

THE BERTRAND RUSSELL SOCIETY QUARTERLY

February 2003

No. 117



Don't Miss out on the Excitement!

**Register Today for the 2003 Annual
Meeting of the BRS!**

See Page 9 for Details.

BERTRAND RUSSELL SOCIETY QUARTERLY

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HAVE YOU RENEWED YET?
See Page 8 to find out!

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

"Perhaps we should thank the Taliban for finishing the task the Crusades began nine hundred years ago—proving beyond further dispute that Religion is incompatible with Civilisation."

Arthur C. Clarke, Letter to
Warren Allen Smith, June 22, 2002

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From the Editor:

Bertrand Russell & John Dewey

On January 5, 2003, BRSQ Editor Peter Stone gave a talk with this title at the Unitarian Universalist Church of the Lehigh Valley, in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania. 36 people attended the event, many of whom took literature about the BRS as well as free sample copies of the BRSQ. The talk was a revised version of a presentation Stone gave at the CFI to mark the 50th anniversary of John Dewey's death. (See "Russell and Dewey at the CFI" in this issue.) The editorial below offers highlights from Stone's remarks.

Today I'd like to compare Bertrand Russell and John Dewey and make their contrasting attitudes towards religion clear. It's worth doing because while both are considered icons among humanist/rationalist types (among many others), they were very different in their approaches to these issues of concern to rationalists and humanists. A clear example of this can be found by comparing their best-known works on religion. It is not an accident, as I shall show, that Russell wrote an essay entitled "Why I Am Not a Christian," while Dewey wrote a book entitled *A Common Faith*. (I am grateful to Michael Rockler and John Novak, whose debates at past BRS Annual Meetings helped make the differences between the two philosophers clear to me.)

There's a lot of biography that would be helpful in understanding these two men. However, covering the life and work of either Russell or Dewey—much less both—is impossible in an hour. And that's a good thing; after all, if all the merit in Russell's life could be summed up in an hour, what room would that leave for a society devoted to him? So rather than talk about their lives in any detail, I shall confine myself to a few words about their respective approaches to philosophy and religion, and how these approaches reflected their very different temperaments and approaches to life.

Bertrand Russell was one of the founders of analytic philosophy. This school of thought advocated the use of rigorous techniques to analyze traditional philosophical problems—in effect breaking them down into smaller components in order to solve them. Russell was particularly concerned to apply these techniques to the foundations of mathematics. The result was *Principia Mathematica*, a massive three-volume *tour de force* co-authored with friend and mentor Alfred North Whitehead. The system laid out in this work was rigorous—so rigorous that the proposition

"1+1=2" could not be proven within it until the middle of the second volume. Russell's goal, in mathematics as in all areas of philosophy within which he worked, was to clear up philosophical difficulties and put knowledge upon certain foundations.

John Dewey was one of the founders of pragmatism. The name of this school is derived from the Greek word *pragma*, meaning "practice," or so I'm told by people who know more Greek than I do. This school of thought advocates answering philosophical questions by inquiring into the difference they make in practice. If they make no difference in practice, why waste time thinking about them? Dewey most famously applied this philosophy in his work on education, though it guided his work in all areas of philosophy.

With these different approaches to philosophy in mind, let's move on to Russell and Dewey as critics of religion. The two men agreed completely on one of the most important points relating to this issue—traditional religion is false. Where they differed is in the response they recommended to this conclusion, as well as their more personal attitudes towards life in light of it.

First, consider their recommended responses. Russell was characteristically clear and succinct in stating his. "I think all the great religions of the world," he wrote in "Why I Am Not a Christian," "both untrue and harmful." Religion was an unmitigated bad in the modern world that people would do best to discard. Dewey, in contrast, took pains to separate *religion* (which made factual claims about the world, claims not supportable by intelligence) from the *religious* (a feeling that some aspects of the world are deeply valuable, even "sacred" and worthy of reverence). He hoped to reconstruct religious thinking so as to jettison the troublesome claims of religion while saving religious language for the values he wished to salvage.

It is interesting to consider these different responses in light of their attitudes toward the falsity of religious claims, to which I shall now turn. Some valuable insight can be gained by looking at another thinker who has commented on both Russell and Dewey—Martin Gardner, noted science writer and theist.

In his collection of essays *The Night is Large* (St. Martin's, 1996), Gardner discussed both Dewey and Russell a number of times. (I should mention that those interested in the philosophical exchanges between these two philosophers can find a helpful list of the most important references in

Gardner. See *The Night is Large*, p. 478, n. 3.) But the most important discussion of the two comes in the final essay, entitled "Surprise."

To understand this essay, it's worth explaining that the title of Gardner's book comes from a line by Lord Dunsany—"The night is very large but full of wonders." In the last chapter, Gardner elaborates on the idea expressed in this phrase, and articulates the religious argument for God based on a feeling of wonder at the universe—an emotion Gardner, following Rudolf Otto, describes as "numinous." "For Otto," Gardner continues, "the essence of the emotion is an awareness of what he called the *mysterium tremendum*, the tremendous mystery of the wholly other" (p. 556).

Gardner takes both Russell and Dewey to task for their attitudes towards the numinous, but in very different ways. The "problems" he sees in their attitudes are very revealing.

According to Gardner, Russell was keenly aware of the numinous. He quotes Russell as expressing this awareness as follows: "But if there be a world which is not physical, or not in space-time, it may have a structure which we can never hope to express or to know." However, Russell is quick to add that in setting down such thoughts he has "lapsed into mystical speculation" and left the realm of serious philosophy (p. 558). This angers Gardner, who finds that far too quickly the atheistic Russell "dismisses the *mysterium tremendum* as unworthy of worship or prolonged contemplation" (p. 559).

In Russell, Gardner recognizes a man aware of the numinous but unwilling to draw conclusions about religion from it (as Gardner himself does). In Dewey, Gardner discerns something much more alien. He writes,

Among more recent philosophers John Dewey seems to me the outstanding example of an atheist for whom a sense of the numinous was minimal. I have been unable to find a single passage in all of Dewey's writings that strikes me as a memorable expression of wonder about the mystery of being. Nothing seems ever to have mystified Dewey. Never, so far as I can recall, did he see anything tragic or comic or absurd about the human condition. We are all organisms interacting with our environment, and that's that (pp. 559-560).

Speaking personally, I should add that this is the side of Dewey that I have always admired the most. Dewey simply never felt tempted to draw any

conclusions (such as the belief that God exists) from his numinous feelings because he never *had* any such feelings. Russell, by contrast, was quite prone to such feelings; he simply resisted their siren call, and refused to draw any conclusions about the human condition from them.

The result is somewhat ironic. Russell was a militant agnostic, author of "Why I Am Not a Christian." But he also experienced intense numinous feelings, feelings that lead many people (such as Gardner) to religion. But Russell did not believe that any religious beliefs not congenial to reason was worthy of worship. This firm dedication to truth led him to an attitude towards the human condition that could be quite despairing. (This despair saw expression in such works as "A Free Man's Worship." The title is not accidental, and the tone radically different from that of "Why I Am Not a Christian.") One could quite reasonably interpret his broader philosophical project as an effort to discover some sort of truth about the universe that would be unshakeable by reason and worthy of veneration.

Dewey, by way of contrast, felt no such drive for something upon which to bestow awe or reverence. Like Russell, he was a strong believer in intellectual honesty, and so would not worship any god that reason could not recognize. But while he saw no reason to believe in the god to whom the numinous had driven others, he also felt no need for a substitute of any kind. He was quite content to make do without any sort of philosophical certainty; and indeed, a lack of certain philosophical foundations is one of the distinguishing marks of pragmatism. But at the same time, Dewey was much more tolerant of religious language. There was never a chance that Dewey would find himself embracing unjustifiable religious beliefs out of a desire to grasp the *mysterium tremendum*, and Dewey knew this. Therefore, he saw nothing wrong with taking the terminology people often associate with this feeling, and putting it to other, more gainful employment.

Here, I think Dewey does go a little off the mark. He tries, as Gardner points out, to have the "religious" without the supernatural (p. 560). It is all well and good for Dewey to use terms that pose no temptation of abuse for him. What he fails to understand is that those same terms *do* pose such a temptation for many people drawn by the numinous and less intellectually respectable than the old pragmatist. By sanctioning the maintenance of religious language, he provides a cover behind which intellectually bankrupt ideas can flourish. (Still, Dewey is way ahead of Gardner, who has no problem with people drawing conclusions of fact from feelings of awe—something along the lines of, the sky is lovely tonight therefore I should go beat up fags. This may seem ridiculous, but it is no less

ridiculous than many conclusions people have drawn under the cloak of religion.)

To summarize, both Russell and Dewey rejected the desire to believe in something supernatural for intellectually disreputable reasons. (This desire has quite appropriately been dubbed by Paul Kurtz the "transcendental temptation.") This rejection was easier for Dewey than it was for Russell, as the former experienced no such desires, unlike the latter. How this should affect one's relative judgment of the two men I'll leave for others to consider.

Letter from the Chairman

As Chairman of the Board of our Society, I would like to thank all who ran for Board membership and to congratulate the winners. I look forward to seeing all Board members at the Annual Meeting this May. (See "The 2003 Annual Meeting of the Bertrand Russell Society" in this issue.) There are very few "special interest groups" that do as well as we do at bringing together academics and non-academics for meetings that are intellectually serious and socially relevant. Board members, and indeed all members, are invited to suggest items for the agenda of our next Board meeting. My main concern is membership. We have neither recruited nor retained as many people as would benefit from membership in the BRS. The Annual Meeting is fun, but it would be more fun if more people attended. The APA sessions have gone well, but there have been some empty seats. The Rochester chapter has put on terrific monthly programs, but there are still some who attend those regularly without joining the BRS. We have a lot of talent available to us in the Society, but we need to find better ways to serve the common good. Another matter of grave concern is russell-l. This is a privately owned mailing list, but many of the recent exchanges can only serve to deter prospective members. One way or another, the society needs to develop a service that will use the web to attract new members and retain old ones.

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Letters to the Editor

November 30, 2002

Editor:

In the November issue of the *BRSQ* on page 27, there is a piece on the issue of transfer of Arabs from Palestine. At the end, there is a note that contains a reference to the present-day activities of Israel in moving Arabs out. I find the parenthetical comment, "otherwise known as 'ethnic cleansing,'" to be so far off the mark as to wonder if the person who wrote it thought about what he was saying. Is he saying that the Israelis are methodically killing as many Arabs as possible in order to eradicate all Arabs from the face of the earth? Does he think it is the same situation as in WWII or in Bosnia? I don't think anyone would say that. Transfer is very different from ethnic cleansing. There may be much discussion about whether or not that is the right thing to do, but I don't think any rational person, of whatever persuasion, would seriously call it "ethnic cleansing," particularly if they knew what that meant. I think you should say something about this in the next *BRSQ*.

Terry Zaccone
Saratoga, California

The BRSQ stands by its choice of wording. The expression was used in conjunction with the proposal (enjoying disturbing levels of support in some sectors of Israeli society today) that Israel forcibly remove an entire ethnic group (Palestinians) from the occupied territories. If the terms of this proposal do not constitute "ethnic cleansing," then what could?

New in Russell Studies!

Would you like to find out what's new in Russell Studies? Then visit the "Forthcoming, New and Recent Works in Russell Studies" page at the website of the Bertrand Russell Archives at McMaster University. The page is at <http://www.mcmaster.ca/russdocs/forthnew.htm>.

Have You Renewed Yet?

All BRS memberships (except Life and Honorary memberships) expire at the end of the calendar year. And so if you haven't renewed already, **now is the time!** Don't delay and risk missing a single issue of the *BRSQ*!

Forgotten whether or not you've renewed already? Just check the mailing label on this issue. It will have one of the following 4-digit numbers on it:

- 2002** means you are paid through 2002, but still need to renew for 2003.
- 2003** means you have indeed renewed for 2003, and so are all set for the year.
- 7777, 8888, or 9999** means you are a Life Member, Honorary Membership, or receiving the *BRSQ* 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 <https://www.paypal.com> and open a free account. Then pay your dues using brs-pp@qconline.com as the recipient's e-mail address when prompted. There is no charge to make a Paypal payment, which (non-U.S. 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. Include any change of name or address, but do NOT include credit card info. 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 djdarland@qconline.com.

The BRS is constantly looking for ways we can make it easier for you to keep your membership current. We'd hate to lose any member because of a misunderstanding over the timing of a dues payment. If you have any suggestions to help us improve the process, please drop the *BRSQ* a line.

The 2003 Annual Meeting of the Bertrand Russell Society Lake Forest College (Lake Forest, IL) May 30-June 1, 2003

The BRS's 2002 Annual Meeting was held at Lake Forest College, in Lake Forest, Illinois (about 30 miles north of Chicago, near Northwestern University). That meeting went so well that the BRS will be returning there for its 2003 Annual Meeting. The BRS thanks Rosalind Carey, an Assistant Professor in Philosophy at Lake Forest who handled arrangements for the 2002 Annual meeting, for volunteering to play host yet again.

The BRS encourages everyone to **submit papers and register to attend** the Annual Meeting. Paper submissions, as well as queries regarding the submission process, can be sent to BRS President Alan Schwerin, Department of Interdisciplinary Studies, Monmouth University, West Long Branch, NJ 07764 USA, (732) 571-4470, aschwerl@monmouth.edu. The paper submission deadline is **May 1, 2003**.

Registration for the meeting—including buffet, banquet, papers, and other conference materials—costs \$60 for members, \$75 for non-members, and \$40 for students. Those interested in skipping the meals may register for one day of the conference for \$20 or both days for \$35. (This rate applies to members, non-members, and students.) Dorm-style accommodations are available on campus for \$49.50 for the weekend (plus \$10 for linens if needed). 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, carey@hermes.lfc.edu. (Registrants may also pay via credit card using PayPal, as detailed in "Have You Renewed Yet?" p. 8.) Anyone paying in this way must still send a registration form to Rosalind. Please direct all questions about the conference that do not relate to the program to Rosalind as well. Or visit <http://www.lfc.edu/~carey/index2003.html>, the conference's webpage.

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

Congratulations...

Tom Stanley, acting Chair of the Elections Committee, has tallied the ballots from the Society's recent election for the Board of Directors. Secretary Chad Trainer has confirmed the results.

25 members voted in this election, which featured 9 candidates. The final tallies are listed below. The 8 highest vote-getters, all of whom have won seats on the Board, are in italics.

Andrew Bone 22, Peter Stone 22, Nick Griffin 21, Ruili Ye 16, David Goldman 15, Cara Rice 15, Justin Leiber 14, Chandrakala Padia 14, David Henchan 13.

All 4 incumbents seeking re-election won. So did Ruili Ye, who has served the Society in the past as a Board member as well. The *BRSQ* congratulates these candidates, and welcomes newcomers Andrew Bone, David Goldman, and Cara Rice to the Board. The *BRSQ* would also like to acknowledge outgoing Board members Steve Bayne, Jan Loeb Eisler, Keith Green, and Bernard Linsky for their service to the BRS.

...and a Note of Thanks

The BRS would like to acknowledge the following members, each of whom donated money to the Society over and above their regular membership dues in 2002:

- *Patron (\$250 and up)*: David S. Goldman.
- *Sponsors (\$100 and up)*: Neil Abercrombie, Robert A. Riemenschneider, Warren Allen Smith.
- *Sustainers (\$75 and up)*: James Bunton, Rich Guilfoyle.
- *Contributors (\$50 and up)*: Jay Aragona, Dong-In Bac, Whitfield Cobb, D.M. Daugharty, John J. Fitzgerald, James Gordon, Earl Hansen, Carol A. Keene, Gregory Landini, Gladys Leithauser, Stephen J. Reinhardt, Michael A. Sequeira, Susan Berlin Vombrack.
- *Other Donors*: David Blitz, Edgar Boedeker, James E. McWilliams, Benito Rey, Laurie Endicott Thomas.

The *BRSQ* thanks these members for supporting the BRS.

The BRS Needs YOU...at the APA!

The Bertrand Russell Society is recognized by the American Philosophical Association and allowed to participate in their programs, but the BRS is also responsible for selecting its own speakers. Members of the BRS who are also members of the APA are urged to get in touch with David White (dwhite@sffc.edu). We need people to give papers, to comment, to chair sessions, and, most importantly, to fill seats. We are now accepting proposals for the Eastern Division meeting (Due May 1, 2003) at the Washington, DC, Hilton, December 27-30, 2003, and for the Central Division meeting at the Palmer House in Chicago, April 22-25, 2004.

All members who can are asked to attend the following sessions already scheduled with the APA. On Saturday, March 29, Jane Duran (University of California, Santa Barbara) will chair a session at which Justin Leiber (University of Houston) will speak on "Russell and Wittgenstein: A Study in Civility and Arrogance," with comments by David White (St. John Fisher College) at the Westin St. Francis on Union Square, San Francisco. Then on Thursday, April 24, at the Renaissance Cleveland, Cleveland, Derek H. Brown (University of Western Ontario) will give a paper on "Russell and Perceptual Relativity Arguments," with comments by David White, and Rosalind Carey (Lake Forest College) will speak on "Russell's Use of Diagrams for the Theory of Judgment," with comments by John Ongley (Northwestern University).

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. Just go to <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.

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

Articles:

Bertrand Russell's Relevance Today

Judy Toth

Judy Toth, leader of the Ethical Society of St. Louis, delivered the following talk on March 28, 1999. Paul Doudna provided the BRSQ with a transcription, which the BRSQ reprints here with slight editing for length. For more on the Ethical Society, visit <http://www.ethicalstl.org/>.

It's been a joy to read Bertrand Russell's *Autobiography* and gain insights into not only Russell's accomplishments, but who he was as a person.

At one point, Russell had been touring the U.S. and visited an amusement park where there were mechanical sharks. The reporters asked him, "What should we do with those who want to war?" He said:

I think every big town should contain artificial water-falls that people could descend in very fragile canoes, and they should contain bathing pools full of mechanical sharks. Any person found advocating a preventive war [and if you want to read Kosovo into this, go right ahead] should be condemned to two hours a day with these ingenious monsters.

I found that two or three Nobel prizewinners listened to what I had to say and considered it not without importance. Since then I have published it in Part II of my book, *Human Society in Ethics and Politics*...I have heard that it has affected many people more than I had thought, and I find that quite gratifying.

This talk is part of a series, interestingly enough. Three years ago I spoke about Albert Einstein, as one of my ethical heroes. What has evolved is an "Ethical Heroes" series, and last year I did Albert Schweitzer, and this year we have Bertrand Russell. So I find it so interesting to go back into these folk's lives and find out not only what they think about life and their achievements in terms of their world view. How do they view the ethical dimension of life and how that view speaks to us?

Recently my friends Lynn and Todd came into town to teach relationship building. Todd said to me, "Did you know that Bertrand Russell is in *Time* magazine as one of the 100 most influential people of this century?" So I went there and found a summary of Bertrand Russell in two paragraphs.

Bertrand Russell:

In more than 50 books, penned over 74 years, Bertrand Russell set the terms of the debate in logic and philosophy in the first part of this century—most notably with *Principia Mathematica*, written with philosopher Albert North Whitehead.

He also married four times, lost three elections to Parliament, founded a school and led the movement for nuclear disarmament. He was twice jailed and dismissed from three jobs for his pacifism and unconventional views on sex. He won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1950 and died two decades later at 97, a humane rationalist to the last.

So with that kind of framework, I'm going to spend a little time talking about Bertrand Russell. Russell's personal life, as for all of us, shaped and influenced who he was not only as a thinker, but as a feeler, as a father, and as a husband. He was orphaned at an early age and raised by his grandparents, who were quite strict and Victorian.

He spent a very lonely childhood with governesses and nurses—with little contact with children his own age—and at the age of eleven began studying Euclid and he called this "one of the greatest moments of my life, as dazzling as my first love." From that moment until he was thirty-eight years old (and had finished *Principia Mathematica*), mathematics became his chief interest and source of happiness. As an adolescent he said his interest was divided between, math, religion, and sex. He studied languages and literature and philosophy and in one of the most profound paragraphs of his *Autobiography*, he says he became an atheist at the age of fifteen, and abandoned the concept of God. "I found to my surprise that I was quite glad to be done with the subject."

He went to Cambridge and said that upon entering it he was a shy prig but by the fourth year he had become a gay and flippant student. He learned the virtue of intellectual honesty and absolute freedom to speculate about anything and everything. He finished his fellowship in 1897 and wrote the *Foundations of Geometry*; in 1901 wrote yet another book on mathematics, while working with his wife on suffragette causes (even though he had very mixed feelings about his wife at this point).

Russell's humor was always present. He had many colleagues, including Whitehead at his professorship school. Russell's friend G.H. Hardy, who was Professor of Mathematics at Cambridge, once told him that if he could

find a proof that Russell would die in five minutes time, he would naturally be very sorry to lose him, but the sorrow would be quite worthwhile for the pleasure of the proof. Russell, wise in the way of mathematics professors, observed, "I entirely sympathized with him and was not at all offended."

The period from 1910 to 1914 was a time of deep transition for Russell. He said, "I felt as sharply separated from the people of England as Faust's life before and after he met Mephistopheles." The Great War made him think afresh on the fundamental questions of life. Back in Cambridge, living with high emotional tension, he could not emotionally face the disaster the war would bring to his people. He was appalled that 90% of the population were excited and energized about the war and he said, "It caused me to review my own thoughts about human nature."

However, love of England was his strongest emotion. He was tortured by wanting to be a patriot but abhorred the violence of war. Ostracized for his pacifist views, he wrote in 1915 *Why Men Fight*, and it was a huge success. His pacifism, however, caused him to lose his job, and he was sent to jail for writing antiwar articles. He wrote in prison that he actually enjoyed the experience. It was a holiday from responsibility.

He emerged from that experience no longer just an academic, deciding that he needed to write a broad range of books. He became less rigid and less prudish, remarried, and his first child was born in 1921. He and his wife decided to found their own school, to school their own children and he found his ambition to write books revived.

In 1938 he became a professor at UCLA and subsequently completed his *History of Western Philosophy*, which became the major source of his income. Russell was to struggle throughout his life with financial trouble—especially during the first half of his life.

He would often travel between England and America and in a poignant section called "Christmas at Sea," written in 1931, he says:

I am learning much about growing old. Thirty-five years ago I was lately married, childless, very happy, and beginning to taste the joys of success. Family appeared to me as an external power hampering to freedom: the world, to me, was a world of individual adventure. I wanted to think my own thoughts, find my own friends....I felt strong enough to stand alone....Now, I realize, [this was just due to my vitality and youth.]

Time, they say, makes a man mellow. I do not believe it. Time makes a man afraid, and fear makes him conciliatory, and being conciliatory he endeavours to appear to others what they will think mellow. And with fear comes the need of affection, of some human warmth to keep away the chill of the cold universe. When I speak of fear, I do not mean merely or mainly personal fear: the fear of death or decrepitude or penury....I am thinking of a more metaphysical fear. I am thinking of a fear that enters the soul through experience of the major evils to which life is subject: the treachery of friends, the death of those whom we love, the discovery of the cruelty that lurks in average human nature.

During the thirty-five years since my last Christmas on the Atlantic, experience of these major evils has changed the character of my unconscious attitude to life. To stand alone may still be possible as a moral effort, but is no longer pleasant as an adventure. I want the companionship of my children, the warmth of the family fire-side, the support of historic continuity, and the membership of a great nation. These are ordinary human joys, which most middle-aged persons enjoy at Christmas. There is nothing about them to distinguish the philosopher from other men; on the contrary, their very ordinariness makes them the more effective in mitigating the sense of sombre solitude.

And so Christmas at sea, which was once a pleasant adventure, has become painful. It seems to symbolize the loneliness of the man who chooses to stand alone, using his own judgment rather than the judgment of the herd. A mood of melancholy is, in these circumstances, inevitable, and should not be shirked.

But there is something also to be said on the other side. Domestic joys, like all the softer pleasures, may sap the will and destroy courage. The indoor warmth of the traditional Christmas is good, but so is the South wind, and the sun rising out of the sea, and the freedom of the watery horizon. The beauty of these things is undiminished by human folly and wickedness, and remains to give strength to the faltering idealism of middle age.

He went back to Cambridge to teach, where his career flourished. But he was always beset by money problems that continued to pile up even as his income increased, as well as by social ostracism for his radical views. Russell says that traditional religion is the source of much evil; he viewed it with scorn for its negative effect. Needless to say, he was attacked for

these views and had to defend his position. He talked about fear in religion, yet another theme in his writing.

Religion is based, I think, primarily and mainly on fear. It is partly the terror of the unknown, and partly the wish to feel that you have a kind of elder brother who will stand by you in all your troubles and disputes. Fear is the basis of the whole thing—fear of the mysterious, fear of defeat, fear of death. Fear is the parent of cruelty, and therefore it is no wonder if cruelty and religion go hand in hand.

When asked about God's existence in 1947, Russell became sarcastic.

There is a rather repulsive smugness and self-complacency in the argument that man is so splendid as to be evidence of infinite wisdom and infinite power in his creator. Those who use this kind of reasoning always try to concentrate our attention on the few saints and sages; they try to make us forget the Neros and Atillas and Hitlers....And even what is best in us is apt to lead to disaster. Religions that teach brotherly love have been used as an excuse for persecution, and our profoundest scientific insight is made into a means of mass destruction.

I can imagine a sardonic demon producing us for his amusement, but I cannot attribute to a being who is wise, beneficent, and omnipotent, the terrible weight of cruelty, suffering, and ironic degradation of what is best: that has marred the history of man in an increasing measure as he has become more master of his fate.

His humor shows up in the area of religion too. "How would you describe Hell, Lord Russell?" he was asked. "Hell is a place where the police are German, the motorists French, and the cooks English."

He was also asked, "Lord Russell, have you missed anything by not being religious?" Russell replied as follows:

I don't feel I've missed anything through not believing in religion. I think, on the contrary, that the religious people have missed a very great deal. They've missed the kind of pride that stands upright and looks at the world, and says, "Well, you can kill me, but anyway, here I am. I stand firm." And they miss that. And I think that's a very valuable thing that a person should have.

I shouldn't like at all to go through life in sort of a creepy-crawly way, full of terror, and being bolstered up all the time as if I were a fainting lady being kept from sprawling on the ground...because no human being whom I can respect needs the consolation of things that are untrue. He can face the truth.

How, then, would you view death without a religious context for it?

I believe that when I die I shall rot, and nothing of my ego will survive. I am not young and I love life. But I should scorn to shiver with terror at the thought of annihilation. Happiness is nonetheless true happiness because it must come to an end, nor do thought and love lose their value because they are not everlasting. Many a man has borne himself proudly on the scaffold; surely the same pride should teach us to think truly about man's place in the world. Even if the open windows of science at first make us shiver after the cosy indoor warmth of traditional humanizing myths, in the end the fresh air brings vigor, and the great spaces have a splendor of their own.

Facing continued attacks for his pagan views and his failure to subscribe to traditional religion, Bertrand Russell wrote his own ten commandments. He called them a "Liberal Decalogue," and said, "Perhaps the essence of the liberal outlook could be summed up in a new decalogue, not intended to replace the old one but only to supplement it. The Ten Commandments that as a future I should wish to promulgate, might be set forth as follows:"

A Liberal Decalogue

1. Do not feel absolutely certain of anything.
2. Do not think it worth while to proceed by concealing evidence, for the evidence is sure to come to light.
3. Never try to discourage thinking for you are sure to succeed.
4. When you meet with opposition, even if it should be from your husband or your children, endeavor to overcome it by argument and not by authority, for a victory dependent upon authority is unreal and illusory.
5. Have no respect for the authority of others, for there are always contrary authorities to be found.
6. Do not use power to suppress opinions you think pernicious, for if you do the opinions will suppress you.
7. Do not fear to be eccentric in opinion, for every opinion now accepted was once eccentric.
8. Find more pleasure in intelligent dissent than in passive

agreement, for, if you value intelligence as you should, the former implies a deeper agreement than the latter.

9. Be scrupulously truthful, even if the truth is inconvenient, for it is more inconvenient when you try to conceal it.

10. Do not feel envious of the happiness of those who live in a fool's paradise, for only a fool will think that is happiness.

These lines are taken from a *New York Times* article called "The Best Answer to Fanaticism—Liberalism," in 1951.

If Russell was so anti-religious, how did he view humanism? It is interesting to consider his point of views on that subject.

Those who attempt to make a religion of humanism, which recognizes nothing greater than man, do not satisfy my emotions. And yet I am unable to believe that, in the world as known, there is anything I can value outside human beings....Not the starry heavens, but their effects on human percipients, have excellence; to admire the universe for its size is slavish and absurd; impersonal non-human truth appears to be an delusion. And so my intellect goes with the humanists, though my emotions violently rebel.

Russell was subsequently asked to comment on human beings, on human nature, and character values. How does he view those kinds of things?

I don't know what human nature is supposed to be. But your nature is infinitely malleable, and that is what people don't realize. If you compare a domestic dog with a wild wolf you will see what training can do. The domestic dog is a nice comfortable creature, barks occasionally, and he may bite the postman, but on the whole, he's all right; whereas the wolf is quite a different thing. You can do exactly the same thing with human beings. Human beings, according to how they're treated, will turn out totally different, and I think the idea you can't change human nature is silly.

What traits then would an ideal character have?

Four characteristics seem to me jointly to form the basis of an ideal character: vitality, courage, sensitiveness, and intelligence. I do not suggest that this list is complete, but I think it carries us a good way. Moreover, I firmly believe that by proper physical,

emotional, and intellectual care of the young, these qualities could all be made very common.

But then, since you are a rationalist, Mr. Russell, how can love and rationality be reconciled?

I regard love as one of the most important things in human life, and I regard any system as bad which interferes unnecessarily with its free development. Love, when the word is properly used, does not denote any and every relationship between the sexes, but only one involving considerable emotion, and a relation which is psychological as well as physical. It may reach any degree of intensity. Such emotions as are expressed in *Tristan and Isolde* and in accordance with the experience of countless men and women. The power of giving artistic expression to the emotion of love is rare, but the emotion itself, at least in Europe, is not.

The three main extra-rational activities in modern life are religion, war, and love; all of these are extra-rational, but love is not anti-rational, that is say, a reasonable man may reasonably rejoice in its existence.

As mentioned before, Russell was a pacifist. He founded the Bertrand Russell Foundation for the purpose of promoting world peace. And it is important to him that we look at war's destruction and find it unacceptable. He once said the following about peace:

Our own planet, in which philosophers are apt to take a parochial and excessive interest, was once too hot to support life, and will in time become too cold. After ages during which the earth produced harmless trilobites and butterflies, evolution progressed to the point at which it has generated Neros, Genghis Khans, and Hitlers. This, however, I believe is a passing nightmare; in time the earth will become again incapable of supporting life, and peace will return.

After the formation of Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation, Russell received a letter from UN Secretary General U Thant, which said:

It is good to know that it is proposed to start a Foundation in the name of Lord Russell, to expand and continue his efforts in the cause of peace. Lord Russell was one of the first to perceive the folly and danger of unlimited accumulation of nuclear armaments.

When we look at Russell's life and what he strived for, what we see is a degree of excellence which he endeavored and strived for and attained in so many fields—whether philosophy or mathematics or world peace or looking at the structure of religion and what it can mean to us as human beings. So he was always looking at what is excellent. He once said:

It would be necessary to the creation of [a society of excellence] to secure three conditions: first, a more even distribution of the produce of labor; second, security against large-scale wars; and third, a population which was stationary or very nearly so.

Until these conditions are secured, industrialism will continue to be used feverishly, to increase the wealth of the richest individuals, the territory of the greatest empires, and the population of the most populous nations, no one of which is of the slightest benefit to mankind. These three considerations have inspired what I have written and said [in terms of how to strive for excellence in our society.]

But then what would you, Lord Russell, hope to see the world achieve?

I think I should put first, security against extreme disaster such as threatened by modern war. I should put second, the abolition of abject poverty throughout the world. Third, as a result of security and economic well-being, a general growth of tolerance and kindly feeling. Fourth, the greatest possible opportunity for personal initiative in ways not harmful to the community.

All these things are possible, and all would come about if men chose. In the meantime, the human race lives in a welter of organized hatreds and threats of mutual extermination. I cannot but think that sooner or later people will grow tired of this very uncomfortable way of living.

He received the Nobel Prize for Literature for his book *Marriage and Morals*, interestingly enough—in 1950. And what is the essence of a good marriage? It only took Russell four wives to come to this conclusion.

The essence of a good marriage is respect for each other's personality combined with a deep intimacy, physical, mental, and spiritual, which makes a serious love between man and woman the most fructifying of all human experiences.

Russell's fame continued to grow throughout his life. He lectured around the world. He was constantly pursued for interviews, especially in his last years. At one point in China, he had a serious illness and he refused to grant interviews. A resentful press decided to carry the news in Japan that he had died. Russell appealed to them but they refused to retract the story. On his way home he stopped in Japan and the press again sought to interview him. His secretary handed out a printed announcement to the reporters that said, "Since Mr. Russell is dead, he cannot be interviewed."

He was once asked, "What has given you the greatest personal pleasure?"

That's rather a difficult question, isn't it? Passionate private relations perhaps would come first of all. I get immense pleasure from natural beauty. And intellectual pleasure, understanding something that has been puzzling, and the moment comes when you understand it, that is a very delightful moment.

Russell's relevance today I think is quite obvious. He continues to challenge us to face and destroy all false beliefs and illusions that keep us from being free in thought and action and capable of self-responsibility. He challenges us to think about war, to stop nuclear proliferation, and create a safe, peaceful world. He began his *Autobiography* with a foreword, which I think really sums up Bertrand Russell very well.

Three passions, simple but overwhelmingly strong, have governed my life: the longing for love, the search for knowledge, the unbearable pity for the suffering of mankind. These passions, like great winds, have blown me hither and thither, in a wayward course, over a deep ocean of anguish, reaching to the very verge of despair.

I have sought love, first, because it brings ecstasy—ecstasy so great that I would often have sacrificed all the rest of life for a few hours of this joy.

I have sought it, next, because it relieves loneliness—that terrible loneliness in which one shivering consciousness looks over the rim of the world into the cold unfathomable lifeless abyss.

I have sought it, finally, because in the union of love I have seen, in a mystic miniature, the prefiguring vision of the heaven that saints and poets have imagined. This is what I sought, and though it may seem too good for human life, this is what—at last—I have

found.

With equal passion I have sought knowledge. I have wished to understand the hearts of men. I have wished to know why the stars shine. And I try to apprehend the Pythagorean power by which number holds sway above the flux. A little of this, but not much, I have achieved.

Love and knowledge, so far as they were possible, led upward toward the heavens. But always pity brought me back to earth. Echoes of cries of pain reverberate in my heart. Children in famine, victims tortured by oppressors, helpless old people a hated burden to their sons, and the whole world of loneliness, poverty, and pain make a mockery of what human life should be. I long to alleviate the evil, but I cannot, and I too suffer.

This has been my life. I have found it worth living, and would gladly live it again if the chance were offered me.

My closing words are from Russell's *New Hopes for a Changing World*.

Man, in the long ages since he descended from the trees, has passed arduously and perilously through a vast dusty desert, surrounded by the whitening bones of those who have perished by the way, maddened by hunger and thirst, by fear of wild beasts, by dread of enemies, [and] at last he has emerged from the desert into a smiling land, but in the long night he has forgotten how to smile. We cannot believe in the brightness of the morning. We think it trivial and deceptive; we cling to old myths that allow us to go on living with fear and hate—above all, hate of ourselves, miserable sinners. This is folly.

Man now needs for his salvation only one thing: to open his heart to joy, and leave fear to gibber through the glimmering darkness of a forgotten past. He must lift up his eyes and say: "No, I am not a miserable sinner; I am a being who, by a long and arduous road, have discovered how to make intelligence master natural obstacles, how to live in freedom and joy, at peace with myself and therefore with all humankind." This will happen if men choose joy rather than sorrow. If not, eternal death will bury man in deserved oblivion.

Russell and Dewey at the CFI

Alan Bock

John Dewey, one of the most influential philosophers of the twentieth century, was the subject of a four-hour discussion and luncheon at the Center for Inquiry in Buffalo, New York on Sunday, November 10, 2002.

Two BRS members, Tim Madigan and Peter Stone, were among the featured speakers at the event, aptly titled "The Legacy of John Dewey (1859-1952)." Also discussing various aspects of Dewey's contributions to twentieth-century thought were Paul Kurtz, Emeritus Professor of Philosophy at the University of Buffalo, founder of the Center for Inquiry, and an Honorary Member of the BRS; Robert Talisse, Professor of Philosophy at the University of Tennessee; Lee Nisbet of the Medaille College Philosophy Department; and John Novak, Professor of Philosophy at Brock University.

In his opening remarks, Kurtz described Dewey as the most important humanist philosopher and promoter of liberal thought in the nineteen thirties and forties. Charles Darwin was an important influence on his philosophy of pragmatism, and led Dewey to attempt to employ the scientific method to all human experience. He was a naturalist who believed that we must abandon the theological/mystical approach to knowledge and apply scientific inquiry to ethics. This led Dewey to a naturalistic ethics and to the defense of a "naturalistic religion" in his *A Common Faith*. In addition, Dewey was a believer in fallibilism, holding that we must always be willing to change our opinion on the basis of new evidence.

The primary purpose of education, according to Dewey, was to develop intellectual growth and critical intelligence, or, in other words, how to think. This could be done by the development of habits of thought, although it should never be done in such a manner as to thwart creative impulses. Unfortunately, many of Dewey's views on education would, in later years, be misinterpreted and distorted by his critics.

Professor Kurtz informed us all that he attended Dewey's ninetieth birthday party at Columbia University and actually met the great man on two or three occasions. According to Kurtz, Dewey was the most "saintly" of philosophers who rarely uttered an unkind word about anyone. Interestingly, the most acerbic remark he ever made about another philosopher was directed at Bertrand Russell, who, according to Dewey,

misunderstood and frequently misrepresented the philosophy of pragmatism in many of his writings. In exasperation after reading one of these critiques, Dewey said of Russell, "He makes me sore."

Tim Madigan confessed that philosophy never made any sense to him *until* he read John Dewey. That experience led him to the study of philosophy and eventually to Paul Kurtz as a philosophical mentor. Madigan noted that Sidney Hook had been a student of Dewey's and that Paul Kurtz had been a student of Hook's and wryly observed that if Hook could be considered Dewey's "philosophical son" and Kurtz his "philosophical grandson," then, by extension and keeping it "all in the family", Madigan could be a sort of "bastardized philosophical great-grandson" of the great John Dewey.

Madigan observed that Dewey's classes at Columbia during the 1917-1918 academic year were audited by two people with whom he (Dewey) would have unusual relationships—Anzia Yeziarska, with whom the "saintly philosopher" would have his only illicit (and unconsummated) love affair; and Albert Barnes, an eccentric millionaire and the inventor of Argyrol (a cure for infant blindness). Years later Barnes would figure prominently in the life of another philosopher, Bertrand Russell.

It has come to light that in 1918 Dewey (rather secretively) wrote a lot of poetry which he kept out of sight by stuffing the papers in his desk or throwing them in his wastebasket at his office at Columbia University. Some of these works were discovered by a junior colleague in the Philosophy Department who inherited Dewey's office and desk. Others were recovered when Columbia's librarian, aided by the janitor, went through Dewey's wastebasket and discovered some of these poems. These eventually came into the possession of Dewey's widow after his death and were subsequently published by Jo Ann Boydston as part of Dewey's *Collected Works*. Interestingly, Professor Boydston authenticated the poetry by researching the life of Anzia Yeziarska, a novelist, who had included some of these poems in her fictional works. While Yeziarska was attending his class, Dewey, who had been separated and estranged from his wife at the time, apparently became quite fond of her. This amorous relationship lasted several months and inspired Dewey's poetry. Eventually, the relationship with Anzia soured and Dewey, who found marriage an inescapable burden, returned to his wife. Boydston described the relationship as a tragedy of two romantics.

Also auditing Dewey's classes in 1917-18 was Albert C. Barnes with whom Dewey, rather surprisingly, would have a life-long friendship

(surprisingly since Barnes was an uncommonly bad tempered fellow who ended up quarrelling with practically everyone who crossed his path.)

Barnes, a self-made millionaire, was also an avid art collector, and in 1922 would establish the Barnes Foundation to bring the blessings of his vast art collection to those he deemed worthy of viewing it. One needed his permission to see the collection and this was apparently given very selectively. He appointed Dewey the Foundation's educational director and encouraged him to study art and aesthetics.

Barnes had a fondness for cranks, and was something of a crank himself. He engaged in behavior that was "way out" such as sending out letters signed in his dog's name. It is something of a mystery as to how a man like Dewey could have tolerated such an oddball as Barnes, but it appears that Dewey had a taste for oddballs of all kinds. Dewey seems to have found him more entertaining than disagreeable. Although very formal with most people, Dewey even allowed Barnes to call him "Jack!" In the final analysis it seems that Barnes merely added a needed spice to Dewey's life.

At the outset of his talk Peter Stone made the "usual pitch" for the Bertrand Russell Society. It would be interesting to determine how many members of BRS have resulted from his tireless proselytizing.

He informed the group that he wished to discuss Dewey and Russell in a rather roundabout fashion by talking about the interrelationships of these two great philosophers with William James, Noam Chomsky, and Martin Gardner.

William James, like Dewey, was one of the founders of pragmatism. He was perhaps more widely read than Dewey because, unlike the latter, he could write with some clarity and was known for clever turns of phrase such as the "cash value" of a proposition. Of Dewey's writing it was said by James that, not only was it damnable, it was "God damnable."

James was also known for applying pragmatism to religion, most prominently in his "Will to Believe" where he seemed to suggest that making a "leap of faith" is the "virile" and "manly" thing to do. At the root of this argument, it seems, was the idea that one can decide to treat a proposition as true regarding religion if not believing it would be depressing. Needless to say, this drove a lot of philosophers and freethinkers up the wall—most notably Bertrand Russell, who devoted some of his earliest essays to attacking pragmatism as an obvious travesty of truth. Russell thought that we should have a "desire to know" rather than

a "will to believe;" he even entitled a short book *The Will to Doubt*.

Unfortunately, James' application of pragmatism to religion seemed to color Russell's attitude toward the philosophy as a whole, causing him to caricature it relentlessly by suggesting that it argued that a belief was true if the consequences of believing it are pleasant. Russell's caricatures, especially when coupled with his razor-sharp wit, really annoyed the normally even-tempered Dewey. As a result the relationship between two of the twentieth century's greatest philosophers was much less fruitful than it could have been.

Noam Chomsky, a seminal linguist, philosopher, and radical activist, is an admirer of both Bertrand Russell and John Dewey and, in fact, has a large poster of Russell in his MIT office. He is also an honorary member of the Bertrand Russell Society.

Chomsky was well aware of the disagreements between the two great philosophers, but he still saw a lot of common ground between them, especially when one ventured beyond philosophy into politics. Both Dewey and Russell were in agreement in defending the classical ideas of the Enlightenment; both saw these ideals as something we could not comfortably assume that we had already attained today. This is especially evident right now, as the U.S. appears ready to attack a country without actually asserting anything like a credible reason for doing so.

It is particularly interesting the Russell and Dewey both reached such radical conclusions in their politics despite their differences in philosophies; this raises questions about the relationship between philosophy and politics. Bertrand Russell was an emotivist, but also wrote an essay entitled "Philosophy and Politics." For John Dewey, the relationship was clearer—a more worked-out and clear version of the ideas in "Philosophy and Politics." (Of course, with Dewey, "clear" is always a relative term.) Today there exist some pragmatists, like Richard Rorty, who argue for no linkage between philosophy and any particular political perspective.

Finally, there was a fundamental similarity in the attitudes of Russell and Dewey toward religion, although they differed in their personal attitude towards it and especially in their recommended responses. For Russell, all religion was false as well as harmful. Dewey, on the other hand, distinguished between "religion" and the "religious" and tried to reconstruct religion so as to salvage the important part of it.

Martin Gardner is a science writer perhaps best known for his book *Fads and Fallacies in the Name of Science*. He is also a theist and, from this standpoint, provides some insight into the religious attitudes of Dewey and Russell. In his book *The Night is Large*, Gardner promotes the idea that nature justifies religious belief because of the feeling of awe and wonder that overcomes one when contemplating the universe. Gardner describes this feeling as "numinous" and takes both Dewey and Russell to task for their attitudes towards it.

Russell was not deaf to this kind of emotion—he simply resisted it. He was an agnostic as well as the author of "Why I Am Not a Christian," but he had an intense desire for a god of some sort to justify the awe and reverence traditionally assigned to the deity. He never found it but he was always troubled by it. Fortunately, he was simply too smart and intellectually honest to believe something just because it would satisfy him emotionally. This may explain his vehement reaction to James as well as how thoroughly this reaction colored his thoughts on pragmatism in general.

On the other hand, nothing ever mystified Dewey, and he had no need for certainty, awe, or reverence. He was quite content to do without them, and he debunked claims about them in such masterful works as *Reconstruction in Philosophy* and *The Quest for Certainty*. However, he was much more tolerant of religious language. It is telling that Russell's main work on religion was "Why I Am Not a Christian," whereas Dewey's was *A Common Faith*.

In summarizing, Stone observed that a discussion of William James reveals that Russell and Dewey were both intellectuals deeply committed to reason despite serious disagreements as to how reason actually worked. A discussion of Chomsky reveals that both were also committed to radical social action derived from classical liberal ideals, though both differed as to what philosophical foundations, if any, existed for these ideals. And a discussion of Gardner brings out that both rejected the "transcendental temptation" and the desire to believe in something supernatural for intellectually disreputable reasons.

BRS Honorary Member on Tour
Warren Allen Smith & Peter Stone

Taslima Nasrin, an Honorary Member of the BRS, has written *Meyebela, My Bengali Girlhood* (Steerforth Press, 308 pages, \$26.00). The work describes her Muslim childhood and, although there is a word for the childhood of boys but none for girls, she coined the word *Meyebela* (pronounced MAY-bull-ah), underlining how language plays a part in the oppression of women.

The book has received favorable reviews in a number of quarters. The November 18, 2002 issue of the *Nation* carried a review by Meredith Tax entitled "Taslima's Pilgrimage." The review is available online at <http://www.thenation.com/doc.mhtml?i=20021118&ts=tax>. Another review, entitled "One Woman Lifts the Veil on Her Islamic Life," appeared in the November 17 *Los Angeles Times*. The review, by Gina B. Nahai, is at <http://www.calendarlive.com/books/bookreview/clbk-nahai17nov17,0,578424.story?coll=cl%2Dbookreview>.

Nasrin's writings have received less favorable attention from other quarters as of late. In September, a magistrate in Gopalganj, Bangladesh, found Dr. Nasrin guilty of offending the sentiments of Muslims through her writings. She was sentenced to one year in prison. Because of her imposed exile, the trial was in absentia and, because she was not informed of trial dates, she was not defended by counsel.

In October 2002, Nasrin started a book-signing tour at the International Festival of Authors in Toronto. Her appearance there was publicized by an article by Cristina Campbell in the October 24, 2002 issue of the *Eye*, one of Toronto's numerous free weeklies. The article featured a review of *Meyebela*. After speaking in November at the "godless march on Washington, D.C.," During her tour, Nasrin spoke to various human rights groups, giving an interview to CNN International and speeches to non-believer and academic groups in Cincinnati; New York City; Charleston, SC; Yale University; the University of Connecticut; Dartmouth College; Boston University; Harvard University; University of California at Irvine; and Los Angeles. In San Diego, she received the "Freethought Heroine" award given by the Freedom from Religion Foundation. And all along the way, she continued to receive publicity. For example, an article on her appearance in New York City appeared in the *Village Voice's* November 13-19, 2002 issue. The article, by Thulani Davis, is entitled "Taslima Nasrin Speaks (Still)," and can still be found online at

<http://www.villagevoice.com/issues/0246/davis.php>. Nasrin's visit to New York did not escape the attention of the Indian press, either. The *News India-Times* covered the event in its November 15, 2002 issue. The coverage appeared in an article by Jyotirmoy Datta entitled "Taslima Nasrin Defends Controversial Works," which is online at <http://www.newsindia-times.com/2002/11/15/women-31-top.html>. Upon her return to Europe in December, Nasrin received in Germany the Erwin Fischer Award from the IBKA (Internationaler Bund der Konfessionlosen und Atheisten). She also gave a speech to the European Parliament in Strasbourg, France on December 17, 2002. The speech, entitled "I Will Never Be Silenced," was published in the February 2003 issue of *International Humanist News*, publication of the International Humanist and Ethical Union (IHEU). (Nasrin was a member of the IHEU's UNESCO NGO delegation from 1999 to 2000.)

Those interested in more information on Nasrin and her recent activities should consult her website at <http://taslimanasrin.com/>. The website is under construction but still up and running for BRS-ers to visit.

Reviews:

Jan Dejnozka. *Bertrand Russell on Modality and Logical Relevance*. Ashgate, 1999.

Dan Kervick

It is widely believed that Bertrand Russell was no friend of modality. In one well-known study of the subject, Nicholas Rescher argued that Russell's views on modality were both highly negative and "massively influential," and helped to bring about two generations of "stunted development" in modal logic (Nicholas Rescher, "Russell and Modal Logic," in George W. Roberts, ed., *Bertrand Russell Memorial Volume* (George Allen and Unwin, 1979), pp. 146-48). Jan Dejnozka sums up this popular perception of Russell's relationship with modal logic like this:

View V: Not only did Russell not have a modal logic, he ignored modal logic, and was even against modal logic.

The avowed purpose of Dejnozka's *Bertrand Russell on Modality and Logical Relevance* is to refute view V.

Dejnozka says that although "there is much that is true and important in view V," it is still "not the whole truth" (p. 21). Yet the ultimate thrust of

his argument would appear to be that view V is not even part of the truth, but just dead wrong. For according to Dejnožka, Russell “developed his own modal logic” (p. 1), based upon a “rich and sophisticated theory of modality” (p. 2).

These are surprising claims, and if true they are important ones. Yet it is no easy matter to determine what Dejnožka means by them. In one place, Dejnožka summarizes Russell’s approach to modality and modal logic as follows:

Russell’s idea is simple: to use notions of ordinary quantificational logic to define and analyze away modal notions. Modal notions are eliminated across the board. The individual (“existential”) and universal quantifiers are used to simulate and replace modal notions. These quantifiers are interpreted as functioning as if they had modal meanings-in-use. They do not in fact have modal meanings-in-use. Literally speaking, Russell has banished modality from logic. Yet functionally speaking, Russell has achieved a modal logic based on a rich and sophisticated theory of modality. And all of this without having to assume any modal entities or even modal notions. The modern moral is that a modal logic is as a modal logic does. This is modal logic without modal metaphysics (pp. 1-2).

Dejnožka claims Russell is engaged in “dialectical accommodation.” While Russell “refuses to allow ontological status to modal entities, and refuses to admit modal notions as logically primitive,” he “finds modality important enough not only to give a philosophical theory of modality, but also to show how to formalize it as a modal logic” (p. 2).

These characterizations of Russell’s approach to modality are provocative, and raise a host of questions. How is it that Russell can at the same time banish modality from logic, yet possess a rich and sophisticated theory of modality? Reconciling this conflict would seem to depend on understanding the difference between “literally speaking” and “functionally speaking.” What do these expressions mean for Dejnožka? In what sense are modal notions “eliminated” yet “simulated?” What is involved in their being “replaced?” And what does the previously unrecognized Russellian modal logic look like? Where is it formalized, and what is the result? What are its theorems and its fundamental principles?

Unfortunately Dejnožka often fails to provide clear answers to these and other important questions. *Bertrand Russell on Modality and Logical Relevance* is a confusing and difficult book, and not all of the difficulty is due to the difficulty inherent in the subject. The presentation is disorganized and unwieldy. Tangential or subsidiary issues are discussed at great length, while crucial matters of formulation of the main claims and arguments for those claims are often given amazingly scant attention. This reviewer often found it difficult to determine exactly what views were being attributed to Russell.

In order to evaluate view V and the contrary view defended by Dejnožka, one needs to know what, for the purposes of this study, we are to understand by the expressions “modal logic,” “having a modal logic,” and “developing a modal logic.” Yet it is difficult to glean from *Bertrand Russell on Modality and Logical Relevance* any precise sense of how these expressions are being used. At times, Dejnožka seems to suggest only that Russell has an *implicit* modal logic. In other passages it is asserted that the modal logic is explicit. An example is the passage quoted above in which Russell is said to “find modality important enough ...to show how to formalize it as a modal logic.” But Dejnožka himself never presents this formalization.

There also appears to be some confusion between modal *logics* and modal *languages*—that is, natural or artificial languages employing modal idioms. Dejnožka says that he will attribute a modal logic to Russell if either “(i) it is more reasonable than not to paraphrase Russell’s thinking into the modal logic, or (ii) it is more reasonable than not to suppose that Russell would have substantially assented to the modal logic as a paraphrase of his thought” (p. 61). Yet the appropriate medium for *paraphrases* of Russell’s thinking or thoughts would presumably be some sort of fully interpreted language, rather than a logic.

For a comparison, consider the case of a first-order set theory such as ZF. For a given philosopher, we might ask whether that philosopher’s informal pronouncements about sets can be captured by the language of ZF. Now while ZF is written in a first-order language, it is not a first-order logic. It is an interpreted first-order theory. Of course, there is some sense in which the language of that theory has an *underlying* first-order logic. Similarly, the thoughts or written pronouncements of some philosopher may be expressible in some interpreted language containing modal operators, and that language may have a more-or-less definite underlying modal logic.

So, is it the case that some of Russell’s explicit discourse can be

regimented in an artificial language containing modal operators? Presumably, yes. But if this is all there is to the claim that Russell possessed a modal logic, then Russell's possession of a modal logic is an unsurprising and uncontroversial fact. Like all other English speakers, Russell used a whole host of modal idioms in what we can assume is a coherent, systematic way, and one may attempt to recover an underlying modal logic (or rather a family of underlying modal logics) from that mass of modal discourse. Russell may be said in this sense to possess a modal logic. In the same sense, Oscar Wilde, Queen Victoria and at least three of the Marx brothers possessed modal logics. It is even possible for a strident philosophical *opponent* of modality and modal logic to "possess a modal logic" in this weak sense, for it may well be that the philosopher makes free and systematic use of modal idioms such as "must," "can't," "may" and "can" even while denouncing modality.

From a logical and grammatical point of view, "modality" denotes a broad subject area. It encompasses temporal and epistemic modalities, deontic modalities, logical modalities and others. What Rescher and others have found Russell to be hostile toward is modality of a particular kind, the kind involved in the typical philosophical use of expressions such as "necessary truth" and "contingent truth." The relevant notion of necessity is sometimes referred to as *broadly logical necessity*. Russell calls it the "traditional" notion of a necessary proposition.

What were Russell's explicit views on the traditional modal notions? Perhaps his most extended and direct treatment of the topic of modality occurs in an early, unpublished paper entitled "Necessity and Possibility" (*CPBR* 4, pp. 508-520.) This paper plays a key role in Dejnoška's reading of Russell. He calls it "Russell's fundamental paper on modality" (p. 1), and finds in it the "first and main appearance" (p. 6) of both Russell's theory of modality and the logic allegedly based upon it. But I believe that Dejnoška has not paid adequate attention to Russell's main conclusions.

In "Necessity and Possibility," Russell considers "the characteristics which ought to belong to a doctrine of necessity and possibility on the traditional theory," along with various suggested definitions of the concept of a necessary proposition. Russell concludes that while each of the defined distinctions has *some* of the required characteristics, none of these definitions marks a distinction that has *all* of the required characteristics. Thus each of them fails as an analysis of the traditional notion of a necessary proposition.

After failing to find an adequate definition of necessity, one might expect

Russell to conclude only that either we must keep looking for a better one, or acknowledge the traditional modal distinction between necessary and non-necessary propositions as fundamental and indefinable. Indeed, he says: "it is likely that there are other possible definitions of necessity which are more satisfactory than those that I have discussed." But ultimately, Russell draws a more negative conclusion. He believes that the modal distinctions among propositions are "based on error and confusion." After rejecting each of the suggested definitions, Russell proposes the following:

...The feeling of necessity that we have is a complex and rather muddled feeling, compounded of such elements as the following:

- (1) The feeling that a proposition can be known without an appeal to perception;
- (2) The feeling that a proposition can be proved;
- (3) The feeling that a proposition can be deduced from the laws of logic;
- (4) The feeling that a proposition holds not only of its actual subject, but of all subjects more or less resembling its actual subject, or, as an extreme case, of all subjects absolutely.

Any one of these four may be used to found a theory of necessity. The first gives a theory whose importance is not logical, but epistemological; the second makes the necessary coextensive with the true. The third and fourth give important classes of propositions; but the third class (propositions deducible from the laws of logic) is better described as the class of *analytic* propositions, and the view underlying the fourth is more readily applicable to *propositional functions* than to propositions (*ibid.*, p. 520).

"Necessity and Possibility" then closes with the following words:

I conclude that, so far as appears, there is no one fundamental logical notion of necessity, nor consequently of possibility. If this conclusion is valid, the subject of modality ought to be banished from logic, since propositions are simply true or false, and there is no such comparative and superlative of truth as is implied in the notions of contingency and necessity (p.

This is an unmistakably skeptical conclusion. Where defenders of the traditional distinction have taken their uses of “necessity,” “necessarily,” etc. to refer to some important logical or ontological attribute of propositions, Russell finds only a complex, muddled feeling springing from a variety of psychological sources.

All of Russell’s later statements about modality echo the discussion in “Necessity and Possibility,” and sound the same disparaging note toward the traditional modal distinctions among propositions. He appears never to have abandoned the view that those traditional distinctions are based upon confusion, although his account of the precise nature of the confusion does change. Dejnoška cites the relevant passages, but sees them as further elaborations of Russell’s theory of modality. The skepticism is downplayed or ignored.

According to Dejnoška, Russell’s modal logic is based on three definitions, which Dejnoška refers to collectively as “MDL”:

1. $F(x)$ is necessary with respect to $x = \text{Df } F(x)$ is always true
2. $F(x)$ is possible with respect to $x = \text{Df } F(x)$ is sometimes true
3. $F(x)$ is impossible with respect to $x = \text{Df } F(x)$ is never true

The MDL definitions appear to characterize a concept of *relative* necessity, applicable to propositional functions. While these definitions are supposed by Dejnoška to provide the basis for Russell’s modal logic (pp. 2-3), so far as I have been able to determine they are not found in Russell’s writings. What can be found instead are some similar but significantly different definitions. In the crucial passages cited by Dejnoška, Russell presents a set of definitions of certain *non-relative* distinctions said to hold among propositional functions. Sometimes these definitions are coupled with definitions of certain *relative* distinctions holding among *propositions* (see, e.g., *The Philosophy of Logical Atomism*, p. 96). The non-relative distinctions can be put as follows:

For any propositional function F :

1. F is necessary if and only if F is always true;
2. F is possible if and only if F is sometimes true;
3. F is impossible if and only if F is never true.

The expressions “always true,” “sometimes true” and “never true” are

familiar from “On Denoting,” *The Philosophy of Logical Atomism* and other works in which Russell presents his account of quantification. To say that ‘ x is mortal’ is sometimes true, for example, is just to say that for some x , x is mortal. Call the three definitions in the above group the *Set I* definitions.

The Set I definitions define non-relative attributes of propositional functions. They entitle us to say of a propositional function *not* that it is necessary or possible or impossible with respect to this or that—as the definitions in MDL seem to require—but that it is necessary *simpliciter*. However, in “Necessity and Possibility,” Russell does define a relative distinction holding among *propositions*. Though a proposition may not properly be said to be necessary *simpliciter*, it may be necessary *with respect to* some constituent c of that proposition (pp. 518-19). Formalizing just a bit, let $\textcircled{1}(c)$ be any proposition containing the constituent c , and let $\textcircled{1}(v/c)$ denote the result of replacing the constituent c in the proposition $\textcircled{1}(c)$, everywhere it occurs, with some variable v that does not already appear in $\textcircled{1}(c)$. Then we have:

For any proposition $\textcircled{1}(c)$:

1. $\textcircled{1}(c)$ is necessary with respect to c if and only if $\textcircled{1}(v/c)$ is always true
2. $\textcircled{1}(c)$ is possible with respect to c if and only if $\textcircled{1}(v/c)$ is sometimes true
3. $\textcircled{1}(c)$ is impossible with respect to c if and only if $\textcircled{1}(v/c)$ is never true.

Call these definitions the *Set II* definitions.

The Set I and Set II definitions are both different from the set of definitions called ‘MDL’ by Dejnoška. The Set I definitions entitle us to say such things as that the propositional function “if x is a bachelor, then x is unmarried” is necessary, since for all x , if x is a bachelor then x is unmarried. And the Set II definitions license the claim that “If Tony Blair is a bachelor, then Tony Blair is unmarried” is necessary *with respect to Tony Blair*, since the propositional function derived from abstracting on “Tony Blair”, namely “if x is a bachelor, then x is unmarried,” is necessary *simpliciter*. But, so far as I know, Russell gives us no account of such locutions as “it is necessary with respect to x that if x is a bachelor, then x is unmarried.” I could find no such account in the passages cited by Dejnoška.

Although Dejnoška never explicitly presents Russell’s modal logic, he has given it a name: it is called “FG-MDL.” What is FG-MDL, and how is it related to MDL? In fact, one can find two different accounts of Russellian

modal logic implicit in the text of *Bertrand Russell on Modality and Logical Relevance*, although Dejnoška does not clearly separate them.

One of the accounts is based Russell's definition of *analyticity*. That notion is connected with Russell's notion of logical truth (not the contemporary notion). A logical truth is a fully general true proposition, a true proposition containing only "logical terms," and an analytic truth is a proposition that results from a universal fully general proposition via universal instantiation. Thus the proposition "Every philosopher who quibbles is a philosopher" is an analytic truth because it is an instantiation of "For all F, for all G and for all x, if x is F and x is G then x is F," and the latter is a logical truth. (Later, Russell added a further condition for logical truth—to be an analytic truth a sentence must also be a tautology, true in virtue of its form. But what truth in virtue of form amounted to was something about which Russell confessed puzzlement. See *Introduction to Mathematical Philosophy*, pp. 204-205.)

Dejnoška cites with approval Gregory Landini's formulation of Russell's notion of analyticity:

Analytically true (A) = Df ($F_1, \dots, F_m, x_1, \dots, x_n$) $A_{F_1, \dots, F_m, x_1, \dots, x_n}$

Here the expressions $F_1, \dots, F_m, x_1, \dots, x_n$ are variables substituted in A for predicate and individual constants. But Dejnoška also seems to be aware that Russell quite definitely *rejects* the identification of the traditional concept of necessity with the concept of analyticity. In "Necessity and Possibility" after considering the hypothesis that a necessary proposition is an analytic proposition, Russell says:

But the *feeling* of necessity does not answer to this definition; many propositions are felt to be necessary which are not analytic. Such are: "If a thing is good, then it is not bad", "If a thing is yellow, it is not red", and so on. *Bad* does not mean the same as *not-good*, and therefore mere logic will never prove that *good* and *bad* are any more incompatible than *round* and *blue*. Hence, though the class of analytic propositions is an important class, it does not seem to be the same as the class of necessary propositions ("Necessity and Possibility," p. 517).

And then in the *Analysis of Matter*, after claiming that "It was generally held before Kant that necessary propositions were the same as analytic

propositions," Russell says that "even before Kant the distinctions were different, even if they effected the same division of propositions." Russell then repeats his negative view of modality, as applied to propositions:

I do not think that much can be made of modality, the plausibility of which seems to have come from confusing propositions with propositional functions. Propositions may, it is true, be divided in a way corresponding to what was meant by analytic and synthetic; this will be explained in a moment. But propositions which are not analytic can only be true or false; a true synthetic proposition cannot have a further property of being necessary, and a false synthetic proposition cannot have the property of being possible (*An Analysis of Matter*, pp. 169-170).

I said that Dejnoška *seems* to be aware that Russell did not identify analyticity and necessity. In a discussion of an argument from *The Philosophy of Logical Atomism*, Dejnoška says:

Naturally, the meaning of "necessary" can scarcely be identified with the meaning of "analytically true." Otherwise the theory that all necessary truths are analytic would not be significant ... This is perhaps why Russell does not explain logical *necessity* in terms of analyticity, tautology, or truth in virtue of form, *pace* the early Wittgenstein (p. 26).

Yet there is a surprise in store when Dejnoška turns in Chapter 6 to the comparison of the alleged Russellian modal logic, FG-MDL, with S5 and other well-known modal systems. For FG-MDL, it turns out, is based on reading "it is necessary that P" as *it is analytically true that A!*

The second account of Russellian modal logic may be called the *modality as quantification* account. It can be put simply: With MDL, Russell has defined certain modal concepts purely in terms of quantification. In fact, these modal concepts just *are* quantification by another name. The logic of *Principia* is clearly a logic of quantification. Thus, the logic of *Principia* is itself a modal logic.

The modality as quantification account is intermittently present in Dejnoška's book, particularly in the Chapter 8 discussion of the motives and origins of Russell's modal views, where it is defended against various

objections.

But if this is all that Russell's "modal logic" amounts to, then the claim that Russell possessed a modal logic is both misleading and uninteresting. The term "modal logic" has a fairly well defined use, according to which it studies and formalizes logical relations holding among the sentences in a language employing certain kinds of sentential operators and verbal auxiliaries. These locutions are used to express certain traditional distinctions among propositions, along with a large family of other similar and related notions. The idiosyncratic usages of "necessity" and "possibility" understood according to MDL appear to have little to do with modality. (The same holds for the Set I and Set II definitions that Russell actually presents.)

One cannot turn a non-modal notion into a modal notion simply by re-labeling it as "necessity" or "possibility." Dejnozka resists this claim. He says that "to say that MDL is not a modal theory is exactly as absurd as to say that Russell has no theory of existence when he holds that existence is a property of propositional function." But there is an important difference. Russell uses his concept of existence applicable to propositional functions to analyze sentences in which existence appears to be attributed to individuals. But, in my view, the Russellian "modal" notions applicable to propositional functions do not provide a similar favor for sentences in which the traditional modal notions of necessity, possibility and impossibility are attributed to propositions. Nor do I believe that they were intended by Russell to serve that purpose.

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Jan Dejnozka. *Bertrand Russell on Modality and Logical Relevance*. Aldershot: Ashgate, 1999. Pp. viii + 241.

Causal Republicanism Sydney, Australia; 14-16 July 2003

This conference, organized by the Centre for Time and the Department of Philosophy, University of Sydney, marks the 90th anniversary of Russell's celebrated attack on causation in his paper "On the Notion of Cause." For further details, go to <http://www.usyd.edu.au/time/events.htm> or e-mail Richard Corry at Richard.Corry@philosophy.usyd.edu.au.

Regular Features:

Russell-Related Odds and Ends

- *Rutgers Focus*, Rutgers University's paper for faculty and staff, recently published a biographical article on Colin McGinn. McGinn is one of Rutgers' most well-known philosophers and the author of 14 books, including the recent memoir *The Making of a Philosopher* (HarperCollins, 2002). The article, by Douglas Frank, described one stage of McGinn's philosophical development as follows:

As he proceeded through his education, he encountered the works of Bertrand Russell, who "made the life of the mind seem like a heroic adventure, not the monkish confinement to dusty libraries. It was reading him that persuaded me that I wanted to become a full-time, card-carrying philosopher," recalls McGinn.

The review may still be online at <http://ur.rutgers.edu/focus/>.

Source: Alan Schwerin

- On December 9, 2002, McMaster University's *News Daily* published a short article by Rowena Muhic-Day on the ongoing project to place Russell's correspondence online. The article quoted Nick Griffin, Director of the Bertrand Russell Research Centre at McMaster and a longtime mainstay of the BRS. The article is online at <http://dailynews.mcmaster.ca/story.cfm?id=1739> and can also be accessed at the site of the McMaster Faculty of Humanities at <http://www.humanities.mcmaster.ca/News/russell.html>.

Source: Ken Blackwell

- The website iafrica.com recently reviewed the fourth edition of Alex Comfort's classic *The Joy of Sex* (Crown Publishing Group, 2002). The review, entitled "'The Joy of Sex,' 30 Years on." appeared on December 10, 2002, and was written by Frederique Prise. It mentioned Comfort's association with Russell twice, both times in terms of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament. (Comfort and Russell once shared a jail cell because of their work for the cause.) Check it out at <http://iafrica.com/loveandsex/features/157030.htm>.

Source: Gerry Wildenberg

- A somewhat vacuous article on atheism appeared in the online magazine *Slate* on December 23, 2002. The article, by Jim Holt, is entitled "The Atheist Christmas Challenge: Can you prove God doesn't exist?" It describes the views of several self-professed atheists, such as Christopher Hitchens, Katha Pollitt, and Gore Vidal. It further notes that "Bertrand Russell, who occupied the same ground as Hitchens, was careful to stress that he was agnostic, not atheist: 'An atheist, like a Christian, holds that we *can* know whether or not there is a God. ... The agnostic suspends judgment, saying that there are not sufficient grounds either for affirmation or denial.'" The article is at <http://slate.msn.com/id/2075653/>.

Source: Warren Allen Smith

- On December 27, 2002, the website ZNet published an article by Dave Edwards entitled "Professional Servility and How to Overcome It." This article, the first in a two-part series, criticizes the mainstream media to task for uncritically accepting the political assumptions of the powerful. This happens, Edwards writes, because journalists are

afraid of the implications of what we and our readers have to say for their sense of who they are. Bertrand Russell explained this with great force in an essay published in 1916:

Men fear thought more than they fear anything else on earth - more than ruin, more even than death. Thought is subversive and revolutionary, destructive and terrible; thought is merciless to privilege, established institutions, and comfortable habits; thought is anarchic and lawless, indifferent to authority, careless of the well-tryed wisdom of the ages...

But if thought is to become the possession of many, not the privilege of the few, we must have done with fear. It is fear that holds men back - fear lest their cherished beliefs should prove delusions, fear lest the institutions by which they live should prove harmful, fear lest they themselves should prove less worthy of respect than they have supposed themselves to be. (Bertrand Russell, from *Principles of Social Reconstruction*, 1916. Quoted Erich Fromm, *On Disobedience and Other Essays*, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1984, pp.34-5)

Nothing is more fearsome to liberal journalists.

The article (Russell quote and all) appears at <http://www.zmag.org/sustainers/content/200212/27edwards.cfm>.

Source: Peter Stone

- On December 31, 2002, the Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation wrote to U.N. Secretary General Kofi Annan, inquiring about a disturbing report in the British press that the U.S. had intercepted Iraq's report on weapons of mass destruction and removed over 8,000 pages (!) of the approximately 11,800-page report, before passing it along to the U.N Security Council. The Foundation also wrote to all the members of the Security Council and to (BRS Honorary Member) Nelson Mandela, attempting to solicit his intervention in the matter. In an article by Ken Coates, the Foundation expressed grave concern about this maneuver by the U.S. government, which appears to have no basis in international law. (How the U.S. obtained the report first is still unclear.) This article is on the Foundation's website at <http://www.russfound.org/UNSecCouncil.htm>.

Source: Ken Blackwell

Rustlings Gerry Wildenberg

"Rustlings" presents a simple substitution cipher based on the writings of Bertrand Russell. In the coded quote below, each letter stands for another letter. For example BERTRAND RUSSELL could be coded as OREGENAQ EHFFRY Y, O=B, R=E, et cetera. The quotes below use different codes. In the cipher below I have made the puzzle harder by disguising the word separations and any punctuation and capitalization. The grouping into 5 letter "words" is meant only to help readability and does not relate to the actual quote.

PDLTN KPKED VNLBK EPKAH UKEDL BVWXA HPDLA VPKXA
EXZWX BLNAL UNXOL XAPDL XALDV ABTQP DLLFJ LCCLA
JLXZP DLKNO DKCXE XDLNE VABXA PDLXP DLNDV ABTQP
DLKNJ XAPLW OPZXX ODKCX EXODQ KATXP DNLEO LJPEP
DLQED XIPDL KNIKE BXW

News from the Humanist World

- The first “Godless March on Washington,” organized by American Atheists and endorsed by (among others) the Council for Secular Humanism, attracted 2,000-3,000 atheists, agnostics, and secular humanists to Washington on November 2, 2002—along with about 60 Christian counterdemonstrators. (An announcement of the event appeared in “News from the Humanist World,” *BRSQ* #115, August 2002.) The *Washington Post*’s report on the event, authored by Caryle Murphy, appeared on November 3, 2002. It can be found on the web at <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A59379-2002Nov2.html>. The International Humanist and Ethical Union (IHEU) also ran an article on the march by Larry Jones in the February 2003 issue of *International Humanist News*.

Updates on Awards and Honorary Members

- BRS Honorary Member Ibn Warraq condemned a recent biographical documentary on Mohammed for its hagiographic depiction of the founder of Islam. In an article in the *New York Sun* by Jacob Gershman (“PBS Documentary Labeled Islamic Propaganda,” December 18, 2002, p. 3), Warraq takes *Mohammed: Legend of a Prophet* to task for its generally uncritical attitude, which makes reform of Islam more difficult.
- Tributes and obituaries to Stephen Jay Gould, winner of the 2000 BRS Award, continue to appear. The December 30, 2002-January 6, 2003 issue of *Time*, which reviewed the past year, ran a tribute to Gould in a section entitled “The People Who Left Us in 2002.” The tribute, by Michael D. Lemonick, was entitled, “A Scientist for Everybody.” It concludes by noting that Gould “delighted his fans and set his enemies’ teeth gnashing, but even the latter had to admit he forced them to think.” (Much the same could be said of Russell, of course.)

BRS Member Reports

- Ever eager to further the Russellian cause, Thom Weidlich has even brought his book, *Appointment Denied: The Inquisition of Bertrand Russell* (Prometheus, 2000) right to City University of New York (CUNY), the institution where Russell’s appointment was famously “denied.” Thom read excerpts from the book at a public event in the archives of the university’s library on September 21, 2000.

An article on the event appeared in *Circum Spice*, a publication of the City College Library of CUNY. The article was featured in issue number 61 (Fall 2000), p. 3. The article appears online at <http://www.ccnycuny.edu/library/News/CircumSpice/cs61-3.html>. The article contains a picture of Thom—although the caption under the picture reads “Bertrand Russell.” Whether *Circum Spice* was trying to honor or slander Thom is still a point of contention.

Coincidentally, the article describing Thom’s appearance appears alongside an article on a different Russell—Russell Banks, who gave the 3rd Annual William Matthews Memorial at CUNY earlier that year.

- Warren Allen Smith’s column in *Gay & Lesbian Humanist* has been retitled “Stateside Gossip” as of the magazine’s Autumn 2002 issue. The column that appeared in that issue is online at <http://www.galha.org/glh/221/gossip.html>.

Russell on the Web

This column will feature brief reports on various Russell-related tidbits on the Web that stumble across the editor’s computer screen.

- Wikipedia, a free online open source encyclopedia (i.e., one that can be updated by its users) has an entry on Bertrand Russell at http://www.wikipedia.com/wiki/Bertrand_Russell. BRS Vice President for Outreach found the site, past Chairman of the Board Ken Blackwell updated its content slightly—and *BRSQ* Editor Peter Stone added a link to the BRS’s website.
- Russellians with a passion for Harley-Davidsons may enjoy checking out the Bertrand Russell Motorcycle Club at <http://www.cpcug.org/user/ackerman/>. The site is run by Bob Ackerman, a longtime BRS member.
- Past BRS Chair Ken Blackwell recently decided to check out the web address <http://www.bertrandrussell.com>. He discovered, to his considerable amusement, that the address is indeed taken—by a website featuring the computer game “Asteroids” (Version 1.2). The game is fully playable, and has been tested by the Editor of the *BRSQ*.

- Those with access to the web might consider checking out some of Russell's works in e-book format. For example, both *Analysis of Mind* (1921) and *Proposed Roads to Freedom* (1918) are available as e-books. For the former, there are actually 11 formats, with prices ranging from \$1.75 up to \$7.95, available at <http://www.ebookmall.com/alpha-titles/a-titles/Analysis-Mind.htm>. For the latter, there are 10, available at <http://www.ebookmall.com/alpha-titles/p-titles/Proposed-Roads-Freedom.htm>. The *BRSQ* thanks Ken Blackwell for this information.

Who's New in Hell

Warren Allen Smith, author of *Who's Who in Hell* (Barricade, 2000) and *Celebrities in Hell* (Barricade, 2002) recently presented the *BRSQ* with a list of the libraries in the U.S. that currently own one or both books. The *BRSQ* reprints the list of libraries carrying *Celebrities in Hell* below; the list of libraries carrying *Who's Who in Hell* will appear in the next issue. Members should consider checking to see if their local library is listed below. If not, ask the library to purchase the books—or, if you're in a generous mood—consider donating copies. (Of course, the *BRSQ* assumes that all BRS-ers are making sure their local libraries have all the essentials of Russell studies.)

The following 60 libraries currently have *Celebrities in Hell*:

Flagstaff City-Coconino County Public Library (Flagstaff, AZ)
 Huntington Beach Public Library (Huntington Beach, CA)
 Los Angeles Public Library (Los Angeles, CA)
 Orange County Public Library (Orange County, CA)
 Oxnard Public Library (Oxnard, CA)
 Stanislaus County Library (Stanislaus County, CA)
 Jefferson County Public Library (Lakewood, CO)
 Pikes Peak Library District (Colorado Springs, CO)
 Library of Congress (Washington, DC)
 Brevard County Libraries (Brevard County, FL)
 Jacksonville Public Library (Jacksonville, FL)
 Leon County Public Library (Tallahassee, FL)
 Oak Lawn Public Library (Oak Lawn, IL)
 Robert Morris College (Chicago, IL)
 William Rainey Harper College (Palatine, IL)
 Elkhart Public Library (Elkhart, IN)
 Valparaiso University (Valparaiso, IN)

Davenport Public Library (Davenport, IA)
 Topeka and Shawnee County Public Library (Topeka, KS)
 Jefferson Parish Library (Metairie, LA)
 Harvard University, Divinity School (Cambridge, MA)
 Lakeland Library Cooperative (Grand Rapids, MI)
 Minneapolis Public Library (Minneapolis, MN)
 St. Paul Technical College (St. Paul, MN)
 Mid-Continent Public Library (Independence, MO)
 St. Louis University (St. Louis, MO)
 Mercer County Library (Lawrenceville, NJ)
 Somerset County Library (Somerset County, NJ)
 ABC News Research Center (New York, NY)
 Buffalo and Erie County Public Library (Buffalo, NY)
 Nassau Library System (Uniondale, NY)
 St. John Fisher College (Rochester, NY)
 University of Rochester (Rochester, NY)
 Fayetteville State University (Fayetteville, NC)
 Cleveland Public Library (Cleveland, OH)
 Columbus Metropolitan Library (Columbus, OH)
 Cuyahoga County Public Library (Cuyahoga County, OH)
 Lakewood Public Library (Lakewood, OH)
 Marion Public Library (Marion, OH)
 Southwest Public Libraries (Grove City, OH)
 Southwestern Ohio Regional Library Center (Fayetteville, OH)
 State Library of Ohio (Columbus, OH)
 Wright Memorial Public Library (Dayton, OH)
 Metropolitan Library System (Oklahoma City, OK)
 Corvallis-Benton County Public Library (Corvallis, OR)
 Multnomah County Library (Portland, OR)
 Salem Public Library (Salem, OR)
 South Dakota School of Mines and Technology (Rapid City, SD)
 Nashville Public Library (Nashville, TN)
 Montgomery County Memorial Library System (Conroe, TX)
 University of Texas at Austin (Austin, TX)
 Salt Lake City Public Library (Salt Lake City, UT)
 University of Richmond (Richmond, VA)
 Bellingham Public Library (Bellingham, WA)
 Kitsap Regional Library (Kitsap County, WA)
 McNeil Island Correctional Center (Steilacoom, WA)
 Seattle Public Library (Seattle, WA)
 Washington Correctional Center (Gig Harbor, WA)
 Ohio County Public Library (Wheeling, WV)
 Milwaukee County Federated Library System (Milwaukee, WI)

BRS Business and Chapter News:

The BRS Library

The catalog of the BRS Library printed in the previous issue of the *BRSQ* failed to list the variety of film and video recordings owned by the BRS and available for loan to members. These recordings are listed below.

For further information, or to inquire about sale or loan of a book or tape, please contact Tom Stanley, BRS Library, Box 434, Wilder VT 05088, **thomas.stanley@valley.net** or visit the BRS Library webpage at **http://www.geocities.com/Athens/Olympus/4268/**.

Dialogues with Russell:

These dialogues with Russell were filmed for television during four and one-half days in the spring of 1959. Transcripts were published in *Bertrand Russell Speaks His Mind* (World Publishing, 1960). Each runs 14 minutes.

- "Bertrand Russell discusses Philosophy" (16mm)
- "Bertrand Russell discusses Religion" (VHS)
- "Bertrand Russell discusses Taboo Morality" (VHS)
- "Bertrand Russell discusses Great Britain" (VHS)
- "Bertrand Russell discusses Fanaticism and Tolerance" (VHS)
- "Bertrand Russell discusses Communism and Capitalism" (VHS)
- "Bertrand Russell discusses the 'H' Bomb" (VHS)
- "Bertrand Russell discusses War and Pacifism" (VHS)
- "Bertrand Russell discusses Happiness" (16mm)
- "Bertrand Russell discusses Power" (16mm)
- "Bertrand Russell discusses the Role of the Individual" (16mm)
- "Bertrand Russell discusses Mankind's Future" (16mm)
- "Bertrand Russell discusses Nationalism" (VHS)

Other Recordings Featuring Russell:

- "The Life and Times of Bertrand Russell" (BBC, 1962. 40 min. 16mm)
- "Bertie and the Bomb" (BBC, 1984. 40 min. VHS)
- "Bertrand Russell" (NBC, 1952. 30 min. 16 mm) Interview with Romney Wheeler.
- "Close Up" (CBC, 1959 30 min. VHS) Interview with Elaine Grand.

**Bertrand Russell Society, Inc.
4th Quarter 2002 Treasurer's Report
10/1/02 Through 12/31/02**

Compiled 1/13/03 by Dennis J. Darland
BRS Treasurer (**djdarland@qconline.com**)

Category Description	
BALANCE 9/30/02	6,909.34
INFLOWS	
Contributions	
Contrib-BRS	95.00
TOTAL Contributions	95.00
Dues	
New Members	72.18
Renewals*	479.70
TOTAL Dues	551.88
Other Income	10.00
TOTAL INCOME	656.88
OUTFLOWS	
Advertising	57.78
Bank Charges	7.85
Library Expenses	16.37
Newsletter	742.05
TOTAL OUTFLOWS	824.05
OVERALL TOTAL	-167.17
BALANCE 12/31/02	6,742.17

* 2003 renewals will appear in 2003.

Bertrand Russell Society, Inc.
2002 Annual Treasurer's Report
1/1/02 Through 12/31/02

Compiled 1/13/03 by Dennis J. Darland
 BRS Treasurer (djdarland@qconline.com)

Category Description	
BALANCE 12/31/01	7,307.19
INFLOWS	
Uncategorized Contributions	0.42
Contrib-BRS	1,705.31
Misc. Contributions	0.67
TOTAL Contributions	1,705.98
Dues	
New Members	497.18
Renewals*	3,756.79
TOTAL Dues	4,253.97
Library Income	38.70
Meeting Income	53.77
Other Income	264.00
TOTAL INFLOWS	6,316.84
OUTFLOWS	
Advertising	57.78
Bank Charges	34.04
Library Expenses	50.47
Meeting Expenses	630.98
Newsletter	3,146.02
Other Expenses	293.57
RUSSELL Subscriptions	2,669.00
TOTAL OUTFLOWS	6,881.86
OVERALL TOTAL	-565.02
BALANCE 12/31/02	6,742.17

* 2003 renewals will appear in 2003.

Greater Rochester Russell Set

Celebrating Six Years of Monthly Russell
 Meetings Open to the Public

GRRS Member Speaks in Toronto

On March 14, GRRS Member Peter Stone will address the Humanist Association of Toronto (HAT). His talk, entitled "Bertrand Russell's Politics & Humanism," will be held at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE) Building, 252 Bloor Street West, Toronto. The talk will begin at 7 PM. For more information, contact the GRRS or visit HAT's website at <http://humanists.net/hat/index.html>.

Program, Winter & Spring 2003

Mar. 13	Russell and the Prisoner's Dilemma
Apr. 10	"An Outline of Intellectual Rubbish"
May 8	Russell on Audio (Celebration of Russell's Birthday)
June 12	<i>Practice and Theory of Bolshevism</i>

All meetings are held at **Daily Perks Coffee House**, 389 Gregory Street, Rochester, NY, at **6:30 PM**. **Note New Meeting Time!**

All dates and topics are subject to change. For information call Tim Madigan at 585-424-3184 or write tmadigan@rochester.rr.com or visit http://sun1.sjfc.edu/~wildenbe/grrs/russell_poster.html.

Solution to *Rustlings* Puzzle, November 2002

"One of the persistent delusions of mankind is that some sections of the human race are morally better than others."

Bertrand Russell, in "The Superior Virtue of the Oppressed", an essay from the collection *Unpopular Essays*.