

## New Insights Into A 20th-Century Monster

by Mark Burdman

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### **Bertrand Russell: The Ghost of Madness, 1921-1970, Vol. II**

by Ray Monk

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One of the most grotesque mythologies of the 20th Century, purveyed by liberal circles in different parts of the world, is that Britain's Lord Bertrand Russell was a great lover of humanity, a champion of peace, and a fighter for justice. In certain quarters, Russell has even been accorded the halo of a saint, most often among the so-called "68ers" of the Baby Boomer generation.

In point of fact, Russell was, along with his British sidekick H.G. Wells, at the forefront of efforts to destroy the very fiber of Western Civilization, throughout the past century, and throughout his regrettably long life of 98 years (he died in 1970). There are no two other individuals, who so persistently fought to destroy the sovereign nation-state, to use "nuclear terror" as the means for doing so, to return the world to some kind of barbarous neo-feudal state, and to reduce humanity to the status of beasts. The cases of Russell and Wells put the crimes of Adolf Hitler, for example, into perspective. *EIR* Founder and Contributing Editor Lyndon LaRouche has, justifiably, characterized Russell as "the most evil public figure of the 20th century."<sup>1</sup>

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1. Lyndon H. LaRouche, Jr., "How Bertrand Russell Became an Evil Man," *Fidelio*, Fall 1994, and see box. For a combined picture of Russell and Wells, see Carol White, *The New Dark Ages Conspiracy*, (New York: New Benjamin Franklin House Publishing Company, 1980).

Although it has significant flaws, the second volume of Ray Monk's biographical account, which covers the second half of Russell's life, from 1921-1970, provides key insights, primarily into the evil personal nature of the man, as exemplified by his mean and sadistic relations with family intimates. In the course of so documenting, Monk also touches upon certain of the more devilish political and social ideas and activities of Russell, in the almost-50 years under consideration.

Monk's 500-page account is often nightmarish, and requires a strong stomach, to make it through to the end. The author's writing is driven by a passion which derives, paradoxically, from his own weakest point. A Professor of Philosophy at the University of Southampton, Monk had, previously, written a volume on the first half of Russell's life, as well as a biography of Ludwig Wittgenstein, the philosopher of "linguistics," who was a sometimes close collaborator of Russell. Monk is an admirer of what he considers to be the "earlier, pre-World War I" Bertrand Russell, the Russell of the 1903 *The Principles of Mathematics*, the 1910-1913 (with A.N. Whitehead) *Principia Mathematica*, and so on. Monk insists, erroneously, that, Russell made great contributions, as a younger man, to mathematics, logic, and philosophy. However, it is precisely that bias of his, as an erstwhile admirer, that causes Monk to be so dismayed, at what he has uncovered about his subject, during the second 49 years of Russell's life.

A related paradox, is that Monk is so aghast at what he has uncovered about Russell, that he spends so much energy ridiculing and debunking Russell's various preoccupations and vanity-driven claims to achievement, and exposing him as a serial hypocrite, that he ends up underestimating the baneful influence that Dirty Bertie had on the world as a



“There is no human being, no, not one, whom I do not hate. There is no being, no, not one, whom I do not wish to see suffering the absolute extremity of mankind,” wrote Lord Bertrand Russell in an autobiographical short story. Russell, shown here at the UN’s Unesco House receiving the 1957 Kalinga Prize, had gulled public opinion into believing him a philanthropist and lover of peace, until Lyndon LaRouche exposed him as “the most evil public figure of the 20th Century.”

whole. The reader may feel a certain compassion for the author, who gets, understandably, carried away by his anger, and misses the bigger picture.

### **This Is No Tragedy**

Readers hungry for a more strictly political narrative, will be disappointed by *The Ghost of Madness*, even if there is much of a political nature contained within. Certain readers may find Monk’s extensive documentation of the details of Russell’s life, to be a distraction, all too much gossip and tittle-tattle. In this reviewer’s estimate, while that occasionally becomes a problem, the overall account, and the emotions that propel the author in documenting it, provide a fascinating insight, into aspects of the inside of one of the more influentially satanic minds of the previous century.

Monk begins his Preface, by, indeed, making a serious misstatement, when he claims that Russell’s life should be seen as a “tragedy.” This is a misuse of the word “tragedy,”

as properly understood, and as conveyed in the tragedies of great dramatists like Aeschylus, Sophocles, Shakespeare, and Schiller. In their tragedies, adapted from real historical events, the enormous tension is brought about, by the failure of a lead character or characters, because of a stubborn flaw, to act in such a way, that the entire course of human history would be changed in a positive direction. Lord Bertrand Russell was so consummately driven by putrid emotions, and was often so expressive of the British oligarchical species to which he was so passionately devoted, that he absolutely does not qualify as such an individual. Quite the reverse. The only Shakespearean character that remotely comes to mind, when thinking of him, is Iago, in the play *Othello*.

Monk largely bases this notion of “tragic life,” on the fact that Russell was haunted by madness — hence the book title — since madness was supposed to have been an inherited family trait. Also, it was the case that Russell became an orphan at a very early age, and was brought up, by grandparents, in a household at Pembroke Lodge, which had a history of episodes of insanity. But seeing matters in this way is, at best, too shallow. The Russell clan was at the height of the British oligarchical establishment. In such circles, madness of one form or another is more or less endemic, because of the prevailing anti-human culture, rather than because of some mysterious biological or genetic transference.

Russell’s grandfather was Lord John Russell, a highly influential 19th-Century British figure. The son of the sixth Duke of Bedford, he was British Prime Minister from 1846 to 1852, and played a very central, if not the leading role, in overseeing the Irish potato famine of the mid- to late-1840s.<sup>2</sup> In the late 1850s, he became British Foreign Secretary, when Lord Palmerston was Prime Minister. Lord John was, then, an enthusiastic backer of the Southern Confederacy, in pursuit of the British Empire strategy of breaking up the American republic, and establishing British imperial sovereignty over North America, as the first step in eventual British control over the Americas as a whole.

As Monk notes in several places, Russell greatly admired his grandfather; one driving force, in *Dirty Bertie*’s obsessive attempts to insert himself at the forefront of world events, was his desire to emulate his famous (or infamous) forebear.

### **An Engine of Destruction**

In any case, whatever he says in the Preface, Monk really doesn’t seem very committed, in the book as a whole, to the aim of portraying Russell as “tragic,” even in the more limited sense in which he uses the word. His account portrays an entirely willful and sadistic nature, evidenced in the abominable way Russell treated his second wife Dora (admittedly quite a kook in her own right) during their bitter breakup and

2. For Lord John Russell’s role in, and significant responsibility for the Irish potato famine, see Cecil Woodham-Smith, *The Great Hunger* (New York: Old Town Books, 1962).



*The “begats” of a misanthropist: In the 1840s, Russell’s grandfather, Lord John Russell, presided over Ireland’s potato famine, and, later, enthusiastically backed the Southern Confederacy to destroy the United States.*

divorce of the late 1920s/early 1930s, and then throughout the next four decades of his life; his son John, who spent most of his adult life in varying degrees of psychological disassociation and breakdown; his granddaughter Lucy; and others.

The case of Lucy is particularly grotesque. John’s youngest daughter, she greatly admired her grandfather, when she was a child and young adolescent. But Russell created confusion in the mind of her and her two sisters, by constantly attacking their father, even going to the extent of showing them obscene letters that John would send to Bertie. By the age of 16, Lucy began to become extremely confused and rebellious, at which point her “loving grandfather” legally disowned her. For the rest of her years, she drifted, until, at the age of 27, she went to a graveyard in a British village, poured paraffin on her body, and lit herself aflame. The suicide attempt did not work as planned, and she ran, body in flames, into a local shop; she died on arrival at a hospital.

Reading about the case of son John, is like reading an account of torture, carried out over decades. He was the first child of Bertrand and Dora Russell. While claiming to love the young boy madly, father Russell raised both John and his sister Kate according to the grotesque behaviorist principles of one John B. Watson, codified in a book entitled, *The Psy-*

*chological Care of Infant and Child*. By mechanical/positivist methods, this was supposed to eradicate fear and other “negative emotions.” But as John became, not surprisingly, more fearful and withdrawn, as he grew up, Russell began to reject him. Later, John was driven crazy, in large part by other antics of his father, including the latter’s violent intensity against John’s mother Dora (with whom the unstable adult John was eventually forced to live, basically by default), and by Russell’s later savage attempts to deny the very existence of his son.

As for Dora Russell, the story is incredibly perverse. Their marriage was, at first, designed by both of them, to allow for liberal bouts of adultery. Bertie became infamous, in the 1920s, for various writings, promoting their concept of the “marriage of the future.” The problem is, when Dora took the matter to heart, and started having children with another man, Bertie went berserk, and began a lifelong campaign of hatred and revenge against her, the which included an about-face, against his former “liberal” views on marriage. Monk’s descriptions, of how he dealt with Dora, from the late 1920s, on through the rest of his life, make for gruesome reading.

### **‘I Don’t Like Human Beings in the Mass’**

Monk’s virtue, although he doesn’t always directly hit his target, is that he usually tries to link Russell’s personal deviancy and immorality, with his immoral and destructive public activities and views. The book has several striking references, to how Russell viewed the human race, Christians and non-whites more specifically.

Among representative Russell quotes are “I don’t like human beings in the mass” (1923); and, mocking human beings as “tiny parasites of this insignificant planet” (1925), and “the animated lumps that disgrace a certain planet” (1959).

Soon before his death in 1970, Russell was asked what he thought of space travel, and replied that he thought it to be a kind of “cosmic impiety.” Monk writes: “He hated to think of humanity extending its perniciousness beyond the ‘insignificant planet’ that was its humble and rightful place. . . . He was entirely earnest in his misanthropy, which was both deeply felt and enduring.”

We will soon return to the theme of Russell’s hatred of humanity as a whole.

As for non-whites: In 1929, in the first edition of his book *Marriage and Morals*, he wrote that “it seems on the whole fair to regard negroes as on the average inferior to white men.” In later editions, he changed the passage, to read: “There is no sound reason to regard negroes as on the average inferior to white men, although for work in the tropics they are indispensable, so that their extermination (apart from questions of humanity) would be highly undesirable.” On the day after he arrived in Australia in June 1950, for a visit organized by the Australian Institute of International Affairs (AIIA), he recorded a broadcast for the Australian Broadcasting Corp. on “The Asian Threat,” in which, Monk writes without further

explanation, “he gave advice on how to keep Australia white man’s country.”

In 1927, he wrote a pamphlet, “Why I Am Not a Christian,” which was reprinted in 1957, as the lead and title item of a collection of essays; this reviewer can recall how, in the 1960s, it influenced impressionable friends of his, to turn against religion. In the essay, Russell declared: “The Christian religion, as organised in its Churches, has been and still is the principal enemy of moral progress in the world.” He further ranted that the “whole conception of God” is “quite unworthy of free men.”

There are many more bloodcurdling quotes that one can find from Russell, in such writings as *The Impact of Science on Society* (1953), *The Problem of China* (1923), and elsewhere, but, for our purposes here, these suffice, especially given what now follows.

### ‘The Enemy of Mankind’

In one of the most striking passages of the book, the core of Russell’s nature is exposed. Since this section is such a singularity, we report it now, in some detail.

When Russell was 80, in 1952, he began to write short stories, to the surprise of many. These stories received, almost universally, a negative reaction, but Russell was quite committed to them. The one that Russell was most proud of, was entitled, “Satan in the Suburbs,” which also was the title given to the volume of his collected short stories. Monk contends, quite convincingly, that this story “may . . . be the most deeply revealing piece of autobiographical writing that Russell ever produced.”

In his *Autobiography*, Monk notes, Russell said that the story was suggested to him, in part, by a stranger he met in Mortlake, a London suburb, who, when he saw Russell, crossed the road, and made a sign of the cross. Writes Monk: “This clearly caused Russell to think: what if he *were* the devil?”

Monk notes that Russell was perpetually haunted, by a letter he had received in 1915, from the author D.H. Lawrence (who certainly knew evil quite intimately, from his own perverted standpoint). In the letter, which nearly drove Russell, then 43 years old, to suicide, Lawrence wrote: “You are simply *full* of repressed desires, which have become savage and anti-social. And they come out in this sheep’s clothing of peace propaganda. . . . You are too full of devilish repressions to be anything but lustful and cruel. . . . The enemy of mankind, you are, full of the lust of enmity. It is *not* the hatred of falsity which inspires you. It is the hatred of people, of flesh and blood. It is a perverted mental blood-lust. Why don’t you own it?”

As Monk notes, what lurked in Russell’s mind, as he wrote “Satan in the Suburbs,” was “the fear that Lawrence was right, that Russell really *was* ‘the enemy of all mankind.’ ”

The story line centers around a “demonic Dr. Mallako,” who, Monk writes, “might be regarded as a . . . self-portrait

of Russell himself,” and Russell’s adoption of Lawrence’s 1915 description of him. This Dr. Mallako, who lives in that same London suburb of Mortlake, goes around the neighborhood, turning everyone he can get his hands on, into a destructive, evil beast, by unleashing their worst “repressed” impulses.

The narrator of the story is a scientist, who, observing Mallako, renounces his optimistic view of human nature, and soon becomes “increasingly filled with a general detestation of mankind.” He decides that he must destroy the entire human race, and so, builds a device, designed to boil all the water on the Earth, so the planet would become so hot and dry, that it could no longer support life, and the Earth would then become, like the Moon, bereft of life.

He and Mallako then end up colluding, with Dr. Mallako (remember, the “self-portrait of Russell himself”) first telling the scientist, that his device is flawed and won’t work, and then exclaiming: “You imagine in your miserable way that you hate mankind. But there is a thousand times more hate in my little finger than in your whole body. The flame of hate that burns within me would shrivel you to ashes in a moment. . . . There is no human being, no, not one, whom I do not hate. There is no being, no, not one, whom I do not wish to see suffering the absolute extremity of mankind.”

The scientist soon thereafter shoots Mallako, but the story concludes with him ending up in a lunatic asylum. As Monk stresses, Russell appears to be making some effort to differentiate the two characters, but this is unconvincing, since “the scientist *does* want—indeed, *intends* to—kill the entire human race. . . .” Not only that, but Russell thinks “there is something ‘noble’ in his desire (nay, decision) to wipe out all life on Earth.” In the end, Monk notes, Russell is effectively giving confirmation to Lawrence’s 1915 accusation, that what drove Russell was “the hatred of people, of flesh and blood” (emphasis in original).

A couple of pages later, Monk reports that Russell, in his 1953 book, *Human Society in Ethics and Politics*, included the following passage: “Sometimes, in moments of horror, I have been tempted to doubt whether there is any reason to wish that such a creature as man should continue to exist. It is easy to see man as dark and cruel, as an embodiment of diabolic power, and as a blot upon the fair face of the universe.”

### ‘I Think War Would Be Worth While’

The horrifying nature of Russell’s war on human civilization, is starkly evident, in those passages of Professor Monk’s account where he documents, in detail, Russell’s push for preventive war against the Soviet Union, immediately after the Second World War, as the leading edge of Russell’s drive to establish world government, and the end of the sovereign nation-state.

LaRouche and his associates have frequently cited Russell’s September 1946 article in the *Bulletin of the Atomic*

## ‘The Mephistopheles of This Century’

*The following is excerpted from Lyndon LaRouche’s 1994 magnus opus, “How Bertrand Russell Became an Evil Man,” published in the Fall 1994 issue of the Schiller Institute’s publication, Fidelio.*

Russell played many strings on his fiddle of evil. His proposals for genocide, especially against populations with darker skin-hues than that of the Vril Society’s self-esteemed Anglo-Saxon master race, are fully as satanic, and more viciously personalized than his policies of world-dictatorship through nuclear terrorism. He was also a savage hoaxster in his corrosive influence within the domains of philosophy and natural science. He was not even truly British; there is not a gram of concern for the well-being of the inhabitants of the United Kingdom in that scoundrel. No notable representative of liberal philosophy during this century . . . has been so conspicuously a virtual incarnation of Satan as the Mephistopheles of

this century, the evil Russell. . . .

Pervading public utterances by Russell, there are three pervasive themes overall: (1) a racism as virulent as Adolf Hitler’s; (2) a feudal-aristocratic socialist’s Ruskin-like hatred for modern European civilization; and (3) a utopian’s obsessive commitment to bringing about civilization’s descent into a parody of pre-Renaissance feudalism, or sometimes even pre-civilized barbarism. No one could miss this in Russell’s public utterances. . . .

[Russell’s mathematical and philosophical writings are] paved with platitudes. . . . The successful practice of evil builds upon diffidence respecting those creative qualities of intellect which set the individual person absolutely apart from and above all species of beasts. Understanding Russell begins with the realization that Russell’s published writings contain no true originality, but only novelty of the same special quality provided by the writings of the Marquis de Sade. . . . Russell’s Mephistopheles is a shallow-minded British snob quoting snippets from the banalities of Bacon, Locke, and Hume. . . . [Russell and his collaborators were] maleficent sophists all, telling one another how devilishly clever they all were. This snobbish banality is also to be recognized as evil. Seen with rigorous objectivity, Russell is a satanic bore.

*Scientists*, on this matter.<sup>3</sup> Monk omits this reference, but comes up with several others. In September 1945—i.e., one month after the dropping of the atomic bomb on Hiroshima—he was writing a letter to a friend, that “there is one thing, and one thing only, which could save the world, and that is . . . that America should make war on Russia during the next two years, and establish a world empire, by means of the atomic bomb.”

In October 1945, he published an article, in the journal *Cavalcade*, entitled, “What America Could Do with the Atomic Bomb,” in which he demanded “a vigorous use” of “American supremacy” against the U.S.S.R.

Monk notes: “After June 1946, when the Soviets rejected the American proposal to establish an international authority to control atomic weapons (the so-called ‘Baruch Proposal’), Russell’s articles and lectures on the subject made Churchill’s famous ‘Iron Curtain’ speech of 5 March 1946 look mild in comparison.”

In 1947, he gave a lecture to the Royal Empire Society, published in the January-February 1948 issue of a magazine entitled *United Empire*, insisting that “Russia” be threatened with war, as a result of which “the world might . . . emerge with a single government such as the world needs.”

3. LaRouche, “How Bertrand Russell Became an Evil Man,” op. cit., p. 7.

Russell soon thereafter wrote a private letter to an American academic named Walter Marseille, in which the great pacifist envisaged a new world war, with vast destruction, but “even at such a price, I think war would be worth while,” for “I have no doubt that America would win in the end,” and after that, “world government must be established.” Later, in 1954, this letter was made public, much to Russell’s embarrassment, because he was beginning, then, to shift into his “bipolar world government” schemes, through Pugwash and other channels.

### ‘The People I Meet Would All Be Better Dead’

As Monk writes at earlier points in the book, the concept of a transitional period of American takeover of the world, preparatory to what Russell variously labelled “international socialism,” “world government,” “international government,” or “a central authority to control the whole world,” was a repeated theme of Russell’s, from the 1920s through the 1940s. Monk makes the useful point, that Russell never meant by this, a takeover by the nation of America as such, but rather temporary rule by *American finance capitalism*, as if he were a prophet of what is today called “globalization.” In reality, even before the virulent and virtually psychotic anti-American phase of the last decade or so of his life, Russell always detested, as if organically, the United States and the American people.

In his writings, Russell would argue, that there were only two ultimate choices for the world: either temporary rule by the United States followed “hopefully” by world government, or a “collapse of our civilization.” Usually, he opted for the first, but, at least on one occasion documented by Monk, in 1923, Russell wrote that he would prefer the latter over the former.

In 1924, during a lecture tour of the United States, he wrote to then-wife Dora: “The people I meet would all be better dead.” In January 1945, he wrote a piece entitled, “British and American Nationalism,” claiming that “British nationalism” was superior, because it was based on “biology, race, instinct,” “a happy *breed* of men” (his emphasis), whereas American nationalism “is more analogous to party or sectarian loyalty,” while the United States is “not biologically a nation at all.” It was only some months later, that he made his above-cited recommendaton that “America should make war on Russia during the next two years, and establish a world empire, by means of the atomic bomb.”

### Throwing the Baby Out with the Bath Water

While identifying, in such passages, the essential aspects of Russell’s policy — hatred of humanity, use of nuclear terror to create a world government/world empire, the necessity of British supremacy, and visceral anti-Americanism — Monk still doesn’t convey the full impact that Russell had on events in the last century.

For one, he avoids the subject of Russell’s influence on scientific circles, in promoting the building of the atomic bomb (the “Manhattan Project”) in the first place, and then in inducing the hopeless U.S. President Harry S Truman to order the militarily unnecessary atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

Second, he avoids discussion of Russell’s profound influence on British imperial affairs, in the postwar era. Oddly, he notes, almost as an aside, that Russell, during the 1945-48 period when he was promoting these ghoulish “preventive war” policies, was the semi-official spokesman of the British Labour Party, which was then governing Britain. How this came to be, is never explained, and is somewhat of a mysterious *non-sequitur*, since Monk spent most of the pages preceding, depicting Russell as a washed-up philosopher, regarded as incompetent even by his former protégés and colleagues.

Third, while certainly identifying Russell’s role, in creating the original movement created out of the Pugwash Conferences, he soon performs the strange trick of decoupling Russell from Pugwash, continuing to deride the former, while praising the latter. For some reason, this vastly documented book completely ignores such Russell intimates as Leo Szilard, whose “nuclear terror” tirades formed the basis for film director Stanley Kubrick’s “Dr. Strangelove.”

Monk fails to see the broader aim of Russell and his Pugwash protégés, namely to use nuclear terror, to unravel

the very fabric of Western industrial civilization, and to return the world to some kind of bestial, feudalistic existence. That goal is crystal clear, in many of the novels of Russell sidekick Wells. But Wells, too, barely receives a mention in *The Ghost of Madness*, despite Russell’s involvement in Wells’s notorious late-1920s “Open Conspiracy” project, and in other ventures, during the 1921-1970 period under consideration

### Tragedy of a Different Sort

The deeper problem that this points to, is Monk’s ultimately inept handling of matters of philosophy and science.

It is beyond the scope of this review, to discuss the ins and outs of Monk’s many discussions of Russell’s so-called philosophical and academic endeavors from 1921 to 1970. Certainly, Monk does document, at one point or another, that Russell was a fanatical proponent of the disgusting “sense-perception is knowledge” nonsense of 18th-Century British philosopher David Hume, or of the concept of “solipsism” developed by Britain’s bizarre Bishop Berkeley.

However, those parts of the book that discuss Russell’s spats with contemporary philosophers, such as Wittgenstein, are usually tedious, as the opponents of Russell are, themselves, tied up in various of the bizarre fashions of the past decades. Monk himself is deeply intertwined with all this. The real point, which Monk completely misses, is that all the various sides in these debates, share Russell’s own denial of the primacy of human creativity and reason, of those precious qualities that distinguish humans from beasts. So, it is no accident, that many of Russell’s opponents are (or were) themselves, like author Monk, admirers of the “early Russell,” that same Russell who was so avidly perverting or attacking the works of such great scientists and mathematicians as Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz, Bernhard Riemann, Georg Cantor, and others. Verging on illiteracy, Monk buys into the fraud that the early Russell was a “platonist.”

It may also be relevant, that the subject of music never once, in over 500 pages, enters into the book; the omission would suggest that, true to his nature, Russell despised and/or ignored music, but the omission may also reflect Monk’s own ignoring a question that is vital to any true philosopher or scientist.

In the end, the author fails to really identify what is most destructive in the saga of Bertrand Russell, namely that he devoted an adult life spanning some eight decades, to trying to eliminate that which is human. His early writings created a network of devotees and epigones who carried on his work in various ways, even if they later found their hero to be too distasteful, even for them.

Monk seems to have no real comprehension, of what it is that separates man from beast, and makes humans really human. So, in the end, if there is any tragedy in *The Ghost of Madness*, in Monk’s more limited understanding of the word, it is that of author Monk himself.