

**“Ecstasy Has Been Given to the Tiger:”
Aggression in the Quaker Meeting for Worship**

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For the tiger in you, that you may meet it aware and often.

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"Greed and Aggression" by Sharon Olds (*The Golden Cell*, 1986)

Someone in Quaker meeting talks about greed and aggression
and I think of the way I lay the massive
weight of my body down on you
like a tiger lying down in gluttony and pleasure on the
elegant heavy body of the eland it eats,
the spiral horn pointing to the sky like heaven.
Ecstasy has been given to the tiger,
forced into its nature the way the
forcemeat is cranked down the throat of the held goose,
it cannot help it, hunger and the glory of
eating packed at the center of each
tiger cell, for the life of the tiger and the
making of new tigers, so there will
always be tigers on the earth, their stripes like
stripes of night and stripes of fire-light—
so if they had a God it would be striped,
burnt-gold and black, the way if
I had a God it would renew itself the
way you live and live while I take you as if
consuming you while you take me as if
consuming me, it would be a God of
love as complete satiety,
greed and fullness, aggression and fullness, the
way we once drank at the body of an animal
until we were so happy we could only
faint, our mouths running, into sleep.

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Chapter One: Introduction

“Fight, fight, Quakers for the light! Kill, Quakers, kill!”

—Traditional team cheer for Haverford, Guilford, and Earlham Colleges¹

Together, aggression and Quakerism are two seemingly disparate aspects of the intersection of psychiatry and religion. Society generally encourages disavowing aggression because of its incitement of and pairing with hatred and violence. Quakerism is branded at the other end of the spectrum as entirely passive for its silence (in the worship service) and dedication to peace (evident in its renowned social justice efforts.) Yet aggression and Quakerism are intrinsically and necessarily intertwined for the religion’s healthy survival. This paper will demonstrate the need for aggression within Quakerism and why Quakerism is an incredible channel for aggression so that it may serve as a model for other religious groups to address their aggression and for Quakers to be further aware of the roots of their own experiences.

In response to psychoanalyst Donald W. Winnicott’s critical view of theology as limiting to the developing true and whole self, professor David Holbrook stated that perhaps all was not lost. There remained one religion that still allowed for this development, particularly in regards to creativity and morality, the two aspects of a self Winnicott deems essential. Holbrook wrote of the Inner Light—understood by Quakers to be “that of God in everyone” and is also referred to as the Spirit or the Divine Presence²—that:

According to Winnicott’s view: ‘Theology, by denying to the developing individual the creating of whatever is bound up in the concept of God and of goodness and of moral values, depletes the individual of an important aspect of creativeness’ (Winnicott [“Morals and Education”], p. 95). In so far as religion becomes less an individual search for inner light (as it is perhaps for the Quakers) and rather a matter of loyalty to institutions, dogmas,

¹ While the alumni/ae of these colleges have often told me this is solely a bit of sarcastic wit, I also suggest it may be the true aggression of Quakers coming out in a loud voice through “justifiable” means such as football, rugby, etc.

² The idea of the Inner Light is also the word of God from the firm belief that it is "the true light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world" (Jn1:9). The early Quakers understood this passage relative to Jesus Christ.

established moral codes, and forms of exhortation, the less it fosters individual moral potential.³

Winnicott wrote that because theology and religion (the terms were used interchangeably and through further reading implies the concept of religion) binds all creativity and morality to its concept of God, the individual does not develop her or his own sense of morality and creativity.⁴ However, Holbrook assumes that because of Quakerism's individual search for knowledge and experience of God and its lack of doctrine and dogma, it therefore allows for the build up of "individual moral potential" and, per Winnicott, the development of creativeness. This paper will argue that Quakerism fosters the development of morality and creativity via individual and collective aggression based upon the theories of Winnicott, Holbrook, and psychoanalyst and educator Ann Belford Ulanov.

This essay will use William James' method of presenting a variety of experiences of Meeting for Worship throughout its existence and how that has led to each of these aspects. As James writes, "In my belief that a large acquaintance with particulars often makes us wiser than the possession of abstract formulas, however deep, I have loaded the lectures with concrete examples, and I have chosen these among the extremer expressions of the religious temperament."⁵ Building upon Ulanov's idea that, "You need your own primary sources to tolerate any theories," these primary experiences serve to prove Quakerism as a proper and fulfilling channel for aggression in the development of the self.^{6 7}

Chapter Two begins with an explanation of Quakerism, providing some key aspects of the tradition, especially those important to this analysis. It would be impossible to address all aspects

³ Holbrook, 211.

⁴ For the purpose of this paper and when not recorded in a citation, *religion* is understood as the practice of theology, *theology* is a system of understanding one's or a group's spirituality.

⁵ James, v.

⁶ Ulanov, Lecture note for: PS308 Aggression. "First Theory of Aggression: Freud," September 14.

⁷ Many texts by Quakers regarding Quakerism make an effort to use as much of primary experiences as possible in their writings. This parallels the Meeting itself of which both vocal ministry and silence are the co-centerpiece.

and all types of experiences of Quakerism in this short paper. Hence, this work addresses the Quaker worship service, Meeting for Worship (hereafter, Meeting). Meeting is the center of Quakerism; the need for a silent, unprogrammed worship service sparked the entire Quaker movement and is still the core of Quaker practice. A Quaker's specific, home church is also a "Meeting." For the purpose of this paper, this type of Meeting will be referred to as a Monthly Meeting. The term "Monthly" is in reference to how often groups have Meeting for Business.⁸ Over time, the Meeting has served as further inspiration for the efforts of the peace testimony and social justice work for which the Quakers have grown to focus their practice on even further during the 20th century.⁹

The materials regarding Quakers were taken from seminal histories, spiritual works, my personal experience of Quakerism, as well as various Pendle Hill Pamphlets.¹⁰ This paper focuses primarily on Meeting in the Friends General Counsel (FGC), which identifies as being politically liberal and shies away from proselytizing. Pendle Hill is the center of learning for the FGC organization or denomination of Quakerism and is located near Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, the center of Quakerism in the United States. FGC is composed of only unprogrammed meetings, which are meetings of silent worship with spontaneous vocal ministry. Other Quaker denominations consist of predominantly programmed meetings that resemble a Protestant-like liturgy.¹¹

Next it is necessary to speak to aggression in more detail, delineating and demonstrating the closeness of the aggressive impulse and aggressive actions within depth psychology. Chapter Three

⁸ *Faith and Practice*, 36.

⁹ The next logical step for study is how aggression, now demonstrated within Meeting for Worship, gives way to, supports, and appears within the peace testimony and social justice work. I hope to perform this study in the future.

¹⁰ Pendle Hill pamphlets are released quarterly from the center of Quaker learning by the same name over the last 60 years and include a diverse base of Quaker thought.

¹¹ Other Quaker denominations are the Friends United Meeting (FUM) and the Evangelical Friends Meeting (EFM). FUM is a more evangelical and conservative denomination than the FGC. The EFM is the most evangelical and conservative denomination of Quakerism.

reiterates Holbrook's claim and then addresses Winnicott's theory of aggression, describing the process necessary for a person to integrate her or his aggression. This process also incorporates the creativity, morality, and True Self essential to living a real, full life in reality. Winnicott states that if the person cannot accomplish this integration with their mother or a psychoanalyst, she or he is lost and the aggression is forever repressed from consciousness. The aggression instead appears in projections, anger and violence, and/or the person is completely inhibited.

However, Ulanov believes that there is hope for those Winnicott deems lost—and all others too—in the God-person dyad. When the other relationships fail or are not available, a person can use her or his aggression with God. Using religion as a channel, the person can let her or his aggression push up against God and fully develop their self. The materials to construct Chapter Three were taken from the body of Winnicott, Ulanov's writings on aggression, and Holbrook's chapter, "Education, Culture, and Moral Growth" from his book *Human Hope and the Death Instinct*.

Chapter Four argues that Quakerism does in fact foster Winnicott's idea of moral potential and creativeness in that it is *both* individual and communal. Furthermore, while it lacks *both* dogma and doctrine, it has guidelines concerning how a Meeting should happen.¹² In other words, although his assertion is correct, Holbrook did not base his claim on a clear understanding of Quakerism. This argument is clearly supported by Winnicott's theory of aggression in that the individual cannot experience her or his aggression in isolation, and that these limits, though not as severe as any dogma, offer creative ways for someone to push up against someone to in turn *be* someone.

Is Winnicott correct in saying that when we or someone else attaches us to a theology's morality and creativity during our development, we give away the opportunity to develop into a real

¹² Hereafter the term "dogma" will be used as a summary term for both "dogma" and "doctrine" as it is the more encompassing of the two and the term that infers religion. "Dogma" and "doctrine" are often interchangeably whereby "dogma" is defined as a set of doctrines laid down by a church relating to such matters as faith and morality, while "doctrine" is any principle and/or body of principles.

self? Again, no. Ulanov's theory argues that the experience of putting aggression against God allows this development as well. Using this idea, this chapter then outlines how morality, creativity, and the True Self develop within Meeting using these theories of aggression and using the aggressive impulse itself. The chapter concludes with the results of repression and projection of aggression in Quakerism and an explanation of how each Meeting integrates and must continue to integrate their aggression for their own "healthy survival."

This chapter also serves the purpose of educating Quakers about their aggression and the essential place it holds in the religion. It is written to educate the psychoanalytic community about the use of Quakerism as a channel for aggression, particularly as an example of how religion is a good opportunity for an individual to achieve wholeness. Chapter Five will summarize the main points of the thesis and address my hope that this paper may serve as a model for and incitement to other Christian denominations, other religions, and other individuals to integrate their aggression through the medium of religion or other venues.

Before I begin offering my background material and analysis, it is best to offer some examples of how Quakers see aggression to offer a frame for reading this paper. While none of the examples in psychoanalytic theory regarding aggression specifically reference Meeting, there are still extreme opinions on the matter that must be presented before proceeding. For example, in 2002, some Quakers issued a statement of protest to the United Nations: "Open Letter to United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan and to Representatives of the Member States, on the Declared Intention of the United States to Commit Aggression Against Iraq."¹³ In the letter, over one hundred Quakers signed the document that read:

When a country simply takes it upon itself to displace a regime of which it disapproves by force of arms, this is aggression... The recent U.S. assertion of a right to engage in "pre-

¹³ ZNet, 1.

emptive" attacks on states, including Iraq, does not obviate these considerations—it is another expression of an intent to violate international law.¹⁴

Hence, aggression is understood as violent, unlawful aspects of war.

In a casual conversation, a leader in the Brooklyn Monthly Meeting asked me the topic of this thesis. After he heard the title, he put his fingers into the air in an “X” towards me and reeled back saying, “We’re not aggressive! We’re not violent! Why would you study such a thing?” After a further explanation of the psychoanalytic understanding of aggression, he said that he still felt that aggression was not “very Quaker.”¹⁵ One Sunday a Morningside Heights Meeting in Manhattan was comprised of only messages that disparaged and expressed their terror of the narrowness of Christian fundamentalists and the diabolical workings of the Bush administration.¹⁶ Such a Meeting has become common in New York City since September 11th whereby the focus of vocal ministry often solely revolves around messages of fear, but rarely is anger discussed. Aggression is not simply anger but the disparity between what is and what is not discussed is striking.

While some Quakers disparage aggression, others welcome it within their work. A leader within the Morningside Heights Meeting had the opposite response to the topic of this thesis: “That’s great! We deny all of that in ourselves and it will be great to have someone talk about it!”¹⁷ The poet Sharon Olds—who may or may not be Quaker—wrote a remarkable poem of her experience during Meeting. The poem entitled “Greed and Aggression” can be found on the dedication page of this thesis. Here is an experience in Meeting of aggression as real and instinctual.

The only other mention of aggression by or regarding Quakerism was delivered in a 1974 lecture entitled “Aggression and Hostility in Quaker Families” by Fortunato Castillo, psychoanalyst

¹⁴ ZNet, 2.

¹⁵ Personal experience at Morningside Heights Meeting with attendee. March 7, 2004.

¹⁶ Personal experience at Morningside Heights Meeting. February 27, 2004.

¹⁷ Personal conversation with Jerry Reisig, Clerk of Morningside Heights Meeting. March 8, 2004.

and Quaker.¹⁸ Castillo's argument is similar to this thesis, addressing the Freudian psychoanalytic opinion of aggression to Quakerism, but he focused on the family while this thesis focuses on the Meeting. He argues that Quaker families do not have symbols, play, or other outlets for the developing individual to channel their drives through, particularly aggression. There are no toy guns, no cannibalistic eating practices like other Christians, and the stifling of these drives leads to delinquency and suicide. He also states that by denying our aggression in Quakerism, Quakers cause the movement to lose its momentum and it will thus eventually disintegrate.

My argument goes a step further. It is aggression that can make Meeting not only survive but grow strong and grow. The healthful use of aggression in Meeting can spark a domino effect then make all of waning religion of Quakerism whole once more. From these introductory examples, it is understood that Quakers both disavow and heartily accept their aggression. Some of these opinions are dependent upon how well these Quakers are versed on the psychoanalytic perspective on aggression, yet the commentators may in fact be against acknowledging aggression as a natural human emotion. Those Quakers eager to disavow aggression in the religion do so primarily in light of the peace testimony and the religion's relentless efforts toward social justice. Other Quakers are eager to consider aggression in light of the Meeting, defending it as part of the natural diversity of personality within the Meeting and an essential part of each individual's selfhood. The next step is to integrate these arguments to then provide a clear explanation and path for self-integration.

¹⁸ Castillo, 1-2, 8-9.

Chapter Two: Quakerism

“Let no one go to Friends’ meetings with the expectation of finding everything to his taste.”
—Caroline Stephen¹⁹

It is necessary to first offer a background of Quakerism on those aspects of the religion to be addressed by the theories of aggression with specific attention to the central focus and act of the religion: the Quaker Meeting for Worship.²⁰ The history, peace testimony, and social justice efforts that Meeting inspires are then briefly addressed.

The Quaker religion, or the Religious Society of Friends, was founded by George Fox in 1647 in England and soon after brought to the United States due to the members’ exile. The denomination is primarily Christian although some Meetings are interfaith. Quakers also are known as “Friends,” a title gained from the following scripture: “This is my commandment, that ye love one another as I have loved you. Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you” (Jn. 15.12-13).²¹ The title “Quaker” was given when early Quakers “quaked” as they awaited and experienced direct revelation from God.²² Although Friends or Quakers can be used interchangeably, this paper will utilize the more universally known name Quakers.

¹⁹ Steere, ed., *Quaker Spirituality: Selected Writings*. From Caroline Stephen’s “Quaker Strongholds,” 1890 [64].

²⁰ It behooves anyone interested in Quakerism to read further in the matter. The reading is quite enjoyable and as Quakers are constantly telling each other to be more brief, the histories and journals tend not to write too often without fascinating details. The other major terms of the tradition are as follows: Silence, Worship, Truth, Simplicity, Conscience, Nonviolence, Service, Business, Education, and Family. Some of these terms may seem consistent with general religious tones (Worship, Truth, Conscience, Service, Education, Family), less familiar (Business, Nonviolence), and some completely unfamiliar (Silence, Simplicity).

²¹ Punshon, 6.

²² Smith, 6.

Meeting for Worship

The concept for Meeting for Worship and the religion itself was inspired when George Fox heard an inner voice he interpreted to be God speaking to him as God spoke to the biblical prophets. As a result of this experience and the messages Fox received therein, the Meeting is based on the belief that the canon was not closed with the New Testament but that that we all “live in a dispensation of continuing divine revelation.”²³ The Bible then serves both as a starting point for the religion for present experiences of the divine. Each person, through her or his mystical experiences,

has the capacity for direct dialogue with God, without the need for clerical intermediaries. Anyone could do it. ... Continuing revelation would occur if people joined together in silence and opened their hearts to the divine voice within. As Psalm 46 directs us: “Be still, and know that I am God.”²⁴

This is identical to what Quaker scholar Thomas Kelly identifies as the “central message of Friends,” i.e., “[T]he possibility of this experience of Divine Presence, as a repeatedly realized and present fact, and its transforming and transfiguring effect upon all life.”²⁵

Meeting involves sitting in the silence “to wait upon the Lord” for “only by listening in stillness for that voice and letting it guide our actions can we truly let our lives speak.”²⁶ This practice of unprogrammed, active waiting is a powerful and enlivening experience to Quakers that sometimes leads to inspired vocal ministry.²⁷ For example,

Fox called this great event an ‘opening,’ and many Quakers love that good old word. Others have called it ‘an immediate personal experience’ (William James), ‘an overwhelming consciousness of God’ (Evelyn Underhill), or a ‘peak experience’ (Abraham Maslow). Under any name the experience is one of surrender to the one source of grace, faith and power. Early Friends often emphasized the experience of

²³ Punshon, 12.

²⁴ Smith, 5.

²⁵ Kelly, *A Testament of Devotion*, 67.

²⁶ Smith, 3.

²⁷ Steere, *On Speaking Out of the Silence*, 4. Steere also wrote, “The texture of the vocal ministry...comes up out of the silent, waiting, unprogrammed meeting that is grounded on the promise in the New Testament that ‘where two or three are gathered together in my name’ (Mt18.20)” This means that in gathering to worship, God and/or Jesus Christ is present.

obedience to the Inner Light; while some modern Friends, like Rufus Jones, speak of the total immersion of the individual will and identity in the divine One.²⁸

The practice of Christian silent worship is unique, as the Quaker educator Smith explains:

[I]t should be noted that Quaker Meeting is not the only religious tradition of silent worship, there is Buddhism. But Quakers are unique in their appreciation of the spiritual power of group silence. If all forms of worship are attempts to transcend the self and find the divine within, Quaker Meeting uses shared silence as a medium of group discovery, as a way of sharing ourselves with others—and with God.²⁹

Many Christian monastic orders also practice group silence as a form of worship but those groups never deviate from the silence, while Meeting invites the spoken Words into the service.

Meeting may be wholly silent or may consist of one or more messages given by an attendee raising to her or his feet and speaking. Quaker historian Howard Brinton surmised, “Vocal ministry is an important, but not an essential element in Quaker worship. Both theoretically and actually a meeting which worships in complete silence may be as valuable as one in which speaking occurs.”³⁰

The mixture of silence and vocal ministry is necessary to perform with others because Quakers believe that “[s]uch shared experiences enrich (their) faith.”³¹

Each message of vocal ministry is heard throughout the community and stimulates those sitting in Meeting.³² When more than one message is given during the hour, they often build upon one another during the hour. As Smith explains,

The premise of Quaker Meeting is that no one person sees the entire truth. The group search after truth is more comprehensive and more exacting than the search of one individual. At Meetings for Worship, the shared silence creates receptivity to the continuing revelation of the truth. People who are moved to vocal ministry offer small insights that contribute to each person's understanding.³³

²⁸ Punshon, 9-10.

²⁹ Smith, 11.

³⁰ Brinton, 83.

³¹ *Faith and Practice*, 11.

³² Punshon, 16. The author adds, “Today evidence for a gathered meeting comes from the phenomenon which the psychologist Carl Jung described as ‘synchronicity,’ a connecting principle or communication without any apparent external cause.” While many Quakers have done much in the way of incorporating Jungian theory into their understanding of Quakerism, it would be helpful to integrate their study into this work with aggression as a helpful next step in self-understanding.

³³ Smith, 21.

The practice of giving a message has its own understanding and teaching among Quakers regarding what should and should not be stated. Both the silence and vocal messages have their place in Meeting.³⁴ The message should be spontaneously received and then given and it should feel as if it is not given to the recipient alone.

In the Quaker *Journals* [historic accounts of Quaker witness testimony] we frequently read of the sense of burden and uneasiness which often precedes speaking. He who ministers does not wish to break the solemn silence. It may seem to him an evidence of pride that, by his own decision, he should take such a responsibility upon himself. But when he becomes aware that the responsibility is not solely his, but that of the divine Master who has called him, if he is faithful, he will yield to the requirement. Quaker *Journals* frequently mention the sense of complete peace which follows obedience to the call. But there is not always peace. Sometimes the most revered Friends sit down with a sense of uneasiness and a feeling of having “outrun the guide.”³⁵

While the message is understood as a direct revelation from God, “there is no sure test of divine guidance in this or any other undertaking.”³⁶

Quakers each seek a centered, concentrated awareness, and this focused depth allows them to achieve further nearness to God.³⁷ Quakers understand that “the process of renewal and growth begins in solitude” to achieve such a centering.³⁸ Smith stated, “The kernel of George Fox's vision was that God finds individual expression within each of our souls and within each of our lives.”³⁹

The Quaker book of discipline states, “Above all, solitude provides the opportunity to be alone with God and opens us to the workings of the Spirit.”⁴⁰

There must be a “sense of urgency” to the message so that a person literally feels pushed up out of her or his seat. Such urgency is difficult to discern, but the most clear example comes from

³⁴ Steere, *Community and Worship*, 26. Steere also wrote, “[D]istractions of the mind are more troublesome, but most of them can vest be treated by making no attempt to resist them, by acknowledging their presence and sinking to a depth that is beneath them. Half a mile under the ocean there is calm, no matter what the agitation maybe on the surface.”

³⁵ Brinton, 84-85.

³⁶ Brinton, 85.

³⁷ For a skillful and powerful psychoanalytic discussion of this form of focused attention, see the following Ph.D dissertation: Kelcourse, Felicity Brock. *Discernment: The Art of Attention in Religious Experience*.

³⁸ Yungblut, 16.

³⁹ Smith, 5.

⁴⁰ *Faith and Practice*, 15.

John William Graham's words in 1790:

It comes in waiting. When I sit down in meeting I recall whatever may have struck me freshly during the past week...so thoughts suggest themselves—a text that has smitten one during the week—new light on a phrase, a verse of poetry—some incident, private or public. These pass before the door whence shines the heavenly light. Are they transfigured? Sometimes, yes: sometimes, no. If nothing flames, silence is my portion. I turn from ideas of ministry to my private needs. From these, sometimes the live coal from off the altar is brought, suddenly and unexpectedly, and speech follows. Sometimes it does not. Again there are times when the initial thought strikes in of itself from the Inner Man beyond the will. These are rimes to be thankful for. Often two or three of these thoughts that have struck home during the week are woven together and in unexpected ways. When the fire is kindled, the blaze is not long. In five minutes from its inception, the sermon is there, the heart beats strongly and up the man must get. ...These are the five or six points, the leading sequences of thought are there, the expository teaching, the generalization, the illustrations, the final lesson and appeal, then fall into place. The sermon is made, but I slow compiler did not make it.⁴¹

Besides the sense of urgency, Quakers have outlines other guidelines to identify a message to be shared. These guidelines ask that messages not be challenged during Meeting, persons giving messages usually speak only once, and the messages are to carry some spiritual weight.⁴² After the pushing away the outside noise to hear a message, the Quaker scholar and educator Douglas V. Steere stated,

[D]istractions of the mind are more troublesome, but most of them can best be treated by making no attempt to resist them, by acknowledging their presence and sinking to a depth that is beneath them. Half a mile under the ocean there is calm, no matter what the agitation may be on the surface.⁴³

In an attempt to be open to the Inner Light at every possible moment, the early Quakers removed that which they identified as “programmed” or rote.⁴⁴ Brinton wrote,

⁴¹ Steere, *On Speaking Out of the Silence*, 9. From John William Graham's *The Faith of a Quaker* “The Workshop of the Ministry” [245-6].

⁴² Brinton, 84-85; Callard; and Smith, 20-21; respectively.

⁴³ Steere *Community and Worship*, 26.

⁴⁴ Worship studies are a necessary angle to this discussion if more room was allowed. As I do have not much of a background in this area, I eagerly prompt anyone who could to take this same study up from that angle. Ritual in Quakerism is a fascinating aspect to this argument. A good starting point for such a study could be Dr. Janet Walton's sabbatical lecture form March 3, 2004 about making worship alive again with play. Such play—a necessary element to Winnicott's psychoanalytic theory, and something I did not get to address in full in this thesis—is also made possible by the aggressive impulse.

When Christian worship lost its spontaneity and became organized and mechanized, with human leadership more apparent than divine leadership, this living presence in the midst was no longer felt so strongly, although by a priestly miracle it could still be realized on the altar.⁴⁵

The usual system of hierarchy was abandoned. Ordained ministers were eliminated; instead Fox charged all of his followers to be ministers. All persons had equal access to God and, as Friends, could each “be in the light” and be ministers to one another. Steere writes,

Here indeed is a service of worship that demands that all believers be their own priests. For in the Quakers meeting for worship, the members must still their bodies, still their minds, must attend to the presence of God, must thank and adore God for being what God is, must feel the incongruities of their own lives that are out of keeping with such a presence, must long for their removal and forgiveness...⁴⁶

In other words, professional ministry in the Meeting disavows all but the prophetic voice as heard from the earliest beginnings of the church.⁴⁷ Meetings are instead run by their members through various committees that absorb all spiritual, pastoral, and administrative responsibilities.

Positions of leadership do exist within Quakerism, and are referred to as “elders” and “overseers.” These people are often over 60 years of age and have been Quakers for a majority of their lives. They exercise “an advisory function, not *over* the meeting, but *under* it as the instruments of its will.”⁴⁸ Elders are therefore the foundation of the Meeting’s structure, simultaneously members and leaders that are central to the growth and solidity of the Meeting. This form of self-governing is still in use today, although many Meetings no longer enlist elders. Instead, these Meetings prefer to rely on committees responsible for ministerial functions, although these committee members often have less experience than an elder or overseer.

Meeting can be held at any location, but Meetinghouses are often structured in a common fashion. The wooden benches all face the center of the rectangular or square room. Sunlight is a

⁴⁵ Brinton, 3.

⁴⁶ *Faith and Practice*, 23-4. From Douglas V. Steere, *On Listening to Another*.

⁴⁷ Brinton, 11.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

prominent feature in Meetinghouses. Long windows often fill each wall to remind attendees of the Inner Light sought and experienced within the self. In the center of the room, a Meeting may place a vase of flowers of the Bible, while others prefer to leave the space open.

“Religion without Dogma”

Quakers are not expected to adhere to any doctrine, dogma, or creed.⁴⁹ The religion has often been referred to as the “religion without dogma.” Yet the early Quakers realized the necessity of cobbling together “a consistent system of ideas, without which religion is vague, and incapable of propagating itself.”⁵⁰ Quakers rely on their own book of discipline entitled *Faith and Practice* to convey this system of ideas.⁵¹ A group of regional Meetings will gather to publish and update their version of *Faith and Practice* every few years. Each Meetinghouse is considered a Monthly Meeting. A region’s group of Monthly Meetings meets annually on various matters and as such is called the Yearly Meeting. The Yearly Meeting is responsible for composing and updating the book. There is no mention in the text of any theological beliefs apart from general statements advising to keep to Jesus’ loving teachings.⁵² Fox’s response to Jesus’ statement “Seek and ye shall find” (Mt7.7, Lk11.9) gets to the heart of how Quakerism exists without dogma: “We will find—if we will but seek—that the power of the Living Spirit teaches us and helps us to meet one another in harmony and love.”⁵³

Any and all business decisions regarding the Meeting are considered once a month at the Meeting for Business. The Meeting for Business makes use of the same process of silent waiting

⁴⁹ Ibid, 10. As a note, Quakers are also renowned for living in simplicity. If this topic interests you, I recommend George Hubbard’s work on the topic or any of on Quaker faith and practice at the end of this thesis.

⁵⁰ Ibid, 32.

⁵¹ While each Yearly Meeting has a unique book of discipline and this thesis relies on the New York Yearly Meeting’s copy of *Faith and Practice* from the FGC denomination, the quotes from that book are all taken from early Quakers and are used inclusively by all branches of Quakerism.

⁵² If I had the opportunity to pursue a detailed Biblical argument to this thesis, I would love to address those teachings of Jesus that are not expressly “loving” and their place in Quakerism. An important example of aggression certainly to be left out of this label would be when Jesus threw the moneychangers out of the temple (Mt21.12, Mk11.15, Jn2.14-15).

⁵³ *Faith and Practice*, 11.

and occasional messages as in the Meeting for Worship. All decisions made by, for, and about the Meeting are completed in the “sense of Meeting” whereby every member must come to agreement on an issue before the issue is approved or denied.

Peace Testimony and Social Justice Advocacy

Quakers enact their devotion to a life of continuing revelation through the worship service of Meeting. This devotion is also evident through the peace testimony and their dedication to creating social justice the world over. Kelly stated, “The straightest road to social gospel runs through profound mystical experience. The paradox of true mysticism is that individual experience leads to social passion, that the nonuseful engenders the greatest utility.⁵⁴ From this statement it is understood that while the aspects of “social gospel” and “mystical experience” are intertwined, it is the individual experience of mysticism which leads to “social passion” of “the greatest utility.” An example of this movement from the interior to the exterior, from the individual search to group work for the common good, is depicted in the Meeting’s end when attendees shake hands with one another. Smith writes,

This silent transfer of focus from heart to hand represents the shift at the end of Meeting from inner reflection to reconnection with the outside world. Heart and hand are the two inseparable agents of faith and work that reflect the two sides of Quakerism: its mysticism (reaching within for truth) and its activism (reaching out to others).⁵⁵

Peace testimony began as a minor part of Quakerism has grown into one of the most central aspects of the tradition.⁵⁶ The peace testimony is primarily a testimony against war. Quakers “repudiate war because it violates the primacy of love, destroys lives that God has given, and tears

⁵⁴ Kelly, *The Eternal Promise*, 24.

⁵⁵ Smith, 19-20.

⁵⁶ Punshon, 6.

the fabric of society.”⁵⁷ The idea for the testimony came from Fox who said, “I told them that I lived in that life and power that takes away all occasion for war.”⁵⁸ In other words, says the Quaker scholar and educator Rufus Jones, Fox felt certain that each individual’s “inward guidance would eventually bring them to ‘the covenant of peace’ which he had found in his own way.”⁵⁹ Peace testimony has always involved and still means acting as conscientious objectors and not bearing arms. These thoughts, words, and actions also express the claim that the greatest authority is that of a peaceful God and not a government. Peace testimony also appears in Meeting for Business where discourse occurs until a common solution can be agreed upon.

The responsibility to enact and support efforts in social justice and social change is another popularized aspect of the religion. In fact, Fox demanded of his followers:

This is the word of the Lord God to you all and a charge to you all in the presence of the living God: be patterns, be examples in all countries, places, islands, nations, wherever you come; that your carriage and life may preach among all sorts of people, and to them; then you will come to walk cheerfully over the world, answering that of God in everyone.⁶⁰

Quakers now conduct a practice known as collective witness, which entails speaking the truth to issues of social justice.⁶¹ They are heavily involved in monitoring, challenging, and contributing in governmental legislation and social justice efforts throughout the globe and work closely with the United Nations efforts towards peace.⁶² Major issues that are presently being addressed include the anti-war effort regarding the Middle East, and equality of sex, race, gender, sexuality, and class.

⁵⁷ *Faith and Practice*, 51.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.* From George Fox’s *Journal I*, 1694.

⁵⁹ Steere, ed. *Quaker Spirituality*, 282. From Rufus Jones, “The Faith and Practice of Quakers” [107].

⁶⁰ Brinton, 29. From George Fox, “Friends in Ministry,” *Journal I*, 316. This popular phrase “answering that of God in everyone” was used interchangeably as “answering that of Christ in everyone” by early Quakers.

⁶¹ Punshon, 3. Punshon also wrote, “If we are to be a community, if we are to bear a collective witness, we have to give form and structure to experience, we have to be relational about religion. We have to go as far as we can to meet the challenge of Robert Burns’s couplet about seeing ourselves as others see us.”

⁶² This includes the Friends Committee for National Legislation in the United States, the American Friends Service Committee, and similar organizations throughout the world, as well as large efforts in missionary work worldwide.

As each Quaker seeks and speaks her or his own truth from the Inner Light, there are varying opinions of aggression from this group, as exhibited in the introduction. To address other experiences of aggression in the religion, it is first necessary to outline those theories of aggression used to make this argument.

Chapter Three: Aggression in Depth Psychology

“One must speak for life and growth, and all this mass of destruction and disintegration.”
–D.H. Lawrence

This paper now introduces the theories of aggression of both Donald W. Winnicott and Ann Belford Ulanov. First, we must return to David Holbrook’s response to Winnicott’s opinion of the role of religion and theology for the developing individual. Quakerism does not suffocate the development process, and this chapter will present the aspects of those theories to address this argument in Chapter Four.

David Holbrook

The British professor of literature David Holbrook studied depth psychology and the societal and cultural implications of many of its theories throughout the 1960s and 1970s. He touched on his predecessor D.W. Winnicott’s theory of religion or theology (both analysts identified them interchangeably) in regards to the healthy development of morality and creativity. After citing Winnicott’s negative viewpoint of theology’s influence during early development, Holbrook offers one possible religion that does allow for moral development: Quakerism. In Holbrook’s central claim recorded in the thesis’ introduction, he argues that because Quakerism is an individual search for God and lacks a theology (which includes “loyalty to institutions, dogmas, established moral codes, and forms of exhortation”), it fosters true “individual moral potential” and does not deplete “the individual of an important aspect of creativeness.”

Winnicott writes that creativity “is the retention throughout life of something that belongs properly to infant experience: the ability to create the world.”⁶³ Morality is the ability to negotiate and act on right from wrong, to be true to her or his own self. In the same essay Holbrook

⁶³ Winnicott, “Living Creatively” [1970], *Home is Where We Start From*, 40.

identifies creativity, morality, and the True Self as Winnicottian concepts bound to one another in their evolution. The True Self is the self that is real, vibrant, present, and viable, that bodily self which does not comply but rather seeks and enacts the truth. Hence, to address the fostering of “individual moral potential” and the “important aspect of creativeness” is to address the True Self as well. Holbrook wrote,

In the light of the object-relations model of personality development, it can be seen that such a view fails to take into account most of the significant processes of growth in which creative symbolism plays so large a part. Such an approach is based on presenting ‘facts’ fails to recognize the one significant human fact involved, which is the inner struggle between love and hate. It fails to take into account the close connection between the ‘need to feel real’ and the need for a personal moral sense.⁶⁴

Donald W. Winnicott

Donald W. Winnicott was a pediatrician in England during the mid-20th century. As his practice progressed, he realized that he could achieve more for and with his patients by incorporating the practice of psychoanalysis into his work. He eventually practiced only psychoanalysis with patients of all ages and backgrounds, but predominantly dealt with children. His work began in dialogue with Melanie Klein, and he was the first to incorporate the environment as important aspect to human growth and development. Previous to his efforts the psychoanalytic community assumed that development remained primarily within the psyche, while Winnicott finally gave credit and thanks to the role of the mother.⁶⁵ Many to follow found this to be a failure of Winnicott’s, arguing that the responsibility given the role of the mother also left her at fault for the child’s shortcomings. However, Winnicott’s work only offered the positive effect mothers could have on their children and sought to acknowledge their hard work.

⁶⁴ Holbrook, 201.

⁶⁵ Winnicott, “Primary Maternal Preoccupation” [1956], *Collected Papers: Through Paediatrics to Psycho-Analysis*.

Winnicott identified aggression as an instinctual energy and an impulse that is biologically inherent in every human being.⁶⁶ Aggression is understood by the depth psychology community to be the instinctual energy or drive that serves to fulfill the basic needs of humanity: describe and claim a territory; gain shelter, food, living space; depend on one's living space; establish order in the group; select and take a mate; hunt; and create and sustain rituals of recognition between one another.⁶⁷ The first evidence of aggression is the motility a baby demonstrates, perhaps in the womb, by kicking, screaming, reaching, and thrashing.⁶⁸ It is "synonymous with activity" and "simply a symptom of being alive."⁶⁹ In this understanding, actual aggressiveness and the aggressive impulse are intertwined.

This aggression is at first only mobility and it then becomes part of the baby's expression of love, and only later does aggression mix with our anger, hate, and destructiveness.⁷⁰ Destructiveness is the destruction of an object, the annihilation of it. The aggressive impulse is first experienced by the baby as "ruthless love" where it "exists with a purpose but without concern for the result. The baby does not see that what it destroys is hurt."⁷¹ This love is not necessarily negative yet, it only exists as what it is.

To demonstrate the use of aggression in the development of the self, Winnicott discusses the example of the mother-child dyad (which is later paralleled by the analyst-patient dyad).⁷² This dyad is the baby's first experience of the world whereby the baby exists simply as a *me* merged with the mothering one. The baby exists as the nursing couple in the world experiencing its "ruthless love."

⁶⁶ I have highlighted those catch phrases and terms of Winnicott's theory in italics for the reader to appropriate more easily. Those terms and phrases in italics in quotations are Winnicott's original emphasis.

⁶⁷ Ulanov. Lecture notes for: PS308 Aggression. "Introduction." September 7, 2003.

⁶⁸ Winnicott, "Aggression in Relation to Emotional Development" [1950-5], *Collected Papers: Through Paediatrics to Psycho-Analysis*, 204.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ Ibid, 205, 206; and Ulanov, *Finding Space*, 108.

⁷¹ Ulanov. Lecture notes for: PS308 Aggression. "Third Theory of Aggression - Winnicott." October 8, 2003. Ulanov also refers to this "ruthless love" as "love with teeth."

⁷² As Winnicott wrote the majority of his work in the 1950s, he assumes the mother to be female. The mother can be of either gender or sex in this paper and mothering is seen as a role.

In her or his omnipotence, the baby cannot differentiate between itself and others, it is all that exists and is therefore all-powerful. This omnipotence develops whenever the baby is hungry—it cries and the breast appears; the baby coos and it receives attention. The baby now exists in the stage of *object-relating*; the baby believes it controls the object. Any expression of aggression in fantasy during this stage results in the baby believing it has in fact destroyed the mother.

Winnicott explains that this omnipotence is broken when the baby realizes that the mother, i.e., the object, is a separate person, that there exists to the baby something or someone that is *not-me*.⁷³ To move past the ruthlessness of object-relating, the baby must grow from object-relating to *object-usage*. In this later phase the baby begins to use the mother by destroying the mother, and the move is prompted when the mother survives this destruction. When the mother is still there and has *survived* the destruction, then the mother is able to exist in her or his own right.⁷⁴ This survival takes place when the mother is present (more often than not) both physically and emotionally, i.e., she does not withdraw from the child or retaliate. “*There is no anger* in the destruction of the object to which I am referring, though there could be said to be joy at the object’s survival.”⁷⁵

Once the baby has experienced the mother’s survival, fantasy and reality are now differentiated for the baby. The baby thinks, per Winnicott, “‘You have values for me because of your survival of my destruction of you.’ ‘While I am loving you I am all the time destroying you in (unconscious) *fantasy*.’”⁷⁶ The mother, and the environment as well, need not be perfect but rather *good-enough* for this to happen.

Literally, the baby’s natural aggression may demonstrate itself when she or he bites the breast of the mother. If the mother thinks of the baby as healthy and accepts this biting, then the baby realizes that its aggression will not destroy the mother. Immediately, the baby experiences *concern* for

⁷³ Winnicott, *Playing and Reality*, 89-94.

⁷⁴ Ulanov. Lecture notes for: PS308 Aggression. October 8, 2003.

⁷⁵ Winnicott, *Playing and Reality*, 93.

⁷⁶ *Ibid*, 90.

the injury it may have caused its mother whom she or he deeply loves. This “brings with it the capacity to feel guilt” for the “damage done to the loved person in the excited relationship.”⁷⁷ The baby has the capacity to hold the guilt and from that learns to repair the situation and be constructive.⁷⁸

If the baby receives a negative response from the mother for biting the breast and the mother thinks ill of the baby and chides her or him, then the child represses or inhibits her or his aggression. Repressed aggression overwhelms a person when it later forces its way out in truly hateful, rageful, or violent acts. The other option is that the child’s aggression remains repressed and the person continues to be inhibited, uncreative, and lifeless.⁷⁹ Without that object to relate to outside of the self, the baby cannot exert its aggression and hence cannot develop healthfully, instead expecting everything to burn up by her or his wild aggression.

Winnicott believes one aim of infancy is to *integrate* aggression into our lives so that we are not relating to others in our omnipotence, but rather are able to use the object, i.e., the mother in this case, and the object is then real to the baby.⁸⁰ Integration for the baby means tolerating her or his own destructive impulses and an integrated person carries the tension within. When we integrate aggression we get our own voice under us.⁸¹ Integration produces the capacity to

enjoy ideas, even with destruction in them, and the bodily excitements that belong to them, or that they belong to. This development gives elbow room for the experience of concern, which is the basis for everything constructive.⁸²

Aggression is hereby transformed from destructiveness into “social functions” and hence it is each individual's responsibility to be conscious of and to integrate her or his own aggression.⁸³ Only by

⁷⁷ Winnicott, “Aggression in Relation to Emotional Development” [1950-5], 206.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ Winnicott, “The Use of the Word Use,” *Psycho-Analytic Explorations*, 1968, 233. A great example of this is: “[H]e had to adopt self-control of impulse at a very early stage before he was ready to do so... This meant that he became inhibited. The inhibition had to be of all spontaneity and impulse in case some particle of the impulse might be destructive. The massive inhibition necessarily involved his creative gesture, so that he was left inhibited, unaggressive and uncreative.”

⁸⁰ Ulanov. Lecture notes for: PS308 Aggression. “Aggression & Society.” November 3, 2003.

⁸¹ Ulanov. Lecture notes for: PS308 Aggression. October 8, 2003.

⁸² Winnicott, “Aggression, Guilt, and Reparation.” *Deprivation and Delinquency*, 142.

properly exerting aggression against the mother and then integrating aggression through the process above, is there destruction *through fantasy* which then gives way to construction and constructive behavior *in reality*. The unused energy dedicated to repressing aggression has now been freed up to go into the unconscious and be used by the imagination; reality becomes alive to a person. Later on it is those “constructive and creative experiences” that make “it possible for the child to get to the experience of her (or his) destructiveness.”⁸⁴

What is important is that the infant integrates her or his aggression knowing that she or he will be loved including her or his aggression, as well as being hated for the same act.⁸⁵ The mother integrates these opposites when the mother both loves and hates her baby; this hate of the baby derives from the baby’s own ruthlessness and dominance.⁸⁶ Hate is a natural human emotion and is at times justified; to the infant it is “ruthless love.”⁸⁷ However,

the most remarkable thing about a mother is her ability to be hurt so much by her baby and to hate so much without paying the child out, and her ability to wait for rewards that may or may not come at a later date.⁸⁸

This process of integration even takes aggression to get through and the baby must also integrate aggression within the self by accepting it as part of its self. With aggression a conscious part of our life, we are more fully human.

Winnicott states, “Integration of a personality does not arrive at a certain time on a certain day. It comes and goes, and even when well attained it can be lost through unfortunate environmental chance.”⁸⁹ Hence, this integration, this move is an infinite, continuous process throughout life from object-relating to object-usage. A person may regress to earlier stage of object-

⁸³ Winnicott, “Aggression in Relation to Emotional Development,” 204, 207.

⁸⁴ Winnicott. “Aggression, Guilt, and Reparation,” 142.

⁸⁵ Winnicott. “The Use of an Object in the Context of *Moses and Monotheism*” [16 January 1969], *Psycho-Analytic Explorations*, 245.

⁸⁶ Winnicott. “Hate in the Countertransference,” *Collected Papers: Through Paediatrics to Psycho-Analysis*, 200, 202. An example of the mother’s integrated hate and love is the lyrics to the song “Rockabye Baby.”

⁸⁷ *Ibid*, 196, 201.

⁸⁸ *Ibid*, 202.

⁸⁹ Winnicott, “Aggression in Relation to Emotional Development,” 205.

relating in the case of crisis or to readdress some issues from her or his early life, but recovering to the state of object-usage is necessary for good health.⁹⁰

By unconsciously destroying the mother figure repeatedly and her repeated surviving, the baby learns that her or his fantasies will not destroy the world and builds up her or his sense of reality. “This is ‘making reality, placing the object outside of the self.’”⁹¹ The process of making reality takes an immense amount of aggression and the results give a person the sense of feeling and being real and alive.⁹² Interdependence develops as a result between the baby and the mother, and between the baby and reality.⁹³ Destructiveness therefore also develops into the relationships with others as an individual self.

The repressed aggression elicits itself through other means, that a person searches “for relief by the discovery of destructiveness elsewhere, that is to say by the mechanism of projection.”⁹⁴ Projection is when a person denies her or his own feelings and attributes them to someone else. For example, Sigmund Freud stated, “A person who is afraid of aggressive and sexual impulses obtains some relief for his anxiety by attributing aggressiveness and sexuality to other people. They are the ones who are aggressive and sexual, not he.”⁹⁵ Projection also serves a positive purpose of aligning internal dangers with the external world thereby making them easier to grapple with and alleviating anxiety. It also allows for someone to express her or his true feelings when perhaps a situation would not otherwise allow it.⁹⁶

While the future seems gloomy for the baby who was led to repress her or his aggression and fails to integrate it, Winnicott offers another option for hope in the psychoanalytic setting. The patient-psychoanalyst dyad can recreate a space for the patient to push up against the analyst and

⁹⁰ Ulanov. Lecture notes for: PS308 Aggression. October 8, 2003.

⁹¹ Winnicott, *Playing and Reality*, 87.

⁹² Ulanov. Lecture notes for: PS308 Aggression. October 8, 2003.

⁹³ Ulanov, “Violence,” 9.

⁹⁴ Winnicott. “Aggression, Guilt, and Reparation,” 143.

⁹⁵ Hall, *A Primer of Freudian Psychology*, 89.

⁹⁶ *Ibid*, 89-91.

achieve a positive channel for the natural aggression she or he was unable to develop in infancy. Here again, the patient must find the analyst by regressing to a stage of omnipotence and dependence. The analyst withstands the aggressive attacks of the patient such as lateness, earliness, testing comments, doubting, lying, grumpiness, unfair anger, hostility, and so on. Like the motility of the adult's infancy, a person can kick, scream, reach, and thrash out in her or his thoughts, in creative and symbolic play, and this leads to constructive behaviors and actions. The analyst takes these attacks in utter fairness and with complete presence, exerting as much reality as the analyst can assemble into the sessions. Eventually the patient learns that she or he cannot destroy the analyst and that her or his aggression is not necessarily bad. Destructiveness now becomes self-acceptance and even self-love.

The analyst has survived the patient's destruction and now the patient uses the analyst, understanding she or he to be a separate, whole person. The patient comes to learn that emotions such as hate and anger and destructive attitude need not be repressed when these feelings are justified and are addressed within society. If they are not justified there are always other outlets for them to be expressed through like sports, art, writing, and such. Now in adulthood, hate needs to be sorted out and made conscious.⁹⁷ The patient can see the analyst's hate for her or himself, or eventually the analyst will tell the patient of her or his hate, and this will serve as a model for the awareness to integrate the love and hate in the patient.

When aggression is taken into account consciously, heeded and used, reality forms. Using ever more aggression, a person's morality, creativity, and True Self develop. These aspects are bound to one another. Immorality is not creative. Uncreativity is not moral.

Morality may be passed on from caregivers but the child must grow into her or his own values. Such caregivers include mothers, fathers, nannies, teachers, camp counselors, Quaker elders,

⁹⁷ Winnicott, "Hate in the Countertransference," 194.

mentors, youth group leaders, etc. Morality is first taken from our early experiences, built from moral codes role models “left lying around” to be found and used, and may eventually be billed as “God.”⁹⁸ For example, if a mother finds some money and turns it in instead of keeping it, their child then picks up on her or his own sense that this sort of action is what is right and good. What is important is that then parents believe their children to develop their own capacity for moral judgment and goodness so that then the child can develop those qualities on her or his own. If the child is overly repressed or allowed to run rampant with her or his aggression, individual morality will develop skewed—too cautious or too violent, respectively.

Creativity “refers to a colouring of the whole attitude to external reality.”⁹⁹ Reality is used as an inspiration to create from and for, to give back to, to be part of, to live with others in the community of, and to have pushing back against us because it cannot be denied if someone chooses to live in a world without repression. Winnicott believes everyone possesses a desire for “creative living,” and this does not mean producing works of art, books, babies, or degrees.¹⁰⁰ Integration of aggression into our daily life allows the wasted energy spent on repressing energy to be then freed up in the unconscious imagination.

Without creativity and play, without morality and goodness from the good-enough mother in the good-enough environment, Winnicott’s *True Self* cannot exist. This True Self of a person comes to life when a person lives with her or his integrated aggression. This would look like being present, choosing life, being true to what you really feel, and not complying with enforced restrictions unnecessary for the common good. The first and most important opportunity to build the True Self is the experience with the mother and it takes aggression to have and endure this experience. Just as the development of creativity and morality contribute to the development of the

⁹⁸ Winnicott, “Morals and Education” [1963], *Maturation Processes and the Facilitating Environment*, 94.

⁹⁹ Winnicott, *Playing and Reality*, 65.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid*, 101.

True Self, the True Self also feeds back into creativity and morality. “Creativity is...the doing that arises out of being. It indicates that he who is, is alive.”¹⁰¹

Winnicott wrote, “The worst thing it is possible to do to a child is to seek to force it to comply so that it fails to discover a True Self” and therefore a person is left being a *False Self*.¹⁰² The False Self is an overly passive or overtly violent person, someone who lives a life of compliance with other standards of morality and has none of her or his own. This person lives uncreatively. Such a person is dull and washed out or all aflame unable to be in reality. “Winnicott tells us that ‘identification is not growth’ and there is a need to be an individual and also belong.”¹⁰³ We each must be our own True Self, not a copy or a mimic of life—lest we fall into the trap of lifelessness and everything is gray without the bright colors of the real. Just as integration is a reiterative process, living creatively and morally, and as the True Self includes processes that take aggression to reiterate, we may aspire always to resist compliance but it is not always possible in every moment.

Winnicott points out that not everyone can achieve the True Self even with the help of analysis. He assumes then that some people are forever lost, either helplessly boring or forever (literally) incarcerated in their violent behavior—forever the False Self. He believed that religion and theology could be part of the reason people developed a False Self:

Winnicott criticizes theology for taking goodness out of the individual and putting it away in the concept of God, so that its purity may be preserved against the hate and destructiveness which would mingle with the same goodness if it were kept within and perhaps be spoiled.¹⁰⁴

Winnicott critiques religion and theology as a priest-state cum police-state for the developing individual. If theology did in fact take away opportunity the goodness, Winnicott is right to blame theology for depriving people of creativity, morality, and then the True Self in their development.

¹⁰¹ Winnicott, “Living Creatively” [1970], 39.

¹⁰² Holbrook, 209.

¹⁰³ Ulanov. Lecture notes for: PS308 Aggression. “Aggression and Society.” October 20, 2003.

¹⁰⁴ Holbrook, 212.

However, it should be noted that Winnicott had great respect for the faith and hope found within religion. As Ulanov wrote, “Implicit in Winnicott’s theory of destructiveness is a new theology: not God as accepting mother but the God who can absorb our worst blows and still be there, steadfast in love.”¹⁰⁵

Yet this critique of religion in Winnicott’s theory is certainly not always true for religion offers more than these dictated codes and practices. From a Christian point of view the idea that someone remains “lost” is difficult to swallow. For example, the religion focuses on saving the one sheep lost from the herd of a hundred (Mt18.12, Lk15.4). Ulanov builds off of Winnicott’s model of aggression and proves that religion is a viable channel for the integration of aggression.

Ann Belford Ulanov

Ann Belford Ulanov is a senior Jungian analyst and Professor of Psychiatry and Religion at Union Theological Seminary in New York. Ulanov theorizes that there is still hope for those people Winnicott deems lost when their mothers and therapy are not successful. Instead she recommends that people let loose their aggression upon God through the channel of religion.¹⁰⁶ Just as in Winnicott’s mother-child and analyst-patient dyads, through religion a person can regress and rework her or his aggression to get that care they were once denied.¹⁰⁷ This experience transforms our destructiveness in the same manner as the other dyads, only now it is through a God-person dyad. I understand a channel to be an outlet and path by which to funnel our aggression.

Following this logic, the morality codes Winnicott sees as restricted are now explored, handled, and eventually individualized and internalized using aggression. Creativity thrives when our concept of God is altered and the aggression we integrate into our self becomes part of God as well,

¹⁰⁵ Ulanov, *Finding Space: Winnicott, God, and Psychic Reality*, 11.

¹⁰⁶ Ulanov, “Aggression and Destructiveness” [Chapter 5], *Finding Space*.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*

and when we place that creativity within God. God is neither rigid nor formless, but as real as we are. We come to understand that God wants each of us to be our True Self; we are loved despite and including our humanity. Suddenly our voice is heard not only by God but by society as well; we are *that* important. Furthermore I add that it is our moral and creative responsibility to God to be our True Self for that is who we were created to be.

The False Self could be equivalent to a spiritual death, whereby our concept of God is dull, empty, only vanilla. The feeling of spirit is stagnant. The concept of God, this compliant version of our self needs to be destroyed but to do so takes tremendous aggression. There is fear in the sheer idea of destroying God—will we disintegrate as well? Yet only in this aggressive destruction does the feeling of being cut-off cease. We suffer our loss and construct a better concept of God and self as result using aggression.

Thoughts and acts of destruction begin to change within the unconscious imagination as the energy devoted to repressing aggression is now freed up into the realm of morality, creativity, and the True Self. Everything becomes fresh and new to us. From the efforts of destruction, constructive aspects of the self and God are born. Ulanov likens this to a windshield wiper wiping the window clear over and over again, wiping our perspective of life to a fresh world every moment.¹⁰⁸ She gives the example of a person experiencing seeing their lover for the first time all over again yet after decades together.¹⁰⁹ Our creativity is freed up to look at who and what and how God is. Morality is taken from our early experiences, from other role models—left lying around—and from within, now imbibed with the trust of God and vice versa. The self is nothing but the True Self; life is in technicolor.

We cannot stop the aggression from exposing and expressing itself on our person, Ulanov tells us. Aggression's disposition is to come forth at all costs.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

¹⁰⁹ Ulanov. Lecture notes for: PS308 Aggression. October 8, 2003.

We must use a lot of aggressive energy to keep our shadow contents (i.e., our repressed, projected contents) out of awareness. Hence again we detour aggression from supporting life into pushing these contents out of consciousness. But we have to keep pushing. Like holding a big beach ball under water, we must keep exerting energy to keep it under. Our arms grow tired and then the ball varooms upward to hit us, and usually someone else, in the face.¹¹⁰

This example points out how much aggression has to come out, come up, be allowed to live conscious of our aggression less we spend our lives wasting energy on denying it. Aggression is alive in us and we can see and feel it, in our nervousness, our urge to argue, to defend, and become disconnected; this restlessness is the unintegrated aggression within forcing its way out into reality.¹¹¹

But why use religion as a channel for aggression when Winnicott offers us other solutions? Ulanov stated, “Religion can do it in a way that analysis cannot,” or in other words, that God can always handle our aggression, our urge to destroy, our worst aspects, our tendency to fight, and still offer each person the opportunity to be loved, to be special, cherished, and known no matter her or his condition.¹¹² It is because of racial, class, economic, cultural, and societal constraints that not everyone may access Winnicott’s channel of the mother and/or psychoanalytic treatment. Yet everyone has access to God.

Ulanov builds on Winnicott’s sentiments regarding projection. In regards to using aggression to overcome projection, “We use aggression to stand the building up of self with symbols and to survive the shattering of them all when reality comes into existence.”¹¹³ In a lecture on the subject of violence, she stated,

Will recalling our projections settle all the strife and violence in the world? No, it will not. But it will subtract that tiny portion we contribute to the world's violence. And it will build up a community feeling of being fellow and sisterly sufferers of the same kind of inner wars. We can encourage each other as well as confront each

¹¹⁰ Ulanov. “Violence.” 11-12. Ulanov uses the word “shadow” but as this is solely a Jungian term, I have chosen to replace the term “them” with “our repressed, projected contents” instead of “our shadow contents.”

¹¹¹ Ulanovs, *Primary Speech: a Psychology of Prayer*, 63.

¹¹² Ulanov. Lecture notes for: PS308 Aggression. October 8, 2003. She added that a good love experience could help the person regress and rework these issues to get the care whereby the person is known and cherished.

¹¹³ Ulanov. Lecture notes for: PS308 Aggression. “Aggression: & Religion” December 1, 2003.

other. We can take aggression to work through our battles. Where that proves impossible, we can use aggression to choose how peaceably to sustain or courteously to break connection with each other.¹¹⁴

Yet realizing our projections is not the final solution; we must still integrate the aggression we see outside of ourselves place without to a place within.

¹¹⁴ Ulanov, "Violence," 13.

Chapter Four: Aggression in Quaker Meeting for Worship

Student: *“So there has to be that tension (to confront one’s aggression)?”*

Ann Ulanov: *“Yes, unless you want to eat Cream of Wheat™ all of your life.”¹¹⁵*

My analysis of Quakerism and aggression has served as a background to both subjects. This chapter integrates and intertwines the analysis of Quakerism in Chapter Two and the theories of aggression in Chapter Three to explain how aggression is demonstrated within Quaker Meeting for Worship.¹¹⁶ As I stated in the introduction, Quakerism fosters the development of morality and creativity that Winnicott and Ulanov deemed necessary to accomplish such development. This in turn fosters the development of the True Self. However, I will now argue that Holbrook’s reasoning around how Quakerism succeeded in this endeavor is inaccurate.

This chapter will address Holbrook’s claim from two angles. First, Holbrook assumes that—going back to the statement that began this thesis—because of Quakerism’s individual nature and lack of dogma it allows for the build up of “individual moral potential” and, per Winnicott, allows the development of “an important aspect of creativeness.” While this aspect of his reasoning is correct, it is an incomplete truth to which I will supply the missing pieces. Second, Winnicott’s assertion that theology stymies development is untrue in consideration of Ulanov’s God-person dyad. In her theory religion is used as a channel for aggression where such development is supported and encouraged. As such Quakerism does, in fact, foster morality, creativity, and in turn the True Self, while addressing some methods of repression and projection.

The examples of aggression listed in the first chapter—from my own life, the poem of Sharon Olds, and the letter to the United Nations—show the disparate understanding and

¹¹⁵ Ulanov. Lecture notes for: PS308 Aggression. September 15, 2003. A classmate, David Schweichler, and Dr. Ulanov shared this exchange.

¹¹⁶ This focus on Quaker Meeting for Worship offers many real-life examples to make it as true to real-life experience as possible, but this is still a high-level study and cannot include all viewpoints. Further work should be done in interviews and studies of various Meetings in varied locations to take prove this study at the local level.

interpretation of the term aggression in the lives of Quakers. Yet as I address experiences and writings about Quaker Meeting in this thesis, all of the building blocks to integrating aggression healthfully are blatant. Hence, it is perhaps not aggression that is disavowed but solely its popular association with violence that is denied. This is potentially harmful and must be rectified.

As Quaker Meeting is entered in silence, I would like to quiet your minds from the background material before we enter my argument. It is important to know that Meeting, when aggression is let through it, is a huge and meaningful experience to Quakers; when Quakers are centered, the phase of object-relating has past and everything becomes object-usage. We use God. We use ourselves. We use the others in Meeting. We see the world in all of its reality and we take the next step to feel real; we are nothing but the kernel of our self.¹¹⁷ This is what Kelly meant when he wrote,

When one rises to speak in meeting one has the sense of being *used*, of being played upon, of being spoken through. It is as amazing an experience as that of being *prayed through*, when we, the praying ones, are no longer the initiators of the supplication, but seem to be transmitters, who second an impulse welling up from the depths of the soul. In such an experience the brittle bounds of our selfhood seem softened and instead of saying, "I pray" or "He prays," it becomes better to say, "Prayer is taking place."¹¹⁸

In Quakerism this aggressive *impulse* funnels *through* each person to where it can *use* the real. This is what Quakerism is at its kernel, that eternally repetitive integration of self that moves from object-relating to object-usage through stages and phases of morality and creativity to create the True Self.

"Individual Search" and the Lack of Dogma

The topics of the individual search, the communal search, and a combination thereof are an undergirding theme of the Quaker tradition as apparent in their numerous appearances throughout Chapter Two. Here, Holbrook's argument disintegrates because the individual search he praises is

¹¹⁷ Ulanov, Lecture notes for: PS304 Anxiety. "Anxiety and the Psyche: Other Theories." March 30, 2004.

¹¹⁸ *Faith and Practice*, 25. From Thomas Kelly, *The Eternal Promise*.

not performed in isolation. While Quakers individually seek to sustain some level of focused attention, Kelly explains that this practice is not experienced alone.

Worship does not consist in achieving a mental state of concentrated isolation from one's fellows. But in the depth of common worship it is as if we found our separate lives were all one life, within whom we live and move and have our being. Communication seems to take place sometimes without words having been spoken. In the silence we received an unexpected commission to bear in loving intentness the spiritual need of another person sitting nearby. And that person goes away, uplifted and refreshed.¹¹⁹

Therefore, the individual and communal elements in Meeting are bound to one another. The experience of coming into the Inner Light is impossible without experiencing the tension between the one and the many. Like the tension of integrating aggression into one's life, of holding the opposites of love and hate within, so too does Quakerism situate itself within these opposites.

Consider Winnicott's dyadic models of mother-child and analyst-patient for integrating aggression. Using aggression within either of these models is impossible for a person without a physical other to push up against. The mother and analyst are not present in Meeting, per se, but another human being sits nearby eager to hear a fellow attendee's voice, to hear the word of God in her or his own voice. The Meeting attendees are willing and open to this sharing. Whatever is stated is truly heard and does not fade. Like a baby moving from object-relating to object-usage, it just happens but it cannot happen alone. Feagins states,

Alone and searching inward, I may slip into a sort of circularity, with a feeling of perhaps being caught in my own self. In Meeting for Worship, there is the same looking inward for the Inner Light, but there is also the equally strong awareness of others involved in the same search in worshipful silence. Insofar as I am able to concentrate on the Common Object of our search and worship, I am experiencing what I suppose Friends mean by 'centering.' The Center *cannot be in myself alone*, even though I am still looking inward to find it. The others are gathered with me and I feel myself a part of them.¹²⁰

¹¹⁹ Steere, ed., *Quaker Spirituality*, 309. From Thomas Kelly, *The Eternal Promise* [34].

¹²⁰ Feagins, Mary E.B. 1984. *Tending the Light*, 14.

Hence, the individual must exert her or his aggression because this experience of Meeting as the baby exerts its ruthless love for this True Self does not exist in a vacuum.

The God-person dyad is present in both the individual and communal experiences. This dyad exists by using aggression in the physical space of Meeting where we push up against God and we also use our aggression against “that of God in everyone.” Quakers must disseminate their leadings with one another to lead and be led together. Hence, worship is not considered to be performed in solitude because the entire service is devoted to sharing God with others and having God shared with each attendee. Individuals push up against God in their silent search and individuals push up against the community in their vocal ministry. In the same vein, the community pushes up against God in their sustained group silence, holding on to be heard and to hear, while the community needs each individual with them on this journey to sustain their aggressive search for and interaction with God. Being part of those dyads (and triads, etc.) in the Meeting gives life meaning.

The community of individuals and their relationship with God becomes evident when, as Kelly wrote in Chapter Two, messages build off of one another and things seemingly discordant have a common thread. Suddenly the tension is collective, everyone is present in a shared reality and present to one another. The doing of object-relating becomes the being of object-usage and the two are intertwined, whereby by being and doing are one action in one whole person. Similarly, Brinton stated,

Such a group mysticism as Quakerism is different from the solitary seeking cultivated by many of the great Catholic contemplatives. ...Their [Catholic] aspirations are directed toward God alone, rather than toward man. The mysticism of the Quakers is directed both toward God and toward the group.¹²¹

Obviously the fruits of such messages cannot be completely known to one another in absolute silence and are therefore meant to be translated in vocal ministry. Quaker worship must be social

¹²¹ Brinton, 4.

and not isolated because its members have a sincere devotion to living their lives towards the betterment of themselves, one another, and the whole of society.

Like the interdependence that grows between the mother-child dyad, interdependence develops between the community of the Meeting and God, and the individual and God. Kelly details an experience of this interdependence in regards to speaking in Meeting.

For the Divine Life that is ministering through the medium of silence is the same Life as is now ministering through words. And when such words are truly spoken “in the Life,” then when such words cease, the uninterrupted silence and worship continue, for silence and words have been of one texture, one piece. Second and third speakers only continue the enhancement of the moving Presence, until a climax is reached, and the discerning head of the meeting knows when to break it.¹²²

God even depends upon us to listen to God, speak God’s word, and heed our shared silence. We need these interdependences to integrate the tension we experience in each Meeting, both of the reality of God and of the reality of society.

Holbrook’s claim that the Quaker lack of dogma leads to healthy development is also inaccurate. Quakerism stands apart from the majority of Christian denominations in regards to dogma because the process of continuing revelation constructs the Quaker theology as undefined and undone yet concurrently settled every Sunday. While the living canon closes with every Meeting, it opens again with the next, and still breathes alive in each Quaker between services. It takes aggression to sustain and withstand the tension between a limitless and limited canon, just as the baby realizes when it first contemplates its finiteness in the existence of an other and omnipotence fades.

Using aggression in Meeting gives Quakers the impetus to make their voices heard for the sake of truth. The early Quakers defined the religion systematically but successfully avoided tying the religion to a theology that anyone or everyone must adhere to. However, while Quakerism lacks dogma, the aggression in Meeting is still given guidelines regarding vocal ministry and silence.

¹²² Steere, ed. *Quaker Spirituality*, 314. Taken from T. Kelly, “The Gathered Meeting” [86].

Furthermore, while a common concept of other Quakers in the Meeting builds a similar concept of God for each individual—life imitates art, art imitates life.¹²³ Hence, there *are* beliefs, though left unwritten, and I argue that they exist in the actions Quakers choose to take to better the world. Quakerism’s focus on Jesus’ “loving teachings” adheres to a deep listening and seeking, an open and loving space that the Quakers are committed to creating both within Meeting and later in their peace testimony and through social justice work outside of the Meeting.

Quakerism is a valid channel for aggression. Holbrook’s claim is therefore true and has now been supported by the articulated the aspects of Quakerism he failed to address completely. I will now argue that Quakerism fosters the development of morality, creativity, and the True Self using aggression.

Morality, Creativity, and the True Self

I am going to approach morality, creativity, and the True Self by building on my comments in Chapter Three on the same subject. While Holbrook mentions *morality* and goodness as two separate aspects of Quakerism, I have decided to incorporate them under the theme of morality. The two feed upon one another in their development and sustenance in the same fashion as the individual and communal aspects of Meeting.

Winnicott advocates that morality develops from moral codes “left lying around” by caregivers, which are then found, used, and integrated by the child to develop her or his own morality once the child has reached the capacity for “belief in.” The same happens within Quakerism. However, rather than be instilled within a dogma that Winnicott would also disagree

¹²³ An interesting path on which to continue this idea down would be Walter J. Lowe’s “Innocence and Experience, A Theological Exploration” in *Evil, Self and Culture* (NY: Human Sciences Press, 1984). Lowe states that there is a limit to creativity and that limit is God. God is a frame and life has a limit, it goes *this* far. This is the frame that Quakers push up against, that remains defined and undefined like their relation to a belief system.

with, morals are offered both in the silence and the vocal ministry of Meeting, through both the individual and within the community of Meeting.

Morals are developed and shared via the vocal messages given in Meeting. Steere stated, “Friends have spoken to man’s deepest needs and have never been content to confine ministry to moral preachments.”¹²⁴ In my years as a Quaker, the majority of messages tell a story, make a remark on the landscape, or a social situation. We are rarely told to “do” or “do not” in messages, but rather what another Quaker sees, experiences, and how they address that situation. We use their experience and moral codes to develop our own morality.

Winnicott wrote that the “[c]apacity to believe is not shoved down someone’s throat (for) what is to be believed which leaves not room to *believe in*, the capacity to believe is to trust.”¹²⁵ Trust develops in the Meeting as we sit in silence and wait for a possible message, where such a practice is not illogical or insane but rather of God. Steere writes,

In ministry, to lay an issue before the deepest insight of the meeting, to take it to God and have it held there, to wait for the Guide and to be content to have the melting down process that can take place in a gathered meeting do its work: this kind of exercise, far from intruding on worship, can only strengthen it.¹²⁶

We trust that we are heard, that we are welcome, that we are equal to the task. Not only do we know this from the messages and silence but from other members’ posture and their very presence on the benches nearby. We trust that others seek the Inner Light as well in equal peace and struggle. We trust in this ever-quickening, often vociferous country that from sharing the silence—an act impossible to some and ridiculed by others—that we are right and loved in one another’s eyes and God’s eyes, too. Feagins said, “My responses to the Light involve both words and actions. Even if

¹²⁴ Steere, *On Speaking Out of the Silence*, 14.

¹²⁵ Ulanov, Ann Belford. Lecture note for: PS310 Aggression. “Psychoanalysis and Value-systems.” April 7, 2003.

¹²⁶ Steere, *On Speaking Out of the Silence*, 16.

my words remain unspoken, they are not registered or unheeded within my own person; they have an audience in the silence.”¹²⁷

Week after week of this practice, Quakers come to know and trust that these people in their congregations share their interests, their passion, their pain. Community forms from this trust and with it the morality of this goodwill are made a reality to each person. True sharing exists and, Steere writes, it

can only be done if there is a willingness to be led by each of the ones ministering into a deeper level of what they were not only saying but what they were meaning to say, and perhaps even beyond into what something beneath us all was meaning to have said through what we were saying and were meaning to say.¹²⁸

Through all of our interactions we are called to be genuine, and yet we must choose to trust.

Ulanov states,

In the world of neurosis and psychosis there inevitably comes a time in treatment where moral choice presents itself to the person involved. The terms come clear. Choose life – being, bits and pieces of goodness – or choose to fall away into illness, into non-being. This is a choice one lives towards.¹²⁹

To live towards something, to have a direction that is under her or his conscious awareness is how Quakers use their aggression.

Winnicott writes that moral caregivers are necessary for healthy channeling of aggression. Such caregivers in the Meeting could be elders, overseers, members of the various committees, or the committees themselves. The Meeting for Business in its rule of oversight which allows for equal participation and simultaneously offers guiding principles could also serve as a caregiver. The obvious candidate for caregiver is every other Quaker, for in Fox’s vision of the religion all members are ministers to one another.

¹²⁷ Feagins, 4.

¹²⁸ Steere, *On Speaking Out of the Silence*, 11.

¹²⁹ Ulanov, “Disguises of the Good,” *Picturing God*, 120.

Creativity is also, in part, fostered by both the silence and vocalizations in Meeting. One way is through the self-development that takes place within the silence. Another and more obvious possibility is in giving and/or truly being open to and being altered by the experience of silent worship in Meeting. Peter Bien, Quaker literary scholar, states that “the Word should be identified with silence” and adds that we should start our understanding of Quakerism “with the startling paradox in the mind that the Word may be silent.”¹³⁰

Both silence and vocal ministry are born out of letting aggression happen in the Meeting. This means pushing up against God by sitting within the silence. It takes waiting in the greatest sense of absence to realize that we continue to remain and be held by God. This is reaching out to God and God in turn reaching back to us. Steere describes creativity in the Meeting in regards to the freedom of ministry therein:

We have received from our Quaker heritage this free ministry that emerges from our corporate waiting on God in what it is not sacrilegious to call a kind of ‘laboratory of the Holy Spirit.’ I hope that we may be true to it and may fulfill the conditions of its creative continuance. For it is a gift that far from being outdated is psychologically and spiritually well in advance of its time.¹³¹

The experience of the individual and within community and the undefined and defined beliefs prompt what Kelly describes as the following:

In the practice of group worship on the basis of silence come special times when the electric hush and solemnity and depth of power steals over the worshipers. A blanket of divine covering comes over the room, a stillness that can be felt is over all, and the worshipers are gathered into a unity and synthesis of life which is amazing. Indeed. A quickening Presence pervades us, breaking down some part of the special privacy and isolation of our individual lives and blending our spirits within a superindividual Life and Power. An objective, dynamic Presence enfolds us all, nourishes our souls, speaks glad, unutterable comfort within us, and quickens us in depths that had before been slumbering. The Burning Bush has been kindled in our midst, and we stand together on holy ground.¹³²

¹³⁰ Bien, *Words, Wordlessness, and the Word*, 16-17.

¹³¹ Steere, *On Speaking Out of the Silence*, 21.

¹³² Steere, ed. *Quaker Spirituality*, 314. Taken from T. Kelly, “The Gathered Meeting” [75].

This unity is the integration of love and hate, the experience of aggression let loose within the God-person dyads and against “that of God in everyone.” Kelly reaches out to other Quakers and is joined by other Quakers reaching back to him. Interdependence is rampant, and the experience is sudden, bright, and alive. Creativity comes unexpectedly in the form of this “blanket of divine.”

Silence, itself, is in part unique to Meeting and is all parts sacred to Quakerism. Even the silence by itself is creative for its rarity and its endless forms. Rufus M. Jones wrote of silence:

Silence itself, of course, has no magic. It may be just sheer emptiness, absence of words or noise or music. . . . But it may be an intensified pause, a vitalized hush, a creative quiet, an actual moment of mutual and reciprocal correspondence with God.¹³³

Yet a popular conceptualization of silence is that silence silences. It robs us of our pleasure, our voice, our self, and therefore it would effect the same suppression of the real as Winnicott expects of dogma. The psychoanalyst Sue Grand states, “Silence is the facilitator of destruction; it is through denial that evil consolidates its power.”¹³⁴ Grand tells us that silence degrades truth by not responding to the trauma that happened, allowing passivity and confusion to reign and all of that promotes forgetting. Aggression is discarded; unprocessed anger and grief regress to rage, and silence through denial allows evil to reign. But Grand offers hope. She says that we can talk back to the silence and “introduce a moral universe.”¹³⁵

I argue that Quaker silence is far from the forgetting that Grand discusses for uses aggression to cope with trauma. Quaker silence is brimming with emotion and voice. Destructiveness is transformed into both silence and words at alternative times. Silence is full and real when people are present to it, thereby searching and experiencing their selves and their God. It holds the opposites in balance that Winnicott demands. Evil is not disavowed in silence in Meeting as it shares the silence with words that Quakers are free to give and take. We talk back to God in

¹³³ *Faith and Practice*, 13. From Rufus M. Jones “Spiritual Message of the Religious Society of Friends” (1937).

¹³⁴ Grand, *The Reproduction of Evil*, 10.

¹³⁵ Ulanov. Lecture notes for: PS308 Aggression. “Aggression and Society.” February 27, 2003. Notes on Grand.

our silent prayer and mediation and we talk back to God when we vocalize. As one of the first Quakers, William Dewsbury, wrote from prison in York Tower during 1660, “And thou, faithful babe, though thou stutter forth a few words in the dread of the Lord, they are accepted.”¹³⁶

The Meeting has heretofore demonstrated that it fosters morality and creativity. Because both concepts are bound to the development of the *True Self*, then the True Self must be fostered in Meeting as well. Steere writes,

Why then do we come here to sit together for our period of waiting expectant worship? We come because we, too, sense that something is going on all the time, something that we have only partially grasped the meaning of, and we long to be brought more deeply into touch with it. We come because in our kaleidoscopic lives with so many priorities all simultaneously demanding the first place in us, we dimly sense that there is, communicating with us in broken ways throughout the week, something, Someone, that makes us one again.¹³⁷

It is in this active seeking, in the centering, that Quakers integrate their aggression, their tensions, and become whole and real. This process must take place within the community of Meeting because “[t]he whole process (of coming to know the truth) is so hard that no one can do it on his or her own.”¹³⁸ In the case of Quakers, this truth is simultaneously God, the Inner Light, and the True Self.

Quakerism calls for each of its members to be her or his own True Self. One of George Fox’s most renowned statements speaks right to this issue: “Art thou a Child of light, and hast walked in the Light, and what thou speakest, is it inwardly from God?”¹³⁹ Aggression channeled through the religion in each of the dyads, particularly the God-person dyad, makes us real. Steere tells us,

I do not pray in a vacuum. Something tremendous is going on, and when I pray, that most important thing of all is that I shall come into a deep, inward realization of what is really taking place in the cosmos.¹⁴⁰

¹³⁶ Steere, *On Speaking Out of the Silence*, 14.

¹³⁷ Steere, *On Speaking Out of the Silence*, 6.

¹³⁸ Punshon, 7.

¹³⁹ Punshon, 11. From George Fox speaking per Margaret Fell.

¹⁴⁰ Steere, *Prayer in the Contemporary World*, 5.

Brinton adds to this argument, “Look for truth within yourself and within the Meeting for Worship. Live a life of simplicity, love, and service. Let your life speak, and trust that your children will learn by your example.”¹⁴¹ It is central to Quakerism that in all of our interactions we are genuine.

In the silence and words of Meeting, Kelly’s statement rings true that “Prayer is taking place.” Ulanov tells us that aggression in prayer prompts God to prompt our True Self.

By bringing us into touch with our aggression, prayer gives us another view of the divine. The God we meet this way is disclosed as aggressive, assertive, commanding, brusque. God says: Here is life. Take it. Seize the day. Accept the love given you. God's wrath no longer threatens us with endless blame. We no longer threaten ourselves with unremitting guilt.¹⁴²

Heeding and addressing the Inner Light with aggression allows us to live with concern in reality as real human beings.

Quaker concern and dedication to better the world for all people serves its purpose in being real as well. Holbrook wrote,

The concept of ‘reparation’... further draws attention to those elements in our cultural activity by which we not only ‘restore the object’ but develop our own sense of ‘real’, of the I AM, and of ‘confirmation’ in ‘meeting.’¹⁴³

And it is the Quaker Meeting that demonstrates how we come to and sustain this aliveness, this True Self.

Repression and Projection

Oftentimes confusing pacifism with passivity, the psychoanalyst Fortunate Castillo who was mentioned in the opening chapter argues that Quakers are most susceptible to the inhibited, dull life.¹⁴⁴ Quakerism needs aggression to center itself or else it is dull and muted, it is just rooms of

¹⁴¹ Smith, 18-19.

¹⁴² Ulanov, *Primary Speech*, 70.

¹⁴³ Holbrook, 232.

¹⁴⁴ Castillo, 4.

silence that may in fact be nothing but Grand's forgetting, it is the empty False Self. Some Quakers are aware of this possibility and they warn each other against this disintegration.

The psychoanalyst Abraham Maslow also noticed this demise in his personal experience of Quakerism.

It should be noted...that these general criticisms of the 'liberal religions' apply also to the Quakers even though the originally based themselves in principle on inner, personal, quasi-mystic experience. Today, they, too, tend to be only Apollonian and have no respectable place for Dionysian, for the 'warm' as well as the 'cool.' They, too, are rational, 'simple,' sober, and decent, and bypass darkness, wildness, and craziness, hesitating, it appears, to stir up orgiastic emotions. They, too, have built a philosophy of goodness that has no systematic place for evil. They have not yet incorporated Freud and Jung into their foundations, not have they discovered that the depths of the personal unconscious are the source of joy, love, creativeness, play, and humor as well as of dangerous and crazy impulses.¹⁴⁵

The whole of Quaker survival rests on allowing its own aggression to destroy its limited concept of self and thus recognize its own and God's survival as something better. In other words, Quakers must confront their selves with each individual's own true, voice; Quakerism must rest its self on the undefined silence and unsteady messages of vocal ministry to concretize into the True Self. Using aggression allows us to recognize our projections and other repressed material in the community of Meeting, in the presence of God. As Ulanov said of God earlier, we need not fear because we are still loved by God despite and including our aggression.

Even though the morality, creativity, and True Self are sparked through the Meeting, we cannot often stand their full development. Steere stated,

Few Friends' meetings today, however, can claim to offer this ideal type of fellowship. Some people would be bold enough to suggest that this fellowship does not exist because so many within the Society of Friends are not really sure that they want the Christian revolution to take place within them and within their world... In spite of our magnificent service organizations and our educational experiments in centers like Pendle Hill, the Society of Friends must still live or die by the character of its local meetings. They are its base. All else is built on them.¹⁴⁶

¹⁴⁵ Maslow, 42, footnote 1.

¹⁴⁶ Steere, *Community and Worship*, 14-15, 17.

It is necessary to be aggressive to take what is offered and use it. In Steere's example, Quakers uncertainty leaves them in limbo, on pause, unreal. An early Quaker, John Fothergill, wrote, "When the time came indeed that I was to open my mouth in a few words for the Lord among his people was so indisputably clear, that I had no scruple about its being certainly the holy requiring: and yet in fear I reasoned it away."¹⁴⁷

At other times Quakers blatantly refuse and repress their aggression. An article on the informal guidelines of giving a message in the monthly FGC publication *Friends Journal* concluded, "When it is clear that what is being said in meeting, or the manner in which it is being said, is destructive to Friends manner of worship, something must be done."¹⁴⁸ As such, anything straying from the norm for a certain Meeting is considered radical and undesired and is asked to be left at the door. Yet Ulanov reminds us, "Behind destructiveness is evil and you can be enthralled by it. You think that you have it by the tail but it can turn around and bite you."¹⁴⁹ The focus has been laid on fixing the problem rather than seeking to guide, shelter, and perhaps prevent it, and it will bite us if we are not aware of it and present to it. Nothing constructive will come of this without aggression.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid, 12-13. This text was written 1697.

¹⁴⁸ Callard, 13.

¹⁴⁹ Ulanov. Lecture notes for: PS308 Aggression. "Aggression and Religion." November 17, 2003.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

“Do not go gentle into that good night.

Rage, rage against the dying of the light.”

-Dylan Thomas, “Do Not Go Gentle into That Good Night” [1952]

This thesis has been entitled “Ecstasy Has Been Given to the Tiger” because each person is the proverbial tiger in the middle of the room: instinctual, raw, real, and powerful. Ecstasy has been offered to us, in our morality, creativity, and our True Self known through aggression. In the recent HBO movie “Iron Jawed Angels” (2003), the aggression of Quakerism was brought on screen. The film told the story of Quaker and suffragette leader Alice Paul whose protest efforts won women the right to vote. Paul was relentless in her pressure and pleading upon the government for equality for women. Throughout the movie, as she noted often throughout her life, her understanding of equality and her determination were a result of her Quakerism.

Depth psychology tells us that it is imperative to be conscious and work with as much of one’s self as possible, both conscious and unconscious, to be the most whole person one can be. The topic of selfhood was too large to confront in this thesis, for it is difficult enough to handle in one lifetime. I chose these seemingly disparate aspects of psychiatry and religion, this study of aggression and Quakerism, to prove the possibilities of, the necessity for, and sheer pleasure in their interdependence for each of us.

Although Quakers would take any opportunity to refute violence within the religion, even going so far as deny their own aggression, they certainly act out their aggression in positively staging protests and championing campaigns for equality and peace. This thesis has demonstrated that the results of these real beings are in fact born from the Meeting for Worship. Holbrook was correct to think that this small group with their silence and their peace was creating morality, creativity, and the

True Self. Winnicott and Ulanov's theories demonstrate the necessity and possibility of an integrated life with and by aggression, and Quakerism is a living example of these ideas.

I protest to Quakers that they should not be violent people, but rather that they must recognize and integrate their aggression consciously into their practice and their work. By labeling aggression as violence and disavowing our aggression, we become dull and, as Castillo states, the entire religion may disintegrate.¹⁵⁰ Ulanov said in speaking to a group of nuns that had taken an oath against committing any violence,

We repudiate them as not-me, not-us. Indeed, in your words, it is the violent parts left out of the vision of non-violence that will direct attack at you and your vision. This places you on the frontier of evil, near to the mystery from which flows violence in the first place.¹⁵¹

We cannot abide on the sidelines of life but only within it, else the very destruction we refute will attack us and destroy us. It is our responsibility to live, to be the True Self God created each of us to be. And we cannot get there without aggression.

My words do not only apply to Quakers, but all Christians, all religions, all people. The successful argument of this thesis makes room for future claims that aggression cultivates moral and creative development via other religions, particularly other denominations of Christianity. It is not solely through Quakerism that we can find these delightful aspects of our real selves. We all must integrate our aggression and be responsible to our self to be responsible to one another. As Steere writes,

But to qualify for making anything of this bone-bare answer of the hermit's, of our being present where immediate need is to be found, you have to be all there. You have to be awake. You cannot be in a drowse of preoccupation, in what Pascal called the Gethsemane-sleep where Jesus' disciples failed him three times by drowsing off, by not being present where they were.¹⁵²

¹⁵⁰ Castillo, 1.

¹⁵¹ Ulanov. "Violence," 1.

¹⁵² Steere, *On Being Present Where You Are*, 12.

To be present, to stand the tension of love and hate, to be real—this all takes aggression. This aggression in Quakerism comes out in Meeting, in prayer, in love, in hate, in life. We must learn to welcome the dependence upon one another and God that this integration creates and allow it to become shared interdependence, regardless of the healthy channel we choose. Every religion offers us the silence and words, the individuality and community to handle our aggression.

The book of *Faith and Practice* makes the following statement regarding Quakerism: “The task is not over. The vision is never complete.”¹⁵³ We reiterate our integration of aggression infinitely as we come to know God. We keep going, just as Winnicott tells us we shall. There will always need to be this tension, this solo and communal journey, this silence, these words heard between us, this trust built between us all. Destructiveness is transformed into a word, a community, peace, hope, and even silence.

Where Quakerism has repressed and projected its aggression can be healed. The passivity confused with pacifism can be overridden. The “dull habit” of existence can become vibrant Meetings and moments they inspire. We can be made whole again and prevent our disintegration by our own will, our own aggression. We must sit out the silence we choose to be heard in and wait with one another for our leadings with absolute conviction, dedication, and attention. We must withstand the tension of our love and hate, our fear and anger, and survive, and we can do it together. We must be the tiger we were created to be for we shall never overcome the tiger within us, we can only allow ourselves to be who we are and to reside in the ecstasy granted by God.

¹⁵³ *Faith and Practice*, 53.

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