

[SECULAR HUMANISM - What is it? - ChristianAnswers.Net](http://ChristianAnswers.Net)

Accurate definitions are difficult to come by. When one hears the word “humanism,” several different ideas may come to mind. For example, Mr. Webster would define humanism something like this: “any system or mode of thought or action in which human interests, values, or dignity predominate.” Others may think of liberal arts education. Both are well and good, but what we are seeking is a definition of the worldview known as Secular Humanism.

1. **Secular Humanism is a worldview.** That is, it is a set of beliefs through which one interprets all of reality—something like a pair of glasses. Second, Secular Humanism is a *religious* worldview.

Do not let the word “secular” mislead you. The Humanists themselves would agree that they adhere to a religious worldview. According to the *Humanist Manifestos I & II*: Humanism is “a philosophical, religious, and moral point of view.”

Not all humanists, though, want to be identified as “religious,” because they understand that religion is (supposedly) not allowed in American public education. To identify Secular Humanism as a religion would eliminate the Humanists’ main vehicle for the propagation of their faith. **And it is a faith, by their own admission.** The *Humanist Manifestos* declare: “These affirmations [in the *Manifestos*] are not a final credo or dogma but an expression of a living and growing *faith*.”

2. What are the basic beliefs of Secular Humanism?

a. **Theologically, Secular Humanists are atheists.** Humanist Paul Kurtz, publisher of Prometheus Books and editor of *Free Inquiry* magazine, says that “Humanism cannot in any fair sense of the word apply to one who still believes in God as the source and creator of the universe. Corliss Lamont agrees, saying, “Humanism contends that instead of the gods creating the cosmos, the cosmos, in the individualized form of human beings giving rein to their imagination, created the gods.”

b. **Philosophically, Secular Humanists are naturalists.** That is, they believe that nature is all that exists—the material world is all that exists. **There is no God, no spiritual dimension, no afterlife.** Carl Sagan said it best in the introduction to his *Cosmos* series: “The universe is all that is or ever was or ever will be.” Roy Wood Sellars concurs. “Humanism is naturalistic,” he says, “and **rejects the supernaturalistic stance with its postulated Creator-God and cosmic Ruler.**”

Secular Humanist beliefs in the area of biology are closely tied to both their atheistic theology and their naturalist philosophy. If there is no supernatural, then life, including human life, must be the result of a purely natural phenomenon. Hence, Secular Humanists must believe in *evolution*. Julian Huxley, for example, insists that “man ... his body, his mind and his soul were not supernaturally created but are all products of evolution.”[9] Sagan, Lamont, Sellars, Kurtz—all Secular Humanists are in agreement on this.

Atheism leads most Secular Humanists to adopt *ethical relativism*—the belief that no absolute moral code exists, and therefore man must adjust his ethical standards in each situation according to his own judgment.[10] If God does not exist, then He cannot establish an absolute

moral code. Humanist Max Hocutt says that human beings “may, and do, make up their own rules... Morality is not discovered; it is made.”[11]

Secular Humanism, then, can be defined as a religious worldview based on atheism, naturalism, evolution, and ethical relativism. But this definition is merely the tip of the iceberg. A more complete discussion of the Secular Humanist worldview can be found in David Nobel’s *Understanding the Times*, which discusses (in detail) humanism’s approach to each of ten disciplines: theology, philosophy, ethics, biology, psychology, sociology, law, politics, economics and history

3. Why Should I worry about Secular Humanism?

[Why Should I Worry about Secular Humanism? - A Sermon on Secularism \(drjustinimelsr.com\)](http://drjustinimelsr.com)

There are those who want to free us from religion and establish a world order centered on man. The crucial question, however, is: “Does it matter Should I be concerned about Secular Humanism?” The unequivocal answer is “Yes.”

- a. **Secular Humanists Want to Influence Our Children**
 1. What Secular Humanists believe concerning education:
 - “In our view, education should be the essential method of building humane, free, and democratic societies.” (Paul Kurtz, *A Secular Humanist Declaration* (Buffalo, NY: Prometheus Books, 1980), p. 22).
 - “There is a broader task that all those who believe in democratic secular humanist values will recognize, namely, the need to embark upon a long-term program of public education and enlightenment concerning the relevance of the secular outlook to the human condition.” (Ibid., p. 23).
 - Notice this not-so-veiled desire to teach Humanism in the classroom: “The battle for mankind’s future must be waged and won in the public school classroom by teachers who correctly perceive their role as the proselytizer of a new faith; a religion of humanity. . . utilizing a classroom instead of a pulpit to convey humanist values in whatever subject they teach” (Quoted from *The Humanist* January/February 1983 by Mel and Norma Gabler, “Humanism in Textbooks (Secular Religion in the Classroom),” *Communication Education* 1987, vol. 36, p. 362.
 - “What is becoming increasingly clear is that public and higher education may be two of the few sites left in which public values (i.e., secular values) can be learned and experienced, and both should be defended vigorously by broadening the terms of learning to define a new democratic (i.e., secular; “democratic” is a buzz word among many secularist) mission for the university” (Henry A. Giroux, “The Passion of the Right: Religious Fundamentalism and the Crisis of Democracy,” *Cultural Studies – Critical Methodologies* 5 (2005): 316).

2. What are some ways that Secular Humanists are influencing our children.

Secular Humanists have placed evolution propaganda in popular children's works. Notice what Humanists have claimed about evolution:

- "Humanism believes that man is a part of nature and that he has emerged as the result of a continuous process" (*Humanist Manifesto I*, Second).
- "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" (*Humanist Manifest II*, Second).

Notice how evolution has been placed in popular children's works. The Berenstain Bears, teach Secular Humanism. In *The Berenstain Bears' Nature Guide* (Stan and Jan Berenstain, *The Berenstain Bears' Nature Guide* (New York: Random, 1984), p. 11 quoted in Charles Colson *How Now Shall We Live? With Nancy Pearcey* (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 1999), p. 54), the Bear family is going on a nature walk and invites the reader to go along. As the Bears walk along on a sunny morning, the reader comes across these words: Nature is "all that IS, or WAS, or EVER WILL BE!" In other words, there is no God, no Creation, nothing but nature.

How many of our toddlers have seen **The Land Before Time video series?** (*The Land Before Time* video series, Universal Pictures (1988) references in Charles Colson *How Now Shall We Live? With Nancy Pearcey* (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 1999), p. 69). **Each video in the series provides a lesson in evolution as seas produce organisms which keep changing until they turn into dinosaurs.** How many toddlers have watched wide-eyed with anticipation as they absorb anti-Christian values?

Secular Humanists have placed much of their material in textbooks and teaching methods. Notice what a theistic writer warned: "Because in their view there is no absolute system of morality, the secular humanists advocate a program of moral education in the public school system" (Robert E. Webber, *Secular Humanism: Threat and Challenge* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1982), p. 43).

Notice some quotes from some textbooks (although these quotes are somewhat dated, they do demonstrate the Secular Humanists have been successful in publicizing their views in schools for some time):

- From a high school psychology text: "There are exceptions to almost all moral laws, depending on the situation. What is wrong in one instance may be right in another. Most children learn that it's wrong to lie. But later they may learn that it's tactless, if not actually wrong, not to lie under certain circumstances" (Allyn & Bacon, *Inquiries in Sociology*, S-E, col. 2. Par. 1, lines 5-11, ca. 1978 quotes in Jim L. Smith, *One Nation Under—God or Man?* (Lawrenceburg, TN: Smith Publications, 1989), p. 30. Smith gives additional quotes from textbooks, and other quotes may also be found in Gabler, "Humanism in Textbooks.").
 - From a 9-10 grade health text: "In a society where values are constantly shifting, the young adult may often be confused by which set of values he or she is to follow" (Steck-Vaughn, *Toward Sexual Maturity*, TRM-29, lines 2-5, ca. 1973 quoted in Smith, p. 30).
- 1) Humanists subscribe to the belief that there are no absolute moral standards. "Humanists have confidence in human beings, and they believe that the only bases for morality are human experiences and human needs" (Paul Kurtz, *In Defense of Secular Humanism* (Buffalo, NY: Prometheus Books, 1983), p. 33). In other words, if I need my

morality to change, it can change. Notice how closely this quote from Paul Kurtz, one of the most-well known Humanists resembles the above statements from textbooks: “it is our moral duty, for example, not to lie, yet to do so on occasion may be morally justifiable. If your aunt labored all day to prepare a dessert you hate, you may believe that sparing her feelings and telling her you like it is a greater obligation than telling her the truth” (Paul Kurtz, *Forbidden Fruit: The Ethics of Humanism* (Buffalo, NY: Prometheus Books, 1988), p. 37).

4. Secular Humanists have given our children much of their sexual ethic. **Obviously because there are no absolute right and wrong in Secular Humanism, there can be nothing inherently wrong with any sexual behavior.** But notice a couple quotes from humanists specifically dealing with sexual behavior:

- “In the area of sexuality, we believe that intolerant attitudes, often cultivated by orthodox religions and puritanical cultures, unduly suppress sexual conduct. . . . 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’” (*Humanist Manifesto II*, Sixth).
- “The question that can be raised is ether some forms of sexual expression are wicked and should be prohibited by law. I would argue that all forms must be left to private choice, although it must be understood that this suggestion applies *only* to consenting adults and not to children” (Kurtz, *Forbidden Fruit*, p. 207).

The Teenage Parent Council of Austin, Texas publishes a “Green Book” which is to inform teens and their parents about services provided to pregnant teens (Robert L. Waggoner, dissertation). The *Green Book* does not list the services of Austin Crisis Pregnancy Center, because the group favors life (rather than abortion) and promotes abstinence. Here’s what the Green Book tells the teens of Austin: “Parents, church leaders, and other teen friends may be urging you to wait until you are older and more mature, or married, before deciding to have a sexual intercourse relationship with someone. . . . About the only thing you can rely on is your personal feeling about what makes sense to you. The personal sense of what seems right is an important tool we have available to protect ourselves.” (*The Greek Book*, Teenage Parent Council of Austin, 1987, p. 3 quoted in Waggoner, p. 113).

b. Secular Humanists are Influencing Our Society

Secular Humanism has created many of the social ills we now confront. Secular Humanism in our society has involved “divorce, abortion, suicide, drug abuse, sexual permissiveness, homosexuality, pornography, wife battering, child abuse, etc.” (Robert L. Waggoner, “Why All Preachers Should Be Concerned About Humanism,” available at http://www.biblicaltheism.com/Why_Preachers_Should_Be_Concerned.pdf. Accessed October 1, 2005).

Notice what Secular Humanists pride themselves on having accomplished:

- There is today a more tolerate attitude toward sexual freedom and a demand that laws against abortion, birth control, and voluntary sterilization be repealed.

- There is a change in public attitudes toward pornography and obscenity, an increased acceptance of nudity on stage and in the cinema—especially where artistic values are involved—and a conviction that society should not impose narrow standards of censorship (Paul Kurtz, *In Defense of Secular Humanism*, p. 35).

Obviously, Secular Humanism is having a large influence on our society.