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**Blasphemies to Be Veiled: The Veiled Theme Conveyed from “The Minister’s Black Veil” to *Moby-Dick***

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In my presentation I try to demonstrate that the Reverend Hooper in “The Minister’s Black Veil” is a Quaker clergyman. For one thing, the chapel where he prays is called “Milford meeting-house” rather than Milford chapel. A Quaker’s chapel is sometimes described as a meeting-house. Moreover, the Congregationalists of the meeting-house in the “Minister’s Black Veil” often “quake” when they listen to Mr. Hooper preach. My presentation therefore presumes that Mr. Hooper could be a Quaker clergyman.

The Quaker Isaac Pennington said in 1651, “As people love themselves too much to discriminate their inside evils from other attributes, and then they cannot bear even being pointed out them by others.” Pennington left many pamphlets and books in order to establish the Quaker’s theology. As Pennington himself might have believed, Hooper’s Congregationalists in the short story always fear being exposed for their “secret sin.” Mr. Hooper’s black veil must symbolize their fear for their own “secret sin.”

Melville’s *Moby-Dick*, the narrative often portrays Quaker attributes because the Nantucket whalers are often Quakers. Captain Bildad and Peleg in Chapter 16 are defined as Quakers. Captain Ahab and Ishmael are not expressly identified as Quakers, but some context of the novel suggests that Ahab is a member of that religion. In the middle of chapter 16, for example, Ishmael offers a general commentary about the Quaker character. He suddenly changes the portrait of the general character of a Quaker coming from Nantucket to one of the tragic hero. He describes, “all men tragically great are made so through a certain morbidness.” If this analysis might apply to Captain Ahab contextually, Ahab could be a Quaker as well as Starbuck. Isaac Pennington also said, “a man is a prisoner because his understanding is fettered, his consciousness is locked and his character and his disposition are bound.” This recognition possesses a specific affinity for Ahab’s perception of self. He says in chapter 36, “if man will strike, strike through the mask! How can the prisoner reach outside except by thrusting through the wall?” The word “prisoner” seems to imply the Quaker’s perception of self.

According to the biographical information, Nathaniel Hawthorne and Melville met on an the excursion to Monument Mountain in August of 1850. On the excursion, Melville and Oliver· Wendell· Holmes debated on the superiority of English novelists to American ones. Melville argued that American writers could be compared favorably with English writers. Two weeks later he submitted an essay to *the Literary World* lauding Hawthorne’s works as achievements equivalent to those of William Shakespeare. Sophia Hawthorne wrote to Evert. A. Duyckinck expressing appreciation for Melville’s understanding of her husband’s works. She admired *Moby-Dick*, too. Nathaniel also admired it, although the letter evidencing his admiration disappeared. Thus, Sophia and Nathaniel Hawthorne had a positive relation with Herman Melville in the early 1850s.