

**THE BERTRAND RUSSELL SOCIETY  
QUARTERLY**

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May 2002

No. 114

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**Paul Kurtz in Rochester**

## THE BERTRAND RUSSELL SOCIETY

The Bertrand Russell Society was founded in 1974 to foster a better understanding of the life, work and writing of Bertrand Russell (1872-1970) and to promote ideas and causes he thought important. The Society's motto is Russell's statement, "The good life is one inspired by love and guided by knowledge." (*What I Believe*, 1925)

## THE BERTRAND RUSSELL SOCIETY HOMEPAGE

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## THE BERTRAND RUSSELL SOCIETY QUARTERLY

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### QUOTE OF THE QUARTERLY

"Canadians are masters of what Bertrand Russell has called the twentieth century's highest achievement: the technique of suspended judgment. Canadians experiment with technology from all over the world, but rarely adopt any technical stratagem broadly."

Marshall McLuhan and Bruce Powers, *The Global Village* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), p. 149.

*Canadian members, we trust, feel appropriately proud.*

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*From the Editor:*

## Talking Up the BRS

The Bertrand Russell Society provides a focal point for people both inside and outside of academia with an interest in the life and thought of Bertrand Russell. But despite the excellent work the Society has done over the past 28 years, there are still a great many people out there who love Russell but don't know much (if anything) about us. On the one hand, that fact should be encouraging. Russell died 30 years ago, and yet there is no shortage of people who share our enthusiasm for him. On the other hand, it should also remind us that we don't necessarily make all the effort we could to reach out to new potential members and tell them about our Society.

I would like very briefly to describe several encounters I had over the past year or so with people interested in Russell who were unaware of our Society. All occurred thanks to McMaster University's excellent russell-l listserv. In addition to facilitating electronic dialogue about Russell, this list allows for the rapid dissemination about Russell-related items in the print media and on the web—much like this newsletter. (To subscribe to russell-l, visit <http://mailman.mcmaster.ca/mailman/listinfo/russell-l>.) Two of these items caught my eye when mentioned on russell-l. The first was an announcement describing a recently published novel entitled *Duck Egg Blue*. The novel apparently describes the story of a young student caught in the middle of a battle over the presence of evolution in school curricula. (A picture of the cover appears on the opposite page.) The announcement found its way to russell-l through the "humanist grapevine."

I rarely have time to read fiction (even good fiction) and I doubt I'll read the novel any time soon. (Avid novel readers may obtain the book from its publisher, Prometheus Books. A full description appears at <http://www.prometheusbooks.com/site/catalog/popular35.html>.) Still, I was intrigued enough to drop the author, Derrick Neill, a few lines about the BRS. He responded enthusiastically. "Russell," he wrote, "is my favorite philosopher. I certainly am interested in your organization." He has since indicated his plans to join the BRS.

The second item on Russell-l concerned a webpage containing jokes and anecdotes about famous mathematicians and physicists, including Russell. The page is at <http://hexagon.fi.tartu.ee/~palo/Fun/mathi-phys.html>. I recognized a small misstatement of one of the more famous anecdotes about Russell (if you want to know which one, check out the page), and

Granted, not all my attempts to talk up the BRS are this successful. Several times I've been told that people are interested but do not have the time to get involved with us. This response perplexes me, I admit; the only time demand the BRS requires of its members is the time required to write a check each year and shelve our marvelous *Quarterly*. Nevertheless, some people do feel that if they join an organization they should "give it their all." I certainly don't mind that, unless it deters them from doing anything with us.

But a few failures mean little beside enjoyable and productive exchanges like the ones I described above. What these two stories indicate is that there are plenty of people who would be happy to learn more about the BRS—and possibly join—if only they knew about it. They also prove that opportunities to talk up the BRS arise all over the place. How many members have seen an article, or received an e-mail, or visited a website that seemed particularly Russellian? If every one of us reached out in situations like that to sing the praises of the BRS, membership would not be a problem. Of course, that may mean that some website owners become bombarded with invitations to join the BRS, as our enthusiastic membership reaches out across the globe, but I wouldn't exactly lose any sleep over that.

Finally, opportunities to promote the BRS can arise from conversations even if the interested party is unlikely to join. This was brought home to me in the wake of the announcements of the 2001 Nobel Prize winners. At that time, Associate Editor Tim Madigan directed me to the Nobel E-Museum, online at <http://www.nobel.se>. In addition to providing information on the latest prize winners, I discovered, the site also provides a chance to search for past laureates. A search for "Bertrand Russell" (winner of the 1950 Prize for Literature, of course) turned up a copy of the presentation given him at the awards ceremony, a brief biography, a copy of his Nobel Lecture (subsequently edited and reprinted as a chapter in his book *Human Society in Ethics and Politics*), and a list of other links. This list included the Russell Archives at McMaster University—but not the BRS! I dropped the webmaster for the site a line, and he agreed to add the link. Now everyone who checks out Bertrand Russell's Nobel Prize entry online will view a link directing them to the BRS.

So the next time you read something, and Russell's name comes to mind, consider reaching out and talking up the BRS. And make sure you have the *BRSQ* handy when you do!

Section 2. Voting by Mail. Voting may be by mail. Ballots shall be sent to all eligible members, either in the BRS newsletter or by special mailing. The deadline for the return of ballots shall be not less than three weeks from the date ballots are mailed by first class mail, not less than four weeks if mailed third class. Ballots must go first class to Canada and Mexico, and by airmail to other foreign countries. Mail ballots shall be tallied by the Elections Committee, and verified by the Secretary. Ballots for the Board's voting by mail shall be tallied by the Chairman, and verified by the Secretary; the Chairman may designate a substitute for the Secretary.

## **Article 12. Amendments to These Bylaws**

Section 1. Voting to Amend at a Meeting. These Bylaws may be amended at a Society Meeting by a majority vote of those members present and voting.

Section 2. Voting to Amend by Mail. These Bylaws may also be amended by mail ballot. The proposed changes, with supporting arguments, will appear in the BRS newsletter or a special mailing. In the following BRS newsletter or second special mailing, other views, including opposing views, will appear, along with a mail ballot. To pass, the Amendment must be approved by a majority of the ballots cast.

# **BYLAWS OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE BERTRAND RUSSELL SOCIETY, INC.**

Revised June 1984; revised June 1999; revised May 2001

## **Article 1. Responsibilities and Obligations**

The Board of Directors (also referred to as "the Board") has these responsibilities: (1) to set policy for the Society's affairs, and (2) to elect officers of the Society and of the Board. The Board has these obligations: to be governed by these Bylaws and by the Society's Bylaws.

## **Article 2. Membership**

Membership shall be in accord with Article 5 of the Society's Bylaws.

## **Article 3. Officers**

Section 1. The Chairman. The Chairman shall be elected by a majority of the Directors present and voting at the Board's Annual Meeting. The

## Last Chance to Renew!

All BRS memberships (except Life and Honorary memberships) expire at the end of the calendar year. The BRS sends everyone with expired memberships the first two *BRSQ* issues of the year (February and May), but those who have not renewed by August will not receive the third issue of the year. And so if you haven't renewed already, **now is the time!** If you don't, the BRS will have to send you an individualized reminder, and that takes time, money, and energy the BRS could better use elsewhere.

To confirm whether or not you have renewed as of this issue, please check the mailing label on this issue. It will have one of the following four-digit numbers on it:

- |                     |   |
|---------------------|---|
| 2001                | means you are paid through 2001, but still need to renew for 2002.  |
| 2002                | means you have indeed renewed for 2002, and so are all set for the year.  |
| 7777, 8888, or 9999 | means you are a Life Member, Honorary Membership, or receiving the <i>BRSQ</i> as a courtesy. In any case, you never need to renew. |

Check for your number, and you'll always know your status.

To renew your membership, just use the handy membership form in the center of this issue. Please return it to our treasurer, Dennis Darland, at 1406 26th Street, Rock Island, IL 61201-2837, USA. You can pay by check (payable, in U.S. Dollars, to "BRS") or money order.

You can also pay by credit card using Paypal on the web. Just go to <http://www.paypal.com>, and open a free account. Then pay your dues using [brs-pp@qconline.com](mailto:brs-pp@qconline.com) as the recipient's e-mail address when prompted. There is no charge to make a Paypal payment, which (foreign members take note) will be handled in U.S. dollars. In the e-mail message that Paypal will send from you to our treasurer (Dennis), be sure to state the purpose of the payment. Do not include your credit card info in the message or any change in your name and address. Dennis will send you an e-mail receipt, and update the membership records accordingly.

If you have any questions about your membership, feel free to drop Dennis a line at [djarland@qconline.com](mailto:djarland@qconline.com). And if there's anything the *BRSQ* can do to make the renewal process easier, please let us know.

**Meet Studs Terkel! Come to the 2002 Annual Meeting of  
the Bertrand Russell Society  
Lake Forest College (Lake Forest, IL),  
May 31-June 2, 2002**

BRS Awards Committee Chair Kevin Brodie has confirmed that Studs Terkel will attend the 2002 BRS Annual Meeting to accept the Society's Annual Award in person. The meeting will be held at Lake Forest College, in Lake Forest, Illinois (about 30 miles north of Chicago, near Northwestern University).

Studs Terkel is a renowned author and journalist most famous for his interviews with people from all walks of life, from political leaders to cleaning ladies—to philosophers, including Bertrand Russell. Terkel is the author of such books as *Working: People Talk about What They Do All Day and How They Feel about What They Do* (New Press, 1997), *The Good War: An Oral History of World War Two* (New Press, 1997), and most recently *Will the Circle Be Unbroken? Reflections on Death, Birth, and Hunger for a Faith* (New Press, 2001).

In addition to Terkel, the meeting will feature various papers and presentations, including the following:

Panel Discussion on Ray Perkins' *Yours Faithfully, Bertrand Russell: Letters to the Editor 1904-1969* (Panelists: Rosalind Carey, Peter Stone, and David White. Respondent: Ray Perkins)

David Blitz: "Russell and Peace in the Middle East"

Kevin Klement: "Russell's Anticipation of the Lambda Calculus"

Greg Landini: "Russell's Distinction between Logical and Semantic Paradoxes"

Tim Madigan: "Russell's Influence on Music Theory"

Alan Schwerin: "Russell and the Early Wittgenstein on Scepticism"

Chad Trainer: "Earth to Russell: The Limits of Russell's Views on Space Exploration"

For information about the program, contact BRS President Alan Schwerin



at the Dept. of Interdisciplinary Studies, Monmouth University, West Long Branch, NJ 07764 USA, (732) 571-4470, [aschweri@monmouth.edu](mailto:aschweri@monmouth.edu), or visit <http://bluehawk.monmouth.edu/aschweri/brs2002.htm>.

Registration for the meeting—including buffet, banquet, papers, and other conference materials—costs \$55, or \$40 for students. Accommodations are available on campus for \$49.50 for the weekend (plus \$10 for linens if needed). Some cheaper accommodations may be available, and there are hotels in the area for those uninterested in the dorm experience. Checks for registration and/or housing should be made out to “Bertrand Russell Society” and sent with the conference registration form (located at the center of this issue of the *BRSQ*) to the conference organizer, Rosalind Carey, Department of Philosophy, Durand Hall, Lake Forest College, Lake Forest, IL 60045 USA, (847) 735-5185, [carey@hermes.lfc.edu](mailto:carey@hermes.lfc.edu). Registrants may also pay via credit card using Paypal, as detailed in “Last Chance to Renew, p. 4). Anyone paying in this way must still send a registration form to Rosalind. Please direct all questions about the conference unrelated to the program to Rosalind as well. Or just check out her web page at <http://mypage.campuspipeline.com/brsam2002/indexbrsam2002.html>.

The *BRSQ* encourages every member to attend and participate in our latest meeting! See you in Lake Forest!

### **BRS T-Shirts Continue to Attract Attention**

Stories relating to BRS t-shirts continue to pour in. *BRSQ* Associate Editor Tim Madigan was wearing his BRS t-shirt on a flight into Rochester last summer when the passenger sitting next to him took an interest in the shirt. The passenger turned out to be a mathematician and physicist interested in both Russell and W.K. Clifford (the subject of Tim’s doctoral dissertation). Another passenger, a comely philosophy student, also asked about the t-shirt and the BRS. Tim provided her with the information she requested; she declined, however, to give Tim her phone number. (Regrettably, the *BRSQ* has no photographs of any of these extraordinary events.)

Stories like these remind all of us that wearing a BRS t-shirt is a barrel of fun. So why not order your own today? The shirts are available for \$10 each plus \$ 3 postage. U.S. funds only, please. Please make checks out to the BRS, and send them to BRS Vice President Ray Perkins, 854 Battle ST, Webster, NH 03303, USA. Please specify size (M,L,XL) and color. Shirts are available in black or yellow. (White may also be available; check with Ray at [perkrk@earthlink.net](mailto:perkrk@earthlink.net).)

## ***Special Feature: Paul Kurtz in Rochester***

*Paul Kurtz, philosopher, secular humanist, and BRS Honorary Member, paid a visit to Rochester on April 20. The BRSQ marks the occasion with a short article describing the visit, along with pictures of the affair. But first, we would like to present a recent article by Kurtz on some of the most important issues of the day. We are pleased to reprint this article from the Spring 2002 issue of Free Inquiry.*

### **Farewell—Fairplay Paul Kurtz**

Something awful seems to be happening to the traditional American sense of fair play and goodwill. The public response in support of the victims of September 11 notwithstanding, in general there seems to be a decline of empathy and altruism. Perhaps I am overreacting, but this deficiency seems to assume many forms.

What immediately comes to mind is our treatment of prisoners. I refer first to the great flap that emerged worldwide over the Bush administration's refusal to place the prisoners of war captured in Afghanistan under the rules of the Geneva Convention. They are "unlawful combatants," we were told; or they are "dangerous and our guards need to be protected;" or, in still another statement, "They do not deserve any better." I've always thought that the Geneva Convention provided commendable rules governing the treatment of prisoners of war, rules that all civilized nations should follow. The prisoners are being treated "humanely," we were told. Surely, we would want our own soldiers, if captured anywhere in the world, to be treated in accord with the Geneva Convention. How can we demand this in the future if we violate these rules today? President Bush relented after much criticism at home and abroad and grudgingly declared that Taliban prisoners would come under the Geneva Convention, but not members of the Al Qaeda. Many critics believe that this concession does not go far enough.

#### **"The Quality of American Mercy Is Not Strained"**

This cavalier dismissal of the Geneva Convention has disturbed civil libertarians in the United States and our allies throughout the world. So has the treatment of thousands of Arabs and Muslims in the United States, recently apprehended by the Justice Department and held incommunicado and without bail. They are "terrorists," says the administration; but how do

we know unless they are indicted and put on trial and processed through the American system of justice? Will the infamous deed of September 11—which we all abhor—and the fear of future terrorist acts so erode our sense of justice that we will abandon our traditional adherence to democratic due process?

Perhaps there is something deeply amiss, for a similar vindictiveness is often displayed as well in our treatment of American prisoners, incarcerated for a wide range of infractions. The War on Drugs in particular has taken a vast toll on the American sense of balance, and its result seems close to the development of a police-state mentality. Bursting into homes at all hours to jail alleged drug offenders—even for possession or use of marijuana, for example—seems like an extraordinary overreaction. Drug offenders are considered “wicked.” Not that I wish to encourage drug use, but shall we abandon our free society to rout out drug use while we permit cigarette smoking and the abuse of alcohol, the two most noxious drugs available? From all reports, brutality in American prisons seems to be intensifying. Has vindictive justice gotten the best of us? I was interested to see William Bennett, the paragon of Christian virtue, railing against sin recently at a convention of American conservatives, defending the harsh tactics of the drug police. Whatever happened to the quality of mercy among those who express the Christian faith?

Another painful sign of the retributive mentality is seen in the fact that we still exact the death penalty; indeed, the United States is the only democracy that does. Our European allies are offended by capital punishment, and many countries now are refusing to honor extradition to the United States if the accused would risk suffering the death penalty. It is highly questionable that capital punishment serves as a deterrent. Surely we need to deal with those who commit heinous crimes. I would myself recommend life imprisonment for such offenders without the right of parole. But should not one of the aims of incarceration be rehabilitation, and should not a civilized society exert efforts to educate and reform offenders so that they may be returned to society? Instead we seem to have an exaggerated sense that punishment is good for its own sake and that those who commit crimes deserve retribution.

It seems to me that what is happening in the United States is that we have been overtaken by a religious sense of retributive justice and that this has taken on exaggerated proportions. Surely one of the purposes of punishment and incarceration is to protect society from criminals. Granted, but beyond that do we need to provide cruel and unusual punishment?

Whatever happened to compassion?

### **The Bloated Defense Budget**

I am also dismayed that the end of the Cold War has not reduced our military budget. We seem so frightened by enemies, domestic or foreign, that we are willing to spend vast sums on armaments and reduce our expenditure on domestic programs, such as medical insurance for those who lack it. The United States has also reduced foreign-aid assistance throughout the world. The ministers of the wealthy Group of Seven nations have recommended that these nations donate 0.7 percent of gross national product for international-aid programs for the poorest nations of the world. The United States currently provides the lowest percentage, only 0.1 percent. Secretary of the Treasury Paul H. O'Neill is a strong opponent of this aid, one reason why the United States is now known as "Uncle Scrooge."

President Bush's proposed military build-up would exceed that of the Reagan years. The administration proposes to increase defense spending by \$120 billion over the next five years—at a time, incidentally, when it proposes that taxes be reduced and the deficit increased. It is interesting that the United States now spends an estimated 50 percent of all arms expenditures in the world. The Religious Right seems to need demons, real or imaginary, to guard against—formerly they were Bolsheviks, socialists, left-wingers, liberals, secular humanists, child abusers, drug fiends; there are now terrorists in place of the anarchists of earlier epochs. H. L. Mencken wryly observed: "The whole aim of practical politics is to keep the populace alarmed (and hence clamorous to be led to safety) by menacing it with an endless series of hobgoblins, all of them imaginary." How true this is of the American political scene today.

The America that we love has in the past defended democracy and human rights and offered aid to those suffering disasters worldwide. Has this America become a swashbuckling military power, pursuing a unilateral foreign policy insensitive to the views of the world—such as the abrogation of international treaties? Are we no longer the hope of the world, but a nationalistic state pursuing our own self-interests? Today Afghanistan is defeated. Will we follow the president tomorrow by putting out of commission Iran, Iraq, and North Korea? I fear that America will lose its cherished friends and allies throughout the world, and her self-respect, and pursue imperialist policies that may be turned against us in the future by new coalitions of adversaries.

## Paul Kurtz in Rochester

### Alan Bock

Paul Kurtz, an honorary member of the Bertrand Russell Society, was the honored guest at a luncheon hosted by Tim Madigan and several members of the steering committee of the Greater Rochester Russell Set (GRRS) on Saturday, April 20, 2002. Dr. Kurtz is Chairman of the Council for Secular Humanism, founder of Prometheus Books and the Center for Inquiry, publisher of the *Skeptical Inquirer* and *Free Inquiry* magazines, renowned philosopher, and certainly one of the leading secular humanists in the world today. The luncheon, held at Mykonos (a Greek restaurant in downtown Rochester frequented by the GRRS), was a very informal affair featuring a wide-ranging discussion, addressing matters of interest to the BRS as well as numerous other matters (philosophical and otherwise). In addition to Dr. Kurtz and Madigan, Phil Ebersole, David White, Peter Stone, David Henehan, and Pat and Alan Bock also attended.

Dr. Kurtz's visit to Rochester had been heralded early in the morning by an earthquake, centered in Plattsburgh, N.Y. and registering 5.1 on the Richter scale. It was felt throughout all of upstate New York. There was widespread disagreement on whether this signified that the tectonic gods were pleased or displeased.

The main reason for Dr. Kurtz's visit was a talk given at the First Universalist Church entitled "The Great Divide: American Theocracy vs. Secular Democracy," co-sponsored by the Secular Humanists of the Rochester Area (SHoRA) and the Religious Education Committee of the First Universalist Church. After welcoming remarks by George Tiger, the youthful pastor of the church, and Ralph Reynolds of SHoRA, 3 members of the audience made promotional statements: David White for the Mark Twain Society, Tad Clements for the GRRS, and Ed Button for the CFI TV program "Humanist Perspectives" broadcast in the Rochester area.

At the outset of his talk Dr. Kurtz observed that the Center for Inquiry is located in Amherst, NY. This town has for the past 5 to 8 years been famous as the American city (with a population of over 100,000) having the lowest crime rate in the country. He suggested, facetiously, that there might be a connection. He went on to point out, however, that the Religious Right thinks otherwise and has accused the CFI of taking over the country claiming that they control the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, the United Nations, the Democratic Party, Yale, Princeton, Harvard and 2,000 universities among others. (There was at least one audible

“Don’t we wish” from the audience.)

There is a great divide in America today between the conservative and liberal streams of thought, said Kurtz, and this divide goes back to the very beginnings of American society. Historically, the conservative stream has been represented by people like Jonathan Edwards, the evangelical minister of the eighteenth century; Alexander Hamilton; John C. Calhoun, the defender of slavery; the Puritans; the Temperance League; the Legion of Decency; and today’s religious right, among others. The liberal stream came out of the Enlightenment of the eighteenth century and included Jefferson, Madison, and Paine among the founding fathers and Emerson, Thoreau, and the abolitionists among the leading figures just prior to the civil war.

American history is, to some extent, a history of the ascendancy of first one then the other of these two streams of thought. Today the conservative stream is in the ascendancy, as is evidenced by “faith-based charities,” public piety and prayer, “God Bless America,” anti-evolution, and anti-atheist fundamentalism.

On the other hand, said Kurtz, we secular humanists defend our point of view that this country should be a secular democracy. We stand for science and reason, not faith and obedience. We defend humanist values and education and oppose discrimination against women and gays. We believe in separation of church and state. Finally, we have a naturalistic outlook believing that science is the best method to interpret human behavior.

Several slides were presented, showing poll results that measured the depth and extent of religious belief in numerous countries. Kurtz pointed out that two continents, Europe and Australia, appear to have moved into the “post-religious” era. In poll after poll, however, America seemed to be intellectually more like a third world country—and not only in all matters pertaining to religion. It was also the least knowledgeable among all countries about the basic scientific facts of evolution. In fact, said Kurtz, America was such an anomaly among the western industrialized nations that it almost looked like she was suffering from some form of “distemper.”

In analyzing the anomalous position of America in the world today, Kurtz invoked one of his own earlier works—*The Transcendental Temptation* (Prometheus, 1991), a study of the deep and powerful human tendency to accept transcendental/paranormal accounts of reality. He was not certain if this was a genetic characteristic, as “we skeptics” appear to lack the

“religious gene.” However, he did advance a number of possible reasons for the prevalence of the Transcendental Temptation in America at the beginning of the twenty-first century.

1. America was originally settled in large part by religious dissenters fleeing from persecution in Europe. As an Australian skeptic once told him, “England sent us their criminals and sent you their puritans.” Thus, from the outset, we have had a large population of religious fanatics.
2. Every street corner in America has a church, which led author Rodney Stark to opine that religion in America is “market-driven.” As in a supermarket every taste is satisfied and new tastes are being constantly introduced. According to the *Encyclopedia of Cults* there are at least 1,350 cults, sects, etc. in America today—many of them of the “nutty” variety.
3. There has been no established church in America (at least since the ratification of the constitution.) Unlike Europe, America has not experienced the evils of “theocracy.”
4. There is very little criticism of religion since it is considered in bad taste to do so. Toleration of all religions has been the rule for a long time. However, as Voltaire pointed out “if we believe absurdities we will commit atrocities.”
5. Religion in America today is combined with political power. In the last election the Religious Right captured the presidency and monotheism has more or less become the official religion. We are “one nation under God” which, of course, excludes all unbelievers.
6. Oligopoly and the concentration of power in the media blocks out alternative and dissenting viewpoints and marginalizes unbelievers. Lately, however, there has been a shift evidenced by media attacks on Catholic priests for child abuse.
7. Finally, Kurtz alluded to the “meme” hypothesis advanced by Richard Dawkins and Susan Blackmore—namely that we humans are capable of imitating and copying from one another and thereby transmitting our culture. So far, at least religiously, we have failed to develop the proper memes.

Kurtz concluded by saying that he saw very good news to report in recent polls and surveys showing the numbers of people who have turned against religion. In a recent survey commissioned by the City University of New York, those listing themselves as having "no religion" were third in number (29 million), right behind Catholics (50 million) and Baptists (33 million). That same survey showed that between 1990 and 2001 the non-religious had almost doubled in number, growing from 8% to 14% of the population. Thus, at the end of his talk Paul Kurtz was exuding optimism.

### **Pictures from Paul Kurtz's Visit to Rochester**



**Mistah Kurtz—he in Rochester!**





**Alan Bock Enthusies at a Sale of Kurtz's Books**



**Kurtz with the Members of *BRSQ* Committee**

## *Book Reviews:*

### **Russell and Critical Thinking: A Review** **Ray Perkins, Jr.**

The journal *Inquiry: Critical Thinking Across the Disciplines* recently published a special issue devoted to Russell entitled "Bertrand Russell and Critical Thinking" (Winter 2001 Vol. 20 No. 2). Various aspects of Russell's views on critical thinking are ably set forth by seven contributors, many of whom are connected with departments of education at Canadian Universities. (Nick Griffin, for example, has an informative piece on Russell research at McMaster University.) The special issue is guest edited by William Hare, who also contributed a short essay of his own ("Russell and Critical Thinking").

One of the nicest features of the issue is its inclusion of a little-known 1953 essay by Russell called "A Philosophy for Our Time." Written during the Cold War shortly after the advent of the H-bomb, Russell explains how the study of philosophy can enhance our critical thinking and undermine "fanatical dogmatism," not only by expanding our imaginative purview of the world and reminding us of human fallibility, but also by developing impersonal thinking and impersonal feeling. The study of philosophy, not unlike the study of science, can lead us from the particular to the universal; away from the "tyranny of the here and now" of our parochial exclusionary sensibilities to a more universal sympathetic vision of the world and the human race. It's a wonderful paper, and its connection with Russell's earlier views regarding logical form/ truth is evident in his simple rule: "No ethical maxim must contain a proper name." (As a crude attempt to ascertain the validity of Russell's idea, I asked a group of freshmen to agree/disagree with several assertions, including the following two: 1. If bin Laden killed your family in a terrorist act, it would be justifiable for you to kill his family; 2. If person A murders the relatives of person B, it would be morally permissible for B to kill the relatives of A. About twice as many students agreed with 1 as with 2.)

Oddly enough, only one contributor, Sheryle Bergmann Drewe, refers to this 1953 paper. Her article ("Russell in Context") is mainly concerned to show that Russell's conception of critical thinking is relevant to current work on critical thinking. As she points out, his conception (especially as explicated by William Hare in his 1998 paper in the *Proceedings of the Twentieth World Congress of Philosophy*) contains many of the elements spelled out by prominent education theorists in recent decades.

Paul Hager's article, "Russell's Conception of Critical Thinking: Its Scope and Limits," also draws heavily on Hare's paper, according to which Russell's conception "embraces a wide range of skills, dispositions and attitudes." After citing a formidable list of abilities, habits, tendencies, attitudes and epistemic values, Hager settles on Hare's phrase "critical undogmatic receptiveness" to summarize Russell's conception, a conception that Russell himself describes variously as "the scientific outlook," "the scientific spirit," "the philosophic spirit," "a scientific habit of mind," "the liberal outlook," etc. The rest of Hager's paper is concerned to make the case that Russell's idea of critical thinking, as comprehensive as it is, is not "sufficient" as either a philosophical method or a scientific method; it is also insufficient for creative thinking or as an ideal by which to live. But apart from his uncritical acceptance of Hare's explication, one wonders just who Hager is arguing against when he presents his "insufficiency" cases. Nevertheless, he does shed some useful light on Russell's conceptions of philosophical method and scientific method and some important differences between the two, despite some Russellian statements seeming to equate them.

But as Hager points out, the starting points of philosophical analysis and scientific hypothesizing are generally different, as are their end products. In philosophy we move from what is certain but vague to what is more precise but less certain; and the data from which we start are complete. In science we move from what is less certain to what is more certain as we move from incomplete data to hypotheses that are continually being modified by new observations and allowing us to be less uncertain as our hypotheses approximate the truth.

A.D. Irvine's article ("Russell on Indoctrination") makes the case that the "liberal or scientific outlook" is Russell's goal for true education as opposed to indoctrination. The essence of such an outlook consists of trained intelligence rather than belief:

Russell holds that genuine education requires something more than the mere instilling of (true) belief. Indoctrination involves itself with methods of belief formation other than careful reasoning and the weighing of evidence. In such cases, the result is a type of belief whose certainty is often out of all proportion to the available evidence...it results in the kind of belief that is very often immune to ordinary processes of rational revision (p. 20).

Since dogmatists the world over believe that nations are made strong by uniformity of opinion and action, the true educator--by training

intelligence and fostering only those beliefs based on the habit of impartial reasoning, tolerance and absence of dogma—becomes the guardian of civilization and democracy. As Irvine reminds us, Russell insists that science and democracy have much in common with the empirical tradition beginning with Locke. Owing to the provisional nature of knowledge, both are receptive to new ideas; both are tolerant of alternative points of view, and both value the holding of beliefs in proportion to evidence. Just as science accepts its hypotheses tentatively and non-dogmatically, so too in politics our hypotheses should be accepted provisionally. As Russell advises, “it is not worthwhile to inflict a comparatively certain present evil for the sake of a comparatively doubtful future good. Since...the distant consequences of actions are more uncertain than the immediate consequences, it is seldom justifiable to embark on any policy on the ground that, though harmful in the present, it will be beneficial in the long run” (“Philosophy and Politics,” 1947). If adopted, this skeptical principle would tend to discourage, for example, the crashing of airplanes into landmarks like the World Trade Center.

Irvine presents Russell’s method as one which is essentially against certainty. And to the examples of science and politics he adds philosophy, which he says, paradoxically enough, advances knowledge with an accompanying increase in uncertainty. This is essentially the same point as the one brought out by Hager that Russellian philosophical analysis gains precision at the expense of certainty. Yet it must not be thought that “mere skepticism” is the goal of philosophy. As Russell puts it, “If philosophy is to serve a positive purpose, it must not teach mere skepticism, for while the dogmatist is harmful, the skeptic is useless. Dogmatism and skepticism are both, in a sense, absolute philosophies; one is certain of knowing, the other of not knowing. What philosophy should dissipate is certainty, whether of knowledge or of ignorance” (“Philosophy for the Layman,” 1946).

Howard Woodhouse (“In Praise of Idleness: Bertrand Russell’s Critical Thinking about the Global Market”) extends Russell’s ideas on critical thinking into the socioeconomic sphere. He underscores Russell’s “contemplative habit of mind” as the key to understanding his willingness to “oppose the stream” and as an antidote for the harm done by the market place and its “instrumental” view of knowledge. With the help of recent work by John McMurtry, Woodhouse brings Russell’s critique to bear on the global market and its perversion of education as a servant of the “money code of value.” Part and parcel of the contemplative habit of mind is the inclusion of “useless” knowledge which affords opportunity of relief from the profit seeking “cult of efficiency” and allows us the readiness “to call dogmas into question and the freedom of mind to do justice to the most

diverse points of view.”

Woodhouse is a bit heavy on McMurtry and light on Russell, at least with regard to helping us see, beyond social diagnosis, how conceptions of “useless knowledge,” “idleness” and “the contemplative habit of mind” do more (assuming they do) than merely afford opportunity for questioning the market system. And there are some minor inaccuracies. For example, in a section reviewing Russell’s opposition to the stream, he says that Russell went to prison “for leading a sit-down demonstration outside the Ministry of Defense in Whitehall London when well into his nineties” (p. 27). Actually Russell was 89, and it was for addressing a crowd by microphone in Hyde Park (August 6, 1961), not for sitting down outside the Defense Ministry (which he also did, on February 18, 1961). Again, he says, regarding the causes of WWI, that it was the “potent mix of the power of the State combined with the overriding self-interest of Capital which, for Russell, had led to the First World War in which millions of Europeans died, so that Britain and France could maintain control over the wealth of Africa” (p. 32). Despite an anti-imperialist component in Russell’s writings on the war, Woodhouse’s statement seems extreme as a Russellian account of Britain’s motives.

Ian Winchester’s article (“Russell’s Practice of Science vs. His Picture of Science and Its Place in Liberal Education”) argues that there is a gap between Russell’s picture of science and his practice of it. His main point seems to be that Russell’s description of the scientific method as essentially the process of inductive empirical generalization is at odds with his practice. He gives as examples of Russell’s practice his critique of Leibnitz and his theory of descriptions. In both cases Russell’s method—not unlike that of Einstein in relativity theory—essentially involves the identification and challenging of the presuppositions of his predecessors.

Winchester’s observations may be true under certain interpretations of “scientific method,” a term used in several senses in Russell’s long career. As the formulation and testing of empirical hypotheses, it is not what Russell has in mind when he talks about “the scientific method in philosophy.” And neither of these senses of the term should be identified with Russell’s conception of philosophical analysis—itsself a complex and variegated notion, as Morris Weitz made clear many years ago (*The Philosophy of Bertrand Russell*, 1944). Hager seems to be sensitive to this point.

When Russell speaks about “scientific method in philosophy,” he is usually recommending a certain set of attitudes to accompany

philosophical theorizing and/or analysis—attitudes that will help philosophy develop theories with a better chance of being true. Specifically, he wants philosophy to be scientific in the sense of being shorn of ethical and religious motives; it is to be value-neutral, non-teleological, non-subjective, non-dogmatic and impersonal; and it should proceed in its solving of problems, like science does, in a piecemeal fashion. And beyond its lessons for doing better philosophy, science is to be positively valued in a liberal education for its “impersonal cosmic outlook” which helps to satisfy “the desire for a larger life and wider interests, for an escape from private circumstances, and even from the whole recurring cycle of birth and death...” (“The Place of Science in a Liberal Education,” 1913). Similar ideas can be found in “On Scientific Method in Philosophy;” both it and “The Place of Science” are reprinted in Russell’s book *Mysticism and Logic* (1918). Both papers are mentioned briefly by Winchester, but neither he nor any of the other contributors (except Hager briefly) mention Russell’s *Our Knowledge of the External World* (1914, subtitled “As a Field for Scientific Method in Philosophy”). The first lecture collected in that work, “Current Tendencies,” is especially relevant for understanding what Russell means by “scientific method in philosophy.”

Overall, this special issue of *Inquiry* gives us a helpful look at Russell qua critical thinker. It also allows us to see much of Russell’s work in philosophy, science, politics and education through the unifying theme of critical thinking.

*Note: the GRRS will devote its June meeting to discussion of this special issue of Inquiry.*

## *Regular Features:*

### **Russell-Related Odds and Ends**

- *The Heretic's Handbook of Quotations*, edited by Charles Bufe, originally published in 1988, appeared in an expanded edition in 1992; both were published by See Sharp Press (P.O. Box 1731, Tucson, AZ 85702). This entertaining collection has one obvious oversight—not a single quotation by Bertrand Russell appears in the book (assuming the index is accurate)! Despite this unpardonable oversight, the *BRSQ* would welcome a review of this book.

See Sharp Press publishes a number of books and pamphlets on atheism, including Chaz Bufe's *20 Reasons to Abandon Christianity* (2000) and E. Haldeman-Julius' *The Meaning of Atheism* (1993). The latter is of note because of its author. Haldeman-Julius was one of the most important radical publishers in the United States during the first half of the twentieth century. Among his many publications in pamphlet form was Russell's famous essay, "Has Religion Made Useful Contributions to Civilization?" (anthologized in the collection *Why I Am Not a Christian*).

*Source: Peter Stone*

- Conrad Russell, Bertie's eldest son and the present Earl Russell, published a short piece entitled "Religion and the Law" in the *New Humanist* (vol. 114, no. 2, June 1999). The piece is available online at <http://www.rationalist.org.uk/newhumanist/issue9906/russellc.shtml>.

### **Are You on BRS-List?**

BRS-List is the BRS's official listserv, used to send members information about Society activities and to discuss Society business. The listserv is open only to members of the BRS, and all members are encouraged to join. To join the list, visit <http://mailman.mcmaster.ca/mailman/listinfo/brs-list> and fill out the form. Alternatively send the message

subscribe

to [brs-list-request@mailman.mcmaster.ca](mailto:brs-list-request@mailman.mcmaster.ca).

Any questions regarding BRS-List can be directed to the listserv's owner, Ken Blackwell, at [blackwk@mcmaster.ca](mailto:blackwk@mcmaster.ca).

contemporary English philosopher Bertrand Russell. But I must concede that Russell—who, as a lifelong radical, might have been expected to take a negative view of patriotism—was being more natural when he said: “Love of England is very nearly the strongest emotion I possess.”

Podhoretz goes on to write: “Very few, if any, statements of similar cast can be found among American intellectuals—and certainly none can be found among radicals—in the past 100 years or so.”

*Source: Thom Weidlich*

- The May 2000-October 2001 issue of *Modern Logic* contains two items of interest to Russell scholars. First, Jan Dejnozka has an article entitled “Origin of Russell’s Early Theory of Logical Truth as Purely General Truth: Bolzano, Peirce, Frege, Venn, or MacColl?” Second, Irving Anellis reviews in great depth Volumes 3 and 4 of *The Collected Papers of Bertrand Russell*. Both of the volumes reviewed, *Towards the “Principles of Mathematics”, 1900-02* (edited by Gregory H. Moore) and *Foundations of Logic, 1903-05* (edited by Alasdair Urquhart with the assistance of Albert C. Lewis), focus on Russell’s contributions to mathematical logic.

*Source: Jan Dejnozka*

- A review of Anthony Gottlieb’s *The Dream of Reason: A History of Western Philosophy from the Greeks to the Renaissance* (Norton, 2000) appeared in the November 1, 2001 issue of the *New York Review of Books*. (A previous review of this book was mentioned in the “Odds and Ends” section of the February 2002 *BRSQ*.) The reviewer, M.F. Burnyeat, compares Gottlieb’s work (the first installment of a projected two-volume work) with Russell’s *History of Western Philosophy*. In particular, Burnyeat notes how Gottlieb’s treatment of Pythagoras updates (and fails to update) that of Russell. Most memorable line in the review? “The second volume should also include an apology for this sentence in the first: ‘Any subject that is responsible for producing Heidegger...owes the world an apology.’” The *BRSQ* would welcome a review of this book that compares Gottlieb and Russell in a more comprehensive manner.

*Source: Warren Allen Smith*



- The November 21, 2001 issue of the *Guardian* published an extract from *Wittgenstein's Poker: The Story of a Ten-Minute Argument between Two Great Philosophers*, by John Eidinow and David Edmonds. This book (published originally in the UK by Faber and Faber but now available in the US via Ecco Press) discusses the debate over an incident in which Ludwig Wittgenstein allegedly threatened Karl Popper with a poker. The *Guardian* had previously excerpted the book in its March 31 issue (see *BRSQ* no. 112, November 2001, pp. 32-33), but the paper apparently thought the Rashomon-like dispute and the book that covered it deserved further publicity. The *BRSQ* would still welcome a review of this book. The extract is at <http://books.guardian.co.uk/firstbook2001/story/0,10486,603100,00.html>.

*Source: Russell-I*

- Adam Gopnik has also written an article discussing Eidinow and Edmonds' book. It appears in the April 1, 2002 issue of the *New Yorker*. The article, entitled "The Porcupine: A Pilgrimage to Popper," is at [http://www.newyorker.com/critics/atlarge/?020401crat\\_atlarge](http://www.newyorker.com/critics/atlarge/?020401crat_atlarge). In the article, Gopnik describes how the book prompted him to remember his pilgrimage as a young man to visit the acerbic and curmudgeonly old Popper, and what he learned from the experience.

*Source: Warren Allen Smith*

- A rather odd article entitled "My Holy War: What Do a Vicar's Son and a Suicide Bomber Have in Common?" appeared in the February 4, 2002 issue of the *New Yorker*. This article was written by Jonathan Raban, a veteran of the British Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament. "C.N.D.," Raban notes, "was then led by John Collins, the 'Red Canon,' a renegade Anglican priest of whom my father richly disapproved, and the ancient, sly, pixieish Bertrand Russell, atheism's own philosopher king." The author then rather obnoxiously compares his devotion to the Campaign to the fanatical zeal of the fundamentalists who destroyed the World Trade Center.

*Source: Sheila Turcon*

- The March 14, 2002 issue of the *New York Review of Books* contains a review of Steven Pinker's *Words and Rules: The Ingredients of Language* (HarperPerennial, 2000). The review, entitled "'Sneaked' or

'Snuck?'" is by John R. Searle. In the review, Searle describes Russell as "indeed the greatest twentieth-century empiricist of them all." The review of Pinker's book was the second of two reviews by Searle on recent work in linguistics. The first, entitled "End of the Revolution," appeared in the February 28, 2002 issue and discussed *New Horizons in the Study of Language and Mind* (Cambridge University Press, 2000)—by BRS Honorary Member Noam Chomsky.

*Source: Phil Ebersole*

- The web-based magazine *Identity Theory* (online at <http://www.identitytheory.com>) currently includes two interviews with Christopher Hitchens concerning his latest two books *The Trial of Henry Kissinger* (Verso, 2001) and *Letters to a Young Contrarian* (Basic Books, 2001). The interview discussing the second book, conducted by Robert Birnbaum, contains the following exchange:

RB: Is there such a thing as an old contrarian?

CH: Yes...

RB: Would that be you?

CH: It's a curmudgeon, it [sic] you are not careful. There are people, one of whom I knew—of the two I'll mention—Bertrand Russell and Jessica Mitford, both people, [who] it seems to me, succeeded in getting more radical as they got older. Without becoming idiotic figures, without becoming cartoon figures or making old fools of themselves.

RB: In the case of Russell, that's arguable.

CH: Well, there were foolish things he did in his later years, but they were analogous to the foolish things he had done when he was young.

RB: Ah, consistency in foolishness.

CH: I wouldn't say he didn't have a foolish streak and couldn't sometimes be taken in by charlatans or encouraged to make slightly rash statements. That wasn't a problem with his age. I remember thinking it was very unfair, not to say graceless, for some people to say, "That just proves the old boy's mind is softening." There seems to me no doubt that he was extremely lucid until the final days of his 92nd year.

Presumably, Hitchens misremembered Russell's age at death (97, not 92)—unless he's claiming that Russell lost it suddenly in 1965.

*Source: Phil Ebersole*

- K. Anthony Appiah, a professor of philosophy and African-American studies at Harvard, has been in the news as of late because of his decision to move to Princeton (a move prompted, many believe, because of the well-publicized spat between Harvard President Lawrence Summers and Cornel West, one of the most renowned members of Harvard's African-American studies program). The *Chronicle of Higher Education* ran an article on Appiah in its April 5, 2002 issue. The article, authored by Danny Postel, describes Appiah's work in two areas of philosophy that few study simultaneously. For while his current work focuses primarily on questions of race, culture, and identity, his training was in "highly technical areas of probability theory, conditionals, and semantics." His first two books deal with the latter topics, and "are the fruits of his apprenticeship at Cambridge, the birthplace of the analytic school and home to such giants as Bertrand Russell and Ludwig Wittgenstein."

When Postel interviewed Appiah, he confessed that he had read neither of Appiah's works in analytical philosophy. "Ha! That makes you and just about everyone else in the world" was Appiah's response. Russell and Appiah thus share more than a Cambridge background and a concern for contemporary social issues; the most demanding works authored by each of them gather more dust than readers.

One more Russellian connection to Appiah—Appiah writes mystery novels (a genre much beloved by Russell) as well as philosophy. And one of his mysteries apparently features a Wittgenstein scholar at Cambridge as a character!

*Source: Peter Stone*

- The online archives of *Oregon Magazine* contain an interview with Ray Bradbury conducted by Larry Leonard. In this interview, Leonard writes, "As an aside, Bradbury spent an evening with Aldous Huxley in England, and considered him, along with Bertrand Russell (who he also knew) to be one of the smartest men he ever met." The interview is at <http://oregonmag.com/Bradbury1001.htm>. And of course, in *Fahrenheit 451*, Bradbury alludes to Russell's "complete essays" as among the many classic works preserved from destruction at the hands of the book burners of the future.

*Source: Ken Blackwell*

- The potboiler *Plato and the Internet* (Icon Books & Totem Books, 2002) credits Russell with being one of the great epistemologists of all time, on a list that includes Aristotle, Descartes, Hume, Kant, and Quine. The author of the book, Kieron O'Hara, is described as "a senior research fellow in the Intelligence, Agents and Multimedia Group at the University of Southampton. He co-wrote the script of the computer game *Tomb Raider 4*, and is the author of the only scholarly paper about *Carry on Cabby*."

*Source: Peter Stone*

- An Italian sociologist named Domenico De Masi has written a book entitled *Economia dell'Ozio: Bertrand Russell and Paul Lafargue* ("The Economics of Idleness: Bertrand Russell and Paul Lafargue"). The book compares Russell's writings on leisure, especially *In Praise of Idleness*, with the work of Paul Lafargue, Karl Marx's son-in-law, who wrote a famous pamphlet entitled *The Right to Be Lazy*. The BRSQ would welcome a review (in English) of this book.

*Source: Giovanni de Carvalho*

- Professor Randall R. Dipert, C.S. Peirce Professor of American Philosophy at the University of Buffalo, has some nice things to say about Bertie at his website. Dipert writes,

I think that every philosopher worth his or her salt—every middle-aged professional in philosophy at any rate—should possess developed views about every major issue in philosophy. Philosophy is not a subject that allows for easy specialization: every deep and major issue is intertwined with many others. Consequently, to do logic or philosophy of language alone, or even metaphysics, is truly impossible—and deluded. Philosophy as a profession has allowed itself to fall into habits of artificial specialization and jargon that do a disservice to the models of Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle—even to Kant.

Whatever his faults as man and philosopher may have been, Bertrand Russell stands as a model of how to do and write philosophy in English.

Dipert's remarks are at <http://www.neologic.net/rd/aboutme.htm>.

*Source: David White*

- Kenneth Rendall, proprietor of a museum devoted to World War II Memorabilia, has posted the image of a letter from Russell on the museum's website. In it, Russell responds to an inquiry regarding his views on anti-Semitism and Hitler. The two-page letter begins at [http://www.museumofworldwarii.com/images/TourPictures/17\\_BRussell\\_lge\\_scan.jpg](http://www.museumofworldwarii.com/images/TourPictures/17_BRussell_lge_scan.jpg). The website also contains images of letters concerning World War II—all apparently owned by Rendall's museum—by Walt Disney, JFK, and Albert Einstein, among others. Russell's letter also appears in Nick Griffin's *Selected Letters of Bertrand Russell: The Public Years, 1914-1970* (Routledge, 2001), and the publication rights apparently belong to the Russell Archives at McMaster.

*Source: Ken Blackwell*

- MusicWeb, a British classical music site, features a survey on the symphonies of Gustav Mahler by Tony Duggan. In this survey, Duggan mentions a recording of Mahler's Symphony No. 9 in D by the Vienna Philharmonic, conducted by Sir John Barbirolli. Duggan claims that Sir John possessed a "clarity of focus" in conducting that amounted to "a living example of a quotation of Bertrand Russell that Michael Kennedy found in Sir John's papers after his death: 'Nothing great is achieved without passion, but underneath the passion there should always be that large impersonal survey which sets limits to actions that our passions inspire.'" The survey is online at <http://www.musicweb.force9.co.uk/music/Mahler/mahler9.htm>.

*Source: David White*

### **Solution to May 2002 Russell-Crypt**

From him, I thought, had emanated a kind of poisonous miasma, infecting with crime or madness or disaster all in his neighbourhood.

Bertrand Russell, *Satan in the Suburbs*, pt. VII.

## News from the Humanist World

- Rationalist International announced in its latest bulletin (April 28, 2002) that a rape victim in Pakistan has been sentenced to death by stoning. Zafran Bi Bi was arrested two years ago along with Akmal Khan, the brother of her husband. Both were accused of adultery, punishable by stoning under Pakistan's Islamic Law. In police custody and in court, Zafran Bi Bi declared that she had been raped by Akmal. But she was convicted while Akmal Khan was released.

Rationalist International is asking everyone to e-mail Pakistani President General Pervez Musharraf, requesting his intervention to stop the execution. General Musharraf can be reached by e-mail at [CE@pak.gov.pk](mailto:CE@pak.gov.pk). Copies of any messages sent to him should be sent to Rationalist International at [Campaign@rationalistinternational.net](mailto:Campaign@rationalistinternational.net).

- The International Humanist and Ethical Union (IHEU), of which the BRS is an associate member, will be holding its 15<sup>th</sup> World Congress on July 3-6, 2002. This conference will mark the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the IHEU. The meeting will be held in the Netherlands, at the Golden Tulip Conference Hotel, Leeuwenhorst, Noordwijkerhout. The theme of the conference will be "Human Diversity, Human Rights and Humanism: All Different, All Equal." A humanist youth conference, with the theme "Empowering Youth in the Humanist Movement," will precede and partially overlap with the main conference, taking place on July 1-5. (For more information on the youth conference, go to <http://www.iheyo.org>.)

Registration as a full participant costs 250 Euros, which includes lunch and dinner but excludes the cost of the hotel. Rooms at the conference hotel range in cost from 84-120 Euros per night; there is also limited accommodation available at a local bed and breakfast for 30 Euros per night, and there will be camping facilities as well. For more information, please visit the IHEU's website at <http://www.iheu.org> or contact IHEU Congress Secretariat 2002, Postbus 75490, 1070 AL, Amsterdam, The Netherlands, Phone: 0031 20 5219000, Fax: 0031 20 5219080, E-mail: [hv@euronet.nl](mailto:hv@euronet.nl).

- The IHEU is also continuing a campaign to save the life of Dr. Younis Shaikh, a Pakistani academic sentenced to death in August 2001 for blasphemy. A report on the case can be found at the IHEU's website at <http://iheu.org/ShaiKh/>. The IHEU is asking opponents of religious

fanaticism to write Pakistani President Musharraf requesting Dr. Shaikh's release. President Musharraf can be reached via e-mail at [ce@pak.gov.pk](mailto:ce@pak.gov.pk) or via any Embassy of Pakistan. Please send copies of any letters sent to the IHEU at [campaign@iheu.org](mailto:campaign@iheu.org).

- The Center for Inquiry Institute is pleased to announce a full 2-week summer session of educational programs available for undergraduate credit through the State University of New York (Empire State College). The summer session will be held at the Center, in Amherst, New York, on July 14-28, 2002. The summer session will feature courses on critical inquiry and the history and philosophy of naturalism, as well as seminars, guest lectures, and other special events. Some scholarships are available. The registration deadline is June 15; scholarship application deadline is May 15. For further information, contact [adacey@centerforinquiry.net](mailto:adacey@centerforinquiry.net) or the Center for Inquiry Institute, PO Box 741, Amherst, New York 14226, Tel: 716-636-4869 x223, Fax: 716-636-1733. Or check online at <http://www.centerforinquiry.net>.
- The Fourth World Skeptics Conference, sponsored by the Committee for the Scientific Investigation of Claims of the Paranormal (CSICOP), is to be held on June 20-23, 2002 in Burbank, CA. The conference will take place at the Hilton, Burbank Airport as well as Burbank's Convention Center. The conference theme is "Prospects for Skepticism: The Next Twenty-Five Years." Sessions are being planned on alternative medicine, unsubstantiated psychotherapies, confidence and financial scams, intelligent design and attacks on evolution, education and young skeptics, urban legends, a meeting of local skeptical organizations, and other topics. For registration, brochures or other information, call 1-800-634-1610.

### **Updates on Awards and Honorary Members**

- BRS Honorary Member Noam Chomsky will be at McMaster University on November 11-14. He will visit under the aegis of the Centre for Peace Studies, the Labour Studies Programme—and, of course, the Bertrand Russell Research Centre. Chomsky's schedule is in the works, but it should include both large public lectures and smaller seminars. For more information, contact Nick Griffin at the Bertrand Russell Research Centre, McMaster University, 1280 Main St West, Hamilton, ON, L8S 4M2, Canada, [ngriffin@mcmaster.ca](mailto:ngriffin@mcmaster.ca).

- Noam Chomsky will also speak at the 2002 Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association (APSA), to be held in Boston over Labor Day weekend. Chomsky has been invited to the meeting by the Caucus for a New Political Science—an organized section of the APSA that promotes radical approaches to the study of politics—in conjunction with two other sections, Human Rights and Transformational & Ecological Politics. Chomsky's talk will take place at 8 PM on Saturday, August 31. For further information, contact John Martin, APSA Program Coordinator for the Caucus, at the Division of Social Sciences, Dowling College, Oakdale, NY 11769, [martinj@dowling.edu](mailto:martinj@dowling.edu).

### The Hunt for Red Hackle

Last issue, the *BRSQ* featured an appeal to the membership, calling on all Russellians everywhere to hunt far and wide for bottles of Red Hackle, Bertie's favorite brand of scotch. (See "The Hunt for Red Hackle," *BRSQ* #113, February 2002). The response thus far has been underwhelming. Apparently, it's not a fluke that we can't get our hands on the stuff.

Dave Henahan of the GRRS reported a Red Hackle sighting in an auction catalog. Robert McTear & Co., a Glasgow-based company specializing in art, antiques, and rare whisky, listed the following item in its April 17 auction catalogue:

Lot #718: Red Hackle Liqueur—Early 20<sup>th</sup> Century. An exquisite blend of fine Scotch Whiskies. Blended and bottled by Hepburn & Ross, Glasgow. Pear shaped bottle, 1<sup>st</sup> prize medal award, London, England 1928 printed on shoulder label. 4/5 quart. Stopper cork, embossed lead capsule. Level: 5cm from base of capsule. 86 degrees proof. 1 bottle: £150-200.

The BRS is still willing to reimburse members who can obtain bottles of Red Hackle for the Society—at a price *less* than £150-200. (The Society will pay up to \$40 a bottle, 4 bottles maximum, for the premium blend of the scotch.) Any member who secures Red Hackle for the BRS will also receive a FREE BRS t-shirt. (See "BRS T-Shirts Continue to Attract Attention" in this issue.)

For those who'd like to check for future whisky auctions, McTear's website is at [www.mctears.co.uk](http://www.mctears.co.uk).



## ***BRS Business and Chapter News:***

*The Bylaws of the BRS and its Board of Directors have not been reprinted in the BRSQ in quite a while. In the interim, several changes have been made. To make sure that all members are familiar with the rules governing the BRS, we reprint both sets of Bylaws below. The Bylaws can also be found online at [http://www.users.drew.edu/~jlenz/BRS\\_Bylaws.html](http://www.users.drew.edu/~jlenz/BRS_Bylaws.html).*

### **BYLAWS OF THE BERTRAND RUSSELL SOCIETY, INC.**

Revised June 1984; revised June 1985; revised May 2001

#### **Article 1. Name**

The name of this organization shall be The Bertrand Russell Society, Inc. It may also be referred to as "the Society" or "the BRS."

#### **Article 2. Aims**

The aims of this Society are: (1) to promote interest in the life and work of Bertrand Russell; (2) to bring together persons interested in any aspect of the foregoing; (3) to promote causes that Russell championed.

#### **Article 3. Motto**

The Society's motto shall be Russell's statement: "The good life is one inspired by love and guided by knowledge."

#### **Article 4. Power and Authority**

Ultimate authority resides in the Members. The Members elect the Directors. The Directors elect the Officers. The Officers make decisions and take action.

#### **Article 5. Membership**

Section 1. General. Membership in the Society shall be open to all persons and organizations interested in Bertrand Russell and the Society's activities. Types of membership shall be: Individual, Couple, Student, Limited Income, Life, Organization, and Honorary. Dues shall be set by the Board of Directors, and are to be paid annually. Life members shall pay dues only once in an amount set by the Board. Honorary members pay no

dues. Life and Honorary memberships are for life unless terminated for cause, as specified hereafter.

Section 2. Individual Membership. Individual Membership shall be available to all persons.

Section 3. Couple Membership. Couple Membership shall be available to two persons sharing the same mail address. Each person shall have one vote; two mail ballots shall be sent, but only one copy of other Society mailings.

Section 4. Student Membership. Student Membership shall be open to any student enrolled in an educational institution and who is less than 25 years old.

Section 5. Limited Income Membership. Limited Income Membership shall be available to a person who, as the name implies, is living on a limited income.

Section 6. Life Membership. Life Membership can be conferred on any person who meets the minimum dues set by the Board of Directors for Life Membership.

Section 7. Honorary Membership. Honorary Membership may be conferred on a person who has been nominated by a member and approved by two-thirds of the Directors voting, after having met one or more of the following conditions: (1) is a member of Bertrand Russell's family; (2) had worked closely with Russell in an important way; (3) has made a distinctive contribution to Russell scholarship; (4) has acted in support of a cause or idea that Russell championed; (5) has promoted awareness of Russell or of Russell's work; (6) has exhibited qualities of character (such as moral courage) reminiscent of Russell. Honorary Members have the same rights and responsibilities as Individual Members, but they pay no dues.

Section 8. Organization Membership. Membership of organizations—such as libraries, associations, corporations—is available upon payment of dues and approval of the President. Dues shall be higher than for a Couple. Organizations may not vote or be on the Board. Only one copy of Society mailings shall be sent.

Section 9. Conditions of Membership. Application for membership shall be made in writing, submitting name, address, and correct amount of dues.

The Board may refuse an application, in which case the President must notify the applicant within 30 days, stating why the application was turned down.

Membership terminates when a member fails to pay dues, resigns, dies, or is expelled.

Any member--including Life or Honorary—may be expelled for seriously obstructing the Society's business, misappropriating the Society's name or funds or acting in a way that discredits the Society. The expulsion procedure consists of five steps:

Step 1. A formal expulsion proposal shall be presented in writing to the Board by any member.

Step 2. The Board shall examine the evidence. If a majority of the Board Members voting decides, either by mail ballot or at a meeting, that expulsion may be appropriate, the matter will be submitted to, and decided by, the members. This shall be done by mail, or at an Annual Meeting if one is scheduled within two months.

If it is to be done by mail:

Step 3. The case against the member shall be presented in the next newsletter or by a special mailing.

Step 4. In the following newsletter, or in a second special mailing, the accused member shall present a defense against the charge. A ballot shall be included in the second newsletter or second special mailing, so that members can vote on whether to expel.

If the expulsion process takes place at an Annual Meeting:

Step 4. The equivalent of Steps 3 and 4 shall be followed, that is, the case against the member shall be presented, after which the accused shall present his defense; and then the members present shall vote on whether to expel.

The President shall notify the accused member as soon as the result of the vote is known.

## Article 6. The Board of Directors

Section 1. Responsibilities. The Board of Directors (also referred to as "the Board") shall be responsible for Society affairs and policy, and shall elect the Officers. The Board shall be subject to these Bylaws and to the Bylaws of The Board of Directors of The Bertrand Russell Society, Inc.

Section 2. Constitution. The Board shall consist of not less than six nor more than 24 elected members. Society Officers are ex-officio members of the Board. Elected and ex-officio Board members shall have the same rights and responsibilities.

Members may nominate candidates for the Board, or volunteer to be nominated as candidates. Directors are elected to three-year terms that start on January 1 of the following year; one-third are elected every year. Directors may be reelected. If a Director dies, resigns, or is expelled, the Board may fill the unexpired term with any member.

## Article 7. Officers

Section 1. General. The Society shall have an Executive Committee composed of the following five Officers of the Society and Board: President, Vice-President, Secretary of the Society and Board, Treasurer, and Chairman of the Board. There may be other Vice Presidents whose duties shall be specified by the Board; these will not be members of the Executive Committee. Officers shall be at least 18 years old and shall have been members for at least one year. They shall be elected by a majority of the Directors present and voting at the Board's Annual Meeting. An Officer's term of office lasts until the next election of Officers, the following year. No one shall hold more than one Office at a time, except that the same person shall be Secretary of the Society and Secretary of the Board. An Officer may be removed or suspended by a majority of the Board members voting. An Officer may resign by notifying the Chairman of Board in writing. If an Office becomes vacant, the Board shall elect a successor to fill the unexpired term. If an Officer is temporarily unable to serve, the Board may elect a temporary replacement.

Section 2. The President. The President shall be the Chief Executive Officer, coordinating the work of other Officers and Committees. Other Officers and Committee Chairmen shall consult the President about their activities, and submit a written report on their activities to him one month before the Annual Meeting, with a copy to the Chairman. The President shall promptly inform the Chairman of any major decisions. After the

Board has selected the site and time of the next Annual Meeting, or of a Special Meeting, the President shall be responsible for making all Meeting arrangements, including compiling the Meeting's agenda. The President shall chair the Meeting. The President shall report regularly, through the BRS newsletter.

Section 3. The Vice-President. The Vice-President becomes President if the President's Office becomes vacant; and assumes the office temporarily if the vacancy is temporary. The Vice-President shall assist the President as requested.

Section 4. The Secretary. The Secretary shall: (1) record the minutes of Society and Board meetings; (2) handle Society and Board correspondence; (3) maintain a permanent file of Society and Board Bylaws and other corporate documents, including minutes of Society and Board meetings, Officers' and Committee Chairmen's reports, newsletters, correspondence; (4) maintain a permanent record of Society and Board decisions, rules, motions made and carried; (5) have custody of the Society's corporate seal.

Section 5. The Treasurer. The Treasurer shall: (1) keep records of money received and spent; (2) safeguard Society funds; (3) invest funds, with Board approval; (4) submit an annual budget to the Board; (5) submit quarterly and annual reports, for publication in the BRS newsletter.

Section 6. Other Vice-Presidents. The Office of "Vice-President/ ..." may be created and filled by the Board. There is no connection between this Office and that of the Vice-President.

## Article 8. Committees

Section 1. General. There shall be standing (permanent) and ad hoc (temporary) Committees. Each shall have a Chairman, and may have a Co-Chairman and other members. A member may serve on, or chair, more than one Committee. Committee Chairmen shall consult with the President about their activities, and describe them in a written report to the President one month before the Annual Meeting, with a copy to the Chairman.

Section 2. Committees. The Board shall establish standing and ad hoc Committees, and appoint their Chairmen who, in turn, appoint Committee Members. Each Committee shall provide the Secretary with a written statement of Committee aims and procedures.

## Article 9. Meetings

Section 1. Annual Meetings. The Society shall hold an Annual Meeting, at a time and site determined by the Board and in time to give the members at least two months' notice of the Meeting. As to time: it should suit the convenience of as many members as possible. As to site: it should be either (a) near locations of special interest to the BRS, or (b) near population centers having many members. Any member may propose agenda items, in writing, to the President, in advance of the Meeting. At Meetings, items may be added to the agenda with approval of the majority of the members present. Six members constitute a quorum.

Section 2. Special Meetings. Any member may write to the Chairman requesting a Special Meeting, claiming that an emergency exists requiring immediate action. The Chairman shall decide whether the request merits consideration by the Board; if it does, the Chairman shall promptly inform the Board, which shall decide, within three weeks, by mail ballot, whether, when and where to hold a Special Meeting. The Special Meeting shall be held no later than six weeks after the Chairman's initial receipt of the request. The Chairman shall announce the Special Meeting to all members by letter, as soon as possible. A quorum shall consist of the members present.

Section 3. Board of Directors' Meetings. The Board shall hold its Annual Meeting during the Society's Annual Meeting and at the same site. The Board may also hold Special Meetings, in accordance with its own Bylaws. Board Meetings shall be open to Society members.

## Article 10. Publications

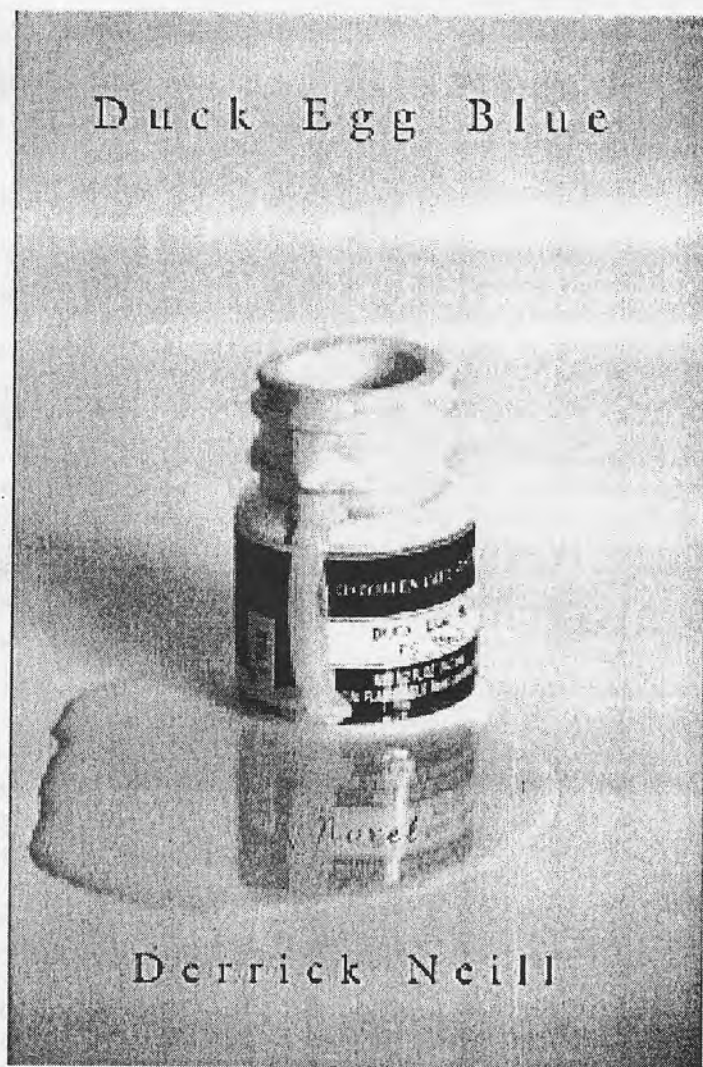
Section 1. Newsletter. The Society shall publish a newsletter at regular intervals.

Section 2. Other Publications. The Society may authorize other publications.

## Article 11. Voting

Section 1. General. All members, other than Organization Members, shall be entitled to vote. All votes shall have equal value. Members may vote by proxy. In contests of more than two candidates or choices, a plurality shall be sufficient.

Duck Egg Blue



Derrick Neill

Chairman's term of office shall start as soon as elected, and shall run till the next election, at the Annual Board Meeting the following year. The Chairman may be reelected. The Chairman presides at Board Meetings, and rules on procedure.

If the Chairman is absent, the Directors may elect an Acting Chairman. If the office of Chairman is vacant, the Directors shall elect a new Chairman as soon as possible, at an Annual or Special Meeting or by mail ballot. The votes shall be tallied by the Acting Chairman and verified by the Secretary. The Chairman may be removed from office by a majority of Directors present and voting at a meeting, with the Secretary presiding.

Section 2. The Secretary. The Secretary shall be elected by a majority of the Directors present and voting at the Board's Annual Meeting. The Secretary's term of office shall start as soon as elected, and shall run till the next election, at the Annual Board Meeting the following year. The Secretary may be reelected. The Secretary of the Board and the Secretary of the Society shall be the same person. If the Secretary is absent from a Meeting, the Chairman shall appoint an Acting Secretary.

#### **Article 4. Voting**

Voting shall be in accord with Article 11 of the Society's Bylaws, except as follows: the Chairman's vote counts as one except in a tie, when it counts as two.

#### **Article 5. Committees**

Committees may be created by the Board in accordance with the bylaws of the Society. These committees may perform Board functions by making or implementing the Society's policies, and will follow Board instructions. Functions delegated to a committee may be withdrawn by the Board at any time.

#### **Article 6. Meetings**

Section 1. Annual Board Meeting. The Board shall meet annually, at some time during a Society Annual Meeting, and at the same site. Society Members may attend Board Meetings.

Section 2. Special Board Meetings. A Special Board Meeting shall be called by the Chairman when at least three Directors request it, stating the purpose. In choosing the time and site, the Chairman shall aim to achieve



the largest possible attendance by Directors.

Section 3. Agenda. The Agenda for Board Meetings shall be prepared by the Chairman. Additions to the Agenda may be made by any Director, with the concurrence of the Chairman.

Section 4. Quorum. The quorum for any Board Meeting is six Directors.

#### **Article 7. Amendments to Board Bylaws**

Any Director may propose an amendment.

At an Annual or Special Meeting, a majority vote of the Directors present and voting shall carry the proposed amendment.

When an amendment is proposed by the Chairman, in writing, between Meetings, the Chairman shall decide whether to hold the proposal for the next Meeting or put it to an earlier vote by mail. For voting by mail, the Chairman shall promptly notify the Directors by a special mailing of the proposed amendment, with supporting arguments, requesting opposing arguments by 21 days after the date of mailing. Thereafter, the Chairman shall mail the opposing arguments, and a ballot, to the Directors, with a voting deadline of 21 days after the date of mailing. The votes shall be tallied by the Chairman, and verified by the Secretary, who shall notify the Directors of the outcome.

### **Russell-crypt Gerry Wildenberg**

This is another in a series of simple substitution ciphers based on the writings of Bertrand Russell.

Below is today's coded quote, in which each letter stands for another letter. For example, BERTRAND RUSSELL could be coded as OREGENAQ EHFRRYY, O=B, R=E, et cetera. The quote below uses a different code. After you've solved it, see if you can identify the source.

DZ NKWQQRN VZB CZDGXSNDYDXN DZJQSOVYDQZ QJ VRR  
NQSYN DN RVBRXB QCY, HCY ZQ QZX DN YVCIWY YQ  
SXVNQZ, QS YQ KQZNDXBS MWVY DN XGDBXZKX JQS MWVY.

The solution will appear in the August *BRSQ*.

**Bertrand Russell Society, Inc**  
**Annual Report**  
**Cash Flow, 1/1/02 Through 3/31/02**

Compiled 4/8/02 by Dennis J. Darland,  
 BRS Treasurer ([djdarland@qconline.com](mailto:djdarland@qconline.com))

Category Description	
BALANCE 12/21/01	7,307.19
<b>INFLOWS</b>	
Uncategorized	0.42
Contributions	0.67
Contributions-BRS	233.22
TOTAL Contributions	233.89
Dues	
New Members	170.00
Renewals	1,498.52
TOTAL Dues	1,668.52
Library Income	38.70
Meeting Income	53.77
Other Income	112.00
<b>TOTAL INFLOWS</b>	<b>2,107.30</b>
<b>OUTFLOWS</b>	
Bank Charges	7.66
Library Expenses	16.05
Newsletter	858.92
Other Exp	12.50
<b>TOTAL OUTFLOWS</b>	<b>895.13</b>
<b>OVERALL TOTAL</b>	<b>1,212.17</b>
<b>BALANCE 3/31/02</b>	<b>8,519.36</b>

# Greater Rochester Russell Set

Celebrating Five Years of Monthly Russell  
Meetings Open to the Public

## 2002 Program

June "Russell and Critical Thinking"

July "Russell the Anti-Communist"

*Guest Speaker: Andrew G. Bone*

Aug. "Russell on Pythagoras"

Sept. "The City College Case"

*Guest Speaker: Thom Weidlich*

Oct. *Yours Faithfully, Bertrand Russell*

Nov. Studs Terkel's Interview with Russell

Dec. *The ABC of Armageddon*

Dates TBA

***New Meeting Location!!!***

**Daily Perks Coffee House**

389 Gregory ST, Rochester, NY

For information contact Tim Madigan at 585-424-3184 or

[TimothyMad@aol.com](mailto:TimothyMad@aol.com). Or visit

<http://sun1.sjfc.edu/~dwhite/grrs>.

**American Philosophical Association  
Eastern Division—2002 Annual Meeting  
Philadelphia, PA. December 27-30, 2002.**

The BRS will offer a panel at this event. For more information on the BRS at the APA, contact David White at [white@sjfc.edu](mailto:white@sjfc.edu).