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A Greater Awakening: Women's Intellect in the Transatlantic Abolitionist Movement, 1824-1834

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Prudence Crandall, well-known Quaker school teacher, was, in fact, not a Quaker in 1833, when she undertook to transform her Female Academy into an Academy for Black women. While raised and educated in the Society of Friends, she had converted to the Baptists and undergone full immersion in eastern Connecticut's Quinebaug river three years earlier. This easily verifiable fact has escaped most accounts of her school, then and now; as a scholar of American religion, and of women and religion, I wanted to discern what larger societal patterns had motivated the very intellectually independent Crandall to undergo this particular religious transformation. Similarly, there has been a tendency to sentimentalize the dramatic history of Crandall's school, resulting in a pattern all-too-familiar to feminist scholars: women's intellectual

development and ambition (in this case, Black women's minds in particular) are ignored in favor of romantic images and, ultimately, trivialization.¹

What factors drove women to change their religious affiliation or to otherwise articulate their religious ideas? How was women's intellectual development tied to their political and moral activism in the early nineteenth century? These questions are closely related. Women's restricted access to some intellectual resources—namely, schools, languages, books,² and extended time for study—led them to deploy their intellectual skills in areas that were open to them, and even culturally valorized: namely religion and school teaching. Despite often being shut out from formal leadership, women who were activists in political causes nurtured their critical faculties, questioning much more than the issues at hand. This trajectory leads to Seneca Falls, suffrage, and beyond; but, as we also know, it led to ongoing divisions among feminist activists over competing priorities of gender, race and class.

¹ Even the Abolitionists themselves did this; when Crandall's school was being daily besieged, and when she and her students were (as I have argued elsewhere) modeling inter-racial cooperation in a new and radical way, Abolitionist conferences gave more serious and sustained attention to establishing a Manual Labor school for Black men than in giving further substantive (and ideological) support to Crandall's experiment. The 1833 Convention of Free People of Colour, while "cheerfully recommend(ing)" Crandall's school (30), turned down a resolution from David Ruggles (who was from eastern Connecticut) to have the convention specifically endorse Crandall. (Minutes and Proceedings of the Third Annual Convention for the Improvement of the Free People of Colour in these United States, held by Adjournments in the City of Philadelphia, from the 3rd to the 13th of June inclusive, 1833. New York: by the Convention.; the next convention did pass such a resolution; see Minutes of the Fourth Annual Convention for the Improvement of the Free People of Colour in the United States, held by Adjournments in the Asbury Church, New-York, from the 2nd to the 12th of June inclusive, 1834. New York: by the convention, page 18.) Likewise, the 1834 meeting of the New England Anti-Slavery Society expressed more interest in establishing the manual labor college than in supporting Crandall (Proceedings of the New England Anti-Slavery Convention, Held in Boston on the 27th, 28th and 29th of May, 1834. Boston: Garrison and Knapp; pages 18, 40-41).

² Consider, for instance, the hunger with which Margaret Fuller enjoys her library privileges at Harvard, in *Summer on the Lakes*, and Prudence Crandall's anger at her husband, Calvin Philleo, trying to limit her reading (Welch 113).

But when examining the roots of this trajectory—prior to 1848, prior even to the tours of the Grimké sisters—patterns emerge which show unexamined pathways, moments when alliances across race and class were possible, moments which are worth reconsidering now because they address problems still with us. Taking matters of religion and education as starting points did not necessarily condemn women to domesticity or the cult of true womanhood. In this regard, the transatlantic world, considered broadly, is especially interesting, providing a stage patently larger than the privatized concerns of home and hearth. It functioned as the location of an imagined community, where minds were sparked as ideas were shared through various forms of contact, but also could become an alarmingly concrete location, where sparks flew when international institutions (such as the Quakers, or mercantile interests) used their extended powers to silence dissent.

The transatlantic disownment of Hannah Barnard was perhaps an inauspicious beginning for women's intellectual independence in the nineteenth century. Barnard, born in New York in 1754, had joined the Society of Friends by conviction before the age of twenty.³ She quickly rose to prominence as a Public Friend in the New York Yearly Meeting, which authorized her to travel to the British Isles in 1798. While speaking in Ireland, Barnard came into contact with Irish Quaker rationalists, who corroborated her questioning of the divine authorship of some aspects of the Old Testament, most specifically God's alleged command that the Israelites make war on their neighbors.⁴ Holding that such a bellicose breach in the character of the divine would render God as changeable as any finite human being, Barnard

³ Ingle lists her birthdate as 1748; all other sources agree on 1754

cautioned that accepting the scriptures uncritically could lead one into moral, and mortal, errors. In her own words (from her 1800 London trial): “the credulity with which those (Old Testament) records had been implicitly stamped with divine infallibility had been, as it were, the very grindstone on which swords had been ground, for many years, among professed Christians” (Jones v. 1, p. 303).

Hannah Barnard’s London trial was precipitated by David Sands, an American evangelical-style Quaker, who was present in England simultaneously with Barnard.⁵ For allies, he gathered other leaders who tended towards a more orthodox, even creedal, form of Quakerism, such as Joseph Williams of Ireland, the prominent Englishman Joseph Gurney Bevan, and the noted scientist-Quaker, Luke Howard (described by Jones as an “anti-mystical” critic of the Inner Light; Jones v.1, 299ff). Hannah Barnard’s trial resulted in the London meetings (at monthly, quarterly and yearly levels) telling her to cease and desist her ministry; her home meetings in New York State followed suit and read her out of the meeting entirely by 1802. As Peter Brock notes, “A Quaker disowned for refusing to give support to war is a curious and somewhat disturbing—incident in the history of the Friends’ peace testimony” (Brock 1968, 373).

I begin with this example, despite its apparent distance from abolitionism, because it foreshadows the complex dialectics of women’s intellect in the contexts of transatlantic political and religious movements. As individual women emerge in these movements, their engagement

⁴ Book of Joshua, especially - this now seems more relevant than I suspected it would be when I started writing (10/02/01).

with preeminent moral questions—war and slavery—naturally leads them to raise philosophic questions about existing social norms and institutions. Furthermore, they specifically set about these self-appointed tasks with religious texts and religious logic serving as their philosophic raw material and catalyst. The transatlantic corridor serves as an inspiration, when women realize they are not alone. But conversely, international institutions (whether ecclesiastical or secular) can rigidify into structural patterns which exclude or marginalize free Blacks and white women.⁶ And, as the case of Hannah Barnard illustrates, women were poised to contribute substantial intellectual leadership (perhaps even to set the intellectual agenda), for the anti-slavery and peace movements. However, this opportunity was only partially realized, at best.

For the women I will discuss here (and for free Black men in the United States as well), the emotional qualities of the Second Great Awakening and the cooler rationalism of the Enlightenment, were not mutually exclusive. Passionate engagement with religious, moral and (in essence) political questions—a tendency encouraged by evangelicalism—provided those shut out from the venues of formal education, and formal philosophy, with an arena for working out the logic of their insights. David Walker’s scathing multi-level critique of Thomas Jefferson, expressed with protean fonts and multiple exclamation points, yet possessing pinpoint accuracy, comes to mind as a prime example of this unity of emotional and rational.⁷

⁵ For more on Sands, see Russell 290ff; Jones v. 1 p. 301-304; Smith 1867, v. 2, p. 536.

⁶ This culminates in 1840 with the splits in the Abolitionist movement in the United States, and the refusal to seat (thus effectively silencing) American women delegates at the London meeting. Of course, that very action brings together the minds of Lucretia Mott and Elizabeth Cady Stanton.

⁷ see Hinks 211-214; consider also Jarena Lee’s humiliation of an old white Deist slaveowner (in Houchins, page 19 of Lee section)

Those on whom I am focusing here—Elizabeth Heyrick, Maria Stewart, Elizabeth Chandler and Prudence Crandall—adopt rhetorical strategies which underline their logical social analyses with the urgency of religious emotion.⁸ Their emotional urgency is also compensatory for structural exclusion, a way of boosting the volume to be heard over the droning boredom of more academic venues.⁹ Furthermore, they are powerful (but not lone) voices describing intellectual realms and roles for women beyond those of wife and mother, something also seen in the British Quaker male philosopher, Jonathan Dymond.¹⁰ Heyrick and Stewart claim future and past legacies for women as thinkers and activists; far from sentimentalizing political issues, their writings become an expression of resolute political sentiment.

The work that convincingly launches women's intellection in the Abolitionist movement (and transatlantically) is Elizabeth Heyrick's 1824 pamphlet "Immediate not Gradual Abolition."

influence is an obligatory gesture, but substantive comment on her work, its content, and the gender dimensions of her authorship are less frequent. However, the fact that the earliest widely-circulated enunciation of immediatism was written by a woman was vitally important to women Abolitionists, especially in the crucial years of the late 1830s in the United

⁸ Other examples I will include in the full chapter on this topic are the New Light Quakers, Anna Almy and the Munro/Monroe families, and the Benson family.

⁹ Nowhere is this more obvious than in the staid journals of the transatlantic peace movement. To read *The Calumet* (journal of the American Peace Society from 1831-1834) alongside *The Liberator* from the same years, is to observe a stylistic gulf of vast proportions, despite the fact that the two publications shared many subscribers and even writers. *The Calumet* has virtually no writings from women or Blacks, and treats "others" patronizingly. There would have been no structural room at that time for women to engage with the peace movement in a highly visible manner, as they were already doing in the Abolitionist movement.

¹⁰ The American woman writer, Hannah Mather Crocker, in her rather mild 1818 argument for women's rights (influenced by, but also quite critical of, Wollstonecraft), remarks on different intellectual needs for women with different marital statuses: "those ladies who continue in a state of celibacy, and find pleasure in literary researches, have a right to indulge the propensity, and solace themselves with the feast of reason and knowledge....also those ladies who in youth have laid up a treasure of literary and scientific information, have a right to improve in further literary researches, after they have faithfully discharged their domestic

States. Lucretia Mott, Lydia Maria Child, the Grimké sisters, and the Weston sisters, are among the many women who specifically single out the importance of Heyrick's gender. Henrietta Sargent remarked that "little progress was made in the (anti-slavery) cause" until Heyrick "saw and publicly acknowledged the principle of immediate and universal emancipation; then that great anti-slavery truth flew through the land, shooting arrows into every heart" (letter to Lydia Maria Child, August 3, 1841).¹¹

Born Elizabeth Coltman in Leicester in 1769, she married John Heyrick, a lawyer who found the legal profession "distasteful." This led him to switch careers, and he "entered the army as Cornet in the Dragoons" (Anonymous 8, and Smith 1893, 186). Soon after his sudden death, his widow became familiar with the Society of Friends, and joined them. Her conversion thus becomes not only the independent decision of an independent woman: it also acts as a posthumous censuring of her late husband's career change. Beginning in the first decade of the nineteenth century, Elizabeth Heyrick produced a steady flow of pamphlets, numbering about twenty, before her death in 1831. In addition to the battle against slavery, which seems to have gained her attention in the 1820s (she published four anti-slavery pamphlets in 1824 alone; see Anonymous 18-19), she engaged a variety of moral topics, including cruelty to animals, education, and, significantly, fair remuneration and living conditions for labor. A hagiographical

duties" because "the maternal mind has become satiated with the common concerns of life" and yearns for contemplation (Crocker 18)

¹¹ This letter is item #245 in the microfiche of Lydia Maria Child's correspondence; the original letter is in the Alma Lutz Collection, Schlesinger Library, Cambridge, Massachusetts. For more on later women Abolitionists saluting Heyrick as a founding foremother, see Lydia Maria Child, letter to E. Carpenter September 6, 1838 (*Letters of Lydia Maria Child*, Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1882, pages 22-23); A.W. Weston to Deborah Weston, a letter dated 12/15-21/1839 (Boston Public Library Collection, ms.A.9.2.12.118); Lutz (1968) 48, 92, 163. The 1836 edition of Heyrick's pamphlet, which I have used for reference purposes, was published by the Philadelphia Ladies' Anti-Slavery Society; in their introduction

sketch, written by a younger woman contemporary thirty-plus years after Heyrick's death, is noteworthy for its emphasis on her intelligence; while it genuflects towards Heyrick's piety and kindness, it is to the theme of "her ardent mind" that it constantly returns (Anonymous 10).

The groundbreaking "Immediate not Gradual Abolition" is remarkably congruent with the basics of Garrisonian Abolitionism. Refusing "accommodation and conciliation" as "deluded" (Heyrick 1836, 16), Heyrick argues for a divine, not human, basis for the struggle (Heyrick 1836, 18ff). Noting that slavery "is a question in which we are *all* implicated...all guilty" (Heyrick 1836, 4), she contends that the rights of the slave trump those of their putative 'owners' (Heyrick 1836, 5-6), so that any compensation upon abolition is due the slaves, not the sinning masters (Heyrick 1836, 16). Even if her phrases do not ring out with the clarion accuracy of Garrison's first *Liberator* editorial, she certainly prepared the field for him when she declares "Truth and justice, make their best way in the world, when they appear in bold and simple majesty; their demands are more willingly conceded when they are most fearlessly claimed" (Heyrick 1836, 17). While applauding her own Quaker denomination for their vanguard role in the fight against slavery, she modulates any self-congratulation when she adds that slavery runs so counter to Christian thought that all denominations will soon adopt anti-slavery positions (Heyrick 1836, 23).¹² And, albeit with some circumlocution, she highlights the sexual abuse suffered by women in slavery (Heyrick 1836, 20-22; see also Heyrick 1828, 4).

they specifically mention that when first published in 1824, Heyrick's pamphlet had helped move Wilberforce and others from gradualism to abolitionism (Heyrick 1836, 2).

¹² Jonathan Dymond likewise was fairly ecumenical in his Quakerism; as Brock points out he "appealed not only to Quakers of his time but to a wider public that had become interested in promoting the cause of peace" and "was in no way sectarian" (Brock 1990, 257, 258). This may also signal Dymond's more Orthodox leanings. But in a letter to Susan Balkwill (January 19, 1826), Dymond notes "that the principles of Quakerism are the principles of unchangeable Truth. To many this may now be the language of bigotry. Be

Most importantly, though, Heyrick recognizes and champions the intelligence of the slaves. Like free Black writers in North America, she equates the actions of rebellious slaves to the brave Greek revolutionary insurgents (Heyrick 1836, 22). Arguing that the so-called vices of the slaves are really a product of slavery, not intrinsic to the people enslaved, she demands

Give the slave his liberty—in the sound name of justice, give it him at once. Whilst you hold him in bondage, he will profit little from your plans of amelioration. He has not, by all his complicated injuries and debasements, been disinherited of his *sagacity*;—this will teach him to give no credit to your admonitory lessons—your christian (sic) instructions will be lost upon him, so long as he both knows and feels that his instructors are grossly violating their own lessons (Heyrick 1836, 8-9; italicized emphasis in original, underline emphasis added).

As a British woman activist, Heyrick was unlikely to have had extended daily contact with Blacks, slave or free. So she is here extrapolating from the idea of spiritual human equality (which pervades the essay) to equality of intellectual capacity; and she recognizes that the slave holds an excellent vantage for detecting hypocrisy and condescension.

It may be that we are so imbued with Garrisonian rhetoric, that the startling newness of Heyrick is not obvious 175 years later.¹³ Up to this time, most writers opposed to slavery were white men of education and privilege, as well as self-acknowledged gradualists. Their writings are far more sober in tone, conciliatory especially towards the interests of commerce and internal security, conceding much to existing racial prejudices. It seems no accident that a woman—free

it so. I have no desire to cease to be a bigot at the expense of such an assurance. I am inclined to hope that (after the *approaching* day is passed when slavery shall be abolished) the attention and the labours of Friends will be more conspicuously and publicly directed than they have hitherto been, to the question of War – an evil before which, in my estimation, Slavery sinks into insignificance. I doubt not that *now* is the time for Anti-slavery exertion. The time *will* come for anti-war exertion.” (CWDymond 47).

of strong ties to mercantile and political institutions—would be the one to make this intellectual and rhetorical breakthrough.¹⁴

Heyrick had an immediate impact within a Transatlantic context. In addition to her influence on the British movement, her pamphlet quickly crossed the Atlantic, utilizing long-standing Quaker lines of communication.¹⁵ It was published in the United States in 1825, where it gained the attention and respect of Benjamin Lundy.¹⁶ He reprinted the pamphlet in *The Genius of Universal Emancipation* over the fall-winter of 1826-27. Lundy appreciated Heyrick's moral absolutism on slavery, characterizing her rhetoric as most "unlike the milk-and-water style of some writers this side of the Atlantic" (Dillon 1966, 107-108). While Lundy was not prepared to fully acquiesce to Heyrick's arguments, his biographer notes that Lundy was less inclined to conciliation after this (Dillon 120, 125)—another example of how Heyrick paved the way for Garrison, here in a most direct sense.

Heyrick's pamphlet, especially its visibility in the deeply factionalized Philadelphia Friends' community, sparked another convert—and, I would speculate, enabled Lundy to hear her, too.

¹³ There are important parallels in the bold writings of free Blacks in the 1820s, especially those of Samuel Cornish and David Walker.

¹⁴ I would add, that it did not have to be a woman; this loving description of William Lloyd Garrison from his grandson indicates many structural similarities between women and Garrison: "What could you do with a man like this Garrison? He had no social position to lose. He was in debt to nobody. No one had any hold upon him with which to padlock his utterances. He had no sacrifices to make. Furthermore, he insisted upon living an absolutely blameless private life, which was a great vexation to his enemies. You threw him into jail, and he liked it immensely, and utilized this opportunity to strike off his best bit of verse....You tried to reach him through his bank account, or his social affiliations, or his desire for power, and you found that he had none of these." (Oswald Garrison Villard. 1939. *Fighting Years: Memoirs of a Liberal Editor*. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, page 7).

¹⁵ See Tolles 1960 for the eighteenth-century background.

¹⁶ Dwight L. Dumond maintains that there is evidence that Heyrick's writing circulated in Indiana even prior to publication in England, but I have not yet been able to corroborate that (Dumond 1961, 138).

In January of 1826, the young Elizabeth Chandler published (anonymously) her poem “The Casket, a literary miscellany (Chandler 1836a, 136).¹⁷ The six stanza poem describes both the culpable moral complacency of those involved in the slave trade, and the suicidal refusal of a captured slave to submit and be separated from his family and home. Whatever the shortcomings of polemical poetry as a genre, there is a subtlety in Chandler’s treatment of the complex networks of human relationships, as well as the simultaneity of the passion of moral courage and the banality of moral apathy. It is possible that Chandler’s imagination was fired by Heyrick’s evocation of a slave revolt in Kingston that had been sparked by the masters’ separation of married couples (Heyrick 1836, 22). In any case, Lundy read the poem, reprinted it in *The Genius of Universal Emancipation*, and through a mutual friend discovered the author’s identity, and asked for more writings (Chandler 1836a, 12). When, in 1827, Chandler wrote a prose essay decrying the hypocrisy of celebrating the Fourth of July, Lundy expanded her writing duties, eventually making her a co-editor, in charge of the Ladies Department. She joined the editorial staff simultaneously with William Lloyd Garrison—a significant fact of women’s history that has been obscured by her early death (Lutz 1968, 8-9; Dillon 143).

Heyrick and Chandler are worth considering together: both were Quakers who, staying within the Society of Friends, used the doctrine of individual conscience as a vantage point (and a

¹⁷ Chandler, a birthright Quaker, was born in Delaware in 1807 and raised in the environs of Philadelphia. Her formal schooling ceased around age thirteen, but she continued to study and write assiduously (Lundy’s Memoir, in Chandler 1836a, 9-10). While her contemporaries and later scholars have noted her humbleness, and frequent use of anonymity, these traits were not motivated by a lack of self-esteem: even five years after the fact, she was still smarting over only receiving third place for “The Slave Ship” (Lundy’s Memoir, in Chandler 1836a, 12)! She died while living in Michigan Territory with her brother, in November of 1834.

vantage specifically available to women) from which to critique the status quo.¹⁸ While neither delineates a feminist agenda, they both urge a mobilization of women to the antislavery cause, pointing repeatedly and decisively to the economic power that women hold, especially as this could impact the free produce movement. Both experienced intra-Quaker tensions: Chandler became a Hicksite (Lutz 1968, 10) and Heyrick was considered too extreme by many, including fellow Quaker James Cropper, who called her and other immediatists “unwanted allies” (Davis 1984, 183). Finally, they each became increasingly concerned with organizing women, not merely into auxiliaries, but as vanguards. Chandler, along with Laura Haviland, organized the first anti-slavery society of any type in the Michigan Territory: the Logan Female Anti-Slavery Society (Dumond 1961, 279; Lutz 1968, 17-18; Lundy’s Memoir in Chandler 1836a, 40). In England, Heyrick not only wrote and traveled to spread the anti-slavery message, but outlined a plan on how to proceed with the project, in her “Apology for Ladies’ Anti-Slavery Associations” published in 1828. In this seldom mentioned work, Heyrick recapitulates most of the arguments from her earlier, more famous pamphlet, but here explicitly intended for a female audience. She rues the fact that women’s “ability and influence are so circumscribed” in the political realm (3), but sees this as a reason to work around, rather than with, the established powers. What motivates Heyrick is a grand impatience with the institutional structures that block emancipation (either viciously or through bureaucratic neglect). Her analysis of power calls on women to act by oblique means:

(slavery) enormous as it is...upheld, as it is, by a mighty host of powerful interests and deep-rooted prejudices—we have the power to expel. The power which could most *promptly* expel this mighty mischief, may be lodged in hands which have no will to exert it; but the power *effectually* to destroy it is

¹⁸ Davis, 1967, 146. I am not the first to compare Heyrick and Chandler; William Lloyd Garrison eulogized Chandler as “worthy to be associated with Elizabeth Heyrick of England” (Lutz 1968, 19).

diffused over a wide surface, and may be roused and concentrated by humble exertions. Though *we* have no voice in the senate, no influence in public meetings,—though no signatures of ours are attached to anti-slavery petitions to the legislature,—yet we have a voice and an influence in a sphere, which, though restricted, is no narrow one. To the hearts and consciences of our own sex, at least, we have unlimited access. By dispelling their ignorance, disseminating among them correct information of the nature and consequences of West Indian slavery, and dissuading them from all participation in its guilt, by a conscientious rejection of its produce, we may withdraw its resources and undermine its foundations (Heyrick 1828, 11).

Heyrick arrived at this analysis, and marshaling, of female power, by a very Quaker-like streamlining of Christianity, an abstraction which validates the inner light and emphasizes the non-legalistic tendencies of that tradition: “Christianity is not a voluminous code of arbitrary commands and prohibitions;—it is a system of principles, few in number, but of universal application. It requires the supreme love of God, and the love of our neighbors as ourselves....inseparably connected” (Heyrick 1828, 10). The simplicity of Gospel principles are pressed into the service of a grand campaign of anti-slavery education: adopting a “plan of dividing large towns into districts, and of making indiscriminate calls upon the inhabitants for the purpose of diffusing general information of the nature of slavery” (11).¹⁹ Revolutionary philosophic ideas—of women’s intelligence, of informal organizing as a political tool of great strength, of questioning the literal truth of the Bible—are enunciated through a (theologically defensible) definition of “true” Christianity.

Women’s intellectual development relates directly to the theme of women’s education. The Quakers, to the extent that they encouraged education, encouraged female education as well

¹⁹ Dymond likewise thinks of Christianity by its principles; for instance he is unworried that the Gospels have no direct interdiction against war (Dymond 1834a, 404f), since Christianity forbids “not specifically the act, but the *spirit* of war” (409).

(although they were not paragons of gender equity, they were substantially ahead of most everyone else in North America). With the establishment of Quaker boarding schools in the late 18th and early 19th centuries on both sides of the Atlantic, the opportunities for Quaker women expanded. One person who grasped the meaning of this, philosophically and personally, was the English philosopher Jonathan Dymond (1796-1828). Best known as the first person to fully articulate the logic of the Quaker peace testimony, his writings were well-known on both sides of the Atlantic. Entering via the peace movement, his cogent, clear statements in opposition to slavery made him popular among American Abolitionists as well. Dymond's works were also, quite literally, in the hands of women—the first American edition of his work was sewn together by the daughters of George Benson—Mary, Anna, Sarah, and Helen (who within two years became Helen Benson Garrison).²⁰ The Windham County Peace Society, and the inexhaustible Moses Brown, saw to its distribution throughout southern New England; Prudence Crandall may have used this pamphlet in the curriculum for her Black students. Lydia Maria Child endorsed Dymond in her 1833 *Appeal in Favor of that Class of Americans called Africans* (Child 154).

What makes this relevant is a proto-feminist philosophy, both explicit and implicit, in Dymond's largest work, the posthumously published *Essays on the Principles of Morality* (1829). It

²⁰ In a letter from George Benson Sr. to Moses Brown, May 17, 1832, he announces the publication of the Dymond pamphlet: "Herewith I transmit one hundred copies of a Pamphlet by the late Jon^d Dymond.... This is the first parcel of the publication prepaid for distribution and in order to send it as early as possible, I employ'd one of my daughters to stitch them." (in the Moses Brown Collection, Rhode Island Historical Society). The Benson sisters—most of whom remained unmarried—contributed to Prudence Crandall's defense, to the establishment of the Brooklyn Female Anti-Slavery Society, and to the Northampton Association. Their close friend, Olive Gilbert, became Sojourner Truth's first amanuensis. I will include them in the fuller version of this survey of women's intellectual development, because they show, collectively, the diffusion of this impulse past the forerunners discussed herein.

appears that very few male readers picked up on these themes, but I would guess his women readers did. Dymond is most explicit on the need for women's education to be the equivalent of what is offered to men: "There does not appear any reason why the education of women should differ, in its essentials, from that of men. The education which is good for human nature is good for them" (Dymond 1834a, 200).²¹ Recognizing that men adopt a patronizing attitude towards women, he challenges that by proclaiming that a true man is one "who evinces his respect for the female *mind*" (Dymond 1834a, 200, emphasis in original). He follows this with a key comparison between gender oppression and slavery:

Unhappily, a great number of women themselves prefer this varnished and gilded contempt to solid respect. They would rather think themselves fascinating than respectable....For this unhappy state of intellectual intercourse, female education is in too great a degree adapted. A large class are taught less to think than to shine....An absurd education disqualifies them for intellectual exertion, and that very disqualification perpetuates the degradation. I say the degradation, for the word is descriptive of the fact. A captive is not the less truly bound because his chains are made of silver and studded with rubies (Dymond 1834a, 200).

Dymond then turns to the women of his own Quaker denomination, and points out that Quaker women as a class are an exception to the degraded state he had just described.²² In a reference to the first quarter of the nineteenth century, he writes that while Quaker women have not "dazzled" the public, they have shown "intelligence, sound sense, considerateness, -201; cf. Bacon 84). He even notes how this intellectual growth is a result of institutional structure, where Quaker "women have an extensive and a

²¹ Dymond, self-employed as a linen-draper, makes a similar set of comments about the poor a few pages later: "that is good for the poor which is good for man" (Dymond 1834a, 212, cf. 210).

²² Heyrick may be obliquely referenced when he adds "The Quakers are not a *writing* people. If they were, there is no reason to doubt that the intelligence and discretion which are manifested by their women's actions and conversation would be exhibited in their books" (Dymond 1834a, 201).

separate share” in governance, where “they are almost inevitably taught to think and to judge” (Dymond 1834a, 201), but he despairs of society at large adopting such practices, despite their (to him) obviously positive results.

Dymond was not spinning his feminist opinions merely from his imagination. Both of his parents had been Public Friends (C. Dymond 4-5), and Dymond’s profession as a linen-draper placed him in regular contact with women. He also maintained his warmest friendship with a woman Quaker, Susan H. Balkwill, who lived in Plymouth, a short distance from Exeter (it appears they met through their Quarterly Meeting). Balkwill and Dymond sustained a lively correspondence from 1825 to his death in 1828, largely discussing intellectual and religious matters. Many ideas he would develop in his essays appear in embryonic form in these letters. He also notes the “advantages of talent and education” among the women of Plymouth’s meeting (CWDymond 62-63). Both Dymond and Balkwill were married, and the letters have no tone of romance in them: it appears to have been a friendship without such tensions.²³

The core of Dymond’s pacifism presents rich implications for his female readers.²⁴ He bemoans the loss of moral agency on the part of soldiers, who resign themselves to

²³ It is also in one of these letters that Dymond criticizes the Hicksites of New England (C Dymond 46). The English edition of Dymond’s *Essays* at the Friends’ Historical Library at Swarthmore is inscribed “Thomas Evans Philadelphia from his affectionate friends George and Ann Jones Stockport 11/3/1830;” Evans and the Joneses were central figures on the Orthodox side of the Orthodox-Hicksite debates and schisms (Ingle, *passim*). So there are contradictions in the uses of Dymond which I am not examining here, but which will be dealt with in the longer version of this.

²⁴ Given that Dymond’s explication of the Quaker peace testimony (which he saw as incumbent on all Christians) was his most widely-circulated text, being excerpted in pamphlet form numerous times, it is the most likely text of his to have been read by Abolitionist women. In this regard, the connection of Dymond to Thomas Grimké deserves attention. Thomas Grimké first encounters Dymond’s writings in 1830-31, becomes more engaged with them through his correspondence with Samuel J. May, until he enunciated similar pacifist positions in his famous 1832 address in New Haven (actually read by Leonard Bacon due to

unconditional obedience, and thereby relinquish their ability for independent thought and reason (Dymond 1834a, 400).²⁵ He notes that “such a resignation of our moral agency is not contended for, or tolerated, in any other circumstance of human life. War stands alone upon this pinnacle of depravity” (Dymond 1834a, 401). Of course, war’s singularity in this regard rests on the fact that soldiers (at least some of them) volunteer for this erasure of moral agency. But for slaves, and for those caught in the vise of gender inequity, the surrender of self is neither voluntary nor morally healthy. Given that Dymond elsewhere attacks slavery and sexism, the implication is—and, I surmise, was—clear: “independence of mind” and “consciousness of mental freedom” were qualities worthy of cultivation and valorization for men and women (Dymond 1834a, 400).

Writings such as Dymond’s that could have offered women both intellectual succor and substance were rare in two ways—rarely written and rarely accessible. The very real limitations placed on women’s education which Dymond pointed out, created and reinforced further limitations. To break through this to a place of self-knowledge, self-development and self-expression, for any woman, required that combination of emotion and reason discussed earlier. The dulling conformity of school textbooks and compendiums was yet another obstacle.²⁶

Grimké’s illness) (Brock 1968, 493; Brock 1991a, 48). He prepared a publication of Dymond’s “An Inquiry into the Accordancy of War with the Principles of Christianity; and an Examination of the Philosophical Reasoning by Which It is Defended; with Observations of the Causes of War and Some of its Effects,” but died before the project had been completed. The pamphlet was seen through to publication by “His Afflicted Sisters,” Angelina and Sarah Grimké (Dymond 1834b, iii-iv). So it is certain that the Grimké sisters had absorbed this material quite thoroughly.

²⁵ I would use Dymond’s own language here, but the sexist language would detract too much from the point I am trying to make: “He who, with whatever motive, resigns the direction of his conduct implicitly to another, surely cannot retain that erectness and independence of mind, that manly consciousness of mental freedom, which is one of the highest privileges of our nature.” (Dymond 1834 book, 400).

²⁶ Dymond’s critique of dull lesson books immediately precedes his section of women’s education; see Dymond 1834a, 191-199.

One of the more prolific compilers of schoolbooks in this era was an Englishman named John Adams, a pedant who flourished from 1785-1810 (ca. 1750-1814). His many books, such as “The Flowers of Ancient History” (1788), “A View of Universal History” (1795, in three volumes), and “Elegant Anecdotes and Bon Mots” (1790), were used in select academies (roughly equivalent to a high school level), and most went through multiple editions. Adams was a writer whose knowledge was broad rather than deep, and whose likely effect on his readers was more exhaustive than enlightening (*Dictionary of National Biography* vol. 1, 98). However, one work of his, through some obscure path, winds up in the hands and mind of the free American Black Abolitionist and feminist orator, Maria Stewart.

Adams’ *Sketches of the History, Genius, Disposition, Accomplishments, Employments, Customs, Virtues, and Vices of the Fair Sex, in all parts of the world*, first published in England in 1790, was republished in Boston in 1807. While the sexism of the book does not grate as harshly as one might fear from the title, Adams’ rhetoric is still laced with condescension. He never hesitates before passing judgment on entire religions, civilizations and cultures, including a racist appraisal of Africa most noteworthy for its reversal claiming that Africans are “robbing and murdering all other inhabitants of the globe” while they wallow in “their idleness, ignorance, superstition, (and) treachery” (Adams 47)

It is only by profoundly conscious acts of intelligence that Maria Stewart is able to get beyond this tone and use Adams as the highly potent (albeit highly edited) source that she does.²⁷ It is unclear at what point in her (oft-interrupted and self-guided) education Stewart discovered Adams' text, but she surely used it with aplomb. The occasion was her farewell speech in 1833—the too-quickly reached finale of her brief public speaking career. She begins by retelling her internal conversion, her willingness to surrender herself to God's will (Houchins 72-73). She then recounts her prophetic calling in Boston, and her sense that God has commanded her to speak (Houchins 74-75). She then commences a remarkable summary of women's involvement in religion (even today it could serve as a reasonable starting point for an outline of a women and religion course!). She compares herself to Deborah, Esther, Mary Magdalene, and women who "ministered unto Christ" (Houchins 75). In the midst of this, she sweeps aside any sexist objections from Pauline texts by trumping Paul with Jesus, and by asserting that if Paul knew how much Black women were suffering, "I presume he would make no objections to our pleading in public for our rights" (Houchins 75). Her bold woman-handling of Paul outstrips much feminist theologizing, then and now, and is another example of women questioning the literal truth (and internal consistency) of scripture.

To convince her hearers that women have been called to sacred vocations in the past, she turns to Adams' text. She quotes him exactly, then follows with shorter paragraphs of her own commentary (Houchins 76-78, given on a handout; the pages in Adams are 51-52). Adams'

²⁷ In this regard, I feel that Stewart is a most ingenious political editor; see my article on her self-positioning after Turner's revolt, Rycenga 2000. Marilyn Richardson sees that the women Stewart selects from Adams' book are those who "gained respect and renown through their mastery of such intellectual disciplines as law, theology, and the arts" (Richardson 24) and Sue Houchins likewise highlights Stewart's establishment of a female spiritual legacy in these choices (Houchins xxxi f).

text is transformed in Stewart's voice! His compendium of prominent women in ancient Pagan and Jewish cultures becomes strong evidence that women are meant to do spiritual work. Rather than seeing the presence of women religious leaders as contemptible and condemned ancient practices, Stewart refigures women as rich spiritual instruments awaiting the touch of the virtuoso deity. And her theological audacity escalates when she declares that those who want her silenced because of her gender are sinning against God.

The next two pairs of paragraphs again alternate Adams' voice with hers. What to Adams is another impressive list, is for Stewart an empowering intellectual legacy. The accomplishments of medieval European women mystics and thinkers, demonstrated to Stewart what was possible for women who had combined education with piety, and who had done political work, as well. Even so, Stewart knows better than to concede formal education as a necessity, since formal schooling was an institution from which she was doubly excluded as a Black woman (even triply excluded as a working-class servant). She reminds her hearers that God does not require a degree to make use of a person.

Rhetorically, Stewart's glosses on Adams' information demonstrate once again the unity of rationality and emotion in these marginalized intellectual activists. Stewart vividly underlines the points she draws out from Adams' nonchalance. While he speaks of women prophets "obtain(ing) much credit at Rome" she magnifies her points with imperatives "ridicule their (i.e. my) efforts" and superlatives—"the strong current of prejudice that flows so profusely against us" (Houchins 76-77). As with her mentor, David Walker, Stewart's urgency enables her reason, her social location triggering the need to detect the larger patterns that

underlie those “strong currents of prejudice.” Whatever the intent and attitude of Adams, to have heard those words from the mouth of Maria Stewart was to see the legacy of women intellectuals, striving for public honors and responsibilities, embodied in a Black woman.

Like Jean Yellin, I despair that while white female Abolitionist readers of *The Liberator* must have been aware of Stewart, they did not cite her: “apparently either racism or class bias—or both—prevented them from identifying with Stewart. Nor did they identify with (Fanny) Wright or (Ernestine) Rose. Their model was not the black Christian, the English-born libertarian, or the freethinking Polish Jew” (Yellin 48). The Grimké sisters are the ones who earn the accolades and support. But I am convinced that there was one white woman at least who tried to hear Maria Stewart’s words into action: Prudence Crandall. Given that Crandall’s exposure to *The Liberator* was through a young Black woman, recently arrived from Boston—her “family assistant” Mariah Davis—and through the family of her future student Sarah Harris, whose father (William Harris) was the local Black agent for *The Liberator*, it seems certain that Crandall read Stewart’s words, specifically about establishing a high school for women.

In the early months of the controversy around Crandall’s plan to reopen her Academy for Black women and girls only, the town fathers of Canterbury called numerous town meetings, attempting to exclude those they saw as outside agitators (such as Samuel J. May from neighboring Brooklyn Connecticut) and as dangers (some Black men who silently attended one meeting). Among those excluded was Crandall herself: as a woman she could not speak (or even attend) in her own defense. Thus emerges this curious, saucy letter from her, first

published in the *Genius of Temperance* (edited by the Abolitionist William Goodell, a Tappan ally) and then reprinted in *The Liberator*:

"A NEW SOCIETY PROPOSED.

Messrs. Editors:—We often hear the remark that the present is an age of benevolent enterprise; and it is claimed that our country, is behind no other in this characteristic of the times. There are, however, many important objects which have not as yet engaged the attention of the benevolent public so deeply as is desirable—I would call your attention to one. There appears to be a disposition of late to try to elevate the intellectual and moral character, as well as ameliorate the condition of the colored population of our country. The fears which many appear to entertain in relation to this subject, are that the efforts made for the above purpose will be unavailing. But I think there is much more reason to fear that they will be successful. The consequences of the accomplishment of such an object I need not name. The question to be decided now, is—what shall be done to prevent a result so disastrous? We have in this country a number of 'American' societies—but what I am about to propose is, to have an *Anti-American* society formed. Boston has been the birth-place of many of our benevolent societies, as well as the cradle of our national liberty; but Boston, for several reasons, too obvious to be assigned, would not be the most suitable place for the origin of this new association. Circumstances seem to point out New Haven as the grand centre of the parent society, and there can, no doubt, be an auxiliary formed immediately in Canterbury. It is time the friends of this cause were awake. If they are not soon at their posts, the anti-slavery party will gain the day, and then all is lost. He who now calls upon the haters of *blacks* to do their worst, is prouder than ever of his name.—P.

CRANDALL" (*The Liberator* 3:17:66, April 27, 1833, emphases and capitalizations in original)²⁸

Though her sarcasm and anger make for confusing diction in this letter, the overall effect is to skewer her opponents: what they really fear is her success, not her failure, in helping Black women to obtain an education. Appropriating the rhetoric that equality and liberty are American qualities, she knows that “the anti-slavery party will gain the day.” Like Maria Stewart, she places her enemies in the camp of the damned in the final sentence, where “he who now calls upon the haters of *blacks*” could be read either as the “anti-Americans” or as “satan.”

When we understand that this letter was the means which Crandall had to answer her opponents, that her structural exclusion from the town meetings left her no other public forum, its anger and bitter irony seem quite fitting. As with Stewart's farewell speech, Crandall is poignantly aware of her ability to outsmart her adversaries. When they met with her privately, their concern that having a school for Black women would lead to intermarriage saw her snap back "Moses had a Black wife" (Strane 36). Did she surmise that a carefully reasoned letter of self-defense would not be effective? Or was this letter her declaration of the ideological war between herself and the town authorities, couched in a language that deflected direct criticism?

What is interesting to note here is that her advocate in England, the Black American minister Nathaniel Paul, adopts a similar tone of ridicule towards the town leaders of Canterbury, in a speech he delivered in London in July of that same year, 1833. He mentions the failed manual labor school in New Haven, then continues that

in the same State, a white female, in endeavouring to establish a school for the instruction of colored females, has been most inhumanly assailed by the advocate of the Colonization Society, who, in town meetings, passed resolutions against her benevolent object, as spirited as if the cholera were about to break out in the village, and they by a single effort of this kind could hinder its devastations. They could not have acted with more promptness, and energy, and violence, than they did, in persecuting this excellent lady, because her compassion led her to espouse the cause of the suffering blacks. (Cheers.) They were ready to expel her from the country. (Ripley et.al., vol. 1, page 48)

The acerbic tone of both Nathaniel Paul and Prudence Crandall proves Heyrick's assertion that the oppressed have not lost their sagacity. Their social position enables each to see through the

²⁸ The reference to "New Haven as the grand centre of the parent society" is, of course, due to the refusal

pomposity of the standing social order, and to reject some of its methods (of stodgy refinement).²⁹ The tremendous perfectionist energy of the early nineteenth-century means that when these marginalized voices speak, they are not seeking a return to a placid status quo. Free Black men, and Black and white women, were not promising that the world would be unchanged if they succeeded: they expected it to be transformed. That is why Crandall assures her readers (and her opponents) that they fear the success of educated Black women, rather than the failure. This revolutionary energy traveled well between Britain and the United States, as witnessed in the shower of gifts that Crandall received from (primarily women) supporters in England and Scotland (Strane 144, 150).

The source of that energy, though, lies in the intellectual self-development, through religion, with which this paper is concerned. In fact, all of the women discussed herein—Barnard, Heyrick, Chandler, Stewart and Crandall—consciously and decisively defined themselves religiously, and chose the more unconventional road in their conversions (or choice of Hicksite for Chandler). While they rose to some prominence in their respective denominations, there is no evidence to suggest any of them was ambitious for institutional power or prestige. Their choices were

of the town to host the manual labor college for Black men.

²⁹ In a reference so rich that I can only report it and not linger to unpack it, even Jonathan Dymond ran afoul of the representatives of stodgy refinement. The 1834 American edition of the *Essays* was edited by Professor George Bush of New York University, a professor of Hebrew and “America’s foremost Swedenborgian” (Moore 11). He was active in the peace movement (serving on the board of the American Peace Society); on slavery he held a conservative anti-slavery position, but was apparently friendly to colonization. In a rare editorial interruption, Bush attempts to temper Dymond’s more radical stance on the issue of slavery, calling for “(w)isdom and moderation” and specifically saying that critiquing colonization is too extreme: “It is doing a manifest violence to every thing that bears the name of liberty or of charity to denounce as dangerous and incendiary the attempts of calm and enlightened philanthropists (who view the subject of slavery entirely in its moral aspects) to disseminate correct opinions respecting it, or to brand sober discussion with the opprobrious title of officious intermeddling.” It is hardly surprising, then, that, preferring as he does arid academic discussions, he calls for the slaveholder to only mentally renounce his right to own property in another person, but “the duty of *immediate manumission*” doesn’t necessarily

arrived at rationally, and engaged in passionately. Beginning with their religious affiliation, they each made “a declaration of independence” which “involved a break from the past” (Hudson 194-195).³⁰ Nor did they look back nostalgically.

To make a decisive break with the past included, of course, making a break with male authorities of some kind (husband, father, brother, minister, community leaders). As they read religious texts and religious history against the accepted grain, they became less likely to ever willingly resubmit to institutional (male) authority. Barnard’s case shows this most clearly, but the resistance that Heyrick, Crandall and Stewart met was nearly as substantive as an ecclesiastical trial, perhaps worse. In the face of opposition, they are not demure: instead they pursue the logic of their positions and extend the radical nature of their thought.

This is where one can catch a glimpse of the intellectual leadership these women were ready to offer. Heyrick recognized the intelligence of the enslaved; Crandall worked closely with the free Black community to establish her school; Stewart transformed the Ladies’ Department of *The Liberator* with her bold insights.³¹ They are each making vital arguments about women, about

follow—a patronizing interregnum holds (during which the master can be “availing himself of their services”) (Dymond 1834a, 389, fn., italicized emphases in original, underline emphases mine)

³⁰ I would have liked to make this point more centrally, but Heyrick, Chandler, Stewart, and Crandall were all unmarried in the time period under discussion. As I will develop further in my biography of Crandall, her marriage stunted her further activism, and may even have played a role in the closing of her school in September of 1834 (she married a Baptist itinerant preacher, Calvin Philleo, in August of 1834).

³¹ A small item from *The Liberator*, not often commented upon, is Garrison’s recognition of intellectual importance. This follows from his similar appreciation (even in disagreement) of David Walker’s *Appeal*. In the issue of *The Liberator* (2:17:66-67, April 28, 1832) which included her Address to the African-American Female Intelligence Society, the following editorial note is included (though it is not contiguous with the address itself): “It is proper to state that the Address of Mrs. Stewart, in our Ladies’ Department today, is published at her own request, and not by desire of the Society before whom it was delivered. Mrs. S. uses very plain, some may call it severe language; but we are satisfied she is actuated by good motives, and that her only aim is to rouse a spirit of virtuous emulation in the breasts of her associates, and to elevate the

Blacks, about class,³² which sound a cantus firmus of spiritual equality implying intellectual equality. Nor do they let intellectual equality rest as an abstract principle: they each put it into effect in their actions, and in their calls for more action and more thought, specifically in education (higher education) for those who had been denied access.

Certainly someone will object, that I have been discussing women who were exceptional, not only by virtue of having achieved some (albeit far too minimal) historical recognition, but exceptional even among women active in moral reform movements of the time in the scope and direction of their vision.³³ Certainly there is some truth in this. While I could produce evidence of the diffusion of their ideas through larger communities of women, it is precisely their exceptional quality that interests me. The ideas that they raise point to directions for feminist thought, and for the Abolitionist movement, that remained unexplored.

Some of this is due to contingencies which cannot be fruitfully debated—Elizabeth Chandler’s tragically early death at age 28, in late 1834, prior to the emergence of more visible women

whole colored population. 'Faithful are the wounds of a friend, but the hisses of an enemy are deceitful.'" (2:17:67, April 28, 1832; the address can also be found in Houchins 56-63).

³² On the matter of class, it is worth noting that in 1831, the same year when Maria Stewart’s voice is first heard, a strike of tailoresses in New York City stressed what Christine Stansell calls “the importance of female self-reliance.” The spokeswoman for the tailoresses, Sarah Monroe, said “Long have the poor tailoresses of this city borne their oppression in silence; until *patience* is no longer a virtue....High time is it, my friends, that we awake—high time is it that we were up and doing...let us unite—let us organize ourselves—let us do all in our power to increase our members; for on that the success of our cause depends....It needs no small share of courage for us who have been used to impositions and oppression from our youth up to the present day, to come before the public in the defence of our own rights....if it is unfashionable for the men to bear oppression in silence, why should it not also become unfashionable with the women? or do they deem us more able to endure hardships than they themselves?” (Stansell 133, 135; the speech is from the *Daily Sentinel* March 5, 1831).

³³ One counter-example which I hope to investigate further, particularly as it relates to Crandall’s youth, is the prominence of women among the Orthodox Quakers. In fact, some Orthodox English Quakers—most notably Anna Braithwaite and Ann Jones—can even be credited with precipitating and pushing the schism with the Hicksites (see Ingle 33-35).

activists; or Heyrick's sudden death in 1831 from a ruptured blood vessel (Anonymous 23). But what happened to Maria Stewart and to Prudence Crandall—both of whom live till long after the Civil War—suggests that the forthrightness of their actions, and the totality of their vision, could not be heard, even by allies. Stewart retired from active public speaking in 1833; Crandall's school closed in 1834. They both remained abolitionists, educators, and moral reformers, but did not regain high public visibility. I would suggest that their philosophic ideas—to change actual social relations towards equality, rather than merely adjusting existing social institutions to accommodate equality—made Heyrick, Stewart and Crandall, as female voices, too radical to be sustained (again, one could well add the likes of Fanny Wright and Ernestine Rose here, too, *pace* Yellin).

As a final example of this, Crandall's transformation of her school from a "Select Female Academy" to an Academy for "Young Ladies and Little Misses of Color" was precipitous. She wrote Garrison, then went to visit him in Boston, without informing anyone in Canterbury of her intention. She had warned Garrison that "I do not dare tell any of my neighbors anything about the contemplated change in my school" (from a letter sent, 1/18/1833; in Welch 25-26). Many contemporaries and historians have agreed with James Monroe (a local boy at the time of her school, who grew up to be an Abolitionist and later Lincoln's ambassador to Brazil) when he sighed that "I do not think it can be contended that she always acted judiciously, especially in the suddenness with which she sprang upon the community her new enterprise" (a letter sent to Ellen Larned, October 18, 1897, from the Larned Collection in the Connecticut State Library). Apparently, Crandall knew better than to ask permission (given the reaction of the villagers to the admission of one Black student). She also seems to have decided, with an absolutism that

parallels Heyrick's immediatism, that it is best to put one's principles directly into effect, without negotiating them to meet the world's comfort level. But in establishing her school, in which Black women were themselves to be prepared to become educators, she was simultaneously demanding that intellectual equality be recognized on the levels of race and gender, and regardless of whether her students intended to become mothers or not. The magnitude of what she tried to do is breathtaking; consider how the attempt to establish the manual labor college in New Haven had failed, despite having clergy spokesmen, precisely because its advocates had asked permission. Crandall's forthright action was a form of leadership which, because it came from a woman, was not recognized as such. Likewise, Stewart's speeches which so effectively extended and enhanced David Walker's voice are rarely understood in relation to his acute analyses. Stewart, Crandall and Heyrick lived, in the rich context of their historic moment, as if they knew that inequities based on race, gender and class were too intertwined to be separated: an insight that has taken feminists decades, centuries now, to struggle towards again.

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