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articles on the history of analytic philosophy, especially those pertaining to
Russell's life and works, including historical materials and reviews of
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PSYCHIATRY, PSYCHOLOGY, AND RUSSELL

CONTENTS

In This Issue
Society News
3
5

Features

A Psychiatrist Looks at Russell's Conquest of Happiness
DAVID GOLDMAN 9

Bertrand Russell on Fear: A Prolegomena
MARVIN KOHL 25

Review

Review of Daniel Gilbert, Stumbling on Happiness
BRANDON YOUNG 33

Discussion

Preston on Analytic Philosophy
GARY HARDCASTLE 35

Preston on the Illusory Character of Analytic Philosophy
CHRISTOPHER PINCOCK 40

Replies to Hardcastle and Pincock
AARON PRESTON 48

Back Matter

BRS 2008 Board Meeting and Members Meeting Minutes,
Treasurer's Report, GRRS/BARS 56

Cover: Bertrand Russell, from Am I an Atheist or Am I an Agnostic?, 1949
IN THIS ISSUE

THOUGH MOST FAMOUS for his work on technical issues in professional philosophy and popular ones in social and political thought, Bertrand Russell also wrote extensively on human emotion and the habits of mind and behavior that lead towards or away from a joy-filled life. With articles on Russell, psychiatry, and happiness by David Goldman, Russell, psychology, and fear by Marvin Kohl, and a review of recent work in psychology on happiness, this issue of the Bertrand Russell Society Quarterly focuses on Russell and human nature.

DAVID GOLDMAN, in his essay “A Psychiatrist Looks at Russell’s Conquest of Happiness” considers Russell’s relevance for psychiatry today. He finds the views on human happiness expressed by Russell in his 1930 book, The Conquest of Happiness, to be not only of value for many people unhappy in their lives, but to also contain important lessons for psychiatric theory today. It is a view of human nature, Goldman says, that has important lessons for us all.

BERTRAND RUSSELL had strong views on fear, which Marvin Kohl surveys and critiques in his essay “Bertrand Russell on Fear: A Prolegomena.” Kohl finds Russell’s view important, though at times unrealistic, with Russell holding what he argues is an overly simplistic idea of fear that ignores some kinds of fear that cannot be confronted in the way Russell thinks all fears should be faced. This is due, Kohl claims, to an inadequate view of human nature on Russell’s part.

ROUNDING OUT the theme of human emotion is Brandon Young’s review of the psychiatrist Daniel Gilbert’s book, Stumbling on Happiness, which pursues a theme not unlike Russell’s own: that happiness is possible, if we would only get out of our own way. How it is that we stand in our own way, according to Gilbert, raises issues of human abilities at prediction and choice Russell would have found fascinating.

WE HAVE STILL NOT YET determined what analytic philosophy is or isn’t, so Gary Hardcastle and Chris Pincock provide further elucidation on this point by way of criticizing Aaron Preston’s article in an earlier issue of the BRS Quarterly, and Aaron Preston provides still
further elucidation on the point by way of criticizing Hardcastle's and Pincock's views and defending his own view that the earlier standard view, that analytic philosophy was a common practice of linguistic analysis shared by most members of the movement, is false, an "illusion" he claims, and yet it is still the only acceptable definition of analytic philosophy, the only view that justifies calling earlier members of this movement 'analytic philosophers' at all.

This issue of the Bertrand Russell Society Quarterly is rounded out by a report in "Society News" on last June's annual meeting of the Bertrand Russell Society held in Rochester NY. Meeting minutes for both the board meeting and members' meeting held there can be found at the back of the issue, along with the most recent Treasurer's Report from Society treasurer Kenneth Blackwell.

**Society News**

**Increase in Membership Fee:** In response to rising costs, in particular, to two successive increases in the price the Society now pays McMaster University for Russell, the board of directors, after lengthy deliberation at the last board meeting, voted to increase membership fees by $10 per year. This will be the first increase since 1992. Thus, for 2009 the annual regular membership fee will be $45, couple membership $50, limited income membership $30, limited income couples $35, and contributors $60. There is one exception: student membership will remain at $20 a year at least through 2009.

The 35th annual meeting of the Bertrand Russell Society took place from June 27 to June 29 at St. John Fisher College in Rochester, New York at the invitation of David White and Tim Madigan. Located in upstate New York, the college was unexpectedly found to be less in the suburbs of Rochester and more in the country outside of Rochester. The setting for the meeting was beautiful and the meeting convivial. After the usual registration and settling in, the board of directors met for a prolonged discussion of the business affairs of the society, followed by a gathering at a local pub. It was the general consensus of those present that more work was accomplished at the meeting than at any other board meeting in recent memory. (See the meeting minutes in this issue of the Quarterly.)

Presentations began the next morning and continued through Sunday noon. On Saturday, Marvin Kohl addressed the potentially controversial issue of "Russell and the Utility of Religion" and was followed by Tim Madigan and John Novak's informative talk "Russell and Dewey in China." The editors of the Quarterly then took turns describing the process of writing (and rewriting) their forthcoming Historical Dictionary of Bertrand Russell's Philosophy. Andrew Cavallo took the floor immediately before the session broke for lunch, with a discussion titled "Russell's Conception of Ethics."

A catered lunch was followed by a master class hosted by Peter Stone (Stanford University) on "Russell's Appeal to the American Conscience." Due to the cancellation of Weiping Zheng's trip, his paper "Remarks on Russell's Logic from a Chinese Point of View," was not heard. Thomas Riggins concluded the afternoon with his talk "Russell and Rousseau."
As is customary, the BRS session then broke and members met later for a cocktail hour and banquet at a local restaurant. Thimble amounts of Red Hackle were ceremoniously quaffed in honor of Russell’s favorite scotch. In the morning, the talks resumed after breakfast, with Gregory Landini speaking on “Russell and the Ontological Argument” followed by Andrew Bone’s informative talk on “Russell and India.” Chad Trainer, an independent Russell scholar currently interested in the history of philosophy, then gave a talk titled “Russell’s History on Locke and Spinoza.”

After lunch Russell Wahl addressed the subject of “Analysis and Acquaintance,” before Howard Blair asked “Did Bertrand Russell Know the Deal on Causation?” Many of these talks employed a computer-driven projection screen, and Blair was able to demonstrate his advanced technical proficiency not only in physics but in computers by employing his cell phone as a modem so as to run the projector when the internet was temporarily unavailable via the computer. Cara Rice completed the program with “Russell and Shelley,” showing clearly the unexpected interest Russell took in that poet.

VOTER ALERT! Forget national politics. It will soon be time for the Bertrand Russell Society to vote for eight new members to its board of directors! Nominations are drawing to a close and ballots will be in the mail soon. Come what may, don’t delay, but make hay, and vote today!

UPCOMING PAPERS AT THE EASTERN APA. The Bertrand Russell Society in conjunction with HEAPS, the History of Early Analytic Philosophy Society, will meet for a combined session at the eastern division of the American Philosophical Association on December 29, 9-11 am. Speakers are Nikolay Milkov (Universität Paderborn-Germany) on “Bertrand Russell’s Religious Humanism,” David Godden (Old Dominion University) on “Frege on the Nature of Proof”, and Montgomery Link (Suffolk University) on “Russell’s Constructivistic Introduction to the Second Edition of the Principia.”

ENDOWED BERTRAND RUSSELL CHAIRS. Louis J. Appignani has informed BRS board member Warren Allen Smith that he (Appignani) is in the process of endowing two Bertrand Russell chairs at Colombia University and at the University of Miami. Each endowment will require the university to convene an annual conference relating to the philosophy of Bertrand Russell, with specific emphasis on community outreach.

BERTRAND RUSSELL SOCIETY LIBRARY. The following audio, video, film and print items have been added to the members area: “Experiences of a Pacifist in the First World War” (1955), The Kalinga Prize Press Conference (1958, video, 30 minutes), and The Russell-Teller Debate, part 1 (1960, video, 30 minutes) that took place on “Small World” with Edward Murrow, “Speaking of Liberty”, an interview with Rex Stout and Bertrand Russell on NBC in 1941, “When the Philosopher Sat Down” a BBC 4 production on the Committee of 100, and “Living in an Atomic Age”, six lectures on ABC in 1951.

THE GREATER NEW YORK CITY CHAPTER of the Bertrand Russell Society met August 3, 2008 in the Winter Garden room in lower Manhattan and then moved to a local restaurant with a view of the statue of liberty, the yacht basin, and the ships on the Hudson river.

The attendees discussed the books that Eric Walther contributed to the Commonwealth of Dominica BRS library. Thom Weidlich and Peter Stone reported details about the recent Rochester meeting. Warren Allen Smith called attention to a change in Dr. Marvin Kohl’s Philosophedia entry. He then reported that Taslima Nasrin has received the key to the city by the Mayor of Paris and has received the Simone deBeauvoir Award in Paris. Her application for US citizenship is in process. Smith is currently editing Ms. Nasrin’s book, Women Have No Country.

CALL FOR PAPERS. The Bertrand Russell Society and the History of Early Analytic Philosophy Society call for papers for a combined session at the meeting of the Central division of the American Philosophical Association February 18-22, 2009 at the Palmer House Hilton in Chicago, Illinois. Send submissions on some topic related to Bertrand Russell’s life and work or to the history of analytic philosophy by November 1 to rosalind.carey@lehman.cuny.edu.

NEW AND FORTHCOMING BOOKS. Alan Schwerin, ed., under the auspices of the Bertrand Russell Society, Russell Revisited: Critical Reflections on the Thought of Bertrand Russell. Newcastle, UK:

IN MEMORIUM: Mr. Andres Kaarik (1954-2007) of Stockholm, Sweden. His wife, Karen Kaarik, informs us that her husband passed away on October 20, 2007. Andres Kaarik was a member of the Bertrand Russell Society from 1981 to 2007.

FEATURES

A PSYCHIATRIST LOOKS AT BERTRAND RUSSELL’S CONQUEST OF HAPPINESS

DAVID S. GOLDMAN, M.D.

In his autobiography Bertrand Russell notes that on the publication of *The Conquest of Happiness* in 1930, “highbrows … considered it as a contemptible pot boiler, an escapist book,” but “unsophisticated readers, for whom it was intended, liked it” and that from “professional psychiatrists, the book won very high praise”¹ There are good reasons for the psychiatrists’ praise. In the book, Russell brilliantly addresses the causes of unhappiness, which is the fundamental basis for psychiatric practice, and proposes both common sense and novel solutions that offer great value to psychiatric treatment.

Russell’s contribution to psychiatry involves three principal areas: an analysis of widespread unhappiness among otherwise successful people, a prescription for applying rational reconstructive practices to combat irrational drives resulting in unhappiness, and a revolutionary vision of embracing the healing potentials of society, nature, and the universe towards achieving balance and happiness. In what follows, I will evaluate Russell’s views on these topics in the light of contemporary psychiatry and consider the possibilities for adapting more of Russell’s therapeutic ideas.

RUSSELL ON CAUSES OF UNHAPPINESS

Russell’s analysis of widespread unhappiness is innovative in tracing its origin to social, political and economic causes. Drawing on what he describes in his autobiography as lessons he learned by painful experience, Russell identifies unhappiness as an imbalance between the willful part of one’s personality and the healthy needs for physical and intellectual satisfactions.² He then proceeds to describe unhappiness as the result of a mother’s faulty rearing habits.

His portrait of the frustrated mother and vulnerable infant rings true; it captures well the actual life experiences of the 1920’s era middle class woman living in Britain or America about whom Russell is writing. This mother is bound to the home and in service to birthing and rearing her children. It is her cultural role. As a result, her greater potential, talents, and hopes are sacrificed. To Russell, such a burdened and resentful mother will compensate emotionally by extracting obedience from her children, favoring the more compliant ones and humiliating the more rebellious. She will enhance her own authority by filling her children with unnecessary fears about their own independence, supporting this with a corrupt religion-inspired morality. That defective morality will, for example, restrict swearing and prohibit sexual curiosity.3

Russell shows in painful detail how such a dissatisfied mother will produce a thwarted and exploited child. The child, he argues, will grow up thirsting for individual power to compensate for the lost love and the feeling of defectiveness that this has implanted in him. Self-absorption and self-aggrandizement are the key emotions that will shape this person’s growing up and determine the direction of his adult life. Russell further describes how this success-prone individual will be haunted by all the signs of excessive egoism. He will envy everyone else’s success. He will drive himself unmercifully at work. This will exhaust him so that only the strongest diversions or stimulants will be able to arouse excitement. He will also easily feel persecuted as he is never as highly regarded as he demands he should be. Finally, he will be constantly fatigued from all his exertions and be frightened of asserting his own tastes and desires as he struggles to preserve his social standing by remaining a member of the herd.

We just have to take Russell’s own example of the unhappy man driven to ruthless competition to get the full picture. Russell lays it out as follows:

> The working life of this man has the psychology of the hundred yard race, but as the race upon which he is engaged is one whose only goal is the grave, the concentration, which is appropriate enough for a hundred yard race, becomes ... excessive. What does he know about his children?... He has probably no men friends who are important to him.... Books seem to him futile and music high-brow.... His life [is] too concentrated and too anxious to be happy.4

Such a devitalized individual reminds Russell of the dinosaurs who killed themselves off despite being the most powerful animals to have ever lived.

In a few brief paragraphs, Russell presents us an impressive example of a wrecked personality, and implicit in it is Russell’s indictment of a capitalistic society that produces exploitive mothers, who, in turn produce exploitive, but unhappy children. Later in the work, he gives us a way of finding happiness that liberates individuals from the indoctrinated view of puritanical capitalism with its emphasis on individual success and nationalistic dominance. Russell makes clear that happiness also needs a proper social milieu in which patients and individuals can have access to the abundant ways that the community and universe can protect and enrich people. It will take a more equitable social, political, and economic organization to produce happy people.

**CONTEMPORARY PSYCHIATRY ON CAUSES OF PATHOLOGICAL UNHAPPINESS**

To the contemporary psychiatrist reading The Conquest of Happiness seventy-eight years after its publication in 1930, Russell’s analysis of emotional disintegration fits well with standard psychiatric concepts of individual psychopathology and the impact of stress. However, very few psychiatrists would grasp the idea that it is society itself that is broadly generating these destructive forces, for they are trained narrowly to consider individual and family disturbances and not as social advocates, so in their analyses they would be unlikely to come to the radical notion that existing corporate, religious, educational, and state polices are creating widespread unhappiness. Rather, as medical specialists in treating emotional and cognitive disorders they look to discover signs and symptoms of disordered mood, disturbed thinking, and inappropriate behavior in specific individuals.

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3 Ibid, pp. 39-47.

Psychiatric diagnosis is based on identifying overwhelming reactions to major internal and external stresses and to explaining the specific acquired personality vulnerabilities that make such stress more destructive than need be for a particular individual. (An acquired personality vulnerability is a loss of good coping skills because parents inhibited self-assertive behaviors or the individual grew up in a restrictive social environment that thwarted the chance to become more open and assertive.) These strains produce overreactions as the emergency defensive circuits in the brain overwhelm the affected individual with psychic pain, anguished thoughts, and panicked reactions. Rather than simply producing effective flight or fight reactions, their intensity causes either too little activity so the individual becomes paralyzed or else too much so the individual panics. This in turn leads to breakdowns in routine self-care, self-esteem, and socially adaptive behavior. You can easily appreciate the delicate balance between adequate adjustment and maladaptive behavior by imagining what would happen if you lost your appetite, suffered regularly from disrupted sleep, couldn’t carry out basic grooming, and failed to keep scheduled appointments or meetings. Such dysfunctions would soon create crisis after crisis in health, social acceptance, and work responsibilities.

BARRIERS IN PSYCHIATRY TO SEEKING SOCIAL SOLUTIONS TO UNHAPPINESS

Faced with acute clinical illnesses, the psychiatrist is too busy trying to help the sick to be able to address the larger social malaise that generates these problems. And the patients require so much immediate support that being told to look at the larger context would only make them more desperate. Their primary need is to restore basic functioning for themselves. They lack the strength, confidence, and energy to tackle the greater problems of the social causes of their conditions. They are like the asthmatic who must concentrate on restoring unobstructed breathing and cannot worry about the air pollution that causes his attacks.

There is an additional problem for psychiatrists who advocate a social solution to psychiatric problems. In addition to restoring the patient to at least minimal social functioning, psychiatrists are taught to respect the patient’s inherent dignity and autonomy in the process. While being helpful in offering specific understanding, support, and advice, psychiatrists try to avoid imposing their own personal values or philosophies on their patients and aim instead at restoring the patient’s undermined autonomy and avoiding any indoctrination that would limit the patient’s achieving his own healthy goals.

Two prominent academic twentieth-century American psychiatrists, Fredrick Redlich of Yale and Daniel Freedman of Chicago, in their textbook *The Theory and Practice of Psychiatry*, emphasize that psychiatrists, much like their medical colleagues, should follow the old medical adage that describes effective treatment as “to cure few, improve many, and to comfort most”. Note that they make no acknowledgement of the effects of the larger social context on the development of the patient’s disorders. To remove the sociodestructive forces in our society, psychiatry would need reform-minded leadership. If Russell were alive today, and discussing the principles in *The Conquest of Happiness* before the 30,000 participants who gather at the annual meeting of the American Psychiatric Association, his passion would stir them to action. We are waiting for that day.

Despite the barriers to their identification and study, it is clear that the role of social forces and institutions as causes of mental illness deserves investigation. As an example of how economic prosperity fails to promote happiness, we find in the wealthiest country of all, the United States, that according to a 1991 National Institute of Health Five Year Catchment study, 32% of American adults in their lifetime will suffer from an emotional disorder that reaches the level of the American Psychiatric Association’s diagnostic criteria and that in any given year, 20% are actually ill. But to remove the sociodestructive forces in our society, however, psychiatry would need reform-minded leadership. And where is such leadership to be found?

COGNITIVE THERAPY AND RUSSELL’S RATIONAL RECONSTRUCTION OF THE EGO

As a prescription for the unhappiness he has described, Russell argues that the troubled individual overexposed in childhood to the irrationalities of capitalism and materialism should undergo a per-

sonal and dispassionate self-analysis. This is designed to identify the irrationalities of the system and initiate a meticulous re-pro-
gramming of the individual. It was his practice to re-program, or re-
educate, his unconscious by talking to himself in mini-lectures that would provide a rational approach to some irrational impulse, compu-
sion, or distortion. He offers us a specific approach and provides over sixty-five maxims that were the basis of his mini-lectures, such as the following:

When a rational conviction has been arrived at ... search out ... beliefs inconsistent with [it] ... and when the sense of sin grows strong ... treat it not as a revelation and a call to higher things, but as a disease and a weakness, unless of course it is caused by some act that a rational ethic would condemn.

Even when a man has offended against his own rational code, I doubt whether a sense of sin is the best method of arriving at a better way of life. There is in the sense of sin something ab-
ject, something lacking in self-respect. No good was ever done to any one by the loss of self-respect.

Since rationality consists in the main of internal harmony, the man who achieves it is freer in his contemplation of the world and in the use of his energies to achieve external purposes than is the man who is perpetually hampered by inward conflicts. Nothing so dull as to be encased in the self, nothing so exhilarating as to have attention and energy directed outwards.6

Russell also favored directly confronting any of his fears. He reject-
ed the normal tendency to avoid these fears, claiming that when he confronted the fears they inevitably subsided. In doing this repeated-
ly, they became familiar rather than startling or devastating. He says that his brain would eventually become unresponsive to a threat that led nowhere.7

With this broad concept of reconstructing the unconscious and ridding it of irrational impulses, Russell was a progenitor of what came to be known twenty-five years later, when Albert Ellis began formulating his views of the theory in 1955, as “cognitive therapy.”

Cognitive therapy aims at challenging a suffering individual’s learnt false assumptions about his fears and guilts and re-directing him or her into more adaptive behavior. For example, in the late 1950s, the psychologist Albert Ellis developed his technique of Rational Emo-
tive Therapy to offset severe sexual inhibitions through a process of sexual re-education.8 In the 1960s, the psychiatrist Aaron Beck and his colleagues at the University of Pennsylvania began formulating cognitive therapy for depression and anxiety. They were able to dem-
strate that they could significantly alleviate these disorders by tackling the underlying distorted thoughts and illogically-acquired concepts. Beck wrote a series of papers on depression in which he showed that 16 one hours cognitive therapy sessions could cause effec-
tive remission of depressive symptoms.

These results were measured against the effectiveness of imipramine (Tofranil), a leading anti-depressant medication of the time, and the results were shown to be equal to the effectiveness of imipramine. Moreover, he demonstrated that his results continued to equal those of imipramine for follow-up examinations of patients done at six week, six month, and one year intervals.9 To give some idea of what these improvements represented, both cognitive ther-
apy and imipramine alike produced a 50% reduction in critical symptoms in 8% of depressed patients in one month, and similar 50% symptom reductions in 37% after three months, 58% after six months and in 70% after one year.10

LIMITS TO RUSSELL’S METHOD OF RATIONAL RECONSTRUCTION

As good as these treatment results are, there are naturally upper limits to how much rational reconstruction can help. E. Cameron provides the most extreme example in work done in the early 1960s. He and colleagues devised a treatment called “Psychic Diving.” Depressed hospital patients were asked to listen to repeated

6 David S. Goldman, “Sixty-five of Bertrand Russell’s Maxims for Happi-
ness”, distributed May 15, 2005, Bertrand Russell Society Annual Meeting, 
McMaster University, Hamilton, Ontario, Canada.
7 Russell, Conquest, pp. 60-65.
9 A. Rush et al., “Comparative Efficacy of Cognitive Therapy and Pharma-
cotherapy in the Treatment of Depressed Outpatients,” Cognitive Therapy
and Research, vol 1, no. 1, Mar 1977.
10 David A. Solomon, et al “Recovery from Major Depression: A 10-year Prospective Follow-up across Multiple Episodes,” Archives of General 
recordings of their own voices intoning positive phrases and messages. This was carried out for several weeks or months in which the patients would listen to these recordings for hours at a time. In some cases, the patients heard over 250,000 repetitions of their own voices. Unfortunately, while Cameron claimed this showed some usefulness, many of the patients had shrunk into greater states of despair.11

The limits to rational reconstruction are the source of two problems with Russell’s techniques. He does not appreciate the therapeutic necessity for a therapist in this sort of therapy nor does he recognize the stubbornness of the fear circuits in the brain to respond to verbal redirection. The presence of a trained therapist who offers an accepting and non-judgmental relationship to the patient is critical in helping the patient to relate the narrative of their sufferings. The therapist facilitates by balancing objectivity with sensitivity, helping the patient to feel comfortable and yet able to accept advice that builds self-esteem and coping abilities. The significance of the therapist in such therapy is indicated by the fact that an untreated depression can last for eight months to over two years with considerable hardship and dysfunction compared to significant symptom relief beginning within 3-6 months with appropriate therapy.12

As for Russell’s failure to recognize the limits of modifying fear responses by any sort of talk, with or without a therapist, this is easily understandable. He could not have appreciated the stubborn character of depressive fear when he was writing in 1929 as the basic work on these circuits did not begin to produce understanding of their mechanisms until the early 1990s. Only in the last 15 years has research identified the circuits responsible for anxiety and depression; this was accomplished by imaging brain activity using radioactive glucose, which is the primary nutrient of the brain. By seeing where radioactivity is concentrated, it is possible to determine which brain circuits are involved in depression and anxiety.

Helen Mayberg, a research neurology professor now at Emory University, has demonstrated that depression involves a reciprocal

over-activation of fear circuits in the sub-cortical parts of the brain and relative inhibition of the thinking, judging, strategizing, and pleasure experiencing circuits located in the top or cortical areas. (See accompanying illustration.)13 Furthermore, she, along with the NYU physiologist Joseph LeDoux, have shown the power of the subcortical circuits to sustain powerful fear responses long after the immediate stressors have disappeared, so that an individual that is suffering from anxiety and depression is repeatedly bombarded by the fear signals underlying his anxiety and depression. These fear responses include hypersensitivity to all environmental stimuli, heightened self-examination, and self-referencing.

The heightened and sustained fear responses uncovered by Mayberg and DeLoux make sense if someone is constantly endangered either by hostile individuals or a savage environment. From an evolutionary standpoint, such a person would benefit by keeping on constant guard against emerging threats. However, this does not apply to the pathologically anxious or depressed. When stress sets off fear responses, they usually subside after the original stress ends, but anxious or depressed individuals experience persistent overactive signaling from the fear circuits that do not subside. Without inhibitory messaging from the cortex to demonstrate their irrationality, the fearful feelings dominate, generating an egocentrism that traps the patient in a prison of self-absorption. Fortunately, modern anti-anxiety, anti-depressant and anti-psychotic drugs can normalize these disturbed subcortical circuits and restore the brain’s reciprocal balance between necessary fear responses and proper intellectual evaluation. When this stability is achieved, it is possible to restore effective rational processes. However, Russell addressed himself to the plight of the functioning though unhappy individual rather than the pathologically depressed and anxious individual, and he neither had to deal with these extremes nor would the science of the time have provided him with clues as to what needed to be done if he had.

RUSSELL ON RESTORING CONNECTION TO EXTERNAL INTERESTS

In addition to suggesting what individuals could do to free themselves from irrational impulses, Russell projected a wider, truly visionary concept of universal happiness available to those who could shed the narrow confines of a life in which selfish fulfillment was the primary objective in part 2 of The Conquest of Happiness. Russell offers a plan for genuine happiness, asserting that the values of zest, affection, the family, work, impersonal interests and resignation, along with the cultivation of broad and meaningful relationships with others and the world is what is necessary to provide ongoing fulfillment despite hardships.

Russell advocates connecting to a wide variety of outside interests that are readily available to the average individual, some as simple as reading about the excavations at Ur of the Chaldees or engaging in gardening. They could open up the unhappy personality to the rich world of stimulation and interest that never ceases. However, the egocentric, success-driving individual has largely discounted them because they appear so common.

Russell retains the humanistic view that we are part of the universe’s creation, with lives that have been harmonized by evolution to fit into its rhythms. To Russell, these rhythms are alternating periods of renewal and quiescence, which allow for energetic activity but also safeguard contemplation. Once the unhappy individual readjusts and starts to experience satisfaction in his family and outside interests, he will cease to be a willful tyrant, exploiting himself and others for his personal glorification, and will become instead a giving and receiving member of the community and world.

Russell stresses how a life that is functioning in many areas protects that individual against the destructive effects of personal loss and despair. He contemplates how having broad-based interests can comfort one when death claims a loved one, and even offers the story of how a scientist with great intellectual desires may suffer a brain-damaging blow to his head, but if he desires the progress of science and not merely to contribute to the field, knowing that others would continue to pursue knowledge he valued, he would not suffer the same despair as would the man whose research had purely egoistic motives. Similarly, despair is more easily faced in less dramatic cases when one has interests outside oneself. Russell gives as an example of this the man who is engaged in absorbing work and is less distracted by an unhappy married life than one not absorbed by interests outside oneself.

Russell also values equal development of the intellectual, sensual, and willful drives and warns against an unbalanced development. Not only does he stress the dangers of too egocentric and willful a life, but he also sees dangers in going too far in one-sided intellectual development or sensual indulgence. He esteems, instead, the balanced life where all potentials fit within the boundaries.


15 Russell, Conquest, pp. 176, 114.

16 Ibid, pp. 182-183.
of health and fairness. These he sees as the formula for harmony, solidity, resiliency, and happiness.\textsuperscript{17}

THE CONCEPT HAPPINESS IN PSYCHIATRY

Despite its fundamental importance, happiness remains an elusive concept in psychiatry. According to the clinical psychologists David Myers and Ed Diener, happiness is underreported in the professional literature. In a literature survey, they have determined that of the 46,380 articles indexed in \textit{Psychology Abstracts} from 1967-1994 only 2,389 or 5\% mentioned happiness while depression was cited 37,000 times.\textsuperscript{18} However, this situation may be changing. According to "The Science of Happiness," which is highlighted in the \textit{Time Magazine} "Special Mind \& Body Issue" of January 17, 2005, academic psychological researchers are concentrating on neurotransmitters and brain regions responsible for happiness. But as is standard for the profession, they focus on the treatable individual rather than the larger society as a source of happiness.\textsuperscript{19} And in February 2004, psychiatrist Dennis S. Charney published a physiological study on the genetic basis of resiliency. In it, he concludes that those who produce the least amount of stress hormone (cortisol) and the largest amounts of stress-protecting hormones and/or neuropeptides (DHEA and neuropeptide Y, respectively) are best able to handle stress, and he calls for developing drugs that enhance these protective genes. But as with the others, he does not deal specifically with the social factors that underlie happiness.\textsuperscript{20}

Finally, there are rogue elements in psychiatry that wish to make happiness into a "diagnosis of mental illness." Richard Bentall, for example, argues in a 1992 paper in \textit{The Journal of Medical Ethics} that happiness should be classified as a mental disorder, because its rarity makes it abnormal. Furthermore, its association with excessive pleasure, indulgence in food, drink, and sex and propensity to produce carefree and unpredictable behavior suggest impaired judgment and impulse control.\textsuperscript{21} He asks that happiness be classified in the American Psychiatric Association's \textit{Diagnostic and Statistical Manual} as a "Major Mood Disorder, Pleasant Type."

MY CLINICAL PSYCHIATRIC PRACTICE

USING RUSSELL'S CONCEPTS

As a practicing psychiatrist, I have found Russell's ideas about social pathology, rational reconstruction, and connecting to the wide world of possibilities important therapeutic principles. Using them, I have been able to help my patients look more profoundly at their own psychological make ups and have helped them to see the wide possibilities for feeling and action that their own contextual and personal thinking have minimized.

I typically introduce Russell's ideas while at the same time offering traditional psychological interpretations about the personal conflicts that have arisen within the patients about their identity, goals, family and work relationships. This will be in cases where patients are struggling with why they are so defective, angry, guilty, or psychosomatically ill. At the same time, I have provided these patients with photocopies of selected chapters from \textit{The Conquest}, including those on "Boredom and Excitement," "Zest," "Affection," "Impersonal Interests," "Effort and Resignation," and most frequently "Competition." In most instances, I have been able to help these suffering patients using this double approach. They have achieved greater personal awareness, greater hopefulness, and a sense of re-vitalization and find that Russell's words and messages are inspiring, moving them further to change destructive underlying egoistic patterns.

Let me illustrate the effectiveness of incorporating Russell's ideas into my therapeutic work. A patient of mine, a 49 year-old chronically depressed woman, was struggling with her domineering and controlling 80 year-old mother, who was still very active in the family business. At the same time, the patient experienced intense guilt over defying her mother. This struggle had begun in childhood, when the mother rejected her daughter's ordinary demands for care, preferring to devote herself to friends and business instead.

\textsuperscript{17} Ibid, p. 46.


My patient found solace and a new perspective in Russell’s chapter on “Effort and Resignation,” where he recommends that one avoid asking oneself to do the impossible. She was eager to read the entire book to see what other suggestions Russell might have.

A second case also involved the bitter struggle of a younger woman (32 years old in this case) with a domineering mother, who, unlike the mother in the first case, was intrusive and sought to control her daughter’s behavior. I addressed this woman’s compulsive compliance to her mother’s wishes by focusing on her need to get confirmation from caring friends. With my encouragement she read Russell’s chapter on fear of public opinion and after this began to effectively assert herself with her mother. She discovered that her mother could respond positively to my patient’s newly-found self-assertion. The fiery confrontation and rejection the patient had long feared were now appreciated as fantasies created by her overactive fear circuits.

In a third case, a 42 year-old anxious and depressed businessman was intensely preoccupied with his past failures. He was able to shift away from these self-condemnations after I interpreted to him his mother’s oppressively identifying him with his so-called “terrible” father, whom she had divorced when the patient was five. He felt that reading Russell’s chapter on “Competition” helped him understand the compulsive origins of his self-hatred.

RUSSELLIAN CONCLUSIONS

We are fortunate to have Bertrand Russell’s examination of the causes of unhappiness and happiness. His recommendations about reorganizing a conventionally competitively successful life fraught with angst and despair have provided us with the remarkable discovery that happiness is our natural state if we overcome the narrow bounds of egotism and reconnect with the larger world.

At the same time, we must reflect that Russell was drawn to this study when he was 57 years of age, because despite inheriting a high social position and developing into a widely recognized mathematical and philosophical genius, he was not spared life’s tragedies, beginning most profoundly with the loss of both parents by the time he was four. Because he had to deal with family loss so early, the strictness of his puritanical paternal grandmother, and intense isolation growing up, he was no stranger to misery. In his long life, he also had to endure, despite much positive recognition, the hostility of peers, his jailing for pacifism during World War I, his loss of two parliamentary elections, three failed marriages, a schizophrenic child, strained economics and rejection by his university.

It was humankind’s good fortune that Bertrand Russell, the brilliant philosopher, was able to draw on his personal life experience with unhappiness and happiness. Forced like most people to endure what seems to be universal suffering, he used his powerful intellect to understand the origins of misery and find a universal solution for it well within the grasp of the ordinary individual living under peaceful conditions. In overcoming “meditating on his sins, follies, and shortcomings” and centering his attention upon the world at large, he found, as he writes in the last sentence in The Conquest that “it is in such profound instinctive union with the stream of life that the greatest joy is to be found.”

Like his contemporary, Sigmund Freud, the father of psychoanalysis, Russell used his own life experiences to discover basic psychological truths. He was able to fulfill significantly the second of the life goals that he had formulated for himself. As stated in the Postscript to his Autobiography, in addition to wanting to find out what could be known, Russell wanted “to do whatever might be possible toward creating a happier world.”

Hopefully, psychiatry can heed Russell’s 78 year old message. If so, it can recover its goal of helping individuals find happiness by again directing them to rid themselves of egoistic preoccupations and promote beneficial social and external activities even as it strives to developed new biological treatments. Naturally, Russell’s more powerful message is addressed to society at large to create new social norms and programs that allow happiness to thrive, and replace the striving for profits, unlimited growth, and dominance with a fair world that offers each of its people a chance for education, health, prosperity, and pleasure.

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22 Russell, Conquest, pp. 18, 191.
BERTRAND RUSSELL ON FEAR: A PROLEGOMENA

MARVIN KOHL

ABSTRACT. Russell maintains that all fear, whether it be unconscious, conscious, or attitudinal, is bad and ought to be eliminated. At best these claims are hyperbole; at worse, false. They also involve an exacting notion of human nature, bringing to mind John Maynard Keynes' charge in Two Memoirs that "there was no solid diagnosis of human nature" underlying Russell's theory, and that Russell "sustained simultaneously a pair of opinions ludicrously incompatible. He held that in fact human affairs were carried on after a most irrational fashion, but that the remedy was quite simple and easy, since all we had to do was to carry them on rationally."

I. RUSSELL'S STANCE
Bertrand Russell maintains that one of the great obstacles to human happiness is fear. In his essay "On Evils Due to Fear" he argues that "a great many of the defects from which adults suffer are due to preventable mistakes in their education, and [that] the most important of these mistakes is the inculcation of fear." He also insists that all fear is bad. Thus, in What I Believe, he writes:

Religion, since it has its source in terror, has dignified certain kinds of fear, and made people think them not disgraceful. In this it has done mankind a great disservice: all fear is bad, and ought to be overcome not by fairy tales, but by courage and rational reflection.

In The Conquest of Happiness, he again reminds us that fear of any kind is a major obstacle to happiness, whether it be fear of life in general, fear of failure, or some other kind of fear. For example, in discussing the fear of public opinion he writes:

Fear of public opinion, like every other form of fear, is oppressive and stunts growth. It is difficult to achieve any kind of

* This paper was presented at the annual meeting of the Bertrand Russell Society, Monmouth University, New Jersey, June 9, 2007.
1 Bertrand Russell, "On the Evils Due to Fear," in If I Could Preach Just Once (New York: Harper, 1929), 219. He later adds "I do not believe that any good thing is to be obtained through fear, and I hold that obedience not otherwise obtainable had better not be obtained." (228)
greatness while a fear of this kind remains strong, and it is impossible to acquire that freedom of spirit in which true happiness consists, for it is essential to happiness that our way of living should spring from our own deep impulses and not from the accidental tastes and desires of those who happen to be our neighbors, or even our relations.¹

All of us probably have had experiences of fear, and so to some extent understand its nature. If we had to describe the general nature of this experience, we might be content to say that fear is the feeling that occurs in the presence of an actual, perceived, or anticipated threat. Perhaps a more sophisticated observer would want to regard fear as the physiological and psychological state that comes about in the presence of an actual, perceived, or anticipated threat.

This characterization has its difficulties in that it leaves obscure the nature or more exact description of this state: for example, the extent to which it conforms with a general reflex type or has the characteristics that have traditionally been associated with instincts. Nonetheless, it is useful at the outset because it reminds us that fear is both a state of mind and a state of body with measurable physiological correlates, and because it appears to be the characterization Russell uses or at least seems to presuppose.

Most of us would agree that fear is a matter of degree and that some fears are more rational than others. For example, some people fear the Tarantula spider and are stricken by panic in its presence because its bite is poisonous. Other people just do not like spiders. They panic in their presence for the same reason as they panic in the presence other insects, namely, because they believe they definitely cause disease. Still others are terrified of spiders because they believe that the bite of any spider is deadly. Most of us would agree that the first belief is rational; that the second is erroneous because spiders, unlike fleas and ticks, are generally known not to cause disease; and that the third belief is irrational because it is contrary to the widely known fact that while tarantula bites can be extremely painful, they are not deadly.

It is true that Russell distinguishes between the rational and irrational apprehension of danger. It is also true that Russell acknowledges the importance of rationally apprehending danger when faced with its presence or a genuine threat. But he also tends to identify cases as being that of fear only when the individual is stricken with panic. In other words, given the logic of Russell's position he would have to maintain that, because of panic, all three of these cases are examples of irrational behavior. This strikes me as an odd and unacceptably narrow way of characterizing fear.

Perhaps the clearest example of this narrowing of meaning occurs in What I Believe. After telling us that the purpose of the moralist is to improve men's behavior, that active malevolence is the worst feature of human nature, and suggesting that most of this malevolence is caused by a haunting fear of danger and ruin, Russell concludes that fear is the great enemy against which we must do primary battle. Thus, he writes:

[love of mental adventure] must ... be one of the chief concerns of the scientific moralist to combat fear. This can be done in two ways: by increasing security, and by cultivating courage. I am speaking of fear as an irrational passion, not of the rational provision of possible misfortune. When a theatre catches fire, the rational man foresees disaster just as clearly as the man stricken with panic, but he adopts methods likely to diminish the disaster, whereas the man stricken with panic increases it.⁴

Notice that Russell is here not objecting to the belief that the theatre is on fire. Since the theatre is presumably on fire, both the rational and irrational man have grounds for believing that this is the case. What he is objecting to are the feelings — the paralyzing panic — which has become associated with the second man's belief that the theatre is on fire. And I think most of us would agree that being stricken, being paralyzed with fear, is not a rational stance. But having said this, we should also recognize the following: first, that paralyzing fear is not the only kind of fear; second, that there are important differences between having rational and irrational feelings; and finally, that the kinds of fear Russell typically attacks are of this extreme kind. Perhaps all forms of panic are bad but it does not follow from this that all forms of fear are.

His abhorrence of fear has another source. Russell, especially when doing political and social philosophy, became increasing


⁴ What I Believe, 70.
aware of the fact that fear kills the love of thought and mental adventure. For example, he concludes his chapter on education in *Principles of Social Reconstruction* by describing the evils caused by a mistaken education, one inspired by fear. Thus, he writes that

> If the object of education were to make pupils think, rather than to make them accept certain conclusions, education would be conducted quite differently: there would be less rapidity of instruction and more discussion, more occasions when the pupils are encouraged to express themselves, more attempt to make education concern itself with matters in which the pupils feel some interest.

Above all, there would be an endeavour to rouse and stimulate the love of mental adventure.... To give this joy, in a greater or less measure, to all who are capable of it, is the supreme end for which the education of the mind is to be valued.5

Russell also explains why, although the love of mental adventure is rare among adults, it is not so with children. Among children, he writes,

> It is very common, and grows naturally out of the period of make-believe and fancy. It is rare in later life because everything is done to kill it during education. Men fear thought as they fear nothing else on earth - more than ruin, more even than death.... It is fear that holds men back - 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.... No institution inspired by fear can further life. Hope, not fear, is the creative principle in human affairs.6

In *New Hopes for a Changing World* he writes: “The thing that above all others I have been concerned to say in this book is that because of fears that once had a rational basis mankind has failed to profit by the techniques that, if wisely used, could make him happy” and that “the greatest obstacle to a good world is fear and [that] both conscious and unconscious fear must be eliminated.”7 The recurring theme, here taken from *Education and the Good Life*, is that “fear should be overcome not only in action, but in feeling; and not only in conscious feeling, but in the unconscious as well.”8

To sum up: Fear, for Russell, as a bio-genetic disposition or emotional attitude based on perceived dangers or threats, is a primary evil because it is responsible for, and continues to produce, the most detrimental kind of cognitive and eudemonic helplessness. It is an evil because it is responsible for causing the worst of human behavior and undermining the best. Russell’s vision is of a world without fear. It is a vision of a universal fearlessness that allows for a fuller nurturing of the good life.

II. CONCLUSION

The type of fear deserving of censure, then, is not any of the ones Russell has chosen. It is not fear *per se*, but panic fear and those ideological stances that inculcate or produce it that deserve censure. Moreover, it is difficult to reconcile the fact that fear is instinct-like with Russell’s normative claim that it ought to be eliminated. This difficulty, I should like to add, does not seem to be a logical one. For it seems consistent to say that, although X cannot be eliminated, X nonetheless ought to be.9

9 Robert Hoffman, in personal correspondence, writes that “perhaps it is not a logical difficulty, but it does seem to be one.” Admittedly, there is an inner tension. However, I believe that this tension is not generated by inconsistency. We commonly suppose, though not with unquestioning certitude, a particular notion of consistency. We assume that it is correct to retain the notion that it is logically consistent to say “although X cannot be eliminated, X nonetheless ought to be.” For example, we may say that “although death cannot be eliminated, it nonetheless ought to be.” Now this may be an utterly unwise thing to say, but it is not inconsistent. Why not? To this question I should reply that it is the normative parts of these statements that take us “off the logical hook.” I admit that “ceteris paribus, one ought to, and ought not to, do X” is inconsistent; but quickly add the statement “although X cannot be eliminated, X nonetheless ought to be” does not take this form; and to insist that it does, as some may be inclined to do, is to re-

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6 Ibid., 165-7.
However, the assumption that the principle of futility is trump, when combined with Russell's claims, generates a worry. The principle of futility roughly reads that one ought not attempt to do what one knows cannot be done or that one ought not aim at what one knows to be impossible. Something here seems to be normatively amiss. This does not mean that we should not attempt in education and elsewhere to eliminate as much of the paralyzing and debilitat-
ing forms of fear as we can. But if it is true that fear is so deeply rooted in the physiological and psychological nature of man that, at present, it cannot be eliminated, then it seems to be unwise to have that aim. For as Russell elsewhere suggests: “There is no such thing as an irrational aim except in the sense of one that is impossible of realization.”

This brings us to a related difficulty, to what may be called Russell's illusory optimism. For there are few areas of Russell's writings where John Maynard Keynes' criticism may be more applicable. Keynes charged that “there was no solid diagnosis of human nature” underlying Russell's views, and that Russell "sustained simultaneously a pair of opinions ludicrously incompatible. He held that in fact human affairs were carried on after a most irrational fashion, but that the remedy was quite simple and easy, since all we had to do was to carry them on rationally.”

Keynes' charge of being "ludicrously incompatible" may be too strong. But certainly Russell is overly optimistic about the ease in which fear may be eliminated. Briefly consider the problem generated by just the existence of unconscious fear. How does a conscious mind command or urge an unconscious mind to behave? Is Russell not too sanguine about the ease in which unconscious fears can be recognized and controlled by the conscious mind? He clearly underestimated the power and role played by repression in the minds of ordinary human beings. Perhaps, given his own vast power of reason, he assumed that ordinary human beings, most of whom are considerably less well endowed, have the same ability.

Respect for fearlessness and courage is one of the outstanding marks of Western philosophy. Russell's writings bear testimony to the vitality of this tradition. His own indomitable fearlessness is a model even critics respect. Nonetheless, it is one thing to tell us to eliminate fear whenever we wisely can, it is another to be cavalier about the ease and extent of being able to do so.

I am not taking issue with the claim that abusive forms of fear are often inculcated and zealously nurtured and that Russell, as a social reformer, deserves our admiration for his courageous battle against this abuse. Nor do I deny that fear often impedes and destroys human happiness. What I wish to suggest is: (1) that we distinguish between the inculcation of specific abusive attitudinal fears, like the fear of truth or public opinion, and the bio-genetic dispositions or instincts that enable us to fear an approaching fire or enemy; (2) that it generally makes good sense to call for the elimination of the former, but (3) that neither Russell's arguments nor the evidence about the protective nature of non-panic fear warrants the conclusion that all fear ought to be eliminated; and (4) that the most vulnerable aspect of Russell’s doctrine seems to be his conviction that it is desirable and possible for ordinary human beings to eliminate all fear.

I would be remiss if I concluded this discussion without commenting on one of Russell’s most important insights. Russell is right on the mark in his understanding of how fear may be manipulated in order to control others. The successful manipulation of fear is an instrument of power. Russell also clearly understood that politicians typically manipulate public fear in order to advance their own agendas. From this perspective, his social philosophy may be viewed as a pioneering effort in understanding how the dread of loss and the fear of death may be used as a means of promoting various political agendas. Here I will remain relatively silent about how the current fear of terrorism has been used to reverse welfare gains and to diminish what always has been a fragile ideal, namely, the commitment to a benevolent society. What I find disconcerting is that this vital insight in Russell's may be lost because of his zeal as a social reformer and his hasty generalization.
The main object of the present paper is in part polemical, critically focusing on Russell’s claim that all fear is bad and ought to be eliminated, and in part preparatory, hoping this discussion will encourage the development of a contrary neural and philosophical theory, one that conceives of fear as a system that is hardwired, part of the emotional unconscious, “a system that detects danger and produces responses that maximize the probability of surviving a dangerous situation in the most beneficial way,” as Joseph LeDoux suggests. Daunting as the challenge may be, would it not be grand if this new theory also added to our understanding of knowing what to fear and what not to fear, even if this understanding is contrary to the dispositions presently embedded or programmed into the neural system by evolution?

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BOOK REVIEW

WHAT IS HAPPINESS?
BRANDON YOUNG


In Stumbling on Happiness, a popular work that won the 2007 Royal Society’s Prize for Science Books, Gilbert examines the nature of and psychological obstacles to human happiness. The book contains five parts, with eleven chapters, that integrate research from game-theory, economics, neurophysiology, philosophy, experimental psychology and sociological study.

In the professional psychological world, Gilbert is an expert in a field properly called “affective forecasting,” a technical phrase for the study of how human beings predict their future emotional state. It is highly likely, he thinks, that this unique human ability, coinciding with the growth of the frontal lobes, helped the species survive by guiding the emotions. “We are,” as Gilbert writes, “the ape that looked forward (p. 9).” However, this cognitive ability is anything but perfect. In fact, the constant refrain of the book is that we consistently miscalculate how we will feel in the future.

Gilbert invites the reader to join him in examining this counter-intuitive human cognitive ability. Thus, in chapter two, “The View From in Here,” Gilbert shows that most of us make predictions about our future happiness in certain situations (e.g., as a lottery winner versus as a paraplegic) based on imagining further conditions (e.g., a lottery winner with perfect health or a paraplegic without a lover) that may not obtain and that directly influence our actual happiness in those situations. Rather than recommending a remedy for this characteristic, Stumbling on Happiness is an work on experimental psychology meant to explain the phenomena, rather than a clinical one meant to correct them.

In chapter 9 (“Immune to Reality”) and again in concluding the book, Gilbert looks at the mechanisms we use to fend off unhappiness and spells out the details of what he calls the “psychological immune system.” Like the physical immune system that defends us

from illness, the psychological immune system defends us from un-
happiness. Psychological traumas (loss of a loved one, divorce, loss of a job) kick the psychological immune system into high gear, and the events are dealt with. The psychological trauma is very complex and must treated with a variety of healing techniques. But Gilbert does not explain how we are to cope with these traumas; it is, therefore, left to the reader to conceive of the ways in which a person copes with such an event (psychotherapy, anti-depressants, group therapy, exercise, meditation retreats, etc).

Gilbert draws an analogy to the physical immune system with respect to the coping mechanisms. We seek treatment for major injuries (like a major gash) but do not seek treatment for minor injuries (small cuts). The result is that minor injuries can end up being worse over time than major ones. Likewise, the minor annoyance of, say, a spouse being late for an important date, is too small to trigger the psychological immune system, and therefore nothing is done to cope with the event. Yet over time, like tiny cuts that do not heal and lead to serious illness, these events can build to depression and other emotional disorders. These events hurt, and they hurt incessantly because the mental ‘immune system’ did not have a sufficient catalyst.

Like Bertrand Russell, who explained relativity theory on analogy with India rubber, Gilbert has the gift of finding novel ways to convey difficult ideas. Couple that with his lucidity (also like Lord Russell’s) and the result is a book so thoroughly enjoyable it is difficult not to affectively forecast the pleasure of the next chapter. According to Preston, the new wavers saw something important, indeed, but failed to see what that something implied. The fact that Russell, Moore, and Wittgenstein (not to mention A. J. Ayer, Rudolf Carnap, Gottlob Frege, etc.) did not see eye to eye on the nature and role of analysis, combined with a bit of thought about what a philosophical school is, forces us, according to Preston, to what he calls an “illusionist” view of analytic philosophy. On the illusionist approach, analytic philosophy is what it has traditionally been supposed to be, but, alas, it does not exist. (Did it seem to you that it existed? There’s the illusion.) This is a view denied by the new wavers, though according to Preston, it follows from their work. More on the illusionist approach, and Preston’s arguments for it, in a bit. First, a distinction.

The discovery that no single doctrine is shared by analytic philosophy’s canonical philosophers could well unseat someone who has devoted his or her best intellectual years to imbibing, and building on,
the analytic tradition. But it shouldn’t, at least not if we keep in mind the simple distinction between an idea on the one hand and the people who consider, examine, hold, resist, or flat-out reject it on the other. There are many ways a person can be involved with a particular idea at a particular time beyond simply believing it. Consider the flux of these various attitudes for one person over time, multiply that by the several members of an intellectual community, and the diversity of intellectual attitudes to a given idea begins to seem the norm in an intellectual community—uniformity, even for short periods, the exception. The appearance of uniformity is, of course, another thing. That, as Preston notes, is appreciated and projected by intellectual communities, philosophical schools hardly being an exception.1

In short, doctrine should not be called upon to serve as the basis for defining a philosophical school, at least if our aim is to pick out its canonical figures. Doctrinal definitions of the analytic movement, particularly, would describe a “movement” whose membership vacillated dramatically, with “canonical” figures dropping in and out as their thought developed or as they merely revisited views they’d earlier defended, attacked, or ignored. That is, indeed, just what new wavers taught us. But it hardly means that certain ideas are not at the heart of analytic philosophy, or that there is no such thing as analytic philosophy. Consider, for example, the idea that many (or even every) exemplary philosophical problem is artificial, a sort of tangle enabled by nothing more than our normal language, or perhaps our misuse of it. That is a profound and fascinating idea, absolutely central to analytic philosophy and worth thinking hard about even today. But to define analytic philosophy in terms of a commitment, conviction, or belief in that idea would be to miss its development, its reconsideration and reformulations in various hands—short, to miss the history of analytic philosophy at its most significant and exciting. What makes new wave history of analytic philosophy so appealing (to me at least) is not that it disables the popular image of analytic philosophy as a doctrinally unified school, but that it attempts to trace the development, in different heads across different times, of the very doctrines once taken to be analytic philosophy’s defining features.2

Inclined to define analytic philosophy (for the sake, presumably, of having a fixed historical target), and impressed that no doctrine picks out just the right people at the right time, one would presumably be in the market for a non-doctrinal definition. Big mistake, says Preston, and here we return to the matter of implications and illusions. According to Preston, what the new wavers missed is that we must have a doctrinal definition of analytic philosophy, and among those the only viable candidate is illusionist. Here’s the argument. Why, first, must we have a doctrinal definition, especially if (as Preston accepts) the new wavers have shown that there is no single doctrine the canonical figures share? Well, in defining analytic philosophy (or, presumably, any philosophical school) we must demand a “real definition,” one that picks out analytic philosophy by its essence, its necessary and sufficient conditions (20). That’s the first premise. Second premise: philosophy is and always has been a “theoretical discipline”; it produces “sets of views about the way things are” which are “verbally articulated in a relatively straightforward way, in the form of a sufficiently clear declarative sentence” (20-1). Therefore the only acceptable sort of definition of any school of philosophy, analytic philosophy included, is one that identifies the school by way of its doctrine:

There is a minimum standard, a necessary condition, for the initial formation and the retrospective demarcation of groups that, like schools, movements, or traditions, purport to mark out not merely a region of social space, but of philosophical space: such groups must rely for their cohesion, and hence also their existence, on a kind of unity that is constituted by agreement in theoretical matters. That is, a group is most properly called a philosophical school (etc.) only when it has come together on the basis of a shared philosophical view (or some set of them) (21, emphasis in original)

Philosophical schools like analytic philosophy must be defined doctrinally because, in short, definitions capture essences, and philosophical schools are essentially shared doctrines.

1 For a remarkable (and entertaining) example of the projection of unity over the fact of disunity in a movement still regarded (despite much research establishing the contrary) as an exemplar of philosophical uniformity, see Paolo Mancuso’s account of the Vienna Circle’s reaction to Alfred Tarski’s theory of truth, “Tarski, Neurath and Kokoszyńska on the Semantic Conception of Truth” (forthcoming in D. Patterson, New Essays on Tarski and Philosophy, Oxford). Faced with disagreement among logical positivists over the acceptability of Tarski’s theory of truth, Carnap, Mancuso recounts, directed participants to “take a waiting attitude and ... not carry out public polemics against semantics as a whole until ... further development.”

2 An appreciation of the role of what Thomas Gieryn has, in the context of the history and sociology of science, called “boundary work” is extremely useful here. See Gieryn, T. Cultural Boundaries of Science: Credibility on the Line (Chicago, Ill.: University of Chicago Press, 1998).
There's a problem here, though, in that anyone dubious about the conclusion, demanding as it does that we have a doctrinal definition of analytic philosophy, will be at least as dubious about the argument's second and all-important premise that philosophical schools are essentially shared doctrines. That second premise asserts, after all, the content of the conclusion, and so the argument appears to beg the question. Granted the first premise, the question of whether we can fashion something other than a doctrinal definition of analytic philosophy just is the question of whether analytic philosophy in particular is, in essence, a set of doctrines.

That aside, the second premise, that philosophy (again, including analytic philosophy) is “the production and critical assessment” of “sets of views … about the way things are, or what is the case, in some region or other – or possibly the whole – of reality,” (21) (something Preston claims is a “minimal conception of what philosophy is and what it involves [that] has been widely held, at least implicitly, throughout the history of the discipline”) was in fact explicitly denied by, for example, assorted logical positivists, notably Carnap. Carnap, with a number of positivists, saw himself not as offering claims about the world, but as fashioning tools for the analysis of language. The tools themselves, in the form of formal languages, were developed in the context of, typically, pure syntax; they were analytic, and thus made no claims about the world. Carnap’s logical syntax program, and the nature of philosophy itself, was of course discussed, contested, and modified at the time, but that, as we saw above, is to be expected.

We should not, therefore, be swayed by Preston’s argument for a doctrinal definition of analytic philosophy; its force depends upon an antecedent commitment to its conclusion via its second premise, and its second premise conflicts with what we know to be the case about at least one prominent strain of analytic philosophy. But this hardly squelches the curiosity we ought to have about Preston’s illusionist view. What sort of definition of analytic philosophy could this be, and how could it be doctrinal, given what we’ve learned from the new wavers?

According to Preston, the “received” view of analytic philosophy is the view that “analytic philosophy is a school of philosophy that originated … around the turn of the twentieth-century … fueled by the perception that the correct method of philosophical inquiry … was the analysis of language.” However, he continues, it “does not correspond and never has corresponded to anything in reality” (14-5, 27). This idea, that the received view is only an illusion, Preston calls “illusionism.” Illusionism adheres to new waver history; there wasn’t, in fact, any such thing as analytic philosophy. But what the illusionist takes analytic philosophy to be – what it is that there wasn’t any of, as it were – is just what traditional definitions have made it out to be, that is, the received view. So, says Preston, “the illusionist is a traditionalist concerning what analytic philosophy is supposed to be, but differs from other traditionalists concerning whether analytic philosophy exists at all” (27). One is reminded of other mythical beasts, say, unicorns, about which we are all apparently illusionists in Preston’s sense. We all subscribe to a traditionalist definition of unicorns but deny that there are any. Anyone who claims otherwise is suffering from, or perpetrating, an illusion.

This is good as far as it goes, except wasn’t it part of the traditionalist account of analytic philosophy that analytic philosophy existed, that is, that there were analytic philosophers, properly named as such because they in fact belonged to a philosophical school? One suspects that there is in Preston’s account of his position an equivocation over ‘philosophical school’. Actually, there must be some equivocation, for otherwise what Preston says about the illusionist view is flatly inconsistent. He writes that “for the illusionist analytic philosophy is exactly what the received view says it is,” (27) and (earlier) that on the received view, “analytic philosophy is a school of philosophy” (14). So on the illusionist view analytic philosophy is a school. But we also read that if “analytic philosophy as ordinarily conceived is an illusion, then it is not a philosophical school” (27). At this point, really, we can only ask for clarification of what is meant by ‘philosophical school’ or, barring that, consider the possibility that the illusionist approach is itself an illusion.

Preston’s approach to these issues in the history of analytic philosophy is thoughtful and creative, and so these problems might steer us back toward non-doctrinal definitions of analytic philosophy. Or, even better, it might lead us to ask what work a definition of analytic philosophy, in any of these senses, does for us, and why we need one to begin with. Quine was fond of noting that the advent, development, and ultimate calcification of definitions is an accurate measure of progress in the sciences. Perhaps just the opposite holds for the history of philosophy?

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PRESTON ON THE ILLUSORY CHARACTER OF ANALYTIC PHILOSOPHY

CHRISTOPHER PINCOCK

I

In his carefully argued and extensively researched article “The Implications of Recent Work in the History of Analytic Philosophy” (Preston 2005a) Aaron Preston has raised what should surely be the central methodological issue for Russell studies and the history of analytic philosophy more generally. That is, what are the goals of the history of analytic philosophy and by what means can we best try to meet these goals? Preston’s main conclusion is that historical investigation into the origins of analytic philosophy has made the most common answers to these questions untenable. In particular, we are encouraged to conclude that analytic philosophy is not even a genuine philosophical movement, and is in this sense “illusory”. For Preston, then, the history of analytic philosophy should reconcile itself to this fact and adjust its methods dramatically. Once we see that analytic philosophy, as traditionally conceived, never existed, then we are free to apply tools not usually deployed in the history of philosophy, e.g. memetics (Preston 2005b).

In this short discussion piece I aim to challenge this conclusion by arguing that Preston’s claims about analytic philosophy depend on ascribing two goals to the history of analytic philosophy. While I will grant that he is largely successful in arguing that no account is likely to be able to meet both goals simultaneously, I will suggest that there is no reason to expect or require a unified means of achieving both goals.

II

A concise version of Preston’s argument comes towards the end of his article when he presents three statements which he claims are jointly inconsistent:

(1) Analytic philosophy is a philosophical school.
(2) Analytic philosophy originated in the early twentieth century.
(3) There is no set of views accepted by all and only those figures ordinarily taken to be analytic philosophers (i.e., on the received view of analytic philosophy) (p. 26).

(3) is supported by citing what Preston calls the “new wave” of history of analytic philosophy “exemplified by such figures as Nicholas Griffin, Peter Hacker, Ray Monk, Peter Hylton, and Michael Beaney among others” (p. 15). They have successfully challenged what Preston views as a prior consensus or “received view” of analytic philosophy that claimed that analytic philosophers agreed that philosophy was primarily focused on the analysis of language. The received view was put in place prior to 1970 by writers like Arthur Pap, J. O. Urmson and P. F. Strawson (pp. 12-13), but failed when it was later critically examined.

Granting Preston’s (3), it is not initially clear how (1)-(3) are inconsistent or why (2) is something we should accept. It turns out, though, that Preston has a special understanding of what a philosophical school is. This understanding requires that a philosophical school be unified by a collection of philosophical views or what Preston calls “a defining doctrine”:

A group counts as philosophical in the most proper, primary, or focal sense if and only if its criterion for membership is acceptance of some set of views on the basis of rational understanding. I will say of any group which meets this requirement that it is philosophically unified, or that it possesses philosophical unity. And, when a view actually functions in this way to ground the unity of a group, I shall call it a defining doctrine of that group (p. 21).

This implies that a necessary condition on the existence of philosophical school X is that all of X’s members have some set S of views in common. This condition is not yet sufficient, as Preston also requires that the members of X each accept S for rational reasons, e.g. explicit philosophical arguments, and that it is this very rational acceptance which unifies X.

Understood in this way, (1) is by itself inconsistent with (3). How does Preston motivate such a demanding definition of a philosophical school? He appeals to the metaphilosophical conception of philosophy as a theoretical discipline, i.e. as a discipline that aims at “the production and critical assessment of theories by means of rea-

\footnote{Unless otherwise indicated, all references are to Preston 2005a.}
soning” (p. 21). I agree with Preston that nearly all philosophers would agree with this aim, and most would probably also feel confident in saying what these theories are theories of, e.g. the nature of reality, knowledge, language and ethics. But it is one thing to take part in an activity that has certain aims and quite another to make the achievement of that aim constitutive of the existence of a school of a certain sort. It seems that the only way to move from the aim of philosophy to Preston’s definition of a philosophical school is to think of philosophical schools as those groups that realize the ideals of philosophy. A history of philosophy that takes on this definition of philosophical schools seems to have as one of its goals what I will call (G1):

(G1) Determine what sets of philosophical views can be justified by rational argument. That is, what philosophical schools are there?

Looking back over the history of philosophy can provide us with raw materials that will help us meet (G1). Along the way we may find that there are some philosophical schools consisting of actual people. But our focus is mainly on the views themselves and whether or not they can be rationally motivated.

Much of the work in the history of philosophy takes on this form, and we often see (G1) expressed with some degree of clarity. Two examples are Russell’s preface to his Philosophy of Leibniz and Soames’ recent remarks on the value of history for philosophy. Russell writes that in addition to the causal question of influence of one philosopher on another,

There remains always a purely philosophical attitude towards previous philosophers – an attitude in which, without regard to dates or influences, we seek simply to discover what are the great types of possible philosophies, and guide ourselves in the search by investigating the systems advocated by the great philosophers of the past (Russell 1900, xvi).

And, in more strident terms, Scott Soames has said of his Philosophical Analysis in the Twentieth Century,

If progress [in philosophy] is to be made, there must at some point emerge a clear demarcation between genuine accomplishments that need to be assimilated by later practitioners, and other work that can be forgotten, disregarded, or left to those whose interest is not in the subject itself, but in history for its own sake. The aim of my volumes was to contribute to making that demarcation (Soames 2006, 655).

If our history of analytic philosophy is aiming at (G1), then we must be willing to admit that analytic philosophy is not a philosophical school in the relevant sense. That is, analytic philosophers are not unified by a set of views that can be rationally justified. This would be a disturbing conclusion for someone who defined herself as an analytic philosopher and also subscribed to the ideal of philosophy as a theoretical discipline discussed above. But all would not be lost for such a philosopher, for she could readjust her self-conception by thinking of herself as helping to create an ideal philosophical school through a continuing refinement of her philosophical views through rational reflection. So conceived, “analytic philosophy” would be a label for an as yet non-existent philosophical school that develops rationally from one’s current views. We see this conception of philosophy, and the relatively fleeting importance of history according to it, at work in the Soames quotation above. History should bring us up to date and show to what extent we have so far realized the ideal behind (G1), but at some point “progress” in philosophy requires that we go beyond what history can teach us.

It is precisely here that Preston would appeal to a second goal for the history of philosophy and it is this goal that is inconsistent with Soames’ approach, or more generally with any “revisionist” conception of analytic philosophy. A second goal for history is:

(G2) To explain how this or that philosophical group achieved and maintained its dominance within academic philosophy.

Here I use “philosophical group”, as Preston appears to, for a collection of philosophers who may or may not amount to a philosophical school. Preston appeals to (G2) in arguing against revisionist conceptions of analytic philosophy. A revisionist isolates a defining doctrine for analytic philosophy, but is willing to accept that the analytic philosophers that result might be different than what the received view would lead us to expect:

By shifting the traditional boundaries of analytic philosophy both extensionally (in terms of who gets included or excluded) and temporally (in terms of when the school originated), it draws our attention away from the locus of the phenomenon that explain analytic philosophy’s meteoric rise to power and prominence during the twentieth century – and this, I think, is what most
needs to be explained by work in the history of analytic philosophy (p. 25, my emphasis).

A revisionist definition of analytic philosophy undermines (G2) because we start with a specified group of philosophers that dominated philosophy for a particular period of time. It is not helpful in answering our historical question to add philosophers to this group from other times or to take out some of the philosophers we started with. It is as if we wanted to understand why a particular explosion took place in the desert on Wednesday and someone proposed an explanation of what happened at the bottom of the ocean on Monday.

(G2), then, motivates (2) by blocking any revisionist accounts of who the analytic philosophers actually are. If we accept (3) and want to also achieve (G1), then we must reject (1). The result is what Preston calls an illusionist account of analytic philosophy. Contrary to the influential picture of analytic philosophy as a philosophical school, we come to accept that “analytic philosophy” merely picks out a group of philosophers who came to dominate philosophy during a certain period of time. But we are a step closer to achieving (G2) because we are now free to consider non-theoretical reasons for the dominance of this particular group. Crucially, Preston argues that the illusion that analytic philosophy was a philosophical school in his sense was in part causally responsible for its social success (p. 27). So, unmasking analytic philosophy is a necessary first step to achieving (G2).

III

My main objection to Preston’s argument is that (G1) and (G2) are goals that we should not try to achieve simultaneously or with similar methodologies. If we restrict these goals to analytic philosophy, then the differences become obvious:

(G1-A) To determine if analytic philosophy is a philosophical school. That is, is there a set of views that can be rationally defended that fits with analytic philosophers’ views?
(G2-A) To explain how analytic philosophy achieved its dominance in academic philosophy at the time it did.

It is only if we assume at the outset that it is likely that (G2-A) can be met solely through an appeal to philosophical argumentation that we are warranted in trying to meet both goals simultaneously. But this is not likely and work in the history of analytic philosophy is not necessary to appreciate this. For it does not take too much historical reflection to reveal that if twenty of the most important early analytic philosophers had not survived past the age of eighteen, then nothing like analytic philosophy would have come to dominate philosophy at the time that it did (Simons 2001). So part of a reasonable answer to (G2-A) would include the fact that these philosophers were born and that they survived into adulthood. But, quite clearly, we are not interested in these sorts of facts when we try to answer (G1-A).

More generally, we can insist that some historical and causal factors must be introduced in answering (G2-A), but that these sorts of factors are irrelevant to answering (G1-A). The dominance of a group of philosophers is largely a result of contingent factors and this dominance should not lead us to expect that this group forms a philosophical school in Preston’s sense. It may be possible to justify many of their philosophical beliefs, but there is little hope that these very justifications played a crucial part in the popularity of that view at that particular time. To see why in slightly more detail, suppose we have a strong philosophical argument A for a metaphysical theory T. If A is a good philosophical argument, then it will not appeal to the authority of particular individuals or the contingent historical events of some particular historical period. But if A lacks these historical details, then an appeal to A cannot be the whole explanation of why T was adopted at the time that it was. A philosophical school with a defining doctrine fulfills the ideal of philosophy as a theoretical discipline. For this reason, understanding the defining doctrine of the school and its justification will not appeal to the historical factors that are necessary to explaining its popularity or lack of popularity at any given time.

Preston tries to connect what I have called (G1-A) and (G2-A) by insisting that the only content that we can assign to a label like “analytic philosophy” must be based on the prior consensus of the received view. Invoking the error of excessive charity committed by an interpreter who claimed that “phlogiston” had referred to oxygen all along, Preston encourages us to accept that “the original definition, analytic philosophy on the received view, doesn’t exist any more than phlogiston does” (p. 25). I agree that if we are trying to meet (G2-A) and we initially also assume that analytic philosophy is a philosophical school of the sort specified by the received view,
then we must conclude that analytic philosophy does not exist. But the appropriate thing to do if this happens is to drop our assumption that analytic philosophy is that kind or any kind of philosophical school, and go on to try to resolve (G2-A) by other means. At this point, I do not see why we must remain wedded to the conception of analytic philosophy initially offered by the received view. To extend Preston's analogy, suppose we started with a theory of combustion that included phlogiston. When we later come to believe that phlogiston does not exist, we don't also come to believe that combustion was an illusion. Instead, we adjust our view as to what combustion is and what brings it about. A similar openness is needed when approaching analytic philosophy as a historical movement. It is only after we start to understand why this philosophical movement took over at the time that it did that we will be able to offer an account of its essential features. Our historical explanation will then use these features to explain the fleeting dominance of analytic philosophy so conceived. Here new methods are needed, perhaps even Preston's sociological approach. Other tools worth exploring are comparisons with other philosophical (Köhne 1991) and intellectual (Kusch 1995) movements that coincided with analytic philosophy.

In answering (G2-A), then, we need to be willing to adjust our conception of analytic philosophy. Similarly, as we engage in the quite different activity of trying to satisfy (G1-A), we must be equally flexible. For there are likely to be several different ways in which the views typically associated with analytic philosophy can be extended, clarified and justified. At the end of the day, we may remain unsatisfied with all of these extensions, but that is not something we can know in advance. On the picture of the history of analytic philosophy that I am suggesting, then, the term 'analytic philosophy' is fairly open-ended, and it may very well happen that our understanding of analytic philosophy as a historical movement may conflict with our favored interpretation of analytic philosophy as a defensible philosophical school. To be sure, these two tasks are difficult to complete. But I believe it is too early to conclude that they cannot be completed.

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I have maintained that the traditional conception of analytic philosophy — according to which it is a philosophical school defined by the view that philosophy is nothing more than linguistic analysis — is the only legitimate conception of analytic philosophy, and that, thus conceived, analytic philosophy is an illusion. In what follows, I respond to objections to my "illusionist" approach to analytic philosophy posed by Gary Hardcastle and Chris Pincock.

I. Reply to Hardcastle

Like Michael Beaney, Gary Hardcastle raises questions both about my insistence that philosophical schools be defined doctrinally and about the meaning and coherence of the illusionist position. I will address these issues in reverse order.

I describe the illusionist position as traditionalist (i.e., it accepts the traditional conception, as described above) concerning what analytic philosophy is supposed to be, but as differing from the standard traditionalist account over whether analytic philosophy exists at all. "This is good as far as it goes," Hardcastle says, "except wasn't it part of the traditionalist account that analytic philosophy exists, that is, that there were analytic philosophers, properly named as such because they in fact belonged to a philosophical school?"

Of course there is a sense in which Hardcastle is correct. If we had asked a traditionalist in the 1950s whether anything corresponded to his concept of analytic philosophy, the answer surely would have been yes. But I'm inclined to classify the presumption of existence as an assertoric or doxastic attitude toward what is conceptualized rather than part of a concept's content, and am in any case skeptical of any "ontological argument" purporting to show that there were analytic philosophers, properly named as such because they in fact belonged to a philosophical school?

Of course there is a sense in which Hardcastle is correct. If we had asked a traditionalist in the 1950s whether anything corresponded to his concept of analytic philosophy, the answer surely would have been yes. But I'm inclined to classify the presumption of existence as an assertoric or doxastic attitude toward what is conceptualized rather than part of a concept's content, and am in any case skeptical of any "ontological argument" purporting to show that that, by endorsing the traditional conception of what analytic philosophy is, one is also affirming its existence. If this is indeed Hardcastle's view, then I have a nice argument for the existence of God I'd like to sell him.

Related to this is Hardcastle's charge that my account of illusionism involves an equivocation over the term 'philosophical school', a point he brings out nicely by quoting passages in which I first affirm and then deny that analytic philosophy is a philosophical school. Now, there may well be equivocation afoot in these cases; but not over the term 'philosophical school'. Instead, the verb 'is' is being used in different senses. For when I affirm that, on the illusionist view, analytic philosophy is a school of philosophy, I am using the 'is' of predication or classification to make a claim about the what of analytic philosophy, just as one might say "a unicorn is a horse with a horn on its head." By contrast, when I deny that analytic philosophy is a school of philosophy, I am using an 'is' of existence to make a claim about the whether of analytic philosophy, just as one might say "a unicorn isn't really a horse at all, since unicorns don't exist."

Hardcastle also has several concerns related to my view that philosophical schools should be defined in terms of their philosophical commitments, or doctrines. Two of these are not directly about that requirement itself, but about my argument for it — or, rather, his reconstruction of my argument for it. The first of these is that the "second premise asserts ... the content of the conclusion, and so the argument appears to beg the question." But it is hard to see how. In Hardcastle's reconstruction of my argument, the second premise asserts basically that the production of views (doctrines) by means of ascent is essential — both in the sense of "necessary" and of "most central" — to philosophy as an historical human enterprise. The conclusion asserts that only doctrinal definitions will do for philosophical schools. Plausibly, different concepts indicate different content. How is it, then, that the former proposition asserts the content of the latter?

Hardcastle's all too brief explanation is as follows: "Granted the first premise," which simply insists on real definitions for philosophical schools, "the question of whether we can fashion something other than a doctrinal definition of analytic philosophy just is the question of whether analytic philosophy is, in essence, a set of doctrines." But I am at a loss to see how this counts as begging the question; for the complaint seems to amount to this: granted the truth of the first premise, the truth of the conclusion turns upon or is determined by the truth of the second premise. Far from making the argument question-begging, this is just the way any sound syllogism works: if the form is valid and one premise true, then the truth of the conclusion will be determined by the truth of the second premise.
Without further help from Hardcastle in clarifying the nature of the supposed circularity, I am at a loss to know what more can be said in reply. I will note, however, that further discussion of the issue might be helped by a more complete reconstruction of my argument. My argument was originally presented in narrative form rather than by way of numbered propositions. In his reconstruction, Hardcastle provides only an abbreviated reconstruction which, though it captures the gist of my argument, suppresses several of its premises and intermediate conclusions. I count at least twenty propositions crucial to the argument, nine of which are intermediate conclusions. It may be that the perception of circularity depends on eliding the contents of some of the propositions suppressed in his reconstruction with one of his expressed propositions.

Hardcastle’s next objection has to do with my claim, captured in the second premise of his reconstruction, that, as a theoretical discipline, philosophy produces “sets of views about the way things are.” The objection is that this claim is false in light of the fact that some philosophers (“Carnap and a number of positivists”) have disagreed with it. However, while these may be counterexamples to Hardcastle’s reconstruction of my second premise, they are not counterexamples to any claims I actually made. For instance, I said that this was “what most philosophers, both currently and historically, take to be true of the philosophical schools with which they affiliate,” and that “few in the contemporary analytic world would deny that philosophy is a theoretical discipline” whose business is “the production and critical assessment of theories by means of reasoning,” where theories are “sets of views (propositions) about the way things are, or what is the case, in some region or other – or possibly the whole – of reality.” And, I summed up the point by saying “I trust it will be recognized that this minimal conception of what philosophy is and what it involves has been widely held, at least implicitly, throughout the history of the discipline.”

Now, the existence of a handful of dissenters – which is all that Hardcastle demonstrates – is perfectly consistent with my claims, and does little more than show that there is an alternative to the majority view. Which of these views about philosophy is the correct one is, of course, a different question, and one not to be decided merely by “majority rule”. But in this case I think that the majority gets it right. The alternative championed by the logical positivists (and also by Wittgenstein on some interpretations) is not very plausible, as is suggested by its short-lived popularity in philosophical culture and confirmed by the fact that it is not possible to avoid making metaphysical claims by focusing on “pure syntax”. Language and its parts (like syntax) are parts of reality, so that to make claims about these things is to make claims about (parts of) reality – just as the traditional view has it.

So much for Hardcastle’s objections to my argument for the requirement of doctrinal definition. But he also objects to the requirement itself. Like Beaney, Hardcastle seems to think that the requirement betrays a fundamental misunderstanding of the nature of a philosophical school or, as he puts it, an “intellectual community”. The norm for an intellectual community is diversity rather than uniformity of views. Consequently, to define an intellectual community in terms of consensus-views is to misunderstand the nature of intellectual community as such; and to do so in the context of historical work is to void such work of much of its value and interest.

First, Hardcastle’s charge that I have fundamentally misunderstood the nature of a philosophical school qua intellectual community depends upon treating ‘philosophical school’ and ‘intellectual community’ as synonymous, and as referring to a type of group characterized (and perhaps united) by cooperative intellectual activity – particularly ideational influence and development – but not necessarily by doctrinal unity in the form of shared views. His argument seems to be: philosophical schools are intellectual communities, and Preston fails to see that. Now, I do not deny that these two terms can be used synonymously in some contexts. For instance, treating philosophical schools as intellectual communities seems well suited to looking at them from a predominantly historical or sociological perspective. But there is also a sense of ‘philosophical school’ which is synonymous with ‘school of thought’, and doctrinal unity would seem to be essential to philosophical schools thus under-

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1 Considerations of space required that I cut these replies to less than half their original length. Among the material cut was a complete, formal reconstruction of my argument. The complete set of comments can be seen at: blogs.valpo.edu/apreston/files/2008/01/reply-to-hardcastle-and-pincock.doc.

stood. This construal of 'philosophical school' is more in keeping with a predominantly philosophical interest in the socio-historical landscape of philosophy. I am guided by such an interest, and this is how I use the term. So it is not that I have failed to understand the nature of philosophical schools qua intellectual communities. Rather, it's that I am not interested in analytic philosophy merely or even primarily as an intellectual community, but as a school of thought, and as an intellectual community only insofar as it is one organized around a school of thought.

Now, one can question the appropriateness of approaching analytic philosophy as a school of thought, but here I appeal to my argument from the nature of philosophy (which, if my replies to Hardcastle have succeeded, still stands), and also to the fact that analytic philosophy originally presented itself as a doctrinally unified "school of thought" even though it wasn't. Hardcastle himself agrees that the early analysts "projected unity" over their doctrinal disunity. What he does not acknowledge is the effect this would have had in shaping the original concept of analytic philosophy, and thereby the authoritative definition of 'analytic philosophy'. But I contend that, on account of its projection of doctrinal unity, the original concept, and hence the original meaning of 'analytic philosophy', included the content "philosophical group united in the view that philosophy is the analysis of language."

For this reason, it is appropriate to approach analytic philosophy as a school of thought first and an intellectual community only second. Also for this reason, it is wrong to approach it merely as an intellectual community. Indeed, the intellectual community that Hardcastle picks out cannot be identical to analytic philosophy, though it may be extensionally equivalent to it. For although 'analytic philosophy' can refer to something like Hardcastle's intellectual community (specifically, a cross-section of persons, ideas and events that are usually taken to constitute the extension of 'analytic philosophy'), the term's referent does not determine its meaning. As I argued more fully in my reply to Beaney, the contemporary use of 'analytic philosophy' is historically grounded in an early, erroneous construal of a cross-section of this sort (here called "the subset") as unified by certain defining doctrines (among other attributes), and hence as constituting a school of philosophy in my sense. That is, our practice of holding together a certain set of philosophers under the label "analytic philosophy" is grounded in a monumental and longstanding error of perception – an illusion. Without this fact firmly in place as the foundation of our work on analytic philosophy, there can be no adequate justification for picking out just these figures and factions as belonging to analytic philosophy, whether we construe them as merely a subdivision of the history of philosophy (a "cross-section" or "subset"), as an intellectual community, or as a movement, a tradition, or a school.

Indeed, Hardcastle's ability to properly demarcate analytic philosophy qua intellectual community depends crucially upon this fact, for it is a case of our practice of holding together a certain set of philosophers under the label "analytic philosophy," and that practice is itself explicable only in terms of my proposed "illusion." It is therefore a mistake to say that analytic philosophy just is this intellectual community. At best that would be incomplete. Instead, we should say that analytic philosophy was supposed to have been a school with such-and-such defining doctrines, but it turned out not to be, and that the figures and factions thought to constitute this school really only constituted a movement or tradition or intellectual community. But to say that for the reasons just given is basically to accept illusionism.

II. Reply to Pincock

Christopher Pincock's objection to my approach is not that I have made an error of principle, but only a strategic error in uniting two aims of history that are best kept separate. I gloss these two aims as follows: (1) to understand or explain the philosophical success of analytic philosophy, and (2) to understand or explain the social success of analytic philosophy (or analytic philosophers). Since, as Pincock agrees, philosophical success is a matter of havingrationally defensible views, the strong doctrinal focus of my approach is not only relevant but essential to achieving goal 1. But social success is largely the result of non-ideational, causal-historical factors. Thus, the focus on doctrines alone, required for goal 1, is not apropos to goal 2 (hereafter, G1 and G2). From this, Pincock concludes that focus on doctrines should be completely excluded from work on G2, except in the unlikely case that a philosophical group's social success can be explained solely in terms of the power and cogency of its defining doctrines.

Now, the reasons for avoiding a focus on doctrines alone in pursuit of G2 are perfectly clear – insofar as the introduction of ideas
into human history always depends upon the birth, growth and survival of particular humans, a philosophical group’s social success will never depend solely on the power and cogency of its defining doctrines. But a case for entirely excluding doctrines has not been made. Indeed, although appeal to causal-historical factors is necessary for explaining a group’s social success, it is far from clear that this could ever be sufficient, not only in the history of philosophy, but elsewhere as well. Imagine, for instance, a history of Christianity’s social success that assigned no explanatory role to the views characteristic of Christianity. Such a history would be insufficient for G2, for it would fail to do justice to the fact that the appeal of Christianity’s teachings has contributed to its social success.

The relevance of views to social success in philosophy and other theoretical disciplines is even greater, whereas the role of views in religion and politics need not be understood as fundamental, they must be understood as fundamental in philosophy. Because of what philosophy as a human pursuit is, views will be central to it. Moreover, to the extent that the pursuit of philosophy is a human institution occupying a certain social space, either within the academy or beyond it, the very nature of philosophy prescribes certain norms for the sociology of that social space. And one of these is that the position of individuals and groups within the inevitable social hierarchy of that space is to be based on excellence in philosophy, and that means excellence in crafting rational views. Indeed, we can even say that there is a corresponding norm concerning the right of a view to occupy the “attention-space” (I borrow the term from the sociologist Randall Collins) of the philosophical institution, such that only rationally well-crafted views should occupy that attention-space. Of course, there are all kinds of epistemological challenges to properly abiding by these norms, but they are norms nonetheless.

So, because the appeal of certain views frequently plays a role in the success of various kinds of social groups, and because the rational appeal of views positively ought to play this role in the social world of philosophy, there is no reason to exclude a doctrinal focus when trying to achieve G2. On the contrary, to the extent that one is interested in understanding not merely the dominance of a group in the philosophical social space, but also whether its dominance was justified and hence legitimate by the standards of that social space, we must look to the rationality of the views associated with that group. And this is mainly what I aim to do with my illusionist approach.3

Pincock has a second argument for rejecting illusionism, one that proceeds upon different grounds. He says:

I agree that if we are trying to meet (G2-A) [i.e., G2 as applied to analytic philosophy] and we initially also assume that analytic philosophy is a philosophical school of the sort specified by the received view, then we must conclude that analytic philosophy does not exist. But the appropriate thing to do if this happens is to drop our assumption that analytic philosophy is that kind or any kind of philosophical school, and go on to try to resolve (G2-A) by other means. At this point, I do not see why we must remain wedded to the conception of analytic philosophy initially offered by the received view.

But we should not take Pincock’s suggestion to heart, for reasons already given in my replies to Beaney and Hardcastle: to do so would be historically misleading, as it would cast aside the very elements in analytic philosophy’s historically extended social-ontological structure that give it its unity, establish the “analytic philosophy” language game, and thereby constitute it a named social object—and not just any such object, but the very one that we are interested in when we research the history and nature of analytic philosophy.

1Admittedly, that this is my ultimate goal in developing the illusionist approach does not always come through clearly in my journal articles due to the limitations of space and scope that are part and parcel of that format. I trust that it comes through clearly in my book (Preston 2007).
BERTRAND RUSSELL SOCIETY 2008
ANNUAL BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES

June 27, 2008

The annual meeting of the board of directors of the Bertrand Russell Society was held on June 27, 2008 at St. John Fisher College. It was convened at 7:20 pm and presided over by Chad Trainer as chair.

Kenneth Blackwell (treasurer) summarized the financial situation of the Society as follows: bank balance, $3,500; guaranteed investment, $8,000; total investment, $11,500. He reported that Arlene Duncan is serving as bookkeeper for which the bertrand Russell Research Centre is paid an annual compensation of $700.00. He stated that McMaster University needs a $5.00 increase from $25.00 to $30.00 per year in Society reimbursement for the cost of publishing Russell. On motion made, seconded and unanimously carried, the increase was approved.

The following individuals were duly nominated as officers for 2008-9, with the motions seconded and unanimously approved: chair of the board, Chad Trainer; vice chairman, David White; president, Alan Schwerin; vice-president, Ray Perkins; treasurer, Kenneth Blackwell; secretary, David Henehan.

The location of the next meeting was discussed. John Lenz has offered Drew University. David Blitz offered Central Connecticut State University as a backup.

John Ongley and Rosalind Carey reported on the quarterly. They intend to ask Lehman College to again help finance publication of the Quarterly.

Treasurer Kenneth Blackwell discussed the anticipated $1,800 shortfall in 2008 expenses ($8,100) over dues income ($5,300). He predicted that with the $5.00 increase in payment to McMaster to cover the costs of producing Russell the deficit will increase annually by $800. Ken recommenced a minimum $5 dues increase. After discussion it was moved by Marvin Kohl, seconded and carried that we increase each dues category $10 beginning in 2009. This is the first dues increase since 1992.

Various motions were made and withdrawn concerning free first year subscriptions for new subscribers and other special membership prices. David Blitz proposed that every board member sponsor a new member and pay the membership fee. The motion passed (12 in favor, 1 opposed, 3 abstentions).

Kevin Brodie has resigned as head of the awards committee; no award was made by that committee this year.

Rosalind Carey reported on the Riga conference. The conference is asking for additional financial support from the BRS. On motion made, seconded and unanimously carried, it was resolved that we do not make any further financial contribution in addition to the $1,000 authorized at last year’s meeting.

John Ongley announced that Routledge wants to “rent” our mailing list for promotion of its Russell books. After discussion, a motion made to approve was passed (7 in favor, 4 opposed).

Dennis Darland requested $83 for OCR scanning software. Ken Blackwell moved and John Ongley seconded a motion, which was unanimously passed, to approve the $83 expense and to limit access to the scanning project to BRS members. On motion made, seconded and unanimously carried, it was resolved to designate Dennis Darland vice-president for electronic projects. As such he will have ex officio board membership.

Ken Blackwell discussed his moderating of the BRS list. On motion made by Peter Stone, seconded by Greg Landini, and unanimously carried, it was resolved that Ken continue his current policy of list moderation, and if in his judgment a communication is “highly uncivil” it shall, at his discretion, not be permitted on the list.

Peter Stone announced that the Secular Student Alliance inquired about a speaker’s bureau. On motion made by Cara Rice, seconded by Marvin Kohl and unanimously passed, it was resolved that we establish a speaker’s bureau of persons ready and willing to give public presentations about Russell.

There being no further business before the meeting, it was, on motion made and unanimously carried, adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

David L. Henehan
Secretary, Bertrand Russell Society
September 10, 2008
President Alan Schwerin convened the annual meeting of the members of the Bertrand Russell Society on June 28, 2008 at St. John Fisher College at 1:35pm. Discussion involved increasing BRS membership. John Ongley suggested we should upgrade our website. Alan Schwerin suggested school competitions/art exhibits and essay contests. To Rosalind Carey's note that BRS membership is aging and we need younger members, Ken Blackwell suggested a $20.00 trial/student membership category. Rosalind Carey suggested make CDs of the BRS talks and asked that we design a BRS logo.

On motion made, seconded and unanimously carried, it was resolved that at least until the next annual meeting for the year, BRS will offer a $20.00 student membership category for any matriculated student.

Members also watched Warren Allen Smith, who was unable to attend, on audio/video.

There being no further business before the meeting, the meeting was, on motion made, seconded and unanimously approved, adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

David L. Henehan
Secretary, Bertrand Russell Society
September 10, 2008

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BERTRAND RUSSELL SOCIETY, INC.
2008 2nd Quarter Treasurer’s Report

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<td>US$ a/c (Toronto Dominion)</td>
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<td>OVERALL BALANCE, 6/30/2008</td>
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Kenneth Blackwell, BRS Treasurer (blackwk@mcmaster.ca)

Note: US and Cdn. dollars are added as equals on 6/30/2008
Greater Rochester Russell Set (GRRS)

Writers and Books' Literary Center
740 University Avenue, Rochester, NY
7 pm - $3 or Free to Members

10/09  Ted Lechman, "Harry G. Frankfurt's On Bullshit"
11/13 Alfred Geier, "Heraclitus and the Logos"
12/11 Thomas Flynn, "Confessions of an Encyclopedia"
1/08 George McDade, "What's Wrong with Contemporary Philosophy in the Real World?"
2/12 Tim Madigan, "Russell's Evasion of Evolution"
3/12 David White, "Ken Wilber and the New Age: Are We There Yet?"
4/09 To be announced
5/12 Howard Blair, "Great Feuds on Mathematics: Russell versus Poincaré"

Bay Area Russell Set (BARS)

Szechwan Café
406 S. California Ave., Palo Alto, CA
7 pm

10/23 An Introduction to Bertrand Russell. Suggested Reading: A chapter of a book in progress by Peter Stone, David White, and Tim Madigan (In the “files” section of the BARS Yahoo! Group)
11/20 Russell on Socialism. Suggested Reading: Atkinson and Hughes, "Russell as Industrial Democrat."
Spokesman 100 (2008): 7-21
THE ANALYTIC TURN: Analysis in Early Analytic Philosophy and Phenomenology

This collection, with contributions from leading philosophers, places analytic philosophy in a broader context, comparing it with the methodology of its most important rival tradition in twentieth-century philosophy, phenomenology, whose development parallels the development of analytic philosophy's own in many ways. The Analytic Turn will be of great interest to historians of philosophy, analytic philosophers, and phenomenologists.

Michael Beaney is Reader in Philosophy at the University of York, UK.