



Lecture 1935

William Penn

*Design
for
Living*

Patrick M. Malin

William Penn Lecture 1935

Design for Living

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by
Patrick Murphy Malin
Assistant Professor of Economics
Swarthmore College

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The name of William Penn has been chosen because he was a Great Adventurer, who in fellowship with his friends started in his youth on the holy experiment of endeavoring “to live out the laws of Christ in every thought, and word, and deed,” that these might become the laws and habits of the State.

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*“With rue my heart is laden
For golden friends I had. . . .”*

A. E. Housman

Robert William Abernethy, 1900-30
Theodora Louise Bliedung, 1902-27
Marvin Yard Burr, 1903-33
Virginia Franke York, 1900-30

They knew much, and taught much, about living in unity
with the fundamental and the permanent. And, whatever
immortality may be, that must be its core.

Design For Living

This talk bears the name of a play staged by Noel Coward two or three seasons ago. It is a glorious title, because the great business of all men is to make a design for living. I fear that the only aspect of what I am going to say which will warrant the splendid title is my purpose—to deal with some basic elements in that great business. Nobody should undertake the William Penn Lecture without at least that intention.

Shortly after I had chosen my topic, an extraordinarily appropriate article was published by Brooks Atkinson, the drama editor of the New York Times, dealing with Mr. Coward's latest play, "Point Valaine." I would like to quote a few sentences from that article, not as an appraisal of Noel Coward, but as a challenge to all of us, who are so easily beset by the sin of making a petty design instead of a majestic one.

"Mr. Coward's fame comes chiefly from little comedies and theatre pieces that he has composed out of an extraordinary instinct for the stage. Satire is the quickest medium of expression for people with his turn of mind. They are not burdened down with beliefs; they are too restless to endure dullness and they have sharp tongues. In 'Point Valaine' he is writing about people who are more human than the glittering phantoms who have been tumbling headlong through his light-fingered comedies. There is no trace of cynicism in his treatment of them; as an

artist he is kind enough to pity them. But he has no capacity for giving his play perspective in the cyclorama of human living. What ‘Point Valaine’ needs is an exhilarating comment that might lift it high above its inherent sordidness.”

Unlike Noel Coward, we ought to be burdened down with beliefs, and we ought to develop the capacity for perspective and exhilarating comment in our design for living. But that is the most difficult way to live. It involves an unremitting search for progressively better answers to the two supreme inescapable questions: Being alive, how should I live? Does the nature of things hold sufficiently worthwhile possibilities for living to justify me in having children? And such a search implies two assumptions, which are paradoxically at once unprovable and undebatable. We must assume that we can really discover something about the nature of things; and we must assume that we really have some choice about how to live. I am not going to talk primarily about the assumptions, or about the nature of things. I am going to talk from the angle of that first question—being alive, how should I live?

I want to explore mostly three inner necessities—sensitiveness, scientific ethics, and a life that is both a life and a crusade. Sensitiveness is the all-inclusive necessity. To learn more and more about how to live, we must learn more and more about life in all its manifestations. Learning about life depends a great deal on intellectual inquiry, but it depends on other sorts of sensitiveness also. Charles Morgan in “The Fountain” exhibits one sort in a description of a winter twilight in Holland:

“She paused to watch the sunset drive down the sky like a ship in flames. The frozen floods in the distant valley, which all the afternoon had been grey and dead, were now a running fire; the black, huddled pines in the foreground glowed and stood apart, divided by tawny gleam and shadow of sapphire.”

I wish I could write words like those, but the words are less important than the capacity to have the inward experience they represent. We must all develop that capacity, for this reason above all others, that without such experiences we are to that extent ignorant of the world in which we live. And to develop that capacity we must put some of our time into giving ourselves opportunity for such experiences, and we must approach the opportunity with a mind that is attentive, not cluttered with other things.

My father taught me the rudiments of another sort of sensitiveness. When I was a youngster we used to walk a lot together, and we would see all sorts and conditions of men. He made one remark so often and with such depth of feeling that it has run like a refrain through all my thought of him: “Pat, you can always look around and see some poor devil worse off than you are.” Little by little, I came to understand that his words did not really mean what they seemed to mean, but something much more significant. He was not really warning me against trifling complaint; he was not really talking to me at all. He was saying a crude litany, and he was saying it because he had unusually keen sympathy for anyone who was miserable. And that understanding of what his words really meant started me toward understanding

something which I think is still more significant. We must all develop the capacity of feeling tragedy keenly, once again for this reason above all others—that without it we are to that extent ignorant of the world in which we live. And to develop it we must once again give it time and genuine attention.

This is a much harder saying than the one about sunsets, and requires brief elaboration. We must not let ourselves be frightened by tragedy into paying too little attention to it. To feel it deeply is the only way to safeguard ourselves from the danger of talking glibly about God in terms of truth and beauty and righteousness without grappling at close quarters with the meaning of their dark opposites—error and ugliness and unrighteousness. Also, it is the only way to make sure, if we take truth, beauty and righteousness as our general design for living, that we make ample provision in the details of our design for aiding the victims of tragedy and for removing its causes.

So, learning about life depends on other sorts of sensitiveness besides intellectual inquiry. But intellectual inquiry is nevertheless an important method of learning—perhaps the most important method. The chief lesson to be learned and re-learned about intellectual inquiry itself is that no discovery of reality can ever upset the life of a person who is committed to an everlasting search for reality. Discovery of fresh facts may upset old beliefs, but that is a very different matter. Defense of old beliefs is part of the process of testing new ones, but the defense should be characterized by an attitude which is unfortunately rare. We should be eager to change our old beliefs—not only willing,

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but eager—as soon as our intellectual inquiry tells us how to improve them.

Most of us actually fear intellectual inquiry, often without realizing it. We fear it because it means hard work, and hard work all life long. We fear it because it frequently means surrender of ideas on which our emotional stability has come to depend. The remedy is simply stated, but dishearteningly difficult to apply. We must increase our determination to learn more and more about life. That will never make intellectual inquiry easy, but it will help us endure it, and perhaps even relish it. And it will help us maintain inner poise in the midst of changing beliefs because our loyalty will be less to any specific belief about reality and more to the general enterprise of discovering more and more about reality. We may not like what we find out, but that is all the more reason for finding it out; otherwise, we live in a fool's paradise.

For my college generation, one outstanding externalization of this internal struggle appeared in the so-called conflict between science and religion. The battlefield was pathetically littered with needless casualties. Many youngsters who had been actively interested in religion and dedicated to high ethical standards tossed both religion and ethics into the scrapheap because they had been taught that religion in general depended on specific beliefs which intellectual inquiry was calling in question, instead of having been taught to welcome in the name of religion every new discovery of reality, from whatever source. Those youngsters were not the weaklings, either; they were in the upper brackets. So the churches, like the nations in the World War,

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did themselves an awful injury; they deprived themselves of those who might have been their best leaders. That should be a lesson forevermore, shocking and shaming us into doing what we should have done anyhow—identify ourselves wholeheartedly with intellectual inquiry, as one great means of sensitiveness to the world in which we live.

One other sort of sensitiveness seems to me to deserve mention here—self-consciousness. We usually associate self-consciousness with excessive shyness or conceit or selfishness, but there are nobler meanings. It teaches us our capacities and our limitations, so we can fit ourselves better into the work that needs doing. It provides us with a highly useful ingredient in our consciousness of other selves; Jesus could see far into the woman at the well partly because he could see far into himself. It tells us how other people respond to what we are and what we do, so we can reduce needless friction. It gives us evidence about the nature of things. After all, we have somehow sprung up in this world, and what we are ought to give some indication as to what the whole thing is. The most beautiful expression of this thought that I know is in a poem by Henry Vaughan, a seventeenth-century Englishman:

*Quite spent with thoughts I left my Cell, and lay
Where a shrill spring tun'd to the early day.
I beg'd here long, and gron'd to know
Who gave the Clouds so brave a bow,
Who bent the spheres, and circled in
Corruption with this glorious Ring,
What is his name, and how I might
Descry some part of his great light.*

*I summon'd nature: pierc'd through all her store,
Broke up some seales, which none had touch'd before,
Her wombe, her bosome, and her head
Where all her secrets lay abed
I rifled quite, and having past
Through all the Creatures, came at last
To search my selfe, where I did find
Traces, and sounds of a strange kind.*

The growing dignity of human life is basically a matter of growing sensitiveness—of all sorts. To be sensitive means to be alive to needs and alive to possibilities. Life at bottom for everyone is an inward and secret experience. If our design for living ignores that basic fact, the basic fact will not be altered, but the failure of our design will be pitilessly revealed—too much time and energy into the outward motions of living, too little enrichment of that inward and secret experience by the one thing which can enrich it, sensitiveness. The longing for harmony with the fundamental and the permanent is common to all men; it may be neglected and corrupted, but never erased. But it is not enough to have such a hunger; we must be conscious of it, and consciously provide for its satisfaction through sensitiveness. Sensitiveness exacts a great price, because capacity for pain goes along with capacity for joy. All I can say is that sensitiveness is worth its price.

The second inner necessity about which I want to talk is that of scientific ethics. Sensitiveness as a means toward learning as much as we can about the world in which we live does not

solve our ethical problems; it only gives us the raw materials for such a solution. There is a general choice, and there are many particular choices; my concern at the moment is with the latter. Suppose we decide in general to live by truth, beauty and righteousness; we are still left with most of our work to do. Should we spend this ten dollars for books on the monetary aspect of the business cycle (truth), for a series of symphony concerts (beauty), or for American Friends Service coal relief (righteousness)? Should we send our children to public or private school? Should we support a textile strike? Should we refuse military service?

I would like to suggest a formula for making such practical decisions, and two important corollaries. We should pursue the course which leads to the largest net gain for the combination of values in which we are concerned. Such a formula is only a beginning, but it does serve to emphasize facts frequently overlooked—namely, that in this mixed-up world any course we can pursue is likely to have its bad results as well as good, and for some of our cherished values perhaps more bad results than good. Our aim must be the largest *net* gain for the *combination* of values in which we believe.

The first corollary is that every one, over whatever range he is free to choose, should work out his own proportions in recognition of the conditions of his own being; he should not slavishly imitate conventional judgments, or unconventional judgments, no matter how correct they may be for someone else. Sometimes his own proper proportion will seem grander than his neighbor's, sometimes meaner; the only important thing is that it shall be proper for him. One of my

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good friends is a national organizer for a prominent labor union, living on almost nothing and being shot at every now and again; another one is about to leave for the mission field in China, where his wife's sister and her husband have just been murdered. Whenever I think of them, my first impulse is to abandon my job as a well-fed teacher of well-fed young Americans and jump in where there is lack of privilege and plenty of risk. So far, my second thought has checked that first impulse—partly, I fear, in unacknowledged excuse of physical cowardice; but partly, I hope, in correct estimate of where I can do my best work for the comprehensive cause which I want to serve no less than they. There is dreadful danger here—it is so easy to descend from the truth that a philosophy of ethics should make due allowance for individual differences to the fallacy that one way is as good as another for a particular person. Discretion may be scrupulously employed, or cruelly exploited. We must enlarge its use, and enlarge our ability to prevent its abuse.

The second corollary is to the outside of scientific ethics what the first is to the inside. We must test our judgments by their actual consequences, and by all their actual consequences—as many as we can discover. The Protestant churches in their relation to prohibition afford a melancholy case study in examining this contention. I do not drink myself; and, although I am prepared to admit that some drinking in some circumstances may yield a net balance of good, I nevertheless believe in the tight regulation of the liquor traffic. Any such regulation will encounter many of the problems encountered by the 18th Amendment and its subsidiary legislation, although I do not now and did not then

think that our prohibition enactments exemplified the ideal method. Much of our difficulty during the 1920's came not from prohibition by itself, but from prohibition in its setting—the sordid aftermath of wholesale human slaughter in the World War.

But recognition of the environment is relevant in any choice of method; if the environment cannot be effectively altered, then we must content ourselves with a method which differs from one that would otherwise be workable. By and large, in spite of abundant evidence, we Protestants failed to propose a method more adapted to the time, and now we have been routed. We paid too much attention to neat principles, and too little to actual consequences; our ethics were not sufficiently scientific. Furthermore, our commitment to prohibition obscured our sight of other responsibilities. During the 1928 and 1932 elections, we talked heatedly about what we called “the moral issue,” meaning liquor. I am not now objecting to those who took all the important issues into account and still preferred Hoover on balance to Smith or Roosevelt; I am objecting to those who confined their social morality to prohibition, and voted for Hoover on one issue alone. They paid too much attention to one set of consequences, and too little to all the consequences; their ethics were not sufficiently scientific. There is of course here again dreadful danger—the habit of careful discrimination easily degenerates into casual compromise. We must have the one, and we must devise further safeguards against the other.

Linked with sensitiveness and scientific ethics is a third inner necessity—a life that is both a life and a crusade. There are

here two contrasting temptations to which a sensitive person is exposed. To imagine a better way of living breeds an impatience to enjoy that better way for himself immediately. It also breeds an intense determination to devote himself wholly to the cause of making such a better way possible for everybody. To yield overmuch in either direction is sin. By trying to live now exactly as we would under ideal conditions, we may waste energy in smashing against the walls of uncontrollable circumstances.

I have discovered this most of all in connection with my life-work. If the United States were more nearly the kind of place I want it to be, I would not be a teacher of economics, but a minor executive in business or government. I have two basic limitations as a teacher; I have very few original ideas, and I am incompetent in research. I could be a better executive, because I have a moderate ability for systematic analysis, and for articulate expression. It would have to be a minor job, because I lack practical inventiveness, I cannot readily delegate authority, and I worry if I have more than a few irons in the fire. But the United States is not yet the kind of place I want it to be. If I were to get a minor executive job in business or government as things now stand, I could keep it only at the cost of doing many things which would be distasteful. So, in my junior year at college, I turned toward a type of work in which my lower efficiency might be multiplied by a greater zest and thus make a larger total contribution. I was lucky; I found such a job. Many others cannot; they must do distasteful things: I hope that, even while they do them, they retain an active dislike for them; I hope that they keep their appetite for income and power in

close check, so that they can be somewhat free to change those distasteful things. But they must also refrain from constantly torturing themselves by futile dreams of living exactly as they would under ideal conditions.

Another sort of damage may arise from that same attempt—we may neglect to crusade enough. Some sensitive people are distressed by city life, and, having the financial wherewithal, buy a farm in the Adirondacks, live simply, and invite their souls. There are moments when I envy them, but I can never quite forget that the attainment of the good life for the great majority of our people requires not flight from industrialism but transformation of industrialism. Perhaps I ought not to have fled even so far as a college. But I suspect that I err mostly in the opposite direction—I crusade too much and live too little. Let me put it this way: if the United States were more nearly the kind of place I want it to be, I would walk more in the woods than I do now, read more poetry with my wife, and talk more philosophy with Brand Blanshard and Douglas Steere. Having put it so concretely, I am more conscious than ever of my present starvation, so I must make a complete confession. I suspect I ought to be doing more of that sort of thing even with the United States as it is! I now put most of my waking hours into a crusade—that is, learning and thinking and explaining, about things as they are and things as they should be. But a man's time has quality as well as quantity; maybe fewer hours would produce better learning and thinking and explaining if the man behind them were better balanced. Furthermore, if access to what is fundamental and permanent—access to

God—is through truth and beauty and righteousness, we have no right under any conditions to neglect any of them.

It boils down to this: each man must discover his own balance between living and crusading. Many a man's job only slightly resembles a crusade, so his balance must be between living and working; but the price to be paid for leisure is much the same in either case. We must here again keep our appetite for income and power in close check, so that we need not work so hard. Beyond that, since to hold a job at all may demand long hours, we must ruthlessly exclude many of the trivial activities which now congest our days.

A worthy design for living, therefore, rests on three inner necessities—sensitiveness, scientific ethics, and a life that is both a life and a crusade. They are timeless. But there are certain outer circumstances in any particular time which must be specially reckoned with in making a design for living. I would like to deal with some which seem specially important in our time—reason and democracy, government as an economic agency, and the threat of war.

We who believe in reason and democracy need to remind ourselves frequently and sharply how inadequate those two virtues are in their present forms, and how threatened they are. In the first place, reason all too often is pale and enigmatic, while dogma is ruddy and simple. It takes energetic imagination to organize life as enthusiastically around “the nicely calculated less and more” of reason, as around the naive or unscrupulous appeal of dogma. Most supporters of reason themselves have a good many

unreasonable moments, and often are least stable and least enthusiastic in their most reasonable moments. No wonder the great majority of us hanker for a dogma as a locus for personal and social living. Rupert Brooke turned from a pre-war life that was multiple but empty to a war-time life that was single but full; and many Germans are now finding personal and national respect under Hitler. It is to the great glory of mankind that men and women have always demonstrated large capacity to live and die for what they have regarded as great causes; our problem is to persuade them that reason is one of the great causes—great though silent. Intelligence can never be put so easily as stupidity, but we who believe in intelligence should at least do these two things: We should show in our daily lives incontestable evidence that the life of reason can be lived with stability and enthusiasm. And we should work much more persistently and skillfully to explain intelligent solutions persuasively.

But to make reason popular is even more difficult than we know it to be from the start; generally speaking, even in our reasoning we do not allow ourselves to be sufficiently bewildered. A friend of mine who teaches in a preparatory school recently commented on a speaker in these terms: “He’s lost his hold on the boys, because they can tell he doesn’t have to hunt for words any more. He’s arrived, and he’s only reporting his arrival.” Reason must compete with dogma, but it cannot use dogma’s weapon—over-simplification. Over-simplification in dogma is disguised by sound and fury; over-simplification in reason is naked and repulsive to those who know troubles at first-hand. Socially, the necessity of sufficient bewilderment is also urgent—

though in a somewhat different way. We must here deal with one phase of the recurrent plea for some good old-fashioned leaders. Leadership has a different job to do in the modern complicated world; it must have the courage to propose complicated solutions. We can sympathize with President Roosevelt's preference for a simple monetary remedy, but that simple remedy is nonetheless wrong. When I was in high school we read George Herbert Palmer's "The Glory of the Imperfect." Well, in solving vast social problems by reason, we must remember the necessity of perplexity and complication. We must not be haphazard, but we must be complicated.

You will think me guilty of unrelieved pessimism when I warn you that we who believe in reason and democracy must deliberately make larger allowance for coercion than we customarily pretend to make. We ordinarily forget two extremely pertinent facts. First, reason and patience are most accessible to, and most praised by, those who need them least. The underprivileged have little access to persuasion and the politer forms of coercion. Radical workers are not fairly treated by the Chicago Tribune—if I may be forgiven a masterpiece of understatement. Second, we advocates of reason, along with other privileged people, have a great deal of unrecognized coercion, even armed coercion, applied on our behalf. Every time a judge in the steel area issues an injunction against striking workers, he is exercising coercion in favor of colleges which own the stock of the companies which employ the workers; maybe it is justified coercion, but it is coercion. Instead of our present forgetfulness, we should substitute this guiding principle: The question is not whether

coercion should ever be used; it is whether coercion should be used in a given set of circumstances, and, if so, what kind and how much. Coercion should always be guided by reason, but it is often needed as a supplement to reason. "Power corrupts"; not only do possessors of power yield too slowly to pure persuasion, but there are some things they never yield without coercion. In essence, this is true everywhere; the nineteenth-century liberal's dream of a parliamentary utopia of pure reason and the twentieth-century communist's dream of a permanently classless society are, at bottom alike, and both false.

Finally, if we would exalt reason and democracy, and reduce coercion and demagoguery and dictatorship to a minimum, we must hasten the provision of a secure basis of material well-being for our whole people. If we would scotch the menace of Huey Long and Father Conghlin, we must speed business revival, and at the same time, make our next prosperity more durable and widespread. There is something anomalous in increased worry over the fate of reason and democracy in an age whose material provision for its people even in depression is much greater than the provision of a previous age in prosperity. But we must remember that we have become accustomed not only to a high standard of living, but to a rapidly rising standard; and we must remember also that modern economic society is a swiftly changing society, that changes bring insecurity, and that insecurity brings hysterical fear. It is frequently said that capitalism and democracy as we now know them cannot meet the challenge, and I agree. But determined application of ethics and reason to our economic and political habits will

change them somewhat, and reduce by that much whatever strain and catastrophe the future otherwise would hold in store for us.

That provides transition to a consideration of our second outer circumstance—government as an economic agency. We must overcome the tendency to think of government as a noun, separate from ourselves, and think of it as an adverb—a way by which we do things for ourselves. As you may know, I am politically a Socialist—not because I agree with everything that every other Socialist believes, but because the Socialist Party comes closest to representing what I believe. In thinking about my position and in discussing it, I have come to the conclusion that a lot of controversy could be saved and better solutions more promptly devised if the question were phrased differently. Instead of asking, “Should we do this for ourselves privately, or should the government do it?” we ought to ask, “Should we do this for ourselves privately, or should we do this for ourselves governmentally?” I believe we should learn to do many things for ourselves governmentally which we now do privately. But even if I believed the opposite, I ought to offer the same suggestion about looking on government as an adverb, because to do so centers attention on the pragmatic merits and demerits of a specific proposal, instead of general oratorical pronouncements. I recognize that there is often good reason for thinking of government as an alien entity imposing its will on us, but I think its adverbial character is more significant—and increasingly significant as an increasingly complicated economic system lays increasingly intolerable burdens on individual judgment.

Treating government as an adverb instead of a noun helps in another way. We are protected from expecting too much of it. We more easily realize that, while doing certain things for ourselves governmentally may give us the opportunity to do them better than if we did them privately; nevertheless it is we ourselves who must seize the opportunity. And we less easily succumb to the temptation to regard the government as an inexhaustible reservoir of philanthropy which will provide for us no matter what we do. Secular education and religious education have an immense task facing them in these modern days—to teach people to think of government not as a noun but as an adverb. A modern design for living must take that immense task into account.

The third outer circumstance which insists on consideration is the threat of war. I do not know enough to discuss whether there is any practical chance to prevent another great war; and I do not know much about methods of peace education and pressure. But I can and must say a few things which do not require such knowledge. First, we must multiply as much as possible our work and our skill in the service of efforts which promise most toward averting the outbreak of hostilities. What if we do overwork and die twenty years sooner? What is that compared with doing something toward preventing another war? Second, since war if it comes is likelier to start abroad, we must act similarly toward keeping America neutral. In that, our chances are better; perhaps better than in 1914-17. Third, since the United States may become involved, we must prepare ourselves to oppose war in wartime—by refusal to bear arms and in other ways. I fear that the lot of the pacifist during the next war-fever will be

harder than formerly; it is better to count the cost now, so that when the time comes we can stick to our purpose without counting the cost. Our design for living must deal realistically with the terrible threat of war.

These inner necessities and outer circumstances concern everybody; but I must say in closing a special word as to how we as Friends may further such a design for living. I do not know whether present-day Quakers are as intelligent and ethical as earlier Quakers or not; I do not know whether Quakers are as intelligent and ethical as other people or not; and I do not much care. What I really am concerned about is that there seems to be plenty of room for improvement everywhere. I have a special threefold concern for Friends. First, advancement work. I respect thoroughly our traditional testimony against proselyting and dragooned conversion. But it seems to me we might go much farther than we now go without violating our tradition or our respect for personality. There are many people who are not now Friends who ought to be; and there are many more who will never formally become Friends who ought to hear of Friendly principles. Advancement work ought to have far more attention than now in a Quaker design for living. But advancement is in large measure dependent on the spiritual vitality of those who are already Friends; so I come to the second part of my concern—religious education. I respect thoroughly our traditional testimony for a democratic ministry. But it seems to me that modern conditions require considerable specialization, particularly in religious education—for this purpose among others: that the democratic ministry itself may be sustained by many Friends well-educated in religion.

Our meetings must move in this direction far beyond where they are now. For example, they must send many more of the right people to Pendle Hill.

Religious education in the broadest sense, however, can never be for Friends the same sort of process it can be in other religious groups; with us, it must always rest in larger proportion on the daily life of ordinary laymen. Now, laymen in every religious group ought to live up to their pretensions; but among Quakers their failures are much more serious, because we have nothing much but laymen! It is sobering to realize that children in Friendly families receive a much larger proportion of their religious and ethical impressions from their parents and other people like their parents than do children of families in other religious groups with professional religious workers. This is a potential source of special strength; when the daily practice of religion is on a high plane, it is useful to have preaching and practice unified. But when the daily practice is on a low plane it is a source of special weakness. We have all heard older Friends comment on the lack of spiritual leadership among young birthright Friends, and on the prominence of convinced Friends. Well, to the extent that the comments are accurate, I suspect that one big reason is to be found in those older Friends whose lives are not actively dedicated to the vigorous intellectual, esthetic and ethical practice of religion. The young Friends naturally conclude that if our treasure is not in religion, neither is our heart; and they withhold their treasure and their heart. The remedy is hard to apply, but easy to see.

Being alive, how should we live? We should live in terms of three inner necessities—sensitiveness, scientific ethics, and a life that is both a life and a crusade—and in terms of three outer circumstances—reason and democracy, government as an economic agency, and the threat of war. William Penn staked his life on a majestic design for living. So should we.

About the Author

Patrick Murphy Malin (1903 - 1964) was born in Joplin, Missouri in 1903, the son of a banker. He entered the family business at age ten, and was expected to eventually become president of the bank. However, Woodrow Wilson's World War I speeches gave him a desire to travel and get a government job. He attended the University of Pennsylvania's Wharton School, graduating as valedictorian in 1924.

From 1924 to 1929, Malin served as private secretary to International YMCA director Sherwood Eddy. In 1930, Malin joined the economics faculty at Swarthmore College, where he would remain for twenty years until taking the job with the ACLU. During World War II, however, he worked for the Intergovernmental Committee for Refugees, headquartered in London. In September 1940, he was dispatched by President Franklin D. Roosevelt to issue visas to the Jewish refugees of the S.S. Quanza when it stopped in Norfolk, Virginia to refuel.

Malin had been an ACLU member since the Twenties, but had not thought of working for the organization until shortly before he was selected to succeed Baldwin. He served twelve years in that position. Malin oversaw a tremendous increase in the ACLU's membership, and established its present-day chapter structure, but faced criticism from those who said that the organization had not aggressively confronted Joseph McCarthy.

In 1962, Malin left the ACLU to become president of Robert College (now Bogaziçi University) in Istanbul. He died there on December 13, 1964.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Patrick_Murphy_Malin

About the Lectures

The William Penn Lectures started as a ministry of the Young Friends' Movement of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting. In the beginning of the last century, "Young Friends" was the community of young adults from both the Hicksite and the Orthodox Philadelphia Yearly Meetings, which reunited in 1955. The Young Friends Movement began the lecture series "for the purpose of closer fellowship; for the strengthening by such association and the interchange of experience, of loyalty to the ideals of the Society of Friends; and for the preparation by such common ideals for more effective work through the Society of Friends for the growth of the Kingdom of God on Earth." The name of William Penn was chosen because the Young Friends Movement found Penn to be "a Great Adventurer, who in fellowship with his friends started in his youth on the holy experiment of endeavoring 'To live out the laws of Christ in every thought, and word, and deed; and that these might become the laws and habits of the State.'"

The first run of William Penn Lectures were given between 1916 and 1966, and are warmly remembered by Friends who attended them as occasions to look forward to for fellowship with our community, inspiration, and a challenge to live into our faith. The lectures were published by the Book Committee of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting. Philadelphia Yearly Meeting has granted Pendle Hill and Quaker Heron Press permission to reproduce the lectures as free ebooks.

Although it was [announced](#) in 1960 that the series would be discontinued several lectures were published in the early '60s. It appears that the lectures given between 1923 and 1931 were never published. If we come upon manuscripts of these lectures, we hope to publish them in future.

In 2010, the Young Adult Friends of PYM revived the series, officially launching the second run of the William Penn Lectures in 2011. [The series was renamed](#) the *Seeking Faithfulness* series in 2016, as part of the Young Adult Friends of PYM's concern for dismantling racism within the yearly meeting and the wider society. It no longer felt rightly ordered to have a major event named after a slaveholder. The [Seeking Faithfulness](#) series is hosted by the Young Adult Friends for the benefit of the whole yearly meeting community, and invites a Friend to challenge us all to explore new ways to practice our Quaker faith. The Seeking Faithfulness series seeks to nourish our spiritual lives and call us to faithful witness in our communities and throughout the world.