

# An Ethnographic Investigation of a British Quaker School: Belief, Values and Cohesion

Matt Alton  
Brighton, England

## Abstract

This ethnographic study of a British Quaker school asks: 'How is Quakerism expressed in this school?' It considers the experiences of staff and students collected through reports during interviews and focus groups, and through lesson and general observations. The article distinguishes between formal and substantive rationality, finding that while the literature shows that many schools are run on formally rational principles, the data collected shows that a school influenced by Quaker values can resist some of the negative impacts of formal rationality. The article addresses some of the concerns of the group 'Quaker Values in Education', set up to work towards an education system in line with Quaker values; this school resisted or rejected the enforcement of practices on teachers by superiors, excessive assessment and militarisation. While Quaker values were seen by respondents to be important in the daily life of the school, the religious beliefs of Quakerism were not. Quaker values were related by respondents to low levels of hierarchy and a calm working environment for staff, and gentle discipline procedures for students. Meeting for Worship is analysed as a ritual that creates cohesion and has the power to communicate the values of Quakerism to those present.

## Keywords

Quaker school, ethnography, sociology, values, citizenship, ritual, cohesion, substantive rationality

## Introduction

Many Quakers feel unsettled by the current educational climate in Britain, Quaker Values in Education (QVinE) being set up in 2014 to work towards overcoming obstacles it identified to achieving a schooling system aligned with

Quaker testimonies. Academic interest is growing in the area of the Religious Society of Friends' relationship to education: this year *Experience and Faith in Education: Contemporary Essays from Quaker Perspectives* (Watson and Rowe 2018) was published; recently The Centre for Research in Quaker Studies called for proposals specifically related to Quakerism and education; and a PhD was recently completed looking at students' experiences and perspectives of their Quaker school education (Newton 2017).<sup>1</sup> Outside the academic sphere, Britain Yearly Meeting's Recording Clerk visited British Quaker schools throughout 2017 to familiarise himself with their work, to explore ways in which the Quaker community and the schools under Quaker governance can work together for mutual benefit, and to examine the question 'What is the difference (if any) between a good school and a Quaker school?' (personal communication).

The existence of fee-paying Quaker schools in Britain is a contentious subject but this is an ethnographic investigation into the daily life of a British Quaker school in which I asked 'How is Quakerism expressed in this school?' rather than a contribution to that debate. When referring to 'Quaker values' I allude to the core testimonies of contemporary British Quakerism: peace, truth, equality and simplicity. I investigate: values promoted by the school; experiences of staff relationships and decision-making; perspectives on and experiences of discipline and pastoral care; provision of Personal, Social, Health and Economic education (PSHE); the school's approach to the arts; its practice of Meeting for Worship; and accounts of a trip to Woodbrooke Quaker Study Centre. In all these areas Quaker *values* were perceived to be of varying levels of importance, whereas Quakers' religious *beliefs* were not. Reports of Meetings for Worship, particularly when Year 7 students programmed and ran an epilogue during their trip to Woodbrooke, are interpreted as rituals with the power to create cohesion.

Some concerns of QVinE (2014) are also addressed: 'the lack of recognition of the importance of professional knowledge of teachers' which 'leads to the imposition of untried policies and practices'; 'inadequate and excessive' assessment which has 'a pernicious impact on teachers and their students'; and 'schools [becoming] increasingly militarised through cadet corps, links with arms manufacturers, and inflexible behaviour policies'. I argue that the substantive Quaker values of the school enable it to resist these themes to varying extents. Other concerns of QVinE could not be addressed here because they pertain either to policies and circumstances imposed on the school from without or to the monetisation of education. The fact that the school was fee-paying was not addressed for two reasons: first, because in order to gain and maintain access it would have been unwise to mount such a critique; and second, because this

1 Watson and Rowe's (2018) volume and Newton's (2017) thesis were both completed after the research and writing which led to this paper. This means that unfortunately my work here was not influenced by theirs.

would have taken the research in an entirely different direction. To protect the school's anonymity the pseudonym 'Elizabeth School' has been used.

### Reviewing the Literature

To provide points of comparison, two definitions of education are given in this paper. For Durkheim (1956: 71) 'education is the influence exercised by adult generations on those who are not yet ready for social life' and should 'develop in the child a certain number of physical, intellectual and moral states' demanded by society. Freire (1970) rejects the idea that education is a one-way process, asserting that knowledge is possessed not only by the powerful and that dialogue between teacher and student enhances learning. Education should start from the student's own experiential knowledge, pose real-world problems and prepare the learner for 'reflection and action upon the world in order to transform it' (Freire 1970: 33). Freire would refer to Durkheim's model as 'banking education' (1970: 73), which treats students as empty vessels and prepares them to slot into hierarchically structured societies, while his own is based upon consciousness raising, where learners become aware of their oppression under capitalism and gain the capacity for critical engagement and liberation.

Weber argued that modernity brought with it the 'disenchantment of the world' (1919: 155) through the elevation of formal rationality, a system of social action based solely on quantifiable end goals. This replaced the previously dominant substantive method of action, which adheres to a set of values determining *how* things should be done—the prime example being a religious worldview. The advancement of science meant that in principle all things could be mastered and explained by calculation, meaning that 'there are no mysterious incalculable forces that come into play' (Weber 1919: 139); religion need provide explanations no longer. Formal rationality is exemplified by bureaucratic procedures that act according to fixed, value-free rules, denying any freedom to the actor, and is described by Weber as an 'iron cage' (1930: 181).

Scholars widely agree that making educational outcomes objectively measurable is contributing to an 'audit culture' (Woods 2009; Hardy and Lewis 2016). This prepares students for the 'demands of organisational life driven by calculation and performance' (Woods 2009: 128) rather than nurturing morality and creativity. Hardy and Lewis (2016) interviewed teachers in a school where student performance data was regularly presented to senior management, finding that staff modified their teaching to neglect topics that were not tested. Formal rationality took precedence in this school, values were marginalised, and the pressure of performativity led to an alienating working environment for teachers (Hardy and Lewis 2016).

While it has been argued that the West has become secularised (Bruce 2002), with a decline in religious attendance, affiliation and belief (Voas and Crockett 2005), it is clear that religion still has great influence through, for example,

political constitutions and legitimacy (Hemming 2011). Hemming (2011: 1063) cites Berger's view that, rather than solely experiencing decline, the modern world may see 'evolving religious institutions, changing roles for religion in society and even counter-secularisation movements'. These changing roles could include providing values rather than habitual practice and belief. Indeed, an ex-archbishop of Canterbury has said that Britain is a 'post-Christian'<sup>2</sup> nation: not a nation of believers but still 'very much saturated by [the Christian] vision of the world and shaped by it' (Moreton 2014).

Ipgrave (2012) proposes three approaches to religion in schools: *doxological*, where religion is explicitly central to the entire life of the school, values having God's authority; *sacramental*, where time and space is marked out for engaging with the possible reality of the transcendent; and *instrumental*, where religions are looked at through a secular lens but can be useful sources to learn from for moral development. A 'faith school' can be defined as one which presents a 'religion as if it is true and good, together with a range of other beliefs, values and attitudes ... which follow from this' (Halstead and McLaughlin 2005: 63), and thus would generally approach religion doxologically. Faith schools could be said to have a religious 'ethos'; a nebulous term which 'generally refers to the core shared values, beliefs and practices of an educational community' and its 'feeling and atmosphere' (Hemming 2015: 45).

Hemming (2015) conducted ethnographic research in two state-funded primary schools, one Catholic, the other non-religious. He examined group cohesion through ritual, using Durkheim's concept of 'collective effervescence' to show 'how symbolic religious practices and rituals, and the emotional states that are influenced by them ... cement social relationships within collectives' (Hemming 2015: 38). He proposes that everyday rituals such as assemblies 'create a feeling of familiarity and community' (Hemming 2015: 85), arguing that the 'embodied and emotional nature' (Hemming 2015: 86) of singing, clapping and dancing in the Catholic school's highly religious assemblies nurtured more cohesion than did the conduct of the assembly at the non-religious school. Furthermore, he suggests that 'consensual rituals' bind together everyone as a 'moral community' and 'differentiating rituals' (Hemming 2015: 84) mark out some as distinct: for example, by religion. In the Catholic school, what was intended as a 'consensual ritual' could become 'differentiating' if a child could not fully engage with an assembly for religious reasons, inevitably leading to exclusion.

While it has been claimed that non-faith schools 'often fail to deal adequately with matters of moral texture and complexity' (Halstead and McLaughlin 2005: 69), Hemming found that both the schools he studied promoted 'an appreciation of nature, awe, wonder and human relationships ... tolerance, respect, caring and honesty' (2015: 58), the only difference being the rationales behind these values.

2 I am aware that Dandelion (1996: 166) has claimed that British Quakerism is 'post-Christian', however here I use an alternative definition of that term.

Davies (2009) has argued that school values should be established by real people, making them contestable, rather than having God's authority, making them sacrosanct. Green's (2009) ethnographic study of a Christian college found that its 'Core Values' were, with analysis, clearly rooted in the Bible, but were at no point explicitly religious. This meant that students who rejected religion might still incorporate biblical morality into their lives.

In 2002 it became statutory for all 11–16-year-olds to be taught 'citizenship'. Active citizenship is defined in this setting by the Crick Report's understanding of the term, which posited that citizenship education should comprise three strands: 'social and moral responsibility; community involvement; and political literacy' (Advisory Group on Citizenship 1998: 8). The Crick Report stressed that, in order to have any lasting effect, content must be relevant to students' lives, students must not be considered passive recipients, and they should be encouraged to question themselves and those around them. All schools in Britain are inspected on their promotion of pupils' Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural (SMSC) development (Ofsted 2015); the majority of schools use PSHE and Citizenship Education to focus on SMSC development, often with resources and training vastly lacking. Hoskins and Crick (2010: 124) dispute this compartmentalisation and marginalisation, noting that SMSC development is seen as 'soft', 'affective' and difficult to assess, and that 'hard' and 'cognitive' subjects that are easily assessed take priority. They argue that SMSC development is key to individual and social success because it teaches critical and creative thinking which enables people to be active citizens with the tools to generate social change.

Every school in England must actively promote fundamental British values (FBV), defined as 'democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs' (Department of Education 2014). The FBV project has its origins in the Prevent strategy, which aims to stop radicalisation, with scholars widely agreeing that its main focus is radical Islam (Sukarieh and Tannock 2015; Panjwani 2016). Four strands of criticism of FBV have been identified by Panjwani (2016: 331): the adjective 'British' neglects the fact that the values are upheld in many countries; the Prevent strategy and its promotion of FBV assumes that journeys to extremism are purely ideological, rather than 'involving a variety of psychological, socio-economic and religio-political factors'; discussion of controversial ideas may be curtailed; and each value is open to interpretation. The head of a Quaker school spoke out against the FBV project, arguing in favour of questioning and challenging the law. He pointed out that 'acceptance of the law would have meant that slavery remained legal ... and that women were wrong to campaign for universal suffrage' (Goodwin 2014). British Quakers' book of discipline advises them thus: 'Respect the laws of the state but let your first loyalty be to God's purposes. If you feel impelled by strong conviction to break the law, search your conscience deeply' (Quakers in Britain 2013: 1.02.35). In practice it is not hard to find examples of Quakers who have broken the law because

of a religious leading: a Friend recently attempted to use a hammer to disarm warplanes he believed would be used by Saudi Arabia to kill civilians in the Yemen civil war (Walker 2017).

While funding has been slashed for disabled, mentally unwell and financially deprived young people, money has been pumped into new military programmes targeting young people and schools (Quakers in Britain 2015). The former Education Secretary, Michael Gove, has been quoted as saying that ‘Every child can benefit from a military ethos’ (Quakers in Britain 2015), citing ‘discipline’ as rationale. Chadderton (2014) has analysed the Troops to Teachers programme, where armed forces leavers are fast-tracked into teaching posts. Described as part of a wider move to ‘restore adult authority’ (Chadderton 2014: 7) in schools, the project has been criticised for its focus on unconditional obedience. Soldiers who deal with life or death situations are trained to accept orders immediately, but pupils in schools should be encouraged to engage critically with the rationale behind rules and norms. Stavrianakis (2009) has drawn attention to the involvement of weapons manufacturers in education. A Schools Roadshow project aiming to ‘inspire excitement in STEM subjects’ through ‘fun, engaging activities’ (BAE Systems 2018) serves a legitimating function, where students make positive associations between BAE’s educational activities and its manufacture of weapons (Stavrianakis 2009). argues projects such as these are part of a wider shift of state spending from care to control, suggesting that ‘the population [must be] conditioned to accept the ideology of the ruling class, which, in this case, involves imposing neo-liberal values on the world through violence and war’.

Weber’s gloominess regarding the ‘iron cage’ of bureaucracy is ‘only understandable if there is a sense of something of great value being lost’ (Woods 2009: 123)—those things being creativity, feelings of connectedness to others, and spirituality. To break with purely formal rationality, ‘the immediacy of artistic expression [can be] enjoyed and appreciated for its intrinsic value, and social solidarity [can] create a kind of democracy of learning in which all contribute and share’ (Woods 2009: 129). It has been proposed that artistic education can play a significant role in citizenship education, and that the ‘opposition between mind and reason ... and the body and emotion’ (Enslin and Ramirez-Hurtado 2013: 63) should be reconciled to create a more rounded citizen. Enslin and Ramirez-Hurtado (2013) argue that the arts educate students to embrace what is new and ‘other’; by its very nature something original is being created and appreciated. Communication skills can be taught, particularly in music, which involves listening and reflecting. Artistic education teaches collaboration and cooperation; dancers can only be successful if each member is willing to engage in ‘artistic empathy’, where they creatively engage with the whole. Waldorf Steiner schools claim that education requires the ‘combined nourishment of head, heart and hands’ (Hallam et al. 2016: 137), with the arts seen as facilitating confidence, creativity and divergent thinking. While research has shown that individual performance outcomes usually take precedence (Hardy and Lewis

2016), Steiner teachers focus ‘upon the “how” rather than the “what”’ of a child’s artistic endeavours, and ‘avoid judgement or comparison between individuals’ (Hallam et al. 2016: 143) enabling the child to connect deeply and emotionally with the process without fear of denunciation. This elevation of process chimes with a substantive, value-based form of social action. Steiner schools use ‘art as a holistic, healing activity which helps to balance the well-being of the individual’ (Hallam et al. 2016: 144).

Quaker educationalists (O’Reilley 1993; Smith 2004) make links between Quaker pedagogy and Freire’s. Smith (2004: 18) proposes that both pedagogies ‘invite a fuller consciousness within the learner’ and ‘recognize that true education is not so much a process of instilling information as awakening insight’. However, she notes, while Freirean social change is oppositional, a Quaker model of social change assumes fundamental equality and is thus cooperative. In both Freire’s writings and in Quakerism, theory (or faith) cannot be separated from practice. The ‘banking’ model is opposed: even when the information is a mathematical formula, true learning occurs ‘when the light of consciousness flares and expands in insight, and one can say, “Oh! I see!”’ (Smith 2004: 10). O’Reilley (1993: 30) likens traditional methods of teaching and grading to the military itself: they fuel anger and destroy confidence, stunting the skills of reflection which make an individual critical and able to resist domination. Holistic teaching for the growth of a critically engaged citizen includes artistic, personal and social activities (Johnson 2009), while O’Reilley (1993: 82) argues for ‘compassion as a mode of critical enquiry’ as opposed to purely formal rational ways of knowing the world.

An important part of Quaker schooling is Meeting for Worship. Lacey and Sweeney-Denham (2002) cite a spontaneous gathering on an American Quaker college campus on 11 September 2001 (following the 9/11 attacks) where the Meeting was seen as a powerful tool for community healing and emotional expression. Johnson’s (2001) interviews with staff in a primary school with Quaker foundations found that silence was a meaningful part of assemblies, but that it ‘could not and was not claimed to be “exclusively Quaker”’ (Johnson 2001: 205). Habituating pupils to ‘silence, attention, recollection and reflection’ (Lacey and Sweeney-Denham 2002: 51) contributes not only to religious or spiritual growth but to practical life skills, where ‘learning to listen and see accurately’ can enable one to ‘wait for the evidence to take coherent shape’ (Lacey and Sweeney-Denham 2002: 51) before acting.

Pattison’s (2010) interviews with heads, teaching staff and governors from each of the Quaker schools in Britain recognised the importance of a head teacher who could resist the pressures of quantifiable outcomes in favour of promoting substantive values. Quaker values were enthusiastically promoted by staff for three reasons: positive working relationships were experienced, staff feeling belonging and well-being; staff felt empowered and trusted to be creative; and, being included in decision-making, they could communicate openly, feeling their

opinions were considered and respected. One governor cited 'the genuine care that teachers had given her children' (Pattison 2010: 134) after a family tragedy, and a non-Quaker teacher felt she had developed as a person owing to the values she had encountered during her time at the school. The values promoted in these schools were not seen as solely Quaker, but were regarded as conducive to well-being in the workplace.

Best's (2008) research among adolescent Quakers found that their practice was much more flexible than that of older Friends. He found that a 'culture of contribution' (Best 2008: 198) existed, where being tentative about religious truth did not stop discussion. During worship people often sat in one large circle, leading to a lower level of differentiation than in adult groups, who sit in concentric circles. Silence was still the central part of collective worship; however, contributions through 'music, song and dance' (Best 2008: 197), unlike in adult groups, were common and welcome expressions. Best uses the concept of collective effervescence to describe how the embodied and emotional nature of worship such as this acted as social glue. Events away from normal life, from school, and from other Quaker communities enabled the development of shared values that would be expressed through behaviour in and out of events, transforming individuals into members of a 'Community of Intimacy' (Best 2008: 192).

### Methodology

In this study I employed an ethnographic approach, aiming to immerse myself in the school, making observations of behaviour and lessons, listening to and participating in conversations, conducting semi- and un-structured interviews and analysing documents. This approach aims to lead the researcher to develop 'an understanding of the culture of the group and people's behaviour within the context of that culture' (Bryman 2012: 432). Owing to time and access restraints it was possible to spend only a handful of days in the field, so this study can be best described as a 'micro-ethnography' (Bryman 2012: 433).

Initially the school was visited for three days to gather themes from unstructured observations, interviews and conversations. I received a tour of the school from two pupils, attended one assembly and one Meeting for Worship, conducted interviews with the heads of Year 7, PSHE, Religious Studies (RS) and Art, conducted focus groups with students, observed lessons and spent breaks and lunch in the staffroom and canteen. After the initial exploratory phase, more specific research questions were developed and a further three visits enabled interviews with the head and a teacher, and more structured focus groups with students and non-teaching staff. In total I observed seven lessons (PSHE and RS) and conducted four unstructured interviews with teachers, a semi-structured interview with the head and with a teacher, one focus group with non-teaching staff members and four focus groups with students. Who I spoke to and observed in these instances was agreed by the head, meaning that the head could have



exerted some level of control over the data collected; however, the breadth of opinion on some topics does not indicate that this occurred. In addition, my ethnographic method provided reliability, as I could cross-check information and opinions by asking questions of any willing staff members.

I encountered primarily students from Years 7 to 11, and had a little contact with Years 12 and 13. There were around 200 students in Years 7 to 13, seven of whom were from Quaker families. Of teachers, senior management and non-teaching staff members, just one teacher was a Quaker. Over half of the board of governors were Quakers; however, I was interested in the daily life of the school, so did not include them in my research. It is a weakness of this study that no parents were interviewed about their perceptions of the school; however, pressure of circumstances at the time of the research meant that I was unable to pursue this avenue of research.

I was reflexively aware of the effect I could have as a researcher. I was often asked whether I had attended a Quaker school myself, which I hadn't; however, I was open about my own Quaker faith and sometimes told pupils that I had attended Quaker youth events at their school. My own Quakerism may have meant that Quaker aspects of the school were accentuated; however, quotes from both staff and students do not indicate this. Where some have attempted to reduce researcher-effect by minimising social distance between themselves and their respondents through their language and style of dress (e.g. McCormack and Anderson 2010), my familiarity with the school may have decreased social distance between myself and the pupils. My effect as a new adult on students was also considered, but it was common for students to give tours to visitors, and focus groups with children were always accompanied by an adult. Whilst accurate recording and reporting was key, theory and practice are 'enmeshed in beliefs, values and commitments' (Taylor and Robinson 2009: 164) and, however implicit, they are present in the way all researchers see and report the world.

## Findings and Discussion

### *Values*

I begin by considering how the school presents itself to the outside world through its website. A page entitled 'An [Elizabeth] School Education' provided a summary of contemporary British Quaker beliefs and values; the title of this page provided an implicit link between what children would experience at the school and its 'adoption of Quaker values as guiding principles'. The Mission Statement lacked any explicit reference to Quakerism and contained neutral statements about nurturing 'informed, well-balanced citizens', guiding them to 'think productively' and 'develop [their own] ideas', sustaining 'academic rigour' and creating 'an environment of mutual respect'. Statements that could have been explicitly value-laden, such as 'teaching pupils about what matters in life' and building 'skills for life' such as 'moral perspective', were not followed up by an indication

of what was perceived to matter in life or the moral perspective that would be fostered. This is comparable to Green's (2009) findings in a Christian college, where the Mission Statement was not explicitly religious but could be traced to its Christian roots. Elizabeth School's Mission Statement itself, however, contained no ideas that seemed to have their origins in Quaker beliefs or values, and chances were not taken to elaborate on the principals of the school in this declaration.

Considering the lack of pupils from Quaker families, it was of interest to find out why staff thought non-Quakers sent their children to Elizabeth School.

**Head teacher:** They are looking for a school which will teach their children well so that they can achieve their potential, and where they will be happy and well looked after. Some choose it because of the school's strong moral foundations of the Quaker testimonies. Some choose the school because it's a specifically good fit for their child.

The lack of perceived religious motivation from parents chimes with Johnson's (2009: 75) observation that 'parents are seen [by staff] as sending their children to a Quaker school ... because they want for their children morality without dogma'. Quaker values were seen by all staff to be a strong feature, one teacher remarking: 'you don't want to lose touch of what it's about—the Quaker foundations', which provided a 'calm and collected environment' and led him to a recognition that 'it's not all about results'. While it is evident that many teachers in the state system also dislike the 'audit culture' prevailing in schools (Woods 2009; Hardy and Lewis 2016), the focus by this teacher on Elizabeth School's substantive value base led to an explicit rejection of this.

Some staff members questioned whether the values promoted by the school were necessarily religious, and one student questioned the religiosity of the school and his experience of Quakerism itself:

**Student:** The school does Quaker things like silent assemblies, but it's not religious.

**Researcher:** Why is it not religious?

**Student:** In religions, there are rules and boundaries, like having to pray. In Quakerism, there aren't rules and you don't have to do anything. At school STEP [Simplicity, Truth, Equality and Peace] is encouraged but not enforced.

This student expressed that the lack of rules he could identify when experiencing and learning about Quakerism set it apart from other religions and even meant that it did not qualify as one.

In the Catholic school of Hemming's study (2015: 54) there were 'continual reminders of religion through objects, symbols and displays around the school building'. Throughout Elizabeth School there were several explicit physical references to Quakerism: meeting rooms had copies of British Friends' book of discipline; on a classroom door was a print of a panel from the Quaker Tapestry; a display detailed the school's involvement in World War I, including information about Quaker conscientious objectors. One display, however, contained the

well-known Quaker phrase ‘let your life speak’ (Quakers in Britain 2013: 1.02.27) with no reference to its origins, along with other non-Quaker motivational quotes. This display where faith could be ‘learnt from’ (along with other findings set out below) shows that Elizabeth School promoted Quaker *values* rather than the Quaker *faith*, suggesting an instrumental approach to religion (Ipgrave 2012).

Elizabeth School was legally required to actively promote ‘fundamental British values’ (Department of Education 2014) (FBV). A policy document stated that ‘the law of the land is above the law of faith if there is conflict between the two’. In the context of an explicit awareness of the criticisms made against FBV by another Quaker school’s head (Goodwin 2014), Elizabeth School’s head was clear that she would never encourage students to break the law, but that: ‘If you have a group of people going out into society who can think for themselves, they can challenge its norms. I hope that we are inculcating the feeling that if there is a genuine wrong in society, that students would have the moral fibre to stand up and challenge it.’ One teacher suggested that ‘if you challenge the law within the law you’re still respecting it’. This may be true; however, the Quaker who recently attempted to disarm warplanes said that he ‘didn’t have any other option left’ (Walker 2017), having been campaigning for disarmament through legal means for 15 years.

Conversations and interviews with teachers established a range of views on FBV. Two of the criticisms identified by Panjwani (2016) were commonly expressed—‘what makes them British?’ and ‘they’re like pinning down jelly’. No teacher felt constrained by FBV or feared that discussion of controversial issues would be limited, and no teacher reported seeing a tension between FBV and Quaker values. During a lesson observation, however, one teacher implicitly noted a tension between FBV and Quakerism, telling her class that ‘Quakers supported gay marriage before it was legal.’ The incompatibility between the fundamental British value of ‘the rule of law’ (Department of Education 2014) and the advice given to British Quakers to ‘let [their] first loyalty be to God’s purposes’ (Quakers in Britain 2013: 1.02.35) cannot be reconciled in circumstances where the state mandates unequal rights for minorities or acts which go against the Quaker testimony of peace.

### *Staff Hierarchy, Relationships and Decision-Making*

One teacher reported perceiving a lack of the kinds of ‘rank and rigidity’ that he thought existed in other schools, and another thought that ‘whether you’re a cleaner or head of maths you’re all on the same level’. This opinion was supported during a focus group with non-teaching staff members:

**Researcher:** Are there ways in which this school’s Quaker ethos is expressed in its atmosphere?

**Non-teaching staff member:** I didn’t expect everyone could be treated equally, I didn’t expect the head would say good morning to me every day, but you do have that. I also didn’t expect to see senior management eating in the dining room with

all the students, but that does happen and I was impressed. It shows that they are all equal to us.

An incident that had occurred around ten years previously was amusingly recalled by a teacher: senior management's pigeon holes in the staff room had been grouped separately from teachers' and, as a joke, a teacher had swapped her own pigeon hole with the head's. When the head noticed this it was disconcerting, and when brought up at a staff meeting it was decided that pigeon holes would subsequently be organised alphabetically 'to show that all staff are valued equally'.

Teachers regularly reported that their relationships with each other were 'trusting' and 'relaxed'. Many were unsure whether this could be attributed to the school's Quaker ethos or to its small size and independent status. One teacher commented: 'We all get on very well, but I think that's the case at most schools. I worked at another independent school and there was more tension there—I think it stemmed from senior management enforcing their way, rather than staff being trusted to get on with the job.'

Decision-making in the school was described by one teacher as 'very Quakerly'; meetings were held regularly where teachers could openly raise and discuss issues, although the worshipful method of Friends' decision-making was not employed at these times. All teachers who mentioned communication said they felt senior management were approachable, that their ideas would be listened to and that they would be helped. These findings concur with Pattison's (2010) conclusions that the values in Quaker schools lead to open communication and positive working relationships in which staff felt trusted to use their initiative.

### *Discipline, Pastoral Care and PSHE*

Considering the work Quakers have been doing to draw attention to the 'creeping militarisation of schools' (Quakers in Britain 2015), it was not surprising that the school had no military-provided teaching resources and never invited military personnel to give talks. Literature suggests that it is not just the military's physical presence but also methods of discipline that can lead to a normalisation of violence and war (Chadderton 2014). On the topic of discipline, one teacher stated:

Conformity is not taught for its own sake here. When a student crosses a line, they are asked to search their conscience and think about what their actions mean and how they affect others. As teachers, we are able to use discretion with the application of rules—you can look at the context, look at the whole child.

Elizabeth School's approach to discipline appeared very far removed from the idea that fast-tracking Troops to Teachers can 'restore adult authority' (Chadderton 2014: 7) in the form of unquestioning obedience; this teacher felt that it was important for students to understand and be able to critically engage with the reasons for rules. When asked if the ability 'to use discretion with the application of rules' related to Quakerism the teacher said that he could 'step back and reflect'.

He also spoke very highly of Meeting for Worship and his comments concur with the idea that ‘by learning to listen and see accurately [in Meeting], we can also learn to wait for the evidence to take coherent shape before we act’ (Lacey and Sweeney-Denham 2002: 51).

Strong and respectful relationships were directly attributed to low-key discipline by many teachers, and when incidences of disciplining occurred during lesson observations they took the shape of a subtle word, or a child being calmly asked to stay behind. Shouting was never observed. The Quaker educationalist Smith (2004: 11) notes that ‘through harshly coercive prodding’ children can ‘see education as joyless and irrelevant’, but that caring instructors who believe in their potential can work miracles. While it was the only mention of the word ‘God’ by anyone at the school, a teacher who was a practising Christian said, ‘if you believe that there is that of God within every child then it completely changes the way you approach discipline’.

Apple (2012: 20), a Freirean, asserts that ‘care, love, and solidarity—or the *absence* of them—are among the constitutive building blocks of one’s identity’. Pastoral care was a central part of life in the school, facilitated by strong relationships and excellent communication. Three times a week teachers were briefed on any personal issues affecting students and it was common to overhear conversations between staff concerning the well-being or behaviour of an individual student. One teacher told me that it was a ‘much gentler place to teach than a high school’ and another recalled being told at parents’ evening ‘I’ve got my child back’, after six weeks at the school.

A non-teaching member of staff expressed some concerns about the impact of the school’s gentleness: ‘The children are very cocooned here. I wonder how they will get on in the real world. Everyone is nurtured, everyone is nice, but that’s not the real world, is it? I think it’s a bit of a shock when they leave here. They should be prepared for what’s out there and I don’t think they are.’ The head, however, was clear that the school aimed to ‘equip [students] with the tools to discern’ and ‘prepare them to stand on their feet when they leave’. Drawing these views together, we can apply Johnson’s (2009: 80) assertion that Quaker schools can model values different from those which are hegemonic, while building *hope* that the world can become a better place, *resilience* to stay true to one’s values and *optimism* in the face of setbacks.

Care, love and solidarity were also reported regarding student–student relationships. When a staff member remarked that a Year 8 pupil had come out as homosexual, the student in the focus group asserted: ‘there’s a strong sense of respect between students of all differences here’. Two Year 7 students, when asked during a focus group whether they felt comfortable and able to be themselves, explained:

**Student #1:** I don’t need to be the coolest. Nobody judges you and they respect who you are. The school is really good and we have independence.

**Student #2:** Yeah! We're made up of individuals who blend together. It's a warm, comfortable, safe environment. We know each other and the teachers really well. We're not afraid to tell teachers if we're having a problem. There's a homely ethos here.

While Green (2009) found explicit links between strict discipline and biblical morality in a Christian college, Elizabeth School's discipline and pastoral practices were rooted in Quaker values such as honesty, openness and care, but were explained through their functionality rather than a supernatural authority.

SMSC development was fostered through day-to-day experiences, extra-curricular activities such as an hour's community service per term and Debating Society, and through PSHE lessons. A 'core theme' of the syllabus was 'Quaker values', which aimed for students to 'recognise the value of the Quaker testimonies' within their lives and society. Students were given opportunities to become active citizens by involvement in the community, developing political literacy and becoming socially and morally responsible (Advisory Group on Citizenship 1998). Each PSHE class observed involved a mixture of real-life situations and interactive learning, like that advocated by Freire (1970). Typical statements from the teacher were: 'there is no right or wrong answer' and 'this is my opinion, but it isn't necessarily what you should think'. In continuity with the Crick Report's suggestions, the curriculum was relevant to the lives of those learning it, pupils were not seen as passive recipients, and they were encouraged to question the views of themselves and others (Advisory Group on Citizenship 1998).

### *'The Art in Everyone'*

Part of Elizabeth School's Mission Statement explicitly referred to developing 'the art in everyone'. When speaking with the Art teacher I asked whether Quakerism was expressed in art lessons:

Well, it's not one shoe fits all, very much like the Quaker ethos. There's no right or wrong answer; everyone has something to show through art—their emotion. I only mark their work at the end of every half term when I have to. I also try to explain to them the pigeon holing that goes on in life—people are put in boxes according to what they're good at, and pushed in a certain direction early on in life, but they're not yet fully formed adults and they should be able to develop their skills and talents.

Here, direct links were drawn between the Quaker ethos and the rejection of approaches to teaching that assume that the same method works for all pupils. She also resisted grading where possible, said by O'Reilly (1993: 30) to damage confidence, fuel anger and 'stunt the very reflective powers that alone make the individual able to resist the dominion of force'. The teacher's statement also resembles the Steiner approach, where artistic endeavours are recognised to enable pupils to connect with and express their emotions without the pressure of constant assessment (Hallam et al. 2016).

Elizabeth School's website proudly states that their alumni had gone on to careers in many fields, including the arts. When enquiring about the value of the arts, students were clear that 'people who excel at art are just as valued as people who excel at maths' and that 'every talent has its place in society'. Not everyone who engages in the arts will find themselves in an artistic occupation, but endorsing them for their worth outside of the job market should be commended. Enslin and Ramirez-Hurtado (2013) tell us that an artistic education also has practical worth for citizenship, helping students to appreciate what is new and 'other', enhancing communication and reflection and encouraging collaboration and cooperation. Considering these arguments, we can see that Elizabeth School's artistic activities could help to develop citizens disposed to both resist the individualistic and competitive nature of twenty-first-century Britain and appreciate the world for more than just its monetary value.

### *Meeting for Worship*

Once a week teaching staff and all students from Years 7 to 13 gathered for a 20-minute Meeting for Worship. One teacher reported having had difficulties in the silence when they started working at the school, saying that they had 'learnt from the students'—an example of the Freirean idea that learning is not a one-way process (Freire 1970). Many said that they felt it was relaxing and one commented that where in 'most schools you're [always] expected to be rushing around doing something—time where you're not expected to be doing something is really valid'. When enquiring about the things that contributed to group cohesion, all staff members cited Meeting for Worship, one stating:

I think we should have Meeting for Worship every day, not for 20 minutes, for half an hour. It's time to listen—something might happen. We are inundated with information and gadgets, but in the silence, you have to learn to be with yourself and not despair. The communal aspect bonds you together as a group. Everyone is caressed by a communal spirit and safe within that.

In a manner similar to an adolescent Quaker's observation that Meeting for Worship 'is so different from modern life' (Best 2008: 208), this teacher recognised that taking time out could enable 'something' to happen that would otherwise not be possible. Be that something of a Divine nature, or developing self-knowledge free from gadgets, it was clearly seen as positive. These times of silence show that, while religion was approached instrumentally ('learnt from') for the most part, a sacramental approach was also present, where time was set aside, offering the chance to experience 'a sense of the numinous', potentially taking 'students to the threshold and offer[ing] a glimpse of what may be beyond' (Ipgrave 2012: 36–37).

I heard both teachers and students referring to Meeting for Worship as 'Silent Assembly', indicating that its purpose was unclear. Teachers reported that this lack of clarity may have been why it was uncommon for a student to offer vocal ministry, while others suggested that it was because of the intimidating size of

Meetings. I was told by a teacher of the relatively recent sad and sudden death of a student, and how a Meeting for Worship had been exceptional:

It was cathartic, bonding and immensely helpful. Many students contributed, some of them people you wouldn't expect to talk. Students cried, and were supported by each other and by staff. In another school a vicar would have come in and said 'I've been through this and this is how you can deal with it', but I think that's disempowering. This way students can work out for themselves how to feel their pain.

This account is very similar to Lacey and Sweeney-Denham's (2002) assertion that Meeting was a tool for emotional expression and collective healing. Staff members recognised that Meeting for Worship, particularly when used as memorial, could act as what Hemming (2015: 84) describes as a 'consensual ritual', binding people together as a 'moral community'. Hemming (2015: 84) suggests that such rituals should 'communicate [a] school's values and norms'; silent Quaker worship is a ritualisation of the *belief* in everyone's equal capacity to connect to that of God within themselves, which leads to the *value* of equality (Collins 2005). However, if pupils were unclear about this the power of Meetings to communicate the value of equality may have been limited.

When pupils were asked about their experience of Meeting for Worship none explicitly mentioned religion, unlike adolescent Quakers, who were enthusiastic to talk about their religious experiences (Best 2008). Most pupils had positive perceptions of it, however, with common themes being reflection, relaxation and thinking. In Hemming's (2015) Catholic school religious rituals could become differentiating and exclusionary if a child could not fully participate owing to their own religion. In contrast, Quaker worship could not become differentiating because, as one pupil told me: 'nobody can tell you what to do'. In a focus group two pupils agreed that Meeting for Worship was 'boring'. Hemming (2015: 86) found that in both schools examined in his study pupils found the length of some assemblies boring, but he argues that because this was 'endured by the entire cohort of children together [solidarity was developed] through common hardship.' No pupils talked about the bonding nature of Meetings, unlike Best's (2008: 196) findings that adolescent Quakers explicitly recognised their 'unique ability to form bonds between people'.

### *Trip to Woodbrooke*

Year 7s went on a four-day residential trip to Woodbrooke Quaker Study Centre during their first half term, learning about Quaker history, belief and values. All staff who were asked about bonding experiences talked about Woodbrooke, often specifying that it was beneficial because while some students had come from the Junior School others were altogether new. The teacher who regularly accompanied the Year 7s on the trip said that it gave everyone 'time to reflect on Quaker values and principals', also having mentioned during our interview that this was foundational



to the school. Here, as in other instances, Quaker values were emphasised, while this teacher did not regard being fluent in the faith itself as important for thriving in the school. In a focus group, Year 7 students spoke enthusiastically about their experience at Woodbrooke. They commented that they liked the outside area and not having electronics, as well as enjoying 'team building' and 'trust building' exercises. They spoke about the relationships they built on the trip:

**Student #1:** At the start of Year 7 it was different because some people hadn't come here from the Junior School and there were new people. We didn't know the new people at the start of the year, but going to Woodbrooke was a bonding experience and everyone made friends, and boys and girls mixed. It was definitely a really good way to start off the year.

**Student #2:** Yeah, and if we hadn't have gone to Woodbrooke we wouldn't have the trust, and know people like we do now—it built relationships.

Best (2008: 197) asserts that in adolescent Quaker groups sitting in one circle during Meeting for Worship symbolises a lower level of differentiation than in adult groups, who generally sit in concentric circles; one student observed that everyone sitting in one circle during Woodbrooke's Meetings showed that 'everyone is valued equally, even the tutors'. One student indicated that she saw other differences between Meetings at school and at Woodbrooke:

**Student:** We have Silent Assemblies here once a week, but at Woodbrooke they have it for 30 minutes every day! When we're here we sit in silence, but at Woodbrooke people often stood up and shared their thoughts.

**Researcher:** Could you stand up and share your thoughts in Silent Assemblies here?

**Student:** I guess we could do that here. Sometimes if something happens—like a big storm—a teacher might stand up and say something.

This student was unsure about whether she could share ministry during Meeting for Worship at school; using the available information, this could have been because she was unsure about the purpose and meaning of Meetings ('Silent Assemblies'), or because their size was intimidating.

On the last night of the trip the Year 7s organised a programmed epilogue. One student told me: 'It was really nice to do our own epilogue. We have very talented people, all who can do different things. For our epilogue we did drama, some people played their musical instruments, people sang, a poem was read, and I read something which I had written thanking everyone for coming.' This reflects Best's (2008: 197) observations that the programmed nature of Meetings not only encouraged adolescents to share but made them feel more confident in doing so. Best also found that a range of artistic mediums were used to share during times of worship. A teacher commented that it was 'powerful and special when it comes from them'; Best (2008: 208) argues that in adolescent worship the alternative ordering to regular Quaker worship, its difference from modern life, and the sense of

community and belonging constitutes a moment of collective effervescence. Adding to this, Hemming (2015: 84) considers that the emotional and embodied nature of rituals can constitute moments of collective effervescence. This can be applied to the account of this epilogue, where people's passions and energies were heightened and 'the charged emotional environments call[ed] individuals out of themselves, imbuing them with a heightened sense of their participation in the collective' (Best 2008: 208), thus acting as social glue.

### Conclusion

Quaker values were perceived by staff to be influential to all themes explored above; however, the religious beliefs of Quakerism were not. These values were seen by staff as a strong feature in the daily life of the school, leading some to an explicit resistance of the 'audit culture' that has been criticised by QVine, scholars and many teachers. Teachers did not report seeing tensions between Quaker values and fundamental British values, although during a lesson observation one implicitly recognised the incompatibility between the value of 'the rule of law' (Department of Education 2014) and laws not aligned with Quaker values. Where the enforcement of practices and the denial of teachers' professional knowledge has been criticised by QVine, 'Quakerly' decision-making contributed to staff feeling trusted to use their initiative. QVine has pointed to inflexible disciplining practices as part of a wider trend in the militarisation of schools, but in Elizabeth School low-key discipline was facilitated by trusting relationships and the ability to step back and look at the whole child. Elizabeth School was committed to nurturing 'the art in everyone', and the Art teacher linked Quaker values to an approach which recognised the individuality of each child.

The school's weekly Meeting for Worship was a time when those present could engage with the possibility of something supernatural. It had the potential to act as a 'consensual ritual' which bound the group together, and it could not become 'differentiating' because, in the words of a student, 'nobody can tell you what to do'. 'Consensual rituals' should communicate a group's values; however, the lack of clarity regarding the purpose of Meetings could have meant its power to communicate Quaker values was limited. The Year 7 trip to Woodbrooke was recognised by the students to have built relationships or, in other words, fostered cohesion. One student identified that the single circle of chairs used during worship symbolised that everyone was valued equally, one way in which this 'consensual ritual' communicated the value of equality. Much like Best's (2008) findings with adolescent Quakers, the epilogue programmed by the students used not just silence and speech but drama, musical instruments and singing. The alternative ordering to school, the sense of community fostered by the trip and the emotional and embodied nature of this epilogue could have constituted a moment of collective effervescence, acting as social glue between those present.

For the most part, Elizabeth School approached religion instrumentally, Quakerism being a source that could be ‘learnt from’. Meeting for Worship, however, was time set aside each week where those present could engage with the possibility of the transcendent, indicating that a sacramental approach was also present (Ipgrave 2012) and that these approaches can coexist in the same institution. As a ‘faith school’ presents a ‘religion as if it is true and good’ (Halstead and McLaughlin 2005: 63), Elizabeth School should not be understood through this lens; although considering British Friends’ doubtful way of holding religious truth (Dandelion 2008: 35) it would be paradoxical for a Quaker school to adopt this approach.

The substantive values of Quakerism provided a counter to formal rationality for those employed by and educated in Elizabeth School. Britain has been described as a ‘post-Christian’ nation—not as a nation of believers but still ‘saturated by [the Christian] vision of the world and shaped by it’ (Moreton 2014). Elizabeth School can be understood as ‘post-Quaker’, although I would define that term here as ‘influenced by the Quaker vision of the world and shaped by it’. For staff, particularly teachers, the substantive values experienced led to a calm and trusting working environment, and meant they were allowed to use their professional knowledge and creativity rather than having procedures enforced from above. Students’ experience of Quaker values meant that grading was decentred and discipline was gentle—both having been linked to militarisation—leaving more potential for the development of an active, rounded and unprejudiced citizen.

## References

- Advisory Group on Citizenship, *Education for citizenship and the teaching of democracy in schools*, Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, 1998. Available at: <<http://dera.ioe.ac.uk/4385/1/crickreport1998.pdf>> [Accessed 2 March 2017].
- Apple, M. W., *Can Education Change Society?* Abingdon: Routledge, 2012.
- BAE Systems, *Help for schools, colleges and community groups*. 2018. Available at: <<https://www.baesystems.com/en/careers/careers-in-the-uk/getting-ready-for-work/help-for-schools-colleges-and-community-groups>> [Accessed 1 November 2018].
- Best, S., ‘Adolescent Quakers: A Community of Intimacy’, in Dandelion, P. and Collins, P. (eds), *The Quaker Condition: the sociology of a liberal religion*, Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2008, pp. 192–215.
- Bruce, S., *God is Dead: secularization in the West*, Oxford: Blackwell, 2002.
- Chadderton, C., ‘The militarisation of English schools: Troops to Teaching and the implications for Initial Teacher Education and race equality’, *Race Ethnicity and Education* 17/3 (2014), pp. 407–28.
- Collins, P., ‘Thirteen Ways of Looking at a “Ritual”’, *Journal of Contemporary Religion* 20/3 (2005), pp. 323–42.
- Dandelion, P., *A Sociological Analysis of the Theology of Quakers: the silent revolution*, Lampeter: Edwin Mellen Press, 1996.
- , ‘The Creation of Coherence: the “Quaker Double-Culture” and the “Absolute

- Perhaps”, in Dandelion, P. and Collins, P. (eds), *The Quaker Condition: the sociology of a liberal religion*, Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2008, pp. 22–37.
- Davies, L., ‘Educating against extremism: towards a critical politicisation of young people’, *International Review of Education* 55/2 (2009), pp. 183–203.
- Department of Education, *Promoting fundamental British values as part of SMSC in schools: departmental advice for maintained schools*, London: DfE, 2014.
- Durkheim, E., *Education and Sociology*, Toronto: The Free Press, 1956.
- Enslin, P. and Ramirez-Hurtado, C., ‘Artistic Education and the Possibilities for Citizenship Education’, *Citizenship, Social and Economics Education* 12/2 (2013), pp. 62–70.
- Freire, P., *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, New York: Continuum, 1970.
- Goodwin, M., ‘British Values? Pupils should be questioning the rule of law’, *The Guardian*, 11 November 2014. Available at: <<https://www.theguardian.com/education/2014/nov/11/british-values-pupils-question-rule-of-law>> [Accessed 2 March 2017].
- Green, E., ‘Discipline and school ethos: exploring students’ reflections upon values, rules and the Bible in a Christian City Technology College’, *Ethnography and Education* 4/2 (2009), pp. 197–209.
- Hallam, J., Egan, S. and Kirkham, J., ‘An investigation into the ways in which art is taught in an English Waldorf Steiner school’, *Thinking Skills and Creativity* 19 (2016), pp. 136–45.
- Halstead, M. J. and McLaughlin, T., ‘Are faith schools divisive?’ in Gardner, R., Cairns, J. and Lawton, D. (eds), *Faith Schools: consensus or conflict?* Abingdon: Routledge Falmer, 2005, pp. 61–73.
- Hardy, I. and Lewis, S., ‘The “doublethink” of data: educational performativity and the field of schooling practices’, *British Journal of Sociology of Education* 38 (2016), pp. 1–13.
- Hemming, P. J., ‘The Place of Religion in Public Life: school ethos as a lens on society’, *Sociology* 45/6 (2011), pp. 1061–77.
- , *Religion in the Primary School: ethos, diversity, citizenship*, Abingdon: Routledge, 2015.
- Hoskins, B. and Crick, D. K., ‘Competences for Learning to Learn and Active Citizenship: different currencies or two sides of the same coin?’ *European Journal of Education* 45/1 (2010), pp. 121–37.
- Igrave, J., ‘Conversations between the religious and secular in English schools’, *Religious Education* 107/1 (2012), pp. 30–48.
- Johnson, H., ‘Living Your Values: exploring the “hidden” culture of a voluntary-controlled Quaker school’, *Journal of Beliefs and Values* 22/2 (2001), pp. 197–208.
- , ‘Quaker Schools in England: offering a vision of an alternative society’, in Woods, P. A. and Woods, G. J. (eds), *Alternative Education for the 21st Century: philosophies, approaches, visions*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009, pp. 65–82.
- Lacey, P. A. and Sweeney-Denham, S., ‘What Is the Role of Quaker Education in a Time of Terror?’ *Journal of Religious and Theological Information* 5/1 (2002), pp. 49–59.
- McCormack, M. and Anderson, E., ‘“It’s Just Not Acceptable Any More”: the erosion of homophobia and the softening of masculinity at an English sixth form’, *Sociology* 44/5 (2010), pp. 843–59.
- Moreton, C., ‘Rowan Williams: I didn’t really want to be Archbishop’, *The Telegraph*,

- 27 April 2014. Available at: <<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/features/10789740/Rowan-Williams-I-didnt-really-want-to-be-Archbishop.html>> [Accessed 02/03/2017].
- Newton, N., 'Schools for Wellbeing – the Educational Significance of Quaker School Culture', PhD, University of Bristol, 2017.
- O'Reilley, M. R., *The Peaceable Classroom*, Portsmouth, NH: Boynton/Cook Publishers, 1993.
- Ofsted, *School Inspection Handbook*, London: Ofsted Publications, 2015.
- Panjwani, F., 'Towards an overlapping consensus: Muslim teachers' views on fundamental British values', *Journal of Education for Teaching* 42/3 (2016), pp. 329–40.
- Pattison, S. A., *Spiritual Capital: an inquiry into the values that provide meaning and purpose to staff in Quaker schools*. EdD. The University of Hull, 2010. Available at: <<https://hydra.hull.ac.uk/resources/hull:4490>> [Accessed 01/02/2017].
- Quaker Values in Education, *Every person is precious – a foundation for Quaker action on education*. 2014. Available at: <<http://www.qvine.org.uk/>> [Accessed 11/04/2017].
- Quakers in Britain, *Quaker faith and practice: the book of Christian discipline of the Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in Britain*, London: Quakers in Britain, 5th edn, 2013.
- , *The Unseen March: questioning the militarisation of education in schools*. 2015. Available at: <<http://www.quaker.org.uk/our-work/peace/challenging-militarism-1/the-unseen-march>> [Accessed 01/03/2017].
- Smith, S., 'The Spiritual Roots of Quaker Pedagogy', in Dalke, A. and Dixson, B. (eds), *Minding the Light: essays in Friendly pedagogy*. New York: Peter Lang, 2004, pp. 5–20.
- Stavrianakis, A., 'In Arms' Way: arms company and military involvement in education in the UK', *ACME: an international e-journal for critical geographies* 8/3 (2009), pp. 505–20.
- Sukarieh, M. and Tannock, P., 'The deradicalisation of education: terror, youth and the assault on learning', *Race and Class* 57/4 (2015), pp. 22–38.
- Taylor, C. and Robinson, C., 'Student voice: theorising power and participation', *Pedagogy, Culture and Society* 17/2 (2009), pp. 161–75.
- Voas, D. and Crockett, A., 'Religion in Britain: neither believing nor belonging', *Sociology* 39/1 (2005), pp. 11–28.
- Walker, P., 'British Quaker "prepared for jail" after allegedly trying to disarm Saudi Arabia-bound fighter', *Independent*, 1 February 2017. Available at: <<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/british-quaker-activist-sam-walton-pacifist-disarm-saudi-arabia-fighter-jet-bae-uk-yemen-a7555246.html>> [Accessed 30/03/2017].
- Watson, A. and Rowe, D., *Experience and Faith in Education: contemporary essays from Quaker perspectives*, London: Trentham Books, 2018.
- Weber, M., 'Science as a Vocation', in Gerth, H. H. and Wright Mills, C. (eds), *From Max Weber: essays in sociology*, Abingdon: Routledge, 1919, pp. 129–58.
- , *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, London: Allen and Unwin, 1930.
- Woods, P. A., 'Rationalisation, disenchantment and re-enchantment: Engaging with Weber's sociology of modernity', in Apple, M. W., Ball, S. J., and Gandin, L. A. (eds), *The Routledge International Handbook of the Sociology of Education*, Abingdon: Routledge, 2009, pp. 121–31.

### **Acknowledgments**

The author wishes to thank his dissertation supervisor, James Rosbrook-Thompson, for the support he provided during the research which led to this paper. In the area of academic support, he also wishes to acknowledge the late Tristan Pickford, who sparked his interest in sociology. The author is grateful for the comments and suggestions made by the reviewers who read the original version of this paper.

### **Author Details**

Matt Alton completed his BA in sociology at Anglia Ruskin University in 2017. He works as a teaching assistant at a primary school. He is interested in how to engage and retain young adults in British Quakerism, and is involved in national and local projects with these aims. He was awarded an Eva Koch Scholarship at Woodbrooke in the summer of 2018 to research young adult perspectives on the future of Quakerism; the dissemination of his findings is forthcoming. This is his first publication.

Email: [matthewalton@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:matthewalton@hotmail.co.uk)