

The Bertrand Russell Society

Spring 2017

Bulletin

Inside this issue ...

**News; diversions; our columnists; feature articles by
Loewig & Doubleday, Riggins, and Turcon.
And much more.**

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Information for New and Renewing Members

Membership in the Society is \$45 per year for individuals, \$30 for students, and \$25 for those with limited incomes (honor system). Add \$10.00 to each for couples. A lifetime membership is \$1,500 for an individual and \$1,750 for a couple. In addition to the BRS *Bulletin*, membership includes a subscription to the peer-reviewed, 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, the BRS email list, access to a host of Russell-related, multi-media resources, eligibility to run for the board and serve on committees, 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 russell.mcmaster.ca/brsmembers.htm. There one will also find convenient links to join or renew via PayPal and our information form.

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 to your contact information.

The BRS is a non-profit organization, and we greatly appreciate any extra donations or bequests that members choose to give. Donations may be tax-deductible in certain jurisdictions. Please check with your tax or legal advisor.

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Letters to the editor may be submitted to the editor's email address. Please reference the issue, author, and title of the article to which the letter relates. 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. 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. Acceptance by the editor does not imply endorsement by the editor. Our goal is to offer a variety and sometimes opposing views.



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**RIP: Warren Allen Smith
(1921-2017):
Teacher Extraordinaire**
By Tim Madigan



Taken by Tim Madigan on Warren's 95th Birthday.

The Bertrand Russell Society is sad to report that our long-time member Warren Allen Smith died on January 8, 2017 at the age of 95. I wrote a tribute to Warren in the fall 2015 *Bulletin*, which I am very glad he lived to see (pages 4-5 of the "President's Corner" at <http://bertrandrussell.org/bulletin/>). In fact, I visited with Warren in New York City in October 2016, a few days after his 95th birthday, and he was as effervescent and insouciant as ever. I use these words to describe him, not only because they are accurate, but also because they demonstrate his love for words. For over 30 years Warren was a high school English teacher in New Canaan, Connecticut, and his Facebook page contains tributes from many of his former students, including this anecdote from one of them: "I teach English now and sometimes tell my students about this wonderful teacher (Warren) at my old high school who required creative writing students to get a rejection notice from a known magazine in order to pass his class. If the student got published, great—but the student needed to keep trying, and be rejected, to pass—because creative writing means dealing with rejection."

Warren loved anecdotes, too, and his 1,237 page magnum opus *Who's Who in Hell* (Barricade Books, 2000) is chock-full of them, including this *bon mot* from our mutual friend, Paul Edwards, editor of *The Encyclopedia of*

Philosophy and "Why I Am Not a Christian" and *Other Essays On Religion and Related Subjects* by Bertrand Russell: "I personally cannot see," Paul Edwards has wittily remarked, "how *Principia Mathematica* could ever have been written if Russell and Whitehead had not started on it long before they were born" (page 949). I had the pleasure of working with Warren when he compiled the entries for *Who's Who*, and he kindly asked me to write the foreword for it, where I noted, "Warren Allen Smith is a wonderful guide to this potpourri of blasphemy...No dry recitation of names and dates, this work is a labor of love, sprinkled throughout with witticisms, arch comments, and pithy sayings. The individuals listed come to life in his descriptions—the only type of resurrection freethinkers would accept" (p. iii). The book, like Warren himself, is *sui generis*—and if you had to look that term up, Warren would be pleased he'd helped you increase your vocabulary.

Warren often referred to himself as a *roué*, a sybarite, and, as a proud veteran of Omaha Beach in World War II, who attended the 40th, 50th, and 60th anniversaries of the Battle of D-Day, as a bona fide atheist in a fox-hole. He was also a veteran of the Stonewall riots and a noted gay activist; an owner of the Variety Recording Studio in Manhattan; and a self-professed "humanities humanist" who loved the arts in all their manifestations. But most of all I think he would want to be remembered as a teacher, as the title of his final book attests: *Mr. Smith, the Sybarite Who Also Was a Teacher*. He taught all of us who knew him how to truly love life.

The Bertrand Russell Society will honor Warren at our next annual conference in June. For those of you who cannot attend and would like your memories of Warren to be shared, please send them to me at tmadigan@rochester.rr.com. Goodbye, old friend—your positive influence lives on.

(de)Notations

- Re-elected BRS directors for the three-year term of 2017 - 2019 include: Rosalind Carey, Tim Madigan, Ray Perkins, Katarina Perovic, Thom Weidlich, and Chad Trainer. New to the board: Tanweer Akram, an economist at Thrivent Financial, and Gulberk Koc Maclean, who teaches



philosophy at Mount Royal University. Congratulations to all. Alan Schwerin and Donovan Wishon are retiring from the board, and we thank them for their contributions to the Society and years of service.

- David Blitz will host the 2017 Annual Meeting at Central Connecticut State University (CCSU), New Britain, Connecticut. The meeting will begin on Friday, June 2nd, and it will end on Sunday, June 4th. Registration info will be emailed and posted later.
- President Tim Madigan has called for papers to be submitted for the 2017 Annual Meeting. If you are interested in presenting a paper on any aspect of Russell's life, thought, or legacy—or if you wish to propose activities appropriate for the meeting (e.g., a master class or panel)—forward an abstract or proposal to Tim at tmadigan@rochester.rr.com no later than April 30, 2017. Among the things already planned is a panel discussion, "100 Years after Russell's *Principles of Social Reconstruction* (1916)."
- John Lenz, Lifetime Member, former President of the Society, and our resident classicist who teaches at Drew University, won the renewal incentive draw for a signed copy of *Bertrand Russell: Public Intellectual* (2016), a wide-ranging collection of essays on Russell's thought, co-edited by Tim Madigan and Peter Stone. With a forward by former BRS Award winner Michael Ruse, the pieces are authored by BRS members, including John Lenz! Congrats to John on his win.



John Lenz

Madigan and Peter Stone. With a forward by former BRS Award winner Michael Ruse, the pieces are authored by BRS members, including John Lenz! Congrats to John on his win.

- There were 4 new Lifetime Members in 2016: Nancy Doubleday, Landon Elkind, Tim Madigan, and Andres Roemer. There are currently 17 Lifetime Members.
- Lifetime Membership dues are now \$1,500 for an individual and \$1,750 for couples.
- We fondly remember Prof. Justin Leiber (1938-2016) of Florida State University, a Lifetime Member who joined the BRS in 1976.

- Our member in Iran, Amir Akbari, has translated several of Bertrand Russell's works into Farsi. Most recently he translated Russell's 1939 essay (based on his lecture), "The Existence and Nature of God" (CPBR Vol. 10). Amir reports that most Farsi translations of Russell's work are unsatisfactory, which is something he hopes to correct. Farsi translations of some of BR's writings can be found on a website that Amir helps to edit: <http://persian-bertrand-russell.blogspot.com/>
- The future of the BRS depends upon two things: renewals and new members. It doesn't cost much to join, or to sponsor someone. Please help us to recruit new members when the opportunity arises.
- 2016 Annual Report Summary:

1-1 Beginning Balance	\$12,367.84
Revenue	16,161.10
Expenses	11,756.37
Income from Operations	4,404.73
12-31 Investment Account	1,208.14
12-31 Year-end Balance	\$17,980.71

Russell 100 Years Ago: 1917



Russell, J.M. Keynes, and Lytton Strachey, c. 1917

Our member Nick Griffin notes in introducing a letter Russell wrote to his fellow peace activist, Catherine Marshall, that he faced the greatest despair of his life when the Allies rejected Germany's peace overtures in December 1916 (*Selected Letters*, p. 96). On New Year's Day of 1917, Russell described his state of mind to Catherine: "I find myself constantly taking refuge from the present in more humane and kindly times, such as



that of Nero. I wish the outlook for peace were brighter. I think we shall have peace in the autumn, after Lloyd George has drunk the blood of half a million young Englishmen in an offensive which he knows will effect nothing. I do not think Lloyd George worse than the rest of mankind—on the contrary I think he belongs to the best 10 per cent—it is the human race that is vile. It is a disgrace to belong to it” (p. 97).

Adding to his depression about the war, Russell had been dismissed by his beloved Trinity the year before for having been convicted and fined for writing a pamphlet “likely to prejudice the recruiting and discipline of his Majesty’s forces.” By now, Russell was nearly consumed by the war, both emotionally and in terms of his day-to-day activities.

Russell’s writing throughout the year mostly dealt with matters of war and peace, though he also had quite a bit to say about events in Russia, both events leading up to and including the October Revolution. In April Russell wrote to a friend, “The Russians have really put a new spirit into the world, and it is going to be worth while to be alive” (p. 102). His books published that year include *Why Men Fight* and *Political Ideals*. He also had a collection of essays published in an earlier book combined with more recent ones for a new book, *Mysticism and Logic and Other Essays*, an essential volume for the Russellian.

One of the highlights of the year was the role he played in the Leeds Convention in June, a conference convened by the Independent Labour Party and the British Socialist Party that also included representatives from various anti-war, labor, socialist, and women’s groups. Russell appeared with a number of Labour MPs, including Ramsay MacDonald, who in due course would become the first Labour Party Prime Minister, and Philip Snowden, a future Chancellor of the Exchequer. Russell even received a standing ovation from the crowd, which he reported to society hostess, Lady Ottoline Morell (1873-1938), with notable pride and pleasure (p. 110).

From October to December, Russell managed to deliver lectures in London on mathematical logic, lectures that would form the basis of his *Introduction to Mathematical Philosophy* (1919), a book he would write in Brixton Prison in 1918 while serving his sentence for his previous conviction for his antiwar activities.

In early 1917, Russell’s former teacher and collaborator, Alfred North Whitehead

(1861-1947), bluntly expressed considerable displeasure that he had inadequately and inappropriately referenced some of Whitehead’s ideas in *Our Knowledge of the External World* (1914)—before Whitehead had a chance to do so himself, ideas that he preferred not be elaborated by anyone else (though Russell gave him acknowledgment). Whitehead also expressed a growing distance in their philosophical outlook and methods. This came up when Russell asked for some of Whitehead’s notes that he wanted to use in his own work. Whitehead was uncooperative and refused to provide them to him. Their relationship had already been strained over major differences about the War. While they would remain on “friendly” terms in years to come, their close working and personal relationship had finally come to an end (*Auto. 1914-1944*, pp. 100-101).

Russell had become less intimate with his lover, Ottoline Morrell, and by spring 1917 he was already head-over-heels in love with a much younger woman he had met not long before, an actress and fellow peace activist, Lady Constance Maleson (1895-1975), mostly known by her stage name, Colette O’Niel (*Auto.* pp. 18-21). She was in an open marriage with actor Miles Maleson. Though separated since 1911, Russell was still legally married, too—to Alys Russell (1967-1951)—and he would remain so until their divorce in 1921. He had fallen out of love with her in 1901—the seventh year of their marriage. Alys would remain in love with him for the rest of her life.

Russell would experience considerable emotional turbulence, suspicions, and jealousy in his romantic relationship with Colette. Despite his oft-stated, liberal beliefs about open marriage, sex, and free love, he found it very difficult to handle, himself, when it came to the sexual freedom of the other party in his serious relationships. Colette and Russell would remain lovers until 1920, and despite the early tumult, good friends for the rest of his life.

It was an eventful year, one hundred years ago.

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Bertrand Russell, *The Selected Letters of Bertrand Russell, The Public Years, 1914-1970*, ed. Nicholas Griffin (London: Routledge, 2001).

Bertrand Russell, *The Autobiography of Bertrand Russell, 1914-1944* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1968)



Not Necessarily Trivial

In his *Autobiography*, Bertrand Russell relates various stories about his intimidating and opinionated maternal grandmother, Henrietta Stanley, Baroness Stanley of Alderley (1807-1895). She was Canadian born;



Lady Stanley of Alderley
in 1860

reared in Florence, Italy; a progressive in her day; and a descendant of British royalty through the mistresses of both Charles II and James II, the sons of Charles I, who lost his head, literally. Of course, James II was deposed in the Glorious Revolution, whereupon the Germans were invited to take over the British monarchy, German Protestants being more desirable than British Catholics, which, with only slight perturbations, has lasted until today. In any event, Russell had royal, Catholic, Scottish, Stuart, and hence, Tudor and French blood coursing through his veins through the Stanley lineage.

Russell said Lady Stanley “had a considerable contempt for everything that she regarded as silly,” and that she was especially “contemptuous of Victorian goody-goody priggery” (*Auto.* pp. 33-34). She was not a proper Victorian, he said, but more a rational creature of the 18th century Enlightenment. A nervous, sensitive boy, he feared her sharp, sardonic, often critical tongue, and he felt he was simply unable to please her. However, he tells the story of one eminent, frequent visitor, an imposing and iconic liberal whose strong personality and “hawk’s eye could quell even her.” Who was that formidable visitor? (Answer on page 7.)

Russell on “The Cult of Common Usage”

Russell lived long enough to see his own method of doing philosophy eclipsed in North America and the United Kingdom by so-called ordinary language philosophy, a method promoted by his former pupil, Ludwig

Wittgenstein and his acolytes. Russell would be gratified to know that his own method of philosophical discovery has weathered the course of time more successfully, with its emphasis on logic, mathematics, science—discovering truth about the world—while ordinary language philosophy—more focused on the way we describe the world than the world itself—has lost much of its preeminence. Wittgenstein still has his share of admirers among philosophers, to be sure; but much of his popularity is sustained by people outside of academic philosophy, continuing to give him cult-like status.

The British Journal for the Philosophy of Science published a pithy, five-page piece by Russell in 1953 entitled, “The Cult of Common Usage.” It well summarizes his view on ordinary language as a style of philosophy popularized in Wittgenstein’s post-*Tractatus* period, one beginning to take shape in the early 1930s. Of course, the apotheosis of Wittgenstein’s own work was his posthumously published *Philosophical Investigations* (1953), a work of singular influence in philosophy departments for years to come. His disciples were already familiar with his methods from his lectures, transcriptions, and student notes long before the *Investigations* saw the light of day, so his influence had been felt well beforehand. His methods would become well entrenched in philosophy departments throughout the United Kingdom and North America through the work of the likes of John Wisdom, Norman Malcolm, Alice Ambrose, Elizabeth Anscombe, Rush Rhees, Morris Lazerowitz, Gilbert Ryle, J. L. Austin, Geoffrey Warnock, J. O. Urmson, and Peter Strawson, among many others.

One can summarize Wittgenstein’s outlook by citing his own words in the *Investigations*: “If it is asked: ‘How do sentences manage to represent?’—the answer might be: ‘Don’t you know? You certainly see it, when you use them.’ For nothing is concealed” (PI, §435; cf. Malcolm 1986, 116). And, “Philosophy simply puts everything before us, and neither explains nor deduces anything. Since everything lies open to view there is nothing to explain. For what is hidden, for example, is of no interest to us” (PI, §122). With some variations on the theme, these statements represent the essence of ordinary language philosophy. Therefore, our interest is in *how* we represent what is, what we say—how we use language in the public domain—and *not* the truth of the matter represented. This style of doing philos-



ophy continued to have considerable currency up through the 1980s.

Here are Russell's simple, encapsulated objections to ordinary language philosophy:

I object to it because:

- 1) It is insincere;
- 2) Because it is capable of excusing ignorance of mathematics, physics, and neurology in those who have had only a classical education;
- 3) Because it is advanced by some in a tone of unctuous rectitude, as if opposition to it were a sin against democracy;
- 4) Because it makes philosophy trivial;
- 5) Because it makes almost inevitable the perpetuation among philosophers of the muddle-headedness they have taken over from common sense (1953 p. 303).

Russell then elaborates upon each of the foregoing objections using examples, often with characteristic Russellian wit. Here's a humorous bit from his article to illustrate his problem with ordinary language philosophy:

These philosophers remind me of the shopkeeper of whom I once asked the shortest way to Winchester. He called to a man in the back premises:

'Gentleman wants to know the shortest way to Winchester.'
 'Winchester?' an unseen voice replied.
 'Aye.'
 "Way to Winchester? '
 'Aye.'
 'Shortest way? '
 'Aye.'
 'Dunno.'

He wanted to get the nature of the question clear, but took no interest in answering it. This is exactly what modern philosophy does for the earnest seeker after truth. Is it surprising that young people turn to other studies? (p. 306)

It is a fact of history that Russell (along with Frege) helped to pave the way for linguistic philosophy altogether, even before Wittgenstein was out of *Realschule*, for he well under-

stood the importance of syntax and usage, ordinary or otherwise. However, Russell also believed philosophers who excluded all else had effectively dispensed with the heavy lifting of discovering truth by using all the available tools, and that they essentially abrogated their duty as philosophers. It certainly seems ironically appropriate, therefore, that his little broadside first appeared in a philosophy of science journal.

References.

Bertrand Russell. Feb. 1953. "The Cult of Common Usage," *The British Journal for the Philosophy of Science*, Vol. 3, No. 12, pp. 303-307.
 Ludwig Wittgenstein. 1997 (1953). *Philosophical investigations*. Trans: G. E. M. Anscombe. Oxford: Blackwell

"If I could prove by logic that you would die in five minutes, I should be sorry you were going to die, but my sorrow would be very much mitigated by pleasure in the proof." G.H. Hardy discussing with Russell the pleasure of being able to prove anything, as reported by Russell.

CPBR.1992. *Logical and Philosophical Papers, 1909-13*, Routledge. p. xxix.

Logicbyte: Russell on Aristotelean Logic

Russell was not a fan of Aristotelean logic. Of course he recognized Aristotle's contributions and historical importance; and he was especially critical of his disciples who held sway over many topics for centuries. About this he said, "His present-day influence is so inimical to clear thinking that it is hard to remember how great an advance he made upon all his predecessors (including Plato), or how admirable his logical work would still seem if it had been a stage in a continual progress, instead of being (as it in fact was) a dead end, followed by over two thousand years of stagnation" (1945, p. 193).

About Aristotle's greatest contribution to logic, the many forms of syllogism, Russell wrote, "In most universities, the beginner in logic is still taught the doctrine of the syllogism, which is useless and complicated. If you wish to become a logician, there is one piece of ad-



vice which I cannot urge too strongly, and that is: Do NOT learn the traditional formal logic. In Aristotle's day it was a creditable effort, but so was the Ptolemaic astronomy. To teach either in the present day is a ridiculous piece of antiquarianism" (1968, p. 38).

Among his several criticisms of Aristotle's logic are the blurred distinctions between names and predicates, which is to say, particulars and universals, that Russell maintains had "disastrous consequences to philosophy," not least of which was the impossibility of a "correct theory of the number one" and "endless bad metaphysics about unity" (1945, p. 198). Russell would spend much of his early career in an effort to rectify this confusion.

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Bertrand Russell. 1945. *A History of Western Philosophy*. New York: Simon and Schuster.
 Bertrand Russell. 1968. "The Art of Drawing Inferences." *The Art of Philosophizing and other Essays*. New York: Philosophical Library.

"[Logic and mathematics] differ as to boy and man: logic is the youth of mathematics and mathematics is the manhood of logic."

BR. 1919. Introduction to *Mathematical Philosophy*, London: Allen and Unwin. p 194.

Answer to "Not Necessarily Trivial" (from page 5)

The "hawk's eye" belonged to William Gladstone (1809-1898), the Liberal lion and four-time Prime Minister. It was a commonplace for contemporaries to comment on his steely-eyed stare, variously described as his hawk's or eagle's eye. Lady Stanley vehemently opposed Gladstone's plans for Irish Home Rule, a matter of considerable controversy at the time, one that divided Liberal from Liberal, not to mention, Liberal from Tory. Before one of the great man's visits, the Baroness announced to young Bertie and others that she would be giving him a piece of her mind on the matter. Bertie was there during that entire visit, though,



William Gladstone

and she "faltered when the time came to do it," having uttered nary a word about the issue (*Auto.* pp. 32-36). That apparently was rare restraint on her part. She wasn't alone in her reticence with Gladstone, however, for he had the reputation of being evangelical and even torrential in argument. When conjoined with his stern visage, it is not surprising that people would tread lightly.

Despite his rocky relationship with his grandmother Stanley, who he said was not respectful of his shyness or sensitivity; Russell would come to appreciate her and that side of the family later in life. He said that he "loved the Russells and feared the Stanleys," while he was growing up, but he came to realize that "I owe to the Russells shyness, sensitiveness, and metaphysics; to the Stanleys vigour, good health, and good spirits," and that on balance, "the latter seems a better inheritance than the former" (*Auto.* pp. 36-37).

Bertie in his teens had his own, up close and personal experience with Gladstone, one that he also recounted in his *Autobiography*. At Pembroke Lodge, home of his paternal grandparents, he was left alone by Countess Russell, his paternal grandmother, to entertain the famous politician after a dinner party at Pembroke Lodge—Bertie was the only male of the household that evening (his grandfather having died some years before), and it then being customary for ladies and men to retire from dinner separately—the men being expected to converse about manly things with the social lubricants of alcohol and tobacco. In this private tête-à-tête, sitting at the dinner table with him alone, Gladstone remarked to Bertie, "This is very good port they have given me, but why have they given it to me in a claret glass?" The reader must imagine being alone with a man who at various times commanded the most powerful empire ever known. What should one say? Young Russell didn't know what the proper response was, and so he remained silent and petrified. The old statesman said nothing more to him for their entire encounter, which must have seemed like an eternity to the then painfully awkward teen (*Auto.* pp. 73-74).

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President's Corner

Bertrand Russell in Popular Culture

By Tim Madigan
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Last November, I had the pleasure of venturing to Trinity College, Dublin (TCD) to give a joint presentation with Peter Stone (Assistant Professor of Political Science at TCD) to the Department of Philosophy about the new book we have co-edited, *Bertrand Russell, Public Intellectual* (Tiger Bark Press, 2016). There was a lively discussion with the various attendees, followed by a book signing. I was in Ireland during my own college's Thanksgiving break, and I'm glad to relate that on Thursday the 24th Peter and I were able to find a Dublin pub that served turkey and stuffing (I won't complain that it also served cabbage with the meal, a non-traditional, but very Irish addition!).



Tim Madigan and Peter Stone

We both attempted to put together a work showing the importance of Russell to many different public areas.

In addition to articles written by ourselves, I'm glad to say that several other BRS members contributed, including John Lenz on Russell's opposition to England's involvement in the First World War; Cara Rice on Russell's work in education running Beacon Hill School; David White on Russell's various best-selling self-help books with Liveright Press during the Jazz Age; David Blitz on Russell's "Little Books" during World War II and the Cold War; Robert Heineman on Russell's appearance in Bruce Duffy's fictional book about Wittgenstein, *The World as I Found It*; and Chad Trainer on the interesting question "Would Russell Have Used E-Mail?" Peter's articles focused on Russell's evolution from a technical academic to a world-renowned symbol of popular philosophy, with an emphasis on his political involvement from World War I right up until the Vietnam War, as well as the rather odd appearance of Russell in a recent best-selling "graphic novel" called *Logicomix*. I wrote on Russell's various con-

nections with famous people, from V.I. Lenin to John Lennon, and the interesting fact that he and his fellow philosopher, John Dewey, were not only educational theorists, but also nitty-gritty practitioners, each helping to found and run experimental schools. I also wrote about Russell's appearances in various works of popular culture, from barely-fictionalized versions in novels by D.H. Lawrence and Aldous Huxley and poems by T.S. Eliot, to references in films like *Taxi Driver* and *The Guard*.

But my trip to Ireland proved to me that the article I wrote for *Bertrand Russell, Public Intellectual* entitled, "Russell in Popular Culture," is by no means all-inclusive. On the plane ride over I watched the recent film *The Man Who Knew Infinity*, the story of Cambridge mathematician G. H. Hardy's work with a young, self-taught prodigy from India named Srinivasa Ramanujan, beginning in 1913 when Hardy arranged for Ramanujan to leave his village in Madras and come to study in the learned halls of Trinity College at the University of Cambridge. Based upon the 1991 book of the same title by Robert Kanigel, the movie took many liberties with its original source, as film biographies are wont to do; but it was still a moving exploration of the human costs involved in the search for knowledge. Best of all, Russell had a recurring role throughout the film, portrayed by the actor Jeremy Northam (in a rather dashing depiction). While I naturally would have liked to have seen more of Russell in the film, I was nonetheless happy that he was shown in such a positive light, with a focus on his pacifistic work criticizing the madness of the First World War, a criticism that led to his being fired from Trinity. My only objection to the film was the final scene with Russell, wherein Hardy (played by Jeremy Irons) sees him with his office materials under his arm leaving Cambridge. When Hardy asks what he'll be doing next, Russell insouciantly replies he'll just go to Oxford University instead. The actual fact, as all Russellians know, is that not only would Oxford never have accepted him, given his principled opposition to the ongoing war, but in fact, very soon in 1918, his location would be Brixton Prison, having been found guilty of prejudicing Britain's relations with its allies. I would have thought this would have made for a much more dramatic departure scene, especially since Hardy had strongly opposed Russell's dismissal, and fought hard for his reinstatement after the war. Nonetheless, Northam does a fine job of showing what Rus-



sell was like during this tempestuous time period.

During the discussion period at TCD after the presentations, I learned of another appearance of Russell in popular culture, one with which I'd been unfamiliar. One of the questioners pointed out that William Lyons, Professor Emeritus of Philosophy at TCD, had written a play entitled *Wittgenstein: The Crooked Road* in 2011, which deals in large part with Wittgenstein's encounters with Russell at Cambridge, both before and after the Great War. Professor Lyons, alas, was not at the presentation, but I have ordered a copy of the play and look forward to reading it. Perhaps it can be revived on stage at a future BRS meeting.

And as if this wasn't enough to show that Russell is alive and well in popular culture, on the flight back to America from Ireland, I watched yet another recent film, the 2016 adaptation of Philip Roth's 2008 novel, *Indignation*. I had not previously read the novel, which is set in the early 1950s, so imagine my surprise when the lead character, an ardent young man named Marcus who is struggling with his Jewish faith, gets into a protracted debate over atheism with the dean of his school in which Russell's essay, "Why I Am Not a Christian," is frequently referenced. Realizing he is losing the intellectual battle with his student, the dean unctuously claims that since Russell was an adulterer, his works cannot be taken seriously. Marcus rightly points out that the dean is resorting to an *ad hominem* argument, which is beneath him. It's a great dramatic scene that ably shows how Russell's work can bring out the best and the worst in intellectual opponents. Even though the man himself is not depicted, I found it to be one of the most powerful examples of Russell in popular culture I've ever seen. It is his arguments, rather than his life story, that are most important.

It is clear to me that my explorations of Russell in popular culture must be an ongoing pursuit, and that at some point I will need to update my article. I would appreciate hearing of other examples with which readers might be familiar—for instance, another questioner at the TCD presentation mentioned a British children's television program in the 1960s that had an animal character named "the Professor" based upon Russell, but he couldn't recall the show's name, and I haven't yet been successful in finding out what it might be. All of this reminded me of the fact that I first became aware

of Russell through a popular culture work, the television show *Meeting of Minds*, written and hosted by the great comedian Steve Allen from 1977 through 1981. On *Meeting of Minds* actors portrayed historic individuals who engaged in spirited—at times heated—debates over issues such as racism, women's rights, crime and punishment, and religious toleration—timely topics in the mid-Seventies to be sure, but timeless topics as well, as exemplified in the words of such individuals as Theodore Roosevelt, Cleopatra, Thomas Paine, Florence Nightingale, Thomas Jefferson, Susan B. Anthony, Galileo, Marie Antoinette, and Frederick Douglass. I was fifteen years old when I first saw the show, and already a big fan of Allen's for his comedic skills. But this was my first introduction to such thinkers as Plato, Aristotle, Thomas Aquinas, Adam Smith, Voltaire, Sun Yat-sen and most especially Bertrand Russell (the only character whom Allen could have *actually* interviewed, since he'd only died in 1970, just a few years before the program aired). A few of the shows can be found on the internet if you search, but I haven't found one with Russell. Printed copies of the scripts were published by Prometheus Books. In them, one can experience "Russell" conversing with "St. Augustine", "Thomas Jefferson" and "Empress Theodora." I should add that the actor who played Russell in the series was John Hoyt, who in another episode depicted Voltaire—another philosopher noted from his biting wit and unconventional views.

As these various examples show, one can honestly say of Bertrand Russell that he was and remains "quite a character"!

From the Student Desk Read for Russell: Aloud

By Landon D.C. Elkind
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Russell wrote many, many books. Sadly, very few are audiobooks. An Amazon search yields just four Russell audiobooks. But it is in your power to remedy this unhappy state! Any book published before 1922 belongs to the public domain. As such, it may be freely downloaded or shared (in the United States—rules vary by country). And such works may be recorded as audiobooks and made freely available by *anyone*, including you.



The website LibriVox is devoted to helping individuals with recording works belonging to the public domain. A volunteer will even ‘proof-listen’ your recording—that is, will check your recording for minor slips. And after the recording and proof-listening is done, a meta-coordinator from LibriVox will make your file available for free download online. Jeff Bezos has quite a pile of money—he will not too much miss the Russell audiobook sales revenue.

Meanwhile, there are constituencies that stand to benefit from recording Russell’s books, viz., the blind, those that take long road trips or long commutes, and those with dyslexia may be aided from having the book available in a different format, or those who just prefer to listen rather than read. Granted, the number of Russell fans in these groups may be small. But if but one listener derives much help from a Russell audiobook, I would judge your reading successful. And even if not, two people at least shall derive some pleasure from the reading—namely, your proof-listener and you!

LibriVox already has twelve works by Russell—five essays and twelve books. Some of these are my doing, and some description of my experience may help you make the leap.

There is some learning required, but not very much. And volunteers are available to help you along the way (including me). The recording process can be frustrating. Completing a recording is still fulfilling, especially if some kind listener shares his or her joy in listening to your audiobook. I was fortunate to receive kind online comment on the archive.org page for my reading of *Our Knowledge of the External World*. User ‘mindscent’ wrote:

Thank you very much for undertaking this project. You’ve helped me enormously. I’m a graduate student in philosophy, a mother of school-aged children, and I have ADHD. Thanks to your efforts, I have been able to listen to your various recordings of Russell’s works as I drive around or complete other tasks, rather than to have to devote all my attention to reading. I cannot overstate the extent to which this has improved my life, and as a result, the lives of my children (08/24/15).

I felt that *even if* recording all eight hours, twelve minutes, and fifty-nine seconds of *Our Knowledge* was neither a good in itself nor very pleasant (though it was good in itself *and* very pleasant), this result justified my deed. So I encourage you to try your hand at lending your voice to Russell.

If a book seems ambitious for your first reading, you can attempt an essay, as you please. Shorter works by Russell, like “On Denoting”, may also be read aloud. I count over seventy-five articles, many just a page long, on a variety of subjects published before 1922. Most are linked on the Bertrand Russell Society homepage and are ripe for the reading.

If you are fearful of internet commentators mocking your voice, be comforted: LibriVox does not allow for comments. They wish to encourage readings to record as they wish, and without fear of scorn. LibriVox users and consumers tend to appreciate the broad purpose of bringing books to broader audiences in a variety of formats for its own sake. A recording is never rejected for lacking the mellifluous pace and soothing tones of Garrison Keillor.

You may be curious about the pickings. LibriVox accepts duplicate recordings of a work, so you might record, say, *The Problems of Philosophy* a second time. Other books await their first reading: *A Critical Exposition of the Philosophy of Leibniz*, three books published during World War I, *German Social Democracy*, *An Essay on the Foundations of Geometry*, and his anthology *Philosophical Essays*. You might race me to record *The Principles of Mathematics*. And *Principia Mathematica*—all three volumes—is unrecorded. Now, not all at once!

Analytics Russell on Negative Facts

By Katarina Perovic

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It is quite surprising to discover that Russell—the philosopher who famously insisted on the importance of having “a robust sense of reality” in metaphysics—was at the same time committed to entities such as *Socrates not being alive* and *hippopotamus not being in this room*. In his *The Philosophy of Logical Atomism Lectures* (1918), Russell briefly discusses negative facts and confesses that his open de-



fense of such entities “nearly produced a riot” when he lectured at Harvard, in 1914. Apparently, “the class would not hear of there being negative facts at all.”

Despite such a reception in 1914, Russell in his lectures states that he is still inclined to believe that there are (or at least that there *may be*) negative facts. The motivation for admitting such entities stems from wishing to provide facts that make certain positive statements false, as well as facts that make certain negative statements true. An example of the former is the fact of *Socrates not being alive* making *false* the statement “Socrates is alive” and an example of the latter is the fact of *hippopotamus not being in this room* making *true* the statement “Hippopotamus is not in this room”.

Interestingly, the case that Russell makes in favor of negative facts is itself a negative one. There isn’t much discussion at all of how negative facts are to be characterized ontologically, or of why they may be a good sort of entity to have in one’s metaphysics. Instead, Russell argues that an account that rejects negative facts and that postulates negative propositions in their place is unsatisfactory. Such an account was produced by one of Russell’s students from Harvard—Raphael Demos (1892-1968).

In his 1917 paper in *Mind*, “A Discussion of a Certain Type of Negative Proposition”, Demos argues that negative propositions are to be considered as mind-independent entities, whose negative character is entirely independent of a judging mind. He also makes a case that negative propositions should not be considered at face value as containing a negative constituent, because such a treatment of negative propositions would end up committing one to negative facts as their truth-makers. And negative facts were simply unacceptable for Demos—he thought of them as not given in experience, and believed that any knowledge of apparent negative facts could actually be derived from perceptions of a positive kind. Thus, the key to avoiding negative facts, according to Demos, had to be found in a specific treatment of negative propositions as not formally different from positive propositions. Negative propositions were essentially negative modifications of the content of the rest of the proposition (and did not involve negations of predicates). The meaning of “not”, according to Demos, was simply to be interpreted as “the opposite”, and hence a negative proposition

“non-p” was to be interpreted as “the opposite of p”. In this way, a simple negative proposition for Demos amounted to nothing more than an *ambiguous description* of some true positive proposition.

Russell criticizes Demos most extensively on this last point. He notes that Demos’s avoidance of negative facts comes at a high cost of making “incompatibility fundamental and an objective fact, which is not so very much simpler than allowing negative facts” (p.213). The incompatibility that Russell is talking about in this context is incompatibility between propositions. And this, for Russell, is problematic because it commits Demos to *facts about incompatible propositions*. Thus, Demos is not just committed to propositions, a commitment that Russell rejects, but he is also committed to there always being positive interpretations of negative propositions, and, finally, to fundamental facts about incompatibility between propositions. For Russell, all these commitments do not add up to an improvement on negative facts. He writes:

It is perfectly clear, whatever may be the interpretation of ‘not’, that there is *some* interpretation which will give you a fact. If I say ‘There is not a hippopotamus in this room’, it is quite clear there is some way of interpreting that statement according to which there is a corresponding fact, and the fact cannot merely be that every part of this room is filled up with something that is not a hippopotamus. You would come back to the necessity of some kind or other of fact of the sort that we have been trying to avoid. We have been trying to avoid both negative facts and molecular facts, and all that this succeeds in doing is to substitute molecular facts for negative facts, and I do not consider that that is very successful as a means of avoiding paradox, especially when you consider this, that even if incompatibility is to be taken as a sort of fundamental expression of fact, incompatibility is not between facts but between propositions (pp.213-214).

Russell here suggests that the statement, “There is not a hippopotamus in this room”, cannot be made true by a “mere fact” *that every part of this room is filled up with something that is not a hippopotamus*. Howev-



er, Russell is not entirely clear why the latter fact is an inadequate truthmaker for the given statement. Is it because it would be a molecular fact, which Russell is adamantly against? If so, what sort of molecular fact would it be? Perhaps it is a conjunctive fact of the form *part x_1 of the room is filled with A and part x_2 of the room is filled with B and part x_3 of the room is filled with C and so on*, until all parts of the room are exhausted.

Russell's placement of the word "merely" indicates that the problem is not so much with the type of fact involved. Rather, it is that such a fact would not be a sufficient truthmaker for the negative proposition. An additional fact would need to be added – an incompatibility fact. Thus, on top of the conjunctive fact about all the parts of the room being filled with different things, there would need to be a fact that such a molecular fact is incompatible with the fact of there being a hippo in the room. And this, in turn, is itself a negative fact, according to Russell. In his "On Propositions" (1919) he puts this point as follows:

The only reason we can deny 'the table is square' by 'the table is round' is that what is round is *not* square. And this has to be a fact, though just as negative as the fact that this table is not square. Thus it is plain that incompatibility cannot exist without negative facts. (p. 288)

Thus, Russell seems to think that an account of incompatibility must boil down to a negative fact of some kind or other. It is a great shortcoming that Russell does not characterize his negative facts and what they might be like. Sometimes he seems to suggest that merely invoking a negation of a certain property (e.g., *not square*) would give us a negative fact. But he does not show us the steps that get him from a negation of a property to a negative fact. One step is possibly a rejection of negative properties, which is implied by his unwillingness to treat *not square* as a negative property. For Russell, strictly speaking, there is no fact of *the table being not-square*; instead, there is a negative fact of it not being the case that the table is square.

It is tempting then to construe the latter sort of fact as an absence of some kind—what else is the fact of *it not being the case that t is square* if not an absence of the fact of *t being square*? But this won't do either, according to Russell. He writes that "the absence of a fact is

itself a negative fact; it is the fact that there is *not* such a fact as [*t being square*]" (p.288). But to this an opponent of negative facts could simply object to Russell that he is reifying facts at will. For what is to stop him from saying "it is a fact that there is a fact that there is no such fact as *t being square*" and then claim that this too is a further fact? Would this then be a positive or a negative fact? Russell does not say.

In his replies to questions at the end of the lecture, he admits that there is no formal test, no clear indication when we are dealing with negative facts. And yet we must admit them even though we cannot define them. For, as Russell, concludes: "you could not give a general definition [of a negative fact] if it is right that negativeness is an ultimate" (p.216).

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 Bertrand Russell. 1956 (1918). "The Philosophy of Logical Atomism" in *Logic and Knowledge*. London: Allen and Unwin. pp. 177–281.
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BR on Skepticism

I wish to propose for the reader's favourable consideration a doctrine which may, I fear, appear wildly paradoxical and subversive. The doctrine in question is this: that it is undesirable to believe a proposition when there is no ground whatever for supposing it true. I must, of course, admit that if such an opinion became common it would completely transform our social life and our political system; since both are at present faultless, this must weigh against it. I am also aware (what is more serious) that it would tend to diminish the incomes of clairvoyants, book-makers, bishops, and others who live on the irrational hopes of those who have done nothing to deserve good fortune here or hereafter.



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From the Archives “I prefer sharp outlines”: Russell and His Spectacles*

By Ken Blackwell
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Note: This article is an addendum to “Bertrand Russell’s Illnesses and Injuries” in the fall 2015 *Bulletin*, which overlooked problems with his vision.



Russell’s spectacles in his case. The items are displayed on his desk in the Russell Archives

On the whole, Bertrand Russell was lucky with his eyes. They served him in the course of reading thousands of books and writing millions of words. But he had to take care. When he was a teenager his tutor W.M. Mee warned him not to read so much—“even if it be reading Milton or Carlyle”—and to go outside and play sports. There is no reason to think he followed all of this advice, although it was at this time that Alan Wood records that “When he was about sixteen, he overstrained his eyes so badly that for a time he was ordered neither to read nor write” (*Passionate Sceptic*, p. 22). On a rear page of his “Greek Exercises” notebook, Bertie drafted a message to someone: “I am afraid I shall be unable to come, as my eyes are so bad that I cannot venture into the light” (see *Papers* 1: 4).

We don’t know when he started wearing spectacles, but visual perception and its attendant science, optics, were of interest to him in the 1890s. He could do a trick with his eyes that surprised even an eminent oculist (or ophthalmologist), George Joseph Bull, with whom he discussed optics in 1895. He had met Dr. Bull during his Paris exile in 1894 (*SLBR* 1: 117, 169), though there is no suggestion he saw him professionally.

A 1923 receipt for “compound lenses in tortoiseshell spectacles” from Theodore Hamblin Ltd. is our earliest evidence that he wore

glasses. He was 51. The pair of glasses that we have in the Russell Archives are reading glasses, which might explain why photos of him wearing them can’t be found until the 1940s.

Russell seldom saw his oculist, who by the 1930s was the eminent Frederick Ridley, of Harley Street, an early developer of the contact lens. Ridley noted in 1953 that he had seen Russell only twice in 20 years. Russell responded: “I am sorry my eyes have given me so little trouble.” Ridley sent him a scientific offprint, “Some Reflections on Visual Perception” (*Trans. Opthal. Soc. UK* 72 [1952]: 635-55), which interested Russell: “I think philosophers in general pay too little attention to the physiology of sensation, and especially of visual sensation.” Ridley cites *The Analysis of Matter and Human Knowledge*, and Russell said he was pleased with this scientific use of his works. He often made philosophical use of the metaphor of spectacles, suggesting seeing the world in “blue” or even “causal” and “spatial” ones.

Two of his greatest heroes, Milton and Spinoza, were vitally concerned with sight: the first went blind before writing his epic poems (Russell knew his sonnet “On His Blindness” [*Papers* 21: 244]), the other manufactured lenses. It is surprising how frequently the term “blindness” comes up in Russell’s works, but we will not psychoanalyze him. D.H. Lawrence tried that in “The Blind Man”, whose protagonist is called “Bertie”. Russell did come up with a good phrase to William James, that of “mental blindnesses” (*Papers* 5: 471), which he used in the Great War as well. There was never any suggestion of personal blindness, or indeed fear of it, though that must always be of concern to an inveterate reader and writer such as Russell was.

One time he was in a hurry for new spectacles. He told his optician, Hamblin, that if he didn’t have them very soon he would be “liable to grave inconvenience”. I don’t know what that was about. It seems inconceivable that he was willing to go some days without reading, but perhaps he had to. As he wrote in “On Verification” about shapes on a page, “I cannot make any [inferences] of them unless I am wearing spectacles” (*Papers* 10: 352). Russell was prudent. At 89 he wanted a second pair “in case of accident”.

The archival spectacles *may* be his last pair. His optician (still Hamblin Ltd.) supplied his last pair in late 1966, when Russell was 94



and in London to announce the International War Crimes Tribunal. Hamblin asked him to return for adjustments when he was next in town. He never returned to London. Later, however, his case was in need of repair. He wanted it repaired to its original condition, which took months. However, we don't know if the case in the photo is *this* case.

By a couple of years later his handwriting had deteriorated. This was due to failing sight. Edith Russell told Constance Malleson: "What irked him most was that he was unable to walk any great distance and that his eyes were going bad. I'm sure that you realized that from his last letter to you" (14 Feb. 1970). A letter he sent Ulverscroft Large Print Books tells a lot: "I feel impelled to write to you to express my great gratitude for your Large Print editions ... even with the strongest spectacles I cannot read any ordinary commercially-published book. But for your volumes I should have been left high and dry without anything at all to read" (25 March 1968). They turned this into a blurb. Russell's taste in large-print books was possibly unusual. He wanted Plutarch and Jane Austen. He got the former but not the latter. Austen's novels in large print would have bulked too large. Mary Stewart learned of his condition and sent him several of her own novels in large print.

A kind optician at McMaster examined the spectacles for their prescription, which is:

+4.50 -1.00 x 30
+6.00 -1.00 x 150

She described his eyesight as "compound hyperopic astigmatism". His eyes were unequal for both reading and distance. The horn-rimmed spectacles we have are fitted, she told me, with "well-made lenses" and are thinner than expected. Although Russell was not seen wearing glasses for distance viewing, the lenses indicated that the wearer needed distance correction, too. Whether he could have got used to progressive lenses, we can't know—the famous table in the first chapter of *The Problems of Philosophy* might have taken on shapes other than "oblong" or "rectangular"—but the optics behind progressives might have interested him as well as correcting his distance vision. He was, of course, too early for laser surgery. The Archives contain no reports as to whether Russell suffered from common diseases of the eye such as cataracts, glaucoma, or age-related macular degeneration.

Perhaps because of the early scare, young Bertie learned to take care of his eyes. He didn't complain about them and evidently didn't strain them again, and they served him until at least very old age.

*The quote is from "Beliefs: Discarded and Retained" (1954), reprinted in *Collected Papers* 11: 103. The original context concerns Greek philosophers and landscapes.

This and That Denouement

By Michael Berumen
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The United States faces a peril unlike any other in its recent history. And, as the most powerful military and economic power, that means the rest of the world also does. The potential ramifications are too numerous to delineate here. It is enough to say longstanding democratic institutions, constitutional principles, and a hard-won liberal ethos that have stood for the rule of law and justice—and as bulwarks against the whims of nefarious men, violations of civil liberties. indeed, of tyranny—are now in serious jeopardy.

It is frightening to witness the fast-paced normalization of Trumpism *qua* neo-Fascism in American society. One hopes to be wrong or for a relatively benign and temporary bout of it all. It is possible. One potential ace in the hole is Trump's insecurity, his neediness: his need to be admired. But we should not allow hope to lull us into inaction. Characteristically, many liberals have begun to rationalize Trumpism as a manifestation of just grievances, an effect of various sociological and economic causes, and to make excuses of various kinds for both its rise and the odious behavior of its supporters. Some of these Trumpers might be friends or relatives. Does anyone imagine that liberal Germans did not have Nazi friends and relatives? And would we say to them today, in retrospect, yes, by all means, they should have tolerated such behavior? *I should hope not.*

One well-known liberal wag recently said Trumpers don't really believe most of the hateful things he says at his rallies; they are mostly decent people, he said—just angry at the establishment. *That is utter nonsense.* Perhaps some are "decent", whatever that means; but he obviously failed to notice (or disingenuously ignores) the nods, smiles, and shouts of enthusiastic agreement by *most* in attendance after each of Trump's hateful remarks. I suspect in



front of many a TV set, too. Pious, polite, and otherwise “decent” people have stood by as all manner of horrors have been committed throughout history. I have no desire to be impolite; but I won’t go out of my way to be civil to *Fascists*. Civility, alone, won’t stop them or make a difference. Being hard-headed, shaming, and persistent might convince enough to change their views, thereby, making a difference. I take heart that others are beginning to agree and act. Some people wallow in stupidity simply because they are most satisfied by it. They enjoy their hatreds and ignorance, notwithstanding the quixotic quest of some liberals to convert them. The wicked, power-hungry, and craven among us will not be reformed by polite entreaties—informed, or otherwise. Reason and comity are irrelevant to them.

We liberals are always looking to see the best in people—not a bad characteristic. But we sometimes make tolerance for its own sake into an unalloyed and absolute virtue. Some things cannot be tolerated. Many, no, *most* liberal-thinking, well-informed people did this once before in the early 1930s, rationalizing evil with various sociological explanations. *To their peril*. One of the very naïve and ahistorical conceits is that the left is immune to the siren song of *Fascism*. History shows *Fascism* has different, quasi-populist melodies to lull many people of different political persuasions into somnolence—until it is too late. *That* makes it at once different and more pernicious than traditional right-left dichotomies.

Observe how many in media, pundits, citizenry, commercial interests, and officialdom, are already adjusting to Trumpism as an acceptable reality as we go about our workaday lives. Day-by-day, we face a steady and subtle erosion of hard-won principles—as vulgarism, kleptocracy, bullying, bigotry, and magical thinking take their place. Russell, not surprisingly, had something to say that continues to resonate. Consider his response in old age to a prominent British *Fascist*, Sir Oswald Mosely (1896-1980), who invited Russell to sit down for a friendly debate:

Dear Sir Oswald,

Thank you for your letter and for your enclosures. I have given some thought to our recent correspondence. It is always difficult to decide on how to respond to people whose ethos is so alien and, in fact, repellent to one’s own. It is not that I take exception to the gen-

eral points made by you, but that every ounce of my energy has been devoted to an active opposition to cruel bigotry, compulsive violence, and the sadistic persecution which has characterized the philosophy and practice of *Fascism*.

I feel obliged to say that the emotional universes we inhabit are so distinct, and in deepest ways opposed, that nothing fruitful or sincere could ever emerge from association between us.

I should like you to understand the intensity of this conviction on my part. It is not out of any attempt to be rude that I say this but because of all that I value in human experience and human achievement.

Yours sincerely,

Bertrand Russell

(Ronald W. Clark. 1976. *The Life of Bertrand Russell*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. p. 571.)

This will be my final issue as editor of the *Bulletin*. Invariably, after I finally believe I have it right and it is mailed, I discover yet more errors of mine. This humbling experience has made me appreciate and admire all the more the work of professional editors and experts like our Ken Blackwell.

Many thanks go to the authors who have provided our members with diverse, sometimes opposing, and always interesting feature articles. And my special thanks to our columnists who, issue-after-issue, take time out of their lives to contribute ideas in relatively short pieces—and as every writer knows, brevity is a lot harder to accomplish than not—and, not least, for having put up with me over the years. Jolen, Katarina, Ken, Landon, Tim, and Ray: *you’re the greatest!* I also must acknowledge the unfailingly dependable Sheila Turcon, who has written about Russell’s homes in nearly each issue, intermixed with fascinating, personal tidbits about Russell and his circle—with things one would be hard-pressed to find anywhere else. I am grateful to all of you.

As for future *Bulletins*, my friend Bill Bruneau will be taking over the editorship. His background, wit, and erudition will serve well to take our little publication to new heights. I wish him the very best.

Finally, I want to thank the readers who saw fit to make kind comments about the *Bulletin* during my tenure.



Russell and Society A Trump Presidency: What Would Russell Say?

By Ray Perkins

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At the time of this writing (Christmas 2016), it's still too early to get a reliable picture of how a Trump presidency will play out. Much of this political fog is due to his penchant for blatant self-contradiction, which he denies—and touts: “I want to be unpredictable.” But given the worldviews of his advisers and cabinet nominees, it sure looks like trouble ahead—the sort of domestic and global calamity that Russell feared during (and after) the US presidential election of 1964.

Russell's Perspective

For most of Russell's life he was not concerned with the “greatness” of this or that country, but with the well-being of the international community—the human family. This was true after World War I, and especially so after World War II, when war became a threat to the existence of humanity itself. And for Russell that meant pursuing nuclear abolition, world peace, and the sort of transnational governance that could make that possible.

Russell, were he with us today, would doubtless agree with Noam Chomsky, et al., that the world's two most serious challenges are nuclear war and global warming. The recognition of both would seem to be a minimal condition for being a US president. Trump, by all evidence, fails to meet that condition—as an alarmingly large portion of the American electorate (including the media) seems not to have noticed, despite ample, pre-election “hints”:

War/nuclear proliferation? “I love war.” (San Antonio Express 11/14/15); “I wouldn't rule out the use [of nukes] against ISIS ...” (3/23/16). And, just when we seem to glimpse some nuclear sense (if not grammatical sense)—“Biggest problem in the world ... is nuclear, and proliferation” (NYT 3/27/16)—we're told “[S. Korea and Japan] ... would be better off if they defend themselves ... including with nukes” (Fox News 4/3/16).¹ Global warming? “... a concept created by the Chinese ...” (Twitter 11/6/12); “... it's a hoax” (12/30/15)

Russell's Nightmare: Election of 1964

I have little doubt that most Russellians share my fears about the next few years under a Trump presidency. But I do find hope and much to admire in the way that Russell himself faced not dissimilar worries during and after the US presidential election of 1964.

It was also a dangerous time nationally and internationally. President Kennedy had been assassinated the year before; the black struggle for civil rights in a racist and violent America was in its throes; anti-communist extremism was rampant; and the US intervention in Vietnam was already underway.² And the Republicans had nominated Sen. Barry Goldwater—a right-wing, anti-communist fanatic, and no friend to the civil rights movement—to run against Lyndon Johnson (Kennedy's VP who became president upon JFK's assassination).

Russell had doubts that the signs of nuclear sanity and détente that Kennedy showed after the near catastrophic 1962 Missile Crisis might not continue under a Johnson presidency. But he had little doubt that a Goldwater victory would be a sure path to Armageddon. In the summer of '64 he immersed himself in the US election to prevent a Goldwater presidency, and urged Johnson to build on the nascent détente with the Soviets. (Some criticized Russell for “meddling” in US politics. But he insisted that the stakes transcended national borders. There could be, as he put it, “No annihilation without representation.”)

He issued an international message warning of Goldwater's anti-communist fanaticism and the heightened danger of nuclear war that a Goldwater presidency would almost certainly bring, citing examples of Goldwater's bellicose and irresponsible pronouncements. Here are a few (see *Bertrand Russell's America*, 1945-1970, p. 215):

- We are, in no uncertain terms, against disarmament.
- We should liberate all Communist states.
- We should abrogate the [1963] Test Ban Treaty and resume testing.
- We should leave the United Nations.
- We should invade Cuba.
- We should use nuclear weapons in Vietnam and attack the North.



A week before the election he also wrote an open letter to Johnson (published Oct. 25 in the *St Louis Post-Dispatch*) urging pursuit of détente and joining the call of China and the USSR for an international congress to abolish nuclear weapons.

Johnson won the election handily.³ But still Russell feared that, given the mood and condition of the country, the next few Johnson years would likely reflect some of Goldwater's belligerent policies. He was right.

Despite some encouragement—for example, LBJ did help plant the seeds for the later SALT treaties (early 1970s) and signed the important Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (1968);⁴ and he did usher in important civil rights and other social legislation (e.g., Medicare) in the mid-60s—the Johnson years were unquestionably a period of enormous upheaval at home and abroad.

At home there were more assassinations (Malcolm X, Martin Luther King, and Robert Kennedy), racial protests, anti-war civil disobedience, and police violence, along with many inner-city neighborhoods aflame and in rebellion.

Abroad there was a decade-long, Anglo-American, anti-Communist, war of aggression and atrocity in South East Asia—a war that took the lives of tens of thousands of Americans and more than three million Asians. The war spawned hundreds of protests and civil disobedience across the US and Europe involving hundreds of thousands of people, many led by Russell's Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND).⁵

Russell's Message of Hope

But Russell—old age and poor health notwithstanding—never gave up the fight for a saner and more cooperative world with a promising path to peace. And, thanks in part to the groundwork of Russell and others in the '50s and '60s, we did finally, by 1990 (twenty years after BR's death), get an end to the Cold War and the makings for that peaceful world. But, alas, we didn't follow up. Of late our gift seems to be slipping away. But we mustn't let go.

Just a couple of months before the '64 US election, Russell wrote an uplifting article of hope for that difficult time—one for our time, too:

Mankind is engaged in a race in which the brutal and stupid are on one side,

while, on the other side, are those who are capable of human sympathy and of imagining a world without armed strife. Philosophers should belong to this second group. ...During the struggle [for such a world] their life will be arduous and painful, but illumined always by a hope as ardent as the Christian hope of heaven. Given time, this hope may be realized. Will the present rulers of the world allow the necessary time? I do not know.⁶

We now know that with hard work and perseverance (and more than a little luck) there was the necessary time. The hope was realized—or at least given a promising start. Can we rekindle that hope and realize an even closer approximation to it? Why not? We learned much on the first run; it should be easier this time.

Endnotes.

¹ My latest info seems to underscore the insanity side: "the US should expand its nuclear capability" (*NYT* 12/22/16). And to his more rational critics: "Let it be an arms race ... we'll outmatch them all" (*MSNBC* 12/23).

² In August ('64) the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution was passed by the Senate giving LBJ *carte blanche* to ramp up the US military response to alleged North Vietnamese attacks on US naval vessels in the Gulf.

³ LBJ ran (but only once) the notorious "Daisy Ad" against Goldwater. In the ad a little girl picks a daisy and pulls off its petals one at a time as she counts to 10 at which point a deep vice-over begins counting down from 10 as the little girl looks up into the distance; at zero, there is the thunderous explosion and flash of a nuclear bomb; then LBJ's voice: "These are the stakes ... we must either love each other, or we must die;" then the voiceover "Vote for Lyndon Johnson on Nov. 3; the stakes are too high to stay home." In the recent US presidential campaign Clinton ran an ad featuring the little girl in LBJ's ad, now in her mid-50s, saying: "the stakes are again too high—vote for Hillary Clinton on Nov. 8."

⁴ Some encouragement, yes. But the escalating anti-communist war in Vietnam greatly damaged détente and brought progress in arms control to a halt for nearly a decade while both the USSR and the US accelerated the nuclear arms race with new missile technologies, warhead proliferation and first-strike preparations.

⁵ It was also the time of Russell's creation of his Peace Foundation and the Russell-Sartre International War Crimes Tribunal to hear evidence on US war crimes in Vietnam with sessions held in Sweden (1967) and Denmark (1968).

⁶ "The Duty of A Philosopher in this Age," *CPBR* Vol. 11, p. 46



We are pleased to introduce Hans Loewig, a BRS member and undergraduate philosophy student at McMaster University. With the tutelage of Hans' professor and BRS member Nancy Doubleday, he has some interesting ideas to share about Russell's social theories, including the relationship of his educational and political theories with modern principles of systems resilience.

Russell's Hope: Overcoming Fear, Fostering Resilience, and Educating with Reverence

By Hans Loewig with assistance from Nancy Doubleday

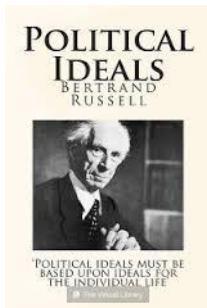
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The links connecting individuals, creativity, opportunity, education, and peace, are also connected with the idea of "hope" in Russell's writing, and it invites us to consider a possible relationship to recent thinking on the concept of resilience, particularly as resilience relates to water resources and the relationship between individuals and the planet. *Briefly described, the principle of resilience is the ability to reduce the magnitude or duration of disruptive events and recover from them.* This article is an effort to interpret within this context elements of Russell's early work on the need for social, political, and economic change, together with his work on education, and to learn more about Russell's vision for processes of transformation, with special reference to education and children, and to go beyond standard assumptions about instrumental educational goals. If we can tease out these elements, and then perhaps relate some of his appreciation of complex systems and his view of enabling change, we hope it will open a door to understanding, at least in some degree, of Russell's own resilience as a "solitary thinker" and more about "the hopes" that he carried—and that in turn, very likely carried him. But this is not an attempt at a psychological or a behavioral study: rather it is concerned with the conceptual implications of some of his ideas about social and political systems, and the way in which his vision of the nature of complex problems is influenced, in turn, by these ideas,

"No institution inspired by fear can further life," Russell wrote in his landmark 1916 work, *Principles of Social Reconstruction* (originally entitled *Why Men Fight*) and it has instead been through the cultivation of hope, creativity, and the struggle to "secure what is good" that humanity can be seen at its best.¹ This is in large part why Russell saw education, and the power that rests in the hands of educators to shape future generations, as an institution that society could not afford to structure incorrectly. As Russell saw it, the modern education system was in dire need of reform, for it often failed to either inspire hope or facilitate creativity. Moreover, educators were often guilty of inculcating fear, dogmatism, and boredom among children.² We will first elucidate that which Russell saw as problematic in the modern education system, particularly the employment of fear as a tool to educate children, and the role he envisioned that education ought to play in shaping humankind and facilitating hopeful democratic citizenship.

Fear is one of the "grave defects from which adults suffer," Russell argued, in that it functions as a powerful source of bigotry, hatred and, consequently, violence.³ Russell saw fear as the greatest obstacle to the whole of human happiness, and he believed that fear in its present form no longer serves the purpose it served when humans lived lives that were "nasty, brutish, and short."⁴ The human mind has not been able to adapt to the modern world of machines, nation-states, and science.⁵ There are three kinds of fears prevalent among adults: first, fear of external nature, including natural disasters; second, fear of other humans; and third, "fear of our own impulses."⁶ Fear of others is the root of insecurity—and insecurity is the root of envy, rivalry, and competitiveness. The prevalent role fear plays among adults often arises from the unnecessary but widespread inclusion of fear as tool to educate children. The result is that both those who spread fear, namely, the instructors, care-takers, and parents, and those who become 'terrorized' by it, namely, the students themselves, will suffer.⁷ Officials who use their authority to spread fear will suffer, for they often become "cruel and fond of thwarting others" and "...impatient of opposition and argument."⁸ Those who are terrorized suffer because fear leads them to reject ideas that deviate from social norms no matter how accurate and sound.

To mitigate the harm fear causes, teachers and parents must first stop teaching children terrifying falsehoods to make them obedient. Indeed, teaching *any* falsehoods as facts to children, whether or not they provoke fear, is a practice that Russell sought to abolish. He further illustrated this when he addressed the "idealistic" nature of children's literature based on two different meanings of "idealistic."⁹ If by "idealistic" edu-





cators mean the exclusion of unpleasant facts from children's books, then he resolutely disagrees. Should children not come to know negative facts about the world, they are unprepared and might eventually react with "exaggerated horror" when exposed to some unhappy fact.¹⁰ But if idealism is understood by educators as consisting of worthy hopes, sound values, and good practices, then children's books ought to be idealistic. Children's books ought to combine "faithfulness to fact with a proper reaction to fact."¹¹ In the same light, it is disingenuous either to withhold teaching children the history of war or falsely teach them that all wars have never prevented greater evils.¹² Instructors should paint war with the analogy that, as children need adults to solve their conflicts, so too do states need an international authority to solve theirs.¹³ It is crucial for educators to cultivate the individual characters of students in order for them to avoid succumbing to selfish impulses, including greed, anger, and fear.¹⁴

In addition to his observations on the state of education in general, Russell also focused on how the public (private elsewhere), aristocratic, schooling system in the United Kingdom at that at the time inculcated a strong sense of militarism, elitism, and nationalism among its enrollees.¹⁵ The culture that permeated these schools was one that placed masculinity, especially the masculinity typified by athleticism, as an ideal aspiration for all young male students.¹⁶ Young men, who saw little value in athletics, particularly those who placed priority on intellectual development, would often, find themselves ostracized by their peers and instructors. These exclusive schools also isolate their students from the outside world, such that they are taught to see themselves as special and superior to the inferior, non-aristocratic classes.

Even private tutoring, despite its relative advantages over more crowded school classes, carries severe disadvantages as a national model. Compared to public (taxpayer-sponsored) schooling, students in private school often lack the same opportunities to befriend other students their age, which may lead them to suffer later from shyness or uncooperative behaviour. But students with private tutors often attain more knowledge, since, unlike students in public schools, they are neither exposed to a student culture that dislikes schoolwork nor forced to pursue school work not personalized to their intellectual strengths and interests.

Russell offers an explanation why he believes education should be based neither on punishments nor external rewards. Instructors who use punishment to motivate students can cause a hostile student-teacher relationship, one that teaches students to respond most strongly to fear, which, in their adult life, can cause them to be timid, cruel, and envious.¹⁷ Education based on external rewards is problematic because it promotes a "violently competitive spirit" for achieving rewards, and a sense of defeatism among those students who fail to do so.¹⁸ Russell believes the only acceptable reward is to congratulate students when they exceed their individual capabilities. Russell holds that the powerful motivation that students can have towards learning is the stimulation of their intellectual curiosity, and it is this that teachers must recognize.¹⁹ The brand of patriotism that the schoolmasters teach their pupils is an example of the 'cult of stupidity' that the schoolmasters foster, which includes the view that any war fought on behalf of their country is patriotic, whether or not it is morally justified.

One method of encouraging children to pursue their intellectual curiosities is to allow them complete freedom of speech, since then the educator can know what the child is truly thinking, as opposed to fostering the nervousness that might result in the concealment of their thoughts and beliefs. Children, who lack scientific knowledge still have plenty of scientific curiosity, and therefore will more freely pursue such curiosities without fear of censorship. Permitting freedom of speech for children ultimately allows them to "acquire knowledge without losing the joy of life." Russell and his wife, Dora, employed these principles in the administration of their experimental Beacon Hill school. At Beacon Hill there were no checks against irreverence to elders, against scientific curiosity, or against one's choice of words.²⁰

In his book, *On Education*, Russell holds that the fundamental aim of childhood education is to foster both the character and intellectual development of children.²¹ The focus on character development helps children manage their emotions, especially fear, selfishness, and sympathy, and it engenders a greater regard for truth.²² Cultivating the intellectual development of students has the primary aim of stimulating their curiosity about the subjects they study. In their earliest years, students should have time to act, dance, and sing, while, in later stages of educational development, they should feel encouraged to take part in discussions focused on current issues in the world, and to reflect upon arguments with an open mind.²³ While it is somewhat unavoidable for teachers to exercise at least some authority over students, they should use their authority in a manner that allows students a great degree of freedom of expression. Instructors must have reverence for their students respecting both their views and their intellectual interests. The use of excessive discipline can make students passive and excessively obedient in their adult lives. The consequence is that as adults they will be afraid to exercise free thought and more susceptible to fanatical indoctrination.

People possess two tendencies that work against a successful democracy: they either become too



subservient and willing to follow a leader into a dictatorship or too unwilling to go along with the majority opinion and, as a result, opt for anarchy.²⁴ Education must address these two flaws, both in an intellectual manner and in a character-building manner. On the intellectual side of education, students must not be taught blind respect for authority, but instead to have a good reason why an authority figure merits respect. As it pertains to character-building, students ought to learn that many disputes in the world are not as important as they seem, and that art, music, and poetry hold value. Children should ultimately have the opportunity to explore activities that they find interesting, and they should be taught the kind of self-respect “which will make them comparatively indifferent to the approval of the herd.”²⁵

Children are often naturally curious about their surroundings, but their curiosity tends to decrease as they age, which is in part due to the “defects in our educational methods.”²⁶ Adults who have been rightly educated will have the same level of curiosity as they had when they were younger, such that the preservation of a student’s curiosity is a necessary condition for an education institution to have successfully educated its students. Students should also receive an education that “enlarges the boundaries of the Self, both in time and space,” such that they understand the biases inherent to their locality and historical period. For Russell, modern education must include the development of open-mindedness, tolerance, and respect for truth based on the available evidence. Teachers must encourage students to scrutinize their assumptions and consider the available evidence. Here, I have attempted to illustrate what Russell saw as especially problematic in the modern education system, namely, that failure to nourish children’s curiosity and inculcating an inordinate value for social norms, in combination, can result in passivity in learning and inhibit character development. Russell believed education ought to play a significant role in shaping humankind and facilitating democratic citizenship by engendering hope and creativity, and further interest in the use of reason and a search for the truth.

It is helpful to make a distinction in primary focus as regards the principle of resilience: Russell would likely prize the resilience of the individual over the resilience of any system that did not privilege truth, human creativity and liberty. In social-ecological systems, resilience is more likely to be assigned an instrumental value, as the tendency of a complex system is to maintain its processes and structures, within preferred parameters, and in the face of disruptions, shocks and other challenging circumstances. In a multi-scalar view, and when including broad divergence of opinion, the question of understanding and influencing resilience is, understandably, much more difficult.

In the “Introduction” of *Proposed Roads to Freedom* (1918),²⁷ Russell observes there are strong political movements emerging from the experience and recognition of widespread and unmitigated human suffering. Ideologies such as Socialism and Anarchism are often seen as solutions to such problems. Russell believes these systems of thought arise from the “hopes of solitary thinkers” such as Karl Marx and Mikhail Bakunin, and he understands that the hopes these systems inspire are seen as a potential danger by those in power. What is more subtle is that often it is these very same authorities who caused the human suffering that drove these emergent ideologies in the first instance. It is analogous to the mechanism of the feedback loop that informs systems in other domains, and that sometimes can even drive whole systems to change, and often with surprising results,

Taking this view of “hope” in its first iteration, as the hope of the individual, we see a hint of Russell’s view of the potential of ideas to flow across scale, from a solitary point, a single thinker, to succeed in garnering widespread interest, and ultimately to become influential enough to become a political movement. When he writes at the close of *Proposed Roads to Freedom* of his own idealistic views, we get a sense of the magnitude of his vision:

The world that we must seek is a world in which the creative spirit is alive, in which life is an adventure full of joy and hope, based rather upon the impulse to construct than upon the desire to retain what we possess or to seize what is possessed by others.²⁸

The emphasis on creativity and on the creative spirit, in opposition to the acquisitive or possessive impulse, is found in other works by Russell, including *Political Ideals* (1917),²⁹ and *On Education and the Social Order* (1932),³⁰ where Russell draws distinctions between the individual, as a cognitive and emotional being, and as a citizen, distinguishing them by the degree of creativity they are free to enjoy, and by the degree to which they “like Leibniz’s monads, should mirror the world”. In the case of the individual with knowledge, and a capacity for joy, there is still a further requirement, based upon his capacity, or agency:

In this world of flux men bear their part as causes of change, and in the consciousness of themselves

as causes they exercise will and become aware of power. Knowledge, emotion and power, all these should be widened to the utmost in seeking the perfection of the human being.³¹

As for the citizen, Russell writes:

The attitude of the citizen is a very different one. He is aware that his will is not the only one in the world, and he is concerned one way or another, to bring harmony out of the conflicting wills that exist within his community....The fundamental characteristic of the citizen is that he cooperates, in intention if not in fact.³²

The comparison between the two is drawn to accommodate both, recognizing that, "With the exception of Robinson Crusoe we are of course all in fact citizens, and education must take account of this fact."³³ Russell asserts his view that however necessary the truth of this is for citizenship, the perfection of the individual is to be preferred:

But it may be held that we shall ultimately be better citizens if we are first aware of all our potentialities as individuals before we descend to the compromises and practical acquiescences of the political life....But this solitary and creative form of citizenship is rare, and is not likely to be produced by an education designed for the training of citizens. Citizens as conceived of by governments are persons who admire the status quo and are prepared to exert themselves for its preservation. Oddly enough, while all governments aim at producing men of this type to the exclusion of all other types, their heroes in the past are exactly of the sort that they aim at preventing in the present. Americans admire George Washington and Jefferson, but imprison those who share their political opinions. The English admire Boadicea, whom they would treat exactly as the Romans did if she were to appear in modern India. All the Western Nations admire Christ, who would certainly be suspect to Scotland Yard if he lived now, and would be refused American citizenship on account of His unwillingness to bear arms. This illustrates the ways in which citizenship as an ideal is inadequate, for as an ideal it involves an absence of creativeness, and a willingness to acquiesce in the powers that be....I do not mean to be understood as an advocate of rebellion....since it is equally determined by relation to what is outside ourselves rather than by purely personal judgement of value....there should be a possibility of rebellion on occasion...more important...there should be the capacity to strike out on a wholly new line, as was done by Pythagoras when he invented the study of geometry.³⁴

Here we find Russell giving an account of a number of concepts that are also used in current resilience thinking, for example, in relation to social-ecological systems (SES) and water resilience. To illustrate with a sample from the literature on social-ecological systems resilience:

People are part of the natural world. We depend on ecosystems for our survival and we continuously impact the ecosystems in which we live from the local to global scale. Resilience is a property of these linked social-ecological systems (SES). When resilience is enhanced, a system is more likely to tolerate disturbance events without collapsing into a qualitatively different state that is controlled by a different set of processes. Furthermore, resilience in social-ecological systems has the added capacity of humans to anticipate change and influence future pathways.³⁵

Here we catch reverberations of similar concerns that Russell raised with regard to awareness of the influence of the context, whether for good or ill, and with the agency of the individual as a path to awareness of power that results from the consciousness of one's ability to impact, as well as being impacted by one's surroundings³⁶. We also see the outline of Russell's concern with the self-perpetuating inclinations of government concerned with citizens, and with citizens committed to the preservation of government. In yet another example of writing about the properties of resilience, we see other traces of Russell's conceptual thinking about individuals in systems, including the unique value of the individual and the importance of realizing individual gifts that are signified by "diversity" in ecosystem terms:

Theoretical advances in recent years include a set of seven principles that have been identified for building resilience and sustaining ecosystem services in social-ecological systems. The principles include: maintaining diversity and redundancy, managing connectivity, managing slow variables and

feedbacks, fostering complex adaptive systems thinking, encouraging learning, broadening participation, and promoting polycentric governance systems³⁷.

Here, the idea of “fostering adaptive systems thinking” maps readily onto Russell’s concern for the “right kind of thought” in his *Principles of Social Reconstruction*, where he writes:

Useful thought is that which indicates the right direction for the present time. But in judging what is the right direction there are two general principles which are always applicable.

1. The growth and vitality of individuals and communities is to be promoted as far as possible.
2. The growth of one individual or one community is to be as little as possible at the expense of another³⁸.

The Idea of “promoting polycentric governance systems” is even more clearly recognizable in Russell, and as early as 1917:

Huge organizations, both political and economic, are one of the distinguishing characteristics of the modern world. These organizations have immense power, and often use their power to discourage originality in thought and action. They ought, on the contrary, to give the freest scope that is possible without producing anarchy or violent conflict. They ought not to take cognizance of any part of a man’s life except what is concerned with the legitimate objects of public control, namely possessions and the use of force. *And they ought, by devolution, to leave as large a share of control as possible in the hands of individuals and small groups* (emphasis added).³⁹

Otherwise, oppression is inevitable; creativity withers under passivity; and thus occurs the loss of hope.⁴⁰

More specifically, Russell, states:

One important step toward this end would be to render democratic the government of every organization. At present, our legislative institutions are more or less democratic, except for the important fact that women are excluded. But our administration is still bureaucratic, and our economic institutions are monarchical or oligarchic. Every limited liability company is run by a small number of self-appointed or co-opted directors. There can be no real freedom or democracy until the men who do the work in a business also control its management.

Another measure which would do much to increase liberty would be an increase of self-government for subordinate groups, whether geographical or economic or defined by some common belief, like religious sects. A modern state is so vast that even when a man has a vote he does not feel himself any effective part of the force which determines its policy....By a share in the control of smaller bodies, a man might regain some of that sense of personal opportunity and responsibility which belonged to the citizen of a city-state in ancient Greece or medieval Italy.⁴¹

In contemporary terms, Russell calls for the creation of polycentric governance, a concept considered key to resilience in social-ecological systems literature, systems capable of accommodating diversity in units of organization and of functioning across scales of human organization. For Russell, the ideas of democratization of decision-making in all spheres of human activity, including commerce and industry, of greater self-government opportunity, and of the implementation of the principle of subsidiarity, are just and fair, but more than this, they contribute to a sense of opportunity, and this, in turn, is in itself a source of hope⁴².

As we recognize the synergies among Russell’s ideals of individual agency and engagement (which he intends to be used as levers for individual freedom, and thus liberation of creativity), and key concepts from resilience in social-ecological systems, we see a possibility for Russell’s concept of hope. His commitment to hope as a necessity for human freedom, creativity, and disruptive innovations leaves us with a strong candidate for a driving force both for human agency (or self-efficacy in Albert Bandura’s terms⁴³) at the level of the individual and also for ideals of self-organizing systems for polycentric governance. The sense that choice is possible is powerful. The understanding that we are agents can free us. Indeed, Russell was exemplary in modeling self-efficacy. Ken Coates⁴⁴ has said that he was of the view that Russell’s life held “a very strong

degree of consistency”, and he also said that the evidence does not rest in texts nor in unyielding positions—rather Russell responded to the context in which he worked and astutely tailored his methods to the issues at hand⁴⁵. He dealt with situations as they arose. His consistency was not dependent upon rigid rules. He recognized the complexity of the context within which he worked and utilized the crises and the opportunities to the best advantage. He developed a remarkable political sense, and trusted it.

Russell’s long life was filled with struggle, some defeats, and some remarkable successes. He understood the importance of education for hope. One way to understand this is to say that Russell himself was resilient: he saw opportunities, made choices, took chances and followed his intuitions, pressing for truth and liberty, freedom and creativity, and guided by his hope for the new world coming into being. There are lessons for us all.

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³³ Ibid., p. 11.

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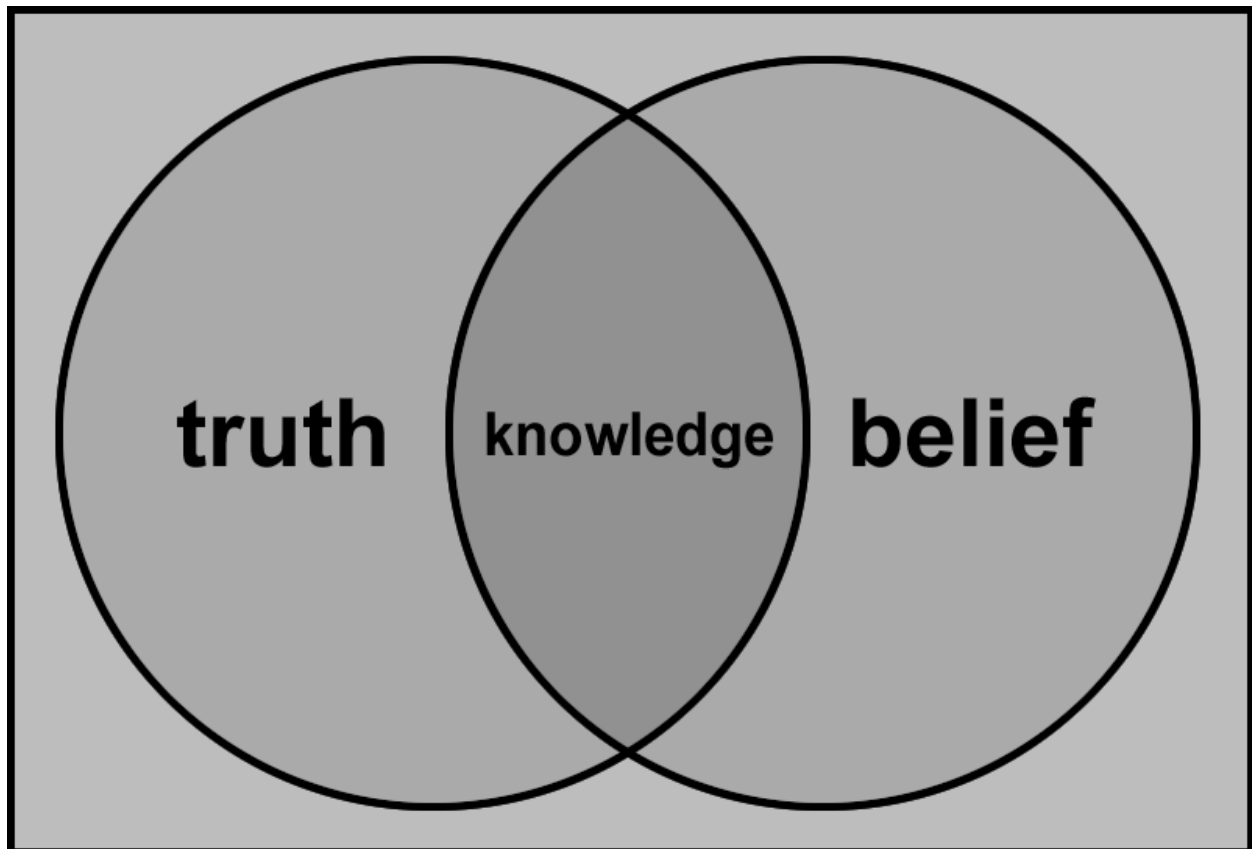
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⁴² Ibid., pp. 20-21

⁴³ Albert Bandura. 1997. *Self-efficacy: The Exercise of Control*. New York: W.H. Freeman.

⁴⁴ Ken Coates worked with Russell from 1965 until Bertie's death in 1970. Thereafter, he edited *The Spokesman* journal until his own death in 2010, during which period he also chaired the Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation.

⁴⁵ Ken Coates. Bertrand "Russell Peace Lecture" (unpublished) given at McMaster University in 1997.



Mark your calendars now for the celebration of the 50th anniversary of the Russell Archives at McMaster University, concurrent with the AM on June 22-24, 2018. You don't want to miss it!



Bertrand Russell's Impressions of Soviet Russia

By Thomas Riggins
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The year 2017 will see the ninety seventh anniversary of Bertrand Russell's book *The Practice and Theory of Bolshevism* (1920). Russell's book has two parts: the first is "The Present Condition of Russia," and the second is "Bolshevik Theory." I will deal with the first part of his book and save his remarks on the philosophy of Bolshevism for a later paper.

Russell reissued the book in 1948, and in a brief preface declared that in all "major respects" he had the same view of Russian Communism as he had in 1920. Russell says Bolshevism is a radically new political movement, which is a combination "of characteristics of the French Revolution with those of the rise of Islam" (*Practice and Theory*, p.9). I note it is radical Islam that, today, is being touted as the next big threat the US has to confront.



Vladimir Lenin addresses crowd in 1917.

The most important fact about the Russian Revolution is the "attempt to realize socialism" (Ibid.). Russell is dubious about this possibility succeeding. "Bolshevism deserves the gratitude and admiration of all the progressive part of mankind" (p.10). There are two reasons for this: Bolshevism stirred the hopes of humanity in such a way as to lay the foundations for the building of socialism, and the future creation of a socialist world would be "improbable" but for the "splendid attempt" of the Bolsheviks (Ibid.).

He thinks Bolshevism is "an impatient philosophy," which is attempting to create a new world order "without sufficient preparation in the opinions and feelings of ordinary men and women" (Ibid.).

Russell considered himself to be ideologically a political Bolshevik himself! "I criticize them only when their methods seem to involve a departure from their

own ideals" (p. 11). This is quite an admission, as it entails belief in a collectivist society based on central economic planning; an abolition of private property in the means of production and distribution; and most other areas of economic life.

While he shares the idealism of Bolshevism, there is another side to it that he rejects. He thinks they act like religious fanatics the way they defend their basic philosophical ideals. Materialism "may be true" (Ibid.), but the dogmatic way Bolsheviks proclaim it is off-putting to one who thinks that it cannot be scientifically proven. "This habit of militant certainty about objectively doubtful matters is one from which, since the Renaissance, the world has been gradually emerging, into that temper of constructive and fruitful skepticism which constitutes the scientific outlook" (Ibid.). Russell must have known that those at the onset of a "splendid attempt" to build a brave new world could not indulge in skepticism.

But he balances this by saying of the capitalist rulers in Europe and America, "there is no depth of cruelty, perfidy or brutality" that they would shrink from in order to protect capitalism, and if the Bolsheviks act like religious fanatics it is the actions of the capitalist powers that "are the prime sources of the resultant evil" (p. 12). He hopes when capitalism falls the fanaticism of the communists will fade away "as other fanaticisms have faded in the past" (Ibid.).

Russell is full of moral indignation when it comes to the capitalist rulers of his day. "The present holders of power are evil men, and the present manner of life is doomed" (Ibid.).

Russell thanks the Russian communists "for the perfect freedom which they allowed me in my investigations" (p.13). Russell went to Russia as part of a British delegation to assess the situation (May-June 1920).

Part One is comprised of eight chapters under the heading "The Present Condition of Russia" (the present being 1920). Briefly, the main points of each chapter follow.

Chapter 1: “What is Hoped from Bolshevism”

Communism inspires people with hopes “as admirable” as those of the Sermon on the Mount. Christians should be willing allies of communist movements if they knew their own ideals. But communists hold their ideals just as fanatically as Christians, and since “cruelty lurks in our instincts” and “fanaticism is a camouflage for cruelty,” communism is “likely to do as much harm” as Christianity has done (p.18).

As for capitalism, “only ignorance and tradition” keep it going. The exceptional power and efficiency of the US are such that it might hold up the capitalist system for another 50 years or so (till the 1970s) (p.19).

Bolshevism is the right form for Russia, “and does more to prevent chaos than any possible alternative government would do” (p.21). The lack of personal freedoms he blames on the Tsarist past; however, in his “Preface” he placed the blame on the evil capitalists behind the intervention and on their attempts to overthrow the Bolsheviks. A communist party taking power in England would be able to be “far more tolerant” (p.22).

Looking at the wreckage of World War I and the almost complete destruction of the Russian economy, Russell thinks communism can only come about through “widespread misery” and economic destruction (p.23). However, he leaves open the possibility that communism could be established peacefully.

He has a goofy idea, based on half-baked psychological notions, which is that revolutionaries find “violence is in itself delightful” (Ibid.), and so have no inclination to avoid it. This is too ridiculous to require much comment, since violence disrupts economic production, which is a prerequisite for the successful construction of the new social order.

Chapter 2: “General Characteristics”

The “Russian character” is attracted to Marxism due to its “Oriental traits.” The only “traits” he mentions are those of “crushing” foes “without mercy” and maintaining a mindset “not unlike the early successors of Mohammed” (p.27).

The position of Marx that led to this observation is his teaching that “communism is fatally predestined to come about.” A position Marx never held. He thought that capitalism would collapse, but the class struggle could also result in the mutual destruction of the contending classes. It is characteristic of Russell that he makes broad assertions about Marxist thought without providing any source or reference which can be checked.

Russell speaks of the “kindliness and tolerance” of the English since 1688, which he contrasts to Bolshevik fanaticism and mercilessness. But of course, he says, this kindliness and tolerance is something “we do not apply to other nations or to subject races” (Ibid.). This may explain why so many of the “subject races” saw a great affinity with the Bolsheviks.

Should the Bolsheviks fail it will be for the same reasons the Puritans did: because people will want “amusement and ease” (p.28) rather than anything else. Well, the history of Russia has never seen a time when “amusement and ease” were on the agenda—so I think Russell missed the boat with these historical comparisons.

Russell thinks there is a philosophical model more accurate than any historical one, namely, Plato’s *Republic*: but Russell is completely off base when he says, “there is an attempt to deal with family life more or less as Plato suggested” (Ibid.). There was no eugenics movement in Russia; the Communists did not have a rigged lottery system to distribute sexual partners; handicapped and illegitimate children were not put to death; and marriage was not outlawed until retirement. At most you have an effort to bring about equality between the sexes and provide universal education—the very demands of both *The Communist Manifesto* (1848—originally originally *Manifesto of the Communist Party*) and Plato’s *Republic*. The assertion that there is an “extraordinary exact” parallel between Plato and what Lenin and the Bolsheviks envisioned is wide of the mark (Ibid.).

Russell interviewed Vladimir Lenin (1870-1924) and remarks that he was a true internationalist, as are all communists, and would have sacrificed power in Russia to help the international revolution. With the failure of the world revolution, Russell imagined that nationalism would take root in Russia. He was certainly correct in this.

He also met Leon Trotsky (1879-1940), the leader of the Red Army, and remarks on the enthusiasm Trotsky aroused in public. Russell thought when the Asiatic parts of Russia are retaken (as the Civil War and foreign occupation come to an end. The Union of Socialist Soviet Republics was not founded until 1922), the Communists will act like typical imperialists (they didn’t) and behave like other Asiatic governments, “for ex-

ample, our own government in India” (p.32).

Chapter 3: “Lenin, Trotsky and Gorky”

This chapter is full of personal impressions of Lenin, Trotsky and the author and activist, Maxim Gorky (1868-1936). It is very subjective, more than other chapters, so I will largely pass over it and give just a few examples.

Of Lenin: “I have never met a personage so destitute of self importance” (Ibid.). Lenin thought it would be difficult to build socialism with a majority population of peasants. He told Russell that the world revolution was needed before any real achievement could happen.

Of Trotsky: Russians don’t regard him at all as equal to Lenin, but he impressed Russell more as to “intelligence and personality,” while he admitted he had only “a very superficial impression” of the man. He had “admirable wavy hair” and appeared vain (p. 37). He brought to mind a comparison with Napoleon!

Of Gorky: “He supports the government,” Russell wrote, “as I should do, if I were a Russian—not because he thinks it faultless, but because the possible alternatives are worse” (Ibid.) If Russell thinks that, then, as a Leibniz scholar, perhaps (!) he should have recognized the Bolsheviks were the best of all possible Russian governments and thus mitigated his criticisms instead of making comparisons to his ideal of Britain since 1688 and suggesting incommensurable historic parallels.

Chapter 4: “Communism and the Soviet Constitution”

Russell wanted to compare the Soviet system with a parliamentary system, but could not as he found the Soviets “moribund” (p.39). The All Russian Soviet, the legal supreme body, hardly ever met and had already become a rubber stamp for the Communist Party.

This was due to the fact that the Western blockade and the Civil War had reduced the country to the verge of collapse, and the Bolsheviks could only hold out by extreme measures. The idea was, first the government had to survive, and, second, after peace was established, there could be a return to more democratic measures.

The peasants were hostile, but “never better off,” and their hostility unwarranted. Russell saw no “under fed” peasants, and the big landlords’ property had been confiscated for their benefit (p.42).

The peasants were ignorant, knowing nothing beyond their villages. Knowing nothing of the Civil War or blockade, “they cannot understand why the government is unable to give them the clothes and agricultural implements that they need” (Ibid.).

Russell saw the Communist Party divided into three parts. First, the old Bolsheviks, “tested by years of persecution”, who have the most important positions. They are upset by the backwardness and hostility of the peasants, and by the fact their ideals have to be postponed awaiting better material conditions (p.43).

Second, the “arrivistes” who have the second level positions. They benefit from the Bolsheviks having power (the police, informers, secret agents, etc.) From their ranks come the members of the Extraordinary Commission (i.e., the Cheka or All Russian Extraordinary Commission for Combatting Counter-Revolution, Profiteering and Corruption).

Third, the people who supported the government, *not* because they were fervent communists, but because the Communists were in power and they could benefit from serving the Communists—either out of motives of patriotism or self-interest (or both).

These people were of the same type as American businessmen (being motivated to advance themselves and take advantage of situations), and Russell “supposes” that if peace comes this group will help in the industrialization of Russia making it “a rival of the United States” (p.44).

The Russian workers were lacking in the habits of “industry and honesty,” and the “harsh discipline” of the Bolsheviks will allow Russia to become “one of the foremost industrial countries” (Ibid.).

Chapter 5: “The Failure of Russian Industry”

Russian industry was not operating efficiently and anti-communists were blaming “socialism” for the problems. Little has changed in 97 years.

The real reason for industrial failure was the economic blockade maintained against the Bolsheviks. Russia needed access to the world economy for spare parts and machinery: “Thus dependence on the outside world persists, and the blockade continues to do its deadly work of spreading hunger, demoralization and

despair" (p.48).

Unfortunately, Russell's book makes a comment about the Russian "character" being "less adapted to steady work of an unexciting nature [factory labor] than to heroic efforts on great occasions" [storming the Winter Palace] (p.49).

The Russian Civil War devastated industrial areas that needed reconstruction. The Communists held their Ninth Congress in 1920 and decided to continue a policy adopted for the Civil War—i.e., the militarization of labor.

It is evident, "the Bolsheviks have been compelled to travel a long way from the ideals which originally inspired the revolution." However, "the situation is so desperate" that if they succeed they should not be blamed for having made these decisions. "In a shipwreck all hands must turn to, and it would be ridiculous to prate of individual liberty." Russell will not always remember his own injunction. (p.52)

Chapter 6: "Daily Life in Moscow"

Ok, life wasn't so great in Moscow. Russell, however, blames both the previous history of Russia and the policies of the West for most of the sad state of conditions in the capital city: "the Bolsheviks have only a limited share of responsibility for the evils from which Russia is suffering." (p.58)

Chapter 7: "Town and Country"

"The food problem is the main cause of popular opposition to the Bolsheviks" (p.62). Russell admits that no popular policy is possible to adopt due to the existential conditions. The Bolsheviks are the representatives "of the urban and industrial population" and cities are little islands in a sea of hostile peasants, even though, the Bolsheviks had done more for the peasants than any previous government. If the Bolsheviks were democratic, "the inhabitants of Moscow and Petrograd would die of starvation." Sometimes democracy just doesn't work (p.63).

The two conditions that have brought this about are all industrial energy is consumed by the war and ignorance of the peasants about the war and blockade. "It is futile to blame the Bolsheviks for an unpleasant and difficult situation which it has been impossible for them to avoid," (Ibid.). In order for them to supply the needs of the peasants and build up industry both the war and the blockade must end.

Chapter 8: "International Policy"

Russell states that the cure for Russia's problems "is peace and trade" (p. 64). The Bolshevik government is so far stable, but it could, if something happened to Lenin, evolve into "a Bonapartist militarist autocracy" (p.65). Well, a few years later Lenin was out of the picture and a Bonapartist regime did not emerge and the Soviet government never became a "militarist autocracy." The Stalin cult may be called an "autocracy," but it was based on the working class and attempted to build socialism in conditions that were not favorable.

Russell was "persuaded that Russia is not ready for any form of democracy and needs a strong government" (Ibid.). He did not base this opinion on the economic backwardness of the country but what he saw "of the Russian character" (a purely subjective and non-scientific impression) and the disorganized state of the "opposition parties" (Ibid.). The opposition was soon eliminated because it cavorted with the enemy in attempts to undermine the Bolsheviks during the Civil War and the Allied invasion.

Russell was interested in Lenin's "First Sketch of the Theses on National and Colonial Questions," which he presented to the Second Congress of the Third International in July of 1920. Lenin advocated a unification of the colonial freedom movements and oppressed nations with the Soviet government in the struggle to overthrow world imperialism. Soviet Russia would lead this movement, but its existence as a separate federated republic was to be "transitory," because what was really wanted was "the complete unity of the workers of all countries" (p.67). *One-world socialist state*: an idea not foreign to Russell, as he later advocated one-world government.

With respect to Egypt, Ireland, and India, Lenin wrote of the necessity of the co-operation of all communists in the bourgeois-democratic movement of emancipation in those countries. Communists could make temporary alliances with bourgeois democracy in backward countries, but "must never fuse with it" (p.68). Russell worried about the future of British India, thinking that Lenin was hatching a plot to get power in Asia. Russell becomes very strange at this point. He says Bolshevism is "partly Asiatic," as is "everything Russian." He sees two trends in Bolshevism: a practical trend for settling down to make a regular country and to co-



exist with the West, and an adventurism that seeks “to promote revolution in the Western nations”—with a “desire for Asiatic dominion.” Russell is mentioning “Asiatic dominion” as a trait of Russians at a time when Britain was maintaining the largest empire in history (p.69).

This Bolshevik desire is “probably accompanied in the minds of some with dreams of sapphires and rubies and golden thrones and all the glories of *their forefather Solomon*” (my italics). It seems weird to think of any of the Bolsheviks tracing their political aspirations back to Solomon and his “golden thrones.” I will ascribe this passage to Russell's having been unconsciously influenced by the popular anti-Semitism of his day. There is a leitmotiv in right-wing thinking that Bolshevism was a Jewish plot. Russell was not a Rightist. It is a very strange thing to have written. At any rate, there is no chance, he says, of making peace with Britain unless the Bolsheviks change their Eastern policy (Ibid.).

There are two attitudes to the world—the religious and the scientific. Almost all the good in the world has come from the scientific outlook and all the evil from the religious. “The scientific attitude is tentative and piecemeal, believing what it finds evidence for, and no more” (p.70). Russell should have refrained from speculations about Asiatic dominion and golden thrones on scientific grounds.

Russell maintains that the religious attitude leads to “beliefs held as dogmas dominating the conduct of life, going beyond or contrary to evidence, and inculcated by methods which are emotional or authoritarian, not intellectual” (Ibid.). This is a perfect description of Russell's negative attitudes towards Hegel, Marx, and Marxism for most his life. Using this distinction, Russell determines that Bolshevism is a religion and that Bolsheviks are “impervious to scientific evidence and commit intellectual suicide” (Ibid.). Russell seems not to be aware of the fact that all the great Bolshevik leaders agreed with Lenin's dictum the Marxism was *not* a dogma, but a guide to action, and that scientific methods should be applied to social questions and to the construction of socialism. Like any human endeavor, there is a range of behaviors—and among both religious and scientific people, you can find all sorts from the most dogmatic to the most open minded, so we don't have to take Russell's specious and dogmatic pronouncements too seriously.

Bolshevism is a religion that should be compared with Islam rather than Christianity and Buddhism. Russell thinks Bolshevism and Islam are “practical, social, unspiritual, [and] concerned to win the empire of this world,” while Christians and Buddhists care about “mystical doctrines and a love of contemplation” (p.71). Russell cannot have been unaware that in 1920, except for Japan and Russia, every nation on earth was directly or indirectly subject to a cabal of Christian countries, and that the empire of the world was definitely not in the hands of Bolsheviks or Mohammedans.

All this is very naive as the spread of different types of Buddhists, Christians, and Moslems completely overlap one another, and these types of invidious comparisons are simply unwarranted and unscientific.

Bolshevism “may go under in Russia” (well it finally did but on a time table far exceeding anyone's imagination), “but even if it does it will spring up again elsewhere, since it is ideally suited to an industrial population in distress” (Ibid.).

Now Russell makes a very valid point. Russia was a backward country and he will not actually criticize the methods used by the Bolsheviks “in their broad lines,” because they “are probably more or less unavoidable.” But Western socialists should not engage in “slavish imitation” of the Bolsheviks, because these methods are not “appropriate to more advanced countries” (Ibid.).

Though a logician, Russell could sometimes arrive at illogical conclusions. In this and the paragraph above Russell has stated 1. Bolshevism is ideally suited for distressed industrial populations, and 2. Bolshevism is not appropriate to advanced countries. But, it is in the advanced countries that distressed industrial populations are to be found.

He concludes part one by saying the Bolsheviks “are neither angels to be worshiped nor devils to be exterminated, but merely bold and able men (he should have added “and women”) attempting with great skill an almost impossible task” (p.72). I think he had a schizophrenic outlook on the Bolsheviks! I conclude that since Russell held the actions of the Communists were “probably unavoidable” (Ibid.), most, if not all, of his negative comments and criticisms were unjustified, and properly understood, the first part of his book is actually a defense of Bolshevism and Lenin as its leader. This is a scientific conclusion, whatever Russell may have thought.

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Russell's Homes: Amberley House

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Amberley House as it appears today.

Russell's last home in England before he left for America was located in Kidlington, near Oxford. His previous home, Telegraph House in Sussex, had been sold in early 1937 and there was a long close. During this time he first considered living in Wales where he and his wife Patricia (née Spence), who used the nickname of Peter, had spent part of 1933 and 1934. On 18 March 1937 he told his friend Lion Phillimore that "we are looking for a small cottage, preferably in North Wales." Cornwall, where his 1920s holiday home was located, was also a possibility. In May he told the philosopher and historian of ideas Isaiah Berlin that he was considering a vague offer from the University of Chicago. On 22 June he notified Berlin that the Chicago offer was definitely off. Then on 10 September he told Berlin that he had accepted an Oxford invitation to lecture after Christmas.

The purchase of his new home was financed in part by the sale of Telegraph House, because John J. Withers, the trustee, lent him £1,000 from the trust towards the purchase price of £1,800. On 19 September he wrote to his publisher, Stanley Unwin, "to ask whether you could let me have my half-yearly cheque before Sep. 28, if quite convenient, as on that day I have to pay for a house I have bought at Kidlington, near Oxford. I have sold this house, but the money goes into a trust, and is not available for the new house."

On 2 September Russell wrote to his old friend and former lover, Ottoline Morrell: "I have bought a house at Kidlington, near Oxford: an old house with a nice walled garden, which hides the ugly villas and bungalows. We hope to move into it at the end of this month." On 18 September Russell's much younger wife, Peter, who had been an undergraduate at Oxford, leaving there in the early 1930s, wrote to Ottoline: "Bertie says you seem puzzled that we should choose to live at Kidlington. I am almost equally puzzled myself—it has just happened—chiefly because Bertie has to be in Oxford this winter and we are anxious to settle permanently. And he wants society but dislikes London and Cambridge. He has many friends and acquaintances in or near Oxford. Apart from them I have only one friend there now. And if the place swarmed with my friends I should not have time to enjoy them. Being Bertie's secretary and [their son] Conrad's nurse, moving a house, and trying to keep up with Bertie's work doesn't leave much for social life. So you mustn't think I am dragging him at my chariot-wheels to Kidlington. When we thought of living in Wales everyone reproached me for proposing to hide him away from the world." Kidlington is about five miles north of Oxford while Bagley Wood, where he lived from 1905 to 1911, is about four miles south of Oxford.

A few days later Russell again wrote to Ottoline: "My chief reason for wanting to go there is that I have

gone back to philosophy, and I want people to talk to about it. I am lecturing there after Xmas and shall get to know all the people in my line, of whom, along the younger dons, there are now quite a number. In Cambridge I am an ossified orthodoxy; in Oxford, still a revolutionary novelty." He told her the name of the house was Greystones, but that they are thinking of changing the name. He also, luckily, tells her the street address, 16 Lyne Road, without which this house could never have been identified (25 Sept.). He informed his American publisher, W.W. Norton, on 29 September that "my address henceforth is Amberley House. We move in in a fortnight [on 13 October]." Amberley House got its name from the courtesy title associated with the Russell earldom. The heir to the earldom uses the title "Viscount Amberley" until he inherits. Russell's father never inherited the earldom; thus, the Russells' book about his parents is titled *The Amberley Papers*—it had been published in March. Russell's older brother Frank named the house he lived in before he moved to Telegraph House, "Amberley Cottage". It was located at Maidenhead near the River Thames.

Oxford did not work out as planned. In his *Autobiography*, Russell writes: "We bought a house at Kidlington, near Oxford, and lived there for about a year, but only one Oxford lady called. We were not respectable" (p. 194). They did meet up with their friends Gerald and Gamel Brennan. In a letter published in the *Autobiography*, Gamel writes: "Yes, we must somehow meet more often. We must have picnics in Savernake Forest—and find some charming place to come together half way between Kidlington and Aldbourne [in Marlborough where they were living]. Gerald and I are going to take bicycles this summer, so we can meet anywhere" (p. 210).

In an undated letter, Peter told Ottoline that the house "is very nice, though surrounded by bungalows—hidden from sight by a high stone wall—and it has a walled rose garden which we all like—and John and Kate have a cottage each and don't live with us! I think that is one of the chief reasons why we are going there!" (No. 1769A). Russell's older children, John and Katharine, were by then teenagers, craving some independence. They spent most of their time at their boarding school, Dartington Hall. On 8 November 1937 Russell wrote to Elizabeth Trevelyan: "This house is very comfortable and Peter has been very clever about it. She got very tired, and was ordered to rest in bed, which she is doing—with good results."

Katharine Tait writes about Amberley House in her book about her father: "He bought an old house, in the village of Kidlington, which Peter's gifts soon turned into another beautiful home. It was a lovely house, with exquisite walled gardens, but to me it will always be a place of great unhappiness" (p. 128). "The year we spent at Oxford was a time of bitter division for us all ..." (p. 128). "The house in Kidlington had a pair of two-roomed cottages attached to it, which were fixed up for John and me, since the house itself was not big enough for all of us. I had the cottage nearest the house and John the end one" (p. 129). "In that house too my father explained to me one day that he found it best to have a set routine for things like shaving, dressing, emptying and filling his pockets, so that he never had to think about them" (p. 130). John's cottage was named Fountain Cottage. On 13 November 1937, John wrote to Russell and Peter, telling them he liked the name. "I am very glad there is a fountain outside. I hope you will be able to make it work."

On 8 February 1938 Russell wrote to Ottoline: "It is shocking that I have not written for such a long time—I am lecturing for the University on Language and Fact, and it uses up my store of language." The lectures were later published as *An Inquiry into Meaning and Truth* (A73, 1940). On 10 April he told her: "I have to finish a book [*Power: A New Social Analysis* (A72)] before June 30; after that, I shall not be very busy. But I may have to go to Chicago for the winter; it is still uncertain." Not long after, with his need for money pressing, he was able to arrange a temporary position at the University of Chicago. The press release announcing Russell's appointment at the University of Chicago for the autumn and winter quarters of 1938-39, beginning in October, was issued on 25 April 1938.

In May and June of 1938 his old friend, Lucy Donnelly, and her friend, Edith Finch (later Russell's fourth wife), were visiting from America. He invited them to tea; he wanted Lucy to meet his young son, Conrad, which presumes Lucy and Edith would have gone to Amberley House. On 2 June he wrote to Lucy: "I am sorry you will not have seen her [Peter] and the child [Conrad]." He did, however, visit Lucy and Edith in London. Writing to their mutual friend Helen Flexner on 21 June 1938, Lucy noted that: "Bertie came to tea on Thursday and seemed in great form. I noticed the change in his eyes, dimmed, almost glazed, and the sharpened lines of his face, but he seemed well and happy and intensely alive, talked with great satisfaction of his children; a good deal about Peace and War; and about his family, telling many good stories after Edith came in, and his new book *Power*, staying until past seven. Edith said I drove him away by mentioning Aristotle! Alys [Russell's first wife] tells me he came up for 'the Apostles' dinner." On 31 January 1939, writing from Chicago to Lucy, Russell clarifies: "Please tell Miss Finch that what drove me away was the realization that I had stayed an unconscionable time; her remarks on Aristotle were more calculated to make me stay."

Colette, a former lover of Russell's, visited in July before leaving for Sweden. She arrived by train,



Russell met her on the platform. She described the visit to her mother, Lady Annesley, in a letter she wrote from Sweden. “Outside the station, Peter was sitting at the wheel of the car, and drove us to their house which is set in a well-made garden with wide lawn. The day was brilliantly hot. We went into the sitting room before luncheon.... The room, not much lived in, was pleasant and cool though quite colourless. His Chinese scrolls were on the walls.” After lunch, John and Kate “vanished the moment they could. They’ve rooms of their own in a cottage in the garden: John’s room pleasantly bare, with fencing paraphernalia on the walls; Kate’s, with tiny ornaments spattered everywhere. We then sat on the lawn, with the new infant plopped down on the grass to sunbathe.” Later on, “we went into the study for a quick tea, Lapsang as usual. The study is properly lived in: lots of books and good big comfortable armchairs.” She felt a “stab as I saw Voltaire’s familiar bust behind which I used to put rowan branches in 1918.” She also wrote about the day in her book, *In the North*, adding new details while leaving out others: “In the wall-enclosed garden of Amberley House, we sat on that brilliant July day; his two children, John and Kate, lay full length on the green English lawn; his smallest son, Conrad, straddled the grass without a stitch of clothing, the living image of glorious health.... And B.R.’s wife, also, had not changed at all in the eight years since I’d seen her.... The day ebbed imperceptibly; but—for me—punctuated by frail commas, sharp colons, graven forever by the long ago past. There was the same faintly aromatic blend of China tea which B.R. had drunk most of his life—and which Harrods Stores persisted in addressing to Miss Bertrand Russell. On his mantelpiece there was the same bust of Voltaire.... And there was the same exquisite Persian bowl B.R. had wanted to give me” (p. 76).

The following month the house was sold. The date of conveyance of the title to Rev. Alan Dalby is recorded as 26 August 1938. Russell writes in his *Autobiography*, “In August 1938, we sold our house at Kidlington. The purchasers would only buy it if we evacuated it at once, which left us a fortnight in August to fill in somehow. We hired a caravan, and spent the time on the coast of Pembrokeshire [at Pencarnan]. There were Peter and me, John and Kate and Conrad, and our big dog Sherry.... Finally, John and Kate went back to school at Dartington, and Peter and Conrad and I sailed for America” (p. 217). In fact, Russell left at the beginning of September, dropping John and Kate at Newport. He then continued on to Oxford where he stayed at the Kings Arms Hotel working on lectures. He met Peter and Conrad at Paddington Station on Saturday 10 September; they went to the London home of his cousins, Ted and Margaret Lloyd – Margaret was Rollo Russell’s daughter. He wrote to Elizabeth Trevelyan on 11 September 1938: “We are at the Royal Court Hotel [in Sloane Square], as there was difficulty about Conrad’s needs at the Lloyds.” The trio left Southampton on 17 September on the MV *Britannic* (letter to Stanley Unwin, 10 Sept. 1938). They were not to return to England until 1944.

No photographs are known to have survived from Russell’s days at Amberley House, where he stayed for less than a year. Google Street View of 16 Lyne Road offers only a glimpse of the house, but it does show red and white roses tumbling over the wall. The photograph above was taken at an unknown but somewhat recent date. It shows the attached cottage(s) now separated from the main house by a wooden fence. Another photograph, not reproduced here, shows the house situated at the corner of Lyne Road and Greystones Court. The photographs were provided to me along with some neighbourhood gossip by a local resident: “the house was originally built by the Bishop of Oxford for his mistress and the adjoining cottage was for his coachman to stay in when the good Bishop was over-nighting in the ‘big house’.” Which Bishop of Oxford this might be is unknown. Russell was acquainted with one of the Bishops of Oxford, Charles Gore (1853-1932), who served as the Bishop of Oxford from 1911 to 1919. They met occasionally at Garsington, the county home of Ottoline Morrell. The house obviously pre-dates Gore’s term as bishop and was probably built in the nineteenth century. Russell would have enjoyed why this house had been built if only he had known. The house was described as “delightful” by Mrs. H.W. Dalby, presumably Alan Dalby’s wife. In an undated letter she notes that Russell sold it to “us” (.048827).

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- Other: Partial digital image of a legal document on the sale of Amberley House and other transactions, from 1938 to 1971. Email from Meredith Goodwin to Tony Simpson and Sheila Turcon, 1 December 2016.

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Last but not Least

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