

Book Reviews

Allan W. Austin, *Quaker Brotherhood: Interracial Activism and the American Friends Service Committee, 1917–1950* (Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 2012), pp. xi + 272. ISBN 9780252037047. Hardback, \$55.

Allan W. Austin's book, *Quaker Brotherhood*, fills what it points to as a gap in the literature on Quaker interracial activism between 1917 and the early 1950s, as most studies of the subject focus either on the antebellum era or the traditionally conceived civil rights era of the 1950s and 1960s. The book also intervenes in the scholarly literature on Quakers by explaining how it complicates scholarship that tends to view Friends as either 'heroes or hypocrites' (p. 4) when it comes to race. Austin instead argues that the Quaker story of racial activism and attempted cooperation with non-white Americans in the early twentieth century, as seen through the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC), reflects complexity—both failures and successes. Austin's main argument is that the way Quakers' faith guided their racial reform efforts remained constant: as individuals possessed an 'Inner Light', for them individual racial reform was possible. Yet the implications for that faith, as seen in practice and in the social context of Quaker work, changed over time. The AFSC's racial activism evolved by the 1950s, from an earlier focus on correcting individual ignorance, through intercultural and interracial education, to a recognition that racism also stemmed from economic and social structures which required larger reform in American society.

Focussing on the history of the AFSC's engagement with race in the first half of the twentieth century helps illuminate several broader historical issues. First, by linking religion and race, it shows how religious communities played important roles in civil rights and other racial reform movements. This story further bridges the worlds of religion and activism by illustrating how Quakers applied ideas from the academic, theoretical world to their religiously motivated activist world. It also joins conversations that, in the last couple of decades, have shifted interpretations of civil rights to the pre-Second World War era in an understanding of the 'Long Civil Rights Movement'. It adds to this scholarship by urging us to examine

white as well as black civil rights involvement, in this case white Quakers. Last, it shows that looking at AFSC activism underscores links between pacifism and the civil rights movement.

The book is quite successful as an institutional history of the AFSC and its evolving stance on and approach to race. For this reason, it will be very useful to scholars of Quaker and religious history. The structure directly illustrates the AFSC's changing approach to remedying racism—how it moved from an individual to a structural focus. The book begins by discussing the AFSC's origins in 1917, but really digs in with the expansion of AFSC work into race relations in 1924, and especially by the late 1920s. The first two chapters discuss two AFSC organisations, the Interracial Section and the American Interracial Peace Committee (AIPC), which viewed racism as an important issue stemming largely from individuals' failures. The Interracial Section focussed on improving race relations by increasing intergroup interactions. For instance, the Section brought Japanese college students and African Americans to give lectures and teach white Americans about their culture. The AIPC worked to link peace and interracial activism. The AFSC began during this period to re-evaluate its individual-focused methods of remedying racism in light of both its own failures and larger social change.

Chapter 3 shows how in the 1930s the AFSC came to see the importance of addressing more systemic issues alongside individual bias and ignorance. This chapter examines how the Institute of Race Relations that began at Swarthmore College and expanded to other universities brought Quakers into further contact with secular scholarly ideas, which helped them see broad societal problems beyond individual ignorance. Such recognition encouraged them to adapt their methods from reforming individuals to working for more basic, structural changes in American society.

Chapter 4 discusses how wartime imperatives significantly curtailed the AFSC's burgeoning broader social and economic critiques. The AFSC relied significantly upon its old approaches of engineered intercultural contact to improve relations as it focussed on refugees from Europe and Japanese Americans, displaced by their incarceration in the febrile atmosphere of the Second World War. It created hostels to encourage European refugees and Japanese Americans to engage with American society and act as 'ambassadors' for their larger ethno-racial groups. The AFSC expanded its geographic scope by situating hostels across the Midwest and East and by helping Japanese Americans initially detained in West Coast facilities. It also expanded its focus on race beyond black and white, specifically in the case of Japanese Americans.

The final chapter discusses how the Race Relations Committee, which formed in 1943 and lasted until after the Second World War, reveals the ultimate transformation away from the intercultural educational approach toward an increasingly expansive approach that tried to deal with discrimination as a structural issue in housing, employment and higher education. This chapter highlights an issue

that would have enabled this interesting, thoughtful and solidly researched book to make an even more significant impact than it does. *Quaker Brotherhood* misses opportunities to situate the AFSC in a broader story of religion and race in the first half of the twentieth century. For instance, the shift 'From Race Relations to Community Relations' (the title of the last chapter) was not limited to Quakers. Stuart Svonkin has shown us, for instance, that Jewish American interracial activists also had moved by the 1950s towards an 'intergroup relations' approach from one more focused on self-defence,¹ rather than intercultural education per se that the AFSC pursued. Were Quakers merely part of a larger shift among liberal social justice-minded institutions towards this intergroup/community relations vision of addressing inequality? Or were they unique? Austin shows us that the way the 'inner light' motivated them was unique, but was the outcome itself so exceptional?

At other times the book could have further contextualised the AFSC's work and its significance. For instance, *Quaker Brotherhood* explains that in the 1920s the AFSC focussed mostly on African Americans domestically and on non-American Japanese internationally. It briefly mentions that the AFSC did not focus on immigrants, but does not explain this surprising fact in an era characterised by conflicts over immigration, especially in the East and Midwest where most AFSC activism seemed to concentrate. The AFSC's apparent neglect of this issue is surprising, given the racialisation and restriction of Catholic and Jewish immigrants from Southern and Eastern Europe during the 1920s; the AFSC's religious orientation; and the timing of the Interracial Section's formation during the same year immigration restriction was enacted (1924). The book would also have benefitted from a discussion of how the Great Migration of African Americans in this same time period connected to the AFSC's interest in African American issues.

These points aside, *Quaker Brotherhood* is a thoughtful, well written and solidly researched book that will undoubtedly help scholars better appreciate the Quakers' work to try to build a more racially just world in the first half of the twentieth century.

Shana Bernstein
Northwestern University, Evanston, IL, USA

1 Svonkin, S., *Jews against Prejudice: American Jews and the fight for civil liberties*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1997.

Kristianna Polder, *Matrimony in the True Church: the seventeenth-century Quaker marriage approbation discipline* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2015), pp. v + 295. ISBN 9781409466888. Cloth, \$135.95.

Kristianna Polder's new book, *Matrimony in the True Church: the seventeenth-century Quaker marriage approbation discipline*, aims to fill in and pave over a gap in Quaker scholarship by developing a thorough overview and interrogation of what Polder calls 'the approbation process of endogamous Quaker marriages'. (For the uninitiated, 'endogamy' in the Quaker context is a marriage between two Quakers whereas a marriage between a Quaker and a non-Quaker is 'exogamy'.)

The book develops this in three main chapters, dealing with what the marriage approbation process was for Early Quakerism, the Quaker discipline's 'theological and conceptual foundations' and then the marriage of Margaret Fell and George Fox, which Polder believes was inspired by theological as well as personal motives—that they shared a vision of marriage 'that reflected and fulfilled their doctrine of marriage' (p. 199).

Polder sees the central mission of early Quakers rooted in two goals: 'the promotion of Quaker identity as the one and only "True Church"' and the maintenance of both their particular identity and purity through their extensive Meeting system (p. 6). This process of Quaker endogamous marriage is a spiritually significant signifier, intimately 'correlated with the early Quakers collective identity as the True Church' (p. 8).

The approbation process developed out of a context in which Friends were not only heavily persecuted, but where there was no hiring priest paid to officiate their weddings (p. 43). Because of this, Quakers ran the risk of being seen as adulterers, having their children treated as illegitimate, being thrown in prison and having their property seized. Thus, in the creation of a process for 'legitimate marriage' outside the state church one finds 'The juxtaposition of a bundle of red tape and revelation from God' (p. 32).

Polder outlines the process, as follows. First it began with the couple being led inwardly by God to pursue marriage (p. 51). Seeking marriage through conviction often meant that great importance was placed on 'length of time spent in thoughtful consideration' during the couple's courtship, but there were other times when it happened so quickly that Friends saw it as nothing other than 'God ordaining it and commanding it to be so, making it "a gift of God"' (p. 61). Second, after the couple confirmed the leading, they sought parental consent, which if obtained had to be stated in a certificate that was given to the couple's Meeting (p. 62). Third, once proof of parental consent was assured, the couple went before their Meeting to state their intention to be married and submit to the orderliness of the process: 'This was considered a serious and sober task undertaken with utmost care, caution and patience' (p. 63). After the Meeting came to consensus about the couple's marriage, a wedding certificate was drafted and read in the presence of the whole Meeting (p. 85).

The second chapter goes into more depth around the significant theological roots of Quaker marriage. Here, Polder argues that Quaker marriage lies at the centre of the Quaker faith. In order to prove this, she delves into the interconnected themes of Quaker theology and the marriage doctrine (p. 119). Themes such as: 'True Church', Gospel Order, unity in the light, the eschatological hope of early Friends, 'honourable marriages' within beds no longer 'defiled' by sin' (p. 119) and connections to the prelapsarian state of Adam and Eve. Quaker marriage was to be understood, as Fox said of his own marriage to Fell, 'a figure or testimony ... of the church coming out of the wilderness' (p. 115). Thus, Quaker marriage was 'a testimony, that all might come up into the marriage as was in the beginning' and that all 'might come up out of the wilderness to the marriage of the lamb' (p. 115).

The third chapter investigates at length the marriage between George Fox and Margaret Fell. Their marriage was significant not only as a union between the 'father of Quakerism' and the 'Mother in Israel', but also because it was a marriage that was both spiritually significant—fulfilling all of their teachings about marriage—and a symbol against the purely spiritual, celibate unions that some Quakers were known for. 'Fox held fast to the notion of the "undefiled bed" as an integral component of a Quaker marriage, a bed which was undefiled not because of an absence of sexual relations, but because of an absence of sin' (p. 248). In other words, Polder is arguing that Fox believed in 'sexuality without sin'. The undefiled bed is an example of Fox challenging those who believed that spiritual marriage was to be celibate or that it was primarily for the purpose of procreation (pp. 248–49).

Polder's work is clear, decisive, informative and convincing. It will become a reference and a standard for historiography from this point onward. It also provides keen insights into a topic and practice that continues to be addressed within contemporary society.

C. Wess Daniels
Guilford College, Greensboro, NC, USA

Sarah Crabtree, *Holy Nation: the transatlantic Quaker ministry in an age of revolution* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2015), pp. vii + 276. ISBN 9780226255767. Cloth, \$45.

Sarah Crabtree's *Holy Nation: the transatlantic Quaker ministry in an age of revolution* is a thought-provoking study of the Religious Society of Friends during the latter half of the eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries, with a strong focus on American Quakerism. Its transition from transatlantic body to transnational body is a particularly intriguing topic and provides an interesting context for Crabtree's focus on the Quaker tradition of Zion.

The two-chaptered first part of the book, entitled 'Combat, 1754–89', begins with a chapter addressing the aftermath of the Seven Years War, during which time Friends suffered greatly, and how the Quaker interpretation of Zion was used to protect them from persecution in the face of rising nationalism and imperialism in America. According to Crabtree, the transition of Friends from looking for Zion to being *of* Zion reinforced connections within the scattered Quaker community and potentially pulled in new members (p. 59).

The single chapter of the second part of the book, 'Compromise, 1779–1809', addresses Friends' schools and Quaker education in the USA. Key to this period was the development of schools that served as shields, protecting young Friends from the influences of the world, while teaching them the value of non-violence, justice, equality and good works. Crabtree mentions that the pedagogy 'advocated neutrality, extolled divine, championed nonviolence, and, most especially, espoused cosmopolitanism' (pp. 97–98), which feeds into her suggestion that this education may have contributed to the later schisms. Quaker schools were a counter to the development of public education in the early USA, with each representing parallel traditions of learning and raising children. Whereas public schools raised children to be good patriotic Americans and citizens within the new republic, Friends' schools, in the words of Crabtree, 'shifted to address the new political and cultural landscape of the post-revolutionary Atlantic World' (p. 116).

The final two-chaptered section of the book, 'Concession, 1793–1826', examines Quaker activism, with a mention of the changing relationship between British Quakers and the government, but with a focus on the compromise necessary in the new American republic in the face of the growing power of the state. Chapter 4's topic of increasing charitable activity, both as a result of a withdrawal from politics and desires for reform from within the faith, is made more complex in the face of the Quaker view that geopolitical borders could one day mean nothing. The inclusion of the antislavery movement is correctly present, and the discussion of the work of Englishman Thomas Clarkson makes this theme more transatlantic and transnational. An especially interesting point covered by Crabtree is the difference between the transnationalism of Benjamin Rush, for example, which was more patriotic, and that of Quakers, who favoured faith over national allegiances (p. 159).

The thread of transnationalism continues in the fifth chapter with a discussion of the French Revolution. Within the context of the development of 'a cosmopolitan vision' (p. 163), Crabtree examines the representation of Quakers by both friends and foes. Starting with Jacques Brissot and his good opinion of Quakers as enlightened, Crabtree raises the idea of the 'good Quaker', and how Enlightenment thinkers' views contrasted with the reality of actual Quakers.

Crabtree's discussion of Quakerism's emerging transnationalism and its evolved tradition of Zion is compelling. The work firmly hints at the coming nineteenth-century disagreements and schisms the Religious Society of Friends faced, but her work would have been even stronger had greater consideration

been given to the period that preceded the Seven Years War. For example, the first chapter's discussion of diaspora and the language of diaspora would have benefitted from a brief mention of earlier stances on Zion and experiences as members of a diaspora. Crabtree describes the Quaker ministry as 'Holy Remnants' in the fourth chapter, but does not refer to frequent seventeenth-century use of the word 'remnant' in epistles and correspondence, originally based on George Fox's 1656 'A Visitation to the Jews'. Discussions of the 'preexisting web of correspondents, travellers, authors, and lobbyists' (p. 147) do not describe them or reference primary or secondary works about their existence and influence prior to the mid-eighteenth century. Grounding Quakerism's change would have strengthened Crabtree's argument.

In addition to the inclusion of pre-1750 Quaker history, a little more engagement with historiography, such as a clearer discussion of Sydney V. James' *A People Among Peoples* or Peter Silver's *Our Savage Neighbors*,¹ would have bolstered Crabtree's work. For example, Chapter 4 is strengthened by its increased engagement with previous works on Quaker charity and good works.

This book is, at least until the final section, a history of American Friends during the Age of Revolution, which at pertinent points wisely embraces the travelling ministry and London Yearly Meeting. This is a study of American Quakerism in an Atlantic context, taking into account the events of the Age of Revolution, as well as the transatlantic and transnational exchanges of ideas. For example, the discussion of Friends' schools includes the fact that pamphlets from the London Yearly Meeting were part of the curriculum (p. 109), yet the schools examined closely are those in the USA. The exchange of ideas carried by Friends from both sides of the Atlantic through epistles and the ministry is discussed most frequently in the context of American Quakerism before Chapter 5, which then opens the study more broadly. The themes of gender and responses to enslavement thread throughout the text, again most frequently in the context of the USA.

Overall, this book is an interesting synthesis of a number of topics, from education to charity to political engagement, within an increasingly transnational world and in keeping with a tradition of maintaining a kingdom of heaven on Earth. Each chapter is well written, with the third standing out strongly. Crabtree raises good ideas about the tradition of Zion within Quakerism, the changing politics of this era, and how they were connected.

Jordan Landes
Senate House Library, University of London, England

1 James, S. V., *A People Among Peoples: Quaker benevolence in eighteenth-century America*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1963; Silver, P., *Our Savage Neighbors: how Indian war transformed early America*, New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2008.

Larry Ingle, *Nixon's First Cover-Up: the religious life of a Quaker president* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2015), pp. ix + 272. ISBN 9780826220424. Hardback, \$50.

Historians have paid little attention to the fact that former US president Richard Nixon (1913–94) was born and raised a Quaker, and held membership at East Whittier Friends Church in California until his death. Because Nixon's Presidency (1969–74) saw the war in Vietnam and his resignation from higher office during the Watergate scandal, many scholars have erroneously concluded that he could not have had a spiritual life worth investigating. In *Nixon's First Cover-Up*, historian Larry Ingle makes a spirited case that Nixon's religious views helped shape his character and actions, and deserve consideration by both scholars of the American Presidency and those interested in Quaker Studies.

The book is principally a biography of Nixon focused on his connections to Quakerism, though his relationship with the broader currents of evangelicalism are also addressed. Each of the twelve chapters, which are arranged chronologically, cover Nixon's attitude towards Quakerism and wider religion during a specific period in his life; these periods include his childhood, his involvement in the Alger Hiss case, his time as Vice President, and (most prominently, with four dedicated chapters) Nixon's presidency and resignation. The work is firmly rooted in primary source documentation, particularly drawing deeply from the Nixon papers. Despite this rigour, Ingle is not afraid to inject his own pointed opinions about Nixon, which gives the book a sense of personality often lacking in historical work.

Ingle's provocative thesis is that Nixon's religion was 'hardly Quakerism', and that Nixon instead adhered to the modern equivalent of a seventeenth-century 'ranterism', spurning the Religious Society of Friends in favour of a self-made religious faith (p. 11). The 'cover-up' in the book's title refers to the idea that Nixon kept up an outward pretence of having a Quaker identity, while not publicly endorsing the principles and traditions that were essential to Quakerism. Ingle repeatedly compares Nixon's beliefs and actions to those of the first generation of Quakers, and finds Nixon grievously remiss.

The decision to portray Nixon as a kind of heretic will probably be an ongoing source of scholarly debate, particularly because the material that Ingle has amassed could easily lead historians to other conclusions. Nixon at many points appears not to have a self-made religion, but simply to be an evangelical Protestant. Ingle documents how Nixon came out of an evangelical Quaker tradition, was heavily influenced by leaders outside his denomination (particularly Billy Graham and Norman Vincent Peale), prayed privately and even apparently rejected Darwinian evolution on religious grounds. Despite this, Ingle maintains that Nixon's life evidenced 'the total absence of any formal religion, especially evangelical Quakerism' (p. 219).

Ingle's understanding is complicated by the fact that he seems to regard programmed and evangelical Quakerism as not being authentically Quaker,

and perhaps not even properly religious. Ingle argues that by 'surrendering their sectarian theological distinctiveness' and giving up pacifist beliefs, while embracing the Bible as more important than the guiding of Holy Spirit, evangelical Quakers became like the rest of America and took on 'the majority's secular worldviews' (p. 20). That Ingle regards evangelical Quakerism as essentially 'secular' means that he can *simultaneously* observe that Nixon's Quakerism 'differed little from the conventional Christianity that marked the religious commitments of most American politicians', suggest that Nixon, like other programmed Quakers, was greatly shaped by the Wesleyan Holiness tradition – and still maintain that Nixon 'created his own religion' (pp. 16, 24, 10). At its core, Ingle's assertion that Nixon was not really a Friend is founded in a theological argument which contends that the essence of Quakerism lies in the denomination's distinctive testimonies, which evangelical Friends regarded as of secondary importance to the saving power of Christ.

Regardless of whether scholars agree with Ingle's conclusions, he does a laudable job of gathering together often-overlooked material on Nixon's relationship with Quakerism. Perhaps most notably, Ingle spends a chapter documenting the numerous connections to Quakerism among the participants in the Alger Hiss case, the politically charged espionage trial that was pivotal to the rise of McCarthyism in the USA. This innovative account highlights the attempts of the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) to mediate that dispute before it went to trial, a factor that historians will have to take note of in the future when interpreting those events (Chapter 4). Elsewhere Ingle provides probably the most detailed account available of the worship services that Nixon held in the White House during his presidency, along with the revelation that invitations to these events were used to court campaign donors (Chapter 8).

The book also conveys a sense of Nixon's tense relationship with liberal Friends. A widely publicised attempt by a group of unprogrammed Friends to disown Nixon is mentioned, as is Nixon's hostility towards Quaker anti-war demonstrators outside the White House (pp. 166, 182–83). However, *Nixon's First Cover-Up* offers fewer details about his numerous Quaker supporters. Nixon's connection with his friend, the first Quaker President, Herbert Hoover and key backers within the denomination, such as popular theologian Elton Trueblood, receive only brief mentions. Despite these limitations, Ingle's work gives far more consideration to these aspects than have other scholars who have handled Nixon's religion, such as Gary Scott Smith and David L. Holmes.

Nixon's First Cover-Up is unlikely to be the final word on Nixon's religion or the connections between Quakerism, evangelicalism and American conservatism, but it does the valuable work of opening up entirely new avenues of inquiry for historians both of American religious history and of presidential politics. Much of the scholarship about US Quakers in the twentieth century has been focused on the AFSC and developments among liberal Quakers. This book illustrates the greater religious and political diversity than is typically ascribed to Quakerism.

Ingle is to be commended for making clear that religion was an important aspect of Nixon's presidency, and for managing to uncover so many new insights into a man who struggled so determinedly to hide his innermost convictions from the world.

Isaac May
University of Virginia, Charlottesville, VA, USA

Jordan Landes, *London Quakers in the Trans-Atlantic World: the creation of an early modern community* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), pp. viii + 252. ISBN 9781137366672. Hardback, £60.

Jordan Landes's *London Quakers in the Trans-Atlantic World: the creation of an early modern community* provides essential background for any historian initiating research on seventeenth-century Quakerism. In thoroughly researched and detailed thematic chapters, Landes provides overviews of the Quakers' institutional structures, communications networks, approach to politics and commerce, their book trade, migration patterns across the Atlantic and their perception of imperial expansion. In each of these chapters she provides essential information, cites the most important scholarly literature on the topic and flags valuable archival material, drawing especially from the collections of the Friends House Library in London. Each chapter may stand alone as a valuable research guide. Taken together, the chapters build into an argument that the Quakers established a community that extended across the Atlantic.

In her introduction, Landes flags a dispute over the concept of 'community' within the fields of history and sociology. Some scholars argue that the term should be applied only to groups residing within a single place or region. Landes takes the contrary position, but she could have done so more forcefully. Her close, detailed discussion of each chapter's theme impedes her from presenting the book's larger argument in a clear step-by-step manner. Landes could also have made her case stronger by doing more to situate her discussion of the Quakers within the wider context of religious studies in the Atlantic World, and by explicitly contrasting the Quakers with others (like the mid seventeenth-century New England Puritans) who ultimately failed to maintain a sense of community spanning the ocean. Thinking about the experience of other religious groups, and the sense of marginalisation that afflicted colonial adherents to the Church of England, for example, highlights how potentially important Landes' argument could be. The Quakers' transatlantic sense of community was distinctive.

A fuller analysis of this issue would require us to pay more attention to the disruptive elements within Quakerism, however. Landes emphasises the meetings' institutional structures and activities, and has much less to say about those Quakers who opposed Quaker discipline and felt alienated from Quakerism as

it was changing in the second half of the seventeenth century. The Quakers' sense of community may have been paradoxically more visible when viewed on a transatlantic scale, and less obvious in smaller-scale local contexts. Especially in colonies like Maryland and Virginia, Quaker meetings were often bitterly divided internally, and indeed the institutional structures that spanned the ocean were the source of much of the discontent.

The thematic structure of *London Quakers in the Trans-Atlantic World* prevents Landes from sustaining storylines across chapters. Individuals like Thomas Chalkley reappear several times in different parts of the book, but each time for a different reason. Those interested in pulling the stories together, in order to rediscover individual Quakers' lived experience, the trajectory of their lives or their spiritual development, should seek out other texts. Landes' footnotes provide good references to the available literature.

After reading this book I made a trip to London to chase down one document Landes cited in her discussion of the Quakers' relations with indigenous Americans. Her reference to the document was brief, but she provided a very strong hint that the letter contained a story worth knowing. The letter, to George Fox from a Quaker woman in Virginia in the 1680s, highlighted friction and dissension within Virginia's Quaker meetings, and the suffering of those on the receiving end of the emerging Quaker discipline. Intriguingly also the letter revealed the importance of indigenous Americans as witnesses to the Quakers' spiritual and moral lives. Pleading her case to Fox, Frances Danson quoted tributes from her Native American neighbours. There was much more in this letter than Landes was able to relay in her brief, dense, rich book. Her chapters invite further investigation, and gently steer us in useful directions.

Geoffrey Plank
University of East Anglia, England