 38.

⁶⁶ See footnote 60.

⁶⁷ For more on Benezet's frank criticism of wealth, see Marietta, *Reformation*, 100.

⁶⁸ Brookes, *Benezet*, 242.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 231.

⁷⁰ Matthew 19:16-30, Mark 10:17-31, Luke 18:18-30.

⁷¹ E.g., Woolman argued that, though the rich young man himself should have sold all his possessions, we "limit the Holy One" if we think that that is God's desire for all people. Instead, God has different levels and roles of stewardship for different people. Woolman, *Journal*, 251. Likewise, Sophia Hume explained the story spiritually, that Christ was really asking the young man in question to "prove his Love and Obedience to God... and take up a Cross to his own Will and Desires, and follow CHRIST, in this Way of Self-denial." Hume, *Exhortation*, 75. One possible exception would be Benezet himself, who in 1757 shrewdly observed that Quakers did not take the biblical injunctions on property as seriously or as literally as they took those on oaths. That said, Benezet did not sell his property, and in fact happily accepted large donations for his benevolent works. Brookes, *Benezet*, 224, 143.

⁷² Pemberton, *Life and Travels*, 12.

⁷³ Fothergill, *Memoirs*, 170.

⁷⁴ Churchman, *Journal*, 22.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.* 138, 339. An excellent example of how reformers challenged the priorities of individual Friends is John Churchman's confrontation of a lackadaisical Friend in Thetford. Churchman, *Journal*, 131-5.

⁷⁶ The key word in this sentence is "direct," which will be discussed in the conclusion.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 117.

⁷⁸ Though I have no quantified statistics to cite, the compilation of my own notes is strikingly clear: those with money advocated the third strategy of combating "formality" rather than criticizing actual possessions. I should make clear, however, as mentioned above, there is overlap. Benezet, who was the most outspoken against the possession of wealth, spoke about formality; and even

Pemberton spoke out against vanity once or twice. These are not isolated camps, but diverse groups of emphasis.

⁷⁹ Tolles, *Counting House*, 131.

⁸⁰ E.g., Pemberton, *Life*, 11; Fothergill, *Memoirs*, 282.

⁸¹ Griffith, *Journal*, 320.

⁸² Fothergill, *Memoirs*, 255. See also Griffith, *Some Brief Remarks*, 8.

⁸³ Again, for background see Marietta, *Reformation*, Sec. 1.

⁸⁴ Griffith, *Journal*, 213, 310.

⁸⁵ Pemberton, *Life*, 226. See also Churchman, *Journal*, 203.

⁸⁶ Griffith, *Brief Remarks*, 89.

⁸⁷ David Brion Davis, *The Problem of Slavery in the Age of Revolution: 1770–1823* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1975), Chapter Five.

⁸⁸ Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, trans. Talcott Parsons (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1948).

⁸⁹ Griffith, *Journal*, 211. See also Fothergill, *Memoirs*, 137.

⁹⁰ See Davis, *Problem of Slavery*, 251. As mentioned above, even the most radical reformers never really challenged the wide scale possession of property. See Woolman, *Journal*, 251. In addition, the valorization of benevolence helped to legitimate the accumulation of wealth because of its potential for philanthropic stewardship. All the reformers I discussed traveled in the ministry, and were able to do so because they were “favoured with a sufficiency of outward things.” Churchman, *Journal*, iv.

⁹¹ Davis, *Problem of Slavery*, 251–3.

⁹² Mark Valeri, “Religious Discipline and the Market: Puritans and the Issue of Usury,” *The William and Mary Quarterly* 54, No. 4 (Oct 1997): 747–768,

⁹³ Churchman, *Journal*, 2, 272; Evans, *Journal*, 51, 198.

⁹⁴ Deep thanks to Catherine Brekus and Stephen Angell for their help and advice.