



Bell, E., 'Rosemary Moore, *George Whitehead and the Establishment of Quakerism* (Leiden: Brill, 2021), pp. 124. ISBN 9789004500129. Paperback. € 84., *Quaker Studies* 29/1 (2025): pp. 1–4. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.16995/quaker.18963>



**Rosemary Moore, *George Whitehead and the Establishment of Quakerism* (Leiden: Brill, 2021), pp. 124. ISBN 9789004500129. Paperback. € 84.**

Erin Bell, University of Lincoln, UK, [Ebelle@lincoln.ac.uk](mailto:Ebelle@lincoln.ac.uk)

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Review of Rosemary Moore, *George Whitehead and the Establishment of Quakerism* (Leiden: Brill, 2021), pp. 124. ISBN 9789004500129. Paperback. € 84.

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In this brief, but extremely detailed and carefully referenced analysis, the prolific and well-respected historian of the first century of Quakerism, Rosemary Moore, offers insights into the works and influence of George Whitehead, a Friend who, as Moore emphasises, was at two distinct points in his life the sole remaining Quaker leader: once in the early 1660s when other leading male Friends had been imprisoned, and then again 30 years later, when most of the remaining First Generation of Friends, including Fox, had died. Despite this, prior to Moore's work, Whitehead was relatively little researched and undervalued as a key early Friend engaged in guiding Quakerism into a second generation, in which, as the series' associate editor Robynne Rogers Healey puts it, the eschaton was deferred; the radicalism of the first generation was internally suppressed in order to support efforts to achieve toleration in wider society, and thereby guarantee the survival of Quakerism, led by Friends such as Whitehead (Moore p. 87 fn289 citing Healey 2015: p. 273).

The book forms part of a collection of *Research Perspectives in Quaker Studies* by the historically significant publisher Brill, currently at 23 volumes produced from 2018–24, on themes as diverse as Irish Quaker family history and Quaker texts in Latin. (see [brill.com/rpqss](http://brill.com/rpqss)) Moore's work fits neatly into this wider collection, offering a detailed yet succinct account of Whitehead's key publications and activities. Moore explores his family background and development as a Quaker leader, via his successful petitioning of the monarch for Toleration prior to the 1689 Act, his de facto role as Quaker leader in the early 1660s and then as sole surviving representative of the first generation by the later 1690s, even noting the lack of commemoration, compared to Ambrose Rigge, another member of the Valiant Sixty early Quaker preachers, of Whitehead in his Cumbrian community in the present.

One of the few areas of the work which can justifiably be criticised is its expense. Although this could be said of many more scholarly works which, at the same time, are largely inaccessible to a wider readership, with their price justified by publishers as relating to an expected low level of sales to a limited group of subject specialists, in this case it is more difficult to justify, and especially the equally high cost of the PDF/ebook. Compared to Moore's magisterial, and considerably longer, *A Light in Their Consciences* (2020 [2000]), covering in detail the first two decades of Quakerism and available at a third of the price, this price difference may reflect the perceived wider readership for the earlier work. Similarly, the use in the 2021 book of an abstract and keywords, otherwise common in an academic article, could be seen as reflecting the expectation that the work would have a limited, university-based readership. Certainly, the work inhabits a space between a full-length book and a substantial journal article in terms of its structure and length. However, there is much to offer for a general reader interested

in early Quakers, especially if already informed and inspired by the 2020 work; there are relatively lengthy quotations from C17th works, but they are contextualised by Moore individually, and through the division of the book into, for example, subsections of the decades of persecution experienced 1663–85 (pp. 25–44), a relatively straightforward chronological structure is offered which requires less prior knowledge from the reader to make sense of the order in which the man and his works are discussed. Indeed, despite Moore's assertion that much of Whitehead's work is 'monumentally dull' (p. 5), her selection is careful, focussing on his childhood (pp. 10–11), convincement (p. 13), Whitehead and his wife Ann's missionary activity (p. 34) and experience of persecution (p. 35), enabling her to avoid the most tedious and potentially least representative works, and therefore to clarify key ideas for readers unlikely to have much specific knowledge.

That is not to suggest that the book is only of interest for general readers rather than those also engaged in research. The listing of Whitehead's publications at the end of the volume (pp. 93–111) is extremely useful for scholars. My own work, amongst that of a number of current historians of Quakerism, will be greatly enriched by this volume as a whole, not least in Moore's attention to detail in relation to Whitehead himself and his role in significant Quaker groups such as the Second Day's Morning Meeting. The latter checked pre-publication manuscripts, even, as Moore reminds us, those of George Fox during his lifetime, to guarantee amendment of those likely to lead to criticism of Friends (p. 84 fn278 citing Braithwaite p. 280). However, the potential which Moore's work offers to the wider Quaker community is greater still. This is despite the work having been apparently aimed, by the publisher at least, at university students and scholars of Quakerism with access to well-funded libraries. This is a great pity and is a greater limitation to the work than the COVID19 restrictions footnoted as (an understandable) reason for less in-depth analysis of Whitehead's fellow minister Alexander Parker due to lack of access to archives to consult manuscript material in 2020–21 (p. 82 fn275). Certainly, the content is accessible and would be of interest to a wider readership, if they could access it; otherwise, Whitehead may continue to be, as Moore suggests, unknown to most Quakers today (p. 4).

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## Competing Interests

[[COMPETING INTEREST STATEMENT TO BE PROVIDED]]

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W. Braithwaite, *The Second Period of Quakerism* (Macmillan: London 1919).



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