

Bulletin

Inside this issue ...

**New and familiar columns,
Reviews by Trainer and Stone,
Feature articles by Galaugher, Landini, and Turcon,
And more.**

Information for New and Renewing Members

Membership in the Society is \$45 per year for individuals and \$25 for students and those with limited incomes. Add \$5.00 for couples in 2013 (add \$10 in 2014). A lifetime membership is \$1,000. In addition to the BRS *Bulletin*, membership includes a subscription to the scholarly journal, *Russell: The Journal of Bertrand Russell Studies* (published semi-annually by McMaster University), as well as other Society privileges, such as participation in the on-line BRS Forum, access to Russell-related resources, and eligibility to attend the Annual Meeting.

Renewal dues should be paid by or on January 1st of each year. One's membership status can be determined by going to <http://russell.mcmaster.ca/brsmembers.htm>. There one will also find convenient links to join or renew via PayPal.

New and renewing members can also send a check or money order via traditional post to the treasurer (make it out to The Bertrand Russell Society). Send it to Michael Berumen, Treasurer, Bertrand Russell Society, 37155 Dickerson Run, Windsor, CO 80550. If a new member, please tell us a little about yourself beyond just your name (interests in Russell, profession, etc.). Include your postal address and email address, as well as your member status (i.e., regular, couple, student, limited income). If a renewing member, please let us know of any relevant changes in your contact information.

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Letters to the editor may be submitted to the editor's postal or email address. Please reference the issue, author, and title of the article. Letters should be concise. Publication will be at the discretion of the editor, and predicated upon available space. The editor reserves the right to truncate letters.

Manuscripts may be submitted to the editor at his email address in Microsoft Word. No PDFs, please. Feature articles and book reviews should be Russell-centric, dealing with Russell's life or works, and they should be written in either a scholarly or journalistic style. Articles generally should not exceed 7 single-spaced pages, and book reviews should not exceed 2 single-spaced pages. Mathematical, logical, and scientific symbols are fine, but please ensure that they are essential. Footnotes/endnotes should be used sparingly and primarily for citations; the editor reserves the right to convert footnotes to endnotes and vice versa, depending on layout needs. Parenthetical citations and page numbers, with standard reference descriptions at the end of the article, are also fine; but no abbreviations for works, please. Submissions should be made no later than August 31st and December 31st for the fall and spring issues, respectively. The editor will collaborate with the authors, as required, and authors will have the opportunity to review any suggested changes prior to publication. There are no guarantees of publication, and articles submitted may be held for future editions.

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BRS in the Heartland

Gregory Landini and his colleagues know how to throw a party: Russell-style! They hosted the BRS' 2013 Annual Meeting at the University of Iowa in Iowa City, Iowa. There was a good turnout, which included members from "down under," India, and all over North America. Members delivered papers on topics ranging from Russell's cosmopolitanism to logicism, and there was much lively discussion and conviviality.

Chair Chad Trainer led the board to do its business, and President Alan Schwerin conducted the annual members meeting. Details of each are in the official minutes published on the website: <http://users.drew.edu/~JLENZ/brs-organization.html>.

Greg made arrangements for several off-campus venues for the delightful evening meals, and he ensured that we were well fed, hydrated, and amply caffeinated throughout the meetings. The University of Iowa helped mightily to defray expenses for members and the Society. Among its other contributions, the University paid for our traditional banquet.



Charles McCarty discusses logicism

The accommodations were reasonably-priced and most satisfactory, and the campus, situated on the banks of the Iowa River, is within walking distance to the charming and vibrant downtown area.

There were flood warnings at the time of the meeting, and sandbags were being stacked near our meeting place at the philosophy building, which provided a bit of excitement for the group, but nothing untoward occurred. Besides, Greg had a back-up plan!

We now look forward to another great meeting at Windsor University in Windsor, Canada in 2014, where, once again, we will have the opportunity to learn, share ideas, see old friends, and make new ones.

Win an Autographed *Mysticism and Logic*

Borrowing an exhortation from Chicago politics: "Renew early and often!" The Society calls for renewals to occur each year on or before January 1st. We don't get too worked-up if people are late. However, we do like to get our hands on the dough as soon as possible, of course, and the earlier, the better. Well, this year we have a great incentive a first edition of *Mysticism and Logic* (W.W. Norton, 1929) ... in very good condition ... and signed by Bertrand Russell, himself. It retailed for \$300 over a decade ago. It includes some of Russell's most important essays on a variety of topics.

Here's the deal. A member in good standing in 2013 (meaning, a member whose dues are paid-up) who renews before or on January 2014, will have her name thrown in a hat for a draw that will occur shortly after the close of 2013 at McMaster University. Members who are renewed for multiple years will have their names put in, too. And, if you want to improve your odds, well, when you buy a gift membership, as members sometimes do, then your name will also be put in the hat, again, for each gift!

As the Holidays approach, by the way, consider that a BRS membership is a very nice gift, indeed. Oh yes, Russell did quite enjoy the Christmas season, in a secular sense, of course; and he had his own rituals, including wearing his Chinese robe, festooned with his grandfather's pocket watch.

"All propositions intelligible to us, whether or not they primarily concern things only known to us by description, are composed wholly of constituents with which we are acquainted, for a constituent with which we are not acquainted is unintelligible to us."

"Knowledge by Acquaintance and Knowledge by Description," *Mysticism and Logic* (1929), p. 231.



(de)Notations

- The 2014 Annual Meeting will be at Windsor University, Windsor, Canada. Dates TBD.
- Fikre Germa won a volume of the *CPBR* in the 2013 renewal campaign.
- The 2012 Student Essay Prize was awarded to Cyril Anene of Nigeria, who wrote about BR's neutral monism.
- The 2013 Book Award was given to Sebastien Gandon for his book, *Russell's Unknown Logicism: A Study in the History and Philosophy of Mathematics* (2012).
- In 2012, the BRS co-sponsored conferences at the University of Glasgow and the University of Mississippi upon the centenary of *The Problems of Philosophy* (1912).
- The BRS also co-sponsored the "Saints and Skeptics" debate between Augustine and BR, featuring a stand-in for BR, our own Chad Trainer. Alas, the saint did not show up, so he had a stand-in, too.
- John Lenz participated in a mock trial about God's existence before a real court judge in New Jersey. John sought damages for all the trouble He has caused.
- The board of directors approved Trinity College in Dublin, Ireland, as the site for the 2015 Annual Meeting.
- Member Mandeep Kaur worked with director John Ongley to secure board approval for the formation of a new BRS chapter in India.

Student Essay

Graduate and undergraduate students are invited to submit a paper for the Student Essay Prize Competition. Essays should be related to Russell's work, life, or influence, and should be no more than 12 pages (double spaced). The winner will receive \$200, plus free registration and room and board at the next Annual Meeting of the BRS. Submit the essays to Alan Schwerin at aschweri@monmouth.edu by April 15, 2014 for consideration.

100 Years Ago

Volume three of *Principia Mathematica* was completed in February 1913. In the preface, the authors mention their plan for a fourth, "final volume" for geometry. That would never come. Also, in that year, Russell wrote his manuscript for "Theory of Knowledge." It was never published as a book. Some chapters found their way into the *Monist*. The manuscript, among other things, details his epistemic program rooted in "acquaintance," and his theory of judgment. But Wittgenstein's criticisms sent him into a tailspin of depression, as he lamented to his lover, Ottoline Morrell. However, he soon recovered, and he began one of his most prolific and creative periods.



Got Forum?

When you feel the urge to express yourself, be it mundane or scholarly, the BRS Forum is available to you. And if you later decide you don't like what you said: delete it! Or, if you just prefer to see what other members have to say about Russell's life and works, current events in a Russellian vein, or what's on their minds, you'll find much to peruse. It has some scholarly application, too, for some of the best folks in Russell studies have posted meaty stuff there, and the search function makes it easy to locate topics that might be relevant to one's research program. Just to give one example, search *Logicism* on the site, and you'll find some interesting discussions.

Go to bertrandrussell.org, click on the Forum; now click on Enter ... you can read the posts. To logon and do more (post, make a profile, etc.), you need a user name (your name) and password. Having trouble? It's easy to get started. Contact Dennis Darland at thethinker@dennisdarland.com. See you there!



RUSSELLIANA

By Tim Madigan

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Note to readers: those of us who recall the wonderful Bertrand Russell Society newsletters edited by Lee Eisler will remember how he would lovingly photocopy articles from various journals that made mention of Russell, no matter how fleeting or obscure the reference might be. In honor of Lee, the Bulletin has initiated a column called "Russelliana" which continues his practice of alerting us to references to Russell, often found in the most startling of contexts. I encourage readers to send me any such appearances they come across for use in future "Russelliana" columns:

In a *New Yorker* article reviewing several new books about Edmund Burke, Adam Gopnik points out that the great Conservative thinker often resorted to flights of hyperbole and overwrought rhetoric. Referring especially to Burke's essay "Reflections on the Revolution in France", Gopnik gives us the following quote from it: "But the age of chivalry is gone. That of sophisters, oeconomists, and calculators has succeeded; and the glory of Europe is extinguished forever." He then adds: "Even for Burke, the tone is oddly overwrought. Bertrand Russell once observed that a lot of the gloom of the early Church is due to the personal gloom of St. Augustine; and certain apocalyptic tendencies of modern conservatism may be due to the later Burke. It isn't enough for him to say that something revolutionary is bad or cruel; the bad thing must be also ruthless, irredeemable, and very nearly irresistible. (And so begins that strange note, found to this day in American conservative magazines, whereby the most privileged caste in the most powerful country in the most prosperous epoch in the whole history of humanity is always sure that everything is going straight to hell, and has mostly already got there.)" (Adam Gopnik, "The Right Man: Who Owns Edmund Burke", *New Yorker*, July 29, 2013, pages 71-72:

http://www.newyorker.com/arts/critics/books/2013/07/29/130729crbo_books_gopnik).

I suspect Lord Russell would have concurred with Gopnik on this point.

The *News Letter: The Pride of Northern Ireland*, alerts us to an upcoming play version of Russell's *Conquest of Happiness*:

"Bosnian director Haris Pasovic is currently in Belfast casting a forthcoming theatre work entitled *The Conquest of Happiness*, a multi-media production inspired by the writings of British philosopher Bertrand Russell which ran at The Venue, Londonderry as part of the City of Culture programme, September 21-22. *The Conquest of Happiness* is Pasovic's UK directorial debut and will detail the history of the 20th century through an exploration of certain ideas espoused by the seminal analytic philosopher, mathematician and noted pacifist Bertrand Russell (1872-1970) whose 1930 work of the same name explores the conditions necessary for happiness and the despair and ennui induced by their absence. *The Conquest of Happiness*, dubbed one of the first 'self-help' books for its astute insights into contentment, finds optimum happiness to be centered on 'zest' or appetite, the struggle against a certain degree of difficulty, and an ability to cease comparing oneself and one's achievements with those of others. As the title suggests, Russell believes happiness is not something that is easily achieved by the simple arrangement of fortunate circumstances, but rather involves a degree of battle or struggle: "The human animal, like others, is adapted to a certain amount of struggle for life and the mere absence of effort from his life removes an essential ingredient of happiness ... to be without some of the things you want is an indispensable part of happiness." For Russell, positivity must be achieved not through a purblind inability to understand the harsh truths of reality, but rather to face the facts and yet manage laughter in the teeth of despair: 'the secret of happiness is to face the fact that the world is horrible, horrible, horrible,' he writes.

"This Prime Cut co-production will face up to the 'horrible' realities of the world by panning across some of the most profound manifestations of unhappiness in our history before exploring some of Russell's ideas about happiness through drama, movement and music.

"Despite the dark subject matter, *The Conquest of Happiness* considers the beauty of the human spirit amidst the world's horrors,' said Pasovic. 'This project brings together people from across civil, racial and economic divides. Its message is one of hope but also warning: happiness is not a right, but something to be worked at, earned but never at another's expense.'



The *Conquest of Happiness* will be shown again at the Belfast Festival at Queen's, October 18-19. For more information visit:

www.conquestofhappiness.com.”

<http://www.newsletter.co.uk/what-s-on/arts-entertainment/production-to-explore-russell-s-philosophy-of-happiness-1-5234592>

Still time to get your tickets!

The *Daily Mail* in an article entitled “Eyebrows Raised as Cross-Dressing Artist Grayson Perry Will Give BBC Lecture Because of ‘Deep Humanity’ in His Work” reported: “It is a platform for some of the world’s most respected thinkers in fields such as philosophy, history and science. But the BBC’s decision to hand over this year’s Reith Lectures to a cross-dressing artist, best-known for his ceramic works, has raised eyebrows. Grayson Perry was chosen because of the ‘deep humanity’ in his work and his ‘insight into the creative process’, the broadcaster said. The Turner Prize winner—who in the past has dressed up as Little Bo Peep—is the first visual artist to deliver the prestigious series of talks, which began in 1948. In 1948, British philosopher Bertrand Russell gave the first Reith Lectures—named after the BBC’s first director general, John Reith” (*Daily Mail*, July 7, 2013):

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2357968/Eyebrows-raised-cross-dressing-artist-Grayson-Perry-BBC-lecture-deep-humanity-work.html>)

No mention on how Russell was attired for his presentation.

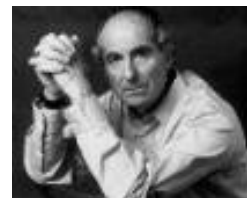
In a scathing review of a new science fiction book by neuroscientist Baroness Susan Greenfield, Adam Roberts writes in *The Guardian* that “It is sometimes the case that an individual famous for non-literary reasons decides they want to write fiction. To the ranks of Bertrand Russell, Mussolini, and Julie Burchill we now add eminent neuroscientist Susan Greenfield, internationally renowned professor of synaptic pharmacology at Lincoln College, Oxford, and former director of the Royal Institution. People often say they ‘have a novel in them.’ By publishing *2121*, Greenfield has proved that she actually did have a novel in her. Unfortunately, it’s a very bad novel. How is it bad? Let me count the ways. It is badly conceived, badly realised, badly characterized, badly paced and above all badly written. On the plus side, the typeface is nice and I quite liked the front cover art” (“*2121: A Tale from the Next Century*,” by Susan Greenfield—Review, *The Guardian*, July 11, 2013:

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/books/2013/jul/11/2121-tale-century-greenfield-review/print>)

One can only imagine what Roberts would have to say about *The Collected Stories of Bertrand Russell*.

Thanks to Lois Ario, who sends the following: “Philip Roth, in a slim novel entitled *Indignation* (Boston, 2008), devotes 9 pages (100-108) to BR’s ‘Why I Am Not a Christian.’ The story is of an 18 year old Jew from Newark, New Jersey who decides to go to a college in Ohio in 1951. Although secular, the college requires weekly attendance at chapel. Roth’s protagonist, Marcus, an A+ student, objects, not because ‘I was an observant Jew but because I was an ardent atheist’ (page 80). He finds a way to dodge services and, for that and other reasons, is called on the carpet by the dean of men. To defend his atheism Marcus mentions ‘Bertrand Russell, the distinguished British mathematician and philosopher [who] was last year’s winner of the Nobel Prize in Literature’ (page 101), and Marcus cites passages from Russell’s essay. The dean calls him gullible for accepting ‘the rationalist blasphemies spouted by an immoralist of the ilk of Bertrand Russell, four times married, a blatant adulterer, an advocate of free love, a self-confessed socialist dismissed from his university position for his antiwar campaigning during the First World War and imprisoned for that by the British authorities’ (page 105). The dean continues by stating that Russell is considered a ‘criminal subversive by his own government.’ ‘But what about the Nobel Prize!’ says Marcus (page 105).”

Since Russell didn’t marry his fourth wife, Edith Finch, until December of 1952 the dean must have had powers of clairvoyance. No wonder he disliked *Why I Am Not a Christian*.



Philip Roth

And, in a last rather strange Russellian reference, beleaguered Spanish Prime Minister Mariano Rajoy, defending himself against charges of corrupting, quoted Russell thusly:



“Slander is always simple and plausible. And this often differs from the truth.”

http://www.teinteresa.es/politica/Rajoy-Bertrand-Russell-sencilla-verosimil_0_966504349.html

However, as Kenneth Blackwell informs me, this is not in fact a Russellian bon mot but rather comes from French author François Mauriac (1905-1970). Well, at least Russell and Mauriac have something in common—they each won the Nobel Prize for Literature. Whether either of them can help get Rajoy off the hook, though, remains to be seen.

Not Necessarily Trivial

Which philosopher did Russell call his “enemy” in an impersonal sense? (See page 13 for the answer.)

Russell and Society

By Ray Perkins PERKRK@EARTHLINK.NET

Nuclear Disarmament in the 21st Century: Russell’s Legacy

Recently, in gathering my thoughts on the 68th anniversary of the atomic bombings of Japan, I had the good fortune to rediscover John Lenz’s excellent piece in an old *BRS Quarterly* on “Pugwash and Russell’s Legacy” (Feb. 1996). John’s article offers an important account of Russell’s role in the Pugwash Conferences’ inception and its and Joseph Rotblat’s Nobel accolades received nearly two decades ago. In what follows, I’d like to revisit some of the main points of Russell’s legacy and bring it up to date as regards nuclear disarmament in the 21st century.

One of the best known and disturbing prophecies regarding the advent of nuclear weaponry is Einstein’s 1946 warning that for want of change in “our mode of thinking” humankind will surely “drift toward unparalleled catastrophe.” Russell issued a similar prophecy even earlier in his November 1945 House of Lords speech in which he (surprisingly) predicted the H-bomb (Russell, p. 20), and told his audience “Either war stops, or else the whole of civilized mankind stops.” It’s this realization that provides the basis for the vital change in thinking if civilization, and possibly the human species itself, is to avoid the ultimate catastrophe. Russell spelled this out a decade later in a power-

ful and globally seminal document (that borrowed heavily from his 1954 BBC Christmas address, “Man’s Peril”), viz. the “Russell-Einstein Manifesto.” The central message was that humankind’s survival in the nuclear age requires that we “... learn to think in a new way.” There are several important points:

- Our concern must no longer be limited to the interests of this or that nation or ideology, but must embrace the future survival of the human family now living under the threat of nuclear annihilation. As Russell succinctly put it: “Remember your humanity, and forget the rest.” (Implied also in his House of Lords speech, pp. 22-3)
- War must be abolished, and the abolition of nuclear weapons would be an “important ... first step” to that end. (Cf. House of Lords speech, p. 24)
- Scientists, on both sides of the Iron Curtain, who understand the nuclear peril and have the respect of their political leaders, must join together now to move the course of events away from disaster and toward nuclear disarmament. (Cf. House of Lords speech, p. 23)

And an additional point, explicit in the House of Lords speech and implicit in the “Manifesto,” was that the new thinking, especially the abolition of war, would require an effective international authority with some “distasteful limitations on national sovereignty”.

This was a tall order in 1955, and, unhappily, one still unfilled. But the good news is that enormous progress has been made in recent years. Not only have we witnessed the end of the Cold War and the forging of international agreements reducing the world’s Cold War nuclear stockpile by more than 80%, but today many of the world’s most respected denizens—including the President of the United States—have publically stated that the abolition of nuclear weapons is both necessary and achievable. And this has been made possible in no small part by Pugwash and other transnational movements motivated by the “new thinking” called for by Russell (et al.) in the “Manifesto.”

Another impressive transnational organization that has appeared in recent years is Global Zero. Its plan for global nuclear abolition is endorsed by more than 300 eminent world leaders, including 21 former heads of state and the current U.S. Secretary of Defense. The movement offers a gradual and feasible plan for getting the world to zero nukes by 2040—a world which just might



stand a fair chance of averting the sort of disaster that Russell and Einstein feared.

These remarkable changes in thinking and policy over the last quarter century may not have come about were it not for Bertrand Russell. He was a “prime mover” for the “Manifesto” and its new thinking, which in turn provided the founding document for Pugwash and the core ideas for Gorbachev’s foreign policy: *perestroika*. Gorbachev and Pugwash—both recipients of the Nobel Peace Prize in 1990 and 1995, respectively—were key, if not indispensable, for the ending of the Cold War, the remarkable advances in disarmament, and a legacy of hope that can be felt today.

I’d like to call attention to some evidence revealed in the last decade or so, direct and indirect, of BR’s influence in ending the Cold War, advancing the cause of nuclear abolition and giving us all grounds for hope about the future of humankind in the 21st century. For example, in the early 1970s the Soviet Pugwash committee’s chair, M. Millionshchikov (1913-1973) credited Pugwash’s informal conferences and discussions (“track II diplomacy”) as vital in bringing about the “breakthroughs” that gave us many of the first international arms control agreements, including (Evangelista, p. 146; Braun, p. 106):

- Partial Test Ban Treaty (1963).
- Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (1968).
- ABM treaty (1972).
- SALT I (1972).

We should note that the Nonproliferation Treaty explicitly commits member states to nuclear abolition. Article 6 requires parties to “pursue negotiations ... on effective measures relating to nuclear disarmament, and on a treaty on general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control.” A World Court advisory opinion in 1996 held that the “threat or use” of nukes would be “generally unlawful”, and that the Article 6 is legally binding on the nuclear weapon state members (i.e., US, Russia, China, France, Britain). The NPT now has 189 states.

Eduard Shevardnaze, Gorbachev’s close advisor and Soviet foreign minister, pays tribute in his Memoirs to the “Russell-Einstein Manifesto” as “the key to the most complex and troublesome riddles of the age” (Shevardnaze, pp. 46-7). Moreover, Gorbachev himself explicitly mentions Russell as an important source of his “new thinking” (Gorbachev, p. 76); and since 1987 he has repeatedly praised the good works of Pugwash, and acknowledged the influence of it and other transnationals on him during his time as head of

the Soviet state (1985-91). (Von Hippel, p. 11; Braun, pp. 11; Wittner, pp. 223-24, 370-72).

Clearly, Russell’s anti-nuclear legacy is huge and extraordinarily important. And it’s one from which the whole human family can take hope and for which we all can be grateful.

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- B. Russell, *Has Man a Future?* (Penguin, 1961).
- E. Shevardnaze, *The Future Belongs to Freedom* (New York, 1991).
- F. Von Hippel, *Journal of the Federation of American Scientists* (winter, 2004).
- L. Wittner, *The Struggle Against the Bomb*, Vol. 3 (Stanford University, 2003).

From the Student Desk

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Read Your Russell!

“Russell missed a lot of things.”

That quote demands some context, given my present audience. In June, my twin brother, George, graduated from Northwestern University. My family and I visited Evanston, Illinois, to attend the ceremonies, one of which involved a house reception for friends and parents. Among the party-goers, only one other person, a parent, had a background in philosophy.

This parent, a sculptor with a B.A. in philosophy and a Masters in linguistics, asked about my background and interests. I mentioned that I aimed to study Bertrand Russell’s work at The University of Iowa. This spurred my interlocutor to utter my leading sentence.

As a young student, I understand that my ignorance eclipses my knowledge, so I inquired as to what Lord Russell had missed. All the details would clutter this column, but the highlights included the following: that I should read some phenomenology and existentialist philosophy, and that Russell spent far too much time generalizing the syntax of English to other languages, e.g., he



failed to note that some languages lack definite articles such as “the”, making Russell’s analysis of English linguistic rather than logical.

I begin with the second charge. Since the gentleman referred to Russell’s 1905 “On Denoting”, I reviewed that piece. On his first page, Russell considers phrases without “the”; and he begins by describing a number of examples involving “some”, “a”, “the”, “any”, “every”, and “all”, a list reexamined on Russell’s third page. The sculptor-philosopher could not have meant that Russell only considers “the” words, but perhaps he meant that Russell thought English provided the form resulting from logical analysis of any language’s sentences.

I find this improbable. Russell writes, “Thus a phrase is denoting solely in virtue of its *form*” (Bertrand Russell, “On Denoting”, *Mind*, Volume 14: Issue 56, pp. 479-93, 479). By this, he intends the reader to consider a phrase’s *logical form* rather than its *English form*. Indeed, Russell offers the logical form as a result of his analysis on page 482. Russell also asks that his reader suspend disbelief in the apparent mismatch of his logical analysis with the English syntax of his examples: “This may seem a somewhat incredible interpretation ...” (Bertrand Russell, “On Denoting”, *Mind*, Volume 14: Issue 56, pp. 479-93, 479). Russell’s analysis avoids the consequence that all languages utilize the same syntactic tools as English; Russell rather notes that his logical analysis departs from natural language. Also, Russell nowhere suggests that other languages submit to a similar analysis.

Maybe I confined my attention too narrowly. Russell writes elsewhere a famous passage about the word “the”:

... in this chapter we shall consider *the* in the singular, and in the next chapter, we shall consider *the* in the plural. It may be thought excessive to devote two chapters to one word, but to the philosophical mathematician it is a word of very great importance: like Browning’s Grammarian with the enclitic $\delta\epsilon$, I would give the doctrine of this word if I were “dead from the waist down” and not merely in prison. (Bertrand Russell, *Introduction to Mathematical Philosophy*, Chapter XVI: Descriptions, 167, George Allen & Unwin, LTD. New York, 1919).

Despite Russell’s dedication to “the”, the evidence indicates that Russell avoided idolizing

English in his analysis. He defines descriptions as follows: “[*descriptions*] consist of several words, whose meanings are already fixed, and from which results whatever is to be taken as the ‘meaning’ of the description.” (Bertrand Russell, *Introduction to Mathematical Philosophy*, Chapter XVI: Descriptions, 174, George Allen & Unwin, LTD. New York, 1919). Russell defines descriptions independently of characteristics of English.

Hence, even though the cases above show Russell analyzing English sentences to reach logical form, this does not entail that Russell believed that analyzing sentences of other languages ends with a logical form found in English.

Russell’s definition of descriptions comes closest to generalizing about other languages, but Russell’s definition and subsequent analysis commits him to some English phrases that describe objects. Russell’s analysis nowhere entails that all languages possess descriptions. Contrast this with Jerry Fodor’s claim, discussed in depth on the Bertrand Russell Society Forum, “... the availability of (definite) descriptions is surely a universal property of natural languages” (Jerry Fodor, *Concepts: Where Cognitive Science Went Wrong*, 99, Oxford University Press, 1998. Dennis Darland, “Clontz vs Fodor on definite descriptions in natural language”, The Bertrand Russell Society Online Forum, March 27, 2013).

Perhaps Russell needed to indicate how his analysis could proceed in other languages. In all likelihood, Russell thought this unnecessary because he refrained from suggesting that all languages possess such phrases. Perhaps Russell’s background informed this abstention; Russell at some point could read, write, or speak ancient Greek, German, and French. At least Russell’s focus on English sentences did not result from parochialism.

Speaking of parochialism, I return to the first charge. Perhaps the gentleman doubted Robert Barnard’s assertion of conceptual affinity between Russell and phenomenology (Robert Barnard, “Russell’s Flirtation with Phenomenology”, Academia.edu, Draft (May, 2012)). As for myself, I informed my sculptor acquaintance that I read Martin Heidegger’s *Being and Time* last summer, and that Maurice Merleau-Ponty’s *Phenomenology of Perception* was in my bag at that party. This failed to improve the gentleman’s regard for me: “You understood about half of what I said – maybe.”

I happily record my acknowledgment of how little I know; in this, I imitate wisdom best-found first-hand in Plato’s works. However, I know that my sculptor-philosopher assumed Russell held



views on the basis of hasty inferences from his writings without textual evidence, i.e., he lazily read his Russell.

None of this shows Russell—in any opinion that he held at some point during his life—to be either correct or mistaken. Russell may have committed the sculptor's sin—Tom Riggins argued this point in his talk, “Did Russell Understand Hegel?” at the 40th Annual Meeting of the Bertrand Russell Society. This anecdote only offers a case for reading carefully before you speak, especially ill, about the good Lord Russell or anyone else.



Tom Riggins holds forth on Hegel

From the Archives

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BOOKS, BOOKS, BOOKS

Bertrand Russell evaluated people, philosophies, political parties, and pretty nearly everything else. Not for nothing was he nicknamed “the Day of Judgment”. Although not what you’d call bookish, he also evaluated books. The breadth of his interests and expertise is astounding. He evaluated them in the course of his private and public writing, in book reviews, and in blurbs requested by publishers. Some of his evaluations are extremely short: he summed up the Koran and *Das Kapital* in one word, “dull”.¹ Many of his evaluations are rich and lengthy, but they usually contain a pithy remark or two suitable for quick quotation on a jacket blurb or separate publisher’s advertisement. Let us quote these in the manner of the modern “consumer” mini-review that so many websites carry. All the quotations that follow are from the period 1944–50. Exact sources, in context, will be found here.² The 52 titles that follow can’t be all of Russell’s book reading during the period, but they

must be a good part, and some remain in his library at McMaster. In Russell Studies, we want to know what went into Russell’s head, as well as what came out of it.

There would be numerous other books that he read but didn’t evaluate in his writing. For example, he was photographed after his plane went down in the Trondheim fjord – in pyjamas, in bed, reading *My Best Thriller* (1947). That’s an implicit evaluation of the wordless kind. And he told the audience at his National Book League lecture in 1946 that he had recently read a book on the Anglo-Saxon invasion of Britain, though he left no clue as to what book it was.³

Russell reviewed the autobiography of Ely Culbertson, *The Strange Lives of One Man* (1940). His comments are definitely high-brow: “it is one of the most interesting books I have ever read. It has all the merits of Borrow, most of the merits of De Quincey, and many other merits of a quite different kind.” At this time his sometime lover Constance Malleson was en route to publishing another autobiographical book, *In the North* (1946). Its publisher, Gollancz, sent Russell the manuscript. “I looked through it”, he told her, “... and it seems most interesting. How much there is in your life that I knew nothing about.”

In the field of education he provided a dust-jacket blurb for William B. Curry’s *Education for Sanity* (1947). The book “discusses just those questions that parents are most apt to raise concerning progressive education. I think it is likely to be widely read....”

Several books on history caught his interest. C. Delisle Burns’ *The First Europe* (1947), which Russell reviewed, was “a very important book dealing with an obscure and little known period of history, of which the formative importance in relation to subsequent European institutions has been quite inadequately appreciated. Having been engaged in a history of Philosophy which compelled me to make some study of the Middle Ages, I found Delisle Burns’s book more helpful than any other that I know of.” A reviewer’s opinion of E.M. Butler’s *The Myth of the Magus* (1948) annoyed him, and he wrote to the editor: “I found the book both delightful reading and highly informative.” At a time when Russell was promoting steps towards the possible unification of Europe, he reviewed John Bowle’s *The Unity of European History* (1948). After favourably mentioning Bowle’s *Western Political Thought*, Russell said that Bowle was “concerned in this new volume to bring out the elements of unity which make it possible to speak of ‘European’ civilization, as opposed to that of other continents. This theme is one of pe-



cular importance at the present time, and we should all be glad that Mr. Bowle has set it forth so convincingly."

Ironically, Russell provided a "descriptive paragraph" that George Allen and Unwin used in advertising his own *Human Knowledge* (1948) – in general, an authorial job he disliked doing – but since it does not evaluate the work, it is excluded from this survey. In *Human Knowledge* he did evaluate some mathematical works. John Maynard Keynes' *A Treatise on Probability* (1922) is "the best that can be done for induction on purely mathematical lines...." "The frequency interpretation of probability ... has been set forth in two important books, both by German professors who were then in Constantinople." Despite their order of publication, Russell's view was that Richard von Mises' *Wahrscheinlichkeit, Statistik und Wahrheit* (1936) was surpassed by Hans Reichenbach's *Wahrscheinlichkeitslehre* (1935): "Reichenbach's work is a development of that of v. Mises, and is in various ways a better statement of the same kind of theory." He had long since introduced Wittgenstein's *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* (1922), but in an article on logical positivism he reminded readers that the book was "undoubtedly important". In the same article he thought very highly of a 1937 work by Rudolf Carnap: "... syntax (in a logical sense) became much more important than it had been thought to be, and also much more complicated. In any language there must be, in addition to vocabulary, rules for the formation of significant sentences, and these rules must be so framed that they exclude sentences which would be self-contradictory ... a large and very technical subject has been developed, which is perhaps best studied in Carnap's *Logical Syntax of Language*." Russell supplied a foreword to James Feibleman's *Introduction to Peirce's Philosophy Interpreted as a System*. He "has performed a most valuable work in presenting to the public a systematic exposition" and "deserves the grateful thanks of all students of philosophy."

Russell prefaced an old favourite, William Kingdon Clifford's *The Common Sense of the Exact Sciences* (1885), saying: "invaluable to the schoolboy"; "it deserved all the adolescent enthusiasm which I bestowed upon it when I first read it"; "knowledge of subsequent work only increases the reader's admiration for his prophetic insight"; and "readers may imbibe something of its author's belief in the possibility of excellent things...." An extract from Russell's review of A.J. Ayer's *Language, Truth and Logic* (1946) may be familiar: "I should like to have written it myself when young", and he praised Ayer's "very exceptional clarity".

He praised the logical positivists' *Erkenntnis* (1930–38) as an "admirable periodical". He told his readership that Alfred Tarski's *Der Begriff der Wahrheit in den formalisierten Sprachen* (1936) was "a very important book". He broadcast a review of his friend and neighbour's book, *The Comforts of Unreason* (1947) by Rupert Crawshay-Williams: "I hope this book will have many readers." In a broadcast on "The Rewards of Philosophy", Russell extolled Boethius' *Consolation of Philosophy* (c.524 A.D.) as "exquisite and moving". This is consistent with the judgment in his *History of Western Philosophy* that it is "as admirable as the last days of the Platonic Socrates". That comparison is at least a reference to the *Phaedo*, and probably also to the *Apology* (4th century B.C.).

Turning to political philosophy, we find Russell "puffing" Karl Popper's work *The Open Society and Its Enemies* (1945): it is "a work of first-class importance, and one which ought to be widely read for its masterly criticism of theoretical enemies of democracy, ancient and modern.... His analysis of Hegel is deadly, and very able.... The book as a whole is a vigorous and profound defence of democracy and of a philosophic outlook likely to promote belief in democracy. It is timely, and calculated to have an important beneficent influence. It is also very interesting and very well written. I cannot doubt that it will appeal to a large circle of readers." In a contemporary essay Russell also described Popper's thesis as "brilliantly advocated". Russell's encomium for George Orwell's *1984* appeared on the dust-jacket of the first edition (1949): it "depicts, with very great power, the horrors of a well-established totalitarian régime of whatever type. It is important that the western world should be aware of these dangers, and not only in the somewhat narrow form of fear of Russia. Mr. Orwell's book contributes to this important purpose with great power and skill and force of imagination. I sincerely hope that it will be very widely read." Elsewhere at this time he wrote of *1984* that "The connection of politics with philosophy has seldom been more clearly set forth." *1984* maintained the standard of the "biting and masterly satire" of *Animal Farm* (1946), and because of the latter book Russell bracketed Orwell with Jonathan Swift. Always interested in the literary roots of Nazism, Russell had already commented several times on Johann Gottlieb Fichte's *Addresses to the German Nation* (1808). In a 1944 article he called the work "the Bible of German nationalism".

This brings us to politics, much of it to do with the advent of the Cold War. Russell used a review of Arthur Koestler's *The Yogi and the Commissar*



(1945) to describe his growing concerns about Soviet Russia's internal and external policies. This was prior to getting to know Koestler the next year. "There is much in the first two parts that is interesting and deserves discussion, but I think most readers will agree that the third part, which is concerned with Russia, is much the most important." Russell was asked about E.H. Carr by Colette. Carr, he told her, "used to write very amusing books about the Russians, e.g. *The Romantic Exiles*" (1933); now he was "bad, bad, bad", doubtless because he was pro-Soviet. Russell expressed his keenness about a new book to Colette in 1946. "Have you read *The Dark Side of the Moon* (anonymous) about Russian doings in Poland? Very horrible." The author was in fact Zoe Zajdlerowa, and the book had a preface by T.S. Eliot. Someone gave Russell P.S. Hudson and R.H. Richens' *The New Genetics in the Soviet Union* (1946) to review in a weekly Church of England paper, of all places. He judged the book "a most valuable piece of work ... completely unbiased, adequately documented, and mentioning political matters only in so far as they have influenced opinion on purely scientific questions." At dinner with a high-placed Liberal politician, Violet Bonham Carter, Russell remarked that there was "a terrible book by Kallin [*sic*] on forced labour" in Russia. The book turned out to be David J. Dallin and Boris I. Nicolaevsky's *Forced Labour in Soviet Russia* (1947). As with the "horrible" book above, this one wasn't poorly written or researched but rather was harrowing in its account of actual events. It happened to be featured in Ram Swarup's *Russian Imperialism: How to Stop It* (1950). Russell praised it on the cover as "excellent" and wished the author "all success."

Russell was asked in 1948 to participate in the centenary of the *Communist Manifesto* (1848). His comment on the BBC, "without doubt the most forceful of the works of Marx and Engels", was not quite on a par with his description of it in *German Social Democracy*, half a century earlier, as "almost unsurpassed in literary merit". (Some readers have mistaken this praise for agreement.) Russell's old friend, Freda Utley, published *Lost Illusion* in 1949. He blurbed it – "an invaluable source book" – and also introduced it: "I earnestly hope that Freda Utley's book will be as widely read as it deserves to be, especially by those who find their illusions about Russia difficult to abandon." In a broadcast and later printed review he called John Langdon-Davies' *Russia Puts Back the Clock* (1949) "an admirable little book". Russell twice wrote about *The God That Failed* (1950), edited by the left-wing Labour M.P. Richard

Crossman, calling it "a deeply interesting new book" because of the contributors' conversions from communism. He helped promote two periodicals. Russell read the *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* (1946), he said in a lost letter that accompanied a submission and was quoted editorially, "with interest and attention". He published as well in the *World Review*, which ran his commendation that it "is always interesting, much more so, to me, than most other Reviews. I read it with avidity, and always with profit."

As for sociological works, we find Russell in an article praising one he had already used in his unpublished book manuscript, "The Problems of Democracy", namely Robert S. Lynd and Helen Merrill Lynd's *Middletown: A Study in Contemporary American Culture* (1929). It is "a book which should be studied by all who wish to understand America." In a discussion of how to treat vanquished Germany, Russell cited Cyril Burt's *The Young Delinquent* (1925): "a very admirable book concerning juvenile delinquency". He had met Burt in the mid-1930s but did not live to learn of the exposé of Burt's research into IQ. In a broadcast on crime, during the growth in the U.K. of serious juvenile delinquency, Russell cited Sir Leo Page's book, *The Young Lag: A Study in Crime* (1950), as "valuable". The Mass Observation movement to diarize the ordinary activities and viewpoints of the British public began before World War II. Hundreds of observers contributed notes on their interviews and what they overheard. Several volumes were published. One concerned religion, and Russell provided the publisher with a blurb for the title *Puzzled People* (1947) – "very interesting and valuable".

In analysing "sin" in 1946, Russell first discussed original sin, "of which", he said, "the best exposition is to be found in St. Augustine." It is unclear, even from his *History*, what writing Russell meant, but it seems not to be *The City of God* (427 A.D.) or the *Confessions* (397–398), but rather some unspecified anti-Pelagian works. He went on to cite F.R. Tennant's *The Concept of Sin* (1912), in which he said the point of view of modern liberal theologians was "well set forth". (He would have known Tennant and perhaps his book from Trinity College before both wars.) Russell reviewed *Ethics for Unbelievers* (1948) by his old friend and intimate correspondent, Amber Blanco White. He judged it to be "extremely useful and timely" and "eminently readable". In a 1946 ethical manuscript that wasn't published until 1954, he wrote of the influence of two anti-serfdom and anti-slavery books. "Turgenev's *Sportsman's Sketches* [1852], with all the art of a great novelist,



gave a sympathetic portrait of the serfs' joys and sorrows, thereby arousing sensibility à la Rousseau in liberal-minded landowners. *Uncle Tom's Cabin* [by Harriet Beecher Stowe, also 1852] performed the same service for slaves in the United States."

Even in his Reith lectures, *Authority and the Individual* (1949), Russell recommended books. Two supported his preference for workers' involvement in the workplace. James Gillespie wrote a work on *Free Expression in Industry* (1948): "This subject [of democratizing management] is dealt with admirably...." He termed John Spedan Lewis's *Partnership for All – A 34-Year Old Experiment in Industrial Democracy* (1948) "very interesting" and "based upon a long and extensive practical experience by a man who combines public spirit with experimental boldness." Finally, he praised William Vogt's *Road to Survival* (1949) for setting forth the world's dire agricultural situation "with great vividness".

With all these books and more – visitors and photographers would find him with a small stack of books in various stages of reading on his tea-table – Russell might seem to be a very bookish philosopher. Yet he was neither a collector nor a bibliophile, and if "bookish" means avoiding life in favour of books, he wasn't that either.

¹ "The Use of Books" (1951), in Blackwell and Ruja, *A Bibliography of Bertrand Russell*, 1: xviii.

² <https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/pub?key=0AphPgnTZrkHrdDgzcVJS-bU1UaEZaNTNFc2hrMjhCWXC&output=html>

³ In 1945 he was asked to name ten favourite books, and he did so without comment: J. Drummond and Anne Wilbraham, *The Englishman's Food* (1939); J. L. and Barbara Hammond, *The Village Labourer* (1911); J. Huizinga, *The Waning of the Middle Ages* (1924); Ernst Kantorowicz, *Life of Frederick II (Hohenstaufen)* (1927); Lucretius (trans. by R. C. Trevelyan), *De Rerum Natura* (1937); Gilbert Murray, *Five Stages of Greek Religion* (1913); Eileen Power, *Mediaeval People* (1924); W. W. Tarn and others, *The Hellenistic Age* (1923); Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America* (1838); and Arthur Waley (trans.), *One Hundred and Seventy Chinese Poems* (1918). He also listed, without comment, the six novels by Joseph Conrad that, in his opinion, were "likely to survive": *Almayer's Folly* (1895), *The Nigger of the Narcissus* (1898), *Lord Jim* (1915), *The Heart of Darkness* (1899), *Chance* (1913) and *The Secret Agent* (1907).

Meet the BRS



By Billy Joe Lucas

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I grew up in Texas "owned" by the work ethic, and at 15 I had my own business, so I bought a BMW Isetta and gave my mom half a down payment on a 4th house. Later, one subtropical Houston afternoon, I read Bertrand Russell's "In Praise of Idleness." That "make money" game plan died then: why seek *more* money when reading books is so much more *en-rich-ing*? I came to Philosophy from reading History, thus I saw Philosophy as whatever philosophers *actually* do. Plato seduced me at once. I wanted a living philosopher as a second tour guide. Raised by a family of gamblers, I saw a student who I wished to know better reading *BR's Best*, so I asked her about it. She: "Hilarious! Here: read it and we'll talk next week!" A lucky roll of the dice began my musical life with Plato and BR in my band (*my* Plato says at *Laws* 672e-673a: *learned* wisdom = learning music and dance). My aim was to read all they wrote at least once, and then later figure out more about what it all meant. How do the texts show for each his way of living an examined life as a lover of wisdom?

As undergrad I read all I could (some items often) of each: for BR, the BR (B. B.), Before Blackwell, *not* the BR (A. B.); for Plato, 'all' *modulo* all he wrote or *might* have written. This led me to reject theories that break Philosophy into a sum of separate parts: e.g., Metaphysics + Logic + Ethics + Epistemology. Thus, *Principia Mathematica* (skipping proofs, but fewer in *Vol. 2*) was as fun and intoxicating as reading Russell's books written from *Our Knowledge of the External World* through *My Philosophical Development*. The diversity in *Mysticism and Logic*, *Skeptical Essays*, and *Portraits from Memory* awed me. Reading *Common Sense and Nuclear Warfare* changed my life overnight: I had told my Uncle Leo only days



before I wanted to be the first American soldier to die on Soviet soil! I then read *Political Ideals* and *Principles of Social Reconstruction*, which erased many political and social beliefs to the beat to which I was *Born to Run*. The concepts of possessive vs creative impulses go as deep as Philosophy gets, and finding the right balance is essential to building a good life. And how could one not fall in love with a guy who begins an essay with: "If I were a comet" and then describes how *Homo sapiens* might seem to a sentient comet? I began more often to say *hastá la vista* to what now in my courses I call the "born into myths" that drive us to avoid living examined lives.

I rolled the dice and did my M.A. at McMaster, where Ken Blackwell and I were in the first year-long BR seminar: Thank you Michael Radner. The Archives became my second home. My PhD at the University of Texas (Austin) was rich in good dice rolls. I taught the three standard logic courses: one required of fellow PhD candidates. I taught Ethics, but added a text by my then third major philosopher, Bruce Springsteen: *Darkness On The Edge Of Town*. At dissertation time I said: I reject over-specialization, so focused on "The Logic of Omniscience." Of the four logicians on my seven member committee, who each did his PhD with counts as rolls of 7's and (11's): Anthony Anderson (Church), Robert Causey (Tarski), Charles Hartshorne (Whitehead), and Norman Martin (Carnap, Beth, and Heyting). I rejected an initial offer to interview for my Manhattanville College job! Just one more roll now: Shelby Hearon and Bob Solomon got me to do it. And that's where I have been since 1981. I've taught 37 distinct courses (8 on logic). In many of those years I've taught Plato and BR in alternating semesters. To see how I mix Plato, BR, Bruce and my doubts that Philosophy has separable parts, you might read my essay in the *International Journal for Philosophy of Religion* (v. 72.2) 2012, 115-138 (Springer); the Guest Editor, that would be moi, seems a bit confused by *his own essay*. Bertie Rocks! (Boss fans: can you pick out the Springsteen references!? Ed.)

Periodically we will "introduce" members to the Society, at large. We will contact members and seek brief, first-person accounts (or we can write it!) that tell us something about themselves, and how they came to "know" Russell.

Answer to question on page 6 ... what philosopher did Russell consider to be his enemy, albeit in an impersonal sense?

In his "Reply to Critics," which concludes *The Philosophy of Bertrand Russell*, edited by Paul Schilpp (New York, Harper, 1963), Russell wrote, in reference to a critical essay by Boyd Bode, "Mr. Bode, who writes on my educational philosophy, is the only one of the contributors to this volume whom I recognize as (in an impersonal sense) an enemy. I feel that he and I desire very different kinds of society, and that therefore all agreement between us, except on minor points, is impossible" (p. 731). Bode was (at least in part) a disciple of John Dewey. In Schilpp, he compared Russell to Mephistopheles, writing: "Like his literary prototype, Mr. Russell is unmistakably a dangerous person. He is subversive; he is the spirit that denies" (p. 621). Further, Bode says, "Whether the theme of his discourse be religion or patriotism or citizenship or capitalism or matrimony or education or some other phase of our social order is a secondary matter; it is fairly safe to assume beforehand that some hoary tradition is going to take a beating" (p. 621). So, what's your point, Mr. Bode? Alas, history has given us little reason to remember poor Bode beyond his moment of fame, when Russell mentioned him by name.

What follows is a good antidote to Mr. Bode:

"I have lived in the pursuit of a vision, both personal and social. Personal: to care for what is noble, for what is beautiful, for what is gentle; to allow moments of insight to give wisdom at more mundane times. Social: to see in imagination the society that is to be created, where individuals grow freely, and where hate and greed and envy die because there is nothing to nourish them. These things I believe, and the world, for all its horrors, has left me unshaken."



The Autobiography of Bertrand Russell 1944-1969. NY, Little, Brown, p. 330. (1968). Published separately as "Reflections on My Eightieth Birthday" in *Portraits from Memory*, NY, Simon and Schuster (1956).



This and That

By Mike Berumen

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Barbs and Bouquets

Bertrand Russell has acquired many admirers and detractors, both while alive and now. Few, if any, modern, English-speaking philosophers have had as many references in book indices. One could easily fill a book or two with just the personal encomia and aspersions. Here's just a brief selection of some flattering and disparaging quips about Russell or his works that found their way into print.

The logician and philosopher W. V. Quine once blurbed that *Principia Mathematica* was the most important book to him. He addressed how he and others of his era were inspired to become professional philosophers: "I think many of us were drawn to our profession by Russell's books. He wrote a spectrum of books for a graduated public, laymen to specialist. We were beguiled by the wit and a sense of newfound clarity with respect to central traits of reality."¹ In another passage, Quine also said that he had mixed feelings about the effects of Russell's social commentary.

Conservative journalist and historian, Paul Johnson, admired Russell's intellect, but not his personal character. Johnson skewers public intellectuals who tell others how to live in *Intellectuals*, where he devotes a chapter to Russell. Among other criticisms, he says Russell did not practice what he preached when it came to solving problems with logic and reason: "The trouble was that Russell repeatedly demonstrated, in the circumstances of his own life, that all these propositions rested on shaky foundations. At every great juncture, his views and actions were as liable to be determined by his emotions as by his reason. At moments of crisis logic was thrown to the winds. Nor could he be trusted to behave decently where his interests were threatened."² Johnson is especially scornful of the way (Johnson believed) Russell treated women and certain friends in his life.

Karl Popper, an unabashed Russell admirer, said more than once that Russell was one of the most important philosophers in history, and the most important in recent history. Many have commented on Russell's seemingly preternatural writing ability, and his ability to get his words out right the first time. Popper writes thusly: "Many years ago I visited Bertrand Russell in his rooms at Trinity College and he showed me a manuscript of his in which there was not a single correction for

many pages. With the help of his pen, he had instructed the paper."³ Russell's friend, Miles Malleson, concurred, and he wrote, "Every morning Bertie would go for an hour's walk by himself, composing and thinking out his work for that day. He would then come back and write for the rest of the morning, smoothly, easily, and without a single correction."⁴

The philosopher-historian Will Durant might be forgiven if he had evinced ill will towards Russell. In his autobiography, he reports that Russell made advances to his wife, Ariel, including fondling her hand, whilst she and Russell were sharing a ride from an event in New York, and trying to divert their car to Central Park. Their driver, unbeknownst to Russell, was Ariel's brother, and he made haste to get her out of Russell's grasp. Nonetheless, Durant continued to admire Russell greatly. Years later, Will and Ariel visited Russell in Wales, and he said, "Bertrand was now an earl, but there was nothing lordly about him except the confident consciousness of having a mind that moved like a deadly laser among the shams and delusions of his time. This rather awed and frightened me.... I admired him as a miracle among men..."⁵

Cognitive scientist Douglas Hofstadter of *Gödel, Escher, Bach* (1979) fame might be considered by some, including me, to have overstated (and misunderstood) Gödel's findings, and to have understated (and misunderstood) Russell's. In his recent book, *I Am A Strange Loop*, Hofstadter writes about Russell's theory of types, "When I read about this 'theory of types', it struck me as a pathological retreat from common sense, as well as from the fascination of loops. What on earth could be wrong with the word 'word' being a member of the category 'word'? He goes on to say, "Categorically banishing all loops of reference struck me as such a paranoid maneuver that I was disappointed for a lifetime with the once-bitten twice-shy mind of Bertrand Russell."⁶

Philosopher Hillary Putnam had a more charitable view of Russell's contributions. In his essay on "Philosophy of Mathematics", Putnam wrote, "Perhaps all analytic philosophers now recognize that "the nature of logical truth" and "the nature of mathematical truth" are *one* problem, not two—and this is itself a victory for the standpoint of Russell, whose most moderate conclusion was that henceforth it would never be possible to draw a sharp line between logic and mathematics."⁷

One of the most famous disparagements of Russell's work came from his erstwhile student and friend, Ludwig Wittgenstein, who said, "Russell's books should be bound in two colours, those



dealing with mathematical logic in red—and all students of philosophy should read them; those dealing with ethics and politics in blue—and no one should be allowed to read them.”⁸ Faint praise from someone who benefited from Russell’s financial generosity, and who almost certainly owed his fame to him. Wittgenstein found Russell’s views on ethics and social issues, and worse, his propensity to discuss such matters, quite repugnant.

Ray Monk, whose obsequiousness towards Wittgenstein is equaled only by his disdain for Russell, wrote in his biography of him, “To research Russell’s private life, I discovered, is to pick one’s way through a long trail of emotional wreckage, and to put oneself in the position of someone close to Russell has often been a heart-breaking experience.” He goes on to ask, “...how could he have been so *cold* towards those who loved him? How could he have written so much second-rate journalism?”⁹

Contrast Monk’s view with the perspective of his daughter, Katharine Tait. In her book about her relationship with him, Tait does not gloss over Russell’s several deficiencies, and she openly disagrees with him on some fundamental issues (notably, religion). And yet, with that said, she concludes her volume with this: “He was the most fascinating man I have ever known, the only man I ever loved, the greatest man I shall ever meet, the wittiest, the gayest, the most charming. It was a privilege to know him, and I thank God he was my father.”¹⁰ Despite whom she thanks for this, I suspect Russell would be rather gratified.

The exponent of pragmatism and apostate from Marxism, Sidney Hook, was critical of some of Russell’s personal characteristics, particularly what Hook perceived as his vanity, and also his juvenile braggadocio on his sexual prowess with women. But he also admired Russell’s intelligence, and thought him to be one of the greatest philosophers. He ranked his prose as greater than Hume’s, and said in his autobiography, “...to be lucid, exciting, and profound in the main body of one’s work is a combination of virtues given to few philosophers. Bertrand Russell has achieved immortality by his philosophical writings. Everything else about him is of little consequence, except for its passing human interest.”¹¹ Having spent a good deal of time with him when Russell visited the U.S., Hook said, “During all this time, I never heard him repeat himself on any matter of substance, although subsequently he wrote about the persons and incidents he discussed in almost the same words he used when talking about them with me. His spontaneous conversation had the same

structure, incisiveness, wit, and brilliant finish as his published prose.”¹²

Study of Russell’s life shows that he was larger than life in many ways, but a human, nonetheless, with many of the frailties that come along with it. Our heroes need not be gods or saints. Such an expectation demands more of anyone than is possible, and when we brand another as such, we are probably guilty of myopic veneration. There is truth, exaggeration, and perhaps even calumny in some of what has been quoted, here. Another philosopher who claimed to have been greatly influenced by his work, A. J. Ayer, summed it up nicely, I think, in comparing Russell to his godfather, John Stuart Mill, though saying Russell was the much superior logician and philosopher. He wrote, “In his later years, Mill was known as the saint of Rationalism. Bertrand Russell would not have wished to be called a saint of any description; *but he was a great and good man.*”¹³

¹ Quine, W. V., *Theories and Things* (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 1981), p. 74.

² Johnson, Paul, *Intellectuals* (NY: Harper and Row, 1988), p. 203.

³ Popper, Karl, “Natural Selection and its Scientific Roots,” *Popper Selections*, ed. David Miller (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1985), p. 245.

⁴ Quoted in Rupert Crawshay-Williams, *Russell Remembered* (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 1970), p. 122.

⁵ Durant, Will and Ariel, *A Dual Autobiography* (NY: Simon and Schuster, 1977), p. 273.

⁶ Hofstadter, Douglas, *I Am A Strange Loop* (NY: Basic Books, 2007), p. 61.

⁷ Putnam, Hillary, *Words and Life*, ed. by James Conant (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1994), p. 500.

⁸ Maurice Drury quoted by Rush Rhees in *Recollections of Wittgenstein* (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 1984) p. 112

⁹ Monk, Ray, *Bertrand Russell: The Ghost of Madness 1921-1970* (NY: The Free Press, 2000), p. xi.

¹⁰ Tait, Katharine, *My Father Bertrand Russell* (NY, Harcourt, 1975), p. 202.

¹¹ Hook, Sidney, *Out of Step, An Unquiet Life in the 20th Century*, (NY: Carroll & Graf, 1987), p. 381.

¹² *Ibid.* p. 361.

¹³ Ayer, A. J., *Bertrand Russell* (NY: Viking Press, 1972), p. 155. My italics.



Russell's Non-Hobbesian Principles of Social Reconstruction

By Jolen Galaugher

In his 1916 book, *Principles of Social Reconstruction (PSR)*, Russell seems to advocate for international government on Hobbesian grounds. That is, he seems to argue in favour of a Leviathan at the level of international law and government on the grounds that, in its absence, there is nothing to prevent a war of all nations against all nations. In this work, Russell also contends that political philosophy has erroneously emphasized self-interested desire as the source of human conduct. He suggests that a sound political theory must instead address the fact that human action and decision is chiefly rooted in impulse. Impulse, according to Russell, is not directed toward any object *per se* and may be destructive or creative according to the circumstances that influence and shape it. Indeed, it is the aims of the State expressed at the level of social, economic, and educational institutions that misdirect human impulse and instance, in promoting extent to which impulse reshaped by the instituted, the political ends he of institutional changes human nature and do enforcement. On my view, man impulse is crucial to

“...for Russell, there is no necessary relationship between human nature and promoting or strengthening the national interest, or between human nature and the powers regularly exercised by the State.”

render it destructive (for nationalism). Since the can be redirected and tions in a State is unlim-envisages as the result are fully in keeping with not require external rein-Russell's notion of hu- understanding the deep divergence of his views from Hobbes's. Though some political achievements may, as a matter of social fact, be the product of a rational calculation balancing self-interest and self-preservation, this accounts only in small part for the role of politics in human affairs. I argue that, for Russell, there is no necessary relationship between human nature and promoting or strengthening the national interest, or between human nature and the powers regularly exercised by the State.

I. Russell's Alleged Hobbesianism

In Thomas Hobbes's political philosophy the absolute power of the sovereign, backed by a monopoly of armed force, is necessary for civil peace. This necessity has its basis in human nature, which, according to Hobbes, is selfish, acquisitive, forward-looking mistrustful and diffident, and characterized by a "...perpetual and restless desire for power after power that ceaseth only in death" (*Leviathan*, xi.2). In a state of nature, individuals are subject to a perpetual "war of every man against every man" in which the life of man can only



be “solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short” (*Leviathan* xiii. 6-9). Hence, a common power, limited only by each individual’s right to self-preservation, is necessary if there is to be civil peace. There is an apparent analogy between Russell’s views on international government in *PSR* and those upheld in Hobbes’s *Leviathan*.

In his article, “Russell’s Leviathan,” Mark Lippincott emphasizes “...Russell’s appropriation of elements from Thomas Hobbes’ theory of domestic peace – in particular, the image of a rational leviathan wielding an awe-inspiring monopoly of armed force.”¹ Lippincott does acknowledge that “the “perpetual and restless desire of power after power”, which Hobbes takes to be an unalterable and universal human tendency, “...is for Russell a perverse exaggeration of one side of our humanity which needs to be checked by fostering our “creative impulses”.² However, he writes:

[B]oth positions share a fixation with finding a means to stop a seemingly endless cycle of selfishly motivated but ultimately self-destructive violence ...[T]he key concept is the initial threat or use of a monopoly of coercive force in order *to establish the necessary conditions for a new order of peace*.³

Whereas, for Hobbes, the preservation of peace requires that the power of the State go unchallenged, Russell regards the State as the embodiment of what he called “possessive impulses”, and hence as the source of war through institutions which encourage “war fever”. Russell departs from Hobbes in limiting the (military) powers of the sovereign State, instead placing power in the hands of an international armed force. On Lippincott’s account, there is nevertheless a deep and undeniable analogy between Hobbes’s theory of the sovereign needed to prevent war within the State and Russell’s theory of international law aimed at preventing war between nations.

In his article, “Bertrand Russell: Moral Philosopher or Unphilosophical Moralist?” Charles Pigden takes a similar view. Pigden tells us that, “...[i]n the realm of international affairs, Russell had a *reason* for...insisting on the need for World Government—he subscribed to Hobbes’s thesis that the international state of nature is in fact a state of war.”⁴ In his 1915 paper, “The Nature of the State in View of Its External Relations”, Russell tells us that “[t]he essence of the State is the organization of force. Instead of each citizen exercising what force he can in accordance with his own initiative, the force of the citizens is united, and exerted collectively.”⁵ There, he also states that “[i]nternational law, like Municipal law, is nothing without a sanction...unless it possesses sufficient armed force to be obviously capable of enforcing its decisions upon any recalcitrant nation”.⁶ Moreover, in a passage from Russell’s *A History of Western Philosophy (HWP)*, which Lippincott also cites, Russell remarks that “[e]very argument that [Hobbes] adduces in favour of government, in so far as it is valid at all, is valid in favour of international government.”⁷ From such remarks, it seems that Russell’s argument for international government was essentially Hobbesian. On my view, however, Russell’s deep disagreement with Hobbes emerges by



considering what we are to make of *the fact* of the war of all nations against all nations, and by considering how far Hobbes's arguments are valid according to Russell's views in *PSR*.

In what follows, I argue that, for Russell, there is no necessary relationship between human nature and the powers regularly exercised by the State, or between individuals' interests and promoting or strengthening national interests. Moreover, the military force and functions of the State are not warranted, as they are for Hobbes, by the State's protection of the interests of individuals. Hence, international law and government is not an ultimate political achievement, as Hobbes's *Leviathan* is in his political philosophy, but a point of progress, securing the peace that is a necessary precondition to the freedom and flourishing of individuals.

II. Impulse or Rational Self-Interest: the Role of State

Importantly, unlike Hobbes, Russell does not consider the relatively unlimited power of the State to have its basis and warrant in the rational self-interest of its citizens. Political obedience, in Russell's philosophy, is not upheld as a necessary condition for peace. Concerning the connection between the interests of individuals and the powers regularly exercised by the State, Russell gives the following statement:

The power of the State is only limited internally by the fear of rebellion and externally by the fear of defeat in war. Subject to these restrictions, it is absolute. In practice, it can seize men's property through taxation, determine the law of marriage and inheritance, punish the expression of opinions which it dislikes, put men to death for wishing the region they inhabit to belong to a different State, and order all able-bodied males to risk their lives in battle whenever it considers war desirable. On many matters disagreement with the purposes and opinions of the State is criminal. In time of war, all criticism of the external policy of the State is criminal.... Certain objects having appeared desirable to the majority, or to the effective holders of power, those who do not consider these objects desirable are exposed to pains and penalties not unlike those suffered by heretics in the past. The extent of the tyranny thus exercised is concealed by its very success: few men consider it worth while to incur a persecution which is almost certain to be thorough and effective.⁸

Such remarks clearly run counter to Hobbes's thesis that to promote the national interest is to promote the interests of humankind. In *HWP*, Russell criticizes Hobbes's assumption that the interests of all individuals are the same and, hence, can be assimilated to the "national interest". In *PSR*, Russell challenges the Hobbesian grounds for the thesis that State interests should be accommodated, maintaining that the conduct of individuals is not primarily guided by self-interest, and consequently, that the interests of individuals cannot and should not be assimilated to those of the State, which is itself merely the embodiment



of the possessive impulses.⁹ While Hobbes's Leviathan emerges from the rational self-interest of individuals, Russell tells us, at the outset of *PSR*, that rational self-interest has been unduly emphasized in political theory. As a matter of social fact, some political achievements may be the product of a rational calculation balancing self-interest and self-preservation, but this accounts only in small part for the role of politics in human affairs. Russell writes: "A political theory, if it is to hold in times of stress, must take account of the impulses that underlie explicit thought: it must appeal to them, and it must discover how to make them fruitful rather than destructive."¹⁰ A crucial aim of the theory put forth in *PSR* is to shed light on the way in which the "impulses" characterizing human nature form the basis of political life.

Political theory, according to Russell, has hitherto considered only individuals' conscious desires. The contrast between impulse and desire consists chiefly in the fact that, whereas desires have fixed objects and lead to action and decision that is the result of a rational calculation of interests, impulses have no objects *per se*, and may be shaped and redirected according to the influences that civil institutions exert on individuals. The extent to which they may be shaped and redirected is virtually unlimited. Russell's markedly non-Hobbesian position is that "... man's impulses are not fixed from the beginning by his native disposition: within certain wide limits, they are profoundly modified by his circumstances and his way of life."¹¹ The difficulty, as Russell envisages it, is that contemporary economic, political, and educational institutions, based on injustice and authority, privilege State interests and nationalism and the outlet for men's creative impulses thereby becomes tied to the sense of purpose, usefulness, conquest, and pride associated with the nation's war efforts. While institutions serving State aims strengthen possessive impulses, which is epitomized by nationalism, these institutions might be revised in accordance with alternative ideals, redirecting impulse towards creative enterprises.

Russell's view that individuals' interests are not reflected in the interests of the State, which encapsulates the possessive impulses, results in his rejection of the Hobbesian thesis that the State has a legitimate claim to unlimited power and authority. In Russell's philosophy, there is nothing to warrant individuals' investment in ensuring the military force of the State and, indeed, no necessary connection between State aims and military force. In Hobbes's philosophy, it is in the nation's self-interest to increase its force to protect against other nations and, since the powers of the State are rooted in individual self-interest, individuals' support of the increased force of the State is warranted.

In Russell's view, however, there is no such link between the role or purposes of State and military power. Peace within and between nations requires, rather, that the State be stripped of its military powers and that power be conferred, instead, upon an international government backed by force. He writes:

The civil functions of the State—legislative, administrative, and judicial—have no very essential connection with the military functions, and there is no reason why



both kinds of functions should normally be exercised by the same State. There is, in fact, every reason why the civil State and the military State should be different.... Of course, if there were an international Army and Navy, there would have to be some international authority to set them in motion. But this authority need never concern itself with any of the internal affairs of national States: it need only declare the rules which should regulate their relations, and pronounce judicially when those rules have been so infringed as to call for the intervention of the international force.¹²

I shall consider the nature and role of international government in a subsequent section. For the moment, it suffices to notice that Russell rejects the view that the relatively unlimited power of the State backed by military force is legitimated by human nature. On Russell's account, human impulse is not endemically destructive when unchecked by the State, but—quite to the contrary—the aims of the State expressed at the level of social, economic, and educational institutions misdirect human impulse and render it so (e.g., in promoting nationalism). Since there is nothing endemically destructive or violent in human impulse, there is no corresponding need for restrictive or prohibitive institutional interventions, but rather institutional changes can be made to redirect impulse to creative initiatives by *limiting the authority of the State*.

III. Redirecting Impulse

In *PSR*, Russell recommends that the State be accorded a negative and regulatory role. He holds, for instance, that voluntary organizations should control positive aspects of government.¹³ The point is crucial since it implies that a political philosophy may be built up on an entirely different supposition than that on which Hobbes's theory is built, namely, that it is by limiting the authority and eliminating the military power of the State, and revising institutions to support individuals' creative impulses, that peace is increased.

To understand Russell's recommendations for reshaping impulse to creative ends, it is worth briefly considering his account of how "war fever" is generated. On Russell's account, war does not arise, in the first instance, by a calculation of one's interests or desire for gain. He writes:

The ultimate fact from which war results is not economic or political, and does not rest upon any mechanical difficulty of inventing means for the peaceful settlement of international disputes. The ultimate fact from which war results is the fact that a large proportion of mankind have an impulse to conflict rather than harmony, and can only be brought to co-operate with others in resisting or attacking a common enemy.¹⁴

Here, it is not the impulses themselves which are harmful; to the contrary, Russell holds that the impulses themselves are needed to prevent society—culture, arts, progress



of science and knowledge, etc.—from becoming static and dead, and are essential to “a vigorous or progressive life”. The difficulty consists in retaining these impulses without making war the outlet for them. On Russell’s account, war might be prevented “... by far-reaching changes in education,¹⁵ in the economic structure of society,¹⁶ and in the moral code by which public opinion controls the lives of men and women.”¹⁷ Having put forth his account of the nature of impulse as the conduit of political life, Russell introduces a variety of practical recommendations for reshaping institutions. “I have no doubt”, he tells us, “that what might be accomplished in this way is almost unlimited.”¹⁸

IV. The Nature of International Government

We have seen that, whereas the individual, on Russell’s account, has unlimited creative capacities, the State is an embodiment of the possessive impulses which lead to conflict. We have seen, moreover, that unlike Hobbes’s Sovereign, the State, for Russell, has no claim to authority based in human nature and bears no essential connection to military functions. Indeed, on Russell’s account, the State backed by military force is not a final political achievement, as it is in Hobbes, but a point of progress toward freedom. In this connection, Russell writes:

The primitive anarchy which precedes law is worse than law. But I believe there is a possibility of a stage to some extent above law, where the advantages now secured by the law are secured without loss of freedom, and without the disadvantages which the law and the police render inevitable. Probably some repository of force in the background will remain necessary, but the actual employment of force may become very rare, and the degree of force required very small.¹⁹

By analogy, international law and government are, at least theoretically, not a final political achievement, legitimated by human nature, but a point of progress toward freedom. On Russell’s view, it is due to the fact that “... force employed according to law is less pernicious than force employed capriciously,” that international law regulating the relations of States would be a great advance on our present condition.²⁰ At the international level as at the State level, the substitution of authority with a monopoly of armed force is preferable to mere anarchy, but it is to be viewed as a precondition to freedom, not the end-result.

According to Russell in “How I Came By My Creed”, the situation to be overcome is mere anarchy between nations, that is, one in which “[e]ach nation is willing to fight till the last gasp to preserve its freedom ... [which] leads to conditions exactly analogous to those in the feudal ages before the bold, bad barons were forced in the end to submit to the authority of the king.”²¹ Russell continues: “When all the armed forces of the world are controlled by one world-wide authority, we shall have reached the stage in the relation of states which was reached centuries ago in the relations of individuals”.²² However, Russell views



international government as a step toward and a precondition for freedom. In “Ideas That Have Helped Mankind”, he writes:

In the history of social evolution it will be found that almost invariably the establishment of some sort of government has come first and attempts to make government compatible with personal liberty have come later. In international affairs we have not yet reached the first stage.²³

If international government, backed by force, is not theoretically legitimated by human nature and is, practically speaking, a precondition to peace only in some initial stage of social evolution, then what are the final aims, both theoretical and practical, of political life and political theory?

According to Russell in *PSR*, desirable ends in political life accord with two general principles: first, the growth and vitality of individuals and communities is to be promoted as far as possible, and second, the growth of one individual or one community is to be as little as possible at the expense of another. What is required to achieve this, he tells us, is some unification or integration first, of our individual lives, and then of the life of the community and of the world, without sacrifice of individuality, all of which requires that the lives of individuals be directed by some creative purpose. The proper aim of a political theory, Russell tells us in *PSR*, “... is not the invention of a Utopia, but the discovery of the best direction of movement ... for the present time.”²⁴

The present state of affairs which Russell’s political theory was to take into account was that in which “[t]he war has made it clear that it is impossible to produce a secure integration of the life of a single community while the relations between civilized countries are governed by aggressiveness and suspicion” for which reason “any really powerful movement of reform will have to be international.”²⁵ World Government, however, was expressly conceived by Russell as a stand-in for force, not as justice-serving. The role of international law and government was not to promote individual flourishing and serve justice directly, but to lay down the conditions for justice and personal liberty by eliminating the use of force to the greatest possible extent.

Russell writes:

A world-State or federation of States, if it is to be successful, will have to decide questions ... in the same sense in which they would be decided by war. The function of authority should be to render the appeal to force unnecessary, not to give decisions contrary to those which would be reached by force.²⁶

The role of international government is not to serve justice, then, but to substitute for decisions reached by force in order to introduce the conditions for freedom and justice, paralleling Russell’s account of the progression from mere anarchy to law and government



as a condition for seeking justice and individual freedom within it, despite of it, and perhaps beyond it.

On Russell's account in *PSR*, the extent to which impulse can be redirected toward creative ends by the institutions in a State is virtually unlimited. The political ends which Russell envisages as the result of institutional changes are fully in keeping with human nature and do not require external reinforcement. The essential role of the State and, by extension, of a World Government, is to substitute law for force, not as an end in itself, but as an intermediary stage preventing threats to security and establishing peace, thereby supplying the preconditions necessary to individual freedom. Thus, in contrast to Hobbes, the role of State and even of international government backed by force is not to serve justice but consists merely in the temporary substitution of law for force. Neither the State nor any international government has a claim to authority based in human nature, as it does in Hobbes's philosophy, and military support supplied to it is not legitimated by the protection of individuals' interest, which it is not thought to represent. In Russell's *PSR*, political obedience does not bear the connection to peace that it bears in Hobbes's philosophy, and a new basis for political life and political theory is found in human impulse, which has an unlimited potential to be directed away from State aims toward creative ends that support human flourishing.

¹ Lippincott, Mark, "Russell's Leviathan," *Russell: the Journal of Bertrand Russell Studies*: Vol. 10: Iss. 1 (1990): p. 8.

² *Ibid.*, p. 12.

³ *Ibid.*, p.12. My italics.

⁴ Pigden, Charles, "Bertrand Russell: Moral Philosopher or Unphilosophical Moralist?" in *The Cambridge Companion to Bertrand Russell*, Nicholas Griffin ed., (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004): p. 487. Pigden cites Russell's *A History of Western Philosophy* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1945): p. 579.

⁵ Russell, Bertrand, "The Nature of the State in View of Its External Relations" in *The Collected Papers of Bertrand Russell, Vol. 13*, Rempel, Richard, et al. eds. (London: Unwin Hyman, 1988): p. 364.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 367.

⁷ Russell, Bertrand, *A History of Western Philosophy* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1945): p. 557.

⁸ Russell, Bertrand, *Principles of Social Reconstruction* (London: Routledge, 1997): pp. 34-5.

⁹ Russell elaborates this: "...internally, it protects the rich against the poor; externally, it uses force for the exploitation of inferior races, and for competition with other States". *Ibid.*, p.162.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 168.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 15.

¹² *Ibid.*, pp. 71-2.

¹³ Russell emphasizes contributions by trade unions, co-operative societies, professions, and universities. *Ibid.*, p. 52.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 75.

¹⁵ Russell held that the current educational institutions promoted nationalism. *Ibid.*, p. 105-7.

¹⁶ An economic system, Russell tells us, "...should not cramp men's private affections, and it should give the greatest possible outlet to the impulse of creation". *Ibid.*, p. 94.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 65.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 163-4.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 34.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 34.

²¹ Russell, Bertrand, "How I Came By My Creed" in *Living Philosophies* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1931): p.

18.

²² *Ibid.*, p. 18.

²³ Russell, Bertrand, "Ideas That Have Helped Mankind," in *Unpopular Essays* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1950): p. 142.

²⁴ Russell, Bertrand, *Principles of Social Reconstruction* (London: Routledge, 1997): p. 157.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 161.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 47-8.



Russell's Geniuses

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In his Autobiography, Russell wrote that Wittgenstein was “most perfect example I have ever known of genius as traditionally conceived, passionate, profound, intense....” But Wittgenstein wasn't the only one among his pupils that held such a lofty status in his eyes and he was not the only one who went on to make an indelible mark on philosophy. Notable among them are Frank Ramsey, Jean Nicod, Henry Sheffer, George Spencer-Brown and T.S. Eliot. Let us take stock of some of *their* efforts.

One hundred years ago in 1913, Wittgenstein isolated himself in Norway endeavoring (according to the August diary entry of his dear friend Pinsent) to rewrite eleven chapters of Whitehead and Russell's *Principia Mathematica*. But indirect evidence suggests that his endeavor was in large part prompted by a discovery of Sheffer. On a leaf of Russell's paper



“On Matter” we find conclusive evidence of Wittgenstein and Russell discussing the import of Sheffer's stroke notation. In April of 1913, Russell received Sheffer's paper¹ heralding that p/q (the “Sheffer stroke”) and its dual $p \downarrow q$ (which we now call the “dagger”) are each individually adequate to express any truth-function expressible by the propositional connectives \sim , \vee of *Principia*. (The proof of the expressive adequacy of the propositional connectives of *Principia* is due to Post 1920.) Sheffer had taken a course with Russell on logic in the fall of 1910 and his work impressed Russell. It is likely, therefore, that at least a large part of Wittgenstein's plan of study was to find a formal system that develops logic using the stroke as its

sole propositional connective. Indeed, in one of his letters to Russell from Norway, Wittgenstein wrote: “Of course the rule I have given applies first of all only for what you called elementary propositions. But it is easy to see that it must also apply to all others. For consider your two *Pps* in the theory of apparent variables *9.1 and *9.11 ... and it becomes obvious that the special cases of these two *Pps* like those of all the previous ones become tautologous if you apply the *ab* notation. The *ab* Notation for Identity is not yet clear enough to show this clearly but it is obvious that such a Notation can be made up. I can sum up by saying that a logical proposition is one the special case of which are either tautologous—or self-contradictory (as I shall call it) and this it is false. And the *ab* notation simply shows directly which is which of these two it is (if any). That means that there is *one* method of proving of disproving all logical propositions and this is: write them down in the *ab* notation and looking at the connections and applying the above rule. But if *one* symbolic rule will do, there must also be *one Pp* that will do.”² Inspired by Sheffer's improvement of Russell's system for logic, Wittgenstein had come to believe that the whole of quantification theory

with identity can be generated from *one* principle and that all logical equivalents can be expressed in one and the same way.

But in 1916 another genius student of Russell’s work, Jean Nicod,³ beat Wittgenstein to the goal (for the propositional calculus). Nicod was able to prove that the entire formal deductive system for propositional logic can be generated from the Sheffer stroke by employing only *one* axiom and one inference rule. Wittgenstein failed to get the result, though his *Tractatus* suggests that he may have tried an analog of Nicod’s rule for the Sheffer dagger. A formal system for the dagger is more difficult to obtain. The analog of Nicod’s stroke system, with one axiom schema and one inference rule did not come until Scharle (1965).⁴ Heralding both Nicod and Sheffer in the introduction to the second edition of *Principia*, Russell wrote that “... a new and very powerful method in mathematical logic has been invented by Dr. H. M. Sheffer. This method, however, would demand a complete rewriting of *Principia Mathematica*. We recommend this task to Dr. Sheffer.”

Wittgenstein never was able to accomplish his goal of finding a notation for quantification theory with identity in which all and only logical equivalents have the *same* notation. He imagined that his *ab* notation (mentioned in the above quoted letter, which had become his *t-f* notation in the *Tractatus*) offers a representation of a *wff* of propositional logic in terms of its truth conditions. All and only logical equivalents of propositional logic have the same *t-f* notation. But Venn had already achieved that goal with propositional diagrams in the 1880’s. Nor can Wittgenstein be credited with truth-tables (pop history aside). A truth-table can be found in Müller’s 1909 *Abriss of Schröder’s Algebra of Logic*.

In any case, *t-f* notations cannot be extended to quantification theory with identity. In the *Tractatus*, quantification theory with identity is supposed to be eliminated in favor of exclusive quantifiers and the N-operator. The N-operator was independently discovered by George Spencer-Brown and discussed in detail with Russell in the mid-1960s. Russell was then in his 90’s and didn’t seem to recognize anything of Wittgenstein’s work in it. The basic translations are as follows:

<i>Principia</i>	$p \supset q$	$p \vee q$	$\sim p$	$p \supset \cdot q \supset r$	$p \supset q \supset \cdot \sim q \supset \sim p$
Sheffer \downarrow	$\sim(\sim p \downarrow q)$	$\sim(p \downarrow q)$	$p \downarrow p$	$\sim(\sim p \downarrow \sim(\sim q \downarrow r))$	$\sim(\sim(\sim p \downarrow q) \downarrow \sim(\sim q \downarrow p))$
	$\sim \downarrow(\sim p, q)$	$\sim \downarrow(p, q)$		$\sim \downarrow(\sim p, \sim \downarrow(\sim q, r))$	$\sim \downarrow(\sim \downarrow(\sim p, q), \sim \downarrow(\sim q, p))$
Wittgenstein N-operator	$NN(Np, q)$	$NN(p, q)$	$N(p)$	$NN(Np, NN(q, r))$	$NN(NN(Np, q), NN(NNq, p))$
			$N(p, p)$	$NN(Np, q, r)$	$NN(Np, q, p)$
Spencer-Brown			\boxed{p}	$\boxed{\boxed{p} \boxed{qr}}$	$\boxed{\boxed{\boxed{p} \boxed{q}} \boxed{\boxed{q} \boxed{p}}}$
			\boxed{pp}	$\boxed{\boxed{p} \boxed{qr}}$	$\boxed{\boxed{p} \boxed{qp}}$

Interestingly, the problem of quantification theory was not addressed until the *Tractatus* was nearly completed. Wittgenstein’s N-operator was to be the solution and was added into the work perhaps in 1918 or even 1919. The N-operator offers a practice of calculation us-



ing rules of sameness which permit *reordering*, *repetition*, *dropping double NN*, *dropping internal expressions of the form $N(\dots p \dots Np \dots)$* , *distribution*, and the like. All and only tautologies of propositional calculus have the form $NN(\dots p \dots Np \dots)$.

Wittgenstein didn't deign in the *Tractatus* to set forth the rules for calculation via the N-operator. This is characteristic of Wittgenstein. Writing to Russell about his *ab* notation, he exclaimed: "I'm upset that you did not understand the rule for the signs in my last letter, since it bores me unspeakably to explain it! ... Please think the matter over yourself...." Martin Gardner's *shuttles* are a rediscovery of the *ab* notation (*Logic Machines and Diagrams*, University of Chicago Press, 1982). Gardner notes that the rules are very tedious indeed to set out rigorously.

Spencer-Brown, working quite independently, found the rules of the N-operator and set them out completely in his bewildering and captivating book *Laws of Form* (1971). Both



Wittgenstein and Spencer-Brown are eccentrics. Wittgenstein closed his *Tractatus* with the famous line: "Whereof once cannot speak, thereof one must be silent". Spencer-Brown's *Preface* remarks: "Wittgenstein used to say, What can be said, can be said clearly. I'm saying, What must be said, must be said wrong. ... Whenever we say anything in a way, we do so at the expense of other ways." Spencer-Brown offered his own twist on Wittgenstein's doctrine that logic and arithmetic are *shown* and not said. He writes (*Laws of Form*, p. 97): "It might be helpful at this state to realize that the primary focus of mathematical communication is not description, but injunction. In this respect it is comparable with practice in forms like cookery, in which the taste of cake, although literally indescribable, can be conveyed

to a reader in the form of a set of injunctions called a recipe. Music is a similar art form.... He [Wittgenstein] notes elsewhere that the mathematician, descriptively speaking, says nothing. The same may be said of the composer, who, if he were to attempt a description (i.e., a limitation) of the set of ecstasies apparent through (i.e., unlimited by) his composition, would fail miserably and necessarily. But neither the composer nor the mathematician must, for this reason, be silent." But neither Wittgenstein's N-operator nor Spencer-Brown's *Primary Algebra* succeeds in capturing quantification theory. The project is doomed to failure. Alonzo Church proved in 1931 that quantification theory (with relations) is not decidable. Hence, it is impossible for there to be a notation in which all and only logical equivalents of quantification theory with relations (even excluding identity) have one and the same form. If there were such a representation, then transcription into this representational form would itself be a decision procedure for logic.

Curiously, the historical origins of Wittgenstein's idea that logic consists of tautologies (or generalized tautologies) lies in *Principia* itself. In a section called *9, Whitehead and Russell demonstrate that quantification theory, which is set out in *Principia*'s *10, can be



adequately developed by beginning every proof from a quantifier-free tautology and generalizing (existentially or universally), switching quantifiers (when possible) and then moving the quantifiers to subordinate positions by employing definitions. *Principia's* system of *9 is successful and, therefore, in a modest sense we can say that quantification theory can be obtained by generalizations of tautologies. The result was accomplished by Russell in



1907. But Wittgenstein was mistaken in *intuiting* from the success of *Principia's* *9 that quantification theory is decidable. It is important to note that the results of *Principia's* *9 applies equally to so-called "higher order" quantification theory, where predicate variables $\phi!$ etc., can be bound as in $(\exists\phi)(\forall x)(\phi!x \supset \phi!x)$. Ramsey, another genius and diligent student of Russell's logic, was very concerned that quantification may turn out to be undecidable (i.e., that there is no one recipe for determining whether or not a given *wff* is a logical truth of quantification theory.) Unlike Wittgenstein, Ramsey didn't put his trust in his intuitions alone and rejected the Tractarian oracular pronouncements that "logic must take care of itself" in a way that makes tautologies *shown* by their symbols and not *said* through discoveries of a science of logic. Ramsey, found a general translation recipe for proceeding

from the notations of *Principia* into a Tractarian notation for exclusive quantifiers, and he found another translation recipe for the reverse direction. Russell amusingly compared Wittgenstein's temperament with that of Ramsey. In *My Philosophical Development* (New York: Simon and Schuster 1957, p. 126) he wrote: "Although he writes as a disciple of Wittgenstein and follows him in everything except mysticism, the way in which he approaches problems is extraordinarily different. Wittgenstein announces aphorisms and leaves the reader to estimate their profundity as best he may. Some of his aphorisms, taken literally, are scarcely compatible with the existence of symbolic logic. Ramsey, on the contrary, is careful, even when he follows Wittgenstein most closely, to show how whatever doctrine is concerned can be fitted into the corpus of mathematical logic." Wittgenstein never set out a system of rules for quantification theory based on his N-operator, and he never set out a deductive quantification theory for exclusive quantifiers. Only recently have deductive systems been proposed.⁵

The informativity of logic does *not* lie in the new quantification theory. Frege, Russell and Ramsey knew this. Sadly, it has not been well understood. Russell heralded the new logic of relations (with identity) as the great advance of the new logic. But he did not mean to speak merely of the new quantification theory with relations. Logic is informative because, and only because, it embodies *impredicative comprehension*. To distinguish this from the new quantification theory, I call this ^{cp}Logic ("impredicative comprehension princi-



ple logic”). This was the great new advance that was first sketched by Frege in *Begriffsschrift* (1879). Whitehead and Russell’s *Principia Mathematica* (1910) concurs.

To understand impredicative comprehension, perhaps Russell’s example remains the most illuminating. Consider the attribute θ that an entity has if and only if it has *every property* Γ that belongs in common to every great general (Caesar, Washington, Napoleon, etc.). This is impredicative because the exemplification conditions for θ involve every property, including θ itself. Now there are only finitely many great generals. Suppose they are just Caesar, Washington and Napoleon. Then there is another attribute Σ , namely the property of being either Caesar, Washington or Napoleon, which is *predicative* and which is such that every entity has θ if and only if it has Σ . But in some cases, there is no such way to dodge. Properties such as the *ancestral, number, finite, the least upper bound*, and many others are essentially impredicative.

Frege, of course, assumed a *realist* interpretation of comprehension making logic science that studies all kinds of *functions*. Russell’s analogous position is that the subject matter of logic is the study of all kinds of structures—structures which ultimately are given by relations ordering their fields. To capture such structures within logic, impredicative comprehension is essential.

ence that studies all the by relations ordering tures (or “logical forms” called them) include inas the structural orderbers (*progressions*), and a Real field. Impredica-

“Russell’s logicism proclaims that what mathematicians are *actually* doing when they do mathematics, is investigating and discovering truths about the *structures*.”

^{cp}Logic is a genuine sci-kinds of structures given their fields. These struc-as Russell sometimes finitary structures such ing of the natural num-the continuous order of tive comprehension is

essential to them and thus to both Frege and Russell’s Logicism. Russell’s entire philosophy of mathematics, from *The Principles of Mathematics* (1903) to *Principia Mathematica* (1910) and beyond, concerns how to emulate the impredicative comprehension of ^{cp}Logic.

Logicism, as Russell viewed it, is the thesis that mathematics is a branch of ^{cp}logic. Notice that in this statement I’ve made no mention of a “reduction” of mathematics to logic, nor have I suggested in any way the logic should be consistently axiomatizable. Indeed, ^{cp}Logic cannot be consistently axiomatized. Russell’s logicism is not the thesis that mathematicians are to transcribe their investigations into the primitive notations of ^{cp}logic, nor is it the thesis that mathematical truths can, one and all, be deduced, from an axiomatization of ^{cp}logic. Russell’s logicism proclaims that what mathematicians are *actually* doing when they do mathematics, is investigating and discovering truths about the *structures*. Their intuitions are one and all intuitions of structure, and thus are part of the ^{cp}logic of relations. Russell embraces the revolution produced by mathematicians such as Cantor, Dedekind, Weierstrass, and Pieri in geometry. The revolution transformed the science of mathematics into a science of structure. It is not a science of *quantity*, studying special objects that are, num-



bers, triangles, and the like. Mathematics, in Russell's view, is part of the study of relational structures; it is thus part of the ^{op}Logic of relations.

The difference between Wittgenstein and Russell on this matter is quite significant. Russell tried to emulate impredicative comprehension. Wittgenstein rejected it outright, maintaining that logic *and mathematics* are not informative and it can get along perfectly well without embracing or emulating impredicative comprehension; it can get along perfectly well without classes, or ramping up an ontology to embrace special mathematical objects (numbers, triangles, etc.). Wittgenstein's *Tractatus* maintained that there is no science of mathematics and no science of logic! Taking recursive functions (operations) as primitive, he hoped that *both* the calculation of whether something is a generalized tautology of quantification theory and the calculation of whether the operational outcomes are the same in mathematical equation are *practices* embodied in calculating outcomes of repetitions of recursive operations. In Wittgenstein's view, *Principia* would have to be done "afresh" without identity, and with mathematics consisting of equations. Tractarian logicism is certainly not Frege's logicism, and certainly not Russell's logicism. But it just as certainly is a form of logicism if, according to the *Tractatus*, *all* operations are fundamentally grounded in the N-operation.

"Wittgenstein's efforts at "perfection" came up well short of their assigned goal. Ramsey eventually found himself more inspired by Russell."

Russell's new scientific philosophy, his philosophy of Logical Atomism, was a research program which endeavored to use the new technical apparatus of mathematical logic to reveal that the only necessity is logical necessity. Russell's first book carrying out his logical atomist program was *Our Knowledge of the External World*. (It is worth re-

calling the original full title: *Our Knowledge of the External World as a Field for Scientific Method in Philosophy*.) Wittgenstein's *Tractatus* hoped to carry the torch further, perfecting Russell's research program by eliminating logical necessity itself! He hoped to eliminate logic (and mathematics) as a genuine science. In this way, Wittgenstein thought, all philosophical problems would be dissolved.

Wittgenstein's efforts at "perfection" came up well short of their assigned goal. Ramsey eventually found himself more inspired by Russell. He wrote that had spent a lot of time developing Wittgenstein's construal of *identity* and the theory of arithmetic as *equations* but found it to be "faced with insuperable difficulties."⁶ He came to reject Wittgenstein's Tractarian account, applied even to elementary arithmetic. He returned to Russell's quest, and using some of Wittgenstein's ideas, he hoped to find way to emulate impredicative comprehension and realize Russellian logicism. *Principia* would *not* have to be done afresh after all. Ramsey offered a new interpretation of *Principia*'s symbols, leaving its logical system and its proofs largely as is, but offering an infinitary nominalistic semantics for its object-language predicate variables (i.e., those such as $\phi!$ and $\psi!$ with the shriek) to replace Russell's finitary nominalistic semantics.



In spite of their differences of detail and temperament, all of Russell's wonderful disciples, Wittgenstein, Ramsey, Sheffer, and Spencer-Brown are *allies* of Russell's program in philosophy. All were trying to perfect it, carrying the torch forward. All offered works of genius, though none were wholly successful.



And then (or better "and yet") there was Eliot – for whom "*April is the cruellest month.*"⁷ Misanthropic nightmares during the first World War plagued Russell, who came to believe that some parts of Eliot's (1922) *The Waste Land* reflected their discussions of the barbarous drives of men (and women!). In his *Autobiography* (p. 64), Russell's praised Eliot's literary genius⁸ and his self-less love: "He has a profound and quite unselfish devotion to his wife and she is really very fond of him, but has impulses of cruelty ... It is a Dostojevsky type of cruelty ... She is a person that lives on a knife-edge, and will end as a criminal or a saint—I don't know which yet. She has a perfect capacity for both." Now Eliot, no less than Wittgenstein, found Russell's *voice* against religious foundations for ethics repugnant. Concerning Russell's book, *Why I am not a Christian*, Eliot remarked: "I have just read your little pamphlet on Christianity, with some sadness. All the reasons you advance were familiar to me, I think, at the age of six or eight and I confess that your pamphlet seems to me a piece of childish folly. But I was brought up as an Atheist, and you were evidently brought up, and in my opinion remain, an Evangelical. Why don't you stick to mathematics?" Russell might have retorted: Why, if you knew these facts since six or eight, did reason not compel you (as it compelled me) to abandon Christ? Russell wrote that "the Christian religion, as organized in its churches, has been and still is the principle enemy of moral progress in the world." Eliot suggests that though an avowed atheist, Russell's polemics should be directed at religious institutions and dogmas and not at the ethical wisdom of Christ. Russell would heartily disagree. He did not think Jesus (as known to us in the Gospels) was ethically wise on many (never mind *all*) matters of importance to mankind. But the Christ-experience, which brought about Eliot's conversion, was perhaps not the "Christ" characterized in the gospels. Eliot's temperament was not that of Wittgenstein. The strict *silence* about morality that Wittgenstein was demanding (while engaging in battle on the side of the Austro-Hungarians!), would surely be repugnant to him. Eliot found poetry to be a profound vehicle for *saying* (expressing) ethical ideas. Russell himself quoted Leopardi's *La Ginestra o Il fiore de deserto* in his book *Power* (1938) and was not at all deaf to poetic expression. In 1923, he offered Eliot his highest praise for part V of *The Waste Land*, and Eliot quite agreed that it was "not only the best part, but the only part that justifies the whole, at all."

For Russell and his allies, the proper business of philosophy is to reveal that the only necessity is logical necessity. Philosophical metaphysics consists in offering theories and ontologies to deal with necessities. Logical analysis is the essence of Russell's new scientific method in philosophy. Philosophical problems in many fields are solved (and dissolved)

For Russell and his allies, the proper business of philosophy is to reveal that the only necessity is logical necessity. Philosophical metaphysics consists in offering theories and ontologies to deal with necessities. Logical analysis is the essence of Russell's new scientific method in philosophy. Philosophical problems in many fields are solved (and dissolved)



by the use of a logical analysis that separates the genuine physical predicates from the pseudo-predicates of non-logical necessity involved in the notions of *space*, *time*, *matter*, *mind*, *motion*, *change*, *cause*, and the like. Russell's logical atomism quickly embraced Einstein's relativity theory, which abandoned the notions *space* and *time* for *space-time*. All purported necessities (mathematical, causal, and metaphysical) must either be revealed as logical necessities or revealed to be pseudo-concepts and dismissed.

Russell's program is with us today. It has survived the Kripke/Putnam essentialism of metaphysical necessities (in mathematics, geometry, biology and the like). It survived Quine's naturalism (and indeed Russell's own anticipation of that naturalism in the 1920's). It positioned ^{CP}logic and the quest for logical form as the essence of philosophy and inaugurated a new philosophical program. It made *acquaintance* with logic the foundation for *all* which could be legitimately called "analytic philosophy".

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⁴ Scharle, Thomas, "Axiomatization of Propositional calculus with Sheffer Functors," *Notre Dame Journal of Formal Logic* 6 (1965): 209-217.

⁵ Landini, Gregory, *Wittgenstein's Apprenticeship with Russell* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007). See also, Kai Wehmeier, "Wittgenstein's Predicate Logic," *Notre Dame Journal of Formal Logic* 45 (2004), pp. 1-11.

⁶ Ramsey, Frank, "The Foundations of Mathematics", in ed., R. B. Braithwaite, *The Foundations of Mathematics and Other Logical Essays by Frank Plumpton Ramsey* (New York: Harcourt Brace & Col, 1931), p. 17.

⁷ For a discussion of the Russell-Eliot correspondence, see Kenneth Blackwell "The Russell-Eliot Correspondence (with texts): Review of Valerie Eliot, ed., *The Letters of T. S. Eliot*, vol. 1: 1898-1922", *Russell* 1989-90, p. 187-192. See also, Gladys Garner Leithauser and Nadine Cowan Dyer, "Bertrand Russell and T. S. Eliot: their dialogue", *Russell* (1982), pp. 7-28.

⁸ Schusterman, Richard, "Eliot and Logical Atomism", *ELH*, vol. 49 (1982), pp. 164-178.

(Drawings by Gregory Landini)



Russell's Homes: Three Nomadic Years

By Sheila Turcon, TURCON@MCMASTER.CA

Although The Millhanger was their home during the 1890s, Russell and Alys did start to rent accommodation elsewhere at the end of the decade. They may have had responsibility for The Millhanger for some time after that. On 25 September 1904, Alys thanked Russell for sending her the lease which she had requested. In Lent term of 1899 they stayed at the Old Granary, Silver Street, Cambridge. Margaret Keynes describes in detail the renovations to the counting house and two floors of the Granary which were made to convert it into a "living-house" in 1896. She has a chapter on the many tenants who lived there. Russell's stay was marked by the near-suicide of a young, pregnant woman in the river. The Russells took her in as a maid, until her marriage at which time the reluctant bridegroom had to be bribed to go through with the wedding. The Old Granary was later converted again, this time as accommodation for graduate students.



The Old Granary in Cambridge from the river

The following two Lent terms found them at West Lodge, Downing College, Cambridge. West Lodge was the home of the historian, F.W. Maitland, who rented it out when he was away. During Lent term 1901 they were joined there by Alfred and Evelyn Whitehead. After the term was over they moved into the Whiteheads' home at Grantchester. These rentals appear to have been mainly motivated by the desire to be in Cambridge. West Lodge is now used as a convention centre by Downing College.

It was in the spring of 1902 that Alys Russell had a complete mental collapse and was sent away for a rest cure. After she was released, Beatrice Webb took her to Switzerland. During this time period Russell split his time between the Whiteheads at Grantchester, near Cambridge and Friday's Hill House, Fernhurst, the home of Alys's parents. Perhaps Alys's mother was away because he writes in his *Autobiography*: "we had in the past spent a great deal of time with her family, but I told her I could no longer endure her mother, and that we must therefore leave Fernhurst." For the next several years the couple drifted through life with no home they could call their own for long. Their marriage was in disarray. Russell stayed with Alys but he no longer loved her.

In late July 1902 they rented a farmhouse from a Mrs. Hoddinott in Little Buckland, near Broadway, Worcestershire. It is not known how they decided on this location as it is not an area that either one of them had stayed in before but they were pressed for time. In June



Alys had asked Russell to see if the Murrays had a furnished cottage to let for a few months in Churt. She felt she “was not sufficient companion” for him in such a quiet place as Fernhurst. Her mental health had begun to break down “last spring” (9 June). It is not known precisely which farmhouse in Little Buckland that they rented. No photographs were taken there or at any other of the many rented accommodations the Russells would live in over the next three years. Russell wrote about the place to his friends. To G. Lowes Dickinson, he remarked that the neighbourhood was quite charming, “all the villages are built of a very good stone, and most of the houses are Jacobean or older.... Our lodgings are in an old and very picturesque farm-house. The place is bracing” (2 Aug.). To Helen Flexner he wrote that the neighbourhood was “soothing and delightful” (2 Aug.). He hoped to entertain the Robert Trevelyans there but noted that there was only one spare bed in the house (28 July). He told Bob that in September they would be “at large til the 13th when we move into 14 Cheyne Walk”, Chelsea, which the couple had leased for six months (1 Aug.).

From the Cheyne Walk town-home in London he wrote to Helen Flexner: “This place is singularly beautiful. Alone at night in my study at the top of the house” he saw sea-gulls and “with them I find a home: rest and peace are with the calm strength of Nature.” (14 Oct.) They rented either number 14 or number 13 Cheyne Walk for the autumn and winter from 1902 to 1905 from the Monteagle family. In the autumn of 1902 it was no. 14. Alys arrived before Russell. She wrote to him that “the house is really charming and will be just large enough. The view of the river is most beautiful.... The servants seem competent and obliging, but the cook is a terrible bore” (14 Sept.). A few days later she added: “Thy room here is perfectly charming ... thy books look very nice in some white shelves ... there is a lovely black cat here to sleep by thy fire.... It is such a pretty house and perfect situation” (17 Sept.). In the autumn of 1903 it was number 13. Lucy Donnelly lived there with them for awhile. Writing to Helen Flexner, she describes the house as “cheerless, uncared for and save for Bertie’s study; un-lived in, to the degree of chill and desolation” (25 Oct.).

The summers of 1903 and 1904 were spent at Churt and Tilford, both near Farnham in Surrey. In his *Autobiography* Russell writes of both these summers together: “I made the practice of wandering about the commons every night from eleven to one, by which means I came to know the three different noises made by night-jars.” Churt, Farnham was near the home of Gilbert and Mary Murray. The first summer the Russells were there from 1 April to 27 July. The name of their accommodation in Churt was never mentioned in correspondence except for one postcard that Russell addressed to Alys at Chimney Corner, Churt Farnham. There appears to be no hamlet called Chimney Corner but there is a Chimney Corner Cottage on the Farnham Road near Churt. To Lucy Donnelly Russell wrote that he and Alys were living a quiet country life in Churt. The handwritten address on all letters written from there is simply “Churt, Farnham”. Lucy Donnelly visited the Murrays in the autumn of 1903 and Gilbert Murray took her on a walk “to see the house that Alys and Bertie have taken” (to Helen Flexner, 15 Nov. 1903). She does not describe it.

In fact, the Russells came close to settling permanently in Churt. In a series of letters



that Gilbert Murray wrote to his mother-in-law, Rosalind Howard, Countess of Carlisle, from June to September 1903, he outlines their plans. A cottage was to be built on the Murrays' land for the Russells. The planning was far enough advanced that an architect, H.M. Fletcher who would later build the Russells' home at Bagley Wood, was involved. The cottage was to belong to the Murrays with the Russells' paying a percentage on the capital outlay. At the same time, the Murrays were considering selling their own home and in August it was listed just as the contract with Fletcher had been finalized (Alys to BR, 5 Aug. 1903). The last letter on 20 September notes: "the architect is waiting to see what the Russells do before deciding whether to get his fee from them or us. It is an annoying charge." It was a sad business all round for Fletcher who was also supposed to build a house for Robert Trevelyan who changed his mind and engaged another architect (Alys to BR, 2 Aug. 1903).

The second summer stretched into autumn and winter. From April 1904 to 1 January 1905 the Russells were at Ivy Lodge in Tilford, near Farnham, Surrey. Alys arrived there in March once again to prepare a house for Russell's arrival. On 25 March she wrote to him that: "the house will be ready whenever thee likes to come. Thy study seems tiny, tho'; charming, and will only hold a few books..." A few days later she wrote: "I am longing to show thee the study and the house – it is fairly in order, except the books, which I am leaving to thee" (30 Mar.). To Lucy Donnelly, Russell wrote: "this place is bad for the spring: there are few trees except pines, very few green fields full of buttercups, and no nightingales" (19 May). E.D. Buckner went in search of Ivy Lodge in 2002, writing: "Tilford is a secluded village in Surrey, still very picturesque (with a village green and cricket club). Despite a visit there, I could not locate Ivy Lodge, and it was not in any postal records at the time I looked." There is however an Ivy Lodge on Lowicks Road which runs off the Tilford Road, so perhaps this is the place. Also Percy Manuel Castello, a member of the London Stock Exchange, lived at Ivy Lodge in 1918 (*London Gazette*).

The Russells broke their pattern of spending the autumn in London. On 23 August Alys wrote to Bertie who was staying with the MacCarthys: "Had thee not better inquire if we can have their house from Christmas to Easter as nos. 13 and 14 are not available? The Montegles evidently want to come themselves on Feb. 1st." The answer must have been no, as the Desmond MacCarthys lived at 8 Cheyne Gardens. Alys then suggested a flat at "20 Carlyle Mansions, 3 ½ guineas a week – overlooking the river ... I will look at it and report on the number of rooms" (28 Sept.). It did not pass muster. Instead the Russells managed to acquire 4 Ralston Street also in Chelsea where they lived from 12 January until April 1905 when they moved into Lower Copse, Bagley Wood. After three years of living as nomads, it was time to put down roots.

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Book Reviews

Religion in Its Death Throes

By Chad Trainer

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In the long succession of books by the New Atheists, one small book that has passed by largely unnoticed is A.C. Grayling's *Against All Gods: Six Polemics on Religion and an Essay on Kindness* (London, Oberon, 2007). This is a shame, because although it covers familiar ground, it could be an ideal read for someone making his initial foray into skeptical critiques of religion, since the book's topics are very general in nature (apart from a chapter lamenting the failure of Michael Behe's "science" to conform to Popper's canons of what science is).

From 1991 to 2011, Grayling was Professor of Philosophy at Birkbeck College, University of London. In 2011 he founded and became the first Master of the New College of the Humanities, a private undergraduate college in London. Fans of Russell are most likely to be familiar with Grayling, either from his book on Russell for Oxford's 'Very Short Introductions' series, or from his essay on Russell's philosophy of science for the *Cambridge Companion to Russell*.

In *Against All Gods*, Grayling argues that far from religion enjoying a resurgence, we are witnessing religion in its *death throes* (p. 54). As Grayling would have it, civilized societies ought seriously to heed the connection between the evils produced and prevailing throughout the world and a "failure to uphold intellectual rigour in education." And one important symptom of this absence of intellectual rigor is people's failure to demand that "religious belief be a private and personal matter for indulgence only in the home, accepting it in the public sphere only on an equal footing with other interest groups such as trade unions and voluntary organizations such as the Rotary Club" (p. 45). Like Russell, Grayling's unabashed position is that religion "deserves no more respect than any other viewpoint, and not as much as most" (p. 7), and that "It is time to reverse the prevailing notion that religious commitment is intrinsically deserving of respect, and that it should be handled with kid gloves and protected by custom and in some cases law, against criticism and ridicule" (p.15). Grayling makes a further point of asserting that "no atheist should call himself or herself one. The term already sells a pass to theists, because it invites debate on their ground. A more appropriate term is 'naturalist'" (p.28, See also p. 35).

G.K. Chesterton claimed "there are only two kinds of people: those who accept dogmas and know it, and those who accept dogmas and don't know it." Grayling contends, "He [Chesterton] is wrong: there are three kinds of people; these two, and those who know a dogma when it barks, when it bites, and when it should be put down" (p. 37). But Grayling doesn't think the death of religion will necessarily leave life empty of meaning: "Those who are not religious have available to them a rich ethical outlook – all the richer indeed for be-



ing the result of reflection as opposed to convention – whose roots lie in classical antiquity, when the great tradition of ethical thought in Western philosophy began” (p. 59).

It is refreshing to have a first-rate philosophic mind such as Grayling’s treating issues important to the general public. The importance of the issues this book discusses, and the lucidity of its exposition, is beyond doubt. This book is a good, easy read; but probably expendable for those already familiar with the writings of the “four horsemen” of New Atheism, Sam Harris, Richard Dawkins, Christopher Hitchens, and Daniel Dennett. Indeed, Grayling describes his remarks in the book as “brief and blunt” (p. 12), in contrast to his more substantial books to which the Introduction refers the reader should they relish more detail.

In general, Grayling deserves to be read as widely as the ‘four horsemen’.

A Delicious (and Definite) Description of Russell

By Peter Stone

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I was recently reading *Saints and Scholars*, by Terry Eagleton (New York: Verso, 1987). This bizarre novel depicts a fictional meeting between Ludwig Wittgenstein, Leopold Bloom (from *Ulysses*), Nikolai Bakhtin (brother of Mikhail Bakhtin, the famous Marxist critic), and James Connolly (the Irish revolutionary). It contains the following delicious description of Russell, who appears in his capacity as Wittgenstein’s mentor:

Russell, lolling in his deckchair, puckish and puppet-like in movement, gave the impression of being pointed all over, from his sharp chin and scrawny elbows to his dainty feet. His waist was improbably slender, nipped in like a ballerina’s. Only the sudden beaked nose and fleshy lips qualified this appearance, protruding from his leanness like an elusive flash of some fatter, more carnal man within. His hair flew off his head at an acute angle as though he was permanently electrocuted, crimped and terraced, a jagged thrust of growth at odds with the ascetic face, as though he was wearing somebody else’s hair absent-mindedly. When he grinned he looked like a demented pixie, but his shaggy head lent him an authority denied by the childlike, slightly dandified body (pp. 16-17).

The section of the novel in which Russell appears is all-too-brief, but in addition to the image above it also depicts Russell drinking claret—quite a lot, so as to fortify himself against Wittgenstein’s excited arguments (pp. 11f). This of course suggests the famous meeting Russell had as a boy with Gladstone, in which the only time the ex-prime minister addressed him was to ask why his port had been served in a claret glass. One assumes that Russell got the difference right by the time he met Ludwig.

Members are encouraged to submit short book reviews that are Russell-centric. Reviews should not exceed two single-spaced pages.



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In the spring 2014 issue:

Tanweer Akram on Russell and the Challenge of Contemporary China;
Sheila Turcon on Bagley Wood;
Our columnists; and much more.

For recent board minutes and treasurer's reports, see
<http://users.drew.edu/~JLENZ/brs-organization.html>

And finally, the editor wishes to express his gratitude for the tutelage and counsel of editors extraordinaire, Ken Blackwell and Arlene Duncan.



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