

Editorial

Opportunities

Welcome to the June 2023 issue of *Quaker Studies*. This is officially the first anniversary of the new editorial team—myself, Rhiannon Grant and Erica Canela. We wanted to open this issue with thanks to the Quaker Studies Research Association (QSRA), its members, our subscribers and to our readers. We have been working hard behind the scenes to develop new ideas and ways of supporting scholarship.

One key development we can share in this issue is the new QSRA Excellence Award. This essay prize for brand new, unpublished research is tailored to those often shut out of academic opportunities: people in precarity, unemployment, and what is termed ‘alt-ac’ (alternative academic) or academic-adjacent careers; and nominally ‘early career researchers’ who are beyond the often one-to-three-year cut-off point instituted by funding bodies and others. You will find the full announcement, which outlines eligibility and submission procedures, immediately after this editorial. If successful, we hope that this will become an annual scheme. We also include, by way of reminder, the full details about opportunities offered by QSRA and by partner organisations:

- The Adshead Award is administered by QSRA and provides research time in physical archives. Traditionally this has been at Woodbrooke, but since the pandemic the scheme has been widened.
- The Gerald Hodgett Award is run by Centre for Research in Quaker Studies (CRQS, University of Birmingham). It is for individuals or groups who have completed research at a British university and would like to present it more widely to British Quakers.
- The Lucretia Mott Student Essay Award recognises promising research with a small cash prize and potential publication in *Quaker Studies*. It is administered by the Quaker Studies Program Unit of the American Academy of Religion.

In many ways, then, this issue is one through which opportunity runs, especially as the scholarly landscape is still challenged by the fallout from the pandemic, and in the UK and elsewhere also by demands on time and demands for better working conditions. This has meant that whereas this current issue is comparatively light, December 2023 will be larger. That themed issue, guest-edited by Jon Kershner (Washington State University), will concentrate on the eighteenth-century American merchant and Quaker, John Woolman, yet also include the George Richardson Lecture and other new contributions.

In this current issue, Judith Roads presents the opportunity to think differently about early-Quaker publications in her Research Article, ‘An Exploration of Seventeenth-Century Quaker Printed Title Pages as Paratext’ – a term embracing everything that is not the main body of the publication. Roads’ qualitative study considers ‘the Quaker approach to title page design and language with contemporary printed works by non-Quaker writers in order to test whether it can be said that there is a prototypically Quaker title page’.¹

Stephen W. Angell’s Research Article, ‘Sarah Mapps Douglass and Sojourner Truth: intersections of religion, race, gender and social class’, offers scholars the opportunity to look afresh at two well-known nineteenth-century Black women connected with Quakers. By carefully considering Douglass and Truth, Angell helps refocus the historiography away from its traditional habitat, whilst also employing the writings of white men ‘during an era in which exceptional women often seemed to be rendered as honorary men’.²

Pink Dandelion’s is the first of three Research Notes in this issue. Here, he reflects on the series of surveys of British Quakers over the past 30 years, which he himself set in train. In the Research Note, Dandelion highlights previously unpublished research drawn from the 2013 survey, offering vibrant insights into meetings and the national community during the last decade. More ambitious, and with the benefit of online completion, the October 2023 survey offers the opportunity to harmonise and consolidate methodologies and in turn gain greater understanding of contemporary Quakers and their beliefs.

Lisa McQuillan’s Research Note reports on the Wellcome-funded cataloguing project at Friends House Library, which has brought to the fore opportunities for researchers and new research. A rounded piece, ‘Exploring the Second World-War Friends Ambulance Unit and Friends Relief Service Records’ offers an idea of extant scholarship and how the newly catalogued archive might alter and enhance the historiography. It gives an overview of the content of the collections, as well as specific examples of the riches therein.

1 Roads, J., ‘An Exploration of Seventeenth-Century Quaker Printed Title Pages as Paratext’, *Quaker Studies* 28 (2023), pp. 15–33, at p. 15.

2 Angell, S. W., ‘Sarah Mapps Douglass and Sojourner Truth: intersections of religion, race, gender and social class’, *Quaker Studies* 28 (2023), pp. 35–59, at p. 35.

The final Research Note is a report about the Africa Quaker Archives, established through the Quaker Religious Education Collaborative (QREC) and Friends Theological College (FTC) in Kaimosi, Kenya, in 2020. Beth Collea's piece is essentially an origins story in real time, telling both the ideas behind and uses of the archives, as well as efforts to capture history before it is lost. A vivid account of the intertwining of faith and history, the Research Note also mentions the opportunity for Friends from all over the world to donate items to the archive.

Following the Research Notes, a virtual question-and-answer session with scholars in Africa and South America presents the opportunity to gain insights about how the academy functions and what might be done by us all to address social and scholarly inequalities. Reflecting on their intellectual pursuit and experiences, Robert J. Wafula, Emma Condori Mamani, Esther Mombo, Oscar Lugusa Malande and David Niyonzima convey a range of thoughts and challenge some of the assumptions that are sometimes made. Taken together, they call for tailored thinking and approaches to address inequality, but recognise that there are different obstacles to change.

The issue closes with the opportunity to gain an insight into several new texts with the book reviews section, edited by Erica Canela.

We hope you enjoy reading this issue and that you will have many more opportunities to engage with *Quaker Studies*. Indeed, as we prepared this issue for print, we received the news that the physical space where *Quaker Studies* is based, Woodbrooke in Birmingham (UK), will be closing. Woodbrooke the teaching, learning and scholarly organisation will continue, and *Quaker Studies* along with it, taking the opportunities opened by all new beginnings.

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