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Music at Conway Hall

Guest Editor: **Simon Callaghan**

‘...A most tempting Sunday Concert series offering... an excellent standard of performances’ [Mark Pullinger on BachTrack.com, December 2016]

In the almost 9 years that I have been coming to Conway Hall, I have relished being a part of the famous Sunday Concerts, and particularly seeing them grow into the success they are today with large, enthusiastic audiences and a regular stream of new patrons coming through our doors each week. The London Mozart Players (London’s oldest chamber orchestra), with whom we have recently formed a new partnership, provided an exciting finale to our 2016 concerts with a dazzling performance of some of the most exuberant chamber music, to a rapturous audience.

We have been honoured to receive continued support from the CAVATINA Chamber Music Trust, who generously subsidise free tickets for 8-25 year olds at all our concerts. Since the beginning of this relationship more than a year ago, we have seen a huge increase in the number of young people attending our music events, several of whom I have noticed attend every week! I have had lots of comments too, from our regular audience about the positive and relaxed atmosphere this has created.

Our musical offerings continue to be broad and adventurous, and we regularly host up-and-coming as well as established chamber music groups from across the United Kingdom and abroad.

In 2016 alone, we welcomed ensembles from France, Germany, the Czech Republic, Bulgaria and Austria as well as the UK. Our collaboration with the London Festival of Bulgarian Culture was a huge success, and I was delighted to meet so many people at these concerts who had not visited us before, and who have continued to attend!

In 2017 we will compliment our concert series with children’s workshops, pre-concert talks and a special post-concert event, ‘Music in Motion’, which will bring the listeners closer to the music in an immersive, social session designed to break down the traditional barriers between the audience and the performers. We will also take our programming slightly further off the beaten track with more music for wind instruments and an exciting project in February, devised by soprano Louise Kemény and featuring Arnold Schoenberg’s great melodrama, *Pierrot Lunaire*. This will be the second performance at Conway Hall to be supported by The Musicians’ Company.

I continue to be moved by people’s reactions to our concerts, by the warm community spirit that we are creating through music at Conway Hall and of course by the excellent standard of musicians who continue to come to play for us and who rave about our amazing acoustics! I hope to be able to welcome some of you to our concerts soon.



Steinway Artist **Simon Callaghan** performs internationally as a soloist, chamber musician and recording artist. His recent tours have taken him throughout Europe, Asia and North America. He has performed at all of the UK’s major concert halls including Wigmore Hall, Royal Festival Hall and Birmingham Symphony Hall. He records for Hyperion and SOMM. Simon is also Director of Music at Conway Hall, where he oversees the longest-running chamber music series in Europe.

CONWAY HALL MEMORIAL LECTURE 2016

LAWRENCE KRAUSS

16 December 2016



Photos: Darren Johnson

A THINKING ON SUNDAY LECTURE, 20 NOVEMBER 2017

Man-made Climate Change: Is it Trumped up?

Professor Piers Forster



Professor Piers Forster is a physicist by background with 25 years of experience researching various aspects of climate change, including its causes, impacts, and adaptation and mitigation strategies. He is the director of the Priestley International Centre for Climate at the University of Leeds. He was lead author for the past two IPCC reports that provided the underpinning evidence for climate change, when the IPCC was a co-recipient (with Al Gore) of the 2007 Nobel Peace prize.

On Sunday 20 November I debated with Piers Corbyn on his proposal “Man-made climate change: is it all trumped up?” He proposed the motion and I opposed it. The debate itself was an interesting experience. It was quite confrontational and Piers mixed politics with science arguments to attempt to persuade us to join his “Great campaign to End the Man-Made CO₂ Climate-Change fraud”. I found that Piers Corbyn made unsubstantiated statements of “fact” with little supporting science analysis or reference to scientific literature to justify his statements. In my talk I tried to challenge this unscientific approach. Science requires statements to be supported by evidence in the form of observations, theory and/or calculations. These then need to be tested and reproduced by other scientists to either falsify, confirm or refine understanding, building up knowledge over time. This progress is achieved by peer review publication and it is noticeable that Piers Corbyn has never published in such literature.

1. Firstly, Piers Corbyn disputes that carbon dioxide (CO₂) has any warming effect at all. And even if it did, he attests that any effects of human emissions would be inconsequential. Piers is correct that CO₂ is a small fraction of atmospheric mass. He is also correct that the fluxes from the natural carbon cycle are larger than the fluxes from human activity. However, he is completely incorrect to conclude from these facts that the effects of human emissions of CO₂ are inconsequential. The natural cycle maintains CO₂ levels in the atmosphere at around 278 parts per million but since the industrial revolution human emissions have increased CO₂ levels to over 400 parts per million. This provides significant warming to the Earth – enhancing the Earth’s greenhouse effect by over 1.5 watts per square metre of the Earth’s surface. This greenhouse effect has been directly measured – see [Forster et al., 2007](#) or [New Scientist](#).
2. Piers Corbyn states that ocean temperatures control the amount of CO₂ in the air, citing Henry’s Law to “prove” that increased CO₂ in the air comes from the ocean. Henry’s law is a real law which does indeed tell you

that if you heat water containing CO₂ it will increase CO₂ in the air whilst decreasing it in the ocean. However, observations tell us that CO₂ is rising [both in the atmosphere and in the ocean](#), leading to ocean acidification and death of corals. These observations mean that the atmospheric increase can’t come from the ocean as Piers Corbyn states. There is much other evidence to show all the increase in CO₂ is a result of human emissions. The carbon 14 isotopic record in the atmosphere shows a signature of fossil fuel burning. There is slightly elevated CO₂ in the Northern hemisphere, compared to the Southern, indicating the CO₂ is emitted more in the Northern Hemisphere where most fossil fuel burning occurs. If the ocean was emitting CO₂, as Piers Corbyn suggests, the gradient would be reversed. There is also a record of declining oxygen which matches the burning of fossil fuels – see [Forster et al., 2007](#) for further details.

3. Piers Corbyn says that the lagged response of CO₂ to warming during the ice-age is evidence of this “control”. It is true that after the ice ages CO₂ increases lagged temperatures by 700 years or so and this increase in CO₂ probably was released by the deep ocean. However, this ice-age effect is unrelated to the cause of CO₂ rise today as it has not had time to occur. See [New Scientist](#).
4. Piers Corbyn also states that the world is cooling (not warming as observations show) and that the East Anglia dataset of global temperature change is fraudulent. However, there are three other datasets, one of which – [Berkeley Earth](#), was produced by sceptical scientists to test the veracity of the East Anglia data. The four independent datasets are in close agreement on their assessment of long-term temperature trends. All show that 2016 will be the hottest year on record, around 1.2C above its 1880 value.
5. Lastly, Piers Corbyn states that the Sun drives extremes by controlling the jet stream. Over the UK and parts of North America changes in

the Sun can be influential. However, the Sun has 11 and 22 year cycles of change but is very stable on the long-term, so over the last 150 years there has been little long-term effect of solar changes on climate. Many other factors such as ocean temperatures also affect the jet stream. CO₂ and solar effects are included together in modern climate simulations. We do not ignore the Sun in our assessment of climate change but rather include it to aid predictive skill. – see [Forster et al., 2007](#) or [New Scientist](#).

In summary, man-made climate change is clear. Science is sure that increasing CO₂ has warmed the climate and that the increased levels of atmospheric CO₂ are caused almost entirely by humans. Uncertainty and/or confusion about the science should not be used to argue for a particular policy decision. We already have enough certainty to make effective decisions about most adaptation and

mitigation choices. All Piers Corbyn's statements of "fact" are either wrong or irrelevant, most are common climate "[myths](#)".

Lastly, to make a better world for our children, we need a constructive dialogue that considers different views on climate change and works towards common solutions. I hope that different sides in the debate listen and learn from each other. Although I disagree strongly with Piers Corbyn on all his science points, I hope I listened and think I understand his underlying political reasons, and those of Donald Trump: to try and protect coal mining communities as coal use declines. To help such communities we need to listen to their concerns and think much harder about how we can make effective climate policy benefit everyone. For example, coal power with carbon capture could be part of an effective solution. I am an optimist and think climate change is solvable – so let's solve it together. Our children will thank us if we do.

'The Spirit of Meliorist Reform' and Other Essays

Tom Rubens

Conway Hall Ethical Society Member
Archivist and Lecturer

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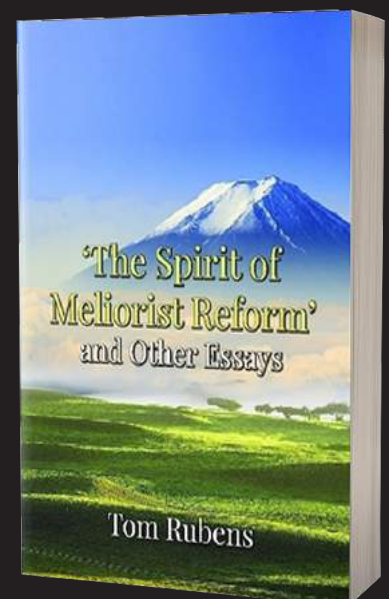
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E-BOOK



Transforming Justice

Chris Purnell



In this article I summarise some of the proposed reforms to our Justice system emanating from JUSTICE, the British section of the international commission of jurists and the Ministry of Justice, before dealing with two changes which have serious implications for the poor, disadvantaged, sick and disabled.

JUSTICE have in their paper 'What is a Court?' sought to provide a reconfiguration of the Court estate and the introduction of online procedures which will soften the impact of Court closures. For, very soon, under Government plans, some towns will lose their own Court. The MOJ are eager to facilitate vulnerable witnesses to give evidence by video link to Court and to permit cross examination recorded earlier to be used.

And it is proposed that for 'victimless crimes' people should be able to plead guilty (and pay their fines) online. If, upon finding out about the charge, the accused decides to plead 'not guilty', the case reverts to an actual Court hearing before a Magistrate.

However, the main proposed change is to establish an online civil court for all money claims less than £25,000. This would do away with the 'small claims track' in the County Court and part of the main County Court jurisdiction. Once this 'online' civil court gets going it will not be possible to bring or contest a money claim for £25,000 or less by a 'paper based' procedure in a conventional Court with an actual hearing before a judge, (although there will be an appeal procedure from the online judgment to a conventional Court probably at Circuit judge level).

Chris Purnell was an employed barrister from 1988-2011, largely at Law Centres in Tottenham and Plumstead, advising on employment law and some aspects of social security law and housing. He became experienced in representing workers at Employment Tribunals and the Employment Appeal Tribunal. Now largely retired, he sits part time as a First Tier Tribunal judge in the social entitlement chamber hearing appeals against the refusal of benefits such as Personal Independence Payment by the Department of Work and Pensions.



It is proposed to drastically simplify civil procedures so it can be handled by litigants in person online. Some categories of whose case – such as boundary disputes – will not be part of the online jurisdiction, because it is thought that the issues ‘are too emotional’. Moreover, it is recognised by some members of the judiciary advocating the ‘online solutions court’ that there is a risk of disenfranchising those who are not computer literate or do not have a computer. So it is proposed that technical assistance will be provided to those not computer literate to enable them to defend themselves or bring a case. Lord Justice Ryder has, in a speech to the Annual Conference of the Bar 2016, on 15th October 2016, said:

“...we are designing a whole programme of assisted digital access. Specialist providers whose expertise can be made available to assist litigants in person, those with disabilities, special needs and vulnerabilities will be commissioned to provide coherent service...”

One wonders. It seems likely that the computer literate man of modest means (e.g. small businessmen or women) who wish to bring money claims will benefit from the simplified procedure of a ‘lawyerless’ online Court. But it seems very unlikely that a defendant who is on low income and is computer illiterate will do so, whatever the assurances Lord Ryder or Sir Michael Briggs (the chief proponent of the Online Solutions Court) may seek to give.

My pessimism about the effects of the above apparently benign proposals is strengthened by consideration of what has happened as a result of imposition of fees on claimants in Employment Tribunals in 2013, and also on the likely effect of the proposed changes in Tribunal composition in the social entitlement chamber.

Well, what about the workers? From the nineteen sixties onwards Employment Tribunals dispensed justice for matters connected with work e.g. unfair dismissal, unauthorised deductions from pay, wrongful dismissal in breach of contract, redundancy payments and discrimination in increasing numbers. In 2010 the change in Government focused attention on the large numbers of supposedly unmeritorious claims. Thus, in 2013 fees for a worker/employee to start a claim and then to get a hearing were introduced with the objects of weeding out the unmeritorious claims and saving money.

The number of claims certainly fell drastically after fees were introduced. Down from 16,000 a month in 2012/13 before fees were introduced to 7000 a month in 2015/16 (TUC analysis of official figures). However, the ratio between successful and unsuccessful claims at hearings remained much the same as before fees were introduced. In other words, there was no change in the proportion of claims which were meritorious or unmeritorious as a result of the introduction of Tribunal fees.

In July 2016, the House of Commons Justice Committee published a report about how the introduction of fees had affected justice in the Employment Tribunals. The report criticises the Government’s failure to publish its post implementation review on the impact of ET fees.

Based on evidence collected during its own inquiry, the Justice Committee concluded that fees had led to an undisputed drop in the number of cases brought and had a significant impact on access to justice. It heard evidence that far from encouraging early conciliation and resolution of disputes, fees were having the opposite effect, because there was no incentive for an employer to settle in cases where the claimant might have difficulty in raising the fee.

A few months earlier, in December 2015, the President and Regional Employment Tribunal judges in evidence to the MOJ review had concluded; “the introduction of fees has had an adverse effect upon access to justice”, and, moreover, “the fees and remission scheme acts as a very clear disincentive to bringing what might otherwise be claims that are not obviously weak or unmeritorious”.

These senior judges made a number of suggestions to improve the system of fees. The most radical suggestion was that employers should be required to pay a fee as well as employees. Thus employers would have to pay for lodging a defence, “response”, to an employee/worker’s claim. This in my view would somewhat even up the class bias in the current system where, by and large, only employee/worker claimants are required to pay fees. Unsurprisingly, at the time of writing, this proposal, that employers should have to pay a fee for lodging a response to claims against them, has not been implemented by the present Government.

The introduction of Employment Tribunal fees and its effect raises the question: In whose interests are we transforming the justice system?

This brings me to the proposal, in the MOJ consultation paper, “Transforming our Justice System”, to scrap ‘wing’ members of First Tier Tribunals so that in general judges, for example hearing cases of appeal against refusal of certain welfare benefits, will hear such cases sitting alone rather than with voting members from other disciplines as at present.

I should explain that the First Tier Tribunal (social entitlement chamber) hears appeals against refusals by the Department of Work and Pensions of benefits like Employment and Support Allowance and Personal Independence Payment. When hearing appeals against the refusal of ESA, the Tribunal judge sits with an experienced Doctor as the other panel member, and when hearing PIP cases the Tribunal judge sits with an experienced Doctor and a member with special expertise in the disabled and their caring needs.

In my experience as a First Tier Tribunal judge, these ‘wing’ members are invaluable. First, in the bundle of documents for each case there is frequently a mass of medical evidence, much of which requires medical expertise to interpret correctly. Second, during the hearing, the medical member and the disability member’s questions often elicit the disclosure of the appellant’s symptoms and difficulty in functioning (eg. walking, eating, dressing etc.) more readily than questioning from the judge. This is because disadvantaged, sick and often inarticulate people frequently have more experience dealing with Doctors and carers rather than lawyers. They therefore give evidence more freely and fully to questions from Doctors and carers. So it seems correct that these “wing” members should continue as voting members of the First Tier Tribunal.

The MOJ, however, appears to believe that medical, voting members of the Tribunal can be relegated to mere “advisers” or “assessors”. However, the experience in former years, when judges heard Invalidity Benefit cases with the medical input merely being that of an assessor, was that the medical advice was frequently misunderstood by the judge leading to ill-founded decisions which the medical assessor could do nothing about. It would be regression to revert to this situation.

There is also the matter of appellants’ expectations. In Employment and Support Allowance cases in particular, they are characteristically appealing against a DWP decision based on an ATOS work capability assessment made by a healthcare professional who is usually a nurse, physio, or paramedic rather than a fully qualified Doctor. The appellant, therefore, expects that his or her appeal will be heard by an experienced Doctor. In the present system this is what they get; the medical members of the Tribunal are experienced GPs and sometimes consultants. This would go under the MOJ’s “judge sitting alone” proposal.

The MOJ’s consultation is now over but readers of the *ER* might like to write to their MPs at the House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA. The question which needs to be considered is “To what extent do recent, and current proposed, reforms in our justice system benefit those exploited at work and disadvantaged by ill health as well as the increasingly computer literate majority of the population?”

Conway Hall Ethical Society

Reg. Charity No. 1156033

Founded in 1793, the Society is a progressive movement whose Charitable Objects are: *the advancement of study, research and education in humanist ethical principles.*

We invite people who identify with our aims, principles and objects to join our society. The Society maintains the Humanist Library and Archives. The Society’s journal, *Ethical Record*, is issued monthly. Conway Hall’s educational programmes include Thinking on Sunday, London Thinks, discussions, debates and lectures, courses, and Sunday concerts of chamber music. Memorials, funerals, weddings, and baby naming ceremonies can also be arranged.

THE ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION IS £35 (£25 IF A FULL-TIME STUDENT, UNWAGED OR OVER 65)

Worker Cooperatives: The Next System?

Dr Adotey Bing-Pappoe



1. INTRODUCTION

Human society has produced many forms of economic organising. Much of world history may be viewed as a succession of the different ways powerful groups have found to extract economic surplus from the less powerful. Under primitive Patriarchy men extracted surplus from women. The ruling classes of Egypt, Greece, Rome, and Europe used enslavement and forced labour to extract surplus from the

enslaved who had become means of production. Mediaeval empires used looting, tribute and tax to extract surplus from the conquered. Feudalism saw “Royalty” having seized the principle means of production – land – use forced rent and military service to extract surplus from peasants. Colonialism allowed Europe to use first slavery, then plunder, investment, taxation and trade policy to extract surplus from their ‘possessions’. Under Capitalism the owners of the means of production – capitalists



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by definition – use labour contracts, where workers ‘freely’ sign away their right to what they produce, to extract surplus. Under actually-existing socialism the state owns the means of production, the labour contract is used to extract the surplus for use by the ruling elite. Nothing yet has replaced capitalism. If cooperative enterprise were to do so – the workers would themselves own and manage the means of production. Surplus extraction would be inter-generational. One generation inherits means of production from the one before it, develops them, and hands on improved means of productive to the next. But is this likely?

2. NOTABLE MOMENTS WORKER COOPERATIVE FORMATION

Since a worker cooperative is a firm owned and managed by those who work in it, it fundamentally alters the relationship between capital and labour: with Labour now hiring capital. Different types of worker cooperatives based on whether workers: own the business themselves or just manage it; own the shares individually or collectively; and, how democratically the firm is managed?

Although the first worker cooperative was formed in France in 1830, we focus on worker cooperative formation in the 20th and 21st centuries. Two trends stand out. They are formed either as a result of leadership by inspirational individuals, or as part of a wave, supported by local or national government. Instances of the former include the Uralungal Labour Contract Cooperative Society started by construction labourers in Kerala in South West India in 1925 under the guidance of Guru Vagbhatananda. George W. Jenkin setting up the retail chain Publix in the US in 1930, and allocating some shares to the workers, and distributing profits to himself and them each quarter. The establishment of the world-famous Mondragon cooperative as a small oil heating stove enterprise by some engineers under the inspiration of their parish priest Father Jose Maria Arizmendi-Arrieta. The handing over of shares in John Lewis, a major UK retail chain by John Spedan Lewis, the son of the founder in 1929. The founding in 1985 of Cooperative Home Care Associates by a group of African-American and Latina women in New York to deliver home health care to the elderly.

Examples of the second type include cooperative formation in Italy, Argentina, Venezuela, the USA and Cuba. Emilia-Romagna in Italy is the worker cooperative capital of the world with a population of around 4 million and 9,000 Worker cooperatives which account for about 40 per cent of the region’s GDP. From being a poor region of Europe in 1945, it is today one of the wealthiest. Venezuela’s wave of cooperative formation started after a special law was passed in 2001 by Hugo Chavez. By 2006, over 150,000 had been registered, though only – 50,000 – were operating, embracing 12% of the labour force (1.5 million people). During the 2001 to 2004 economic collapse in Argentina, some 3,900 factories in Buenos Aires were declared bankrupt, and abandoned by their owners. In response, workers took over these workplaces and, under the slogan “Occupy, Resist, Produce,” began to work for themselves. By 2009 an estimated 300 factories, termed *empresas recuperada por sus trabajadores* (ERTs) or worker recuperated enterprises, were controlled by 9,500 workers, of which 95% eventually became worker cooperatives. The USA’s wave of worker cooperative formation is happening under the slogan “democracy at Work”, and sometimes finds support from state law and initiatives. By 2015 there were between 300 and 400 ‘democratic workplaces’ in the USA, employing about 7,000 people and generating \$400mn in annual revenue. Finally, to Cuba. In April 2011, the Communist Party approved measures to allow the creation of Workers cooperatives. Following legislation by parliament in 2012, the first such cooperatives were launched in July 2013 and by 2014, 500 had been legally formed, and about half were operating.

3. WORKER COOPERATIVE IN THEORY AND PRACTICE

Main stream economics theorists when thinking about worker cooperatives, tend to focus on trying to explain their relative paucity and have asked: why worker cooperatives might find it harder to raise capital, and why might they not behave like investor owned firms when making short and long term investment decisions? The answer given to the capital raising question is that worker cooperatives are not able to provide credible guarantees to lenders that

workers will prioritise loan servicing over high wages. To the short-term investment decision question the answer has often assumed that worker cooperatives would seek to maximise average income per worker rather than total profits. So, when confronted with falling average income, due to for example rising costs, they would hire additional workers (assuming the workers would generate more income than their wage) as a way of raising average incomes again. On the other hand, when faced with increased average income resulting from say higher prices for products, they would dismiss workers, to raise average incomes even further. Long term investment behaviour would be inefficient, because workers it is said would not approve investments which would benefit future employees more than themselves. The worker cooperatives imagined in these models would therefore not be formed, be short lived or remain small.

Nevertheless Uralungal Labour Contract Cooperative (1925) which began with road, bridge, and house building, expanded into agriculture and information technology. Its membership is 2,000, and it recently completed the construction of a major cyber park in Kerala state. Publix (1930) has over 1,000 retail stores and a membership of 180,000, with a turnover of \$32bn. In 2015 it was number 8 on Fortune Magazine's list of top 500 private firms in the USA. Today Mondragon (1956) is a cooperative corporation. An interlocking network of 102 cooperatives with a total of 80,000 members, operating in industry, finance, knowledge and retail sectors. Its assets include a bank, R&D centres, a university, and retail chain. It is the 7th largest company in Spain, with a turnover of €13bn in 2013. In the UK the John Lewis Partnership (1929) comprises 42 stores, and leads the UK retail sector. It had 93,000 members, and a turnover of £4.43bn in 2015. Finally, the Cooperative Home Care Associates (1985) US has 2,500 members and turns over \$20mn a year.

There is in addition, a sizable body of knowledge showing that worker cooperatives match or outperform investor owned firms in many areas. A comparative review of their performance against investor

owned firms by Virgine Perotin reported that: worker cooperatives are often larger than conventional businesses, not necessarily less capital intensive, survive at least as long as other businesses, have more stable employment, are more productive, have staff who work 'better and smarter', organise production more efficiently, retain a larger share of their profits, and have much lower pay differentials between executives and non-executives.¹ Suma Foods in the UK, formed in 1975, stands out for paying all its 150 multi-tasking members the same and turns over about 45mn a year.

Finally, worker cooperatives appear to be better for the human beings who work in them. A recent study found that people living in communities in Italy which could be described as worker cooperative heavy had significantly better scores for indices related to crime, health, social environment, and social participation, than communities that had low or no worker cooperative presence².

4. FACTORS ENABLING FUTURE WORKER COOPERATIVE FORMATION

Some have argued that the capital-intensive technologies that drove the first industrial revolution have hindered worker cooperative formation. Whether true or not, the evidence suggests that determined people have been successful in forming worker cooperatives. However, if they are to become 'the next system', they will require values, law-makers, and technology to ease the way.

Cooperative formation in the last century suggests that while individual ethical systems were often the spur, working people's desire to secure their livelihoods and achieve a fairer society by owning their own means of production was also important. Data indicates that cooperatives provide greater levels of employment growth and security than investor owned firms. Also, worker cooperative formation increases as economic insecurity does. Between 1976 and 1981, job creation by all firms in the EEC rose by 2%, but among the cooperative by 76%.³ During

1. Virginie Pérotin. 2016. *What do we really know about worker cooperatives?* Manchester: Coops UK.

2. D. Erdal. Chapter 11 – Employee Ownership and Health: An Initial Study, in Novkovic S and Webb T (2014) *Cooperatives in a Post Growth Era* Zed Books.

3. S. Smith and J. Rothbaum. 2013. *Cooperatives in a Global Economy: Key Economic Issues, Recent Trends and Potential for Development*, Institute for International Economic Policy.

and after the financial crisis of 2008-9 worker cooperative formation in the US and Europe increased. Democratic decision making in cooperatives means wages are reduced for everyone before workers are dismissed. So, if the current system fails to safeguard people's livelihoods, the drive towards cooperative formation is likely to strengthen.

The UN designated 2012 the international year of cooperatives, giving a boost to the movement. Many countries passed laws and established initiatives providing for easier formation, development and growth of cooperatives. A study by CICOPA for the 2014 International Summit of Cooperatives found 26.4 million worker cooperative members globally. While this is less than 1% of the world's employed population, much higher levels are recorded in Emilia-Romagna (15%), Gangwon in South Korea (23%), Spanish Basque Country (7%), and Sante Fe province in Argentina (9%). Finally a strong positive correlation between worker cooperative density and human wellbeing appears to exist. The experience of actually-existing cooperatives will increase their popularity.

As socio-economic systems mature, technological advances open up possibilities for new forms of social relations. The new technologies now emerging will usher in ways of storing and analysing data, generating energy, making things, and transporting information. Perhaps most importantly machines will learn how to learn. They will not only change the structure and distribution of occupations, change the nature of the skills that people will need, and how they will acquire them, but also change what and how people consume.

Many new "commons" will arise, offering new opportunities for business to use 'increasing returns' to capture monopoly positions, witness Google, Airbnb, and Uber. But these trends have also given rise to counter trends intended to protect the commons. One example being the open source movement – dedicated to demonstrating that an economy can operate on the principle of knowledge sharing rather than knowledge capture. Such values make it easier for workers everywhere to gain access to the knowledge and means of production required to improve their livelihoods.

Another important consequence is that the new technologies make near-zero marginal cost of production more common, making it possible for some people in the rich countries to virtually banish scarcity, at the cost of increasing national and global inequality. But they also make it technically easier for cooperative enterprise to form, because less capital may be required at start-up, as the heavy presence of cooperatives in the Germany renewable sector demonstrates.

5. LOOKING FORWARD

Whether cooperative enterprise becomes the next system depends on how well investor owned firms secure peoples' livelihoods, and distribute income (if not wealth) within and between countries tolerably fairly. Also important is the extent to which people come to value democratic forms of economic organising, and how well lawmakers reflect this. Finally, it will depend on the ability of cooperative enterprise to take advantages of the new technologies now coming into being and use them to add to the types of socio-economic systems so far devised by humankind.

If you are interested in learning more about cooperatives, then the following new Open edX's course may be of interest: *Economic Democracy: The Co-operative Alternative*, starting on 29th November. Open edX is a nonprofit open source platform. More information can be found on their website:

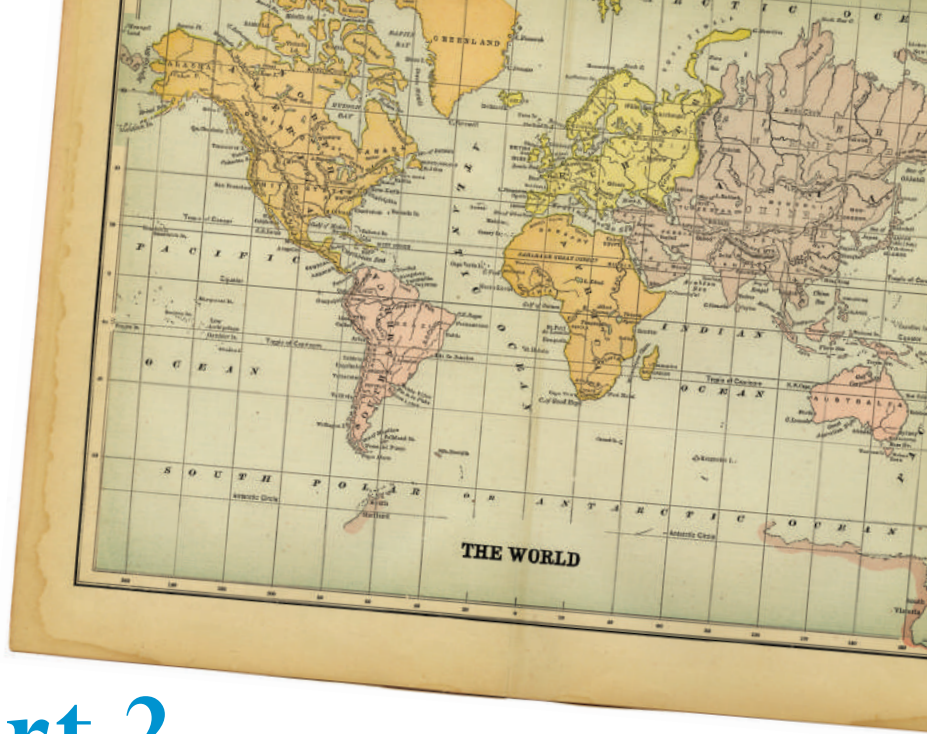
<https://www.edx.org/course/economic-democracy-cooperative-edinburgh-coopsx#!>

Though the course was opened in November 2016 it will be open until November 2017. It is intended to be a 6 weeks course, but you can progress at your own speed.

4. B. Roelants, E. Hyungsik and E. Terrasi. 2014. Cooperatives and Employment: A Global Report CICOPA

Nigel Sinnott

Conway's Journey Round the World, 1883–84: Part 2



Moncure Conway also met the Honourable Peter Lalor, then speaker of the Victorian parliament. “He was a striking figure,” Conway recalled, “but his glory was the stump of an arm lost while fighting against the Victorian soldiery at the Eureka mine.” He added: “My friend Mr Jeffray, who was among the early diggers, told me that when some measure was before the legislature involving the rights of diggers, Peter Lalor, in speaking, made a gesture with the stump of his arm which elicited a wild cheer from the assembly and helped carry his case.”[79]

Conway visited Ballarat, Victoria, and went down a mine with M.P. Eustace Smith. It was about 240 metres underground. “Clutching candles,” writes Conway, “we waded through white mud-purée till we came upon men who, with a grunt or groan at each stroke, picked at the hard quartz. For nine hours’ daily toil in this Hades each obtained seven shillings.”[78]

Conway found that the Athenaeum Hall, hired for his Melbourne lectures, had a disadvantage. “Every word I uttered returned in startling echoes, and a third of the fine audience could not hear.” He did something about it:

For the next lecture I had the desk moved to a side of the hall, and was fairly heard. The first lecture, however, well reported in the admirable Argus, elicited public letters vehemently vindicating the functions of pain in nature. The ablest of these I had to answer,

simply maintaining that no advantages could justify Omnipotent Love in selecting pain and wholesale torture of sensitive creatures as the method of Evolution. My argument was not answered, but I was angrily abused.[75]

In late October, Conway went to Tasmania at the invitation of Andrew Inglis Clark, then a young barrister in Hobart but later attorney-general of Tasmania and one of the founding fathers of federation.

Conway loved the views from Mount Wellington and took an interest in the plants and birds of the area. He was woken up one morning by a (native) magpie singing “Polly Put the Kettle On”. He was shown specimens of the so-called vegetable caterpillar, a fair-sized fungus, *Cordyceps gunnii*, that parasitises the large caterpillars of a moth. I have collected it myself in Victoria. He was unable, however, to see a Tasmanian devil, as the animal had become rare in the area. He makes no mention of the thylacine, but probably did not visit areas where it still occurred.

Conway found time to visit what he termed “the smallest conventicle in Hobart” because its denomination was given as “Campbellite”. “Alexander Campbell”, explained Conway, “was the only Virginian who ever founded a sect, a little brick chapel in our town, Fredericksburg, being by tradition the first built by Campbellism.”[81]

Conway was led to believe that the last of the Tasmanian Aborigines had perished, and he was not to know that this did not apply to Tasmanians of

mixed ancestry. "In English imaginations," he wrote, "the natives had loomed up into ferocious creatures; the phrase 'Native Devils' paralleled 'Tasmanian Devils.'" He continued:

A considerable number of troops were sent out to search for natives, but could find none. At last they made a cordon across one end of Tasmania and advanced day by day across the whole island, catching in their net two aged people! Their photographs were said to be those of the native king and queen: the faces are haggard and disfigured by want and woe. The extermination of a race by no means bloodthirsty was not due to British violence, but to ignorant and puritanical missions. The earlier missionaries were self-sacrificing, but as of old it was not the worldly pagan emperors who persecuted, but the religious ones, so it was those missionaries who took their dogmas seriously who did the great mischief in Tasmania. In 1834, as Australian annals record, "a fund was raised in England for the purpose of clothing the native women. Among the subscribers were the Duchess of Kent, Lady Noel Byron, and the Hon. Mrs. Wilbraham." It was these pious prudes who killed off the Tasmanians. It was the belief of every scientific man I met that they all were attacked by tuberculosis soon after they put on clothing. [86–87]

Conway also tells us that "I lectured in various parts of Tasmania, and had the honour of being attacked in the papers by orthodox writers. My lectures were not theological, but my account of London, my sketches of scientific men, and the fact that I was there by invitation of distinguished rationalists gave sufficient ground for this clerical imprudence, which filled my halls wherever I went." [87]

Conway occupied himself with reading on the ship from Tasmania back to Victoria, in time for the colony's most important festival, then, as now, the Melbourne Cup, run on 6 November in 1883. He was somewhat bemused by it:

It is odd that Melbourne, rigidly Presbyterian, should have for its Pan-Australian synod a

horse-race. Melbourne has, however, made its racing week a social congress of the colonies. The betting is universal. Sweepstakes were arranged in the schools (by the teachers), and Cup Day is a holiday...

Early in the morning I walked over the course, so to say. Byron Moore, secretary of the Racing Club, guided me, and I saw the artistic arrangements for this great event. The apartments for the governor and his company, the committee rooms, the medical rooms, the ladies' rooms, – all were elaborately elegant. There was fine floral decoration everywhere; cosmetics in the ladies' room, and needles threaded with every colour, ready for use.

In the element of grotesquerie the English Derby has large advantages over the Cup, where respectability was carried to an extreme; there was hardly a side-show, nothing characteristic of the country, no aborigines, no boomerangs. It all impressed me as too much a Presbyterian Vanity Fair; no one could fail to be struck by the multitude of beautiful ladies and fine looking men, but they appeared so serious! It was pleasant to see so many people without any tipsiness, but there might have been some fun... [70–71]

Conway's next journey was by train back to Sydney, observing on the way vast numbers of gum trees that had been ring-barked by farmers to kill them. The bush had "a desolate look".

Reports of Conway's lectures in Melbourne had already appeared in the press, and, in his own words, "had given me a fame in Sydney ludicrously disproportionate to my deserts". He added wryly: "And though probably none of my accusers revered the character of Jesus more than I did, I found myself a full-blown apostle of Antichrist." [91]

His first talk was advertised for 13 November, on "Toleration of Opinion, or Pleas for Persecution". It was in the Protestant Hall, to an audience that included the premier of New South Wales, Sir Henry Parkes, "other ministers, and eminent citizens". Conway writes:

I had taken the utmost pains to make my lecture on Toleration conciliatory... But hardly had I given the exordium [introduction]

when crowds assembled at the doors and windows, shouting Salvation Army hymns. Each crowd sang a different hymn, the result being a confusion of yells which my voice could hardly surmount. When, however, these noisy saints discovered that my voice was not quite drowned, some of them repaired to a bowling alley adjoining a wall of the hall and zealously rolled the balls.

Care was taken by the managers of Protestant Hall that the annoyance should not be repeated, but the balls went on rolling in the Sydney Herald, where in anonymous letters my lectures were distorted. For instance, I gave a sketch of Cardinal Newman, and of my going some distance on a terribly wintry morning at daybreak to his oratory (Birmingham), where he usually conducted mass, though hardly expecting that the aged man would arise on such a bitter morning. ...His presence on that occasion, when only two or three attended, was mentioned with admiration, and every word I said was to his credit. Yet some silly – or malicious – Catholic described what I said as an attack on the cardinal! Though other statements about my twelve lectures were equally misleading, this particular one annoyed me most because it had been a sort of specialty of my ministry for thirty years to maintain that Protestantism, theologically and morally, was a relapse into the stony ages from the height to which evolution had carried Catholicism, with its merry Sunday, antiquated dogmas, exaltation of a feminine divinity, and cult of the fine arts. [92–93]

But Conway was welcomed in other quarters. The Union Club elected him an honorary member, and he was able to stay there. He was also invited to give the annual lecture to the Philosophical and Scientific Institution, and for some days was the guest of Justice William (later Sir William) Windeyer, who presided at the lecture. Conway adds: “Several ladies whom I had known in London, married in Sydney to excellent men, entertained me in their houses, arranged pretty excursions for me, and introduced me to the best people.”[93]

“As a lecturer,” Conway admitted, “I was a disappointment to the average lecture-goer; I was not a ‘spell-binder’, taking up large world-themes, with a millennial magic-lantern throwing on the popular eye visions of England, America, Australia, transfigured in the near future. My mission, if I had any, was still to individual minds. I lectured about the great literary and scientific men whom I had known in Europe and America, trying to interpret their influence and their contributions to thought and knowledge. . . . An eminent scholar said to me, ‘Nearly every thinker in Sydney agrees with you, but we do not speak publicly on such subjects. Why reason with people who do not know the meaning of reason?’”[93–94]

During his time in Australia, Conway observed that quite a few people combined interest in free-thought with spiritualism. A good example in Sydney was John Bright, who combined both in Sunday evening lectures in a theatre. Conway writes:

I regretted not hearing this able man, . . . who insisted that I should take his place on my only remaining Sunday. The theatre was crowded, more than three thousand being present. This strange movement had, I was told, almost swallowed up Unitarianism. The widow of the latest Unitarian minister (Mr. Pillars) had married Charles Bright, and had been occasionally lecturing for her husband in the theatre with much effect. About the same time a female evan-gelist, Mrs. Hammond, was drawing larger crowds than any regular preacher attracted. This revivalist was preaching in Sydney while I was there, and in my fifth lecture (“Woman and Evolution”) I referred to her apostolate as showing how far society had travelled away from the Pauline doctrine against women preachers, and congratulated the city on having two eloquent ladies in the religious conflict of the time.[94]

Conway found time to visit the Sydney Museum, where he saw the first complete skull, found in 1881, of the extinct marsupial “lion”, *Thylacoleo carnifex*, which was a powerful carnivore capable of killing animals larger than itself, like (now extinct) giant kangaroos.

He returned to Melbourne to take another ship (early December?), and a large crowd gathered to see it off. "There were partings," he wrote, "and I thought I observed more tears shed by those left behind than by those departing. Somehow the multitude suggested a vision of shades on either side of the Styx, some longing for Charon to ferry them over to Elysium, the Elysians longing to voyage back to upper earth." [98]

(Text numbers in square brackets refer to pages in Conway's *My Pilgrimage to the Wise Men of the East*.)

To see Nigel Sinnott's biography please refer to page 13 of Vol 121 No.11 of the *Ethical Record*.

VIEWPOINT

THE PENULTIMATE CURIOSITY

The Thinking on Sunday presentation, by Roger Wagner and David Briggs, succeeded in its object of making me think.

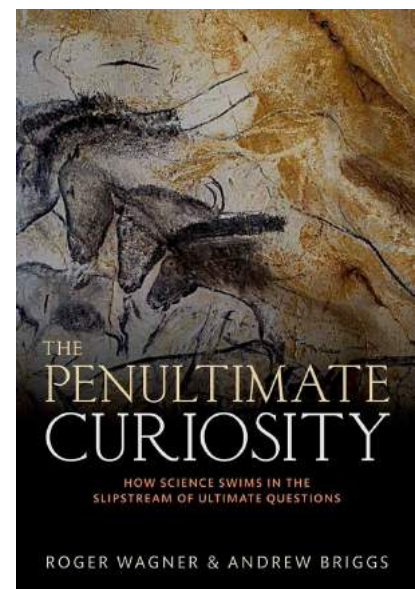
Explaining the whole of existence is logically impossible. To explain something means to explain it in terms of something else, and by definition, there is nothing else than the whole of existence.

We may think of existence in two parts: beyond the space-time world is Eternity; or, God is not part of the universe but the creator of it; or (the metaphor used by Wagner and Briggs), the Ultimate Curiosity drags the penultimate curiosity in its slipstream. But of course this does not work as an explanation of the whole. If Eternity, God, the Ultimate Curiosity, or whatever, does not exist, then existence has no explanation. If Eternity exists, then Eternity is part of existence, and any explanation of existence must include an explanation of Eternity.

Explanations are not necessary for knowledge. We know and understand many things without being able to explain them. Saints, prophets, and mystics claim experiences which they claim (or others claim for them) enable them to comprehend the whole of existence without looking for an explanation. Skeptics (including me) may suppose that such experiences have no reality outside the brains of those who experience them. But we cannot know for certain.

For practical purposes, however, we can be aware of the tyrannies, massacres, wars, individual suffering, and other harmful events associated with such claims, and for practical purposes refuse to believe them.

Donald Room



Trunkman Productions and Conway Hall Ethical Society
present

The Empty Niche

The Long Lost Bust of Moncure Conway



TRUNKMAN PRODUCTIONS AND CONWAY HALL ETHICAL SOCIETY PRESENT

THE EMPTY NICHE: THE LONG LOST BUST OF MONCURE CONWAY

PRESENTED BY GINNY SMITH ORIGINAL MUSIC BY THE FGS DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY ANDREW MICKELBURGH WRITTEN BY TRENT BURTON

PRODUCED BY JIM WALSH TRENT BURTON DIRECTED BY TRENT BURTON

COMING SOON



trunkman.co.uk

CONWAY
HALL

conwayhall.org.uk

OBITUARY

Terry Mullins

(13 April 1931 – 11 October 2016)

Terry Mullins – a keen, long-term member of many societies – died suddenly, from septicemia, on 11 October, at the age of 85. A memorial meeting was held at Conway Hall, Holborn, on Sunday 27 November 2016.

Born in London's East End between the wars, he spent his first eight years there in deprivation – until the eve of WW2, when, as one of the millions of child “evacuees” removed from London because of its expected vulnerability to Nazi bombing, he found himself placed with an upper-working-class family, which not only provided him with proper nutrition but spurred him, by example, to better himself.

In the 1970s, feeling that he lacked learning, he made a successful application to enter Ruskin College as a mature student, and did well enough there to get in to Stirling University (Scotland). He joined its newly formed humanist society, and it was there that I first met him.

Trustees of the British Humanist Association, of whom I was one of at the time, were on a tour of university humanist groups, and at Stirling we were each assigned a student guide. My guide was Terry – and he kept me laughing the whole time. He was adept at clever puns, and often indulged in “gallows humour”.

I was also president of the National Secular Society, founded exactly 150 years ago by another Eastender, Charles Bradlaugh, MP. When, in 1980, its then General Secretary proffered his resignation, I thought of Terry – his wit as well as his commitment – and wrote asking him if he would like to step into that job when he came down from university. He accepted with alacrity, and I persuaded the NSS committee to appoint him. It is the NSS that I am representing here today.

Terry held the job of its General Secretary for sixteen years. This enabled him to buy his large house in Penn Road, Holloway, at a bargain price, from a fellow humanist – on condition that he ran it as a humanist community home. This he did: mainly, but not exclusively, with gay humanists as tenants. Long

before the days of Gay Pride, Terry was quite open about his sexuality, and joked about it.

He was brave in other ways too. For instance, when Salman Rushdie was the victim of an Islamic fatwa, Terry placed a copy of *The Satanic Verses* in the window of the NSS shop in Holloway Road. I pointed out that it could mean the window being broken, to which Terry responded “Well, we’re insured”.

His NSS salary being minimal, it was not always easy for him to meet his mortgage repayments; but, the house being of great importance to him, he contrived to do so, largely through his frugal style of living.

He was quite obsessive about avoiding waste – for instance, always switching off unwanted lights – and if any piece of equipment broke down he would usually devise a Heath Robinson sort of way to continue using it rather than buy a new one.

Apart from his house, however, he enjoyed one other item of expensive but important ownership: his old banger. And it was part of his generosity to me personally that he would often drive me in it on long journeys – including a visit to a convent near Liverpool when one of my sisters was terminally ill there.

Terry was an active joiner of societies and groups committed to his various interests and causes, of which the Conway Hall Ethical Society was probably the most important, together with its Sunday Evening chamber-music concerts. He continued to attend the lectures and concerts there regularly, even after succumbing in the last few years to severe mobility problems, caused by a rare neurological disease similar to Parkinson's.

Other organisations Terry supported included the Shaw Society, musical fellowships, the atheist campaigning London Secular Group, and his local Residents Association. In all of them he played an active executive part, and, even more important perhaps, they contributed to his many friendships, comprising an amazingly large and varied circle. But whenever he thought that friends had betrayed him they became enemies – and he could be permanently unforgiving.

Aside from his astute input on practical decisions, his humour and clever witticisms caused a lot of laughter at meetings. He was in fact the very personification of Irish Cockney wit – which hid an unexpectedly soft heart.

He enjoyed comic Edwardian monologues, and knew several of them by heart. And he loved cross-dressing as Lady Bracknell, so as to declaim her part in the most famous scene from Oscar Wilde's *The Importance of Being Earnest*.

He was a great appreciator of music, especially classical vocal music, and he built up such a good collection of records in the days of vinyl that he was interviewed about it on BBC Radio 4. He also had a good eye for antiques, and would buy them either to keep or to sell at a profit.

You will all remember Terry's many clever witticisms, which caused most of the laughter during audience participation at meetings. There will be fewer laughs now, without him.

Barbara Smoker

Note by Norman Bacrac. Terry became a member of the South Place Ethical Society around 1990. In 1992, he was elected to its General Committee and in 1996 elected to be its Chairman. In the subsequent years, he was elected Honorary Representative, as a Holding Trustee, as Hon. Registrar and served on the Legal, Social and Sunday Concert committees. Terry conducted a monthly 'Topical Topics' forum on Sunday afternoons. He was MC at many Christmas socials, master-minding a hilarious quiz and singing old music-hall songs.



THE HUMANIST LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES

Conway Hall Humanist Library and Archives is home to a unique collection of published and archival sources on humanism and its related subjects. We are open for members, researchers and the general public on Tuesdays to Thursdays from 10 till 17. Our collections include printed materials such as books, pamphlets and journals as well as archival material of unpublished institutional and personal records and papers, such as manuscripts, letters and photographs. For your time and convenience it is advisable to contact the library before your visit so we can ensure the material you seek is available.

Tel: 020 7061 6747.

Email: sophie@conwayhall.org.uk

CONWAY HALL

COURSES

TO BOOK TICKETS: <http://tinyurl.com/gr4qok2>

London's Agitators and Protesters for Equality 1880s–1980s

**6
WEEK
COURSE**



2 February – 9 March 2017
6:30 to 8:30 pm

David Rosenberg

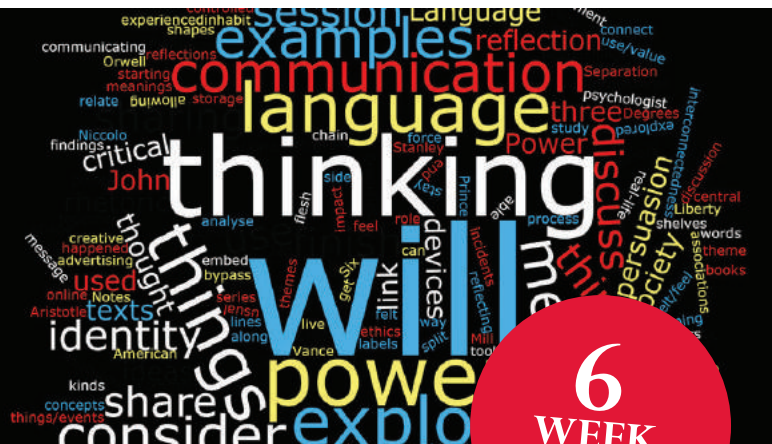
Londoners have been engaged in collective struggles for equality in many spheres – economic, political, and social. This course will tell stories from a selection of these struggles that took place over a 100 year period since the 1880s to the 1980s – from the struggles of women making matches in the Bryant and May factory to the mass protests against apartheid outside South Africa House. It will attempt to illuminate how these struggles began, what they were trying to achieve, how they recruited supporters and activists and what they did.

Suitable for all levels

Tickets: £85 (£65 Concessions)

**a school
of thought:
thinking &
language**

6 WEEK COURSE



1 February – 8 March 2017
6:30 to 8:30 pm

Take part in a series of six interactive, collaborative workshops using a think-share-explore approach. These Wednesday-evening workshops will encourage you to think, read, discuss and relate to different topics around the links between thinking and language. You will gain the confidence and skills required to apply critical, reflective and creative thinking in your daily life, studies and work.

Tickets: £85 (£65 Concessions)

THINKING ON SUNDAY

Start at 11.00 unless specified otherwise.

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- | | |
|---------------|---|
| Feb 5 | New Frontiers in UK Politics? <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Jonathan Bartley, Peter Taheri and Timothy Barnes</i> |
| Feb 12 | Dystopian Times <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Professor Gregory Claeys</i> |
| Feb 19 | Is the Writing on the Wall for Liberal Democracy? <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Dr Adrian Pabst</i> |
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For ticket prices and other information, please visit www.conwayhall.org.uk

OTHER EVENTS

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- | | |
|-------------------------|---|
| Feb 2-27 | Amorphous <ul style="list-style-type: none">• An exhibition of work by Melissa Budasz• Private view, Friday 3 February, 18.00 to 21.00 |
| Saturday Feb 11 | Stand Up For Darwin <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 19.00 to 23.00 • Featuring: Lawrence Krauss, Jay Foreman, Kate Smurthwaite, London Humanist Choir and special guests• Presented by Central London Humanists and Conway Hall Ethical Society |
| Monday Feb 13 | The Disappearance of Émile Zola <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 19.00 to 21.00 • Michael Rosen• Presented by Newham Bookshop with Conway Hall |
| Feb 20 Mar 13 | The Testing Ground – a Dance Theatre Performance Workshop <ul style="list-style-type: none">• four Monday evenings, 19.00 to 21.00• Presented by The Conway Collective |
| Wednesday Feb 22 | Ethics & Politics: Does Culture Lead & Parliament Follow <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 18.30 to 20.00 • Presented by Conway Hall Ethical Society and GlobalNet21 |
| Wednesday Feb 22 | Alan, Alec and Bert: A Solo Performance by David Izod <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 19.45 to 21.00 • Presented by The Conway Collective |
| Friday Feb 24 | Conway Hall Book Club Meet and Greet Session <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 18.00 to 19.30 • The club's first title is the novel Silence by Shūsaku Endō, which will be read at the following meeting |
| Friday Feb 24 | Members Screening of The Empty Niche <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 19.00 to 21.00 |
-

For ticket prices and other information, please visit www.conwayhall.org.uk

CONWAY HALL SUNDAY CONCERTS

Start at **18.30** unless specified otherwise.

Feb 5 Barbican Piano Trio

Feb 12 Children Workshop with Catriona McDermid (bassoon)
• 14:00 to 15:00

Feb 12 Louise Kemény & Friends

Feb 19 Zoffany Ensemble

Feb 26 Albion Quartet

Mar 5 Fibonacci Sequence

Mar 12 Children Workshop with Manus Noble (guitar)
• 14:00 to 15:00

Mar 12 Treitler Quartet

For ticket prices and other information, please visit www.conwayhall.org.uk/sunday-concerts/