

Humanistic Education

HUMANIST MANIFESTO I WAS ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED IN 1933 IN *THE NEW HUMANIST* (VOL. VI, #3, 1933: Yellow Springs, Ohio), the main publication of the American Humanist Association. Co-author John Dewey, the noted philosopher and educator, called for a synthesizing of all religions and a “socialized and cooperative economic order.” The following are excerpts taken from *Secular Humanism and the Schools: The Issue Whose Time Has Come* by Onalee McGraw, Ph.D. (Critical Issues, Series 2, The Heritage Foundation: Washington, D.C., 1976):

The basis of humanist belief is that there is no Almighty God, the Creator and Sustainer of life. Humanists believe that man is his own god. They believe that moral values are relative, devised according to the needs of particular people, and that ethics are likewise situational.

Humanists reject Judeo-Christian moral and ethical laws, such as those contained in the Ten Commandments, calling them “dogmatic,” “outmoded,” “authoritarian,” and a hindrance to human progress. In humanism, self-fulfillment, happiness, love, and justice are found by each man individually, without reference to any divine source. In the Judeo-Christian ethic, there is and can be no real self-fulfillment, happiness, love, or justice on earth that can be found which does not ultimately issue from Almighty God, the Creator and Sustainer.

Several main differences between the humanist ethic and the Judeo-Christian ethic become clear upon reading the Humanist Manifestos I and II (1933 and 1973) and comparing them to the tenets of the Judeo-Christian ethic contained in the Old and New Testaments.... At issue is the basic concept concerning the nature of man and the “rules” by which men govern themselves individually, in society, and in government. In the Judeo-Christian ethic, man’s ultimate deliverance and salvation—his finding a means of living together on this planet, in peace, harmony, justice, and love—is through God’s given “rules.”

For the humanist, man’s greatness, his coming of age, his total fulfillment is found when he no longer needs the idea of God. Man gets rid of God, not just to do what he wills but to regain possession of human greatness.

Is Humanistic Education unconstitutional? Inasmuch as humanistic curriculum programs and “values clarification” and “moral education” teaching strategies are based upon materialistic values found only in man’s nature itself, they reject the spiritual and moral tradition of theistic faith and religion. Thus, many parents who subscribe to Judeo-Christian belief oppose humanistic education in the tax-supported schools on grounds that such programs promote and advocate the religion of secular humanism in violation of the First Amendment to the *United States Constitution*.

(The Deliberate Dumbing Down of America (Revised and Abridged Edition), by Charlotte Thomson Iserbyt, Ravenna, Ohio: Conscience Press, 2000 [1999], Location 761 & 779 of 17059, Text Modified)