

# THE BERTRAND RUSSELL SOCIETY

45th ANNUAL MEETING, 22–24 JUNE 2018  
&  
50th ANNIVERSARY OF THE BERTRAND RUSSELL ARCHIVES\*  
at  
MCMASTER UNIVERSITY

## *Programme*

### FRIDAY

10:00 am–4:00 pm  
88 Forsyth Ave.

Researchers are welcome in the [Bertrand Russell Archives](#).

11:00–5:00 pm  
McMaster Museum  
of Art

“[Undying Hope for this Dangerous World: Bertrand Russell in Perspective](#)”  
Exhibition of art, documents, books, medals, furniture, and memorabilia

1:00–5:00 pm  
88 Forsyth Ave.

Registration in the [Bertrand Russell Research Centre](#)

### FRIDAY EVENING

5:00–8:00 pm  
88 Forsyth Ave.

[Grand opening of the new home of the Bertrand Russell Archives and the Bertrand Russell Research Centre](#)

5:45–6:15 pm

Remarks by Vivian Lewis, University Librarian; Dr. Patrick Deane, President and Vice-Chancellor; Kenneth Blackwell, Honorary Russell Archivist; Nicholas Griffin, Director, Russell Research Centre

BBQ

8:30–9:00 pm  
L.R. Wilson Hall  
Room 1057

[Carl Spadoni: “Russell and the Birth of the CND”](#)

Formed in late 1957 and launched with a massive public meeting in London in February 1958, the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament became the largest peace and anti-nuclear movement in Britain. How did this organization coalesce from different protest groups? Who were the players that worked together and established CND? What was Russell’s role in its formation?

9:00–10:00 pm

[Board meeting](#) (open to all members)

### SATURDAY MORNING

7:45–8:30 am  
L.R. Wilson Hall  
Room 1057

“[Jogger’s Breakfast](#)” (Continental plus)

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\* And centenary of Bertrand Russell’s imprisonment for writing against World War I. The Russell Research Centre is publishing his prison correspondence collected by the Russell Archives. This weekend three more letters written from Brixton Prison will be published at <http://russell-letters.mcmaster.ca/>.

8:30–9:50 am

### Landon D. C. Elkind: “Russell and Wittgenstein’s Differing Senses of ‘Tautology’”

Russell seems to say in 1919 that he largely accepts Wittgenstein’s thesis that logic consists in tautologies. He writes, “They [logical propositions] all have the characteristic which, a moment ago, we agreed to call ‘tautology’” (*IMP*, 204). In 1959, he suggests something stronger: “Wittgenstein maintains that logic consists wholly of tautologies. I think he is right in this, although I did not think so until I read what he had to say on the subject” (*MPD*, 88). Russell appears to give similar views in *Human Knowledge* (111–12) and *An Inquiry into Meaning and Truth* (111). This gives rise to some puzzles. First, Russell also claims to be a logical atomist. But a logical atomist needs a powerful logic—a logic much stronger than truth-functional logic with quantifiers. Second, Russell seems to be unsure how to define a tautology: but a primitive proposition of *Principia*, \*1.2, is dubbed “Taut”. We study Russell’s and Wittgenstein’s differing senses of “tautology” to illuminate this issue. We find that Russell and Wittgenstein mean rather different things by “tautology”, and that Russell never adopts the view that Wittgenstein endorses, namely, that logic is just truth-functional logic with quantifiers.

### Gregory Landini: “Logical Atomism’s Necessity”

Russell’s Logical Atomism was born in 1911 with the paper “Analytic Realism”, and it appeared while the second of the projected four volumes of *Principia Mathematica* was at the press. It is a thesis that can be found in a subdued form in Russell’s book *The Problems of Philosophy* (1912). But its best articulation appeared in the book *Our Knowledge of the External World as a Field for Scientific Method in Philosophy* (1914) where Russell proclaims that logic is the essence of philosophy. In both works, acquaintance with universals is the foundation of our knowledge of synthetic a priori truths. In both works, Russell held that the distinctive tool of philosophical criticism is its use of the theories of structure exemplified in *Principia*’s mathematical logic. In Russell’s view, *Principia*’s logic is the synthetic a priori science that studies all the kinds of structures that there are by studying the way relations, exemplified or not, order their fields. The great value of the new science of philosophy, with *Principia*’s logic as its essence, lies in its freeing the mind from the prisons produced by dogmatism parading as if they were necessities. In short, Russell holds that philosophy is the study of necessity and its aim is to reveal that logical necessity is the only necessity.

### Howard Blair: “Russell’s *Introduction to Mathematical Philosophy* (1919), p. 114: the Road to Heterotic Dynamics”

With topology, continuity of functions generalizes from the context of classical analysis to a huge collection of structures, the topological spaces. Lesser, but still increasingly known, are convergence spaces, built on the work of Henri Cartan who began with filters of sets as the basic notion to treat convergence, as distinct from open sets, and is elucidated in full in Bourbaki (1948). Convergence spaces allow a finer structure than topologies permit concerning notion of continuity and continuous trajectories in a space. Built as they are on the notion of filters, several key properties of convergence spaces, individually and collectively, allow us to conservatively extend the notion of differentiation from normed spaces to convergence spaces. By ‘conservatively’ we mean the notion of differentiation remains unchanged on normed spaces, thus in no way altering definitions of differentiation in familiar Euclidean and Hilbert spaces, and Euclidean manifolds. Russell’s *Introduction to Mathematical Philosophy*, beginning on page 114, lays out a non-numerical and non-topological theory of limits and continuity—the earliest precursor to Cartan’s work I have found. “We may now generalise our definitions so as to apply to series which are not numerical or known to be numerically measurable. The case of motion is a convenient one to bear in mind....” To illustrate the power of their approach, we apply this work of Russell’s, and subsequently Cartan’s, to give a causal account, with an example, of continuous motion through discrete nontopological structures in continuous time.

9:50–10:00 am

Coffee break

10:00–11:20 am

### David Blitz: “Russell’s *History of the World in Epitome (for Use in Martian Infant Schools)*”

Among his many writings, Russell’s *A History of the World in Epitome* stands out—among the 150 separate publications printed during his lifetime and listed in section A of the Blackwell/Ruja bibliography—for a number of reasons: it consists of a single sentence (two if you count “The End” included on the last page); it was printed on gold foil coloured paper, and as its subtitle indicates, was intended for other-worldly purposes: “for use in Martian infant

schools”; it was one of two illustrated works by Russell, with drawings by Franciszka Themerson. There are a number of other peculiarities worthy of note: it is the only publication of Russell’s which first appeared in print, in whole (as for its text) previous to its official publication: both in the *Hartford Courant* (May 12, 1960), two years before its official release in 1962, and in 1961 on the dust-jacket of Norman Cousins’ critique of nuclear weapons, *In Place of Folly*. It is also the only Russell text to my knowledge which starts with a biblical reference (to Adam and Eve). This paper will trace the origin and place of Russell’s booklet in the context of his anti-nuclear weapons campaign, including the role of Stephanie May, a Connecticut activist in SANE (National Committee for a Same Nuclear Policy) in releasing the text to the general public. By the way, for those unable to attend the talk, here is the complete text of the pamphlet: “Since Adam and Eve ate the apple, man has never refrained from any folly of which he was capable. The End”.

### Stefan Andersson: “Richard Falk and the Russell Tribunals”

If you have consulted my “Secondary Bibliography of the International War Crimes Tribunal: London, Stockholm and Roskilde” (*Russell*, 2011), you might have noticed that one name appears more often than any other author. In contrast to Noam Chomsky, who was asked to join the Russell Tribunal but declined, Falk was never asked to participate. However, he soon realized the importance of civil society tribunals and wrote about it. He also joined Lelio Basso, who sat on the Russell Tribunal, to lay the groundwork for the Permanent Peoples’ Tribunal. My talk will be about Richard’s contributions to promoting the legacy of the Russell Tribunal.

### Ray Perkins: “Russell’s Hopeful Plea to Philosophers and the Confessions of a Nuclear War Planner”

I will explore the implications of (BRS HM) Dan Ellsberg’s recent book (*The Doomsday Machine: Confessions of a Nuclear War Planner*) for our world’s current condition and comment on some remarkable similarities with Russell’s final decade in his appeal for help to inform the world regarding the nuclear threat and what he feared as the possible extermination of human civilization. Russell’s danger-warnings and his moral denunciations of the principal practitioners of nuclear deterrence (“the wickedest people ...”)—which were widely dismissed as irresponsible nonsense at the time—have turned out, with Daniel Ellsberg’s recent “confessions”, to have been remarkably accurate—and nearly as genocidal as we now (a half-century later) know they were—and very likely still are. Ellsberg has some preventative suggestions. So did Russell.

11:20–11:30 am

Coffee break

11:30–12:30 pm

### David Harley: “Bertrand Russell on the Theory and Practice of Education”

Bertrand Russell’s contributions to educational theory and practice have suffered from two primary distortions. First, that his interest in education only arose after the birth of his children and so was tangential to his primary interests. Second, that the application of his views at Beacon Hill School formed part of the progressive movement in education and that having been characterized by the contemporary press as the “Do as you wish school” was much the same as A.S. Neill’s Summerhill. My research indicates conclusively that Russell’s views on education began to be formulated during his own upbringing and continued to develop throughout adulthood, finding expression in writings both before, during and after WWI. The original research that I conducted on Beacon Hill School with the assistance of Dr. Katharine Tait as well as comparisons between Russell’s views on education and A.S. Neill’s indicate conclusively major disagreements between the two, amounting to not only a difference of degree but of kind. Indeed, if Russell’s views on education are to be perceived to be within the ‘progressive’ movement, this can only be done if placed in a standalone category. I conclude with a discussion of how Russell’s core ideas are not reflected in modern educational theories and practices. This neglect is of growing importance and relevance today.

### William Bruneau: “Russell’s Educational Critics, 1915–35”

Published criticism of Bertrand Russell’s social and political views dates from the turn of the twentieth century. Criticism grew heated as Russell took up the cause of suffragism. His pacifism in the Great War raised the critical temperature again. Despite or perhaps because of those rising temperatures, Russell chose after 1915 to expand his field of activity, rather than restrict it. He began a lifelong career as a writer on British (and North American) social institutions — education, the family, marriage, property. All were dear to right- and left-leaning reformers

alike. Since Russell's arguments had noteworthy foundations in psychology and economics, he excited particularly dark suspicion or downright opposition. Using manuscript evidence and published records, I ask if Russell paid close attention to all of this, particularly to criticism of his educational thought and practice. After all, education was a key feature of social reconstruction as Russell defined it in 1916–18. Educational criticism mattered to Russell. I begin with wartime correspondence between Russell and two remarkable women educators, Lucy Silcox and Helena Normanton, to illustrate his willingness to hear expert educational opinion. I pass on to the extensive published response to *Principles of Social Reconstruction* (1916) and to Russell's "big" books on education (1926, 1932). The patterns of educational criticism I find in the period 1915–35 suggest that Russell listened to his educational critics, and further suggest why Russell's big educational ideas began to fade from public view after the mid-1930s.

Noon–5:00 pm

**“Undying Hope for this Dangerous World: Bertrand Russell in Perspective”**  
Exhibition of art, documents, books, medals, furniture, and memorabilia in  
McMaster Museum of Art

12:30–1:20 pm

Lunch and 2nd meeting of board of directors (open to all members)

1:30–2:50 pm

**Nicholas Griffin: “Russell and Leibniz: Similarities and Differences”**

It is a familiar story, often repeated by Russell, that although he despised Leibniz as a human being, philosophically he regarded him as a kindred spirit. However, in addition to the points Russell frequently made in support of this account, there were many other similarities—and some striking differences—between the two philosophers. The talk will explore a number of these.

**Russell Wahl: “Russell on Leibniz”**

Russell's main foray into the history of philosophy was his work on Leibniz. He became an important authority on Leibniz. Russell saw his work as fitting in to a certain way of doing the history of philosophy which he articulated in the preface of that work. Russell's view was that the importance of the history of philosophy was to assess the view on its truth or falsity so that not just the historical work will be revealed for what it is, but that the very kind of system it belongs to can be shown to be flawed. In this paper I will examine Russell's project in the history of philosophy and assess some of his conclusions about Leibniz's philosophy. In one way, his approach to the history of philosophy seems tailor-made to the position in which Russell found himself at the time he gave his lectures on Leibniz. Russell felt the flaws of Leibniz's system were those of the Idealism that he had so recently rejected. While some of his conclusions are coloured by his project, there is no doubt that there remains much of importance in Russell's ground-breaking work on Leibniz.

**Katarina Perovic: “Russell on Truth and Judgment in *The Philosophy of Logical Atomism* Lectures (1918)”**

It is widely known that after abandoning the *Theory of Knowledge* manuscript, Russell's views were in flux for a while. In the *Logical Atomism* lectures this is particularly evident with respect to a number of issues. In my paper, however, I would like to track aspects in which Russell's views are continuous with his views of 1913 and 1914. In particular, I will focus on his views on facts, truth, and judgment and I will argue that there is more continuity with *Theory of Knowledge* than discontinuity. For instance, Russell still seems adamantly opposed to reifying propositions and is concerned with pointing out that we can only loosely talk about belief in propositions. We find him still grappling with the puzzling issue of “how to deal with error without assuming the existence of the non-existent” and he is even more convinced, just as in the later passages of *Theory of Knowledge*, that the logical form of belief will have to depend on the nature of what is believed. By this he does not only mean to stress that the relation that enters into the complex cannot be treated in the same way as the terms, but, I take it that he still thinks that terms themselves, with their distinct ways of occurring in the complex, will need to be treated in markedly different ways. This sort of interpretation will also nicely sit with the comments that Russell makes about the inability to produce a map in space of a belief.

2:50–3:00 pm

Coffee break

3:00–4:20 pm

### Roberto Parra-Dorantes: “Bertrand Russell’s Notion of Impulse and Its Importance to Ethics”

Russell’s use of the notion of impulse, which plays a central role in many of his ethical and political philosophy writings—from *Principles of Social Reconstruction* (1916) and *Roads to Freedom* (1918) to *Human Society in Ethics and Politics* (1954)—has sometimes been criticized for being vague and imprecise (e.g. C. Delisle Burns in his review of *Principles of Social Reconstruction* from 1917). A thorough examination of Russell’s theory of desire, as presented in *The Analysis of Mind* (1921), along with a somewhat expanded version of it presented in “The Anatomy of Desire” and supplemented with the ideas found in his article “On ‘Bad Passions’” (both published in 1919), allows for a more detailed and coherent explanation of his concept of impulse to emerge. According to Russell, a desire consists in certain sensations and other non-cognitive mental occurrences which issue in action. These occurrences possess a motivating causal property (for which he stipulates the term “discomfort”). When a desire—in this technical sense—is accompanied by a true belief regarding the state of affairs that will make the feeling of discomfort disappear, the desire is said to be conscious. When either no belief, or a false one, goes together with it, the desire is said to be unconscious. The interpretation I will defend is that when Russell uses the term “impulse” in his usually non-technical writings in ethics and political philosophy, he generally does not mean to imply by it an “evanescent, transitory, fitful excitability, [making it] the wrong word to use for a basic conception of social philosophy”, as Burns (1917) criticized, but instead a fundamental motivating element of the sort explained in his theory of desire. The fact that these impulses (constructive, destructive, possessive, etc.) may be accompanied by either true or false beliefs, and are malleable by education, as Russell supposes, makes room for an ethical and political philosophy according to which even the most basic human aspirations are at least partly open to rational assessment and intervention.

### Tanweer Akram: “China’s Problems in the 21st Century”

China has made remarkable economic progress after the reforms that started in the late 1970s. Per capita real income has grown markedly. The rates of absolute poverty have declined. The country is the world’s most important manufacturing centre. Most Chinese people now live in urban areas. However, income inequality and various forms of polarizations have increased. There are serious threats to the environment. The sharp rise in housing prices and increased leverage among corporations and financial institutions pose risks to financial stability. The Communist Party of China retains the monopoly of political power. Bertrand Russell’s understanding of China’s problems was quite prescient. Some of the issues that Russell identified in his book on China, such as industrialization, education, and governance, still apply to contemporary China. However, there are also many new issues that are crucial today for the country’s modernization and development. This paper examines China’s achievements and its challenges in the 21st century. [The paper will be an update of an earlier version: Akram, Tanweer (2014). “Bertrand Russell and the Challenges of Contemporary China”, *Bertrand Russell Society Bulletin* no. 149 (Spring): 23–34. Keywords: China, economic development, growth, modernization, Bertrand Russell]

### Chad Trainer: “(Proposed) *Roads to Freedom* a Century Later”

In the first chapter of his first book, *German Social Democracy* (1896), Bertrand Russell took Karl Marx to task roundly rejecting Marx’s materialistic theory of history, his theory of value, and his view that wage-earners are doomed to be kept at starvation levels of pay. He granted substantial credit, however, to Marx’s theory that, in the industrial world, unfettered competition is bound to result in a continually increasing concentration of wealth. 113 years later, the French economist Thomas Piketty in his celebrated tome, *Capital in the Twenty-first Century*, finds that “What primarily characterizes the United States at the moment is a record level of inequality of income from labour (probably higher than in any other society at any time in the past, anywhere in the world)...” Russell would certainly have thought Piketty’s findings provided grounds for concern. To be sure, as critical as Russell was of Marx, he hardly carried water for the capitalists. Rather, for Russell, “Laissez-faire means, in practice, tyranny by employers.” When weighing the comparative merits of syndicalism and Marxian socialism, Russell expressly stated: “The BEST practicable system, to my mind, is that of Guild Socialism.” He cites trade unions as organizations in which “really effective democracy is possible.” Russell did not live to see the strides technology has made in the 21st century, but he fully expected substantial progress on this front. He warned the world that, although technology could provide significant increases in leisure, its progress was more likely to be accompanied by the prosperous few getting away with preaching the merits of work for the rest while they themselves remained conspicuously idle. As Russell viewed matters, “there is far too much work done in the world, and immense harm is caused by the belief that work is virtuous...” What would be most appropriate is a scenario in which trade unions ensured that advances in productivity were

shared with workers. This would motivate workers to become more efficient with obviously favourable repercussions both for workers directly and society generally by yielding more leisure as a consequence. The United States is presently experiencing a perilously high concentration of wealth. Although Communism may not have been the appropriate remedy, Russell would have cited the extreme inequality of American income as proof positive that the neo-liberal model is hardly the answer. Rather, a robust revival and expansion of trade unions is what is in order. If progress in technology is good for anything, it will eventuate in increasing working people's leisure.

4:20–4:30 pm

Coffee break

4:30–5:30 pm

### Kenneth Blackwell: “Russell’s Autobiographical Insights in Brixton, 1918”

Russell’s swift conversion from a busy pacifist to a lonely jailbird prompted a lot of soul-searching. He expressed fresh and profound views of himself in private letters from his cell while he pondered his philosophical, political and personal future in both the short and the long terms. Passages from some letters have become famous—e.g., the “I was not a stained-glass saint” and “I am free, and the world shall be” letters—but others are worthy of study for his abiding, inspiring and indeed literary view of his character and the struggle to exorcise loneliness from his life. Editors at the Russell Research Centre are preparing an accurate, annotated edition of the 105 surviving letters, which will be drawn on in the talk.

### Nancy Doubleday: “Russell, Impulse and Resilience in *Social Reconstruction*”

At the opening of his *Principles of Social Reconstruction* (1916), Russell makes clear that his purpose in preparing the lectures on which the book is based is to urge human impulse toward the “creative”, understood as supporting “love, the instinct of constructiveness, and the joy of life”. Russell’s efforts, both before his imprisonment, and during his activities leading up to it, can be seen in many lights. Given the various accounts and standpoints from which we can grasp the turbulence of the period and Russell’s deeply held views, how can we best read his strategy in the period leading up to the trial? Taking seriously his conceptual frame of reference, and the evidence for it, both in *Principles*, and found amongst the materials from which he created it, we examine key concepts and the connection to expectations for social change that Russell gave them. Concepts such as “hope”, “impulse”, “creativity”, and “pacifism”, as well as his mode of expressing their intertwined agency in his text, are of special interest, both as elements offering a standpoint for social criticism and from which according to his view we might be given glimpses of an outline for a peaceful future.

5:30–6:00 pm

Break

6:00–7:00 pm  
Celebration Hall,  
Kenneth Taylor Hall

### “Red Hackle” Hour

7:00–8:00 pm

Banquet

8:00–9:00 pm

### Sheila Turcon: “On Working in the Russell Archives”

Sheila Turcon will discuss successful searches for Russell letters in England and Spain as well as failures. She will recount various trips: to Lady Ottoline Morrell’s Garsington Manor—the first and only time she met Russell’s son Conrad and his wife—to Newnham College, Villa I Tatti (the home of Russell’s brother-in-law Bernard Berenson in Italy), and Pembroke Lodge where Russell grew up. She will talk about her friendship with Russell’s daughter, Kate Tait, and visits to the Russell home, Carn Voel, in Cornwall. She will touch briefly on retracing Russell’s steps during his vacations with his lover Lady Constance Malleison. She will reveal memories of Russell by people who knew him. Illustrated.

### Michael D. Stevenson: “‘The Iowa Lady’: Bertrand Russell and Helen MacLeod Fiske, 1931–1932”

“I went to see the Iowa lady,” Bertrand Russell wrote to his mistress, Patricia Spence, in December 1931 during the final stage of his extended North American lecture tour. “She turned out to be quite unlike her letters,” Russell noted, “sincere & earnest, & very lonely. I should

have been needlessly unkind if I had not gone, & I liked her very much.” Since Russell’s correspondence with Spence had been subject to a long-standing embargo until very recently, Russell scholars have been previously unaware of Russell’s involvement with this American woman identified as Helen MacLeod Fiske from Iowa Falls in his 1931 pocket diary, and no other mention of Fiske exists in the voluminous correspondence currently contained in the Russell Archives. This paper will reconstruct Russell’s short-lived but intense relationship with Fiske in 1931 and 1932 using diverse sources that include newspapers, hitherto unexamined archival records, an interview with Fiske’s only child who met Russell during the 1931 tour, and video footage of Fiske’s farmhouse and property in Iowa Falls. Fiske, a journalist and aspiring playwright who had moved to Iowa with her infant son following the death of her husband, a prominent Minneapolis lawyer, proved to be much more important to Russell than many of the women with whom he carried on casual affairs during his lecture tours of the interwar period. As such, documenting the relationship between Russell and Fiske provides new insight into Russell’s complex interactions with women in general and specifically into his relationships with Patricia Spence and his second wife, Dora Russell, as he entered a particularly tumultuous period in his private life in the early 1930s.

## SUNDAY MORNING

7:45–8:30 am  
L.R. Wilson Hall  
Room 1057

“Jogger’s Breakfast” (Continental plus)

8:30–9:50 am

**Tim Madigan: “Russell on Byronic Unhappiness”**

In 1930, Bertrand Russell published *The Conquest of Happiness*. In the first part of the book he explores the causes of unhappiness and the ways one can try to overcome them. One of these causes, he says, is “Byronic unhappiness” which he identifies with the life and writings of English Romantic poet Lord Byron (1788–1824). Essentially, the Byronic individual has a self-absorbed, brooding personality. The Byronic personality may also include descriptions that include a proud, moody, cynical, defiant and lonely person. Russell depicts Byronic individuals as those who are “proud of their unhappiness, which they attribute to the nature of the universe and consider to be the only rational attitude for an enlightened man.” In this talk I will explore what Russell means by “Byronic Unhappiness” and why its attractive features—especially defiance towards convention and a willingness to question all accepted wisdoms—need to be tempered by concern for others and a sense of humility in order to lead to a happy existence.

**John Lenz: “Bertrand Russell and the Post-War Greek Left”**

In 2012, George Kalpadakis published (in Greek) *Bertrand Russell and the Post-Civil-War Greek Left*. He sent this to the BRS in July 2017 and I have translated his book, which includes the preface by the iconic hero of the resistance against the Nazis, one of the heroic Greeks of all time, Manolis Glezos. Another hero of the Greek peace movement is Dr. Gregory Lambrakis, whose assassination (1963) by the government and police is the subject of the classic political film *Z* (by Costa-Gavras, 1969). It turns out that Glezos and Lambrakis were followers of Russell. They attended his Aldermaston march and visited him in Wales. They founded a Bertrand Russell Youth League in Greece. Lambrakis brought the peace march to Athens; that contributed to his assassination not long afterwards. Russell supported their cause with letters and statements. I summarize the history I learned from Kalpadakis’ book and related documents.

**Laurie Endicott Thomas: “Bertrand Russell: Agnostic Priest and Atheist Saint?”**

Priests and saints may be religious figures, but they also serve practical purposes within society. Even a secular modern society has a need for the social roles that priests and saints filled in ancient and medieval societies. Priests and saints can serve as teachers of philosophy: priests teach mainly through the use of language, while saints teach mainly by example. For this reason, even agnostics and atheists need to think carefully about how they choose their teachers, and about whom to revere as examples of heroic virtue. Bertrand Russell’s life serves as a useful case study for exploring the roles of priests and saints in the lives of non-believers and the role of scientists and scholars within a democratic society.

9:50–10:00 am

Coffee break

10:00–11:20 am

**Tony Simpson: “Russell, Ottoline and Lawrence”**

During the early months of the First World War, Ottoline Morrell was reminded of her childhood at Welbeck Abbey in the English Midlands by D. H. Lawrence’s writings. She showed Lawrence’s books to Bertrand Russell, her lover. In due course, she introduced the two men, who at first got along famously, but only for long enough to conceive a series of public lectures on reforming human relations with a view to preventing another such world war. Thereafter, they found their paths diverged, gradually discovering that they “differed from each other more than either differed from the Kaiser,” in Russell’s words. Nevertheless, Russell wrote his *Principles of Social Reconstruction* while Lawrence toiled at what became *Women in Love*, replete with characters not unlike Ottoline and her “learned, dry Baronet”. Russell considered Lawrence a “sensitive would-be despot”, but acknowledged some positive influence on *Principles*.

**Andy Bone: “Russell and the Other DORA: the Legal and Political Background to His Prosecution under the Defence of the Realm Act in 1918”**

Most students of Russell’s life are aware of his trial and conviction in February 1918 for making statements “likely to prejudice His Majesty’s relations with a foreign power”. But the legal and political background to Russell’s case is less well understood. How could a casual aside about the strikebreaking proclivities of the American military have landed Russell in Brixton Prison for six months? This paper will seek to elucidate the battery of draconian emergency powers forged by Britain’s wartime governments, and to assess the political considerations influencing their deployment against Russell and other dissenters.

**Bernard Linsky: “Who was the present King of France?”**

Bertrand Russell’s example of a definite description, “the present King of France”, first appeared in print in “On Denoting” in 1905. The source of the example seems to be Richard Whately’s *Elements of Logic*, which was republished in many editions throughout the 19th century, even when France was an empire and later a republic. Whately first used the example when there was a King of France; however, it was unaltered in the later editions of the book (except for one edition in which it is “the present ex-King of France”). The example was meant to illustrate Whately’s own analysis of definite descriptions using syllogistic logic, and Russell noticed that it fails for cases in which there is no present King of France. Russell was making a joke at the expense of “traditional logic”.

11:20–11:30 am

Coffee break

11:30 am–Noon:

**Alan Schwerin: Masterclass on “Did Russell Experience an Epiphany in 1911?”**

For many, the eyes are the window to the soul. But is there a gateway to the mysteries of the mind? Frustratingly elusive, the mind and its contents can, fortunately for us, be fathomed in a variety of ways. While many strands present themselves, arguably the most secure routes into the mind, especially that of the philosopher, are the rich philosophical fabrics that have been laced together by the thinker—texts both formal and informal. The hidden mysteries of the mind of the philosopher will unfold slowly to patient and persistent enquiries. We have much to gain from an investigation of the correspondence from one of the most prolific philosophers of the twentieth century: Bertrand Russell. While Russell’s formal corpus is monumental, his informal correspondence is equally breathtaking, and revelatory. Changing practically daily, the entries in the annotated catalogue of his correspondence in the Russell Archives at McMaster University listed 131,582 records by 24 January 2018. This fascinating resource offers a unique insight into the mind of Russell. More specifically, the correspondence shows that Russell’s commitment to certainty undergoes a major transformation in 1911. While Russell’s views on philosophy change throughout his life, as has been well documented by numerous scholars, there is ample evidence to suggest that 1911 saw an especially dramatic alteration. This seismic shift in his thought is due in large measure to radical alterations in his commitment to certainty: a fundamental transformation—as I see it—that is induced by an epiphany. Our session will consider the evidence for this proposal. See [this file](#) for preparatory reading.

Noon–1:00 pm

Lunch and **Society membership meeting**

1:00 pm

Farewell