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Print Culture and the Early Quakers

The early Quaker movement was remarkable for its prolific use of the printing press. Carefully orchestrated by a handful of men and women who were the movement's leaders, printed tracts were an integral feature of the rapid spread of Quaker ideas in the 1650s. Drawing on very rich documentary evidence, this book examines how and why Quakers were able to make such effective use of print. As a crucial element in an extensive proselytising campaign which also used public preaching, confrontation, silence and symbolic performance, printed tracts enabled the emergence of the Quaker movement as a uniform, national phenomenon. The book explores the impressive organisation underpinning Quaker pamphleteering and argues that the early movement should not be dismissed as a disillusioned spiritual remnant of the English revolution, but was rather a purposeful campaign which sought, and achieved, effective dialogue with both the body politic and society at large. The Quakers' vibrant use of the press sheds light not only on the significance of print in early modern society, but also on our understanding of political and religious participation in the 1650s.

KATE PETERS is Lecturer in Archives and Records Management, University College London.

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PRINT CULTURE AND THE EARLY QUAKERS

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ABBREVIATIONS

A. R. Barclay Mss	Abram Rawlinson Barclay Manuscripts, Friends' House Library, London
Audland's Journal	'The Journal of John Audland, 1654', in 'Letters of John Audland, 1653', Ms Box P2/15, Friends' House Library, London
<i>BDBR</i>	<i>Biographical Dictionary of British Radicals in the Seventeenth Century</i> , ed. Richard Greaves and Robert Zaller, 3 vols., Brighton, 1982–1984
BL	British Library, London
<i>CSPD</i>	<i>Calendar of State Papers Domestic</i>
CUL	University Library of Cambridge
<i>DNB</i>	<i>Dictionary of National Biography</i>
DQB	Dictionary of Quaker Biography, typescript collection of biographical details of Quakers, Friends' House Library, London
FHL	Friends' House Library, London
<i>JFHS</i>	<i>Journal of the Friends' Historical Society</i>
Nuttall, EQL	Geoffrey Nuttall, 'Early Quaker letters from the Swarthmoor Mss to 1660', typescript calendar and index with annotations, London 1952, Friends' House Library, London.
Portfolio	Portfolio Manuscript Collections, Friends' House Library, London.
PRO	Public Record Office, London (since 2003 the National Archives).
<i>STC</i>	Donald Wing, <i>Short-title Catalogue of Books Printed in England, Scotland, Ireland Wales and British North America, 1641–1700</i> , 2nd edn, 3 vols., New York, 1972–1988

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Sw Mss	Swarthmoor Manuscripts, Friends' House Library, London
Sw Trs	Transcriptions of the Swarthmoor Manuscripts, Friends' House Library, London

CONVENTIONS USED IN THE TEXT

The Quakers were highly articulate, but they were not literary. Their spelling and their syntax are unusually erratic, even for the seventeenth century. In quotations I have kept to the original spelling. However, I have, where necessary, inserted words in square brackets in order to clarify the meaning, and have occasionally inserted punctuation for the same reason. Most abbreviations and contractions have been expanded, and upper-case 'F' substituted for 'ff'.

References to printed tracts include the *STC* reference number as well as the author and title, for ease of identification. Where page numbers in the printed tracts are missing or incorrect, the signature number is given.

Where dates of mss are uncertain they are placed in square brackets. Unless otherwise stated, all manuscripts referred to are from collections at Friends' House Library, London.