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The Editors Respond to the Reviewers

Stephen W. Angell  
*Earlham School of Religion*, angelst@earlham.edu

'Ben' Pink Dandelion  
*University of Birmingham*, b.p.dandelion@bham.ac.uk

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THE EDITORS RESPOND TO THE REVIEWERS

STEPHEN W. ANGELL AND ‘BEN’ PINK DANDELION

We would first of all like to thank the four reviewers for such thoughtful and helpful responses. We also want to pay tribute to the 42 authors and the 30 additional consultants: each chapter was read by at least two other scholars besides ourselves, and the whole project felt very much like a team effort.

This book doesn’t take a particular line through Quaker studies. Paul mentioned the part of the introduction which lays out the different dominant theories of Quaker studies in the past 150 years. This book didn’t take one of them and impose it on the authors. Carole Spencer wrote to her theory and Doug Gwyn to his. As such, the book shows quite transparently the complexity of the breadth of scholarship in the field. We did insist that authors refrain from using the ‘inner light’, a modern Quaker invention so often wrongly attributed to earlier Friends.

The book is not cutting edge. The Press wanted us to use settled scholarship with references to published material. In our respective positions, we were aware of much new scholarship but refrained from including it ahead of it being tested by the academic community. We can think of Tim Burdick’s work on Oregon Yearly Meeting and its different theological positions in the first fifty years of the twentieth century but it wasn’t included, given his PhD was only completed in early 2013. Elaine Pryce’s work on how Quietism can be identified in the 17th century and should not be used only to label eighteenth century Quakerism is highly compelling, but her PhD has just been submitted.

We should address the issue of space. The Press gave us 250,000 words. Each author had no more than 8000 words, most 7000 words or less. This may have limited the connections authors made with wider religious and political history that Matt Hedstrom suggests would have been useful, although it is also true that Quaker studies is still too focused on Quakerism. We did create two chapters from the original one on Family and Sexuality but we accept that we could have done more to include different perspectives on sexuality. We asked
all authors to specifically include the experience of women and to include a global perspective. We chose not to divide world Quakerism geographically and accept the possibility of extra chapters, as Paul Anderson suggests, on Liberal Quakerism outside of North America and on majority Quakerism in the global south. We attempted to give agency through inclusion rather than through separation, which might possibly be seen as tokenistic. Paul Anderson’s volume on the future of Quakerism and the project Ann Riggs talks of will help redress the vacuum of African and South American voices in this volume. As Quakerism in the global north itself faces the prospect of reverse mission, so it is also true within the study of Quakerism that we should be ready to welcome new scholarship that Ann Riggs and Jon Kershner rightly identify as urgently required.

QUAKER SCHOLARSHIP AND THE GLOBAL SOUTH

At this point, we might reiterate the purposes that we editors of the OHQS set forth to the chapter authors, because these highlight how we intended this Quaker reference work to build upon other works in the field of Quaker studies.

Quoting from page 8, “This handbook aims for a broad, thorough in-depth treatment of the Quaker tradition in all chronological periods, with coverage of Quaker meetings and churches in all parts of the world, and including both men and women. All of the chapter authors were informed from the outset of the editors’ wish for both breadth and depth of coverage and have endeavored to craft their chapters accordingly.”

We also noted how ambitious some of these goals were. “We have struggled to include as much material as we would like on Quakerism in the global south in spite of the distribution of Quakerism. While we have deliberately tried to emphasize the contribution and experience of women Friends, this is still largely an unwritten story.” (8)

In response to Ann Riggs’ observation that only five or six percent of the material in the Handbook addresses the situation of African Quakers directly, we would say the following: If the aim of the Handbook was only (or mainly) to give a description of the present-day Religious Society of Friends, then it would be worrying that so little space has been given to coverage of Friends in the global south. However, given that the editors asked for a thorough treatment of all
historical periods, and that for most of Quaker history most Friends were to be found in the transoceanic community spanning the North Atlantic, the result (and the proportion of coverage of different geographical areas) was about what we desired and had planned on.

The emergence of Quakerism so strongly in the global south is the major story of the last 50 years of Quaker history. Thus we worked hard to include global south perspectives, and coverage is present in nearly every chapter of the handbook.

Many chapter authors consulted with the editors as to how best to do this. With Michael Birkel’s chapter on Discernment and Roger Homan’s chapter on architecture, we encouraged our chapter authors to bend the Press’s guidelines that the essays be based on well-settled findings. That is, the Press had advised that authors’ findings should be source to the best essays in refereed scholarly journals, or in the most authoritative books. What our chapter authors found themselves needing to do, in order to write the essays according to editors’ guidelines, was to generate source materials, through interviewing Quakers who had lived in the global south, or, in some cases, who had merely visited the region.

The fact that OHQS helps to set trajectories for future research in Quaker Studies Jon Kershner sees as a strength of this book. We agree. At least, it is our hope that it be so.

**ORIGINAL SIN**

We have already stated that our editorial aim was not to homogenize all of our author’s contributions, and hence it is quite acceptable to us that Nikki Coffey Tousley, on the one hand, and Max Carter and Simon Best, on the other hand, be seen to have said something different on seventeenth-century Quakers’ attitudes toward original sin.

We agree with Jon Kershner however that, in either or both chapters, an extra sentence or two of what Fox meant by sin might clarify the ambiguity he identifies.

An Earlham School of Religion student, reading Chapter 4 of Barclay’s *Apology*, on human nature, observed, “Barclay does not accept original sin, but he comes very close.” Rufus Jones’ sharp reaction against Barclay’s theology was based in large part in a similar...
reaction to what Jones thought of as Barclay’s mistakenly pessimistic assessment of human nature. We would not be as inclined as Kershner to draw a sharp distinction between Fox and Barclay on the subject. But, no matter how subtly expressed, the Quakers’ emphasis on the perfectibility of human nature, through the intervention of the divine, meant that they were after something different than their Puritan opponents were. Quakers never would have put out a speller beginning, “In Adam’s Fall, we sinned all.”

In fact, Fox did publish a speller! His “Child’s Lesson” begins, “Christ is the Truth. Christ is the Light. Christ is my Way. Christ is my Life. Christ is my Savior. Christ is my Hope of Glory.” After a dozen or more such affirmations of Christ, Fox continues, “Christ destroyeth the Devil and his Works, which leadeth man and woman from God; and so Christ is the Way to God again.” (Fox and Hookes 1673, 14) In other words, as Fox stated in his vision from the Pendle Hill summit, he reaffirmed in his catechism that the ocean of light does flow over the ocean of darkness.

In the area of the Trinity, raised by Paul Anderson, space limitations of 7000 words for a chapter on “God, Christ, and the Light” limited also the number of theories that could be covered, in addition to William Penn’s agreement with a Sabellian view of the Trinity. With more words, we could have covered more theories.

**CONTRIBUTION TO DENOMINATIONAL STUDIES**

We are greatly indebted to Matt Hedstrom for his reflections on the various ways that Quaker history might fit into a broader narrative of religious history, especially in the modern world. The connections that he points out between Rufus Jones and mystics like Howard Thurman, as well as liberals such as Harry Emerson Fosdick, are apt ones. Leigh Schmidt’s *Restless Souls*, as he mentions, is full of insights in this area. Another instructive work that illuminates connections between pacifist Quakers and like-minded pacifists in other denominations is Patricia Appelbaum’s *Kingdom to Commune: Protestant Pacifist Culture between World War I and the Vietnam Era*.

We might also add that Quakers have made contributions to the broader world across the religious spectrum. Thus, one might explore Quaker influences on Pentecostalism and related religious movements through such personages as birthright Quaker A. J. Tomlinson,
the founder of the Church of God (Cleveland, Tennessee) and Quaker attender John Wimber, founder of the Vineyard Fellowship. Hedstrom’s insight (based in part on Lonnie Valentine’s chapter on Quaker peacemaking) that Quaker witness became less distinctively Quaker, that is, that in the modern world Quakers have tended to make their contributions by blending into a broader interreligious and ecumenical framework, is also true across the religious spectrum.

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