

Book Reviews

Madeleine Ward, *The Christian Quaker: George Keith and the Keithian Controversy* (Leiden: Brill, 2019), pp. 101. ISBN 9789004393578. Paperback, €70.00.

This significant study begins creatively by describing a small stained-glass window in the rural church in Edburton, Sussex, that commemorates its onetime rector, the Anglican priest George Keith, who also served as the first missionary of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts. These two activities occupied Keith in his final years, from 1702 until his death in 1716. Understandably, the window says nothing about the greatest share of his adult life, which he spent as a theologian and defender of Quakerism. Author Madeleine Ward notes that there is no memorial to those years. It can be argued that her insightful volume in fact fills that void. Her work offers a sympathetic yet keenly analytical approach to a figure who, despite his importance to the early Quaker movement, has been largely ignored because he abandoned the Religious Society of Friends and became an open enemy to it. In a volume that will be profitable to specialists and yet is utterly readable to all, she offers important new understandings of George Keith and the conflict that bears his name.

George Keith, who was among the most educated of early Friends, joined with Quakers in the early 1660s and soon ascended to prominence among them for his theological prowess and his staunch defence of Quaker tenets. Keith was an associate of Henry More, Anne Conway, George Fox, and William Penn, as well as a close friend of fellow Scotsman Robert Barclay. After the death of Fox and Barclay, as Quakers moved into a less contentious relationship with other denominations, Keith directed his combative disposition toward his fellow Quakers. He engendered a schism among them and then, after rejection by yearly meetings on both sides of the Atlantic, became an ordained Anglican cleric and a predictably unsuccessful missionary commissioned to convert Quakers to the Church of England. His works written in his early years among Friends endure as worthy theological achievements, but the sum of his legacy is, to say the least, mixed. As Ward notes, despite Keith's historical significance, Quaker scholars have tended to neglect him—or treat him with evident partisan resentment for his apostasy.

The book's three chapters begin with a concise account of the Keithian controversy that is well grounded in primary documents and secondary scholarship. The second chapter consists of a judicious reading of historiography. The third and by far the longest chapter offers a close theological study of the Keithian controversy in chronologically arranged sections that consider Keith's earliest Quaker writings, his Christological interest in Kabbalah, his experience as an educator in the American colonies, the course of the Keithian controversy, and his post-Quaker works as an Anglican clergyman. The author's focus on theology poses a respectful challenge to many earlier treatments of the conflict that have blamed the phenomenon either on Keith's irascible personality or on the politics of colonial Pennsylvania. Some have suggested that the cause would not have been theological because Quakers were so lukewarm about, or downright inept at theology. The contribution of Ward's research is to argue persuasively that theological disagreement was in fact at the core of the controversy. She identifies two central issues. The first centred on the themes of the sufficiency of the inward Light to save and the role of the external, historical Christ. The second concerned the relationship between Quakerism and wider Christianity.

Ward demonstrates that these two issues were in fact life-long concerns for Keith. Like other early Friends, he initially held that the Light, and therefore immediate revelation, was salvific, without the necessity of external means, including scripture or knowledge of the historical Christ. Keith also believed that the Quaker message was in fact the truest form of Christianity. These two themes had been fundamental to all of his thinking since his earliest writings. The great contribution of this study is to attend to the subtle shifts in Keith's theology over the decades, which reveal that Keith's theological stance during the controversy of the 1690s is no sudden, new direction, but instead the result of a steady evolution in this thinking that eventually took him away from the Quakerism that he himself had helped to establish.

Specifically, Ward finds in Keith's opus a growing respect for outward forms, beginning as early as the 1670s. The author notes how, as early as 1670, Keith's works reflect the language of the Christological dogmatic definition of the Council of Chalcedon in 451, a monument of orthodoxy that Keith, as someone well trained in theology, would have known. Chalcedon focussed on the relationship between the divinity and humanity of Christ. In early Quaker terms, this translated into the relationship between the Light within and the historical Jesus. In 1670 Keith wrote of the outward, historical Christ and the inward Christ experienced as the Light as in unity, without division—key Chalcedonian terms.

As Keith's Christology evolved, he came to treasure the physical Christ more, particularly the crucifixion and bodily resurrection. His early Quaker experience led him to focus on the inward Christ and on 'immediate revelation' (the title of arguably his most important work), but his very understanding of that concept changed: inward experience ultimately became for him a metaphor that led to faith in the external, historical Christ. 'For true, immediate revelation, one must

look beyond the metaphor, and paradoxically back towards the outward reality' (p. 51). Keith came to perceive a necessity of scriptural revelation; the Light alone was no longer sufficient. Both the Bible and the Incarnation assumed central importance. Thus, by the time of his departure from Quakerism, Keith had, step by step, come to a re-evaluation of both the relationship between the Light and the historical Christ and the relationship between Christianity and Quakerism, which he now considered heretical. In his final years, he sought to persuade others that Friends were therefore unworthy of the protection of the Act of Toleration of 1689. Ward concludes: 'If the Keithian controversy was a battle for the religious heart of Quakerism, then, it secured no absolute victory' (p. 92), for the issues returned full force in the nineteenth century, resulting in divisions among Quakers that continue to this day. Following on from her praiseworthy Oxford dissertation, this volume confirms Madeleine Ward's status as an important voice among Quaker historians.

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Naomi Pullin, *Female Friends and the Making of Transatlantic Quakerism, 1650–1750* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), pp. vii + 302. ISBN 9781316510230. Hardback, £75.00.

Naomi Pullin's deftly written book offers a clear and convincing history of social, spiritual, and cultural life in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, using the rich case studies of Quaker women as a revealing example. Pullin's book is certainly and centrally concerned with female Friends, but in the process, it tells us much about the history of the early-modern period writ large.

Pullin's book beautifully advances work on the early Quaker movement, on female sociability and friendship in early-modern Britain, and on the influence of Dissenting communities upon British Atlantic politics, religion and empire. In four well-developed and informative chapters, the author examines the structure of Quaker home life; the political agency and activity of female Friends within the Meeting structure; the ways that Quakers, as well as other Dissenting women, described and understood the spiritual and emotional ties which bound them together; and the ways that Quaker women interacted with Anglican conformists. The book contains four very helpful indices and a lot of valuable demographic data, all of which will be of use and interest to scholars of Quakerism, from early-career students through to later-career scholars.

Pullin's sources draw from across the wide spectrum of Quaker writings, including the printed pamphlets and Meeting Minutes which have been of frequent use to scholars, but also manuscript correspondence, petitions, travel accounts, poetry, diaries, account books, and—probably my favourite example,

and a truly amazing archival find—ephemera such as a pocket almanac, carried by a female English preacher during her travels through Pennsylvania, which contains records of the people she encountered in her ministry, and also the recipes that she gleaned from them. The scope of Pullin's sources offers a much more nuanced account of women's experiences in Quakerism. By comparing these less formal, less well-regulated stories with those approved by Quaker authorities (such as printed pamphlets and tracts), Pullin is able to offer fresh, unrivalled perspectives on the early movement.

The dedicated archival work displayed in this book is one of its major strengths, but the organisation of its evidence is also extremely compelling. Pullin works to integrate information about Quakers with evidence on other early Dissenters, such as Baptists, Methodists and Presbyterians, placing Quakers within an early-modern world in which religious revelation, as well as religious violence, was commonplace. The author examines the work of female Public Friends alongside those women who remained in their communities, and compares Quaker women with their male counterparts abroad and at home. Throughout the book, the collaborative nature of women's work receives special attention; whether they were travelling, writing, socialising, or caring for families, Pullin's historical actors did so in community. This is not to say that all of these relations were idyllic—the author provides noteworthy examples of strife, both within the movement and within the spaces of the home—but it is clear that, in order to undertake the joint projects of ministry and domesticity, Quaker women felt compelled to work together.

Female Friends focusses upon Britain and the North American and Caribbean spaces that it claimed in acts of colonisation. This is a familiar historical geography, and it is where most of the materials produced by and about early female Quakers were and have been written. But as scholars of the Atlantic work to expand our view of this world—to centre the experiences of people enslaved in the Americas and in Africa, and to recognise the many significant ways in which British colonisation was built upon and integrated within Dutch, French, Portuguese, and Spanish Atlantic conquest—it would be valuable to recognise Quakerism's own impact on these broader imperial processes.

Scholars who work on the first generations of Quakerism have done much excellent work to recover the experiences of early modern Quaker women; despite these efforts, scholars of the period as a whole (and especially those studying English mainstream political and religious history) have tended to bracket or sideline Quaker women, treating them as unique or unusual but ultimately atypical phenomena. Yet as Pullin's book proves, not only were female Friends visible to and integrated within the British Atlantic, they were hugely influential in shaping the ways that many different kinds of British Atlantic subjects interpreted and understood their society and culture.

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Jon R. Kershner, *John Woolman and the Government of Christ: A Colonial Quaker's Vision for the British Atlantic World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), pp. xiv + 266. ISBN 9780190868079. Hardcover, £59.00.

Jon R. Kershner's *John Woolman and the Government of Christ: a colonial Quaker's vision for the British Atlantic World* is a compelling monograph on minister and abolitionist, John Woolman. The book lays out a persuasive argument about Woolman's theology, and particularly its embrace of apocalypticism, in an orderly and understandable way. Furthermore, his argument is accessible to those without prior knowledge of Woolman's theology, such as this reviewer. Kershner describes Woolman's beliefs as 'lay theology in the way of popular religious movements', which 'answered his concerns about the social events and religious anxieties of his day' (p. 175). Kershner uses seven chapters to explore and describe Woolman's theology and place it in its historical context.

The introduction begins with Woolman's 1758 call for Quakers to reject enslavement and makes it clear that Woolman's antislavery was just one part of his vision of colonial America. Kershner then advances to his definition of Woolman's apocalypticism and spells out its five themes, starting with God's intervention in world affairs and ending with His overcoming of evil on earth. The introduction ends with a useful chronology of Woolman's life, allowing the subsequent chapters to focus on Woolman's theology and vision.

The first chapter looks at Quaker theology and its transatlantic context, with background on the earliest Quakers to 1756, drawing on work by historians Frederick Tolles and Jack Marietta. Tolles and Marietta both pointed to the mid-eighteenth century as a turning point for American Quakers; the end of the 'Holy Experiment' in Pennsylvania according to Tolles and the Quaker withdrawal from mainstream American life in Marietta's view.¹ The context is further fleshed out by mentions of enslavement, the Seven Years' War (1756–63), the Crisis of 1756, the transatlantic marketplace, and quietism.

With the context described in the prior chapter, chapter two examines revelation as a starting point for understanding Woolman. For Kershner, revelation is a key part of Woolman's vision, leading not only to religious purity, but also of Woolman's 'social and spiritual vision' for a reformed society in the British Atlantic world (p. 51). This vision was developed in its colonial context and shaped by what was happening in the world. Moreover, for Woolman, God's message was revealed to all, not just Quakers. Woolman believed that the society seen through revelation was different from the world in which he lived, a contrast evident in his arguments and activism.

1 Tolles, F. B., *Meeting House and Counting House: the Quaker merchants of colonial Philadelphia, 1682–1763*, Chapel Hill: Institute of Early American History and Culture at Williamsburg/University of North Carolina Press, 1948; Marietta, J. D., *The Reformation of American Quakerism, 1748–1783*, Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1984.

Woolman as a prophet is the focus of the third chapter. Through his renunciation of luxury, Woolman became a prophetic figure. Kershner examines the tension between Woolman's obedience to his revealed vision and his pragmatism: the 'maintenance of unity' among Quakers versus Woolman's 'true unity' through obedience to God's Truth (p. 64). Woolman described his 'anguish' as a result of being part of the Quaker community, but did not leave it. His thoughts and writings on politics and Quaker politicians, the evils of the silver-mining industry, and the 'greed-based economy' are all addressed in this chapter, building effectively on Kershner's placement of Woolman in his context and how he responded to it.

The fourth chapter focusses on Woolman's eschatology, described by Kershner as a combination of Quaker tradition and Woolman's own sense of urgency. Kershner is especially strong here, his definitions and explanations as he works through Woolman's eschatology making his study clear and understandable to readers without backgrounds in theology. Kershner's reminder that Woolman was not trained in classical theology helped this reader, as a historian of transatlantic Quakers, understand the composite nature of Woolman's theology.

Chapter 5 examines Woolman's perfectionism, moving from conversion to submission to God's will. Woolman believed that it was possible to live 'perfectly'. Furthermore, Woolman's perfectionism, an important part of his apocalyptic theology, drove his activism. Drawing from early Quaker writings by Barclay, Nayler and others, as well as the belief that Jesus was the ideal of submission to God's will, Woolman created a new standard for people in an increasingly commodified and market-based world.

Judgment and God's treatment of people are addressed in chapter six. Kershner discusses 'chastisements', Woolman's word for 'corrective interventions meant to guide the world toward faithfulness' (p. 129). Woolman believed that these 'chastisements' manifested in his contraction of smallpox in 1772 and read the condition as a message to limit his travel. He also believed the Seven Years' War was a message that Pennsylvanians were not listening to God as they should. Within this philosophy, 'Woolman believed that the universally atoning work of Christ carried ominous warnings for the slave economy and spoke to the historical moment' (p. 135).

Chapter 7 looks at Woolman's influences, such as his reading of diverse collections of spiritual writings, not all of them Quaker. Woolman adopted pieces to create his own theology. This chapter leads into Kershner's conclusion, in which he emphasises the complexity of Woolman's theology and incorporates his identification with the prophetic tradition and his focus on apocalypticism.

Each chapter builds toward understanding Woolman's theology, with reminders of his colonial/imperial world and of the Quaker and non-Quaker influences in each chapter. Kershner's work places Woolman in an Atlantic world that was key to the development and spread of Quakerism, but for which Woolman held little respect. This tension can be seen clearly, for example, in chapter seven's discussion

of Woolman's reading, an activity enabled by the transatlantic exchange of print. Nonetheless, Woolman's place in this world contributed to the development of his theology as a way to examine the impact of the culture and imperialism he witnessed. 'Woolman adopted a prophetic identity to address the social dislocation and secularization he witnessed in the British Atlantic world' (p. 5).

Kershner is kind to the non-theologian, defining terms like eschatology and apocalypticism, and building his argument gradually. In short, Kershner's work is fascinating and useful. Read as a companion volume to Geoffrey Plank's *John Woolman's Path to the Peaceable Kingdom*,² Kershner's book generates a fuller picture and understanding of Woolman as a man of his time and place.

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Andrew R. Murphy, *William Penn: A Life* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019), pp. xiv + 460. ISBN 9780190234249. Hardback, £25.00.

Andrew R. Murphy's *William Penn: A Life* (2019) serves as a sequel of sorts to his *Liberty, Conscience, and Toleration: The Political Thought of William Penn* (2016) and, ideally, the two should be read together. In his earlier work, Murphy cites the 'widespread scholarly neglect' of Penn, a situation he resolutely remedies with these two ambitious and comprehensive volumes. The first monograph focusses mainly on the theory and practice of liberty of conscience; however, he opens this biography by asserting, 'Penn's life is too complex to be viewed through only one lens' and emphasises the need to 'look anew at the totality of his life in all its complexity' (p. 5). Murphy succeeds admirably in this regard, re-introducing readers to a man we thought we knew well and placing him within the broader context of 'a world racked by religious and political discord, civil war, and social unrest' (p. 13).

As Murphy notes ruefully in his acknowledgements, he has lived with Penn for many years, yet it is precisely because of the length and depth of this relationship that he is able to offer such a full and fair portrait of a flawed man. Murphy is strongest when evaluating Penn's character and his careful, judicious analysis is most incisive when illuminating Penn's weaknesses. In Murphy's deft telling, the man who emerges from the shadows of the luminary is wholly imperfect, often falling short of the monumental tasks at hand. After all, Murphy reminds us, Penn-as-colonial-proprietor was 'an absentee landlord with no understanding of American political realities' (p. 202). Murphy dismisses one of Penn's more desperate schemes to get out from underneath his ever-mounting debt as 'yet

2 Plank, G., *John Woolman's Path to the Peaceable Kingdom*, Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012.

one more initiative that had captured Penn's imagination but would fail to yield concrete benefits.' (p. 341). And in an appraisal so incisive and succinct it could serve as Penn's epitaph, he describes him as a man who was 'well practiced at self-pity and was a demanding task master' (p. 302).

In Murphy's capable hands, however, these personal moments become more than mere reflections on Penn's character. He effectively uses these vignettes to weave a story of much larger political significance. For example, Murphy relays Penn's early concerns about his son, William Junior, in a passage that is almost painful to read, not only because of the palpable filial disappointment, but also because anyone familiar with Penn's family drama certainly knows what happens next (p. 299). Murphy then expands this passage into an entire chapter on the errant son, again illustrating well how the intimate family drama (including William Junior's challenge to Penn's will) shaped Pennsylvania in the decades to come.

Like the best biographies, Murphy also successfully uses Penn's life to illustrate important facets of the broader society in which he lived. The sections on the Penn-Mead trial highlights not Penn's rise to prominence as well as the unjust nature of the English court system (see pp. 76–80 in particular). Unsurprisingly, given his previous work on Penn's writings, Murphy also illustrates the more conservative side to Penn's campaign for liberty of conscience and what critics viewed as his hasty retreat from the Fundamental Constitutions (see p. 133 and especially pp. 148–52). For this American reviewer, at least, Murphy's pointed and persuasive marking of Penn as a fundamentally *English* subject primarily shaped by and concerned with *English* politics was a useful corrective to much writing about Penn. Finally, throughout the volume, but especially in the Epilogue, Murphy makes a crucial and compelling case for the mutually constitutive nature of religion and politics (p. 361). At the same time, those readers interested in immersing themselves in the religious life and practice of the broader Religious Society of Friends in which he worshipped or the theological controversies with which he involved himself (such as the Keithian controversy) should seek out supplemental sources.

There were a few topics about which I wish Murphy had leaned in a bit more. Penn's money worries were his constant companion and Murphy effectively highlights how Penn's debt influenced the trajectory of his life and therefore his colony. Yet I found myself wanting to know more about just what Penn was spending all of his money on and how he squared this extravagance with (albeit ever-changing and unevenly observed and enforced) ideas about simplicity. Murphy also mines scant sources to examine Penn's role as an enslaver, remarking that Penn 'displayed no signs of a troubled conscience over it' (p. 185). It is of course difficult to read silence, but the contrast for a man who wrote so much about liberty seems ripe for further analysis. Finally, Penn's wives, Gulielma and Hannah, are never full people in this study, and his domestic affairs remain firmly in the background. This may be an accurate portrayal of Penn, and it does not

differ in this regard from the recent spate of biographies about Quaker men by Geoffrey Plank (2012), Thomas Slaughter (2008), Jon Kershner (2018), Maurice Jackson (2009), Marcus Rediker (2017) and Gary Nash (2017), but I still wish the impact of his domestic life on his politics were given the same attention and space as his religion.

If Andrew Murphy's first book explored the 'promise and paradox of toleration in theory and practice', *William Penn: A Life* leaves us with the promise and paradox of the man himself in theory and in practice (p. 362). The Epilogue is a thoughtful reflection on the memory and memorialisation of Penn and his 'holy experiment' (see pp. 358–63 especially). In the end, Murphy's biography delivers more than an examination of Penn's 'life in all its complexity', he leaves us with an exploration of what is essential to living a life of conscientious integrity in a diverse world. (pp. 5 and 366).

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Nancy A. Hewitt, *Radical Friend: Amy Kirby Post and her Activist Worlds* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2018), pp. xi–xvi + 413. ISBN 9781469640327. Hardback, \$39.95.

This biography of Amy Kirby Post has involved dedicated labour over many years on the part of its author, Nancy Hewitt, a widely respected researcher in her field. The name of the subject of this work is unlikely to be familiar. Indeed Post's figure has previously stood somewhat on the periphery of historical research on major nineteenth-century American reform movements, most especially anti-slavery and women's rights, in which she was active. Hewitt successfully redresses that neglect, one arising, it would seem, from a variety of causes: limited sources until the recent deposit of family papers in a public collection; Post's location in provincial America; her own focus on activism within local communities; and her own apparently limited desire for public recognition. Yet, as this study so amply shows, a focus on her activities allows a much closer attention to what might be called the mechanics of reform, and to an understanding of how national movements were shaped and carried forward by particular persons in particular localities.

Amy Kirby was born in 1802 among farming communities of Quakers on Long Island. Her religious affiliation shaped her social and political values. Moreover, through this religious affiliation she was also part of extensive kinship and friendship networks created by the discipline and organisation of her church. Both in their meetings for worship and their business meetings, these Friends might look beyond spiritual matters and church management to express concerns regarding war, slavery, women's rights and temperance, for example. The local Friends' meetings of Amy Kirby's youth became divided over the teachings of

minister Elias Hicks, and the majority, including Amy Kirby, joined the Hicksite separation that occurred in 1828, a separation that emphasised, for example, Friends' longstanding emphasis on the spiritual guidance of 'the inner light', over the focus on bible study advocated by evangelically inclined Friends.

With her marriage to farmer-turned-pharmacist, Isaac Post, she settled in up-state New York, where their household became part of the underground railway, and where together the couple pursued a wide range of reform interests. The Posts were among those who departed the Hicksite Yearly Meeting in 1845 to protest its attempted restrictions on the participation of its members in 'worldly' movements for social justice. For them, their social activism and political commitments arose directly from their religious beliefs and they were not alone among Friends in this. In 1848 the Posts joined those who formed the Meeting of Congregational Friends, later known as Progressive Friends, which rejected the quietism that had so long shaped the values of their church. By this time, too, they were also exploring spiritualism, a belief in which the couple united but that came increasingly to dominate the religious life and public work of Isaac Post.

The commitment of Amy Kirby Post at the local level to a wide range of reform issues is charted in great detail. But this exercise is not undertaken simply to redress her relative neglect in national histories. Nancy Hewitt's main aim is to explore Post as an example of what she terms here 'conductors', those who orchestrated social activism within their local communities while also linking them to the national leadership. So, with regard to the founding of a national movement for women's rights at conventions held in upstate New York, Post's networks were a significant help, networks which linked her closely both to local reformers and to the emerging national leadership of this movement. Hewitt also stresses the 'holism' that she finds in Post's activism—each campaign in which she played a part being an aspect of her 'universalist vision' of social justice (p. 287). In such instances the importance of particular persons and particular localities to national campaigns is again carefully argued, alongside the interconnections they represented between a number of causes.

The particular is central then to Hewitt's methodology, and so access to the Post family archive was a considerable aid to her research, comprising as it does a large body of family correspondence. Letters may be especially important for the project of women's history, given women's relative invisibility in more public records. Moreover, letters became the technology by which women fulfilled the role they were often expected to play in this period, of maintaining, if not creating, relationships, familial and otherwise, sometimes across great distances, through letter-writing. And as this study so ably demonstrates, letters are often an important resource for observing a woman at work in her domestic environment, but also, as in this case, as she 'conducted' major movements for reform from her home.

The charting of the particular may create fresh historical understandings, then. But it also carries difficulties: for the reader, of sometimes not being able to see the wood for the trees; and for the writer, of sometimes becoming overly

repetitious. Charting the guests and boarders who lived from time to time in the Post household may serve further to illustrate the central arguments in Hewitt's study. But do we need to know about the ups and downs of her family life and that of her kin to comprehend this interpretation? Do they help us understand the personality of the subject? For this reader, probably not, fascinating though they are in themselves. The family archive contains relatively few of Post's letters, and their content appears to reveal much more about what Amy did than who Amy was. If it seems ungrateful to introduce these quibbles in discussing a work of such dedicated, detailed, careful scholarship, it is to raise the question of whether biography is the best way of presenting such research. Might Post's role as 'conductor' have been better examined by organising this research around her changing religious affiliations and the history of the campaigns in which she was involved? For, in the end, this is Hewitt's main interest, and the nub of her significant challenge to how the history of national movements has previously been constructed.

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Anne Logan, *The Politics of Penal Reform: Margery Fry and the Howard League* (London: Routledge, 2018), pp. xi + 193. ISBN 9781138039377. Hardback, £105.00.

Largely forgotten in recent years, in her own lifetime Margery Fry was a well-known advocate of penal reform and a rare example of a female public intellectual. In this meticulously researched and very readable account, Anne Logan repositions Fry at the heart of twentieth-century penal reform in Britain and beyond. Fry's life history is used as a lens through which to explore the hitherto neglected history of the Howard League, the most significant penal reform pressure group of the twentieth century. Rather than a conventional cradle-to-grave biography therefore, the author presents 'a feminist analysis of a feminist subject' (p. 7), and considers Fry and her activities within the context of her overlapping networks of family, friends, colleagues and political allies. Logan foregrounds her feminism, and the impact of gender ideology on her career and on how the League, and penal reform more broadly, developed under her leadership. Here, Fry is conceptualised as a 'proto-professional' (p. 5) who, despite working in an unpaid capacity, devoted a substantial part of her life to penal reform, utilising skills and expertise developed through her education and life experiences. In so doing, this study presents a very different reading to the earlier, and only previous biography by Enid Huws Jones in which Fry was portrayed as the 'essential amateur'.¹

1 Jones, E. H., *Margery Fry: the essential amateur*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1965.

How Fry developed her plethora of attributes and skills is the focus of the first part of the book. Entitled 'Becoming Miss Fry', three chapters trace the influences at work in Fry's background, and her intellectual development and activities up to 1918, when she first became involved in penal reform. This includes her Quaker family and ancestry, and her childhood and education in an affluent upper-middle class family in London. Logan takes issue with some common assumptions about Quakers in the histories of social movements in the period, especially the idea that all Quakers were progressive in their attitudes to gender. Her father Edward was a successful barrister whose legal career distanced him from some aspects of Quaker faith and traditions, a trajectory that would be followed to an even greater degree by Fry herself, and by the sibling to whom she was closest, her artist brother Roger. At Somerville College, Oxford, which she entered in 1894 to read mathematics, despite the initial opposition of her parents, she was exposed to new influences and challenges to her upbringing, largely through her friendship with Eleanor Rathbone. It was here that she first became engaged in committee work and public speaking, and encountered feminism, which was very much at odds with her mother Mariabella's more conservative gender ideology. Hampered by her parents' expectations, and by the limited career options open to women in the period, she returned home briefly in 1897 before taking up a post as librarian in Somerville College.

The second and third chapters narrate her career from this point to 1918, including her move to the University of Birmingham in 1904 as first warden of its newly created women's hall of residence. During her time in the Midlands she developed political and networking skills as an active campaigner for women's suffrage and a co-opted member of Staffordshire Education Committee. A family legacy in 1914 led to her resignation from Birmingham University, as she could now afford to dedicate her time and energies to suffrage and voluntary work. These plans were interrupted by the First World War. The third chapter explores the profound impact of the conflict on her life, including her intimate friendship with the historian Rose Sidgwick who died in 1918, and her relationship with the mathematician Bruce McLaren, who was killed in 1916. This chapter also focusses on Fry's activities as a relief worker with the Friends' War Victims' Relief Committee in France. Despite her Quaker background she was not a pacifist, writing in her journal that she would have enlisted had she been a man. Although Logan covers a several significant and very different themes in these three relatively short chapters, she demonstrates convincingly how Fry's background, her gendered girlhood, and her education and experiences as a young woman by 1918 all equipped her for the political activism to come.

The second part of the book covers Fry's work in penal reform, beginning with her early involvement with the Penal Reform League, and her instrumental role in its merger with the Howard Association to create the Howard League. Fry was a central figure in shaping the League's policies, practical advocacy, and lobbying strategies until her death in 1958. Its story is told in the context

of related activities and organisations in which she played a significant part, including her role as one of the first women magistrates in London from 1919, the establishment of the Magistrates' Association, and the Campaign Against the Death Penalty.

One fascinating aspect of this period is her international activism, working alongside women such as Gertrude Eaton to secure minimum standards for the treatment of prisoners through the League of Nations, her work monitoring prisoner welfare in the British Empire and colonies, and her later interest in China. Fry emerges as a dedicated professional who believed that the argument would be won by reason and evidence rather than sentiment, and who engaged in meticulous research to support her campaigns. A woman of great charm, she was also adept at developing effective personal relationships with key people to achieve her ends and had a very clear understanding of the potential of mass media. Chapter six considers her use of print media and her extensive broadcasting career with the BBC, from her first appearance in a radio debate on capital punishment in 1928, to her regular 1940s appearances on the highly regarded *Brains Trust*.

Arguing that the contributions of women to criminology have largely been ignored as they took place outside formal academic structures, the final chapter considers her contribution to this discipline through research and publications, and her promotion of criminology as an academic subject at Cambridge and Birmingham. This last chapter also demonstrates her innovative ideas relating to youth justice, and how she anticipated some of the elements of more recent initiatives in restorative justice in her last campaign for compensation for the victims of crime in the 1950s.

This study makes an original and valuable contribution to the history of penal reform in the twentieth century and the role of women in that history in particular. Although this is the main focus of the book, the author presents a biographical portrait of a woman with a wide-ranging humanitarian mission. Logan argues convincingly that although Fry was not motivated by religious faith, the cultural inheritance of her Quaker background was a significant influence on her work and trajectory, whilst also demonstrating that their effect was more complicated and nuanced than is sometimes assumed. Interestingly, she recounts that nothing irritated Fry more than being compared with Elizabeth Fry, once explaining that she was 'rather tired of her, though no one could feel anything but admiration for her work' (p. 7).

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Kathryn Montalbano, *Government Surveillance of Religious Expression: Mormons, Quakers, and Muslims in the United States* (London and New York: Routledge, 2019), pp. ix + 168. ISBN 9781138306714. Hardback, £84.50.

Kathryn Montalbano's *Government Surveillance of Religious Expression* analyses government monitoring of: Mormons in the Territory of Utah in the 1870s and 1880s for polygamy; Quakers of the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) from the 1920s to the 1960s for communist infiltration; and Muslims in Brooklyn, New York, from 2002 to 2013 for suspected terrorism. In an effort to reposition religion as an important category for investigation in the field of communications, Montalbano's scholarship is in conversation with important authorities on the phenomenon of secularisation such as Talal Asad, David Sehat, and Saba Mahmood. The focus of *Government Surveillance of Religious Expression* is on the particular techniques used by government agencies as seen in these case studies, and how those techniques disciplined certain religious minorities towards the dominant social and political outlook of their time.

Beginning with the case of the Latter Day Saints, Montalbano explains how nineteenth-century government authorities dealt with the perceived threat of polygamy on the American frontier. Underpinning Montalbano's discussion of what secularisation meant at this time was the distinction made in the Supreme Court case *Reynolds v. United States* (1878) between religious belief and religious action. In her analysis of the Mormon case study, Montalbano explains how government agents went about determining who in fact was a polygamist, since the church did not leave much of a paper trail concerning these marriages. Many of these techniques would be used by the federal government to monitor subjects in the twentieth century and Montalbano's discussion of the Mormon case study pushes back the origins of modern surveillance into the late nineteenth century.

The second case study addresses the FBI's surveillance of the American Friends' Service Committee from roughly 1921 to 1972. This chapter is almost exclusively focussed on the means of surveillance of the AFSC from material obtained by William Davidon and others in 1971 concerning COINTELPRO, J. Edgar Hoover's confidential counterintelligence programme. Quaker scholars will need to look elsewhere for a detailed history of the AFSC or its work with civil rights or other religions, particularly from writers such as Allan W. Austin. But in her book Montalbano does demonstrate how FBI surveillance likely made the American Friends Service Committee more radical. One example of this can be seen in the Campaign to Stop Government Spying, launched by the AFSC in 1975, along with the creation of a more robust legal defence network against civil liberties abuses by the federal government after the discovery of the extent and scope of FBI spying on the AFSC.

However, in her analysis of the FBI's surveillance of the American Friends Service Committee, Montalbano stresses the paradox of how many FBI agents, particularly from the AFSC's native Philadelphia, actually respected

the Religious Society of Friends and may have been ambivalent regarding certain aspects of J. Edgar Hoover's surveillance campaign. In addition, the FBI produced a paper titled 'The Tenets of the Quaker Religion', published in 1943, that articulated how Quaker beliefs were rooted in common American values—another example of the ambivalence felt by at least some in the FBI towards the Quaker organisation.

Similar willingness to at least try to understand the good intentions of followers of an unpopular religious group was not present in Montalbano's third study, concerning the NYPD's interactions with the Muslim community in Brooklyn, New York. Montalbano refers to the interrogators as the most ill-informed of those in her three examples, in part because Islam can be racialised in ways that Mormonism and Quakerism cannot be. Moreover, few of the police officers involved in the surveillance had any direct association with Islam. The decision to surveil mosques in Brooklyn likewise represented something of a departure from the other cases, as the religion of Islam itself was being framed as inspiring terrorist activity.

Montalbano traces how over the course of roughly 140 years, government surveillance techniques shifted from the monitoring of behaviour to predicting if seditious or illegal activities were going to occur by certain religious groups. But throughout, the dominance of Protestant hegemony has remained a constant. An important implication, then, of *Government Surveillance of Religious Expression* lies in its reminder that American society does not necessarily trend toward greater respect for individual rights of conscience, nor that a secular society is free of government-sponsored sectarian prejudice. In fact, with the growth of newer modes of monitoring, accompanying the expansion of new forms of state power generally, Montalbano details how the groundwork has been established for a 'transnational hegemonic secularism that limits the religious expression' (p. 160) of the targets of state surveillance.

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Laura Rediehs, *Quaker Epistemology* (Leiden: Brill, 2019), pp. 92. ISBN 9789004419001. Paperback, €70.00/\$84.00.

This ambitious and very welcome book lays out a series of connections between Quaker thought and contemporary problems in epistemology. Rediehs begins with early Quaker thought, tracing some of the interactions between the Quaker movement and the situation in philosophy (and in science, or natural philosophy) at that time, adding more recent Quaker thought and dialogue with other forms of philosophy, before moving on to consider ways in which the distinctive Quaker epistemology she has developed from these sources might be understood today. Overall, I found this book to be an important contribution to the small field of

Quaker interaction with formal philosophy, and a very coherent and well-written one. Both the historical aspects of Quakerism (which can be confusing) and the technical aspects of the philosophical issues (which are apt to be obscure) are handled in a readable way with precise and clear explanations.

The text is divided into parts, rather than chapters. Beginning with historical background, Rediehs works through both the Quaker and academic philosophical material. She draws out connections between the two when possible, and explains both concisely. She includes material from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, sometimes neglected in Quaker contexts, and places Quaker thought within its wider cultural and intellectual context. After a short introduction, Part 2 looks at the early historical background—including a helpful insight into the state of philosophy at the time of the founding of the Quaker movement—and Part 3 covers the eighteenth to twentieth centuries. In Part 4 of the book she moves smoothly on to the Quaker position today, bringing it into dialogue with other philosophical positions, then in Part 5 offers significant constructive work. By comparing Quaker epistemology as she has outlined it with feminist epistemologies, Rediehs is able to offer an integrated hermeneutic which brings out the best of both approaches.

As I read this book, I found that I was admiring the quality of the research and writing as well as finding the argument easy to follow. It deals with a range of time periods, but I did not spot historical inaccuracies or get confused about which time was being discussed. It covers a multitude of philosophical positions, and while I was aware that some of them were being simplified, I was able to understand them all and keep track of which were in play at each stage. Explaining the other discipline concisely and coherently to readers is a constant balancing act in multi-disciplinary work (in this case historical and philosophical), and Rediehs is able to maintain that balance throughout. Most of the points where I wanted to know more were covered in her comments about implications and areas for future research. Books in this Brill series are necessarily short, and while I would like to read a good deal more on these questions—for example: How does this play out in Quakerism today? Is she right to identify one Quaker epistemology rather than, say, a distinctive liberal one developing from 1895 onwards? Would this religious epistemology ever be acceptable to secular philosophers?—Rediehs was right not to try and go beyond the scope of her specific project.

Researchers in two fields are likely to benefit particularly from this book, beyond those working directly on the connections between Quakerism and philosophy. One is those in Quaker Studies for whom the clear articulation of a specifically Quaker epistemology will shed light on their own work: in particular, those working on Quaker involvement in science, other aspects of Quaker thought and theology (including issues around non-theism), and perhaps also aspects of the history of ideas within or related to the Quaker context. The other—and perhaps this book is less likely to reach this audience due to its publication in a series on Quaker Studies—is epistemologists, especially (but not

only) those working in philosophy of religion. There are important possibilities here for alternative approaches to religious epistemology, building on and going beyond those which have been common in the twentieth century, and in particular Rediehs' suggestions about a potential Quaker contribution to solving what she terms 'today's crisis of truth' (p. 76) deserve serious consideration from other philosophers. As she herself points out, both Quaker and scientific epistemologies rely on a community surrounding the individual to test and expand or correct what has been proposed; similarly, the approach proposed in this book needs to be considered and tested against current problems in order to see whether it actually provides a functional paradigm for addressing them. I hope this book will be the beginning of such a discernment.

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