Andrew Copson, BHA Director of Education and Public Affairs said, ‘Bernard Crick, in his defence of politics, his advocacy for tolerance and cooperation – a rebuke to fundamentalisms of all sorts – and his support for a shared society, shared schools and a shared future for all humanity, embodied the humanist ideal of great thought and great deeds going hand in hand.’

1969 saw Crick’s first public engagement for the BHA at its conference at the Royal Festival Hall on creating an open society. He gave a paper advocating the virtue of tolerance in the ideal state saying, ‘the most important thing about living in any complex and reasonably civilized community is to perceive it is pluralistic’. He urged that people of different beliefs should learn about those with different beliefs as part of their school curriculum, and that people of different beliefs could cooperate for the common good. In the decades that followed, these concerns all recurred in his work and that of the BHA.

Crick’s humanist morality was robust and deep: he saw that ‘morality depends on reasoning and instinctive sociability’ (lecture to the 2005 BHA conference) and had that expansive and universal vision of morality which distinguishes the greatest humanists. Expressing this sentiment in Essays on Citizenship in 2000, he said, ‘The crucial test of ethical values is whether they apply to strangers, and those afar, not just in our midst.’ In 2003 he was a signatory to a joint letter to the Prime Minister and Education and Public Affairs said, ‘Bernard Crick, in his defence of politics, his advocacy for tolerance and cooperation – a rebuke to fundamentalisms of all sorts – and his support for a shared society, shared schools and a shared future for all humanity, embodied the humanist ideal of great thought and great deeds going hand in hand.’

1969 saw Crick’s first public engagement for the BHA at its conference at the Royal Festival Hall on creating an open society. He gave a paper advocating the virtue of tolerance in the ideal state saying, ‘the most important thing about living in any complex and reasonably civilized community is to perceive it is pluralistic’. He urged that people of different beliefs should learn about those with different beliefs as part of their school curriculum, and that people of different beliefs could cooperate for the common good. In the decades that followed, these concerns all recurred in his work and that of the BHA.

Crick’s humanist morality was robust and deep: he saw that ‘morality depends on reasoning and instinctive sociability’ (lecture to the 2005 BHA conference) and had that expansive and universal vision of morality which distinguishes the greatest humanists. Expressing this sentiment in Essays on Citizenship in 2000, he said, ‘The crucial test of ethical values is whether they apply to strangers, and those afar, not just in our midst.’ In 2003 he was a signatory to a joint letter to the Prime Minister and national press calling for the 12 February birthday of Charles Darwin to be made a national holiday.

He was a great advocate of Humanism as a moral endeavour – actively working for good. He saw this as especially vital in a time of fundamentalisms: ‘We live in a time of increased religious fanaticism both in the Christian and Muslim worlds. The extraordinary spectacle of Pentecostal churches in the US joining with the Catholic Bishops against abortion and homosexuality and therefore in support of President Bush at the last election. The Muslim demonstration of the Supreme Sacrifice: the suicide bombers in Iraq, a phenomenon not known since the Assassins of early Medieval times. Humanism is firstly, denial of religious orthodoxy and intolerance; secondly, denial that morality depends on religious belief; but thirdly, positive assertions that reason and tolerance are the bases for freedom and human brotherhood – The Brotherhood of Man.’ (lecture to the 2005 BHA conference).

Like many humanists of his generation, it was in the shared endeavour of politics that Crick believed that religious and non-religious people could cooperate for the common good: ‘We must cooperate on the practical politics of the common good. In our country we are inherently pluralistic, unlike the heresy of French secularism, our church was made by compromises with each other long ago, and now the majority of our population are in all practical terms non-believers. We must assert the secularity of politics and citizenship but in doing this we should not assume that all believers would differ from us. We should be as respectful of sincere error, even of weird superstitions, just as moderate Christians Jews and Muslims are – or can be – of each other. Unnecessary antagonisms weaken the moderates and strengthen the fanatics who thrive on direct antagonism.’ (lecture to the 2005 BHA conference).

Although he was an advocate of toleration and mutual understanding between those of different religious and non-religious beliefs, he was implacably opposed to any notion that one religious or philosophical group should ever use impose their beliefs on another by force a fierce advocate of politics as a secular enterprise. His defence of citizenship as secular at ‘Faith, Community and the Common Good’, the 2003 Humanist Philosophers’ conference, was an invigoration for all those present. Most recently, he was a signatory in March 2007 to the Brussels Declaration which called for a secular Europe to ‘affirm the worth, dignity and autonomy of every individual, and the right of everyone to the greatest possible freedom compatible with the rights of others. We support democracy and human rights and aim at the fullest possible development of every human being.’

Well known for introducing the curriculum subject of Citizenship to English schools, he had lifelong interests of many sorts in education and was an opponent of faith schools and a supporter of inclusive and shared community schools, such as those proposed by the BHA. He remained involved in work to promote secular education almost until his death and as late as September 2009.

2009 is...

250th anniversary of the birth of Mary Wolstonecraft...200th anniversary of the birth of Charles Darwin...200th anniversary of the death of Thomas Paine...150th anniversary of the publication of Darwin’s On the Origin of Species...150th anniversary of the publications of Mill’s On Liberty...100th anniversary of the coming into force of the UK Old Age Pensions Act – one of the foundations of the modern welfare state.
this year became a patron of Accord – the campaigning
coalition uniting religious and non-religious people to lobby
for reform of state-funded faith schools.

Accord Coalition

The BHA is a founder member of Accord: a new coalition to
campaign for inclusive schools and an end to special
arrangements for state funded religious schools.

Other members include the Association of Teachers and
Lecturers, Ekklesia, Hindu Academy, The Lesbian and Gay
Christian Movement, The Socialist Education Association,
and Women Against Fundamentalism. And high profile
supporters of Accord include Baroness Tessa Blackstone,
Former Minister for Education, Reverend Jeremy Chadd,
Anglican vicar, Rabbi David Goldberg OBE, Professor A.C.
Grayling, Phillip Pullman, and Polly Toynbee. The Chair of
Accord is Rabbi Dr Jonathan Romain MBE.

The Accord manifesto is clear and has attracted wide
support. Accord believe all state-funded schools should:

1. Operate admissions policies that take no account of
pupils’ – or their parents’ – religion or beliefs.
2. Operate recruitment and employment policies that do
not discriminate on the grounds of religion or belief.
3. Follow an objective, fair and balanced syllabus for
education about religious and non-religious beliefs –
whether determined by their local authority or by any future
national syllabus or curriculum for RE.
4. Be made accountable under a single inspection regime
for RE, Personal, Social & Health Education (PSHE) and
Citizenship.
5. Provide their pupils with inclusive, inspiring and
stimulating assemblies in place of compulsory acts of
worship.

You can visit the website of the campaign at
www.accordcoalition.org.uk to sign up for free to
support the coalition, and register to get regular updates on
the coalition’s campaigns. You can also find out if there
are plans for new religious schools or academies in your
area and learn about how to start or join a local campaign.

SRE to become compulsory in all schools

The BHA welcomed the Department for Children, Schools
and Families’ (DCSF’s) announcement in late 2008 that
Personal Social and Health Education is to become
compulsory in all schools, for pupils aged 5-16.

Andrew Copson, BHA Director of Education, said ‘We are
delighted that the Government has listened to evidence-
based, expert inquiries into the provision of PSHE in
schools and will ensure all pupils will have objective and
comprehensive PSHE, and particularly Sex and
Relationships Education (SRE).

‘We believe that SRE can best be improved if it is a
statutory, compulsory part of the curriculum in all schools,
being comprehensive in scope and well above the
minimum basics of what is currently required by law.
Making comprehensive SRE compulsory in all schools,
together with the necessary training and investment in
teaching resources and information, should help to give
teachers the skills and confidence to teach excellent SRE
to their pupils.’

As members of the Sex Education Forum’s faith and
values working group, the BHA will be contributing to work
around new guidance in this sensitive area at a critical time.

Courses on Humanism

Greater Manchester Humanists have developed a course
on Humanism, making good use of the BHA’s own Short
Course on Humanism. It consists of six ninety-minute
sessions each titled with a question, ‘What do Humanists
believe?’, ‘Where do Humanists get their moral values
from?’, ‘How do Humanists handle moral dilemmas?’,
‘What are the historical roots of Humanism?’, ‘What is the
meaning and purpose of life for Humanists?’, ‘What do
Humanists do? – celebrations and campaigns.’ The course
is being offered for public consumption in 2009 and the
course leaders will be Rob Grinter and Anna Whitehead.
Rob can be contacted through the BHA by email to
education@humanism.org.uk

Together with the South Place Ethical Society, Rationalist
Association, Centre for Inquiry London and Humanist
Philosophers, the BHA is also working on development of
eight-week course for public use in group sessions. The
course will be trialled in London in early 2009 and then
rolled out for provision by local groups and others from late
2009 onwards.

James Hemming Essay Prize

The BHA, South Place Ethical Society and New Humanist
have launched an essay competition for pupils in years 12
and 13. The closing date is March 2009 and more details

Consultation on New RE Guidance

The consultation process on the guidance to replace the
elements of circular 1/94 dealing with RE and SACRE’s
duties in relation to RE is proceeding at a national level.
Andrew Copson and Marilyn Mason are the two BHA reps
on the steering group for the process. The BHA is
welcoming the opportunity to be involved in this badly
needed revision of outdated guidance – watch this space
for more news!

Fundraising for campaign against state-
funded faith schools

The BHA is raising funds to employ our dedicated
campaigner against faith schools for a further year. You
can donate online at www.justgiving.com/faithschools
or by sending a cheque to the BHA in an envelope marked
‘faith schools campaign’ – please do pass this on to all you
know who may wish to donate.

Education for Choice

At the annual meeting of humanist SACRE reps at the end
of 2008, concern was expressed by many that the
organisations Life and SPUC have been taking lessons in
schools which contain misleading information about
abortion and which push a strong anti-choice line. Readers
of Edlines may wish to know of two good resources on
teaching about abortion: Abortion: rights responsibilities
and reason, a cross curricular resource by Lisa Hallgarten

ARE YOU GLAD WE’RE HERE?
The BHA is an educational charity depending on
membership, donations and legacies to fund our work.
We do not own property, we do not have wealthy
sponsors, and our education work is unlikely ever to be
funded by the Government.

We give away a lot of material and advice, because
that is what we are here for. If you value our services,
please consider making a donation or joining the BHA.

You can visit the website of the campaign at
www.accordcoalition.org.uk to sign up for free to
support the coalition, and register to get regular updates on
the coalition’s campaigns. You can also find out if there
are plans for new religious schools or academies in your
area and learn about how to start or join a local campaign.

**Humanism in GCSE Religious Studies**

Many readers will have read reports of the decision not to allow the study of Humanism in a Religious Studies GCSE in the same way as religions are studied. The exam board OCR had included Humanism alongside religions in its proposed GCSE in Religious Studies, announced in April 2008, but a decision by the QCA has meant that it could not be included. The stance of the QCA will be a great disappointment to the many teachers, parents and pupils who were as pleased as we were at the BHA when OCR included the option of Humanism in their draft GCSE. The study of Humanism alongside religions as an example of a non-religious worldview is recommended by the Government and QCA's National Framework for RE and is a growing feature of many syllabuses and is increasingly being included in many Initial Teacher Training programmes. Its inclusion contributes to making the study of RE more meaningful for the vast majority of young people who are not religious, and also introduces invaluable perspectives on the big questions of life from which all pupils benefit.

As popular author and professor of philosophy A C Grayling who said, 'The Humanist tradition is a rich and important subject of study and children deserve the opportunity to engage with it as part of their schooling. If schools are teaching about religious views they must also teach about humanist ones, and all moves towards a more widespread acceptance of this should be welcomed, not opposed.'

The BHA is meeting with the QCA to see how the future inclusion of Humanism in GCSEs can be taken forward, since the technical obstacle to its inclusion in this instance was that it would have been possible for students to opt for only Humanism (just as they could opt for only one religion). The BHA does not accept that this was a valid reason for not allowing the GCSE to be offered, since we believe in the equal treatment of religious and non-religious worldviews in the subject. Nonetheless, we realise that we must now find a way forward in this context and will keep readers informed as our work with the QCA develops.

**RECOMMENDED RESOURCES**

**FOR THE SECONDARY CLASSROOM**

*Citizenship, Identity and Difference* ed Jane Clements (CCJ): £26.50 from 020 7820 0090

This CD-ROM pack, with teaching materials, aims to 'explore different strands of religious and non-religious traditions in British society today, and stimulates discussion on the nature of identity and citizenship'. The CD-ROM presents five young people from different backgrounds including Hindu, Christian, Jewish and Muslim. One character – Ellie – is from a non-religious background. Each character has three objects in their home which students click on to learn more about the character and their background in the context of beliefs, values and citizenship. Ellie's three objects are a photograph of her dead Gran, which leads into a discussion of humanist funeral and then to a discussion of humanist beliefs about death and life after death (with a great quote from Bertrand Russell); a picture painted by her father, which leads into a discussion of non-religious meaning and purpose and the awe and wonder of the natural world as well as the appreciation of art and literature; a book of Aesop's fables which leads into a discussion of values and non-religious philanthropy and social action. An excellent resource as far as the study of the non-religious beliefs and values presented is concerned for both RE and Citizenship lessons.

*Issues Today: Cloning* ed Claire Owen (Independence) and *Issues Today: Vegetarians and Vegans* ed Claire Owen (Independence)

The *Issues Today* series is an excellent resource for Key Stage 3 Citizenship, PSHE or RE. In *Cloning*, as well as a humanist discussion of embryo research, there is a lot of factual information about cloning and stem cells and ethical arguments of different kinds. In *Vegetarians and Vegans*, in addition to a humanist discussion of animal welfare, it contains material from the Vegetarian Society.

**FOR THE LIBRARY**

*Humanism*, Barbara Smoker (SPES): £6.50

Barbara Smoker’s ‘Humanism’ was published in 1973 and 2008 saw this fifth edition. It is not suitable as a textbook, but is designed for the individual student to supplement their learning and has also proved very useful to adults as the back cover of this edition says, ‘as a general introduction to this important subject, or as an aid to clarifying their own emergent ideas’. The six chapters cover ‘The humanist tradition – its beginnings’, ‘The humanist tradition – its continuation’, ‘Reality – true and false’, ‘Values – good and bad’, ‘Morals – right and wrong’, ‘Living as a humanist’. You can order copies from the BHA by telephoning 020 7079 3580 or emailing name and postal address so that we can remove you from the mailing list.

You can also download recent issues from our site at [www.humanism.org.uk](http://www.humanism.org.uk)

‘The Environment’ ed, Marilyn Mason et al (Shap)

The 2008/9 edition of the Shap Working Party on World Religion’s journal takes the environment as its theme and contains the usual contributions from religions large and small and from Humanism. It is also the last edition to be produced in hard copy. The 2009/10 edition and all future editions will be published online at [www.shapworkingparty.org.uk](http://www.shapworkingparty.org.uk)

**www.humanism.org.uk**

Much information for teachers can be found on our website, including information on Humanism and ideas for inclusive assembles.
HUMANISM is the belief that we can live good lives without religious or superstitious beliefs. Humanists make sense of the world using reason, experience and shared human values. We seek to make the best of the one life we have by creating meaning and purpose for ourselves. We take responsibility for our actions and work with others for the common good.

The British Humanist Association exists to promote Humanism and represent and support people who seek to live good lives without religious or superstitious beliefs. In education the BHA promotes rational thinking and moral education, offers teaching resources, and campaigns for reform of RE and an end to religious privilege and compulsory worship in schools.