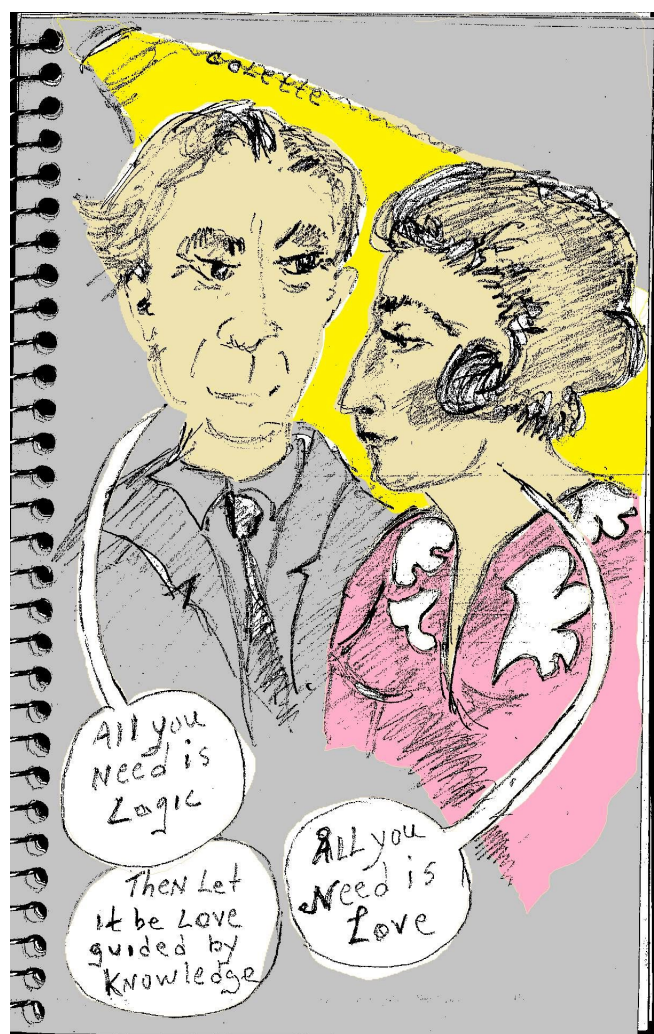


THE BERTRAND RUSSELL SOCIETY BULLETIN

In this issue

- 2026 Conferences postscripts
- Treasurer's mid-year update from Landon Elkind
- CFP: *Principia*'s 2nd Edition at 100
- Russell in *O Lucky Man!* by Nick Griffin
- Revisiting Carroll's Barbershop paradox by Gregory Landini
- Russell Quote of the Issue on the last page



Artist Credit: Gregory Landini

Russell Conference Season, 2026

BY ANDREW G. BONE

2026 wasn't the first time that the BRS AM at McMaster has shared the spotlight with a more narrowly focused gathering of Russellians at the university. In 2005 "On Denoting" was the Society's co-headliner; in 2010 it was the turn of *Principia* (in the book's centenary year); after a rather longer hiatus between double-headers, *The Analysis of Mind* had its moment in 2022, then, this year, it was back to *Principia*—or rather "PM2" a hundred years (plus one) after publication of the second edition of Russell and Whitehead's opus (revised exclusively by BR). The latter, more academic meeting was organized by your editor Landon Elkind and received a \$49,683 grant from the US National Endowment for the Humanities, which was most assuredly *not* responsible for anything at all said about that perennial hot potato of a topic, Russell's logic. The Bertrand Russell Research Centre acted as on-ground host for Society members visiting McMaster for the AM. (Some details about the PM2 meeting can be viewed [here](#), and abstracts of all papers delivered at the AM [here](#).)

There were some teething problems in arranging the two gatherings back-to-back—due to the delayed release of funding for PM2 and a charity bike ride creating an unexpected run on accommodations for BRS-ers on the McMaster campus and beyond. The bloated FIFA behemoth that was the 2026 World Cup—partially hosted in nearby Toronto—had no discernible disruptive effect on any of the arrangements or proceedings.

What necessity demanded actually proved highly advantageous to the synergies, both intellectual and social, of the twin meetings. In 2022 the AoM events kicked off *after* the BRS AM had wrapped up, with a couple of "dead" days in between. This year, the PM-ers led off on Monday through Thursday (8-11 June), with the Society closing things out on the Friday and Saturday (12-13 June), a major break from its time-honoured convention of meeting over the

course of a whole weekend. (But if a Russell Society can't improvise, innovate or adapt, what hope is there for humanity?) The arrangement worked well because of the overlap of *dramatis personae* between the two meetings—including of your two editors, who both took the podium at both meetings.

The baton was passed not so much seamlessly as spectacularly from PM2 to the BRS at a garden dinner party outside Russell House put on for delegates from both camps on the Thursday evening thanks to the tremendous generosity and hospitality of the McMaster University Library.

For *Bulletin* readers who haven't yet ventured to McMaster, or who have not been since the official opening of Russell House in 2018—fifty years after the Russell Archives came to McMaster—the building is a converted residential home just off the main campus. It houses both the archives (downstairs) and the Research Centre (upstairs), the former falling inside the university library's domain and the latter that of the Faculty of Humanities.

The following evening the resolutely secular weather gods again smiled favourably on the BRS, enabling the AM's traditional banquet also to be staged outside, at one of Hamilton's best kept secrets: the patio of the university's graduate student bar, The Phoenix. Suitably wine and dined, the guests then adjourned indoors to hear Tony Simpson (director of the Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation) talk evocatively about Carn Voel. Russell's one-time Cornish summer home remained in his family for decades until its recent purchase and renovation by the BRPF's sister charitable organization, the Atlantic Peace Foundation, and *should* be the site of next year's BRS AM.

Although the subject matter of the PM2 meet was understandably specialized, there was nevertheless considerable variety in the presentations, ranging from a historical examination of BR's influence on Italian logicians (Giovanni

Ratti), through Margaret Macdonald's engagement with *Principia* in her thesis (Giulia Fellappi), and of course all the logical and meta-physical issues raised by *Principia* in between.

Of special note at the Society's AM were the last two talks on the schedule, both dealing with Russell's International War Crimes Tribunal in the final years of his life. The first was a personal reflection by Russ Stetler, who as an emissary for Russell played a major role in organizing these proceedings as well as providing secretarial support for BR at Plas Penrhyn. The second of these highly complementary papers was a more analytical account of the Russell-led investigation into alleged American atrocities in Vietnam, presented by Swedish historian Leyla Belle Drake, who has recently completed a doctoral dissertation on the subject at Uppsala University.

These two presentations (both can be

viewed on the BRS/Russell Centre's *Russelliana* YouTube page) provided a dramatic finale to five days of stimulating talks across two separate meetings and covering a pretty full gamut of Russell's personal, political and philosophical lives. Among other highlights of the Society's AM were talks delivered by two undergraduate presenters, Dev Pandya (McMaster) and Sydney Dilling (Trent). Both were of the highest quality, but regrettably there can be only one winner of the Society's Student Essay Award, and it was Dev Pandya who received this accolade (plus a free year's membership in the BRS!) for his paper entitled "The Philosopher as Image: Bertrand Russell, Aesthetic Self-Testimony, and the Visual Archive". With an eye to the future, the Society would be well advised to nurture and sustain the interest of these and all other young Russellians.

Post script to June workshop celebrating Francesco Orilia

BY GREGORY LANDINI

In June we had an inspirational BRS meeting in Hamilton, as well an audacious NEH funded conference (thanks to our own Landon D. C. Elkind) that celebrated the 1925 second edition of *Principia Mathematica*. Next year (2027) we should celebrate Russell's remarkable *Outline of Philosophy* which codifies his abandonment of the *subject* of Acquaintance, his Neutral Monism and four-dimensionalist Eternalist reconstructions of *mind* and *matter*. There was also a remarkable conference in honor of the career and retirement of Francesco Orilia (University of Macerata, Italy), who for many years has been a champion of Russell's philosophies. I say "philosophies" because, as Francesco reminded me at the conference:

I am captivated by the research ideas of Russell's *Principles of Mathematics* and its commitment to propositions, while you are working from Rus-

sell's later *Scientific Method in Philosophy* whose goal is to rid abstract particulars from the subject-matter of every genuine field. Our meta-physical views seem incommensurable!

We are all Russellians, partly because there are many Russells. He had the laudable audacity to change his mind and even change back again. (*Sapere Aude*). But since we never quite know what philosophical position it wisest to hold, I prefer *Dum Spiro Spero* (While I have life, I have hope). The closest of friends may, nonetheless, work in different research programs— each hoping to solve philosophical problems. The conference discussed Francesco's work and this took us to logic, modal logic, temporal logic, entailment logic, the logic of fiction (Meinong vs Russell), the dispute between Eternalism and Presentism, the nature of index-

icals, quasi-indexicals and Russellian descriptivism (*versus* referentialist theories). And there were still many more Russellian topics such as whether there is distinction between *propositions* and *events* and *states of affairs*. A “Paradox of Pomeranians” emerged concerning whether transposition of a were-would subjunctive is

logically valid. (See my discussion of the Carroll Barbershop Paradox in this BRS Bulletin). There were so many engaging talks that I shall not mention any speaker’s name here- with a volume planned to be published in the years ahead.

Mid-year Treasurer’s Update

BY LANDON D. C. ELKIND

The BRS remains in good financial health. We have just shy of \$18,000 in our checking and slightly over \$15,000 in our savings. As is typical for our budget, our largest expenses so far were our annual meeting (\$3,300) and our subscription to *Russell* (\$1,695).

Our payment processor has changed from PayPal to Stripe. Members should not notice anything different about the renewal process, but now membership renewal can be automated.

Our website has been updated (our old template was no longer being maintained, and had not been for some time). Members will notice the look and feel of the website is significantly different from its appearance over the past ten years (around when it was last updated).

Call for Papers: *Principia Mathematica*’s Second Edition at 100

BY LANDON D. C. ELKIND

We invite contributed papers on *Principia Mathematica* and its second edition, broadly construed, for a collection that also brings together the papers stemming from this workshop. Topics of interest include but are not limited to the following:

1. What was Whitehead’s influence on the *Principia*’s second edition? According to Whitehead himself, the second edition of *Principia* was “solely undertaken by Mr. Bertrand Russell.” Nonetheless, Whitehead notes that he did discuss and concur in the changes to any first edition materials. What proposals did Whitehead influence, and how did he influence them?
2. To what extent did the second edition of *Principia* support a move among logicians and mathematicians towards the now-preferred (set-theoretic) foundation for mathematics? The logic of *Principia* was decidedly intensional such that two relations might not be identical even if they have the same extension (that is, they apply to the same things). But Quine (1941, 147-148) for example argued at length that the intensional logic of *Principia* was best replaced by the extensional logic. In the 1930s and 1940s, notable logicians like Kurt Gödel (1944) and Alfred Tarski (1944) similarly moved in this direction (and argued explicitly for doing so). Arguably, though, the second edition of *Principia* apparently departs remarkably from its earlier intensional stance. Not only that, but the second edition departs (if it does) from the earlier intensional logic and embraces an extensional logic due to different influences, especially that of Ludwig Wittgenstein. Taken as a newly extensional work, *Principia*’s second edition rather supported the gathering momentum towards extensional

logics. This belies the lukewarm reception of *Principia's* second edition among reviewers, who largely repeated their impressions of the first edition with minimal discussion of the second edition's innovations.

3. What parts of *Principia's* first edition, like the multiple relation theory of judgment, are rejected in its second one? Perhaps the most difficult and longstanding textual question concerning *Principia's* first edition concerns the highly technical matter of its formal grammar or syntax. Similarly, a difficult and longstanding controversy persists concerning Russell's multiple relation theory of judgment. These two issues are related, though there has been little interaction across these two literatures.
4. What results from *Principia's* text can be saved if other parts are rejected? Perhaps the most significant inquiry undertaken in *Principia's* second edition is to what extent the first edition's two axioms of reducibility (*12·1 and *12·11) can be abandoned without critically damaging the rest of the work. Kurt Gödel (1944) identified an error in a key demonstration within this appendix, and subsequently scholars intermittently discussed whether a repair was possible and how it might be done. But how might other results be recovered without the axioms of reducibility? For example, Wittgenstein (1922, 5.53-5.5303) in his *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* criticized *Principia's* account of identity. This definition hinges on the axioms of reducibility in *Principia's* first edition. So also does the recovery of important results about classes, like the principle of extensionality (*20·11). Which results besides induction are jeopardized by abandoning reducibility in *Principia's* second edition? How are these to be recovered? Applications of interactive theorem provers to *Principia's* theorems and proofs are especially welcome.
5. Contributions utilizing the PM-MATS digital resource are especially welcome. Read more about this resource <https://principia.lib.uiowa.edu/about.html>.

Absent alternative arrangements, papers are due no later than December 14, 2026. Expressing interest in submitting a contribution is strongly encouraged by October 15, 2026. Papers should be at least 5,000 words and no more than 15,000. Papers should be anonymized for blind review and submitted with a cover page indicating the author's name, affiliation, email, paper title, and abstract to Landon Elkind, [landon\[dot\]elkind\[at\]wku\[dot\]edu](mailto:landon[dot]elkind[at]wku[dot]edu), with the subject line PM2 Paper Submission.

TeX format is encouraged for contributions, but Word formats are also acceptable. Typesetting of equations using the *principia* package or the PMifier (for Word users) is strongly encouraged.

The Principia Mathematica's Second Edition in Its Century, 1925-2025 workshop has been made possible in part by a major grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities (Collaborative Research, RZ-206663-26). Any views, findings, conclusions, or recommendations expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect those of the National Endowment for the Humanities.

"O Lucky Man!"

BY NICHOLAS GRIFFIN

"Realism is not a matter of showing real things, but of showing how things really are."

- Bertolt Brecht¹

In The Bertrand Russell Society Bulletin for February 2024, Tim Madigan proposed that we "keep up" with references to Russell in popular culture.² The following piece is presented as a contribution to that project, though it can hardly be counted as "keeping up" since the film it's concerned with is over 50 years old – we all keep up at our own pace. Nonetheless, it has not, I think, been previously noticed. It concerns a silent, but intellectually significant and prominent, allusion to Russell in Lindsay Anderson's great film *O Lucky Man!* (1973).³ (Spoiler alert: If you haven't seen the film, you may want to watch it before I tell you how it ends.)

First, some background. The aesthetics of the film are heavily influenced by Brecht and its narrative structure by Voltaire's philosophical satire, *Candide or Optimism* (1759).⁴ In Voltaire's story, the guileless, eponymous hero has been brought up at the country estate of Baron Thunder-ten-tronckh (he is reputed to be the illegitimate child of the Baron's sister) where he has absorbed the teachings of Dr Pangloss, the tutor to the Baron's son, who famously believes that this is the best of all possible worlds. He is expelled from this Edenic setting when he is discovered *in flagrante delicto* with Cunégonde, the Baron's daughter. Thereafter he travels through Europe, the Americas, and the Ottoman Empire in search of Cunégonde, going haplessly from one misadventure to another, each testing, but failing (until the very end) to undermine, the teachings of Dr Pangloss. The book is episodic: each short chapter describing the calamities, natural and man-made, which befall Candide and the other characters at different locations on their travels. The episodes are not plausibly linked: Candide goes direct from one disaster to the next, the book is a catalogue of catastrophes. The disasters would be horrific, but are so extravagant as to be absurd. The one occasion, equally absurd, on which they are treated

well is when they arrive in the country of Eldorado (Chs. XVII and XVIII), a beautiful land of plenty where they are loaded with riches by people who care nothing for wealth. But Candide pines for Cunégonde and so "these happy men decided to be happy no longer" and leave (p. 83). Voltaire's style, like Anderson's, is dry, distanced, and matter-of-fact.

Candide is obviously a satire on Leibniz's theodicy. Towards the end of the book, when Candide reminds Pangloss of the irrefutable evidence that not everything is for the best, Pangloss holds firm: "Leibnitz cannot be wrong", he says (p. 136).⁵ But Voltaire's satire is directed at more than Leibniz. He takes aim widely: at the Inquisition, the Jesuits, religion in general; at Prussia, France, and England; at slavery, the military, colonialism, and the sheer inhumanity of humanity. (He was also lampooning the popular literary genre of the romantic, picaresque novel.) The book was banned all over the place, as late as 1929 in the USA. In 1973, when *O Lucky Man!* was released, it was having something of a revival. In that year, the BBC aired a TV adaptation with Ian Ogilvy as Candide and Frank Finlay as Voltaire, the narrator. The same year, a heavily revised version of Leonard Bernstein's comic operetta, *Candide*, which had flopped when it first appeared in 1956, opened in New York to great success. And a few years earlier, in 1968, Terry Southern and Mason Hoffenberg's novel, *Candy*⁶, was filmed by Christian Marquand with Ewa Aulin in the title role. Only the last of these could have had any influence on *O Lucky Man!*, for Anderson's film was several years in gestation. The two works are very different, but they do have one thing in common: while Bernstein and the BBC stuck to Voltaire's story, Southern and Hoffenberg's novel and Anderson's film are set in contemporary America and Britain, respectively, and the misadventures they conjure up

for their protagonists are quite different from Voltaire's. As befits the heroine of a story in *The Traveller's Companion*, Candy's misadventures are exclusively sexual. Anderson's story is, like Voltaire's, much wider-ranging in its satire, and much darker.

O Lucky Man! is the second in a trilogy of films by Lindsay Anderson starring Malcolm McDowell playing a character called "Mick Travis". There is some debate as to whether these are three different characters with the same name or the same character at different stages of his life: nothing in the films, apart from the name, links the stories together. In the first, *If...* (1968), Travis is a student suffering the horrors of a private British boarding school.⁷ At the start of *O Lucky Man!*, after a short, silent, black-and-white prologue about the brutality of work on colonial coffee plantations, Travis is seen graduating from a training course for coffee salesmen.⁸ From this relatively safe environment he is peremptorily expelled to take over the north-east region to replace Oswald, who has disappeared after being suspected of fencing stolen goods. (He turns up later in the film, a successful criminal.) In the north-east Travis is taken in by the sleazy petit bourgeoisie who, by broad innuendo, hope he will continue Oswald's corrupt practices. On his travels as a salesman he visits a steel works which has been shut down and then a secret military base where he is arrested at gunpoint and tortured until he admits to being a Russian spy. He escapes because the base blows up in a nuclear explosion.⁹

There follows a brief pastoral idyll, corresponding to the Eldorado episode in *Candide*, where he finds a country church and is given surprisingly literal succour by the vicar's wife. But, like *Candide*, he decides to be happy no longer and takes her advice to "Go south. There's nothing in the north for a boy like you" (A 1:08). Hitch-hiking, he gets a ride to a private clinic seeking "volunteers" for transplant experiments. Just in time, he discovers a previous victim whose head has been transplanted onto a pig.¹⁰ Horrified, he breaks out of the clinic and

flees on a bicycle only to collide at the gates with a van which is carrying Alan Price (who is reading George Orwell) and his musicians, along with a hippy-ish, groupie named Patricia (Helen Mirren). They take him to London.

Patricia is his gateway to the grand bourgeoisie. She's the disorderly daughter of Sir James (Ralph Richardson), who is (by her affectionate estimation) immensely wealthy and completely ruthless. She affects to be indifferent to property because her dad has so much of it. By guile, Travis arranges a meeting with Sir James and, by accident, becomes his assistant. Sir James is looking to make a safe investment in the newly independent country of Zingara, where, however, an insurrection is underway. Sir James arranges to provide Zingara with a chemical weapon to exterminate the rebels. Travis has found himself close to where he wants to be: "Right at the top" (B 0:06). But as the documents are being signed and the money handed over, the police appear and find Travis in possession of both as a result of Sir James' quick thinking. Travis gets five years hard labour. "We all want justice./ But you got to have the money to buy it", sings Alan Price (B 0:45).

Jail is a turning point for Travis. So far, he has been exclusively motivated by money. But after he leaves prison money is of no interest to him, his intention is to do only good. This, sadly, does not improve his luck. He gives away most of the money he left prison with to a street preacher (the rest is stolen by pickpockets) who then turns the faithful against him because he refuses to believe in original sin. He risks his life trying to stop a woman from killing herself and her two children – she commits suicide anyway. While helping at a soup kitchen, a fight breaks out and, when he preaches brotherly love to the combatants, they turn on him and nearly kill him. (The scene is Anderson's *homage* to Buñuel.) Somehow he survives and the next scene shows him roaming the busy streets of London at night, penniless, homeless, and friendless. In the crowd is a sandwich man with a placard advertizing a casting call for a

film. He takes the man's card and ends up in a hall full of people, many of whom we recognize from the film. There he gets cast by Lindsay Anderson himself to star in the movie we've just watched.

Anderson's film offers a comprehensively bleak view of the human condition. Yet the film does not end bleakly: it ends with a party that begins as the credits roll. (A party which, paradoxically, is a wrap party, celebrating the completion of the film, and a party before shooting begins, to celebrate the completion of casting.) Anderson's ending parallels Voltaire's. At the end of Voltaire's story, *Candide*, having decided that "work is the only way to make life bearable", famously announces that he will go and cultivate his garden. Travis/McDowell decides to make a movie. In both there is a degree of reconciliation with the horrors of the world. Yet these horrors are significantly different in the two works. *Candide* faces natural as well as human disasters (storms, shipwreck, the Lisbon earthquake) and when things go better for him, he becomes bored. His problems lie in the natural order of things as well as in human attempts to re-order them. Travis's are exclusively the latter. And this raises a political problem: is any degree of reconciliation an appropriate response to the horrors humanity creates?

The politics of *O Lucky Man!* are a matter of controversy. After *If....*, which ends with Travis leading an armed insurrection against the school, one *might* have expected the sequel to show how the revolution had progressed. And perhaps, in a way, it does. After the student revolts of 1968 had fizzled, the world we are shown in 1973 has the bourgeoisie firmly back in control and even more obnoxious than before. Even in 1967, they were already shooting back as *If....* ended. This might suggest a Marxist interpretation: the student revolt failed because the students lack the power and organization to challenge the existing order effectively. (They are clearly out-gunned, even at the end of *If....*) For a Marxist, a successful revolution requires the proletariat. It is notable that, while Anderson ranges high and low in his critique

of bourgeois society, he nowhere takes aim at the proletariat. This is significant, but not for Marxist reasons. In the steel plant scene, where he might easily have done so, the proletariat is not a revolutionary force waiting to seize its chance, it has been made redundant!

Although Brecht's dramaturgy had an obvious and profound influence on the film, if the film's politics owe anything to Brecht, it is to the politics of the early plays, *Baal* and *The Threepenny Opera*, not to the committed Marxism of the later, great plays. Indeed, in the *Times* interview already cited, Anderson says that socialists will find his film "extremely reactionary". And indeed they do: Colin McCabe puts it in a special category of "reactionary art". He cites it as an example of the "vulgarisation and de-politicisation of Brecht" in order to convey the "message of the reactionary petit-bourgeois intellectual – that we can do nothing against the relentless and evil progress of society ... except note our superiority to it."¹¹ Alan Price, in the commentary (A 0:20ff), goes further. He maintains the film is a satire on socialism and hails the advent of Thatcherism. He argues that, though corruption is inevitable under either capitalism or socialism, capitalism is to be preferred because, with it, you can make a lot of money. The suggestion seems to be that corruption works best under capitalism. (I have no quarrel with the last point.)

Price's reading of the film, however, is equally difficult to maintain. Britain in the early 1970s was hardly a socialist state. And in the film those institutions which might be thought to have made it one – public education, universal health care, nationalized infrastructure, public housing, the welfare system, etc. – are not so much as mentioned. The medical experiments, for example, are carried out in a private clinic, not the NHS or a university. I suspect (at least, I would like to think) that Anderson does not target these public institutions because he does not disapprove of them. And perhaps the same is true of his silence about the proletariat: in Britain in 1973 trades unionists, for example, were common targets of reac-

tionary petit bourgeois satire. Only the police, the military, and the judicial system, among public institutions, are attacked at length and these are hardly the exclusive hallmark of socialism. (In the pre-prison scenes, politicians occasionally appear as fixers for whatever level of bourgeois corruption is going on.) By contrast, the prison system is treated kindly in the narrative. Only the sarcastic intertitles citing the enormous amount of public money spent on rehabilitation (a Brechtian distancing device) remind us not to take this too seriously.¹² The film needs some pivot-point on which to turn Travis from trying to get rich to trying to do good and Anderson chooses the unlikely expedient of five years hard labour. Anderson's target is not socialism, but human beings, as he explains in the *Times* interview:

The poor people are just as beastly to their fellow men as the rich people. And I don't think the tone of the film is such to say that they're beastly to them only because they're poor. They're beastly to them because they're human beings.

Anderson's film is thoroughly misanthropic, but it is, I would like to believe, the misanthropy of a man with leftist sympathies.

What does all this have to do with Bertrand Russell? In fact, quite a lot. We don't see Travis's life in jail, but we do see him packing up his belongings in his cell as he is about to be released (B 0:52ff). At the back of his table lined up against the wall is a row of books. Only one is plainly visible: Russell's *A History of Western Philosophy*, in the 1970s Unwin paperback edition with Russell's photo on the front. It is the only book which Anderson clearly intends the audience to recognize instantly.¹³ Above the books are four photographs attached to the wall which Travis reverently takes down and places carefully in a folder. The most easily identified one is, again, Russell. To the left of him is Schweitzer (also easily identified) and below him a photo of Gorki as a young man.¹⁴ As already noted, the film's narrative pivots around

Travis's unseen five years in prison which turn him from a man interested only in getting ahead to one interested only in doing good. The books on his desk and the photographs above it are the only clues Anderson gives as to what wrought this transformation and of them Russell is pre-eminent.

So, why Russell and why the *History*? He could, after all, have chosen Martin Luther King and Gandhi or stuck with Lenin and Mao from *If...* Obviously, he needed instant recognizability, and in 1973 few intellectuals would have been as widely and as readily recognized as Russell. You would not have to be a member of the Bertrand Russell Society to get the reference. Moreover, Russell was renowned equally for his intellect and his attempts to improve the world. I think his intellectual credentials were as important to Anderson as his political activism, for he needed to convey that the world's greatest minds had attempted to ameliorate the human condition, and let the film show that they had failed. *A History of Western Philosophy* was also a very famous book with, conveniently for a film, the author's photo and name in large letters on the front cover. It also suggests, as do the other books on Travis's desk but more succinctly, that Travis had covered the entire western intellectual tradition in his search for enlightenment. And, of course, the *History* will remind viewers (at least those who are members of the BRS) of Russell's book on Leibniz, which links Travis to *Candide*. This is not to suggest that Anderson ascribes Leibniz's theodicy to Russell: no one could think that Russell believed that this was the best of all possible worlds. Anderson's point is rather that Russell's teachings fail Travis in the way that Leibniz's failed *Candide*. Anderson is clearly using Russell as an avatar of the great and the good – perhaps even of the greatest and the best – but he is far from endorsing Russell's views as an effective means of putting the world to rights.

And yet, there is an incongruity in the way Anderson uses Russell for this purpose; and Anderson, I am sure, must have been aware of it. Travis emerges from prison a complete al-

truist – he gives away the money he needs to survive, he nearly dies trying to prevent a suicide, he makes no attempt to defend himself from the enraged mob – he acts only in the interests of others, taking no heed of his own. These are values he is more likely to have got from the prison chaplain than *A History of Western Philosophy*. Russell, as was well-known, rejected them. He would have regarded Travis's ethic of self-abnegation as a part of the Christian ethic which was "universally admitted to be too good for this wicked world".¹⁵ The point of such ethics was the purification of the soul, not the improvement of the human condition. To achieve the latter, an ethics had to be practical, and to be that it had to take account of the motivational power of self-interest.¹⁶ The key point for Russell was that self-interest had to be pursued rationally; that is, with due consideration of which interests were most important over a long period and a recognition that "[i]n an ordered community it is very rarely to a man's interest to do anything which is very harmful to others" (*ibid.*). Such rational self-interest, Russell held, would on its own make the world "almost a paradise".¹⁷

I quote from volume 16 of the *Collected Papers* because it is on my desk and in my mind

(and the volume deserves some advance publicity), but many similar remarks are to be found in less obscure places. I would imagine that Anderson was aware of some of them. But would it have made a difference to his film? Probably not. It is hard to imagine that the winos who set on Travis when he offers them soup would have acted differently if, instead of appealing to the Brotherhood of Man, he had urged them to reflect rationally on what it was in their best interest to do. They would act, as Russell would expect them to act, and as they did in fact act, on "irrational impulses".¹⁸ Anderson's misanthropy is too comprehensive and too profound to be deflected by a change of moral theory. And, as Russell himself admitted, even rational self-interest was a hard sell. Anderson's problem as a film-maker was to account for Travis's transformation while in prison. It had to be done quickly because the film was already long and this precluded verbal explanations, which would, in any case, have been too specific to suit Anderson's all-encompassing pessimism. Four photographs and a row of books, prominently showcasing Russell, in a scene lasting less than thirty seconds was, in my view, an inspired way to do it.

Notes

¹Quoted by Lindsay Anderson in an interview, "Stripping the Veils Away", *The Times* (London), 21 September, 1973.

²"Russell and Succession", *The Bertrand Russell Society Bulletin*, No. 167, p. 15

³It was reissued in 2007 by Warner Brothers, split across two DVDs (120031A and 120031B, referred to here as A and B), with most of the cuts made for the original release restored and a running time of 178 minutes. This is the version I've used (other versions, longer and shorter, are around). It includes a useful audio commentary by Malcolm McDowell (the star), David Sherwin (the main screenwriter), and Alan Price (whose group provides musical interludes which, like a Greek chorus, comment in general terms on the action). Remarks labelled "commentary" below are from this source. Approximate timings are given in the format A/B hour:minute.

⁴I use the translation by John Butt (West Drayton, Middlesex: Penguin, 1947). McDowell reports (commentary, A 0:10) that *Candide* was the most important of three books that Anderson told him to read in preparation for the film. The other two were Thornton Wilder's *Heaven's My Destination* (1935) and Kafka's *Amerika* (1927).

⁵Obviously, Pangloss caricatures Leibniz, else the work would not be a satire, but there has been much debate on how fair the caricature is. Deidre Dawson has argued persuasively that Voltaire's source for many of the views he puts into Pangloss's mouth was his correspondence with the Duchess of Saxe-Gotha, a disciple of Christian Wolff who in turn based his theodicy on Leibniz's: Leibniz at two removes, so to speak. See her "In Search of the Real Pangloss: The Correspondence of Voltaire with the Duchess of Saxe-Gotha," *Yale French Studies*, 71 (1986), 93-112.

⁶The authors used the pseudonym "Maxwell Kenton" when it was first published in the Olympia Press's *The Traveller's Companion* series (Paris, 1958). It became a best-seller when it was reissued by Putnam in the US under

the authors' real names in 1963. The protagonist, of course, is female.

⁷The third film, *Britannia Hospital*, which I've not seen, was released in 1982.

⁸This actually follows the course of McDowell's own career, which began as a coffee salesman. McDowell himself wrote the initial screenplay for the early parts of the film. The commentary reveals that, despite the bizarreness of the story, a surprising number of the incidents had some basis in reality. Anderson's savage portrayal of the British class system ca. 1973 is often deadly accurate.

⁹In the commentary (A 0:26), Sherwin says that he is protected from radiation by a golden suit he was given by a tailor with whom he lodged earlier in the film - one of the few benign characters Travis encounters - most likely an allusion to the gold-fleeced sheep that Candide receives in Eldorado.

¹⁰From the opening sequence to the very last shot, Anderson does nothing to mitigate the horror of the unreal things he uses to show how things really are.

¹¹"Realism and the Cinema: Notes on some Brechtian Theses", *Screen* (1974), 15: 7-27; reprinted (in part) in J. Hollows, P. Hutchings, and M. Jancovich (eds.), *The Film Studies Reader* (London: Arnold, 2000), pp. 201-206 at 205. MacCabe's last point is unfair: in the closing scene of the film, Anderson makes it quite clear that he includes himself in his own critique.

¹²The figures are completely fictitious according to McDowell in the commentary (B 0:50).

¹³With various degrees of difficulty and zooming some other titles can be made out. At right-angles to *A History of Western Philosophy* but much less visible is *Selected Writings of Mahatma Gandhi*. In the row of books behind the *History* there is a book on Albert Schweitzer, Konrad Lorenz's *King Solomon's Ring*, a large volume of Lenin (perhaps a volume of the *Collected Works*) next to a book with the word "Revolution" in large letters on its spine, and *Political Philosophy*, a volume of essays edited by Anthony Quinton in the Oxford Readings in Philosophy series.

¹⁴I couldn't identify the fourth figure, but a remark by McDowell in the commentary suggests it's a reference to Burt Lancaster in *The Birdman of Alcatraz*, though it is not a shot from the movie itself (at least not in the version in which I've seen it). It's worth noting that in *If....* the students have pictures of Mao and Lenin on their walls.

¹⁵"Eastern and Western Ideals of Happiness" (1924), in *The Collected Papers of Bertrand Russell*, vol. 16, *Labour and Internationalism, 1922-25*, ed. by Andrew G. Bone, Nicholas Griffin and Michael D. Stevenson, (London and New York: Routledge, forthcoming), p. 156. In the paper he compares this unfavourably with Confucian ethics.

¹⁶"Can Men Be Rational?" (1923), *ibid.*, p. 370.

¹⁷"The Effect of Science on Social Institutions" (1923), *ibid.*, p. 454.

¹⁸"Causes of Modern War" (1924), *ibid.* p. 145.

The Lesson of Dodgson's *Barbershop Paradox*

BY GREGORY LANDINI

Charles Dodgson (*aka* Lewis Carroll, who authored *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*) published a Barbershop Paradox. It appeared in a short essay called "A Logical Paradox" (*Mind* 3, 1894, p. 436-438). He ended with the note:

I greatly hope that some of the readers of *Mind* who are interested in logic will assist in clearing up these difficulties.

The paradox is as follows. The barbershop has three barbers a, b, c (which we may regard as brothers, if we like) who live and work at the shop. It so happens that a is very nervous and vows never to leave the shop unless b accompanies him. The shop is open, and when the shop is open it is always occupied by at least one of them. These features can be expressed in various ways, and there is the rub. The logical puzzle is open to interpretation over the natural language meaning(s) of "if...then..." (i.e., the natural language "conditional".) Let us abbreviate with $\sim A$ (a is not in the shop) and $\sim B$ (b is not in the shop) and $\sim C$ (c is not in the shop). Carroll characterizes the situation as having two fundamental premises:

If $\sim A$ then $\sim B$
If $\sim C$ then if $\sim A$ then B .

Carroll argues by *Reductio Ad Absurdum*, assuming that $\sim C$. He thus arrives at both:

If $\sim A$ then $\sim B$
If $\sim A$ then B .

Carroll holds that the above is impossible, and thus he infers C (i.e., that c is always in the shop). This result seems quite paradoxical.

The main criticism came from John Cook Wilson who was a colleague and rival of Carroll at Oxford. In 1905, he published "Lewis Carroll's Logical Paradox" (*Mind* 14, pp 292–293; with correction, *Mind* 14: p. 439. (It was signed only as "W," but it is now widely to believed

to be Wilson.) The canonical view, coming from the logician E Johnson, Hohn Wilson, among others, concurs with what later would be codified by an outright definition in Whitehead and Russell's *Principia Mathematica* (vol 1, 1910):

$$*1\cdot01. p \supset q. = . \sim p \vee q$$

The primitive logical connective are " $\sim$ " and " $\vee$ ". (In this work I shall use the horseshoe in just this way.)

Wilson did not adopt explicitly adopt the definition $*1\cdot01$, but held fast to the truth-conditions that it renders. Wilson demanded that the premises of Carroll's Barbershop story be characterized as if they were:

$$\begin{aligned} \sim A \supset \sim B \\ \sim C . \supset . \sim A \supset B \end{aligned}^{19}$$

Assume by *Reductio* that $\sim C$ so that we get both $\sim A \supset \sim B$ and $\sim A \supset B$. It merely follows that $\sim A \supset A$ and hence that A . So we simply get $\sim C \supset A$. Wilson correctly pointed out that no paradox follows from here at all. Unfortunately, to many this has seemed to settle the case. Bas van Frassen reopened it, hoping to indict conditional proof– i.e., reasoning under a hypothesis. (See van Frassen's blog.) But there is no need to go there.

In 1894, controversies raged about the proper meaning(s) of natural language "conditionals" expressed as "if p then q ". It only intensified the debates that Peano and Russell had both adopted a theory that there is a relation sign " $\supset$ " of implication that can hold between mind and language independent entities they called "propositions." In his 1906 "The Theory of Implication" Russell held that implication is a relation, and $x \supset x$ hold no matter what entity x may be (proposition or otherwise). The relation $\supset$ of implication of Russell's *Principles of Mathematics* may be said to be "material" insofar as the truth conditions for $p \supset q$ are just the same as those for his $\sim p \vee q$, where we find:

$$\sim x =_{\text{df}} x \supset f$$

$$x \vee y =_{\text{df}} x \supset y \cdot \supset y$$

The system accepts the principle that a false proposition implies every proposition.

$$\sim p \cdot \supset p \supset q$$

And we also get:

$$p \cdot \supset q \supset p$$

This assures that a true proposition implies every proposition. In *Principia* Russell abandoned his ontology of propositions and his relation of implication. In this work, there is no “material implication” sign and the sign “ $\supset$ ” is not a relation sign at all. A relation sign is flanked by terms to form a wff. In stark contrast *Principia*’s sign “ $\supset$ ” is flanked by wffs ϕ and ψ to form a wff $\phi \supset \psi$. Hence in *Principia*, we find the following which is obviously a tautologous form:

$$\text{*2.21. } \vdash \sim p \cdot \supset p \supset q$$

i.e., $\vdash \sim p \cdot \vee \sim p \vee q$

$$\text{*2.21. } \vdash q \cdot \supset p \supset q$$

i.e., $\vdash \sim q \cdot \vee \sim p \vee q$

This explains away the so-called paradoxes of “material implication.” They certainly don’t exist so far as *Principia* is concerned.

In this respect, it is very unfortunate that in 1918 C. I. Lewis spoke of *Principia*’s “relation” of “material implication.” There is no such *relation*. Lewis is at liberty to introduce a relation of “strict implication,” writing $p < q$. But it has no bearing on *Principia* at all and it will be born in the sin of use-mention confusion unless (like *Principles*) we are to accept the expression $\alpha < \beta$ as well-formed any terms α, β . This includes variables and allows $x < y$ as a wff. Lewis’s 1912 *Survey of Mathematical Logic* endeavored to introduce a strict implication relation, but it is unclear what it was that he meant—once we look back at his work with the ideas of modern modal systems (due largely to Kripke), and the Relevant systems (esp of Anderson and Belknap). Cresswell imagined C. I. Lewis to have in mind:

$$p < q =_{\text{df}} \Box(\sim p \vee q)$$

But this is doubtful and creates serious difficulties for understanding (let alone modeling) Lewis’s system S1. The approach of *were-would* would interpret C. I. Lewis as rendering the following:

$$p < q =_{\text{df}} p \Box \rightarrow q$$

This is the subjunctive “conditional” and it is read “if p were, then q would be.” It has been shown by David Lewis (and independently Robert Salmaker) to be plausible that it can be embedded in a modal logic—though Salmaker (and not Lewis) accept the controversial

Conditional Excluded Middle:

$$p \Box \rightarrow q \cdot \vee \cdot p \Box \rightarrow \sim q$$

A very different way to interpret the C. I. Lewis strict implication is via Relevant entailment. For instance:

Relevant Entailment: $p \rightarrow q$

This is read: p entails q . In fact, I believe that this is the best approach to S1. (See Landini 2027). In any case, C. I. Lewis’s interest in a relation of “strict implication” can be, and should be, made entirely independent of his confused criticisms of *Principia*

C. I. Lewis wrote long before the modern systems (modal and relevant) were developed. (See C. I. Lewis. *A Survey of Symbolic Logic* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1918). But interesting he mentions that Carroll (Lewis Carroll) wrote a book *Symbolic Logic*, and remarks: “I shall never cease to regret that he had not heard of *material* (strict) implication” (Lewis, 1918, p. 326, fn 9). I suspect that this is a typo and Lewis meant to say that he regrets that Carroll hadn’t heard of strict implication (as opposed to material implication). In any case, Lewis tries to illustrate the untoward nature of “material implication” insofar as it yields that a false proposition implies every proposition. He uses the following example:

Puppy's teeth are filled with zinc implies tomorrow will be Sunday. Because puppy's teeth are not filled with zinc...

This only adds insult to injury. Lewis is right that the following is not true:

$$\sim p \therefore p \Box \rightarrow q$$

$$\text{i.e. } p : \vee : p \Box \rightarrow q$$

But obviously it is true that:

If Puppy's teeth are filled with zinc then tomorrow will be Sunday.
i.e., Either it is not the case that a puppy's teeth are not filled with zinc or tomorrow will be Sunday.

The same point applies when C. I. Lewis offers the following against the the nature of "material implication" insofar as it yields that a true proposition is implied by every proposition.

The moon is made of green cheese implies $2+2=4$. Because $2+2=4$.

Again the Lewis would be correct to point out that the following is not true:

$$p \therefore \sim q \Box \rightarrow p$$

$$\text{i.e. } \sim p : \vee : p \Box \rightarrow q$$

But obviously it is true that

If the the moon is made of green cheese then $2+2=4$
i.e., Either the moon is not made of green cheese or $2+2=4$

The truth of either disjunct is sufficient to make an "or" statement true. It is imperative that one keep the various notions of "if... then..." distinct. Running them together (as Lewis does) engages in a dangerous equivocation. Happily, we may charitably interpret Lewis as callign for disambiguation. Nowadays we have various formal systems to accommodate the different meaning of the natural language "if... then...". It curious how readily participants in the original debates very often talked past one another.

In any case, we shall see that the subjunctive (were-would) expressed by " $p \Box \rightarrow q$ " is all we shall need to clarify Carroll's Barbershop Paradox and find its proper solution.²⁰

Cook Wilson's characterization of the Barbershop Paradox has become rather canonical orthodoxy. And yet his interpretation quite unfair to Carroll. The situation of the barbershop is understood by Carroll in terms of a were-would subjunctives. He clearly does not have the definition *1·01 (or the truth conditions thereof) in mind. It seems very plausible that he characterized his premises in terms of the following two were-would subjunctives:

$$\sim C . \Box \rightarrow . \sim A \Box \rightarrow \sim B$$

If c were not in the shop, then if a were not in the shop then b would not be in the shop

$$\sim C . \Box \rightarrow . \sim A \Box \rightarrow B$$

If c were not in the shop, then if a were not in the shop then b is in the shop.

Carroll thinks the second premise (above) holds because the shop is open and that one of the brothers "must," therefore, be in the shop. Carroll argues that from the two premise we may paradoxically infer that C , i.e., that C is in the shop (never leaves the shop when it is open). His argument is by Reductio. Assume that $\sim C$. Then we'd get both:

$$\sim A \Box \rightarrow \sim B$$

$$\sim A \Box \rightarrow B$$

Carroll holds that it is impossible t have both, and hence he concludes C . That's the paradox, for surely, C doesn't have to be in the shop. We don't have to worry (as Van Frasson does) about were-would reasoning under an assumption. We have:

1. $(A \vee B \vee C) \ \& \ \sim C . \Box \rightarrow . \sim A \Box \rightarrow \sim B$
premise
2. $(A \vee B \vee C) \ \& \ \sim C . \Box \rightarrow . \sim A \Box \rightarrow B$
premise
3. $(A \vee B \vee C) \ \& \ \sim C . \Box \rightarrow . \sim B \Box \rightarrow A$
from 2 by transposition

4. $(A \vee B \vee C) \& \sim C . \Box \rightarrow . \sim A \Box \rightarrow A$
5. $\sim(\sim A \Box \rightarrow A)$
6. C

Something has indeed gone awry. And yet, we can see that $\sim A \Box \rightarrow A$ is impossible (on both the David Lewis and the Robert Stalnaker embeddings). It says: if a were not in the shop then a would be in the shop. Moreover, transposition of a were-would is valid. The challenge is on.

As an amusing aside, I have heard it said that transposition of a were-would has untoward instances. For example, there appears to be the following case concerning the purchase of a dog.²¹ Consider this:

If S were to buy a dog, S would not buy a Pomeranian.

Therefore, If S were to buy a Pomeranian, S would not buy a dog.

At first blush, this might seem to indict the transposition of a were-would subjunctive. One might call this the “Paradox of the Pomeranian”. But the proper explanation is that the natural language here is misleading. The inference is:

If S were to sustain her intentions with respect to what breed of dog to buy, S would not buy a Pomeranian.

Therefore, If S were to buy a Pomeranian, S would not sustain her intentions with respect to what breed of dog to buy.

The transposition is perfectly valid.

What is the solution to the Carroll Barbershop paradox? The proper diagnosis is that Carroll’s premises are simply false. The situation with the Barbershop is properly characterized as follows:

1*. $(A \vee B \vee C) \& \sim C \& \sim B . \Box \rightarrow . A$ Premise

This says that if it were the case a or b or c are in the shop and c and b are not in the shop, then a would be in the shop.

2*. $(A \vee B \vee C) \& \sim C \& \sim A . \Box \rightarrow . B$ Premise

This says that if it were the case a or b or c are in the shop and c and a are not in the shop, then b would be in the shop. But from these premises were merely get:

$$(A \vee B \vee C) \& \sim C . \Box \rightarrow . B \vee A$$

This says that if it were the case a or b or c are in the shop and c is not in the shop, then either b or a is in the shop. There is no more to solving the Barbershop paradox than this.

Of course, we must also hasten to note that premise 1* does not yield Carroll’s 1. And similarly, premise 2 does not yield Carroll’s 2*. These are features that are nowadays well-known.²² Carroll simply mischaracterized the situation of the barbershop. He had false premises which parades themselves itself as if true characterizations of the situation with the barbershop. No paradoxical conclusions follow from a proper were-would characterization of the situation at the Barbershop.

This is the proper, albeit unsung, solution to Carroll’s Barbershop Paradox. But to find its solution, we are required to engage in the distinctly modal logic of were-would. We are required to respect Carroll’s paradox was couched in were-would reasoning. It is often said that Russell’s conception of logic requires the use of $\sim p \vee q$, and thereby excludes using modal systems and were-would systems. Not so. The burden on the Russellian, however, is to find a way to embed modal logic (and the were-would embedding in it) into the logic of *Principia Mathematica*. Now the (semantic) definition of $p \Box \rightarrow q$ in terms of invariance over accessible worlds uses only $\sim p \vee q$ (i.e., they use no conditional at all). The semantics involved, thereby, shows the way forward for the Russellian. The same holds of the semantics for the relevant entailment $p \rightarrow q$. It also uses only $\sim p \vee q$. The key is to focus squarely on the fact that *Principia*’s logic is *not* itself an invariance structure with respect to a relation; it is an apparatus capable of studying any invariance structure. Modal “logics,” in contrast, are invariance structures with respect to a relation. So

are, relevant entailment “logics.” This is a difficult research program that is enjoying a revival. It is well-worth developing and promoting as a Russellian school of mathematical philosophy.

See Landini 2018 “Logical Atomism’s Necessity,” in Landon D. C. Elkind and Gregory Landini eds, *Russell’s Logical Atomism: A Centenary Reappraisal* (London: Palgrave-Macmillan).

Notes

¹⁹Observe that this does not yield:

$$\sim C \supset A \supset B$$

²⁰We could also use relevant entailment to clarify and solve the Barbershop paradox, but the solutions are the same.

²¹This example was brought to my attention by the Relevant logician Edward Mares.

²²The same point holds for relevant entailment: The following inference is invalid:

$$\text{From } p \& q \supset r \text{ infer } p \supset q \supset r$$

Bibliography

Carroll, Lewis. (1894) “A Logical Paradox,” *Mind* 3 (1894), pp 436-438.

Lewis, C. I. (1918) *A Survey of Symbolic Logic*, (Berkeley: University of California Press).

Anderson, Allan & Belnap, Nuel. (1975) *Entailment: The Logic of Relevance and Necessity* (Princeton: Princeton University Press).

Landini, Gregory. (2027) “Lewis’s System S1 as Relevant Entailment,” forthcoming.

Cook Wilson, John. “Lewis Carroll’s Logical Paradox”. *Mind* 14, pp 292–293; with correction, *Mind* 14: p. 439

Russell Quote of the Issue

BY BERTRAND RUSSELL

This issue’s quote comes to us from Russell’s *A History of Western Philosophy*:

The rejection of reason in favour of the heart was not, to my mind, an advance. In fact, no one thought of this device so long as reason appeared to be on the side of religious belief. In Rousseau’s environment, reason, as represented by Voltaire, was opposed to religion, therefore away with reason!

“Rousseau”, p. 720 in *A History of Western Philosophy*: George Allen and Unwin Ltd: London. 1946. (Note: the book was published in the U.S. in 1945.)

Have an idea for contributing to the Bulletin, whether by you or someone else? Write to the editor! You can send a submission to the Bulletin using the contact form on our website.