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A Weaverian Analysis of the Secular Humanism/ Christianity Arguments

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A Weaverian Analysis of the Secular Humanism/

Christianity Arguments

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BY

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Abstract

Since the Renaissance, the unclearly defined movement known as "Humanism" has been a part of society. However, it is only recently that the movement itself has caused significant controversy. What is responsible for this sudden outbreak of humanism hysteria? Is it even to be classified as a problem? To many, especially the Catholic church and many fundamentalist groups, it presents an overt threat.

A vital area of controversy centers around education and the fight between a religious-based curriculum and the more recent secular studies. The issues, it appears, are often obscured by the rhetoric. Indeed, Karl Wallace sees rhetoric as "determining opinion or fact on any question of public doubt" (1954, p. 127), but the basic problem is a lack of agreed-upon terms so the issues can be rationally resolved.

In this treatise, the reach of humanism and its rhetoric into the schools was examined. As Donald Clark notes in Rhetoric in the Middle Ages (1957), rhetoric can serve to teach morals and ethics. As will be shown, this concept is one of the main battlegrounds between humanism and conservative Christianity.

An examination of the Humanist Manifesto II, in terms of Weaver's analysis, revealed the clash of "god terms" and "devil terms" in a distinctly secular document.

Finally, an examination of the rhetoric involved provides insight into the basic ideology and purposes of humanists and their opponents. Examination of anti-humanist rhetoric helped define elements of humanism. Richard Weaver's method of rhetorical analysis was used to diagnose the arguments of both sides to provide a more comprehensive picture of the rhetorical clashes between the two groups.

Table of Contents

Abstract.....2

Chapters

I. Overview.....5

II. Humanism, Education, and Opposition.....9

III. Major Arguments of the Humanist Manifesto II.....23

IV. The Rhetoric of Humanism.....25

V. Humanism, Christianity, and Extremes.....33

Chapter I

Overview

The concept of secular humanism requires an examination of several vital areas. The major area of emphasis was an examination of the Humanist Manifesto II and the rhetoric of both secular humanists and Christianity using Richard Weaver's rhetorical analysis. This examination provides better insight into the pros and cons of the much-heated debate.

A basic understanding of humanism should begin with an analysis of that term. Humanism itself is often referred to as "secular humanism" to distinguish it from the humanistic movement related to Christianity. The term "secular" comes from the Latin saeculum, meaning "time" or "age." A characteristic of humanism is its timeliness and its emphasis on the lack of eternity in the sense of a hereafter existence (Hitchcock, 1982).

Several basic definitions of humanism exist. Gerald Larue (1984) defines it as "a way of life that involves joyous service for the greater good of all humanity in this one and only life" (p. 20). An article by John Dietrich in The Humanist defines the movement as "a religion which aims at the enrichment of human life on earth through intelligent human effort, working in conformity with natural processes"

(1984, p. 28). Both definitions center around the idea of the one life here on earth and the importance of the fulfillment of that life--an element of timeliness. Also, interpretations may vary. The sense of open-endedness allows humanism to function without exact eternal goals. This lack of specificity provides a constant purpose for humanism since it must continually work to find, define, and refine its goals (Edwards, 1984). As will be explained later, this open system is often a welcome conceptualization to many people. Julian Huxley notes that it can give support "to all searching for some firm ground of belief and moral direction" (1961, p. 13). The firm ground seems to come from the continuous search for fulfilling goals.

Scholars within the Catholic church tried to reconcile their faith with Aristotle's emphasis on the rational. St. Thomas Aquinas who was, ironically, credited with laying the foundation of humanism, believed that anything revealed to humans must be in accordance with divine revelation (Bollier, 1984, p. 13). This was revealed in Aquinas's concept of grace and nature. Grace, or the concept of God or heavenly things, was seen as being above Nature, or the things of this earth. It was a clash between the unseen and the visible. In Aquinas' view, the will of man was fallen, but his intellect was not (Schaeffer, 1968, p. 11). This view of the

incomplete Biblical fall was the cause of subsequent difficulties. Man's intellect became autonomous (Schaeffer, 1968, p. 11) from God. In essence, this became a type of Christian humanism. However, the power of the church at this time prevented a clean "break." Many people did not want conflict since they genuinely believed the church's teachings. They did not want to move out to the boundaries of autonomous study. More recently, Pope John Paul II urged scholars in Rome to "reincarnate the values of Christian humanism" (Bollier, 1984, p. 14), embodying the humane aspect of the term including self-denial and self-control.

The beginnings of humanism can be specifically traced to the Renaissance with its emphasis on the rationality and scientific ability of man. Later, the Scientific and Industrial Revolutions furthered the idea that there was nothing man could not know and any problem that stood in his way could be conquered. The emphasis on machines and new ideas turned the world into a "man-centered universe" with the enrichment of human life as its goal (Dietrich, 1984, p. 30).

Schaeffer (1968) notes three principles that were significant in the development of modern man at this time. First, men were rationalistic. Man "absolutely and totally from himself, gathers the information concerning the

particulars, and formulates the universals" (p. 34). Second, they all believed in the rational; hence, if a certain thing was true, the opposite was not true. Third, they hoped to create a unified field of knowledge that would encompass all aspects of life (p. 35). These ideas would directly relate to humanism's reliance on scientific knowledge.

The common man's ability to share his own destiny was a key element in the forming of the United States. While the Declaration of Independence noted a reliance on God, the founding fathers, aware of excessive religious influence in other lands, refused to establish a national religion. Nonetheless, America's early history, especially in education, showed a strong dependence on religion. Some felt that the Americans were the recipient of a special calling to improve the world (Hitchcock, 1982). This concept led later Americans to the Manifest Destiny doctrine--on the premise that God wanted the white man to "civilize" all the land between the oceans.

The 1960s were a time when Americans were less willing to accept any type of self-denial. It was a time of prosperity. Religion's self-denial became subordinate to the self "seeking infinite gratification," according to Baptist theologian Harvey Cox in The Seduction of the Spirit (Hitchcock, 1982, p. 44). Again, the Renaissance idea of man

in control could be seen. Also, the prosperity of the 1960s enabled many more Americans to go to college. On campuses, revolts took place because many students saw self-denial as repression instead of the privileges they felt they were entitled to. These expectations became a type of authority denial. A rebellion against authority resulted in filthy language, drugs, and free sex. Any attempt to curb students' freedom was viewed as oppression and an attack on their liberty (Hitchcock, 1982). Students felt a need to cultivate their own talents: to "do their own thing." Humanism's emphasis on man's reliance on himself found a firm foothold on the college campuses.

The "me" decade of the 1970s fostered the attitude of rejecting authority of any type; including religion. Americans were preoccupied with themselves and countless numbers went to psychiatrists, sensitivity sessions, etc. to seek ways to improve themselves. It became an obsession. By the end of the 1970s Americans felt that they could get whatever they wanted if they wanted it bad enough and worked hard enough for it (Hitchcock, 1982). Achievement and self-improvement were not to be denied. Indeed, the very name of "me" decade showed the self-reliance on mentality.

Summary

To review, the present interest in humanism had several

starting points. First, the Renaissance fostered a new belief about man: he could more fully develop when left to his own devices. Later, the Scientific and Industrial Revolutions indicated that the universe was governed by law, not deity (Mortyn, 1984, p. 29).

According to humanists, the growth of the movement itself accompanies the advancement of the sciences since the more man rationally knows, the less reliance he will place on a supernatural being. To them, the acceptance of a naturalistic universe will guarantee the success of humanism (Dietrich, 1984). Much of the development of this tendency was seen in the United States in the 1960s and 1970s: humanity was interested in itself and improving its condition. Lastly, the move to secularism was, in part, due to the split of Christianity, especially religious liberalism. Realizing the need to retain members, liberals in the church tried to "save" the inner core beliefs by abandoning those beliefs brought into question by science (Hitchcock, 1982). Humanists pushed the idea that 2,000 years of Christianity were mostly irrelevant to the present. Those aspects that were needed should be reinterpreted in light of modern needs (Kurtz, 1973, p. 13). This led to the conclusion that no moral absolutes existed, as per the humanist emphasis on changing goals and values. Christian

humanism could not accept this conclusion.

As previously noted, America had a reliance on religion throughout most of her history. However, the religious values, such as those found in the Pledge of Allegiance ("One nation under God") and the national motto ("In God We Trust"), were eroded as a result of secular pressures on these commitments (VanDale, 1985, p. 23). This pressure came from various groups: the American Civil Liberties Union, the American Jewish Congress, and Americans United for the Separation of Church and State (Hitchcock, 1982).

Prior to the 1930s, Supreme Court cases involving religious liberty were rare because the First Amendment applied only to Congress and not to the states (Cushman, 1982, p. 258). With its recognition that freedom of religion is part of the liberty which the due process clause of the Fourteenth Amendment guarantees, the states were obliged to contend with it. Later, the Supreme Court, according to humanists, advanced secularism with their broad definition of religion: "a deeply held set of values or a worldview by which a person or group of persons structure daily life" (VanDale, 1985, p. 25). This apparent recognition of secular humanism as an official religion afforded it protection under the law. Despite this, humanism still does not have a clear-cut definition (Schoonover, 1984, p. 50). VanDale

(1985) noted that legislation and judicial decisions could be based on other Constitutional criteria rather than a definition of religion (p. 27). Philip Kurland, author of Religion and the Law, concurred. He suggested "that government cannot utilize religion as a standard for action or inaction" (1962, p. 112). Once a religion was used as a basis for a decision, other religions would feel slighted.

Humanists base their understanding on observation. Aldous Huxley in an essay in The Humanist Frame suggests that people move to a receptive outlook (1961). These first-order experiences provide motivations for values which can only make sense in the context of human life. It is a circular pattern. Pure receptivity avoids hidden biases. Observations are made and experiences are collected. Past experiences enable motivations for certain values to surface. Since human knowledge is not perfect, these values must be continually questioned. This is done through reception, observation, and refinement.

Lastly, although humanists refute divine revelation, they do accept intuition, speculation, and insight as sources for ideas (Edwards, 1984, p. 18). Recall that humanism has a tremendous reliance on observation, experience, and pure receptivity. William James says, "When larger ranges of truth open, it is surely best to be able to open ourselves to

their reception, unfettered by our previous pretensions" or arbitrary labels (Miller, 1984b, p. 15). This reception is clogged by arbitrary labels which shut out other interpretations; therefore, values and other ideas which give rise to labels must be constantly re-evaluated.

Chapter II

Humanism, Education, and Opposition

Robert Flagg in his article "America Must Regain Its Course" writes that the catalyst for a "humanistic renaissance" is education (1984, p. 25). Without a doubt, the public school system has been the target in the war between humanism and Christianity. Bollier calls it the "main battleground" (1984, p. 12).

Christianity with its emphasis on beliefs and morality and humanism with its belief in the superiority of man come into direct conflict in the battle for the education of young minds. Public schools play a key role in indoctrinating, (some say "immorally indoctrinating") (Bollier, 1984, p. 12) minds. Secular humanists rely on Thomas Jefferson's advice on diversity. He said, "It is a singular anxiety which some people have that we should all think alike" (Bollier, 1984, p. 50). Humanism's emphasis on diversity angers many people. To them, the younger generation is expected to fit into the environment the older has made (Miller, 1984a, p. 26). The

wish is for consistency and conformity.

Although the argument rages on, the goals of parents, teachers, and state officials remains overwhelmingly that the schools should emphasize academic goals (Wasserman, 1984). Despite this, there is no "verifiable evidence" of a secular humanistic takeover in the schools even though people are still convinced of an anti-religious or anti-God attitude in many school systems (VanDale, 1985, p. 21). A reason is that people feel schools are teaching secular humanism whether they are or not. The false assumption is that when all religious training has been eliminated from a child's formal education, what is left is merely neutral on the subject of religion (Rusher, 1987, p. 6). The Supreme Court's broad definition of religion enabled secular humanism to be placed in that category. Since the 1961 Torcaso v. Watkins case in which the Court officially recognized humanism as a religion, it has been a major component of public education while attempts to provide religious instruction have been cut. The liberal extremist position of separation of church and state has been extended to the schools.

The effective removal of religious influence has meant a victory for secular humanism. The mere omission of religion can have an effect. Critics say that the average youngster receives an education "based on a world view that

regards religion as misleading at worst and unnecessary at best" (Rusher, 1987, p. 6). Eckstein notes, "to recognize language can make reality, that a statement implies what it does not say . . ." (1985, p. 594) is a potent teaching force. Even if a teacher admits a religious point of view, it is hard to interject because of "a purely secular curriculum" (Thiessen, 1985, p. 45). This has caused considerable backlash. For example an Alabama federal court judge recently banned 36 textbooks from that state's public schools on the grounds that they unconstitutionally promoted the religion of secular humanism (Buursma, 1987, p. 1). The plaintiffs claimed that the state had established secular humanism as a religion. This was accomplished by the use of texts "which minimize or ignore the role of religion in American history and contemporary culture" (Buursma, 1987, p. 1).

The Religious Right's challenge to the curricula is mainly that it is teaching children what to think, not how to think (Bollier, 1984, p. 18). Jerry Falwell, leader of the Moral Majority, is a major figure in the fight against secular humanism. He wants to replace the public schools with "Christian schools" and looks forward to the day when "we won't have any public schools" (Bollier, 1984, p. 18). This is a point of concern for evolutionists and others who

wonder whether the public schools can afford a "mass exodus" of the children to biblical literalists (Svensson, 1987, p. 12). The drain of students would also lead to a drain of parents' contributions and an increase of support for the voucher system. VanDale (1985) argues against this. He calls for church people to let the schools get back to fundamentals and to stop pushing "evangelizing" (p. 22).

Secularists say that children can learn religion at home, but anti-humanists disagree. They point out that school is required because it is believed that parents cannot give a child all the education--both secular and religious--he/she needs (Hitchcock, 1982). Perhaps O. Meredith Wilson (1964) said it best: "to talk of a method of educating the young without some judgment as to what the young should become is folly" (p. 103). A creationist responds. Svensson (1987) notes that it is equally a violation of parental rights to teach evolution to children of biblical literalists as it is to teach creationism to children whose parents want them to be raised as atheists (p. 12).

In the early history of education only the very rich were able to attend schools. They did not need to get ahead in order to achieve a better station in life. One was born into his/her station. Education's value was intrinsic

(Wilson, 1964). Today, education is often a means to achieve station and status. McKeon sees these means as an emphasis on "persuading and producing" rather than "appreciating and knowing" (1964, p. 168). Some people feel that this "ends more than the means" philosophy is "a dangerous lesson in amorality" (Miller, 1984a, p. 27). An examination of humanism's influence on education will be discussed later.

Given access to knowledge, according to Thomas Jefferson, most adult human beings are better judges of their own interests than are others (Hook, 1984, p. 18). While this may be true of adults, the debate centers around more impressionable minds, the pre-adults. The question becomes "Do we have the power to discover and select values most helpful to our development?" (Miller, 1984a, p. 27). Again, the implication is that values are temporary and the individual may select those that suit his/her needs. If the answer implies that we have the power, then the current educational system with its rigid structure is crushing it. Miller (1984a) declares that it is "within our power to give education an entirely new meaning--a humanistic meaning--. . . if that is the kind of world which we choose to inhabit" (p. 28).

A solution is to face the religious pluralism in public education (VanDale, 1985). In this way areas of common

beliefs and values would be taught. However, as noted, it is hard to be "value-free." Even the objectivity of science can lead to the development of values for the society (McKeon, 1964). Its presentation of evidence is but one way it can create values. Also, in order for scientific findings to be accepted by the general audience as well as its peers, persuasive rhetoric must be used. The overriding idea is that a common set of beliefs and values would be difficult, if not impossible, to obtain. Value judgments are implicit depending on experiences, history, religion, and a host of other factors.

The secular philosophy in the schools can shape a person's understanding and it also seeks to "encourage every person to grow more responsible for interpreting his/her own experience with an open and searching mind" (Miller, 1984a, p. 28). Again, the interpreting of values and experiences for each individual is paramount. Humanism's new ways of looking at common items and coming up with alternatives, say its advocates, should not undermine a democratic society. Education should help students make the transition from the family to a wider community. The development of a "world view" is essential (Elvin, 1961, p. 272). This idea is espoused in the Supreme Court's definition of religion.

Experience then is the key to humanistic education.

Students should direct their attention to the reality of everyday life (Murray, 1964). Selma Wasserman in her article "What Can Schools Become?" (1984) concurs. She notes:

Is it too much to ask that we put coloring books and stenciled Santa Clauses and cut-out Christmas trees behind us and bring to the classroom the primary tools of children's creative play--sand and water, finger paint, dress-up clothing, conversation, song, daydreams, tears, quarrels, blocks, creative writing, clay, dolls, boats, chalk, paints, love, dancing? (p. 692).

Knowledge is firmly grounded in this type of verification with "real" items. The humanist admits that the tools for testing knowledge, the senses and human reason, are fallible; yet, he/she insists on testing the validity of arguments to prove knowledge (Edwards, 1984, p. 18). This fallibility renders knowledge subject to revision. Under humanism knowledge, like ethics, is situational. Patterns must be inferred in order to accumulate knowledge. Therefore, there is no assurance that the order found at any one time is final (Bronowski, 1961, p. 88). Nonetheless, humanists feel that basing knowledge on super- or god-figures creates an illusion

that becomes a basis for decisions. This means reason is not used for decision-making as humanists would advocate.

Change is the item sought after says Lionel Elvin (1961). In order for change to take place, students should be encouraged to call beliefs into question. In humanistic education, nothing is final and if the idea is important to the individual then it is worthwhile. The inclusion or exclusion of any subject matter is not considered to be relevant (Murray, 1964). The individual is to be the judge as to what is of importance to him/her. An education for change should equip people "to deal with controversy rather than attempting to avoid all controversy by watering down issues" via religious arguments (VanDale, 1985, p. 12).

The failure to account for human variability in the educational system irritates humanists. Curiosity, enthusiasm, care, and self-esteem are seen as "problems" to the rigid teacher (Miller, 1984b, p. 14). Miller (1984b) goes on to suggest that this smothering of "initiative, imagination, and idiosyncrasy" is stifling "geniuses" (p. 14). Humanism "dares" more people to be geniuses. All humans have different makeups, abilities, and gifts so to ". . . subject them to the same kind of . . . training seems absurd" (A. Huxley, 1961, p. 423). Schools should seek to nurture creativity and imagination.

Humanistic education stresses the elevation and nurturing of children's feelings. Today's schools offer little opportunity for growth into feeling humans: "the primary path of self-actualization" (Wasserman, 1984, p. 692). This need to actualize potentialities is the apex of a hierarchy of human needs (A. Huxley, 1961). Also, the development of interpersonal skills is an asset to this hierarchy (Wasserman, 1984, p. 691).

Discipline in the humanistic classroom revolves around the instructional program. Time spent in process pays off in better discipline and more responsible and cooperative students (McDaniel, 1984, p. 71). Defining problems and generating solutions allows students to use interpersonal skills to develop community and communication in the classroom. The morale and climate strongly predict "end-of-course measures of affective, behavioral, and cognitive learning" (Walberg, 1984, p. 24). When violation of norms does occur, re-education and re-direction should be used in place of punishment (Larue, 1984, p. 22).

In secular humanism, the teacher plays a vital role. He/She is responsible for the promotion of higher-order cognitive skills and a more involved role in the evaluation of individual learning needs; not as an authority figure (Wasserman, 1984, p. 693). As a facilitator, the teacher

should respond empathically in order to preserve the dignity and self-respect of the student. McDaniel (1984) suggests confronting students in a nonthreatening way (p. 73). Teacher and student should confer together on alternative behavior.

Perhaps, as Haim Ginott advocates in Teacher and Child, teachers "need to unlearn their habitual language of rejection and acquire a new language of acceptance" (1972, p. 81). "I messages," which direct attention to the child and not on the work, will provide a less-threatening atmosphere (McDaniel, 1984, p. 73). Also, homework can be less offensive. Walberg (1984) notes that comments on homework have a positive effect, more so than homework that was simply assigned and not graded (p. 24). Finally, teachers need to "abandon their traditional role as judge and jury" (Wasserman, 1984, p. 693). This would enable the teacher to be more empathic.

Opposition to humanism has been apparent since its inception due to the place of religion in society. Any attempt to wipe away thousands of years of Judeo-Christian teachings is bound to cause backlash. Humanism simply states that there is no need for religion once enough is known about human needs, drives, motives, and characteristics. The ultra-fundamentalists, according to

humanists, seek to "censor texts, ban books from libraries, prohibit sex education, mandate prayer readings, require the teaching of 'creationism', and eliminate exposure to ideas they see as anti-American or anti-Christian" (Bollier, 1984, p. 12). Various religious groups counter that attack. They note that the preservation of pagan classics was due to the interests and industry of Christian, Muslim, and Jewish scribes and priests (McKeon, 1984). Humanists, with their emphasis on separation of religion and school, seem to be seeking to limit viewpoints.

Despite these differences, much of the controversy is centered around humanism's freedom of association and the impact of secular humanism on education. For example, Mel and Norma Gabbler--members of the Religious Right who run a controversial textbook review service--did a study on humanism. They claimed it was "a hideous conspiracy to promote sexual freedom, socialism, 'death education', atheistic morality, and anti-American values" (Bollier, 1984, p. 12). Humanism admitted to advocating sexual freedom, sex education, and euthanasia among other beliefs found in the Humanist Manifesto II, but maintained they did so within a responsible framework.

While other aspects are intriguing, most of the debate has raged over instruction in the public schools. Onalee

McGraw, author of Secular Humanism and the Schools: The Issue Whose Time Has Come, notes that parents, teachers, and citizens have been concerned that their tax money is supporting schools tending toward humanistic education (VanDale, 1985, p. 20). They were concerned about the values, or lack thereof, being taught. In fact, the Christian school movement arose in 1966 to provide an alternative to the public school system ("Chronology," 1985, n.p.)

Religious persons are concerned that anti-religious positions may be presented in the schools, while religious positions are prohibited. Several Supreme Court cases appear to confirm this. The following is a short list of examples:

1948--*McCollum v. Board of Education*. The Court ruled that a released time program in public schools was unconstitutional.

1962--*Engel v. Vitale*. The Court ruled prayer in school unconstitutional.

1963--*School District of Abington Township, Pa. v. Schempp*. The Court ruled that Bible reading in public schools was unconstitutional.

1980--*Stone v. Graham*. The Court struck

down a Kentucky law requiring the posting of the Ten Commandments in every public school.

1982--Beck v. McElrath. A federal court prohibited a moment of silence before class because it might be interpreted as a time for prayer. ("Chronology," 1985, n.p.).

Coinciding with this information, a statement by the Roman Catholic bishops in Pennsylvania in 1976 read, "The law of the land, as interpreted by the courts, prohibits any values in public education except secularistic ones . . ." (VanDale, 1985, p. 13). While this was an obvious overstatement, a feeling that eroding values by the "corrosive philosophy" of secular humanism was deteriorating the schools was evident.

While there are many conflicting approaches to classroom management, secularists aim for an air of neutrality with regard to the schools' learning atmosphere (Hitchcock, 1982). Religious people argue that neutrality cannot be maintained with the wide variety of items dealing with the classroom such as courses, discipline, textbooks, and teachers. The Catholic bishops statement also notes that "There is no such thing as a 'value-free' education" (VanDale, 1985, p. 13).

Catholics are not the only religious group that has stated an opposition to secularism. The Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs replied that many people assume that prayer and moral values have been taken out of the public schools and as a result "some form of secular humanism has been established in their place" (VanDale, 1985, p. 18). The Baptists feel that the schools should teach religion and religious literature as part of already existing courses. Another example is "Religion and Public Education: A Statement of Views" released by the American Jewish Committee. This statement says that public schools should stress moral and spiritual values basic to all religions (VanDale, 1985, p. 16). This may be an ideal situation since many consider it to be impractical. Jay Newman, author of Foundations of Religious Tolerance, writes: "Public school teaching can never be absolutely neutral on religious questions; most religious doctrines are so broad that they spill over into various departments of knowledge--science, history, literature, and so on" (1982, p. 84). The only way to keep these differing doctrines apart is not to allow any religion in the schools. If all religions claim to be the "true" religion, then confusion results and secular humanism--a religion as defined by the Supreme Court and others--is effectively established.

Chapter III

Major Arguments of The Humanist Manifesto II

An examination of the Humanist Manifesto II (1973) [see Appendix A] (hereafter HM II) reveals distinct characteristics and the fallacies of arguments involved. The following information is summarized from Humanist Manifestos I and II (Kurtz, 1973). This overview precedes a detailed discussion of the rhetoric and arguments surrounding the struggle between humanist and anti-humanist proponents.

The major fallacies in argumentation of the Humanist Manifesto II are its tendency to over-generalize, its singular cause reasoning, and its guilt or blessing by association.

First, HM II over-generalizes in the sense that it seeks to prophecy about the future in a humanistic world. A major argument is that the "preciousness and dignity of the individual person" (p. 18) is sought. However, no method for achieving this distinction is offered. Second, economic well-being for all persons is essential. This will enhance the quality of life. Effects of this redistribution of wealth are not discussed nor are the mechanics provided. Third, a "peaceful and prosperous world" (p. 23) will result advocates aver, if people take part in the humanistic revolution.

Singular cause arguments are abundant in the HM II. The humanists blame religion for ignoring reality and merely offering "theologies of hope" (p. 14). To them, religion simply distracts people from the goals they should be emphasizing, such as self-actualization. Next, humanists abhor religiously based rules and regulations as inhibitors of individual freedom. What is important to the individual should be stressed, they say, not simply what society deems important. They also argue that if man would only use reason and intelligence, he would see the scientific evidence and know that religion and its values are too tradition- and authority-bound.

The Humanist Manifesto II also implies guilt, or blessing by association. First, it condemns those who still falsely put their trust in religion and other ideologies. These have been proven, according to secular humanists, to be "outmoded" (p. 13) since they ignore human progress and restrict individual growth. Humanists believe that individual autonomy is vital and any attempt to repress that, through whatever means, is wrong. Lastly, the use of "god terms," terms with a positive connotation, are used in conjunction with humanist ideas. For example, humanists have hope in human "progress" (p. 14). Progress means moving forward and being open to change. Humanism is also

described as being "tolerant," capable of correcting "social injustices," and challenging its followers to "move beyond the confines of narrow allegiances" (p. 23). Acceptance of these ideas all offer a utopian image of America. This America is challenging, tolerant, and seeks to establish a more common bond with people of the world, not just of the community.

The major weakness of such arguments is the vagueness on which much of its overall philosophy is based. The utopian idealism is inherent in the terms used to describe the foundations of humanism. Striving for the development of the individual, the economic independence of all, and the building of a world community are all attractive premises. The means to achieve these ends are, however, completely lacking.

Chapter IV

The Rhetoric of Humanism

Upon close examination, there is more to the rhetoric of humanism than merely vague, superficial arguments. A series of articles by Richard Weaver provides a method of analysis which will be used here. The three main components include: emotive language, modes of argument, and types of rhetoric. The two former items will be briefly touched upon but emphasis will be upon the latter. A short explanation of

each will be helpful.

First, emotive language carries a force with "overt and concealed 'should' and 'ought' propositions" which make one course seem not only desirable but mandatory (McClerren, 1984, p. 2). These include ultimate and ideological terms. Next, modes of argument include presenting cases by definition, similitude, cause and effect, and testimony. Finally, types of rhetoric are neuter, evil, or noble. Closely connected to these are arguments from ideological starting points.

Method

Richard Weaver's analytical communication method was applied to the secular humanism/Christianity conflict. This method allowed for a detailed examination of both sides of the argument in an objective framework. Critiquing both philosophies side by side revealed similar modes of argument and use of terms.

Critique

Although stating that traditional religion is unproved and outmoded, the Humanist Manifesto II does not state (much less prove) that God does not exist. The idea is more agnostic than atheistic although fundamentalists and others disagree. The implication is that humanists seek to live in a world governed by nothing but science. To them only

individual ethics will successfully guide the person through this world. This situational and autonomous ethics standpoint is a major concern because there is no clear standard of right and wrong. While fundamentalists may err in providing too many rules, HM II goes to the opposite extreme. It offers none at all.

The pursuit of the goals of humanism is apparent. A "dawn of a new age" (p. 14) awaits those who will follow. Also, the things which man can accomplish, aided by technology, are stressed. The limits and boundaries of religion are gone. The "fulfillment of the potential" (p. 14) for each individual leads to the illusion of problem-free existence.

Any belief system which places anything above human needs results in a "disservice" to the human species; however, this disservice is never defined. For humanists, simply refining religious tenets will not suffice. That would only mask the dependency on something which has not been proven.

Works geared to heavenly reward, they say, will only distract from the work that needs to be done on earth. They argue that if one is striving for salvation via institutionalized religion, then earthly social injustices will be ignored. No facts or rationale is given; just an

assertion. Again, the emphasis on science and its credibility to "prove" a case is demonstrated while ignoring the strong religious impetus which inspired many secular gains (including the settlement of America).

Situational ethics is one of the main arguments against humanism. The belief in no absolutes and the lack of uniformly agreed upon criteria for decisions is a major concern. The individual is expected to establish his/her own values. The problem is that values vary widely and man can rationalize almost any actions if the result appears desirable enough.

They rightly argue that man has choice. He can choose to be and do whatever he wants. But they go too far when they say any attempt to limit this is "intolerant" and repressive (p. 18).

To add credibility to their cause, secular humanists "bless" their movement by identifying the Magna Carta, the Bill of Rights, the Rights of Man, and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights as documents arising from their philosophy. It does so as though religion were anathema to the ends espoused in those works, which is not the case.

People "are more important than decalogues, rules, proscriptions, or regulations" (p. 19). This statement against decalogues would seem to be a thinly-veiled attack

upon the Ten Commandments. The argument is clear. People's impulses should take precedence. Since ethics are autonomous and situational, what the people consider important should be deemed most important. But again, unless clear guidelines are set, there is no solution to many of life's most pressing problems.

They also argue that in a democratic society, schools should not be confining. The goal should be "the achievement of excellence" (p. 20). Any type of innovation or experimental forms of education are to be encouraged. The child should not be bound to learn by rules or regulations. More importantly, the teacher should not restrict these types of behavior because they are simply the wishes of the individual child discovering his/her own values or methods of learning. Religion in the schools would only suppress individual freedom. The rules that are now in place are already stifling creativity.

Whether the barriers consist of discrimination, nationalism, or economic systems does not matter. Distinction causes separation. This does not benefit the individual. One must "transcend the limits" (p. 21) of these confining barriers in order to link his/her future with the future of all. There are some "hard choices" to be made (p. 21). However, these choices are not defined or clarified

nor is a plan of action explained.

Military expenditures should be turned to "peaceful and people-oriented uses" (p. 21). Again, these uses are not defined.

The last image of the world community section borrows from an analogy used by Benjamin Franklin during the War for Independence. The HM II states that "we must learn to live openly together or we shall perish together" (p. 22). The implication is a false dichotomy. The reference to Franklin's "hang separately or hang together" comment seems apparent. As the colonies were forced to stick together, so too are humanists urged to join forces against the "repressive" forces of organized religion and other authoritarian institutions.

Humanity as a whole devotes its central argument to the proposition that people who care for peace will work for it. Humanity's goals should be to produce "a world in which peace, prosperity, freedom, and happiness are widely shared" (p. 23). Humanism's goals are idealistic, perhaps even utopian, in nature. Yet, the terms are ultimate and positive with regard to man's role in the universe. Humans must dare to set a goal for mankind beyond the narrow restrictions of "church, state, party, class, or race" (p. 23). These categories identify distinctions between people and the

emotive appeal is for humans to be adventurous and dare to bypass those classes. Where the bypassing will lead is not addressed: a serious omission.

Summary. In terms of Weaver's analytical method, emotive language in the Humanist Manifesto II is quite apparent. It sets forth of certain things reasonable and intelligent humans should do to insure the development of humankind. The language presents positive, active roles that humans can play in a civilized, tolerant society.

The modes of argument used are mostly similitude, cause and effect, and testimony. Argument by definition is lacking. This is one of the problems of humanism; the movement itself basically does not have a clear definition, nor do many of its terms. Similitude is used with regard to the comments about religion. HM II identifies religion as a limiting, dependent institution. Any ideology which limits the freedom, good will, free use of intellect, and reason of the individual sets boundaries. In the context of the push for a world community, separations and distinctions are not regarded even (as with national boundaries) though they may be very real.

Cause and effect arguments deal with the black or white statements in many of the sections of the HM II. The dependency on religion and salvation, they say, has caused

people to overlook the needs of humanity in the here and now. Another example is that the problem with intolerant attitudes has led to repression in our society. These attitudes are fostered by divisions among people based on religion, politics, economics, or nationalism. While this has some truth, it provides no workable alternative.

Testimony in the Humanist Manifesto II relies on citing information and documents which are revered in democratic nations. Again, a type of blessing by association. This may also be a form of similitude since it links the HM II with these documents. First, the emphasis on human rights as evidenced in the Magna Carta, the Bill of Rights, and others lends the humanist stress on this goal credence. Second, science and the credibility of the scientific theory offer a form of testimony to readers. So, the seeming infallability of science and technological achievements in our society gives respectability and support to the humanist position. Third, the signatures of many well-known and highly regarded people in all areas lends credibility to the HM II and the earlier Humanist Manifesto I. Some of the names included are Isaac Asimov, B. F. Skinner, John Dewey, Sir Julian Huxley, Betty Friedan, and Andre Sakharov; all of whom made significant impacts on society.

Many analytical situations such as those mentioned are

described in the critique above. An analysis of any document requires an examination of these areas in some capacity. Much can be learned about a movement by careful study of documents and the rhetoric involved.

Chapter V

Humanism, Christianity, and Extremes

Rhetoric is often seen as "the study of men persuading men to make free choices" (Hunt, 1955, p. 114). It is in this context that an investigation of the rhetoric of humanism is needed. If man is to choose humanism over Christianity or another religion, he needs an understanding of the language itself. As McKeon (1964, p. 160) notes, rhetoric moves beyond words and abstracts to a discussion of actual things and concrete facts.

The marks of humanism have always been its self-confidence and its anti-authoritarianism (Bronowski, 1961, p. 85). Its emphasis is on the confident recognition by mankind of the superiority of the self. But clear definitions are needed: on even the most basic terms, i.e. "humanism" and "Christianity."

The basic philosophy of humanism is the enhancement of the self in this one and only life. What is there, then, to prevent a hedonistic, selfish life? Humanists reply that an examination of lives before them have provided a basis for

long-range values (Larue, 1984, p. 23). Of course they also note that a person may live the hedonistic lifestyle if he/she wishes since the individual has the right to decide what is important to him/her. Hence, values are left to personal preference only.

Weaver's analytical method will be used here to elaborate and distinguish the rhetoric of humanists and their opponents.

To humanists, only humanism provides this full capacity for growth, sensitivity, and responsiveness--powerful and emotive terms which people like to link to their own "human" qualities. It overgeneralizes and links only humanism to these qualities though both religious persons and humanists urge man to higher levels of action.

Both humanists and anti-humanists have been hurt by using terms such as "secular" humanism, "scientific creationism," "voluntary school prayer," and abortion "on demand" because of their vague meanings and emotional power. Those who argue against humanism say those who disagree with them are "immoral" or "ungodly." A pamphlet titled Is Secular Humanism Molesting Your Child? uses several "god" and "devil" terms. Some of these include a statement that humanism is "the denial of the Bible, God, and moral values and a belief in sexual freedom, incest, abortion, suicide,

and a 'one-world socialistic government'" (Bollier, 1984, p. 19). All of these terms carry definite emotive statements as well as implicit values. Even the name of the pamphlet itself implies a connection between humanism and a "devil" term ("molesting"). Other protesters declare America is being turned into an "amoral" country and decry the "atheistic depravity" of humanism (LaHaye, 1982). Both groups present a model of the extremist rhetoric involved.

Both secularists and anti-humanists use several modes of argument to aid their persuasive rhetoric. The humanist mode of argument by definition has several key propositions. First, they say religion is not based on fact. It cannot be rationally proven; therefore, it is false. As per the Humanist Manifesto II, this speaks of a reliance on scientific evidence. God simply represents man's idealized or authoritarian-imposed version of morals (Mortyn, 1984, p. 29). Humanist decisions are based on reason which they say is "the most reliable guide for understanding the world" (Edwards, 1984, p. 18), even though humanists admit the fallibility of human knowledge.

Anti-humanists' arguments by definition seem just as valid. To them, "secular," the term used to differentiate this humanism from Christian humanism, means having no enduring or permanent values. This term fits humanists live-

for-now philosophy but does not encompass all secular humanists. Aside from this, anti-humanists use definitions provided by humanists to attack them. Supposedly the scientific, objective nature makes humanism more valid; but, does that mean religion is less valid? Basically, anti-humanists anchor their arguments on helping people see the permanence of Christianity and the instability of humanism. Humanists rely on the argument of adaptability as a basic starting point for their ideology. It is not unstable, it is simply situational according to the individual's needs. Both ideologies have valid points but go too far in pinning all the world's problems on each other.

Attempts to show similarities are also modes of argument. Humanists claim anti-humanists are manufacturing martyrhood for their cause since humanism is in opposition to their policies (Bollier, 1984, p. 18). Some of the religious zealots may be unwilling converts. They are swayed by the rhetoric and pre-printed lists of the spread and danger of humanism.

Religious persons also offer arguments based on similitude. They note how totalitarianism is found in certain kinds of secular humanism. Hitchcock (1982) notes that the system tries to control all aspects of a person's life, though they do not explain how. Religious leaders

argue that court decisions seemingly protect nonbelievers from religious influence but deny believers' rights. Religion they say is guaranteed its liberty by the same First Amendment that the courts use to restrict it.

Arguments made from cause and effect are many. Humanists feel that "restrictions" and "fears which tie [people] to traditional religion" keep many from advancing and accepting the humanistic interpretation of the universe (Hitchcock, 1982; Dietrich, 1984, p. 30). They also persuasively argue that an individual's mediocre existence can be changed. A person can go from pursuing "materialistic greed and temporal power" to a feeling of a "worldwide community based on reason and compassion" that will alleviate his/her feeling of "purposelessness" (Flagg, 1984, p. 25). How this will be done is not explained.

Christian extremists too, are guilty of overgeneralization. An example is the Gablers singular cause argument is that unless textbooks are changed (to a religiously-based interpretation) there is "no possibility that crime, violence, venereal disease, and abortion rates will decrease" (Bollier, 1984, p. 15). In another instance, the awful nature of consequences was stressed. In 1982, a Corvallis, Oregon school board member Karl Drlica said "no doubt 'humanists' actually existed and were seeking converts

to their 'godless' ideology" (Bollier, 1984, p. 11). He could not tell exactly who the "humanists" were but he knew they existed somewhere. The awful nature of this was that humanists, if they existed, would be seeking converts among school children.

Anti-humanist arguments have many fronts. Duane Gish, a creationist, says that evolutionary theory is largely responsible for the ". . . lack of respect for parents, for teachers, and our government. . ." (Bollier, 1984, p. 18). Others want to return to the pre-Renaissance ideas with the emphasis on a more rigid family structure. They blame the Renaissance for the loss of stability and the questioning attitudes that people have today. The Moral Majority's Reverend Tim LaHaye also blames the Renaissance with its emphasis on nude art as the forerunner of today's humanist "demand for pornography in the name of freedom" (Bollier, 1984, p. 15).

The cause and effect arguments of anti-humanists in education tie together the two conflicting philosophies. Prior to 1940 when the emphasis was on religious instruction, school problems included truancy, chewing gum in class, and graffiti. Problems of the 1980's, after several years of humanistic education, included rape, arson, and teacher abuse (LaHaye, 1982). All are laid at the feet of the secular

humanists and their influence in the schools.

Testimony arguments are relatively simple to follow on this issue. As previously mentioned, the signers of the Humanist Manifesto II include many well-known names from various areas of achievement. Catholicism's testimony extends from the Pope to supportive religious personnel and documents, specifically the Bible. Bishop's conferences to the proclamations of Vatican II offer guidelines and instruction for Christians to follow. Other religions and even other ideologies have their own established works which provide reference: the Talmud, the Book of Mormon, the Pentatuch, the Bible, Das Capital, the U.S. Constitution. These works, and the words contained in them, have been recognized for centuries as authorities for particular groups.

The final aspect of Weaver's analysis looks at types of rhetoric--neuter, base, and noble. Neuter rhetoric is difficult to establish since any philosophy that attacks an established ideology has a difficult time remaining objective. Nonetheless, humanists try to use the scientific method and scientific notation in an attempt to validate knowledge. Humanism is directed toward "positive mental health" (Larue, 1984, p. 22). Its arguments often wear the cloak of neutrality. Those who argue against humanism note

areas of "conflicting interest" with science (Hook, 1984, p. 19). Science's laws state that they cannot "be supernaturally violated" (Bronowski, 1961, p. 87). As shown throughout this paper, with this topic, rhetoric can hardly remain neutral when it deals with two conflicting ideologies.

Although several examples of evil or base rhetoric have already been discussed, a few more will be elaborated on. Evil rhetoric can be found by noting the one-sidedness of arguments presented and the creation of an urge to react rather than think. Humanists note a reliance on "deeds, not creeds, in confrontation and challenge, not in cloak of faith" (Larue, 1984, p. 42).

On the other hand, anti-humanists are offended by the courts' use of the term "sects" to define religious bodies. They feel that this conveys the idea of narrowness and fanaticism (Hitchcock, 1982). Other examples of base rhetoric applied to anti-humanists are "resistant to change," "ultra-fundamentalists," and "narrowness."

Noble intentions exist on both sides. Ethical humanism seeks to promote the individual's right to choose and the enhancement of the self through individual effort. However, one of its major tenets is warned against by Weaver: situational ethics. Can a cause be noble if its ethics are constantly changing? That is a question Christians would

like humanists to answer. Christians themselves are clouded ⁴⁵
in a noble-sounding but often vague rhetoric such as "pro-
family," "moral," and "American." Again, on both sides, much
of the noble rhetoric is cloaked in ideological garb which
confines rather than clarifies.

Summary

The fight between secular humanism and Christianity
will no doubt continue. Most of the conflict will center
around the public schools and its teaching (or not teaching)
of values, morals, and ethics. The official recognition by
the Supreme Court of humanism as a religion pushed
anti-humanists to the brink. They are now fighting back and
will no longer remain tolerant. Extremes are present on both
sides as an examination of the rhetoric proves. However, a
closer scrutiny of the rhetoric reveals that the two sides
use essentially the same types of arguments and emotive
language to persuade men to make a free choice--Secular
Humanism or Christianity.

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APPENDIX A

The following information is taken from:

Kurtz, P. (1973). Humanist Manifestos I and II.

Buffalo, NY: Prometheus Books.

Humanist Manifesto II

Preface

It is forty years since *Humanist Manifesto I* (1933) appeared. Events since then make that earlier statement seem far too optimistic. Nazism has shown the depths of brutality of which humanity is capable. Other totalitarian regimes have suppressed human rights without ending poverty. Science has sometimes brought evil as well as good. Recent decades have shown that inhuman wars can be made in the name of peace. The beginnings of police states, even in democratic societies, widespread government espionage, and other abuses of power by military, political, and industrial elites, and the continuance of unyielding racism, all present a different and difficult social outlook. In various societies, the demands of women and minority groups for equal rights effectively challenge our generation.

As we approach the twenty-first century, however, an affirmative and hopeful vision is needed. Faith, commensurate with advancing knowledge, is also necessary. In the choice between despair and hope, humanists respond in this *Humanist Manifest II* with a positive declaration for times of uncertainty.

As in 1933, humanists still believe that traditional theism, especially faith in the prayer-hearing God, assumed to love and care for persons, to hear and understand their prayers, and to be able to do something about them, is an unproved and outmoded faith. Salvationism, based on mere affirmation, still appears as harmful, diverting people with false hopes of heaven hereafter. Reasonable minds look to other means for survival.

Those who sign *Humanist Manifesto II* disclaim that they are setting forth a binding credo; their individual views would be stated in widely varying ways. The statement is, however, reaching for vision in a time that needs direction. It is social analysis in an effort at consensus. New statements should be developed to supersede this, but for today it is our conviction that humanism offers an alternative that can serve present-day needs and guide humankind toward the future.

Paul Kurtz

Edwin H. Wilson

The next century can be and should be the humanistic century. Dramatic scientific, technological, and ever-accelerating social and political changes crowd our awareness. We have virtually conquered the planet, explored the moon, overcome the natural limits of travel and communication; we stand at the dawn of a new age, ready to move farther into space and perhaps inhabit other planets. Using technology wisely, we can control our environment, conquer poverty, markedly reduce disease, extend our life-span, significantly modify our behavior, alter the course of human evolution and cultural development, unlock vast new powers, and provide humankind with unparalleled opportunity for achieving an abundant and meaningful life.

The future is, however, filled with dangers. In learning to apply the scientific method to nature and human life, we have opened the door to ecological damage, overpopulation, dehumanizing institutions, totalitarian repression, and nuclear and biochemical disaster. Faced with apocalyptic prophecies and doomsday scenarios, many flee in despair from reason and embrace irrational cults and theologies of withdrawal and retreat.

Traditional moral codes and newer irrational cults both fail to meet the pressing needs of today and tomorrow. False "theologies of hope" and messianic ideologies, substituting new dogmas for old, cannot cope with existing world realities. They separate rather than unite peoples.

Humanity, to survive, requires bold and daring measures. We need to extend the uses of scientific method, not renounce them, to fuse reason with compassion in order to build constructive social and moral values. Confronted by many possible futures, we must decide which to pursue. The ultimate goal should be the fulfillment of the potential for growth in each human personality—not for the favored few, but for all of humankind. Only a shared world and global measures will suffice.

A humanist outlook will tap the creativity of each human being and provide the vision and courage for us to work together. This outlook emphasizes the role human beings can play in their own spheres of action. The decades ahead call

for dedicated, clear-minded men and women able to marshal the will, intelligence, and cooperative skills for shaping a desirable future. Humanism can provide the purpose and inspiration that so many seek; it can give personal meaning and significance to human life.

Many kinds of humanism exist in the contemporary world. The varieties and emphases of naturalistic humanism include "scientific," "ethical," "democratic," "religious," and "Marxist" humanism. Free thought, atheism, agnosticism, skepticism, deism, rationalism, ethical culture, and liberal religion all claim to be heir to the humanist tradition. Humanism traces its roots from ancient China, classical Greece and Rome, through the Renaissance and the Enlightenment, to the scientific revolution of the modern world. But views that merely reject theism are not equivalent to humanism. They lack commitment to the positive belief in the possibilities of human progress and to the values central to it. Many within religious groups, believing in the future of humanism, now claim humanist credentials. Humanism is an ethical process through which we all can move, above and beyond the divisive particulars, heroic personalities, dogmatic creeds, and ritual customs of past religions or their mere negation.

We affirm a set of common principles that can serve as a basis for united action—positive principles relevant to the present human condition. They are a design for a secular society on a planetary scale.

For these reasons, we submit this new *Humanist Manifesto* for the future of humankind; for us, it is a vision of hope, a direction for satisfying survival.

Religion

First: In the best sense, religion may inspire dedication to the highest ethical ideals. The cultivation of moral devotion and creative imagination is an expression of genuine "spiritual" experience and aspiration.

We believe, however, that traditional dogmatic or authoritarian religions that place revelation, God, ritual, or creed

above human needs and experience do a disservice to the human species. Any account of nature should pass the tests of scientific evidence; in our judgment, the dogmas and myths of traditional religions do not do so. Even at this late date in human history, certain elementary facts based upon the critical use of scientific reason have to be restated. We find insufficient evidence for belief in the existence of a supernatural; it is either meaningless or irrelevant to the question of the survival and fulfillment of the human race. As non-theists, we begin with humans not God, nature not deity. Nature may indeed be broader and deeper than we now know; any new discoveries, however, will but enlarge our knowledge of the natural.

Some humanists believe we should reinterpret traditional religions and reinvest them with meanings appropriate to the current situation. Such redefinitions, however, often perpetuate old dependencies and escapisms; they easily become obscurantist, impeding the free use of the intellect. We need, instead, radically new human purposes and goals.

We appreciate the need to preserve the best ethical teachings in the religious traditions of humankind, many of which we share in common. But we reject those features of traditional religious morality that deny humans a full appreciation of their own potentialities and responsibilities. Traditional religions often offer solace to humans, but, as often, they inhibit humans from helping themselves or experiencing their full potentialities. Such institutions, creeds, and rituals often impede the will to serve others. Too often traditional faiths encourage dependence rather than independence, obedience rather than affirmation, fear rather than courage. More recently they have generated concerned social action, with many signs of relevance appearing in the wake of the "God Is Dead" theologies. But we can discover no divine purpose or providence for the human species. While there is much that we do not know, humans are responsible for what we are or will become. No deity will save us; we must save ourselves.

Second: Promises of immortal salvation or fear of eternal damnation are both illusory and harmful. They distract humans from present concerns, from self-actualization, and from rectifying social injustices. Modern science discredits

such historic concepts as the "ghost in the machine" and the "separable soul." Rather, science affirms that the human species is an emergence from natural evolutionary forces. As far as we know, the total personality is a function of the biological organism transacting in a social and cultural context. There is no credible evidence that life survives the death of the body. We continue to exist in our progeny and in the way that our lives have influenced others in our culture.

Traditional religions are surely not the only obstacles to human progress. Other ideologies also impede human advance. Some forms of political doctrine, for instance, function religiously, reflecting the worst features of orthodoxy and authoritarianism, especially when they sacrifice individuals on the altar of Utopian promises. Purely economic and political viewpoints, whether capitalist or communist, often function as religious and ideological dogma. Although humans undoubtedly need economic and political goals, they also need creative values by which to live.

Ethics

Third: We affirm that moral values derive their source from human experience. Ethics is *autonomous* and *situational*, needing no theological or ideological sanction. Ethics stems from human need and interest. To deny this distorts the whole basis of life. Human life has meaning because we create and develop our futures. Happiness and the creative realization of human needs and desires, individually and in shared enjoyment, are continuous themes of humanism. We strive for the good life, here and now. The goal is to pursue life's enrichment despite debasing forces of vulgarization, commercialization, bureaucratization, and dehumanization.

Fourth: Reason and intelligence are the most effective instruments that humankind possesses. There is no substitute: neither faith nor passion suffices in itself. The controlled use of scientific methods, which have transformed the natural and social sciences since the Renaissance, must be extended further in the solution of human problems. But reason must be tempered by humility, since no group has a monopoly of

wisdom or virtue. Nor is there any guarantee that all problems can be solved or all questions answered. Yet critical intelligence, infused by a sense of human caring, is the best method that humanity has for resolving problems. Reason should be balanced with compassion and empathy and the whole person fulfilled. Thus, we are not advocating the use of scientific intelligence independent of or in opposition to emotion, for we believe in the cultivation of feeling and love. As science pushes back the boundary of the known, one's sense of wonder is continually renewed, and art, poetry, and music find their places, along with religion and ethics.

The Individual

Fifth: The preciousness and dignity of the individual person is a central humanist value. Individuals should be encouraged to realize their own creative talents and desires. We reject all religious, ideological, or moral codes that denigrate the individual, suppress freedom, dull intellect, dehumanize personality. We believe in maximum individual autonomy consonant with social responsibility. Although science can account for the causes of behavior, the possibilities of individual *freedom of choice* exist in human life and should be increased.

Sixth: In the area of sexuality, we believe that intolerant attitudes, often cultivated by orthodox religions and puritanical cultures, unduly repress sexual conduct. The right to birth control, abortion, and divorce should be recognized. While we do not approve of exploitive, denigrating forms of sexual expression, neither do we wish to prohibit, by law or social sanction, sexual behavior between consenting adults. The many varieties of sexual exploration should not in themselves be considered "evil." Without countenancing mindless permissiveness or unbridled promiscuity, a civilized society should be a *tolerant one*. Short of harming others or compelling them to do likewise, individuals should be permitted to express their sexual proclivities and pursue their life-styles as they desire. We wish to cultivate the development of a responsible attitude toward sexuality, in which humans are not exploited as sexual objects, and in which intimacy, sensitivity,

respect, and honesty in interpersonal relations are encouraged. Moral education for children and adults is an important way of developing awareness and sexual maturity

Democratic Society

Seventh: To enhance freedom and dignity the individual must experience a full range of *civil liberties* in all societies. This includes freedom of speech and the press, political democracy, the legal right of opposition to governmental policies, fair judicial process, religious liberty, freedom of association, and artistic, scientific, and cultural freedom. It also includes a recognition of an individual's right to die with dignity, euthanasia, and the right to suicide. We oppose the increasing invasion of privacy, by whatever means, in both totalitarian and democratic societies. We would safeguard, extend, and implement the principles of human freedom evolved from the *Magna Carta* to the *Bill of Rights*, the *Rights of Man*, and the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*.

Eighth: We are committed to an open and democratic society. We must extend *participatory democracy* in its true sense to the economy, the school, the family, the workplace, and voluntary associations. Decision-making must be decentralized to include widespread involvement of people at all levels—social, political, and economic. All persons should have a voice in developing the values and goals that determine their lives. Institutions should be responsive to expressed desires and needs. The conditions of work, education, devotion, and play should be humanized. Alienating forces should be modified or eradicated and bureaucratic structures should be held to a minimum. People are more important than decalogues, rules, proscriptions, or regulations

Ninth: The separation of church and state and the separation of ideology and state are imperatives. The state should encourage maximum freedom for different moral, political, religious, and social values in society. It should not favor any particular religious bodies through the use of public

monies, nor espouse a single ideology and function thereby as an instrument of propaganda or oppression, particularly against dissenters.

Tenth: Humane societies should evaluate economic systems not by rhetoric or ideology, but by whether or not they *increase economic well-being* for all individuals and groups, minimize poverty and hardship, increase the sum of human satisfaction, and enhance the quality of life. Hence the door is open to alternative economic systems. We need to democratize the economy and judge it by its responsiveness to human needs, testing results in terms of the common good.

Eleventh: *The principle of moral equality* must be furthered through elimination of all discrimination based upon race, religion, sex, age, or national origin. This means equality of opportunity and recognition of talent and merit. Individuals should be encouraged to contribute to their own betterment. If unable, then society should provide means to satisfy their basic economic, health, and cultural needs, including, wherever resources make possible, a minimum guaranteed annual income. We are concerned for the welfare of the aged, the infirm, the disadvantaged, and also for the outcasts—the mentally retarded, abandoned or abused children, the handicapped, prisoners, and addicts—for *all* who are neglected or ignored by society. Practicing humanists should make it their vocation to humanize personal relations.

We believe in the *right to universal education*. Everyone has a right to the cultural opportunity to fulfill his or her unique capacities and talents. The schools should foster satisfying and productive living. They should be open at all levels to any and all; the achievement of excellence should be encouraged. Innovative and experimental forms of education are to be welcomed. The energy and idealism of the young deserve to be appreciated and channeled to constructive purposes.

We deplore racial, religious, ethnic, or class antagonisms. Although we believe in cultural diversity and encourage racial and ethnic pride, we reject separations which promote alienation and set people and groups against each other; we envision an *integrated* community where people have a maximum opportunity for free and voluntary association.

We are *critical of sexism or sexual chauvinism*—male or female. We believe in equal rights for both women and men to fulfill their unique careers and potentialities as they see fit, free of invidious discrimination.

World Community

Twelfth: We deplore the division of humankind on nationalistic grounds. We have reached a turning point in human history where the best option is to *transcend the limits of national sovereignty* and to move toward the building of a world community in which all sectors of the human family can participate. Thus we look to the development of a system of world law and a world order based upon transnational federal government. This would appreciate cultural pluralism and diversity. It would not exclude pride in national origins and accomplishments nor the handling of regional problems on a regional basis. Human progress, however, can no longer be achieved by focusing on one section of the world, Western or Eastern, developed or underdeveloped. For the first time in human history, no part of humankind can be isolated from any other. Each person's future is in some way linked to all. We thus reaffirm a commitment to the building of world community, at the same time recognizing that this commits us to some hard choices.

Thirteenth: This world community must *renounce the resort to violence and force* as a method of solving international disputes. We believe in the peaceful adjudication of differences by international courts and by the development of the arts of negotiation and compromise. War is obsolete. So is the use of nuclear, biological, and chemical weapons. It is a planetary imperative to reduce the level of military expenditures and turn these savings to peaceful and people-oriented uses.

Fourteenth: The world community must engage in *cooperative planning* concerning the use of rapidly depleting resources. The planet earth must be considered a single *ecosystem*. Ecological damage, resource depletion, and excessive population growth must be checked by international concord. The cultivation and conservation of nature

is a moral value; we should perceive ourselves as integral to the sources of our being in nature. We must free our world from needless pollution and waste, responsibly guarding and creating wealth, both natural and human. Exploitation of natural resources, uncurbed by social conscience, must end.

Fifteenth: The problems of *economic growth and development* can no longer be resolved by one nation alone; they are worldwide in scope. It is the moral obligation of the developed nations to provide—through an international authority that safeguards human rights—massive technical, agricultural, medical, and economic assistance, including birth control techniques, to the developing portions of the globe. World poverty must cease. Hence extreme disproportions in wealth, income, and economic growth should be reduced on a worldwide basis.

Sixteenth: *Technology is a vital key to human progress and development.* We deplore any neo-romantic efforts to condemn indiscriminately all technology and science or to counsel retreat from its further extension and use for the good of humankind. We would resist any moves to censor basic scientific research on moral, political, or social grounds. Technology must, however, be carefully judged by the consequences of its use; harmful and destructive changes should be avoided. We are particularly disturbed when technology and bureaucracy control, manipulate, or modify human beings without their consent. Technological feasibility does not imply social or cultural desirability.

Seventeenth: We must expand communication and transportation across frontiers. Travel restrictions must cease. The world must be open to diverse political, ideological, and moral viewpoints and evolve a worldwide system of television and radio for information and education. We thus call for full international cooperation in culture, science, the arts, and technology *across ideological borders*. We must learn to live openly together or we shall perish together.

Humanity as a Whole

In closing: The world cannot wait for a reconciliation of competing political or economic systems to solve its problems. These are the times for men and women of good will to further the building of a peaceful and prosperous world. We urge that parochial loyalties and inflexible moral and religious ideologies be transcended. We urge recognition of the common humanity of all people. We further urge the use of reason and compassion to produce the kind of world we want—a world in which peace, prosperity, freedom, and happiness are widely shared. Let us not abandon that vision in despair or cowardice. We are responsible for what we are or will be. Let us work together for a humane world by means commensurate with humane ends. Destructive ideological differences among communism, capitalism, socialism, conservatism, liberalism, and radicalism should be overcome. Let us call for an end to terror and hatred. We will survive and prosper only in a world of shared humane values. We can initiate new directions for humankind; ancient rivalries can be superseded by broad-based cooperative efforts. The commitment to tolerance, understanding, and peaceful negotiation does not necessitate acquiescence to the status quo nor the damming up of dynamic and revolutionary forces. The true revolution is occurring and can continue in countless non-violent adjustments. But this entails the willingness to step forward onto new and expanding plateaus. At the present juncture of history, commitment to all humankind is the highest commitment of which we are capable; it transcends the narrow allegiances of church, state, party, class, or race in moving toward a wider vision of human potentiality. What more daring a goal for humankind than for each person to become, in ideal as well as practice, a citizen of a world community. It is a classical vision; we can now give it new vitality. Humanism thus interpreted is a moral force that has time on its side. We believe that humankind has the potential intelligence, good will, and cooperative skill to implement this commitment in the decades ahead.