

**“What they seek for is in themselves”:
Quaker Language and Thought and Their Influence on American Literature in the
Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries**

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Focussing on the doctrine of the inner light, or the "still, small voice" within, and its implications for Quaker language, this paper will examine the influence of Quaker thought on certain American authors, notably Charles Brockden Brown. How were Quaker tenets transmuted in a peculiarly New World setting, and what implications did this have for the American novel? There are also grounds, it shall be argued, for placing the figure of the American detective in a spiritual tradition which encompasses Puritan and indeed Quaker thought.