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I must thank Kathryn Jo Ottman for her invaluable assistance in preparing the Quarterly for publication. She formatted the copy pages and provided much-needed advice. Thank you, Kathryn.

Catharine Kendig and Robert Barnard continue as assistant editors. I hope you enjoy the *Quarterly*.

**BERTRAND RUSSELL SOCIETY:
Conference Report
John Lenz, President**

The Bertrand Russell Society held its annual meeting on May 30-June 1 at the Center for Inquiry in Amherst, NY (outside Buffalo). This year we participated in a joint meeting of ourselves, the Humanist Association of Canada, and the Campus Freethought Alliance. The CFA represents student-groups at colleges and universities around the U.S. and Canada. It was wonderful to see such vitality among young people at this event entitled "Humanism: The Next Generation."

Several Russell-L subscribers were in attendance, among other BRS members. Here is a brief report of Russell-related events.

At the opening plenary session, the BRS President (myself) made short remarks about two messages "the good Lord" would send to us today (if spirits had e-mail): skepticism and hope. (By the way, I found a little known line of Russell's published for the first time in the "Bibliography" by Blackwell and Ruja: "... let us hope, for as yet there is no tax on hope.")

It was pleasing to see that two other speakers paid homage to Russell in the opening session. Derek Araujo, a student at Harvard, CFA President, and (we're proud to say) a BRS member, said Russell was a major influence on him. Jeff Lowder, President of Internet Infidels which maintains the Secular Web (this is fantastic! <http://www.infidels.org>), said that he was introduced to free thought in high school through reading "Why I Am Not a Christian" and "An Outline of Intellectual Rubbish." He actually gave pride of place to BR among the people he thanked at the beginning of his talk! (It was fascinating to hear about and to see the uses to which e-mail and the WWW are being out--whether or not "Principia Mathematica," a book which almost no one has read, had anything to do with computers!)

Friday, a luncheon was held at the home of Prometheus Books (like the

Center for Inquiry, founded by Paul Kurtz). All walked away with books they purchased. By the way, in connection with the activities of this formidable group in Buffalo, it was noted that the first line of the new blockbuster film, "The Lost World" (the sequel to Jurassic Park; but I would be pained if this mention caused anyone to go to see the film) mentions their periodical, "Skeptical Inquirer."

At the afternoon session Tim Madigan of *Free Inquiry* magazine and the BRS hosted the BRS session.

Thomas Magnell (chair of Philosophy at Drew University -- my colleague here in Madison, New Jersey) spoke on "Present Concerns and Future Interests." Tom has published on this topic in various ethics journals (he edits the *Journal of Value Inquiry*) but we asked him to explain it to us in view of the theme of the conference. He distinguished between the "politically enfranchised" and the "politically unenfranchised" futures and argued that ignoring the interests of the latter (say, for the sake of argument and example only, the future after 100 years from now) entails a new form of bigotry, "temporal bigotry."

Michael Rockler (BRS Chairman and Professor at National-Louis University in Washington, D.C.) and John Novak (of Brock University and editor of the John Dewey Society newsletter) staged another in their series of "Russell vs. Dewey" debates. This one the 6th or so, addressed "Dewey vs. Russell on Democracy." Their wide-ranging critiques embraced much more than democracy. There was no clear-cult winner.

On Saturday, the morning plenary session heard outstanding reports from student organizers and activists, notably Adam Butler from Alabama who is rallying troops against the "10 commandments" judge (and the governor). We were moved by (among others) Ibn Warraq on "Why I Am Not a Muslim"--this is also the Russell-inspired title of his book from Prometheus. He told me that BR is a pervasive influence in that work and that he intends to join the BRS.

At lunch we were treated to another delightful and well-informed performance by the good Lord himself, personified by Trevor Banks of the Humanist Association of Canada. Trevor comes to look more like BR all the time.

The afternoon session included four papers: James Alouf (Sweet Briar College) spoke on "Russell and the Teaching of History." He had new things to say even after old timers noted that this was the third BRS talk on this popular topic in the past 16 or 17 years.

John Shosky (American University) addressed "Bertrand Russell on Power," particularly discussing the contemporary relevance of his thinking about organizations. He acknowledged work on the book *Power* presented to the BRS in previous years by Peter Stone.

Catherine Kendig, a graduate student at American University, read Victoria Patton's paper on "Russell's Theory of Judgment." This paper won the

1997 BRS student paper prize, but Victoria could not attend from University of Western Australia. She is a student of Stewart Candish. We will publish this paper in the *BRS Quarterly* (under the new editorship of John Shosky).

Peter Stone (Univ. of Rochester) gave a stimulating talk on "Russell's Political Thought: What's Ethics Got to Do with It?" He examined the unified theory of ethics and politics that Russell offered in one of his last works of political theory, *Human Society in Ethics and Politics*. This theory is grounded in a theory of good very similar to utilitarianism. The primary difference is that Russell replaces "utility" with "desire satisfaction." Peter then examined both the coherence and the relevance of the theory of the good. While the conclusions he offers are rather preliminary, he believes that a coherent version of the theory runs the risk of irrelevancy. In other words, a coherent version of the theory might not be capable of providing guidance to a person as to how to act which any person (including Russell himself) might have reason to follow.

An annual highlight was the Red Hackle Hour preceding the banquet on Saturday night. Chairman Michael Rockier made some appropriate Russellian remarks in a brief after-dinner address.

On Sunday, the BRS conducted meetings of its Board and of the Society at which, among other things, it was resolved to plan a meeting for Tampa or St. Petersburg, Florida at the end of May 1998. That will be our 25th annual meeting. Jan Eisler will host this meeting.

The last official BRS presence at this joint gathering was when John Lenz was flattered to introduce Paul Kurtz for his valedictory address on "The Future of Humanism." Paul Kurtz (who is bouncing back from triple-bypass surgery) is a past recipient of the annual BRS Award for work in Russell's spirit.

It was a great pleasure as always to come together to express our shared values and interests. This event was largely organized by the indefatigable Tim Madigan of *Free Inquiry* magazine, whom we thank again along with the entire staff of the Center for Inquiry!

By the way, I should repeat that the BRS offers a half-price initial membership to anyone who attended this conference.

P.S. On a personal note, the presence of the CFA was a special delight to me. I was a founding faculty co-sponsor of the Agnostic and Atheist Student Group at Texas A&M University (where it was and still is sorely needed) and (anecdotes omitted) this group spawned the Internet Infidels now extremely ably run (elsewhere) by Jeff Lowder. (I knew my presence there was in line with some higher purpose . . .) Check out their mega-resource, the Secular web, at: <http://www.infidels.org>.

RUSSELL NEWS: Publications, etc.

➡ An article on Bertrand Russell ("Poor Bertie") appeared in *Radical Philosophy*, 81 (Jan./Feb. 1997). The article is inspired by the recent biography by Monk and Ironside's analysis of Russell's social thought.

➡ Indiana University has just published a book on Pierce: *Studies in the Logic of Charles Sanders Pierce*. It is edited by Nathan Houser, Don D. Roberts and James van Evra.

➡ Oxford University Press has just reissued Russell's *Religion and Science* with a new introduction by Michael Ruse.

➡ University of Chicago Press has published a book by William R. Everdell, *The First Moderns: Profiles in the Origins of Twentieth-Century Thought*. Among the moderns covered: Georg Cantor, Richard Dedekind, and Gottlob Frege. Chapter 12 is "Bertrand Russell and Edmund Husserl: Phenomenology, Number, and the Fall of Logic, 1901."

➡ Carl Rollyson's *Rebecca West: A Life*, published by Scribner in 1996, contains a major letter from Russell to West about his attitude on H.G. Wells.

➡ American University Press in Beirut has published an introduction to Russell's thought by Ibrahim Najjar. Translated, the title is *Bertrand Russell: His Thought and Place in Contemporary Philosophy*. Najjar was awarded his M.A. in Russell Studies at McMaster.

➡ Routledge has reissued Russell's *Principles of Social Reconstruction* (1916), with a new introduction by Richard A. Rempel.

➡ Four upcoming titles concerning Russell are: Ivor Grattan-Guinness' *The Search for Mathematical Roots, 1870-1930*, Princeton University Press, 1998?; Charles Pigden's (ed) *Russell on Ethics*, Routledge, 1998?; Nick Griffin's (ed) *Companion to Russell*, Cambridge University Press, 1998?; and Louis Greenspan and Stefan Andersson's (eds) *Russell on Religion*, Routledge, 1998?

➡ The BBC recently ran a two-part biography on Bertrand Russell as part of their "Reputations" television series. The series is a popular collection of historical biographies.

➡ A recent trip to Warfield's secondhand book store in Oxford uncovered a chestnut: the April 1970 issue of *Mind* (Volume LXXIX, No. 314), the philosophical quarterly then edited by Gilbert Ryle. There is a frontpiece photograph commemorating the life of Bertrand Russell. The photo is by Allan Chappelow, taken in Russell's study at his home in North Wales.