

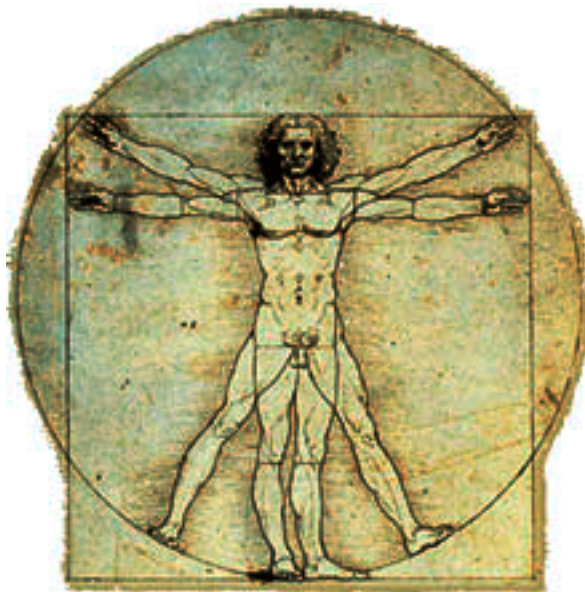
Forcing Change



Exploring Secular Humanism

Over the years, *Forcing Change* has examined a number of worldviews that have challenged Christianity and have shaped modern culture. This edition takes a look at one worldview that has formed much of the backdrop regarding current trends in transhumanism, the push for world government, and the establishment of global ethics based on world law: Secular Humanism.

Brad Alles, author of *Starting at the End*, has graciously allowed his essay on Secular Humanism to be reprinted in its entirety. It provides an important starting point to understanding the implications and applications of the Secular Humanist worldview.

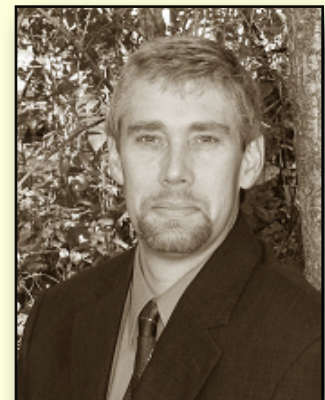


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Carl Teichrib, Editor

Starting at the End: Secular Humanism

By Brad Alles

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***"Man is at last becoming aware that he alone is responsible for the realization of the world of his dreams, that he has within himself the power for its achievement. He must set intelligence and will to the task."*¹**

That's how the *Humanist Manifesto I* ends. Written in 1933, it describes life as it should be — according to the Secular Humanist. Forty years later, in 1973, *Humanist Manifesto II* continued this vision of the future:

"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... 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."²

Starting at the end is essential for understanding why people are advocating their worldview. But notice that "commitment to all humankind is the highest commitment," greater than your commitment to family, country, or God. Why? Because God doesn't exist. And man "alone is responsible for the realization of the world of his dreams."

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Your membership helps fund the research and expenses incurred in producing each issue of *Forcing Change*. *Thank you!*

Assumption — Atheism

There can be no doubt that the underlying assumption of Secular Humanism is atheism, the belief that there is no God. While countless quotes could be surveyed, a few will be offered here to illustrate the point.

The *Humanist Manifesto I* says, “We are convinced that the time has passed for theism, deism, and modernism.”³

In other words, out with theism (the belief that a personal God exists), deism (the belief that God exists yet is uninvolved with His creation), and modernism (the belief that church teachings should be defined in the light of scientific discoveries).

Furthermore, the *Humanist Manifesto II* states outright, “We find insufficient evidence for the 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.”⁴

Corliss Lamont, author of *The Philosophy of Humanism*, declares that “Humanism... considers all forms of the supernatural as myth.” He goes on to say that anything outside of nature “does not exist.”⁵

Recall that every worldview starts with an assumption, and this one does loudly and clearly. Author and speaker Nancy Pearcey sums it up: “Secularism itself is based on ultimate beliefs, just as much as Christianity is.”⁶ Yet the danger of failing to remember that every worldview starts with a presupposition leads to the notion that Secular Humanism is somehow “neutral,” without bias, while Christianity is solely based on private opinions.

Pearcey continues: “It is impossible to think without some set of presuppositions about the world.”⁷

Translation: no one is neutral. And that’s why asking the question, “How do you know there’s no God?” helps expose the starting premise of this map.



Philosophy — Naturalism

Having established the starting point of the map, let’s examine reality according to Secular Humanists. It should be no surprise that there’s just a natural world, without the supernatural (God, Satan, angels, or demons) as Corliss Lamont stated definitively. Returning to the *Humanist Manifesto II*, it says,

“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...Nature may indeed be broader and deeper than we now know; any new discoveries, however, will but enlarge our knowledge of the natural.”⁸

Stated another way, the Secular Humanist eliminates the possibility of the supernatural since it is neither observable nor measurable, using the scientific method.

But this naturalist view, believing that only physical things comprise reality,⁹ then rules out the soul as well, since it is immaterial. It can't be measured or observed. We have a brain, which can be seen and examined during brain surgery, but no soul. In their worldview, the mind (or soul or personality) is just a manifestation of the brain, since matter is all that exists. Yet by thinking about the mind or soul, Christian apologist C. S. Lewis states that the Secular Humanist misses the blatantly apparent — “the moment one attends to this it is obvious that one's own thinking cannot be merely a natural event, and that therefore something other than nature exists.”¹⁰

To state it differently: thoughts and logic aren't made of matter. There is more to life than just the material state of things.

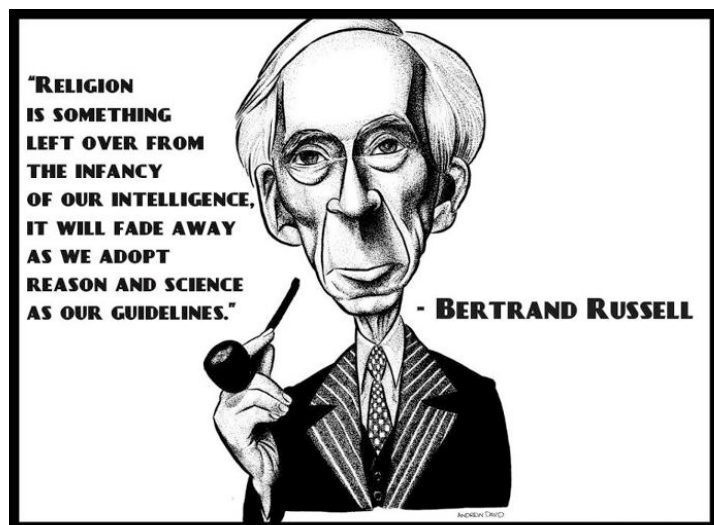
Denial of the supernatural also rules out heaven and hell. Corliss Lamont says, “There is no possibility that the human consciousness, with its memory and awareness of self-identity intact, can survive the shock and disintegration of death... the body and personality live together; they grow together; and they die together.”¹¹

Therefore, when you die, it's all over. There's no afterlife, since nature and matter is all that exists. Even more bluntly, the *Humanist Manifesto II* states, “Promises of immortal salvation or fear of eternal damnation are both illusory and harmful... There is no credible evidence that life survives the death of the body.”¹²

Apparently, Jesus' empty tomb, the changed lives of the eyewitnesses, as well as Josephus' recording of Christ's resurrection must not count!¹³

Yet this philosophy explains why the Secular Humanist is so focused on this present life: that's all there is. You get one ride on the merry-go-round of life and that's it. And this philosophical stance, starting with the assumption that there's no God and supernatural realm, has implications on their ethical views.

Just how should we behave according to this map?



Ethics — Moral Relativism

According to Secular Humanism, humans have evolved over millions of years. To quote *Humanist Manifesto II*, “Science affirms that the human species is an emergence from natural evolutionary forces.”¹⁴

Over time we have gained life from lifeless matter (against the Law of Biogenesis which states only living things can give life), developed thought (an immaterial concept in a universe comprised only of matter), and gotten progressively more advanced. But no matter how advanced humans get, there is always the lurking presence of evil. With no God to create, nor Satan to tempt, this issue of evil in a naturalistic world poses a problem. Sev-

eral Humanist psychologists state that humans are “essentially constructive in their fundamental nature,” “perfectible,” and without “any intrinsic instinct for evil.”¹⁵ But if mankind is basically good, then why is there evil? Some state that our culture makes us do evil; societal influences are to blame. Yet the logic of that position doesn’t make sense. Author and speaker David Noebel rightly asks, “How could culture or society ever have become evil if there were no tendency within us toward evil?”¹⁶

However, others point not to our culture but to our bodies. The assumption is that evolution produced the human body, and it also must have produced beliefs and behavior. A very popular idea today is that our genes make us do good and bad. For example, this explanation is given in books like *The Selfish Gene*, *Evolutionary Origins of Morality*, and *Demonic Males: Apes and the Origins of Human Violence*. Yet there’s no proof for this hypothesis.

Geneticist H. Allen Orr says, “The ugly fact is that we haven’t a shred of evidence that morality in humans did or did not evolve by natural selection... We have no data.”¹⁷

The starting assumptions that God doesn’t exist and that man is basically good makes this map highly suspect.

Yet even though this map doesn’t accurately describe the origin of evil, it does depict what is acceptable behavior. It’s whatever you feel is right.

The *Humanist Manifesto II* states, “Ethics is autonomous and situational, needing no theological or ideological sanction.”¹⁸ This is individual moral relativism. Morality is determined by each person, relative to their individual ideas. But while you decide which behavior is right for you, the rest of society needs to be considered as well.

The *Humanist Manifesto II* continues: “We believe in maximum individual autonomy consonant with social responsibility.”¹⁹ Adding to the notion of each person determining right and wrong, cultures can also form moral codes. Acceptable behavior can change from culture to culture — this is cultural moral relativism.²⁰ Yet if we each decide what’s permissible, or if each culture decides, then how do we handle the inevitable clashes that will ensue? Who gets to say what is right or wrong? Can we judge a thief or an invading army as doing evil?

With no moral absolutes or God to tell us, how do we judge actions? This dilemma is why moral relativism sounds so good, yet doesn’t work in practice.

To illustrate this, listen to the position of the American Civil Liberties Union, or ACLU, on the issue of child pornography. Serving on the U. S. Attorney General’s Commission on Pornography, attorney Alan Sears heard the ACLU state that “no government should be allowed to limit the distribution of child pornography between consenting adults.”²¹

For people to employ this map of Secular Humanism with its moral relativism, one has to wonder, “Is there anything wrong with anything?” Someone *has* to decide. And Secular Humanists believe that certain people should map out our behavior and future according to their vision.

Future — Global Government

Since the notion of more than seven billion people on the planet all doing whatever they want doesn’t work in a practical sense, the world has to have rules. We all can’t simply behave however we want — that would make life unbearable. So the Secular Humanists

have an idea: a global government to make life a heaven on earth (since there is no afterlife, just this physical reality).

Returning to the *Humanist Manifesto II*, the authors state that “we deplore the division of humankind on nationalistic grounds... Thus we look to the development of a system of world law and a world order based upon transnational federal government.”²²

In other words, having separate countries is bad, so a “transnational” or global government is needed to form a world community.

This is not an isolated idea. Visions of world government can be traced back to the early 1910's. For example, take the 1912 World Peace Foundation pamphlet, *International Good-Will as a Substitute for Armies and Navies*, by William C. Gannett. This document calls for international order based in five areas which are pursued today in the name of global government. These five areas are: 1) a world judicial system; 2) an international parliament or congress; 3) world laws; 4) a global military force; and 5) a unifying architecture to ensure global compliance and security under an international protectorate.²³ This is why it's no mere coincidence that today we actually have the International Criminal Court, the United Nations, United Nations treaties and resolutions, and the United Nations peacekeeping force.

In addition, through the past one hundred years, various people have weighed in with their thoughts on what this international authority should do. Recently, the World Federalist Movement, the largest global government lobbying group, advocated reform of the United Nations, development of a world tax, and the construction of a new global currency.²⁴ As an example of this potential new global currency at the G8 Summit in 2009, Russian President Medvedev

Quotes on World Order

Humanist thinkers and leaders have long advocated “world government.” Here are a number of quotes from humanists on the “necessity” of international order and management.

“Evidently a point has been reached in the evolution of human culture at which the development of a planet-wide economic, political and social organization is not only the next logical step, but is the alternative to continued chaos and appalling destruction.” - Scott Nearing, *United World* (Island Press, 1945), pp.183-184.

“...the more united man's tradition becomes, the more rapid will be the possibility of progress... the best and only certain way of securing this will be through political unification.” - Julian Huxley, *UNESCO: Its Purpose and its Philosophy* (Public Affairs Press, 1947), p.13.

“The need for a world government, if the population problem is to be solved in any humane manner, is completely evident on Darwinian principles.” - Bertrand Russell, *The Impact of Science on Society* (Simon & Schuster, 1953, p.105.)

“...we can define our finalities: the pursuit of hominization in humanization via accession to earth citizenship... for an organized planetary community.” - Edgar Morin, *Seven Complex Lesson in Education for the Future* (UNESCO, 1999), p.62.

“Strengthening the idea of a world civilization will provide the stage for communicating, interacting, associating and rejecting what will not fit in global codes. People must become citizens of the Earth, not of a single culture.” - Gustavo Lopez Ospina, *Planetary Sustainability in the Age of the Information and Knowledge Society* (UNESCO, 2003), p.141.

held up a coin that was stamped “United Future World Currency.”²⁵ Even Pope Benedict XVI called for a “true world political authority” to manage the affairs of the world.²⁶ So if we have a global government, what happens to the United States?

Richard Rorty, a Post-Modern philosopher, believes that “America will someday yield up sovereignty to what Tennyson called ‘the Parliament of Man, the Federation of the World’”²⁷

Along that line, the *Humanist Manifesto 2000* says: “The idea of a World Parliament is similar to the evolution of the European Parliament, still in its infancy. The current UN General Assembly is an assembly of nations. This new World Parliament would enact legislative policies in a democratic manner.”²⁸ Elections to this global government would be based on population and represent people, not their governments.

That is different from what we experience today in America. Our U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations represents our country’s government, not our people. The ambassador must be nominated by the President and confirmed by the Senate. We don’t pick the ambassador — the President does, and we can tell our Senators what we think of the choice, but in the end, they confirm the candidate.

The reason we don’t vote on the ambassador is due to the fact that the United States is a republic, not a direct democracy. In a direct democracy, all of the citizens debate and decide government questions, and decisions are reached by a majority vote. The people vote on every issue, so it is direct government ruled by the majority. A republic is different: it is a constitutionally limited government of the representative type, created by a written Constitution.²⁹ In other words, a republic is representative government (the Congress) ruled by law (the Constitution).³⁰ So we are a republic, and every four years we decide who decides which course our government should take, following the outline of the Constitution.

So questions arise: Do we even choose our representative in this global government, or is s/he appointed for us as our present ambassador is? Do we still contact our representative to voice our opinion? Is this a republic or a direct democracy? Or is it something else? Who chooses the agenda of this global government?

Evidently some have already determined the agenda. According to the authors of the *Humanist Manifesto II*, this world government should renounce war, cooperatively plan the use of Earth’s resources, provide economic assistance to those who need it, and expand technology, travel, and communication. That sounds good — who would oppose that? However, problems arise when policies are determined without input from the people.

Austin Ruse is president of The Catholic Family and Human Rights Institute, which focuses on international social policy. He says that laws derived from United Nations’ treaties are being used “to establish norms that are being forced upon governments and upon people. These new norms have never been voted on. They are being perpetrated by the same people who call themselves transnational progressives. They do not believe in the democratic process; they believe in their own superiority.”³¹

An illustration of this incursion of United Nations treaties upon American law was clearly



stated by American Civil Liberties Union Executive Director Anthony Romero: “Our goal is no less than to forge a new era of social justice where the principles of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights are recognized and enforced in the United States.”³²

And so the Secular Humanist’s agenda progresses. The *Humanist Manifesto II* continues:

“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.”³³

Simply stated, we should compromise and cooperate. Only then can the world see peace through a reformed United Nations or some future global government. Yet if we are to be open to diverse ideas, why has the Secular Humanist decided that the time “passed” for belief in God? Shouldn’t people be open to this as well?

According to Noebel, “Secular Humanists believe that their worldview is capable of promoting tolerance, compromise, and cooperation in a world community.”³⁴ But they are intolerant of religion!

Notice also that a moral absolute was established: “The world *must* be open to diverse political, ideological, and moral viewpoints (emphasis mine).”

Who says the world must be open-minded? The Secular Humanist does. But this is a contradiction to moral relativism, where we each decide what is right. They know there must be an ultimate authority to judge people’s behavior as either right or wrong. And since God doesn’t exist in the Secular Humanist worldview, the government must be the ultimate authority — the government must be “god.”

Noebel says, “If God is denied, the state must usurp His role. Thus, power falls into the hands of politicians — persons who are not, despite optimism to the contrary, infallible.”³⁵

That’s why this is so dangerous. In order to realize the dreams of a perfect world community, not everyone’s ideas, morals, or beliefs can be accepted. The call was for compromise, yet who has the final say on what is acceptable and what is not? The government does. And when those in power decide for the rest of us what is permissible, freedom is lost and tyranny ensues.

Tyranny, by definition, is when the government has absolute power. Author and speaker Jonah Goldberg notes that in a tyrannical, or fascist, government,

“Any action of the state is justified to achieve the common good... It takes responsibility for all aspects of life, including our health and well-being, and seeks to impose uniformity of thought and action, whether by force or through regulation and social pressure.”³⁶

You may wonder if this is an overstatement: “It takes responsibility for all aspects of life.” Sadly, it is not. Take, for example, the fact that some McDonald’s Happy Meals are banned in San Francisco because there is a childhood obesity problem. The law is to prevent “offering a free toy with meals that contain more than set levels of calories, sugar and fat. The ordinance would also require restaurants to provide fruits and vegetables with all meals for children that come with toys.”³⁷

As humorous as this may sound, it illustrates the power to legislate every aspect of people's lives — even to whether one orders French fries. In San Francisco, if you want a Happy Meal with a toy, you'd better eat your veggies! Instead of the child and parent deciding, government decides for them. Goldberg continues: "Everything, including the economy and religion, must be aligned with its objectives. Any rival identity is part of the 'problem' and therefore defined as the enemy."³⁸

For Christians, this sets an ominous tone. Since we are already viewed as dimwitted for believing in God, and judgmental for believing in moral absolutes, is it any wonder that we are "the enemy"?

Carl Teichrib, editor of *Forcing Change*, describes what this looks like:

"Your role as a world citizen will be to revolutionize your values and radically alter your lifestyle; but this is a small price to pay in the name of sustainability and progress. The solution is Technocratic: social engineers, using a systematic approach will work to transform your behavior — even what it means to be human — while new social technologies will collectivize the system."³⁹

In other words, "social engineers" are the skilled rulers among us who believe they can transform the human population because the planet is in deep trouble. Using a scientific/engineering mindset, this transformation will be accomplished through all aspects of society — economics, industry, education, and the like — to remake the world. Once the world is remade in their image, there will be social harmony — peace on earth, goodwill to men.⁴⁰ And no more obese children since no Happy Meals came with fries!

Since people aren't smart enough to make good choices, choices will be made for them. According to Goldberg, Secular Humanists believe that it's time for man to put aside outdated notions like religion, constitutional liberty, and capitalism in order to "rise to the responsibility of making the world in his own image. God was long dead, and it was long overdue for men to take His place."⁴¹

The "outdated" view that life is unfair, man is sinful, and that the only real utopia awaits us in heaven is rejected by the Secular Humanist. Goldberg lists what motivates these people: "a faith in the perfectibility of man... the quest for community... the authority of experts... and the need for an all-powerful state to coordinate society at the national or global level."⁴²

Humans have to take ownership of the future, because according to the *Humanist Manifesto II*, "No deity will save us; we must save ourselves."⁴³

Yet history is littered with past attempts to create this utopia. Unfortunately, only after we have seen their horrible consequences do they end up in the garbage dump of evil ideas. Examine the French Revolution, German Nazism, Italian Fascism, and Russian Communism, just to name a few. Sadly, people still try to recycle these ideas and polish them up with new names. After Pope Benedict XVI (pictured right) called for a "true world political authority" that would

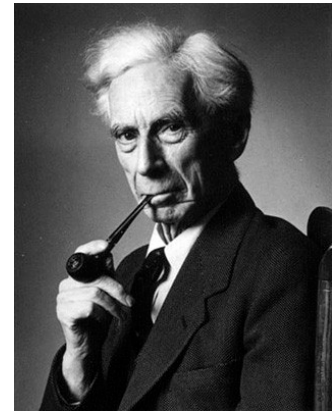


have “to ensure compliance with its decisions from all parties,” writer Thomas Eddlem warned about the dangers of global government in the light of history:

“A world government powerful enough to ‘to ensure compliance with its decisions from all parties’ is also a world government powerful enough to impose a global tyranny that could result in the murder of countless millions. The history of the world has taught that most people were not allowed to be free by their governments in the past, or even in the present. Most people who have walked this world have done so as slaves to the state. Incautious language about the supposed ‘urgent need’ for a global political authority may convince many Catholics and other Christians to accept whatever world government they can get, and what they’ll likely end up with — if history is any guide — is a brutal tyranny.”⁴⁴

Even the noted philosopher and atheist Bertrand Russell (pictured right) stated that a world government would be brutal at first, formed by imposition.

“I believe that, owing to men’s folly, a world-government will only be established by force, and will therefore be at first cruel and despotic. But I believe that it is necessary for the preservation of a scientific civilization, and that, if once realized, it will gradually give rise to the other conditions of a tolerable existence.”⁴⁵



From that viewpoint, global government is a necessary evil that justifies some people’s ends. Yet notice how this atheist philosopher admitted that the global government would be “cruel and despotic” due to “men’s folly.” This speaks to the very nature of man — we’re not good! That’s the biggest problem that needs to be addressed! Therefore, because man is imperfect, life can’t be perfect. The fourth President of the United States and “Father of the Constitution,” James Madison, stated this clearly in *The Federalist* #51.

“But what is government itself, but the greatest of all reflections on human nature? If men were angels, no government would be necessary. If angels were to govern men, neither external nor internal controls on government would be necessary. In framing a government which is to be administered by men over men, the great difficulty lies in this: you must first enable the government to control the governed; and in the next place oblige it to control itself.”⁴⁶

If a global government should come to reality, one of the major concerns is that there will be nowhere to go when the government is corrupt and evil. Presently, Americans don’t typically look at the world this way. We have not faced the problem of our nations acting like God, unlike Nazi Germany, the Soviet Union, or communist China. Today, with approximately 200 nations on the planet, one could move to another country to start a better life. Not so with a global state under one authority.

C. S. Lewis said it like this:

“Let us not be deceived by phrases about “Man taking charge of his own destiny”. All that can really happen is that some men will take charge of the destiny of the others. They will be simply men; none perfect; some greedy, cruel and dishonest. The more completely we are planned the more powerful they will be. Have we discovered some new reason why, this time, power should not corrupt as it has done before?”⁴⁷

Starting at the end with the Secular Humanist, one sees a world united under one government; the aspiration to create a global government that will one day usher in a better world based on that government’s idea of an ideal planet. The sovereignty of the United States and other nations must be sacrificed for the good of the earth. Loss of representation and voice in government must be permitted to advance the global agenda. And loss of freedom must be accepted in the name of a brighter future.

Since there’s no God, government is the ultimate authority, and since mankind is basically good, the right people in charge will provide a better tomorrow. Yet look at the evil that surrounds us, and review historical accounts of countries who tried to make such a utopia. Then ask yourself which worldview map mirrors reality — the Christian or Secular Humanist?

Dr. David Noebel states the choice well:

“We stand at the crossroads, with one path leading to individual liberty and the other to a future lived under the rule of the Conditioners. Which path our society takes depends on the choices we make today and whether those choices are based on God’s principles of life, or that of secular man.”⁴⁸

Brad Alles is the author of *Starting at the End: Worldview, God’s Word & Your Future* (Concordia Publishing House, 2013)

Endnotes:

¹ Paul Kurtz, *Humanist Manifestos I and II* (Amherst, NY: Prometheus Books, 1973), p. 10.

² Ibid, p. 23.

³ Ibid, p. 8.

⁴ Ibid, p. 16.

⁵ As quoted in David Noebel, *Understanding The Times* (Manitou Springs, CO: Summit Press, 2006), p. 60.

⁶ Nancy Pearcey, *Total Truth: Liberating Christianity from Its Cultural Captivity* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2005), p. 42.

⁷ Ibid, p. 94.

⁸ Paul Kurtz, *Humanist Manifestos I and II*, p. 16.

⁹ David Noebel & Chuck Edwards, *Lightbearers Worldview Curriculum, 3rd Edition* (Manitou Springs, CO: Summit Press, 2008), p. 61.

¹⁰ As quoted in David Noebel, *Understanding The Times*, p. 91

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- ¹¹ Ibid, p. 105.
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- ¹⁴ Paul Kurtz, *Humanist Manifestos I and II*, p. 16.
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- ²² Paul Kurtz, *Humanist Manifestos I and II*, p. 21.
- ²³ "In Their Own Words: International Good-Will" *Forcing Change*, Volume 6, Issue 1.
- ²⁴ Carl Teichrib, "Setting the World Agenda," *Hope for the World Update*, Spring 2008, p. 13-16.
- ²⁵ Carl Teichrib, "Question of the Month," *Forcing Change*, vol. 3, no. 7, 2009, p. 10.
- ²⁶ See his encyclical, "Caritas In Veritate."
- ²⁷ As quoted in David Noebel, *Understanding The Times* (Manitou Springs, CO: Summit Press, 2006), p. 10.
- ²⁸ Ibid, p. 334.
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- ³⁴ David Noebel, *Understanding The Times* (Manitou Springs, CO: Summit Press, 2006), p. 334.
- ³⁵ Ibid, p. 455.
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- ³⁸ Jonah Goldberg, *Liberal Fascism* (New York, NY: Doubleday, 2007) p. 23.
- ³⁹ Carl Teichrib, "Engineering a New World: Technocracy and Transformation," *Forcing Change*, July, 2010, p. 8.
- ⁴⁰ Ibid, p. 4.
- ⁴¹ Jonah Goldberg, *Liberal Fascism* (New York, NY: Doubleday, 2007) p. 31.
- ⁴² Ibid, p. 14-15.
- ⁴³ Paul Kurtz, *Humanist Manifestos I and II* (Amherst, NY: Prometheus Books, 1973), p. 16.
- ⁴⁴ "Pope calls for 'world political authority'" Available online at <http://www.thenewamerican.com/culture/education/1375> (cited February 2012).
- ⁴⁵ Quoted by Carl Teichrib in "One World, One Force," *Forcing Change*, Volume 5, Issue 6.
- ⁴⁶ "The Federalist #51" Available online at <http://www.constitution.org/fed/federa51.htm> (cited February 2012).
- ⁴⁷ C. S. Lewis, "Willing Slaves of the Welfare State," Available online at <http://cslewisjrtrolkien.classicalautographs.com/cslewis/bookexcerpts/willingslaveswelfarestate.html> (cited August 2012).
- ⁴⁸ David Noebel, *Understanding The Times* (Manitou Springs, CO: Summit Press, 2006), p. 336.
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IN THEIR OWN WORDS

*The texts below are the main points from Humanist Manifesto I, II, and III,
as given by the American Humanist Association.*

Humanist Manifesto I (1933)

FIRST: Religious humanists regard the universe as self-existing and not created.

SECOND: Humanism believes that man is a part of nature and that he has emerged as a result of a continuous process.

THIRD: Holding an organic view of life, humanists find that the traditional dualism of mind and body must be rejected.

FOURTH: Humanism recognizes that man's religious culture and civilization, as clearly depicted by anthropology and history, are the product of a gradual development due to his interaction with his natural environment and with his social heritage. The individual born into a particular culture is largely molded by that culture.

FIFTH: Humanism asserts that the nature of the universe depicted by modern science makes unacceptable any supernatural or cosmic guarantees of human values. Obviously humanism does not deny the possibility of realities as yet undiscovered, but it does insist that the way to determine the existence and value of any and all realities is by means of intelligent inquiry and by the assessment of their relations to human needs. Religion must formulate its hopes and plans in the light of the scientific spirit and method.

SIXTH: We are convinced that the time has passed for theism, deism, modernism, and the several varieties of "new thought".

SEVENTH: Religion consists of those actions, purposes, and experiences which are humanly significant. Nothing human is alien to the religious. It includes labor, art, science, philosophy, love, friendship, recreation--all that is in its degree expressive of intelligently satisfying human living. The distinction between the sacred and the secular can no longer be maintained.

EIGHTH: Religious Humanism considers the complete realization of human personality to be the end of man's life and seeks its development and fulfillment in the here and now. This is the explanation of the humanist's social passion.

NINTH: In the place of the old attitudes involved in worship and prayer the humanist finds his religious emotions expressed in a heightened sense of personal life and in a cooperative effort to promote social well-being.

TENTH: It follows that there will be no uniquely religious emotions and attitudes of the kind hitherto associated with belief in the supernatural.

ELEVENTH: Man will learn to face the crises of life in terms of his knowledge of their naturalness and probability. Reasonable and manly attitudes will be fostered by education and supported by custom. We assume that humanism will take the path of social and mental hygiene and discourage sentimental and unreal hopes and wishful thinking.

TWELFTH: Believing that religion must work increasingly for joy in living, religious humanists aim to foster the creative in man and to encourage achievements that add to the satisfactions of life.

THIRTEENTH: Religious humanism maintains that all associations and institutions exist for the fulfillment of human life. The intelligent evaluation, transformation, control, and direction of such associations and institutions with a view to the enhancement of human life is the purpose and program of humanism. Certainly religious institutions, their ritualistic forms, ecclesiastical methods, and communal activities must be reconstituted as rapidly as experience allows, in order to function effectively in the modern world.

FOURTEENTH: The humanists are firmly convinced that existing acquisitive and profit-motivated society has shown itself to be inadequate and that a radical change in methods, controls, and motives must be instituted. A socialized and cooperative economic order must be established to the end that the equitable distribution of the means of life be possible. The goal of humanism is a free and universal society in which people voluntarily and intelligently cooperate for the common good. Humanists demand a shared life in a shared world.

FIFTEENTH AND LAST: We assert that humanism will: (a) affirm life rather than deny it; (b) seek to elicit the possibilities of life, not flee from them; and (c) endeavor to establish the conditions of a satisfactory life for all, not merely for the few. By this positive morale and intention humanism will be guided, and from this perspective and alignment the techniques and efforts of humanism will flow.

Humanist Manifesto II (1973)

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 survival and fulfillment of the human race. As nontheists, 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 them-

selves 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, 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, humankind'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 lifestyles 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 mo-

nies, 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 goodwill 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 over-

come. 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 nonviolent 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, goodwill, and cooperative skill to implement this commitment in the decades ahead.

Humanist Manifesto III (2003)

Note: The 2003 version was drastically shortened from the 1973 edition.

Humanism is a progressive philosophy of life that, without supernaturalism, affirms our ability and responsibility to lead ethical lives of personal fulfillment that aspire to the greater good of humanity. The lifestance of Humanism — guided by reason, inspired by compassion, and informed by experience — encourages us to live life well and fully. It evolved through the ages and continues to develop through the efforts of thoughtful people who recognize that values and ideals, however carefully wrought, are subject to change as our knowledge and understandings advance.

This document is part of an ongoing effort to manifest in clear and positive terms the conceptual boundaries of Humanism, not what we must believe but a consensus of what we do believe. It is in this sense that we affirm the following:

Knowledge of the world is derived by observation, experimentation, and rational analysis.

Humanists find that science is the best method for determining this knowledge as well as for solving problems and developing beneficial technologies. We also recognize the value of new departures in thought, the arts, and inner experience—each subject to analysis by critical intelligence.

Humans are an integral part of nature, the result of unguided evolutionary change. Humanists recognize nature as self-existing. We accept our life as all and enough, distinguishing things as they are from things as we might wish or imagine them to be. We welcome the challenges of the future, and are drawn to and undaunted by the yet to be known.

Ethical values are derived from human need and interest as tested by experience. Humanists ground values in human welfare shaped by human circumstances, interests, and concerns and extended to the global ecosystem and beyond. We are committed to treating each person as having inherent worth and dignity, and to making informed choices in a context of freedom consonant with responsibility.

Life's fulfillment emerges from individual participation in the service of humane ideals. We aim for our fullest possible development and animate our lives with a deep sense of purpose, finding wonder and awe in the joys and beauties of human existence, its challenges and tragedies, and even in the inevitability and finality of death. Humanists rely on the rich heritage of human culture and the lifestance of Humanism to provide comfort in times of want and encouragement in times of plenty.

Humans are social by nature and find meaning in relationships. Humanists long for and strive toward a world of mutual care and concern, free of cruelty and its consequences, where differences are resolved cooperatively without resorting to violence. The joining of individuality with interdependence enriches our lives, encourages us to enrich the lives of others, and inspires hope of attaining peace, justice, and opportunity for all.

Working to benefit society maximizes individual happiness. Progressive cultures have worked to free humanity from the brutalities of mere survival and to reduce suffering, improve society, and develop global community. We seek to minimize the inequities of circumstance and ability, and we support a just distribution of nature's resources and the fruits of human effort so that as many as possible can enjoy a good life.

Humanists are concerned for the well being of all, are committed to diversity, and respect those of differing yet humane views. We work to uphold the equal enjoyment of human rights and civil liberties in an open, secular society and maintain it is a civic duty to participate in the democratic process and a planetary duty to protect nature's integrity, diversity, and beauty in a secure, sustainable manner.

Thus engaged in the flow of life, we aspire to this vision with the informed conviction that humanity has the ability to progress toward its highest ideals. The responsibility for our lives and the kind of world in which we live is ours and ours alone.
