

# Ethical Record

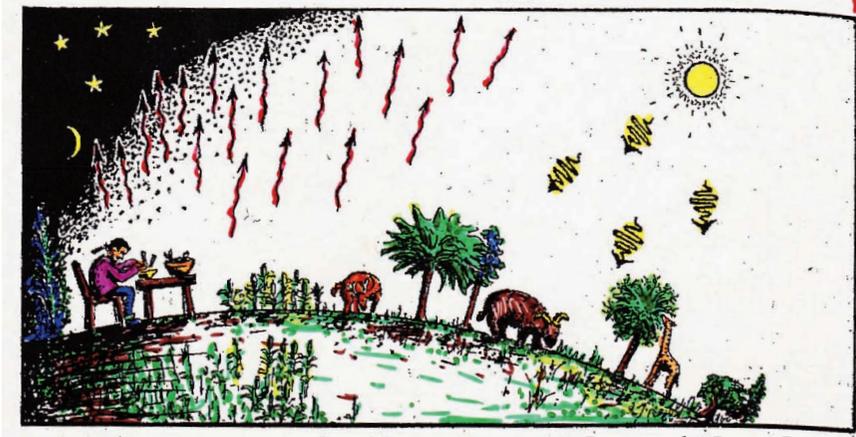
The Proceedings of the Conway Hall Ethical Society

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## PERPETUAL PROGRESS – IS IT POSSIBLE?



*Drawing by Roger Penrose*

*The 2nd Law of Thermodynamics (localised oases of order can appear but always amid increasing cosmic disorder) in action.*

This question, raised by Jacob Bronowski in his 1954 Lecture to SPES entitled “The Fulfilment of Man” was answered “Yes” by him but “No” by Barbara Smoker (see page 3 for an account by Barbara Smoker). On the cosmic scale, can ‘progress’ be defined or is there just perpetual change?

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**New members**

We welcome the following to the Society:

Michael Agg, Berkshire; R H Barry, Hull; Kathryn Caine, Middlesex;  
Anson Caudow, London E17; Amy Crosthwaite, London W6;  
Andrew Doughty, London N1; Philippa Durnford, London SE1;  
Omar Hamidi, Middlesex; Chris King, London W6; Roger Knight, Middlesex;  
Ian Mackay, London, NW1; Richard Moore, London, NW3;  
Robert Penn, Switzerland; Patricia Rogers, London SE1;  
Maxine Sacks, London, NW5; D M J Stevenson, London, SE13;  
Richard Thompson, Oxfordshire; Richard Wilson, London, SE26  
Sabine Zetteler, Hampshire.

**Obituaries**

Further tributes can be seen in this issue for Mary Lince (p 19) and John Rayner (p 20).

If you have any suggestions for **FILMS YOU WANT TO SEE** at  
Conway Hall please let Sid Rodrigues know their titles.  
[programme@ethicalsoc.org.uk](mailto:programme@ethicalsoc.org.uk) or 020 7061 6744.

**CONWAY HALL ETHICAL SOCIETY**

Reg. Charity No. 251396

Founded in 1793, the Society is a progressive movement whose aims are:

**the study and dissemination of ethical principles based on humanism and freethought**  
**the cultivation of a rational and humane way of life, and**  
**the advancement of research and education in relevant fields.**

We invite to membership those who reject supernatural creeds and are in sympathy with our aims. At Conway Hall the programme includes Sunday lectures, discussions, evening courses and the Conway Hall Sunday Concerts of chamber music. The Society maintains a Humanist Library and Archives. The Society's journal, *Ethical Record*, is issued monthly. Memorial meetings may be arranged.

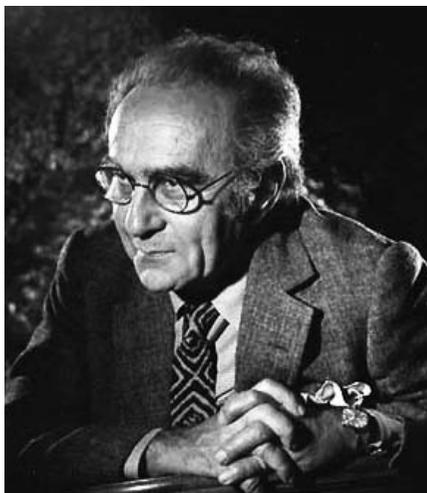
**The annual subscription is £35 (£25 if a full-time student, unwaged or over 65)**

## TWO CONWAY MEMORIAL LECTURES

Barbara Smoker

I attended the 82nd Conway Memorial Lecture, given on 26 June 2014 by Lisa Jardine, CBE, one of Jacob Bronowski's four daughters, under the title "Things I Never Knew about my Father" – just as I had attended the 45th lecture of the same series, given sixty years ago by Bronowski himself, under the title "The Fulfilment of Man". That was in 1954 – and I remember the event more clearly than whatever it was I did yesterday!

Although it took place almost two decades before the acclaimed Bronowski television series "The Ascent of Man" and the offshoot book of the same title, the lecture attracted a large audience, for Bronowski was already well-known as a populariser of science, mainly through his regular appearances on the BBC TV programme "The Brains Trust".



*Jacob Bronowski*

He was also known as a radio playwright. At least one of his plays, *The Face of Violence*, was adapted for the stage, and I remember seeing it (probably in a coterie theatre) and being very impressed by it. Its background was a totalitarian regime, the protagonist being a man imprisoned for opposing a government doctrine. As this was officially reversed before his release, he was then hailed as a hero – though not to his satisfaction. The theme is reminiscent of George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four* – and Bronowski was an ardent Orwell admirer, sharing his passionate commitment to free thought and honest communication.

Academically, Bronowski was a mathematician with a Cambridge doctorate, specialising in algebraic geometry, topology, statistics and the mathematical aspects of biology, but he was at the same time both a biologist and physicist, and also wrote poetry and plays, so was in fact a latter-day Renaissance man – seeing science and art as "twin expressions of the human imagination" – and he influenced C.P. Snow's *Two Cultures*.

In 1941 he married the sculptor Rita Colin, and in 1964 the family emigrated to the USA.

### **Belief in Perpetual Progress**

His 1954 lecture was skilfully presented, with a richly idiomatic command of the English language – which I admire even more now, since I have learnt that he did not begin to use it until the age of 13 and it was actually his fourth language after Polish, Yiddish and German.

While he forthrightly opposed religious dogmatism, Bronowski had an outmoded commitment to belief in perpetual progress – as his use of the word “fulfilment” in the 1954 lecture and in its title indicate. Though ingrained in the 19th-century humanistic philosophy, the idea was seriously questioned by 1954 – and was something that I already rejected at that time. After the lecture, therefore, I waylaid the lecturer as he was leaving the hall and broached a brief argument on that point; but failed to convince him.

As for the title of his later (1973) TV series and book, not only would the word “ascent” in that context be impossible to use today, but so, because of feminist extremism, would the word “man”. With the hindsight of the human genome, I now realise that such a phrase as Bronowski’s “our cousins the apes” would today have to be “our cousins the *other* apes” since it is now known that *Homo sapiens*, far from being at the top edge of apedom, is just one of its branches – and more closely related, for instance, to the chimpanzee than the chimp is to any of the gorillas.

Obviously, that was unknown in 1954, but I think geneticists had already repudiated the notion of human superiority, which Bronowski seemed to hold – and, especially the speciesist notion that the whole of evolution represents progress towards *Homo sapiens*, the real meaning of “progress” surely being nothing more than “change that I approve of”. These Bronowski defects are symptomatic of his enthusiastic over-optimism, which was a robust aspect of his vibrant charismatic persona.

Experience of the past 60 years only confirms my rejection of the idea of perpetual progress.

### **Bronowski’s MI5 Dossier**

The main purport of Lisa Jardine’s biographical talk was the distrust that her father, being a foreigner, faced in Britain. Though he became a British subject in 1933, this distrust persisted, not only during the war when he pioneered important operational research but during the Cold War too – his leftish liberalism often being misconstrued as Stalinist communism.

For years, he was the subject of an MI5 dossier, to which the family gained access under the 30-year rule. Copies of some of the documents from it were shown on the screen – but unfortunately were so faint as to be largely illegible. (This could have been due to, or at least exacerbated by, the fact that the front-of-house lights were never switched off.)

One official 1950 letter shown on the screen was an apologetic explanation that the only reason Bronowski had been cleared after the war for a top research post with the National Coal Board was that no other candidate could be found with the requisite expertise!

Lisa Jardine has obviously inherited not only her father’s linguistic presentational skill but also his enthusiastic disposition — though modernised. Perhaps she could be invited to give us a Sunday morning lecture on her own academic subject: the history of science.

# CORRUPTION IN FINANCE AND THE LAW

Nicholas Wilson, known as 'Mr Ethical'  
*Lecture to the Ethical Society, 8 June 2014*

My campaign started in 2003 when, after having acted for the John Lewis Partnership in debt recovery for 20 years, I met the new bank, HFC, who were taking over their store card business. At a meeting at the bank's headquarters in Winkfield, accompanied by the Senior Partner of my employer Weightmans solicitors, Ian Evans, the bank's solicitor Duncan Hamilton told me that my firm could continue to act for John Lewis, and the bank generally, provided we did so on the basis of their existing solicitors, Restons, in Warrington.

When Mr Hamilton explained those contract terms I told him that such an arrangement was illegal in English law, and I have been saying so ever since. Basically the arrangement was that the solicitors would add 16.4% to defaulting accounts (e.g. £1,640 on a £10,000 debt) before they had done any work, and then write to the debtor claiming the sum of £11,640. If they issued proceedings they claimed £11,640, *plus* interest *plus* the further costs allowed by the court. If the bank agreed to accept a lesser amount, e.g. £5,820 - the solicitors would send the bank a pro forma invoice for £820. This is known as a contingency fee and was illegal. The average sum added was £1,500, with some charges as much as £5,000.

## 2.04 Contingency fees

- (1) You must not enter into an arrangement to receive a contingency fee for work done in prosecuting or defending any contentious proceedings before a court of England and Wales, a British court martial or an arbitrator where the seat of the arbitration is in England and Wales, except as permitted by statute or the common law.
41. A "contingency fee" is defined in [rule 24 \(Interpretation\)](#) as any sum (whether fixed, or calculated either as a percentage of the proceeds or otherwise) payable only in the event of success.

Furthermore the 'collection charges' are unlawful because they breach this rule in the Solicitors Code of Conduct:

taking unfair advantage of an opposing party's lack of legal knowledge where they have not instructed a **(11.7)** lawyer ;  
**IB** demanding anything for yourself or on behalf of your *client* , that is not legally recoverable, such as when you **(11.8)** are instructed to collect a simple debt, demanding from the debtor the cost of the letter of claim since it cannot be said at that stage that such a cost is legally recoverable;

I spent much time at Weightmans remonstrating about the illegality of their contract with HFC (HFC Bank became part of HSBC Group in 2003), culminating in my reporting them to the Law Society in 2006 (which became the Solicitors Regulation Authority [SRA]). Following my complaint to the SRA I was immediately dismissed from Weightmans. In my employment dispute with them they wrote this to my solicitors, Bindmans:

### **The HFC Contract**

Nick now says he feels unable to handle the HFC bankruptcies (identified as part of his role at (1) above) because he considers the contract to be illegal. We have already stated on numerous occasions that we do not accept Nick's argument but he has confirmed his refusal to undertake the work. This of itself gives rise to a fresh employment issue.

From this it is clear that I was told that if I refused to undertake illegal work on behalf of HFC I would be sacked anyway.

After a year apparently 'investigating' my complaint, the SRA adjudicated that the fees were in fact contingency fees but they decided to take no further action because they stated that it only happened in a small number of cases. (All documents I refer to are available to view on my website, nicholaswilson.com). When I left the firm there were 70-80,000 cases worth in excess of £100m. A subsequent Freedom of Information Request I made to the Ministry of Justice for details of claims issued by Weightmans and Restons in the year of my complaint, 2006, revealed that approximately £44,000,000 in illegal charges were added in that year alone. I estimate that since Restons started acting for the bank a total in excess of £1bn has been added in illegal charges.

After being dismissed by Weightmans and settling my employment dispute at mediation, when they paid me a considerable sum on my signing a compromise agreement containing a gagging clause, I moved to Hastings. I intended to pursue my interest in writing music.

### **I Decide to Set up a Business**

However, I worked for a period as a consultant at a firm of solicitors in Brighton, and much to my amazement discovered that even after the SRA ruling against them Weightmans were *still* adding the collection charge of 16.4%. At the same time the Consumer Credit Act 2006 came into force, which contains a provision whereby a consumer can challenge a credit agreement on the basis of 'unfair relationship'. Apart from their inherent illegality, the charges breach the Office of Fair Trading Guidelines on debt recovery, in that firms are not allowed to apply charges which are disproportionate to the amount of any work done.

I therefore decided to set up a business to assist people to recover the charges, which should be simple matter. I was naive in believing that I would be able to obtain public domain information from the Ministry of Justice. They refused to search the Register of County Court Judgments for me in order that I could contact victims of the fraud. Their refusal meant that I had to appeal in the

County Court for an order overturning their decision, but unfortunately I was unsuccessful as they argued that I had not been refused access to the Register but that they had refused to carry out a search based on my requested criteria. A completely specious argument in my opinion as anybody familiar with databases will know it is a very simple matter to filter a column to produce a specific set of records.

The next step was to take out a group action against the bank and I contacted well-known group action lawyers Leigh Day & Co who employed me as a consultant to launch a multi-million pound action against HSBC. Unfortunately, for reasons that are confidential, a conflict arose which meant we couldn't proceed. I approached all the major law firms that specialised in group action/consumer law and they similarly had a conflict in that they either acted for, or banked with, HSBC. Another problem was that they were reluctant to work with me because I was a whistleblower.

In 2010 the Office of Fair Trading (OFT) made an order against HFC Bank forbidding them from applying a collection charge unless and until they amended their terms and conditions to allow for such a charge (their terms and conditions merely stated that in the event of default they will add 'reasonable costs'). No interpretation of that clause could justify an imposition of a charge of £5,000 before the lawyers had even written one letter.

Unfortunately the OFT order was hidden away as a PDF attachment to a press release about the OFT concerns regarding Charging Orders i.e. nothing to do with collection charges; so the order was not picked up by the media. There is a reason for this. The OFT order was dated one day after, and released one week after Stephen Green, Chairman of HSBC Group was made a Lord by David Cameron and invited into government as his Trade Minister.

I have since been campaigning tirelessly to try to expose this massive fraud without success. In December 2012 I reported the matter to the Financial Services Authority, which became the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA). This is the regulator that is supposed to regulate the behaviour of banks. They did absolutely nothing and this year I made a Freedom of Information Act request asking for details of their investigation. They confirmed that they had done nothing with the extraordinary statement that the OFT had already dealt with the matter and that HFC agreements entitled them to add collection charges.

*See next page for an extract from the OFT order mentioned above:*

So it would appear that the FCA either didn't even bother to read the OFT order or they are deliberately cover-up the fraud to protect the bank. They are certainly not fulfilling their regulatory role.

It may also be significant that last year HSBC employed the ex-head of MI5, Sir Jonathan Evans, as non-executive director on a salary of £150,000 per annum for 40 days' work. Was this a reward for MI5 protecting Stephen Green from prosecution during the Mexican drug cartel money laundering investigation, for which HSBC were fined \$1.9bn on a Deferred Prosecution Agreement?

1. When referring a customer's account or debt to an external third party for collection of the outstanding debt HFC Bank will not levy, or claim that it is entitled to levy, a fee or charge ("the Collection Charge") on such customer in order (amongst other things) to recover the costs and expenses incurred by such external third party in relation to recovering, or attempting to recover, a sum which HFC Bank claims is owed to it by such customer (save in respect of court fees and legal costs and disbursements incurred as part of legal proceedings to recover a customer's outstanding debt) until such time as HFC Bank has after the date of these requirements introduced a new term or terms in its agreements with customers or varied a term or terms contained in its agreements with customers (the new term or terms or the term or terms as varied are together referred to below as "the New Collection Charge Term(s)") pursuant to which it may levy the Collection Charge.

My most recent activity has been to file a complaint with City of London Magistrates Court against the bank and five solicitors for conspiracy to defraud and various other charges under the Fraud Act 2006. It remains to be seen whether summonses will be issued, and if so whether the prosecution will be taken over by the Crown Prosecution Service, as is their right, and killed off.

As a footnote, the effect of all of this on my life and health has been devastating. As a whistleblower I am virtually unemployable, and 'over qualified' for menial jobs I have applied for. 10 years of extreme stress has taken its toll on my mental health and I now suffer from depression and a very short concentration span. I recently had an Atos Work Capability Assessment, was deemed fit for work and had my Employment Support Allowance benefit withdrawn. I have not had any benefits or income for 10 weeks at the time of writing and have a further repossession hearing at court on 19 June.

If I can keep going, I will not give up trying to expose this massive fraud in the hope of obtaining recompense for the victims and hopefully some criminal prosecutions against those involved. It would also be good to find some work.

<http://nicholaswilson.com/> [nw@nicholaswilson.com](mailto:nw@nicholaswilson.com)

THE 80th CONWAY MEMORIAL LECTURE

**JEREMY BENTHAM: PROPHET OF SECULARISM**  
by **Philip Schofield**

Copies available at £4 inc post from the  
Conway Hall Ethical Society



# CLASSIC LIBERAL-INDIVIDUALISM AND THE CONTEMPORARY WESTERN WORLD

Tom Rubens

*Lecture to the Ethical Society, 15 June 2014*

Firstly, what exactly is classic liberal individualism? I will begin by answering this question, placing the points in historical context. I will then identify what I regard as the defining features of the contemporary Western world. Finally, I will examine the place in that world which I think still remains for the kind of individualism under discussion.

Classic liberal-individualism can be broadly defined as a frame of mind which gradually developed in the West from the Renaissance and Reformation onward; and one which, arguably, reached its apogee in the 19th century. It is an outlook which emphasised, to an unprecedented degree in Western culture, the importance of the individual mental context, the personal intellectual witness.

## **The First Completely *Post*-mediaeval Century**

In this regard, its post-Renaissance and post-Reformation setting needs to be stressed. The Renaissance and Reformation, despite several differences between them, had had the shared effect of radically reducing the intellectual authority of the Catholic Church in Western Europe, and therefore irreversibly weakening the whole mediaeval mindset. This process opened the way for new thinking in philosophy and science. Such thinking was not necessarily or invariably anti-religious (some thinkers continued to be Catholics, or were Protestants) but it was definitely opposed to any automatic and unquestioning acceptance of traditionalism in philosophical and scientific thought. Its exponents showed determination to think for themselves and come to their own conclusions on philosophical and scientific matters. Squarely representative of this spirit are Bacon and Descartes, two of the leading Western European thinkers of the 17th century — which was, in an intellectual sense, the first completely *post*-mediaeval century.

All subsequent major advances in Western European thought (and, later, North American thought) were made by such people. As philosophy and science continued to pursue their exploratory and critical paths, their anti-conventional and anti-dogmatic outlook increasingly found new targets: not only traditionally accepted notions of an ontological kind, but also those of an ethical kind. Moral, social and political norms, centuries-old, came more and more under fire. Hence the 17th and 18th centuries were, to an extent never before known, periods of political revolution and social transformation; the leading instances being the English Civil War (17th century) and the French and American Revolutions (18th).

Revolution, of course, continued in Europe in the 19th century, and in fact became more frequent. But, as the century continued, there took shape another radical development, non-revolutionary, in those Western countries which, by this time, had already achieved a significant measure of the political democracy which most revolutionary movements were seeking to attain: those countries, then, which were the more advanced ones in modern political terms. The main examples were Britain, France and the United States.

## **The Process of Democratisation**

With democratic practice well established, and with more in prospect, these countries were witnessing what a number of thinkers came to regard as a process of democratisation which was actually extra-political and cultural: one that was affecting the society's total way of life. This was an expanding tendency toward more and more collective thought and action; an amplifying majoritarianism; a spreading mass-conformism. As such, it was seen as threatening the mental sphere of the individual: that personal intellectual context on which post-mediaeval Western culture had increasingly focussed, and around which the whole concept of classic liberal-individualism has cumulatively been built.

Three thinkers who objected very strongly to the conformist tendency were John Stuart Mill in Britain, Alexis de Tocqueville and Benjamin Constant in France. (Relevant American thinkers of the 19th century can also be referred to: despite the emphatically democratic context in which they were situated, Hawthorne, Emerson and the later Twain displayed a marked scepticism about the general directions their society was taking.)

It is of course the case that many other 19th century European thinkers and writers (e.g. Schopenhauer, von Humboldt, Nietzsche, Spencer, Ibsen) shared these men's strongly individualistic outlook; but Mill, Tocqueville and Constant are especially notable for articulating that outlook in a very focussed and systematic manner. Their clearly formulated concern was with the autonomy of the individual, in choice of cultural commitment, of activities and relationships, and of mode of self-expression. Their concern was that the individual make these choices in ways that were un-coerced by institutions or organisations, or by threats of social unpopularity and ostracism. This concern, in Mill and Tocqueville, was combined with anxiety at the possibility of conformist excess in their own countries, and in the United States (then, incidentally, the numerically largest democracy in the world). Mill in particular warned against "the tyranny of the majority", and spoke, with what can only be described as scorn, of "collective mediocrity" (as contrasting with the superior calibre of individual achievements). Constant insisted that, against majority encroachment, there should be political guarantees for liberty of religion, opinion, expression and ownership of property.

In the 20th century, the chief philosophical representatives for the liberal-individualistic position have included Russell, Santayana and Isaiah Berlin. Among creative writers, major figures have included Gide, Forster, D.H. Lawrence and Orwell. Focussing on the philosophical advocates: Russell and Santayana, both born in the second half of the 19th century and coming to intellectual maturity around the turn of the 20th, were very much imbued with the spirit we have found in Mill, Tocqueville and Constant. Russell clearly showed this spirit when, in the 1930s, he predicted and lamented the emergence of political super-powerdom: "In the world at large, if civilisation survives, I foresee the domination of either America or Russia, and in either case of a system where a tight organisation subjects the individual to the State so completely that splendid individuals will no longer be possible." (*Autobiography*)

Russell's concern about the predicament of the individual in the world of the 20th century is shared by Santayana when the latter writes, with reference to the growth of social democracy as distinct from liberal democracy, "Social democracy at high pressure would leave no room for liberty. The only free man in it would be one whose whole ideal was to be an average man." (*The Wisdom of Santayana*, p. 35)

Russell's words about the power of the State, and Santayana's about the pressures of social conformity, are reflected in a series of striking statements made in 1949 by Isaiah Berlin:

"We are often told that the present is an age of cynicism and despair, of crumbling values and the dissolution of the fixed standards and landmarks of Western civilisation. But this is neither true nor even plausible. So far from showing the loose texture of a collapsing order, the world today is stiff with rigid rules and codes and ardent, irrational religions. So far from evincing the toleration which springs from cynical disregard of the ancient sanctions, it treats heterodoxy as the supreme danger.

Whether in the East or the West, the danger has not been greater since the ages of faith. Conformities are called for much more eagerly today than yesterday; loyalties are tested far more severely; sceptics, liberals, individuals with a taste for private life and their own inner standards of behaviour, if they do not care to identify themselves with an organised movement, are objects of fear or derision and targets for persecution for either side, execrated or despised by all the embattled parties in the great ideological wars of our time.....In the world today, individual stupidity and wickedness are forgiven far more easily than failure to be identified with a recognised party or attitude, [or failure] to achieve an approved political or economic or intellectual status."

(In an article written for the mid-c20 edition of the American journal *Foreign Affairs*.)

While it is true that Berlin was writing in the context of the Cold War between the West and the Soviet Union, a conflict which ended in 1989, much of what he says about contemporary social attitudes in the West, and in other parts of the world influenced by those attitudes, remained the case for the rest of the 20th century, and still obtains. (In this respect, it is interesting to note that Berlin decided to let his statements of 1949 stand unamended when he re-published them twenty years later in his book *Four Essays on Liberty*.)

The general "tight organisation" of the individual's daily life to which Russell referred is powerfully echoed in Berlin's words. The pressure to conform, to be a member of organisations, to espouse a group outlook, to eschew privacy and a position of social marginality: such requirement remains, in some form or other, a very powerful one. In this regard, incidentally, it is sobering thought to consider how many past persons of genius, especially in the humanities, would have achieved what they did, had they been constantly subject to this obligation. A like consideration applies to their equivalents today, as the latter confront this all-too-real current obligation, while attempting to inwardly locate, and outwardly express, their own originality.

Overall, it can be affirmed that awareness of the threats to individual integrity posed by over-organisation in modern life reminds us of the importance of opposing that excess: an opposition based on the values of the liberalism we have been examining. In turn, it can be observed that this liberalism has, despite the forces ranged against it, played a larger part in Western culture than in any other on record. Moreover, again despite those forces, it continues to do so. These facts, for all those who value liberalism, point to one of the tremendous contributions the West has made to the course of human progress.

### **The Kind of World We Now Live In**

Consideration of the problem of over-organisation now leads us into a larger examination of the defining features of the contemporary Western world. Bearing in mind that the major 20th century voices of liberal-individualism to which we have referred belong mainly to the first half of that century, which is now well over 50 years ago, we need to make further observations about the kind of Western world we currently live in. These observations will be followed by recommendations about the continuing and expanding role which can still be played by liberal-individualism.

In addition to the increasing general institutionalisation of personal life, there has been growth in the power of certain specific institutions: private corporations, industrial and financial. This power entails influence over the policies, domestic as well as foreign, of the governments of the countries where the corporations are based: the governments in question are principally those of the United States, Britain, France, Germany and Japan. Such power also involves influence over the governments of the countries in which the corporations have their overseas operations.

Influence over the foreign policy of the government in the home country usually results in that government's pursuing an imperialistic policy in the interests of the corporations: one in which military means are harnessed — firstly, to acquire control of raw materials needed for corporate industry, and secondly, to gain geo-strategic advantages which go hand in hand with such control.

Western corporate power is not, of course, a new phenomenon, but its current magnitude is. The latter is due to enormous advances made in the technology of production, the geographical spread of production, and the techniques for advertising and marketing products.

Institutional power of this kind directly shapes the lives of only a small number of people: those who actually work for the corporations; and this point applies to financial companies as well as industrial ones. However, in an *indirect* sense, the power impacts on the lives of millions of people, both in the home countries and overseas. Such impact comes from the sheer fact of economic dominance. To have the giant shadow of this dominance cast over one's entire life, most obviously over the adult part of it, is to have one's own integrity as an individual seriously compromised.

The problem of corporate power, as it existed in a lesser form, was recognised by Russell, especially in his 1930s book *Power: A New Social Analysis*, and has

since then been scrutinised by a number of leading writers, including Chomsky. Viewed from the standpoint of the liberal-individualist, it has to be seen as a challenge which, at all costs, must be met by society as a whole. Unless this power is either drastically reduced or completely dismantled, liberal values are in grave danger of being driven to the farthest edge of the social periphery, or even over that edge.

### **The ‘Job-ocratic’ Mentality**

Another difficulty related to economic pressure on the individual is to do with the limits imposed on personal development by the parameters of occupation. People, of course, must work, and one of the reasons they have to is economic need. But a job is a fixed set of activities, and unfortunately many jobs do not provide anything like a full outlet for the individual’s capacities. To be added now is the point that contemporary Western society generally views the individual too much in terms of occupational function, and not enough in other, more informal, elastic and imaginative terms. (In passing, we should note that this tendency to ‘pigeon-hole’ the individual is strongly criticised in the existentialist thinking of Sartre and others. It also attacked by Marcuse in his opposition to social processes which produce what he calls ‘one-dimensional man’.)

Liberal-individualist thought, at its high tide in the 19th century, favoured the Renaissance concept of the multiple possibilities of individual behaviour — see especially Mill and von Humboldt — and this concept remained strong in the 20th century among people such as Russell and Santayana. But, more and more, as society has moved toward and into the 21st century, the emphasis has been on job-status and job-hierarchy (‘job-ocracy’, as some have called it) as the main reference points for defining the individual. This attitude clearly overlooks the fact that so many great achievements, especially in the humanities, have been attained outside the sphere of job requirements and remuneration. Profound originality has rarely been part of a job description, or been met with enthusiasm by most employers. Thus liberal-individualism needs to oppose the ‘job-ocratic’ mentality, at least its ungenerous and unimaginative elements.

Linked with the above issue is that of the general role of intellect in everyday life. A social system which, in various ways, militates against the expansive and panoramic play of mind in day to day activity is the enemy of mental energy and spontaneity. In the face of this enemy, liberal-individualists should at all times seek to maximise the outlets for mental vitality in the daily round.

Let us now move to a conclusion. As said in the introduction, classic liberal-individualism has always focussed on the individual mental context, the personal intellectual witness. This focus has faced many problems, even and especially during its heyday in the 19th century. The talk has outlined what these problems have been and remain, but has also referred to various ways of combatting them.

These ways imply that a considerable degree of compatibility between liberal-individualism and contemporary Western society is in fact possible. Implementing them does not mean turning the clock back to some pre-

contemporary social order; what it does mean is making the current order more flexible, elastic, accommodating to personal idiosyncrasy, tolerant of exceptions to rules. Such changes would allow the individual to feel more at ease within social formations, less threatened by organisational structures, less fearful of personal mental context being eroded.

The circumspect person clearly sees that, in the contemporary Western world, certain kinds of large-scale organisation, and inclusion in them, are objectively necessary. Reference has already been made to the need to combat the power of industrial and financial corporations. This task clearly calls for participation in large-scale political movements; it otherwise has no chance of success. A further context in which a person is required to put his/her individuality in second place is in relation to the benefits of extensive health and social services provided by central and local government.

These benefits are available only if the individual agrees to become a name on a long list; each person duly has to wait his/her turn before receiving attention. This public-service context — which of course was virtually non-existent for much of that 19th century in which classic liberal-individualism reached its high water mark — is one that every sensible person should accept and adjust to. A similar point can be made about social and national emergencies (eg. natural disasters, wars) in which the individual is required to contribute to the general welfare. S/he ought to acquiesce with willingness in a practically requisite degree of public organisation and authority: one which is certainly reconcilable with an equally requisite degree of private autonomy and integrity.

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## BOOK REVIEW: **ELEANOR MARX - A LIFE**

by **Rachel Holmes** (Bloomsbury 2014)

Review by **Mazin Zeki**

Biographies can transform the retelling of history and produce a romanticised and possibly distorted narrative. Eleanor Marx is one of those iconic figures who attracts biographies, well, because of her iconic status. Few of them contain new material and there is in fact little to add to Yvonne Kapp's definitive two volume of the 70s or of David McLellan's biography of Marx.

The subject is of special interest to freethinkers because the tragic heroine whose life was dominated by her care for her father, and his legacy, was fatally betrayed by a leading secularist. It was Eleanor's misfortune to have met him at the British Museum reading room.

Edward Aveling, a friend of Annie Besant, was a very flawed character who not only betrayed her but was a thoroughly disreputable fellow in all respects. Aveling was Vice Chairman of the NSS. He was also a leading socialist political activist at a time when secularism was moving towards the Left. Later on, socialism may itself have become more influenced by Christianity. These are the most interesting passages in the book.

Like many radicals, Aveling was an emotionally detached stunted individual seemingly incapable of basic empathy or intimacy. He may even have known of Eleanor's impending suicide and did nothing to prevent it.

His quarrels with Bradlaugh and Besant propelled him to socialism. Aveling was typical of the kind of figure often thrown up by progressive movements. Articulate, able, intelligent and intellectually gifted, he was driven by a concern for 'love of humanity', but who was an emotional and social cripple, manipulative and a ruthless exploiter in personal life. Such individuals do untold damage to the movements concerned.

### **Eleanor was Naïve**

Eleanor was a naïve, unworldly, honest and gentle Jane Eyre without the Rochester. Aveling's disgraceful behaviour toward a vulnerable Eleanor has been well-documented and well known at the time. Eleanor was also touched by other recent tragedies in her eventful life: the deaths of her mother, father, siblings and close friends in rapid succession.

Finally on Engel's deathbed she discovered that her friend Freddie Demuth was actually her half-brother. This may have devastated her. (Interestingly Bradlaugh himself may have had an illegitimate child who he did not acknowledge, namely Horatio Bottomley).

Rachel Holmes, a historian, appears to have used secondary sources and adds nothing to the well known facts of Eleanor's life. Nevertheless it is a story which is told well but reads more like a tragic novel such as Anna Karenina. Eleanor was traduced, betrayed, exploited, humiliated and provoked beyond endurance by Aveling. She saw her situation as hopeless and chose an honourable suicide.

Her thesis, if such it is, argues that Eleanor should be remembered as a feminist pioneer who changed the world.. This is wildly inaccurate. Although she was a female political activist it would be incorrect to cast her as a 'feminist'. Eleanor was not without her own contradictions. In her later years she lived on a modest inheritance and had her own servant and secretary.

Holmes implies that the advancement of women was wholly influenced by socialism. But Eleanor's milieu also included Karl Pearson, and Bradlaugh who were certainly not socialists yet supported female education and equality as did many leading intellectuals.

Socialism based on a class analysis of society, and latter-day feminism, which has essentially a petty bourgeois character, are quite distinct. This has persisted to this day.

### **Eleanor as Organiser**

Eleanor's main activity was organising industrial workers and helping to win the 1889 dock strike which paved the way for the foundation of the Labour party. But her role was not major and the decisive element in winning the strike (and an inspiring example of international solidarity) was the

£30,000 raised in Australia from dockworkers and sympathisers including religious groups. This underlines the fact that Holmes is using a historical narrative to construct a new myth or expand an existing one.

Eleanor left the world much as she found it but, betrayed in love, she found it unbearable.

It is part of a unwelcome trend in which an allegedly hidden narrative is revealed as ‘reclaimed’ history. Personalised versions and events are seen through an empathic prism which ostensibly illuminates but also distorts. Eleanor had a tragic life but that alone does not equate with historical significance. This might explain why Holmes’ argument is unconvincing.

Holmes has little knowledge of the complex political currents at a seminal historical moment with massive political upheavals from globalisation, industrialisation, mass communications, literacy and imperial expansion bringing forth radical and contradictory ideologies. Socialism, though hopelessly divided into factions, was only one of them and offered hope and optimism in an uncertain world before it came crashing down in the turmoil of WWI.

Holmes confuses socialism and social democracy and does not properly explain the roots of socialist and other internal political divisions and factions which are still the subject of fierce debate. Instead Holmes focusses on one individual through a personal memoir on Eleanor and her circle. This is wholly unsatisfactory although such divisions have persisted with catastrophic results. Aveling was one of those who caused a permanent rupture within and between progressive causes. If the alleged common agendas of secularism and socialism could ever have come together is doubtful but EA ensured otherwise..

Marx and Aveling were correct about Hyndman who later became a super patriot. Eleanor’s carefully planned suicide has ensured that she is remembered as a tragic heroine. It is very depressing that her last home has now been subdivided and although has a blue plaque does not have the status it deserves as the home of an important political figure.

Holmes’ conclusion is that Eleanor changed the world. Even by the idolatrous standards of romanticised ‘feminist’ biography this is fanciful. Holmes seeks to make Eleanor the centrepiece of a seminal historical period during which she and a few others of the socialist *nomenklatura* ‘changed the world’. But this contradicts a central tenet of Marxism that events are shaped by historical forces which individuals do not transcend.

**Note:**

Surely Marx knew that these ‘historical forces’ needed to be felt by individual men and women who then acted in response to them? [Ed.]

The views expressed in this Journal are not necessarily those of the Society.

## A SHORT HISTORY OF HUMANISM

by **John Severs**

Scarborough: Farthings Publishing, 2014. ISBN: 978-1-291-88557-6

Review by **Charles Rudd**

In this short book of 50 pages, John Severs brings together a wide range of subversive writers, from ancient times to Richard Dawkins, who dared to question religious (mostly Christian) doctrines and put forward alternative views, in some cases paying for it with their lives. Some of them are little known (to this reviewer at least), and it is good to see them given an airing.

The book shows how erratic and painful the path was to today's scientific/secular humanism, important milestones being the Enlightenment, the Reformation and the invention of printing. Hume is rightly given a fair amount of space, and it is good to see so many women writers featured (p.39-45), with their pointed critique of the monotheistic patriarchal religions. The ending is optimistic, as (in the UK at least) humanist ceremonies increase, polls show a decreasing number of people claiming to be Christian, and the churches' stranglehold on the schools is beginning to be loosened.

The book should stimulate further reading, raising as it does some intriguing questions which cannot be addressed in detail in such a short book. How did the medieval church manage to reconcile Aristotle's view of the universe, eternal and uncreated, with Christian doctrine? What was it about Venice which produced the dissenters mentioned by Severs? What is left of Christianity when the supernatural element is discarded? What has happened to the central doctrines of Christianity, and why are they no longer publicly discussed as they once were?

Some cavils: Protagoras (misprinted as "Protagorus") is introduced before the sophists as if he were not himself a sophist (p.7). Sextus (p.11) is usually cited more fully as Sextus Empiricus, since Sextus is a very common Roman praenomen, and he lived ca.190 CE, not in the "late 200s or early 300s." More might have been said about Francis Bacon, who pointed the way to experiment-based science, as opposed to armchair speculation.

The Sunday Lecture Society is described as a "forerunner of Conway Hall Ethical Society", but both were running side by side in the 1870s. (CHES was then called South Place Religious Society.) The minister who in 1888 changed the name of the Society to "South Place Ethical Society", strangely not named by Severs, was Stanton Coit (1857-1944), who founded the Ethical Union, which is mentioned.

Further misprints, which I hope can be corrected if the book is reprinted, include: (Werner) "Jaegger" (Jaeger), "Humphrey Davey" (Humphry Davy), (Robert) "Hook" (Hooke), "Schoppenhauer" (Schopenhauer), (Richard) "Carlisle" (Carlyle), and (Mary) "Wolstonecraft" (Wollstonecraft).

Further reading has to be selective, but I would add Nicolas Walter's *Humanism: what's in a word?* (London: RPA 1997) which includes a lot of history.

## VIEWPOINTS

### Harry Stopes-Roe's 'Life stance'

Harry Stopes-Roe and David Pollock (see obituary of H. Stopes-Roe, *ER* June 2014 p 29) succeeded in persuading the International Humanist and Ethical Union to adopt his 'lifestance' idea, <http://iheu.org/humanism/what-is-humanism/>. All affiliated IHEU associations must endorse it. I thought it comical initially, as if I were in a boxing posture. But I can sign it provided that I don't have to account for some of the sneaky things I may do.

**Harry Gardner** (Australia)

### More on Alan Hayward

As published in *ER* June 24, my letter on Hayward's "Ancient Creationism" says that according to Hayward, continuous creation stopped "with the advent of Adam". What I wrote, before the editorial correction, was "with the advent of Christ". In fact, Hayward sees the working out of God's decree in three successive stages: "the sinful Adam as only the beginning ... the coming of the sinless Christ ... and the fiat will not be complete until all God's people have ... been stamped with the image of God".

All Christian creationists believe the Genesis account of creation, and Hayward also takes account of Paul's epistles: (2 Corinthians 4,4) "Christ who is the very image of God" and (1 Corinthians 15, 49) "We shall wear the likeness of the heavenly man".

The scientific principle of parsimony, that the simplest explanation of data is to be the preferred explanation, has been known as "Ockham's razor" since 1852. But William of Ockham himself, analysing the methods of argument used by schoolmen in the 14th century, recognised "necessary truths", as in "A necessary truth follows from anything, for instance I am white, therefore God is triune".

Hayward follows Ockham in combining the principle of parsimony with an incontrovertible assertion, namely that the Bible is true. He shows that the Bible agrees with all the findings of geology, astronomy, and natural history, by using bizarre, but not impossible, interpretations of biblical statements. This is certainly daft, but intellectually respectable, in the sense that theology is an intellectual pursuit.

1. Alan Hayward, *Creation and Evolution, the facts and the fallacies*, 1985.
2. William of Ockham, *De Puritate Artis Logicae*, trans. Philotheus Boehner 1951.

**Donald Rooum – London E1**



### VIRGINIA WOOLF AND MADNESS: TRAUMA NARRATIVE IN *MRS. DALLOWAY*

by **Suzette A. Henke**

A monograph based on the Virginia Clark Memorial Lecture delivered on 9 July 2008 to the Ethical Society.  
£5 inc post from the Society.

## OBITUARIES

**MARY LINCÉ** (15 MARCH 1915 - 26 MARCH 2014)

**David Morris** writes:

Mary Lincé was a valued and long standing member of this Society. Chamber music was an important part of her life and she played a significant role in the concerts' history, as did her husband Martin. It is unlikely that anyone else can claim a span of 90 years as an audience member, over 61 of which were as an active participant on the concerts committee. She had a delightful disposition and was universally liked, and highly regarded for her contribution to the concerts and her knowledge of music.

Mary first attended the chamber concerts with her parents at the age of nine, at their original location in South Place in Finsbury. From there, the concerts moved temporarily to the Great Hall of the City of London School in 1927 before moving to the newly built Conway Hall in 1929. She joined the Society and the Concerts Committee in 1938 and remained an active member until 2000, after which she continued as a regular attendee. Of the many who have attended the Sunday concerts over the years, Mary was probably the only one to have done so at each venue since their inception. Quite remarkable!

Mary (née Seeley) was born in Wembley in 1915. Her mother played cello in the Wembley Amateur Orchestra and her father was its secretary. Mary was encouraged to learn the piano and she progressed well, gaining her Grade 5 by the age of nine. Her teacher in later years was Maurice Jacobson. When leaving or arriving at the Jacobson house, Mary would occasionally cross paths with the notable contralto, Kathleen Ferrier.

At the onset of the Second World War, Mary became a volunteer nurse as well as taking a job in censorship. Her work took her to various locations around Britain. One evening in May 1943, when she was stationed at an airfield in Lincolnshire, she witnessed a squadron of planes taking off. It was only later that she discovered that they had been deployed as part of Operation Chastise, otherwise known as the Dam Busters raid.

In 1945, Mary married her lifelong friend, Martin Lincé. She had first met Martin at the age of five or six, when they were near neighbours, both of whose parents were keen amateur musicians. After the war, Mary and Martin lived in Redcar, where Martin had taken up a teaching post. However, Mary was keen to return to London so in 1947, Martin took a position at Wandsworth School and they moved to Southfields which has since remained the family home.

In the early 1960s, Mary took up some part-time teaching in the remedial department at Wandsworth School and a few years later, became secretary to the music department.

One of Mary's greatest passions was chamber music. She and Martin hosted monthly gatherings at home, to play chamber music with friends. She and Martin particularly enjoyed participating in Music Camp, at Pigotts in Buckinghamshire, until they were well into their 80s.

Although instrumental music featured strongly throughout Mary's life, she enjoyed some of her most rewarding and moving experiences through choral music. Both Mary and Martin were closely involved with the Wandsworth School Choir which achieved international recognition under its Director of Music, Russell Burgess. She was often allowed to sing alto as the only female member of an all male choir!

Mary derived great pleasure from a range of performances and recordings of the works of Benjamin Britten and appearances at the Aldeburgh Festival, as well as a variety of film sessions. As time went on, she joined both the London Philharmonic and Philharmonia Choruses and had the opportunity to sing many of the great choral works such as Verdi's *Requiem*, Mahler's *8th Symphony*, Elgar's *The Dream of Gerontius*, and many performances of Beethoven's *9th Symphony* under world-renowned conductors.

She subsequently spent several highly enjoyable years with Morley College Chamber Choir, later re-formed as the Borough Chamber Choir, under Bob Hanson. More recently, Mary spent a few terms singing with Morley College's Meridian choir until some months after her 98th birthday!

Mary had a long and interesting life and maintained her many interests in art, music, politics and current affairs. She was kind and helpful, and took an interest in everything around her. An excellent listener, she was a pleasure to converse with. Lively, active, and strongly independent wishing never to be a burden to others, even to the extent of travelling to and from the concerts by public transport right up to almost her last year!

We look back at Mary's long and substantial contribution to the Society, her hospitality and rapport with the artists, her high standards, her knowledge of music and understanding of performance, and her valued observations. She was a delightful lady whom we will remember with much appreciation and affection.

*[Sincere thanks to members of the Lincé family - Janet and Hugh, Mary's daughter and son, and Nicola and Chris, her granddaughter and grandson - for their eulogies, from which much of her life history and musical experience was taken. DM]*

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### JOHN RAYNER (1929 - May 2014))

**Marina Ingham** writes:

There was a fairly good attendance at John's funeral at the Ruislip crematorium on the 12th June, his own birthday: they were mainly friends and members of the Harrow Humanist group, as well as the Conway Hall Ethical Society, and his own family (his niece Julia and husband, and her two daughters). The celebrant described the life of John from his boyhood in the house where he grew up with his parents and brother, and where he died suddenly at the age of 85; his education from the age of 7 when he and his older brother were sent to a boarding school in Croydon, run by a charitable organisation, for children of bereaved or widowed mothers.

John was only 6 when his father died. The celebrant mentioned John's career as a metal engineer, then his change of career when he became an accountant. John was celebrated for his talent for writing stories, as well as his love of music and drama, and many interests in various charitable organisations where he served as a trustee and treasurer. For instance the Ruislip Forests and Population Control.

John's marriage lasted ten years. He then returned to live in Wembley with his mother, whom he continued to look after, taking her on numerous vacations in this country and abroad.

John took to me when he read my edited version of his profile from the notes he had given me when he first applied to become a trustee on the General Committee. He was subsequently elected and remained a trustee for many years, often contributing in the absence of a treasurer.

At the time I was the secretary of the Ethical Society with a heavy work load and a good but demanding General Committee of 14 members. John understood the pressure I was under and decided to help. Filing was my *bete noire*, and this is where John was most welcome. However his own devotion was such that I had to remind him on many occasions when he was over-controlling that it was ME who WAS the secretary... We had disagreements and arguments but made it up on Friday after work over a beer in the pub at Lambs Conduit Passage.

I retired in 2006 but my friendship with John continued. Our meetings usually consisted of afternoon teas, get-together when we gossiped about Conway Hall and criticised Albert Einstein. We also had walks in Regents Park, Hampstead Heath, visits to various English Heritage houses when John always looked first for the cafeteria. And I will never forget the great fun he and I had producing the Yuletide pantomimes when staff and trustees were transformed into actors.

John was a humanist and a rationalist. One day when travelling in the underground he came across a foreign woman who could not find her way, so he escorted her the whole way to her destination. I will miss John. A kind person, honest, and devoted, but also vulnerable for being on some occasions too single-minded.

I was not the only one to notice John's deterioration in his health over the last two years, and lately he had admitted to me of feeling very tired a lot of the time. I did encourage him many times to arrange for a thorough health assessment or a full doctor's examination. Sadly, he did, but too late. I last saw John when he came to my flat for our regular afternoon tea session just before I left for Switzerland to be with my family.

**Peter Vlachos** writes:

I was shocked and deeply saddened to learn of the death of John Rayner. Shocked, because it had been barely a month earlier that we had shared a drink at the local pub around the corner from Conway Hall when he had been his usual spritely self.

I first met John some 15 or so years ago when he joined the General Committee of the Ethical Society and I was manager of the Conway Hall. John was an active trustee right from the start. With his knowledge of the accounting field, he contributed a great deal in helping to prepare the annual accounts for the Society and to their upgrading to modern standards. John also helped in many other aspects such as staff recruitment and building maintenance. He was very much involved in the major improvements to the Conway Hall around this time. He threw himself whole-heartedly into the planning and execution of the Conway Hall's 75th anniversary in 2004, the evidence of which was captured in a prominent article and photograph in the local newspaper.

John was always concerned with detail. Rarely would an annual general meeting go by, whether the Ethical Society's or the National Secular Society's, of which he was also a member, when John's keen eye would not have picked some minor oversight in the accounts, whether a misplaced comma or a small figure carried forward incorrectly. Indeed, we had practically come to expect John's input such that the meeting would seem somehow incomplete without it.

There was also a jovial and creative side to John. For many years he was our resident playwright at Conway Hall, producing the script and directing the pantomime at the annual yuletide festivities. His writing style conveyed a sharp wit and a good sense of humour, often at the cheerful expense of those of us performing!

John was an ardent conversationalist and would be happy to discuss all sorts of topics. We could be discussing his recollections of east London in the 1960s at one minute, and the latest opera at Covent Garden the next. He had a great interest in military history and had toured the Balkans where his father had been active during the First World War.

Though his hearing had grown weak in his later years, he would still enjoy several trips to the theatre every year. In fact, John was very much the social organiser for these outings, compiling the performance schedules and liaising with us all to arrange the tickets. Our merry band would enjoy a stroll along the river on the way to Shakespeare's Globe, the lunch before the performance and the tea and chat afterwards being as much a part of the day as the performance itself.

John had a wide range of interests, one being in the field of light physics. A self-proclaimed amateur of the field, he nonetheless carried out his research with a

great deal of thoroughness, challenging accepted assumptions along the way. Earlier this year he had asked me if I could help him to publish his papers online so as to encourage further scientific debate. These are available at <http://123lightphysics.wordpress.com/> \*

I will deeply miss John Rayner. He was a hardworking, decent and honest man. It was a privilege to have known him and to be his friend.

**\*Note:** These papers treat the movements of light particles from the pre-Einstein point of view, moving relative to an absolute space.[Ed.]

### THE 6<sup>TH</sup> EDITION OF *HUMANISM* (2014)

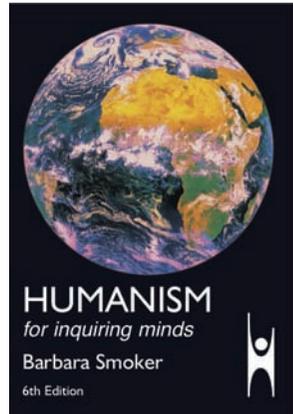
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Tel: 020 7405 1818 Registered Charity No. 251396

For programme updates, email: [programme@ethicalsoc.org.uk](mailto:programme@ethicalsoc.org.uk)

Website: [www.conwayhall.org.uk](http://www.conwayhall.org.uk)

Admission to Sunday morning lectures is free for members of CHES and £5 (£2 conc) for non-members. For other events, no charge unless stated.

### JULY 2014

- Sunday 13 **WHY I AM NOT A BELIEVER**  
1100 **Elliot George**, author of *Godbuster – Exorcises all known gods*
- Wednesday 16 BHA and CHES present  
1000 **RE TEACHERS' CONFERENCE**  
A free day-conference for Religious Education teachers to explore Humanism
- 1900 CENTRAL LONDON HUMANISTS present  
**THE OMEGA COURSE - MY JOURNEY TO ENLIGHTENMENT**  
**Will Watling**, ex-teacher of the Alpha Course
- Sunday 20 **CAMPAIGN TO END FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION IN THE UK:**  
1100 Moral Progress or Moral Hypocrisy?  
**Brian D. Earp**, Research Fellow, Uehiro Centre for Practical Ethics, Oxford University
- Sunday 27 **INTERNET DATING WITH DARWIN**  
1100 **Michael Sutton**, Reader in Criminology at Nottingham Trent University, presents the case that Darwin's theory was originated by Patrick Matthew in 1831.

### AUGUST

- Friday 29 BHA and CENTRAL LONDON HUMANISTS present  
**THE ANCESTORS TRAIL**
- 1900 Andrew Copson
- 2000 **Armand Leroi**, Professor of Evolutionary Developmental Biology at Imperial College
- 2100 **Yan Wong** – Evolutionary Biologist, co-author of *The Ancestor's Tale*  
Non BHA members £17.00  
BHA members, children, students £12.00

## SUMMER BREAK – Events resume in September

If you have any suggestions for speakers (their contact details are required) or event ideas, or would like to convene a Sunday afternoon informal, get in touch with Sid Rodrigues at [programme@ethicalsoc.org.uk](mailto:programme@ethicalsoc.org.uk) or 020 7061 6744.