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AN ANALYSIS OF THE ARGUMENTATION WITHIN
THE RELIGIOUS HUMANIST MOVEMENT.

The University of Oklahoma, Ph. D. , 1965
Speech-Theater

University Microfilms, Inc., Ann Arbor, Michigan

THE UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA
GRADUATE COLLEGE

AN ANALYSIS OF THE ARGUMENTATION WITHIN THE
RELIGIOUS HUMANIST MOVEMENT

A DISSERTATION
SUBMITTED TO THE GRADUATE FACULTY
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the
degree of
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

BY
RICHARD JOE CRAWFORD
Norman, Oklahoma

1965

AN ANALYSIS OF THE ARGUMENTATION WITHIN THE
RELIGIOUS HUMANIST MOVEMENT

APPROVED BY

James E. Broome
J. E. Douglas
John S. Egan
Charles W. Egan
Raymond Faver
DISSERTATION COMMITTEE

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

A special debt of gratitude must be expressed to Professor Wayne Brockriede for his valuable guidance and considerable assistance in the completion of this study.

Other members of the faculty of the University of Oklahoma, especially those serving on my graduate committee, deserve a note of thanks for their useful suggestions in the research and writing of this work which is submitted in partial fulfillment for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at the University of Oklahoma.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Significance of the Movement

Traditional courses in both public address and intellectual history devote considerable time to a discussion of nineteenth-century opposition to religious orthodoxy--agnosticism, free thought, Unitarianism, Modernism, etc. However, these extremities of religious thought as they persist in the twentieth century are often ignored or dismissed as insignificant; the presumption left is that agnosticism, for example, died with Ingersoll at the dawn of this century. Nevertheless, considerable evidence indicates that one form of ultra-liberal religious thought has become strongly organized in the twentieth century and today represents a growing and significant movement. This ideology has adopted the name "Humanism"¹ even

¹The specific movement of Humanism discussed in this study should not be confused with the literary humanism of Paul Elmer More and Irving Babbitt, nor should it be thought of as the humanism of the Italian Renaissance in the sense of a "return to the classics." The two senses in which the word will be used here are (1) the traditional historic usage, that of an attitude of mind which assigns primary value to man, and (2) as a reference to the specific twentieth-century religious movement represented by the American Humanist Association. In this second sense, Humanism will be capitalized, even though the practice is not universally observed by all authors. Historical humanism will be discussed in Chapter II.

though it has sometimes been called "New Humanism," "Scientific Humanism," "Atheistic Humanism," "Religious Humanism," and "Naturalistic Humanism."²

This study will be devoted to an analysis of the ideas and the arguments found in the twentieth-century Humanist movement. That the movement is, in fact, significant and worthy of analysis may be illustrated by citing some statements of noted authors from the fields of philosophy and religion. Today "almost every college textbook in basic philosophy" allocates space for a discussion of Humanism as a modern and respectable way of life.³ Such was not the case some years earlier. By numerical standards Humanism is still a minor movement, but it has come increasingly to have a place in American philosophic and religious thought.

In a survey of religion in this century, Professor Herbert Schneider of Columbia University devotes a chapter to Humanism and therein asserts that "a fourth faith is in the making" (the other three being Jewish, Protestant and

²Some differences in emphasis do exist between such labels as naturalistic and scientific humanism; however, these distinctions will not be important in this study. The significant criterion determining whether or not a given individual will be included here will be his rhetorical and organizational involvement in Religious Humanism as a movement.

³"Five Years of Achievement--1949-1955," The Humanist, XV (March-April, 1955). Hereafter, all references in footnotes to Humanist journals will be abbreviated as follows: TH for The Humanist, TNH for The New Humanist, and THB for The Humanist Bulletin.

Catholic).⁴ He further has this to say of Humanism:

The humanist societies have been successful in bringing these various kinds of liberals, freethinkers, rationalists, Unitarians, Ethical Culturalists, etc. together for fellowship, instruction, publication, and promotion of their common interests. The reappearance of humanism as an independent religious movement is significant in spite of its small numbers. It gives proof through the night that Modernist Liberalism still lives as a positive religious faith, that the demand for religious expression exceeds the supply offered by conventional religious bodies.⁵

Schneider is not only pointing to the importance of Humanism as an independent movement, but he is also explaining some of the characteristics of the modern religious situation which contribute to the movement's success.⁶

John Hutchinson and James Martin, Jr., in an analysis of many religious faiths, contrast the movement with traditional religion and go on, like Schneider, to argue that Humanism is important enough that it may well be called "the fourth main religious option, along with Judaism, Roman Catholicism, and Protestantism, for thoughtful men in the contemporary Western World."⁷

Professor of Philosophy Harold Titus of Denison

⁴Herbert Wallace Schneider, Religion in 20th Century America (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1952), p. 141.

⁵Ibid., p. 142.

⁶Aspects of the context surrounding the growth of the movement will be discussed in Chapter II.

⁷John A. Hutchinson and James Alfred Martin, Jr., Ways of Faith (New York: The Ronald Press Co., 1953), p. 445.

University also devotes a chapter to Humanism, and while he has some critical comments regarding the movement's ideology, he admits that it has a rather natural appeal for many scientifically oriented people in modern society.⁸ Likewise, Charles S. Braden, in an examination of minority beliefs, writes that the movement is more than "just an organization" and its point of view is shared by "a large number of people," many of whom as yet have nothing at all to do with Humanism.⁹

The noted religious critics, Henry Wieman and Walter Horton, writing several years ago, stated that "the most recent of the humanitarian cults is that very considerable movement . . . which is known as the 'new humanism.'"¹⁰ And Willard Sperry of Harvard points to the Humanist's goal of becoming a "powerful denomination"; while he is none too optimistic about the movement's chances of achieving its goal, he does concede that Humanism has "many of the best brains and the most disciplined characters among us."¹¹

Whether or not Humanism is or will become a "fourth

⁸Harold H. Titus, Living Issues in Philosophy (3rd ed.; New York: American Book Co., 1959), p. 221.

⁹Charles Samuel Braden, These Also Believe (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1949), p. 468.

¹⁰Henry N. Wieman and Walter M. Horton, The Growth of Religion (Chicago: Willett, Clark, and Co., 1938), p. 191.

¹¹Willard Sperry, Religion in America (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1948), p. 256.

faith" or a strong denomination, it clearly represents a segment of modern religious and philosophic thought significant enough to provide a meaningful basis for an ideological and rhetorical analysis. Whereas the historical perspective may be hampered by the movement's youth,¹² a rhetorical analysis may be enhanced by it; that is, one is free to examine the argumentation of Humanism from its earliest beginnings to the present.

Scope of the Study

An examination of any social movement necessarily presupposes the establishment of some rather definite limitations, and there are several imposed in this study. For Humanism, the time period to be studied will be the least restrictive; the boundaries will simply encompass the total organized existence of the movement--1928 to the present. Of course, this restriction does not apply to the historical background which will be included.

The discourse to be examined herein will be taken almost exclusively from the movement's publications, for since Humanism was officially organized it has almost continuously published a journal.¹³ Other Humanist rhetorical activities

¹²The movement was officially organized in 1928.

¹³The movement's publications will be discussed in Chapter III.

such as speeches, discussions, and workshops¹⁴ will be examined when they are properly within the internal structure of Humanism and represent, largely, communication among members.

Another major limitation involves the selection of subject matter or ideas. The most persistent and consistent stream of ideas within Humanism, permeating all of its literature, involves a statement or an argument of the Humanist religious and philosophic position. This discourse may be referred to as the fundamental "ideology" of the movement and involves two broad spheres: (1) the value and meaning of Humanist tenets and (2) the relationship of Humanist ideas to those of other ideologies or religions. This study will be restricted to an analysis of the patterns of argument with which Humanists defend their ideology and attack opposing ideologies. Some of the rhetorical arguments are "defensive" in nature; that is they involve attempts to justify or provide a rationale for the movement's position. Other arguments may be classified as "offensive," meaning that they represent efforts to attack or refute other ideological positions which are in fundamental conflict with Humanist ideas. Thus, the defensive and offensive aspects of Humanist argumentation will represent the scope of this study. Consideration of the

¹⁴These and other channels of communication will be examined in Chapter III.

Humanist discussion of such issues as civil rights, birth control, and separation of church and state will, reluctantly, be omitted.

Emphasis will also be placed upon the specific Humanist figures who are most representative of the movement. This study will be focused on those men who have been the active leaders, "active" being defined as (1) frequency of contribution to Humanist publications, (2) degree of involvement in ideological discussions, and (3) activity in the organizational structure of Humanism. Approximately thirty individuals are the "active" leaders; their argumentation is the primary material for this study.

The Problem of Audience

Efforts to analyze the Humanist movement in regard to the relation of speaker and writer to audience present some unusually complex problems; and to assert simply that the speakers involved have many audiences and multiple purposes does not resolve the difficulty. The picture is complicated by the fact that social movements, according to Sherif and Sherif, are always possessed by a "sense of mission,"¹⁵ and this traditional zeal of evangelism has not by-passed Humanism. Professor Schneider observes, for example, that the

¹⁵Muzafer Sherif and Carolyn Sherif, An Outline of Social Psychology (New York: Harper and Brothers, Publishers, 1956), p. 722.

Humanists "are inevitably becoming militant and are organizing for missionary activity."¹⁶ Indeed, official Humanists have been open and frank about their desire to create growth (some Humanists even talk of their hope of establishing a mass movement), and their literature is replete with talk of expansion.¹⁷ Thus, one purpose in the minds of many Humanist speakers and writers is the possible proselytizing of new members; at least one broad audience could be called the "outsider" or the non-Humanist.

Yet, perhaps the most vital Humanist audience has always been composed of sympathetic listeners. What Humanists write or say is attended, for the most part, by other Humanists or near-Humanists, and Chapter III will illustrate how the "need to belong" and to communicate within the framework of an organization have been important uniting forces for this cluster of liberals. Actually, the open lines of communication which have allowed for membership interaction may well have meant the very survival of the organization. The rhetoric presented within the movement, then, is of primal importance, and for that reason will be the focus of this study. That outside audiences have been involved cannot be ignored, but will be de-emphasized here.

¹⁶Schneider, p. 141.

¹⁷Chapter III discusses the movement's channels of communication and that part of their function related to seeking new members.

A most vital observation regarding Humanist rhetoric is that those writing and those reading are essentially the same people; that which is a characteristic of one group is a characteristic of the other. Important writers of the movement fall into three major categories; so also, of course, do the readers.

The first category consists of liberal clergymen, primarily Unitarians and Ethical Culture leaders. Among those who have contributed to the movement as ministers,¹⁸ several deserve special mention. Five Unitarian ministers who might be considered "pioneers" of early Humanism are the following: John H. Dietrich of Minneapolis, who was preaching a strict Humanism as early as 1915; Curtis W. Reese of Chicago, who for many years was dean of the Abraham Lincoln Center in Chicago; Albert Eustace Haydon, also from Chicago, author, minister, and professor (most distinguished for his twenty-six years as Professor of Comparative Religion at the University of Chicago); the noted author and Humanist spokesman Charles Francis Potter of New York; and Edwin H. Wilson, for many years Unitarian minister of Salt Lake City, who eventually left the pulpit to devote full time to Humanist organizational work.¹⁹

¹⁸Unitarians who have become strict Humanists have sometimes been referred to as "Unitarian Humanists." Not all Unitarians are willing to accept certain aspects of Humanism as it has developed.

¹⁹These five men have now either retired or died.

Other Unitarian ministers who have espoused Humanism²⁰ are Kenneth Patton, R. Lester Mondale, Harold P. Marley, John Morris, and Harold Scott. J. Hutton Hynd is an Ethical Society leader who must be mentioned for his considerable contribution to the Humanist movement.

The second group of Humanists may be found in departments of philosophy and religion scattered throughout the country. Early Humanist thought came out of the University of Chicago where, in addition to Professor Haydon, mentioned above, was Professor Edward Scribner Ames. Columbia University was also an early Humanist stronghold; noted philosophy professors at Columbia include John Dewey, John Herman Randall, Jr., Herbert W. Schneider, and Corliss Lamont (a lecturer in philosophy).

Other important Humanist philosophers or theologians include Professor J. A. C. Fagginger Auer of Harvard Divinity School, Professors Max C. Otto and Horace Fries of the University of Wisconsin, Professor Roy Wood Sellars of the University of Michigan, Professor Van Meter Ames (son of Edward Scribner Ames) of the University of Cincinnati, Professor Harold Larrabee of the University of Utah, and Professor Oliver L. Reiser, chairman of the Department of Philosophy at the University of Pittsburg. Other professors of philosophy and religion will be cited throughout this study, but the above

²⁰The degree to which Humanism is indebted to Unitarianism is discussed in Chapter II.

list includes some of the most distinguished--distinguished not only for their work in education but also as authors.

A third group of Humanists is less easily classified; they include educators (primarily college professors) from various fields, scientists, authors, and others. Some of the more prominent figures in this list are Hermann J. Muller, Distinguished Service Professor of Zoology, Indiana University, Nobel Prize winner, 1946; Maurice Visscher, Distinguished Service Professor of Physiology, University of Minnesota Medical School; Rudolf Dreikurs, Professor of Psychiatry, Chicago Medical School; Harry Elmer Barnes, noted historian, author, and lecturer; Brock Chisholm, M. D., former head of World Health Organization and president of World Federation for Mental Health; Lloyd Morain, business consultant and past president of International Society for General Semantics; Anatol Rapoport, well-known author on general semantics, a member of the research staff on mental health at the University of Michigan Medical School; Gerald Wendt, author, lecturer, scientist, publisher of material for science education; William Floyd, editor and author; George Axtelle, Chairman of the Department of History and Philosophy of Education, New York University and later Professor of Education at Southern Illinois University; and Arthur E. Morgan, former president of Antioch College.

These three lists of Humanist leaders, while in no way

exhaustive,²¹ are nevertheless representative of the Humanist. Perhaps the most important common characteristics of the modern Humanist are that he has a high degree of formal education, most frequently is trained in philosophy or theology, and sometimes plays the dual role of minister-professor. Professors of the physical and social sciences also have been strongly attracted to the movement, as have many authors from various fields. The Humanist, then, is most likely to be one affiliated, directly or indirectly, with a college or university; and, almost without exception, Humanist chapters have been formed in communities in which an institution of higher learning is located.

Purpose and Structure of the Study

Leland Griffin argues that a rhetoric student's purpose in any movement study should be to "isolate the rhetorical movement within the matrix of the historical movement."²² The purpose of this study will be to discover and evaluate

²¹The brief biographical data about individual Humanists presented here as well as elsewhere in this study is not intended to be comprehensive or necessarily current. For example, many important Humanists who joined the movement very early have since then died or retired; others who joined the movement later may have changed professional positions or residences many times. The figures are identified here only in a general way in order that the composition of the Humanist movement may be better understood.

²²Leland M. Griffin, "The Rhetoric of Historical Movements," Quarterly Journal of Speech, XXXVIII (April, 1952), 184.

the patterns of argument which have emerged from Religious Humanism. The historical context surrounding this heterodox grouping will be examined in an effort to understand better its ideas, its leaders, and its goals.

This study will examine Humanist arguments as a part of the general history of ideas. A rhetorical analysis of the ideas involved should result in a better historical interpretation of this specific ideological tendency in American thought, and may also create some insights into other minority group efforts to organize.

A further purpose is to show that interaction among the members of the Humanist movement through several channels of communication produces a common rhetorical approach to ideological questions. A number of rhetorical patterns have emerged through the years of Humanist writing and speaking. Rhetorical "patterns," as used in this study, will refer to the nature of the arguments with which a Humanist seeks to defend his own ideology or to attack the position of a hostile ideology. Chapter II presents an exposition of the major Humanist tenets; Chapters IV, V, and VI are devoted to an analysis of the arguments Humanists employ.

The first task of this study will be to place Humanism into historical perspective, to make clear how it emerged as a significant ideological current, and to clarify its relation to other religious and philosophic tendencies. Next,

the role played by communication within the structure of the organization will be examined. The functions and strengths of each of Humanism's channels of communication will also be described.

The rest of the study will be devoted to an examination of the movement's three rhetorical patterns, patterns which have emerged as a result of communication within the structure of the group. The first will include an analysis of a fundamental Humanist ideological defense, the rhetorical identification of Humanism with science and the scientific method. The second division includes a description of the Humanist's offensive position, a refutation of religious orthodoxy. And the third contains an analysis of another pattern regarded as defensive in nature, Humanist's attempts to identify their movement with several commonly accepted ideals. The patterns of argument discussed in this study seem to be the major rhetorical product of the more than thirty years of Humanist argumentation.

CHAPTER II

HUMANIST FOUNDATIONS

Although organized Humanism has only recently appeared on the religious scene, the movement was in the process of evolving long before the twentieth century. A social movement, according to Sherif and Sherif, does not take place in a short time, but rather "it simmers, it seeks expression and fulfillment over wide areas of human congregation and through years of ebbing and flowing tide."¹ And correspondingly, Humanism has emerged out of a complex and long-fermenting social, cultural, and religious milieu. The purposes of this chapter are (1) to examine some of the humanistic tendencies in history, (2) to investigate the organizational forerunners of the Humanist movement, (3) to discuss the beginning of organized Humanism, and (4) to outline the formulation of the Humanist ideology.

Humanistic Tendencies in History

Much of what historians have traditionally identified

¹Muzafer Sherif and Carolyn Sherif, An Outline of Social Psychology (New York: Harper and Brothers, Publishers, 1956), p. 733.

as being "humanism" is relevant to the present movement, despite the fact that the word humanism is notoriously ambiguous and has been subjected to a myriad of meanings and interpretations. In at least one broad sense, humanism has meant and means a point of view which considers the affairs of man to be central to life, which emphasizes reason, science, human nature, and natural law, or which places a concern for human welfare on earth above other considerations. In such a context, countless philosophies and religions have at least some "humanistic" characteristics, and few philosophic positions indeed can be completely excluded.²

Nevertheless, the notion of a central emphasis on man has its own general place in history. The idea has some foundation even in Eastern cultures, especially with certain aspects of Buddhism and Confucianism. For example, Abraham Kaplan, Professor of Philosophy at the University of California, refers to Buddhism as "one of those philosophies that is centered on man," and what the Buddhist wants "to understand is man, and what he seeks knowledge of is how to live so as to achieve the supreme value that life affords."³

²It is for this reason that no effort will be made here to write a history of humanistic thought; rather, the intent is to point to some general tendencies in history which may have a relation to modern Humanism. The late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, as a period, will be treated with greater specificity.

³Abraham Kaplan, The New World of Philosophy (New York: Random House, Inc., 1961), pp. 242-43.

About Confucianism, Professor Kaplan says it is a philosophy which "is, above all, a humanistic one." He points out that morality "based squarely on the conception of a common human nature" is the major "preoccupation of Confucian thought."⁴ Obviously, these two great world religions contain many other complexities; they are cited here only to illustrate the humanistic current found in Eastern culture.

But the roots of humanism are more often located in Western culture.⁵ Actually, the word was first used by historical scholars of the nineteenth century when referring to those men of the Renaissance who were seeking to revitalize the rediscovered culture and literature of ancient Greece and Rome.⁶ Likely, the word humanism may be traced to the word humanitas as used by Cicero.⁷

Most modern Religious Humanists believe that their movement has rather definite ties with the ancient Greek culture, and they often claim to be descendants of the fifth century Sophist Protagoras; his statement, "Man is the measure

⁴Ibid., p. 273.

⁵H. J. Blackham, "Modern Humanism," Journal of World History, Published for the International Commission for a History of the Scientific and Cultural Development of Mankind, with the financial support of UNESCO, VIII, No. 1 (1964), 101.

⁶Werner Jaeger, Humanism and Theology (Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 1943), p. 20.

⁷Ibid.

of all things," is frequently quoted as support for that claim.⁸ The modern English philosopher H. J. Blackham refers to this anthropocentric tendency of Protagoras as a "characteristic Greek idea," furthered by many other natural philosophers of the ancient culture.⁹ In at least a general way, human nature and reason were given a prominent place throughout ancient Greece;¹⁰ their degree of prominence, however, is sometimes debated. Furthermore, one need not conclude that humanistic and theological ideas have always been in fundamental opposition to each other.¹¹ Indeed, theology is also a "Greek invention" and its roots go deep into the culture of that ancient democracy.¹² Of course a strict theocentric view may be contrasted to an anthropocentric

⁸Cited in Lloyd Morain and Mary Morain, Humanism as the Next Step (Boston: Beacon Press, 1954), p. 19.

⁹Blackham, Journal of World Humanism, VIII, 102.

¹⁰Jaeger, p. 20.

¹¹See especially ibid., pp. 39-64. Jaeger here advances the argument that the anthropocentric philosophy of Protagoras and others of his day was not the central essence of Greek thought, but rather, represented a decay of philosophic advance. He argues that theology and the search for God were more truly symbolic of the Greek contribution. The historical point being made in this study is that at least one important phase of Greek thought was man-centered and that modern Humanists claim that ancient land as the birth-place for their movement. For a discussion of humanism in ancient times which may be contrasted to Jaeger's interpretation, see Corliss Lamont, "The Humanist Tradition: Forerunners," TH, IV (Summer, 1944), 62-69.

¹²Blackham, Journal of World History, VIII, 102.

position, but the broader "humanistic" need not be thought of as inherently in conflict with the theological.¹³

The Renaissance has already been mentioned as a period during which classical ideas from Greece and Rome were rediscovered and revived. The humanism of the Renaissance was, in part, a revolt against the theological scholasticism of the Middle Ages and a return to a concern for man;¹⁴ but again, most of the humanists of that period were not actually hostile toward Christianity.¹⁵ Nevertheless, the period did represent a move toward a new emphasis upon man and human nature to the extent that Professor Oliver Reiser has been led to say that today's Religious Humanism "is simply Renaissance humanism modernized."¹⁶

Thus, in a very general way, a humanistic emphasis can be said to have foundations in a limited way in Eastern cultures, but in a more direct way in the ancient Greek and Roman cultures, being revived during the Renaissance. Undoubtedly, a humanistic tendency might be found to exist in almost any period of human history and, to a degree, has been mingled with the history of theology. St. Thomas, for example,

¹³That is in the historic sense, it is modern Humanism which has taken a position in opposition to theology.

¹⁴Douglas Macintosh, "Contemporary Humanism," Humanism Another Battleline, ed. William Peter King (Nashville, Tennessee: Cokesbury Press, 1931), p. 41.

¹⁵Jaeger, p. 2.

¹⁶Oliver L. Reiser, A New Earth and a New Humanity (New York: Creative Age Press, Inc., 1942), p. 53.

a pre-Renaissance figure, attempting to give new life to the recently discovered writings of Aristotle, was himself furthering the humanistic tradition, and it would not be inappropriate to label him a humanist of his day.¹⁷ Historical humanism, then, has conflicted with religion and theology only in matters of degree or emphasis, even though at points this conflict has been definite and real.¹⁸

But the broad and central emphasis on man and reason came into a sharper conflict with certain religious views in the seventeenth ("Age of Reason") and eighteenth ("The Enlightenment") centuries. The clash was particularly evident wherever the "ecclesiasticism of medieval Christendom survived and blocked the way to new knowledge and social change."¹⁹

With the rise of European rationalism (both religious and secular) of the seventeenth century came an important movement toward a general "humanistic morality."²⁰ This tendency in both the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries pointed toward an ever-widening interest in "purely human problems" and toward a "science of man," man shorn of his ultimate possibilities and restricted to success or failure on earth.²¹

¹⁷Jaeger, p. 19.

¹⁸The earlier mentioned Sophists of ancient Greece are good examples.

¹⁹Blackham, Journal of World History, VIII, 104.

²⁰Stow Persons, Evolutionary Thought in America (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1950), p. 423.

²¹Ibid.

This new humanistic trend in Europe soon spread to America where its impact was to be violent.²² But American religion, at least, was not immediately affected, for during the eighteenth century the church was little involved or concerned with the new morality and those who sought to initiate such humanistic ideas were a few "freethinkers" and "infidels."²³ But the nineteenth century was to see humanistic ideas cause a revolution in both religious and secular thought.

Very early in the nineteenth century the spread of seventeenth and eighteenth-century European rationalism to America began to permeate American culture, causing an upheaval in religious thought. The new humanistic orientation soon began to "undermine" traditional theology, creating a need for rapid readjustment.²⁴

Accompanying the new humanistic morality came an abiding faith in reason and especially science and the scientific method.²⁵ However important science was before Charles Darwin wrote about evolution, the interest in science

²²Ibid.

²³Henry N. Wieman and Walter M. Horton, The Growth of Religion (Chicago: Willett, Clark and Co., 1938), p. 183.

²⁴Persons, Evolutionary Thought in America, p. 424.

²⁵Stow Persons, Free Religion An American Faith (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1947), p. 105.

following the Civil War became intense. Science found its "devil in the irrational dogma of traditional religion," and its "demi-gods" in great scientists like Darwin.²⁶ The "Cult of Science" found its popularizers in men like John Draper, Edward Youmans, and Robert Ingersoll, and had its popular magazines, its Herbert Spencer clubs, and its powerful press--The Appleton Scientific Series.²⁷ Thus, the new humanistic emphasis and especially the interest in science were penetrating American culture and the resulting impact on theology, according to Henry Steele Commager, was "violent."²⁸

Traditional religion answered the humanistic challenge in the last half of the century by an "adjustment" which has come to be called the "Social Gospel." Professor Herbert Schneider argues that the Social Gospel movement was "the most far-reaching and apparently permanent moral reconstruction in American religion."²⁹ The Social Gospel sought "to save human beings from a temporal distress," and might be called a brand of "social mysticism."³⁰ This movement, which substituted the

²⁶Ibid.

²⁷Ibid.

²⁸Henry Steele Commager, The American Mind (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1950), p. 166.

²⁹Herbert Wallace Schneider, Religion in 20th Century America (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1952), p. 72.

³⁰Morris R. Cohen, American Thought (Glencoe, Illinois: The Free Press, 1954), p. 193.

saving of man on earth for the "saving of souls," cut across denominational lines and found its most articulate spokesmen in figures such as Washington Gladden, Walter Rauschenbusch, Henry Potter, Francis McConnel, and George Davis Herron.³¹

The church, then, was deeply influenced by the new morality, but so also was the general religious outlook of the country.³² One example of the changing religious atmosphere throughout the nation in the last half of the nineteenth century was the "amazing popularity" of the agnostic Robert Ingersoll, whose vigorous attacks on religious orthodoxy some years earlier would probably not have been tolerated.³³

The humanistic trend in the nineteenth century, however, went a step beyond producing tolerance for a few scattered agnostics and influencing the church for social action. The century has been called a "great experiment" in which there was a search for a new religious attitude free from dogma.³⁴ This search led to attempts to organize humanistic thought and extremist religious ideas into a separate movement.

³¹Edwin T. Buehrer, "Retracing the Liberal Tradition," TH, XX (May-June, 1960), 133.

³²Wieman and Horton, The Growth of Religion, p. 133.

³³Harvey Wish, Society and Thought in America (New York: Longman, Green and Co., 1952), p. 152.

³⁴Harold Buschman, "Humanism and Positivism," TNH, I (1928), 2.

Organizational Forerunners of
Modern Humanism

Growing out of this search for a new religious expression were at least three³⁵ significant attempts to unite the adherents of the new ideology under one banner. These three were the Unitarian Church, the Free Religious Association, and the Ethical Culture Societies.³⁶ All three represented ultra-liberal humanistic thought and had much in common, but what is important here is that modern Humanism grew rather directly out of the seeds of each. Some examination of the three "religions" is, therefore, necessary.

Unitarianism (1825-)³⁷

The largest and most important humanistic movement of the nineteenth century, and the only one which can be called a "church" in the usual sense of the word, was Unitarianism.

³⁵There were, of course, more than three organizations of this kind, but these three are most similar to modern Humanism because they each attached a "religious" significance to their movement. Other organizations included the Rationalists, the Freethinkers, and Auguste Comte's "Religion of Humanity."

³⁶The Universalist Church will not be considered as a separate movement because it was very similar to Unitarianism, but of a lesser import. The two churches have recently merged.

³⁷The Unitarian church actually existed as early as the sixteenth century in Hungarian Transylvania and as early as the seventeenth century in America as a development of the Congregational movement. The date 1825 is used here to mark the beginning of what some would call "modern" Unitarianism. It was in 1825 that the American Unitarian Association was first organized.

Organized before the new European ideas had widely permeated this country, Unitarianism was itself strongly influenced by the new tide of humanistic thought.

Unitarianism has sometimes been characterized as primarily a reaction against both Trinitarianism and a belief in the divinity of Jesus, but such concepts have not been fundamental to the movement. Willard Sperry points out that Unitarianism "was a revolt against the whole grim doctrine of human nature and the mechanical means for man's salvation which had become the convention in American Calvinism by the middle of the eighteenth century."³⁸ And Professor Commager argues that the movement was, in general, a reaction against those Protestant sects which represented a "flight from reason"; whereas Unitarianism moved in the opposite direction in an effort "to accommodate inherited theology to the realities of American experience."³⁹

But even such a "rational" religion as Unitarianism was profoundly influenced and changed before the end of the century by Darwinism and the new interest in science.⁴⁰ The ultra-liberal wing of the Unitarian church so completely embraced the new humanistic tendency that it became the basis of a separate movement--the Free Religious Association (to be

³⁸Willard Sperry, Religion in America (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1948), p. 88.

³⁹Commager, p. 165.

⁴⁰Ibid.

discussed next). The new Association, ~~then~~, had an impact on the whole of Unitarianism. Professor Stow Persons observes:

Free Religion was most immediately influential in the transformation of Unitarianism from a Christo-centric religion to a pragmatic, humanistic theism, retaining the Christian name but actually being Christian only in the sense of recognizing its dependence upon the religious patterns of Western culture.⁴¹

Before the end of the century, therefore, the Unitarian church became the leading spokesman for the new humanistic trend and the cult of science.

This relatively small movement of Unitarianism also had a significant impact on the total religious picture. Dean Sperry of Harvard writes:

Unitarianism has never bulked large in numbers, but it has had an influence on American religious thought out of all proportion to its numbers, partly because of the distinguished names it has carried on its rolls.⁴²

He goes on to point out that the movement's influence has further resulted because Unitarianism has led theology into questions which other denominations refused to face; and that much of the achievement of Unitarianism in "freeing man from the iron grip of Calvinism" has now become the common property of many orthodox denominations.⁴³ Unitarianism, however, has continued to move to the theological left, and many of the "more advanced Unitarians," according to Sperry, in the middle

⁴¹Persons, Free Religion, An American Faith, p. 154.

⁴²Sperry, p. 89.

⁴³Ibid.

and western part of the United States have given up theism for agnosticism and may already be called humanists.⁴⁴ This wing of liberal Unitarianism has been one of the chief sources for modern Humanism.⁴⁵

The Free Religious Association (1867-1917)

In a comprehensive study of the Free Religious Association, Professor Stow Persons writes that it

was conceived by the extreme radicals as a substitute for the organization of Unitarianism. In a real sense it was sort of a mutual protection for those dissenters who would not submit to the yoke of Christ, as prescribed in the National Unitarian Conference.⁴⁶

He adds that the FRA was prompted "by purely negative considerations; men needed a new fellowship to replace the old one no longer available."⁴⁷ Thus, Free Religion emerged from Unitarianism, and it did so simply by moving further to the theological left. As already mentioned, this move tended to "liberalize" the entire Unitarian movement.

But it was not Unitarianism which chiefly antagonized the Free Religious Association; rather it was the general organized church which the Association considered "inert" and bound to a defective social order.⁴⁸ The FRA showed a deep

⁴⁴Ibid.

⁴⁵Charles Francis Potter, The Preacher and I (New York: Crown Publisher, Inc., 1951), p. 394.

⁴⁶Persons, Free Religion, An American Faith, p. 75.

⁴⁷Ibid.

⁴⁸Ibid., p. 132.

concern for what it called the "dangers of the evangelical revival," but its major criticism of Christianity centered around authoritarianism, institutionalization, and fixed beliefs.⁴⁹ The constitution of the Free Religious Association, for example, talks about the promotion of "pure religion" and encouragement of the "scientific study of theology."⁵⁰ And Persons points out that the most important goal advanced by the FRA was

the application of free thought to religious problems, with the consequent emancipation of religious belief and life from allegiance to all authority save that of truth as determined by rational human intelligence.⁵¹

Such expressions of concern for man and science clearly place the FRA in the midst of the new humanistic ideology.

In contrast to the Christianity it condemned, Free Religion made a strong effort to remain individualistic and "creedless." This powerful concern for complete individualism within the group, coupled with the fact that the Association was fundamentally more negative than constructive in its outlook, significantly interfered with group activity.⁵² The movement was further hampered by the confusion in the minds of many people of Free Religion with the general "anti-Christian cult" of the century.⁵³

Despite these organizational problems, Free Religion

⁴⁹Ibid., p. 116.

⁵⁰Ibid., p. 75.

⁵¹Ibid., p. 148.

⁵²Ibid., p. 151.

⁵³Ibid., p. 152.

helped break down narrow ecclesiastical authoritarianism of the middle nineteenth century, and aided in making the important issue of the time one of freedom versus authority.⁵⁴

But as many churches became more liberal, partly through the influence of the FRA, most of the young Free Religionists began to drift back into the Unitarian and other liberal churches.⁵⁵ The net result was that the organization dissolved in 1917.

The Ethical Culture Societies (1876-)

A one-time president of the Free Religious Association, Felix Adler, broke with the Association in 1876 and formed the first Ethical Culture Society.⁵⁶ Adler had a deep concern for "ethics," and he argued that "the ethical end is the sovereign, supreme end of life to which all other ends must be subordinated."⁵⁷ His general quarrel with religion was that ethics and morality should not be taught as dependent on any religion, for a failure of religion would also mean a decline in morality.⁵⁸

Some have asserted that the Societies turned out to

⁵⁴Ibid.

⁵⁵Ibid., p. 127.

⁵⁶Stow Persons, American Minds (New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1958), p. 121.

⁵⁷Cited in Charles Samuel Braden, These Also Believe (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1949), p. 463.

⁵⁸Ibid.

be "just another Modernist church."⁵⁹ And, in at least one sense, they have resembled a church; that is, they have held regular meetings with music, inspirational readings, and an address by their leader on some social, philosophic, or religious issue.⁶⁰ The historian Harry Elmer Barnes points out, however, that some would not call the Societies a religion but rather a type of social ethics or social philosophy, which has been successful in adapting itself to "the progress of scientific knowledge and critical thought."⁶¹

At any rate, the Ethical Culture Societies brought together people of "all faiths and no faiths," who could unite on "promoting religiously and practically a social ethic."⁶² Schneider further sums up the movement by saying:

These societies gave radical expression to the tendency which was increasingly noticeable among liberal American faiths, generally, the tendency to subordinate theological differences to a practical program of social reconstruction. They also emphasized as did the Christian Socialists, that a social order must be judged by the kind of human beings it produces, and not by impersonal criteria.⁶³

Thus, the Ethical Culture Societies embraced the humanistic trend of the nineteenth century. And, like Unitarianism and

⁵⁹Persons, American Minds, p. 121.

⁶⁰Braden, p. 463.

⁶¹Harry Elmer Barnes, The Twilight of Christianity (Peterborough, New Hampshire: Richard R. Smith Co., Inc., 1929), p. 349.

⁶²Schneider, p. 75.

⁶³Ibid., pp. 75-76.

Free Religion, they have insisted upon remaining free from dogma or creed.⁶⁴

Common Characteristics of the Organizational Forerunners

The three groups just discussed share several significant characteristics: all have grown out of the Western religious tradition, and yet, they represented a reaction against the church and Christianity in general. Each organization was an attempt to unite the extreme left in America's religious thinking. The three were deeply interested in social reform and subordinated theology to an earthly humanitarianism. Each attached a religious significance to its movement and displayed an interest in organized fellowship. Every one of the groups expressed a strong commitment to reason, the scientific method, and science in general, emphasizing the importance of "free thought" and making an effort to remain free from any creed. And all three of the organizations were responsible for helping spread the new humanistic ideas throughout America.

The Beginning of Organized Humanism

These three strikingly similar forerunners are significant because they represent a thread in American religious and intellectual life, a thread which has persisted into the twentieth century and has been carried forward by the

⁶⁴Braden, p. 463.

organization of Humanism. As already indicated, Unitarianism provided the primary source for modern Humanism. Actually, the theological evolution within Unitarianism, including its efforts to unite the liberal movements, had as its "natural consequence," according to Professors Wieman and Horton, the emergence of the "new humanism" which replaced the belief in God and immortality with "the very modern belief in the possibility of indefinite progress through social cooperation and scientific research."⁶⁵ Professor Barnes also recognizes this natural tendency in the Unitarian church as he refers to "Unitarian Humanism" as being the "most conspicuous and straight-forward representative of Advanced Modernism."⁶⁶ But the seeds for modern Humanism were not to be found exclusively within the Unitarian church, for both the Free Religious Association and the Ethical Culture Societies helped provide a base for the new movement. When it disbanded in 1917, for example, the FRA (whose origin and purposes almost precisely parallel those of modern Humanism) left a "core of ethical humanism."⁶⁷ This "core" was soon to be absorbed by the new Humanism as it took up the task of unifying the liberals, a task which the FRA had never completed.

⁶⁵Wieman and Horton, The Growth of Religion, p. 182.

⁶⁶Barnes, p. 338.

⁶⁷Edwin H. Wilson, "Free Religion and Freethought," book review of Free Religion, An American Faith, by Stow Persons, The Humanist, IX (Spring, 1949), 43.

Twentieth-century Humanism, then, drew many, if not most, of its leaders and members from the ranks of Free Religion, Ethical Culture, and Unitarianism. Because the three organizations had no creed and were so much alike in outlook, a man could, and sometimes did, become a member of more than one at the same time. Indeed, even today many Humanists are also members of the Unitarian Church or the Ethical Culture Society. The impression should not be left, however, that the three organizational forerunners provided all Humanism's membership; for the entire humanistic trend of the nineteenth century meant that Humanists could be found in many of the liberal churches. Also, many of the early Humanists were men who had previously belonged to no religious organization or church at all.

A Separate Movement Seeks Expression

The truly important period which finally culminated in the emergence of Humanism as a separate movement was the decade immediately following World War I. Even before the war, Unitarian clergy were allowed to express from their pulpits any belief they chose.⁶⁸ The result was an increasing expression of a position some were beginning to call "Humanism," bringing with it "a conflict in the Unitarian denomination which threatened to split it."⁶⁹ Thus, Humanism was

⁶⁸Morain and Morain, Humanism as the Next Step, p. 33.

⁶⁹Potter, The Preacher and I, p. 361.

seeking expression by the 1920's, and more and more individuals were finding the confines of Unitarianism unsatisfactory.

Dr. John H. Dietrich has often been called the "Dean of American Humanism," for he was preaching a straight-forward Humanist doctrine as early as 1915 as minister of the First Unitarian Church of Minneapolis.⁷⁰ In an address delivered in Minneapolis in 1925 entitled "Humanism, The Next Step in Religion," Dietrich argued that Humanism was simply an extension and "a more rigorous application of the fundamental principles of Unitarianism." He also recognized, however, that the new Humanism had not yet been "fully preached" by most Unitarians.⁷¹ By this time, other influential Unitarian ministers had begun to espouse the new ideology; they included such men as Curtis Reese of Chicago, Charles F. Potter of New York, and Edwin H. Wilson of Salt Lake City.⁷² Outside the confines of the Unitarian church, a number of scholars began to identify with the new Humanist ideology; the most notable examples in philosophy were Max Otto, Roy Wood Sellars, and A. E. Haydon.⁷³

⁷⁰Charles Francis Potter, Humanism: A New Religion, (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1936), p. 80.

⁷¹Cited in ibid.

⁷²Braden, p. 463.

⁷³Henry N. Wieman and Bernard Meland, American Philosophies of Religion (Chicago: Willett, Clark and Co., 1936), p. 258.

The Movement Is Organized

The inevitable attempts to organize this scattered Humanist thought were soon to begin. In 1927, for example, a number of professors and students at the University of Chicago began to meet as a group and in 1928 they formed The New Humanist Associates.⁷⁴ That same year they launched a modest, mimeographed journal called The New Humanist. The journal soon grew in size and importance. Meanwhile, in a separate venture, Charles Francis Potter of New York was making plans to inaugurate a Humanist Fellowship. Potter successfully began the First Humanist Society of New York, September 29, 1929. The Society received wide publicity and its meetings were well attended.⁷⁵

The New Humanist Associates evolved into the Humanist Press Association in 1934, named partly in an effort to pattern the organization after the Rationalist Press Association of England.⁷⁶ The HPA in turn gave way to the present American Humanist Association formed in 1941. The journal also changed its name during this period.

The American Humanist Association was organized as a non-ecclesiastical religious group for the purpose of carrying

⁷⁴Corliss Lamont, "John Dewey and the American Humanist Association," TH, XX (January-February, 1960), 6.

⁷⁵Potter, The Preacher and I, p. 356.

⁷⁶Lamont, TH, XX, 3.

on educational activities in the United States "for the advancement of naturalistic humanism," and to serve its members.⁷⁷ The leaders of the American Humanist Association in the 1930's and 1940's were primarily men with other liberal religious responsibilities--ministers of the Unitarian church and Ethical Culture Societies for the most part. The bulk of the editorial and organizational work of the AHA during its first twenty years of operation (including the NHA and the HPA) was carried on through the volunteer work of one Unitarian minister, Edwin H. Wilson.⁷⁸ In 1949 Dr. Wilson gave up his Unitarian post to become the full-time executive director of the AHA.

The Formulation of the Humanist Ideology

The diversity of liberal intellectual groups from which Humanism has drawn its adherents makes difficult an enumeration of propositions to which all members of the movement can subscribe. Indeed, as already indicated, Humanism has traditionally been critical of all "dogma" and has struggled to remain without a creed. Wilson, for example, asserts that "Humanists do not have a creed," and that all creeds are bad "because they tend to freeze thought and become a block to

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ Morain and Morain, Humanism as the Next Step, p. 84.

intellectual progress."⁷⁹ Despite this attitude, a number of rather specific beliefs have emerged as fundamental to the movement and are commonly held by most modern Humanists. These major tenets can best be outlined by an examination of at least three ideological formulations, one from each decade of the movement's existence.

The Humanist Manifesto

The only formal and official statement of Humanist beliefs and the most significant document of the movement was the Humanist Manifesto, drawn up and signed by thirty-four intellectuals in 1933.⁸⁰ The statements in the Manifesto have never been able to claim universal Humanist acceptance; however, they do represent the basic foundation of the ideology.

The following list of propositions from the Manifesto has been abbreviated here,⁸¹ but the core of each idea remains. The fifteen points in the document are as follows:

1. The universe is self-existing and not created.
2. Man is a part of nature and has emerged as a result of continuous process.
3. The traditional dualism of mind and body must be rejected.

⁷⁹Edwin H. Wilson, "Correspondence," editorial reply to a letter, TH, IX (Spring, 1949), 56.

⁸⁰Unitarianism's relationship to Humanism is further indicated by the Manifesto, for by the end of 1933 sixty Unitarian ministers had endorsed the document.

⁸¹A complete copy of the Manifesto and its original signers appears as Appendix I.

4. Man's religious culture and civilization have developed through interaction with his environment, and an individual born into a culture is largely molded by it.
5. The nature of the universe depicted by modern science makes unacceptable any supernatural or cosmic guarantee of human values. Humanism does not deny the possibilities of realities as yet undiscovered, but it insists that the way to discover them is through intelligent inquiry.
6. The time has passed for theism, deism, modernism, and the several varieties of "new thought."
7. Religion consists of those actions, purposes, and experiences which are humanly significant and satisfy human living. The distinction between the sacred and the secular can no longer be maintained.
8. The complete realization of human personality is the end of man's life and should be developed here and now.
9. In place of worship and prayer, religious emotion may be expressed in a heightened sense of personal life and an effort to promote social welfare.
10. There are no uniquely religious emotions and attitudes of the kind hitherto associated with the belief in the supernatural.
11. Man will learn to face the crises of life in terms of their naturalness and probability. They will discourage sentimental and unreal hopes and wishful thinking.
12. Man should develop creative achievements which add to the satisfaction of life.
13. All associations and institutions exist for the fulfillment of human life, and religious institutions must be reconstructed to function effectively in the modern world.
14. A socialized and co-operative economic order must be established to the end that the equitable distribution of the means of life be possible. Humanism demands a shared world and a shared life.

15. One needs to affirm life rather than deny it, to elicit the possibility of life and not flee from it, and to endeavor to establish a satisfactory life for all.⁸²

In 1953, The Humanist conducted a survey of the original signers of the Manifesto in an effort to determine what changes they might wish to make in the document.⁸³ All but one of the twenty-five living signers indicated that they still were in general sympathy with the fundamental postulates of the Manifesto. However, some criticisms were raised, and the two most common ones were (1) that point fourteen regarding a socialized economy should be excluded, or that such an economic change was less vital in 1953 than it had been in 1933, and (2) that the statements in the Manifesto were too "exclusive" and "dogmatic," especially points like number six disclaiming all theism, deism, modernism, etc. Modern Humanists who had not signed the Manifesto were also asked to evaluate the document, and the criticisms made were very much like those set forth by the original signers.⁸⁴ What is significant about the survey is that the general purport of the document can still be said to hold the foundations of modern Humanism.

⁸²Reprinted in TH, XXII (July-August, 1962), 130-31.

⁸³"The Humanist Manifesto: Twenty Years After," TH, XIII (March-April, 1953), 58-71.

⁸⁴"Comments on The Humanist Manifesto," TH, XIII (May-June, 1953), 136-41.

Humanists are quick to protest, however, that the Manifesto must be put in its proper historical perspective. Wilson reflects the movement's attitude by saying that the Humanist Manifesto "was simply what thirty-four men agreed on in a general way at a particular time."⁸⁵

Another Ideological Formulation

In 1943, two leading Humanists published in The Humanist a rather extensive statement of the movement's beliefs. The statements belong in the main stream of Humanism and have met with general acceptance by the membership. Lloyd Morain and Oliver Reiser prefer to use the label "Scientific Humanism," and they assert that the following twelve ideas best describe the Scientific Humanist.

1. He feels that man is a part of nature in a completely natural universe and that he is an independent agent using nature to serve his own enlightenment.
2. He is global in his outlook and gains his strength not from heaven, but from the resources and wonders of the earth.
3. He is a leader in social progress and interested in social change with a global orientation.
4. He is not dogmatic, but feels that there are some things which are facts, an uncreated universe, for example. He feels that there is no "riddle of existence" or antecedent "meaning of life," but that such meanings are created, not discovered.
5. He believes that everything occurs or exists in a context and that science never learns everything about anything; and he feels that without being

⁸⁵Wilson, "Correspondence," editorial reply to a letter, TH, IX (Spring, 1949), 56.

absolute, he must make adjustments on the basis of probabilities and predictabilities.

6. He believes that all events are multi-causational and that scientific laws are tentative; he feels that man is an agent in affecting nature and society.
7. He is a semanticist and stands for the application of the scientific method to all problems; he feels that it is wrong to separate reason and emotion, facts and values, or science and morality, and that science has a deep social responsibility.
8. He believes that scientific control of the world has reached the point where all men can enjoy security and peace; and that through humanized and socialized changes global problems can be solved.
9. He holds that a universal ethics is needed; that morality needs no supernaturalism and is not heaven-sent, but rather it evolves from man's experience.
10. He feels that religion which interferes with social progress should be subordinated; and in the Humanist world, "religion" should become obsolete, while the "religious" attitude of awe in the universe should become vital.
11. He believes in all groups co-operating in the world so that knowledge can be available to all and a good society can be made to serve universal humanity, as opposed to selfish interests.
12. He holds that the wonders of scientific discovery will help break down the religious, political, and economic barriers which now prevent a global orientation.⁸⁶

Morain and Reiser have, thus, set forth some broad and sweeping philosophic ideas regarding Scientific Humanism.

⁸⁶Lloyd Morain and Oliver Reiser, "Scientific Humanism: A Formulation," TH, III (Spring, 1943), 15-19.

They reflect a strong faith in man, nature, and science, while displaying an optimistic outlook toward the future.

Six Humanist Premises

A radio address delivered in 1951 by the most prominent spokesman of the movement, Edwin H. Wilson,⁸⁷ offers a clear picture of Humanist beliefs, though less formal and philosophic than the formulation just outlined. Wilson outlines six major premises of Religious Humanism.

His first premise states that Humanists are not "other-worldly," and that time spent thinking about an after life is "time wasted." If there is another life, argues Wilson, the Humanist is willing to let it take care of itself.

The second premise is an affirmation of the Humanist's concern for man. Wilson states that the Humanist lives as if "men count most of all with him," and "human fulfillment" is of "primary value."

The third premise is an extension of this idea, for it asserts that Humanists strongly believe in the equality of all men, and that there is "no master race, no nationality or class which is superior to others." The Humanist, Wilson continues, is concerned where "any human is abused," and is found leading the struggle against prejudice and injustice.

⁸⁷Edwin H. Wilson, "Humanism: The Fourth Faith," TH, XI (May-June, 1951), 105-109.

In premise four, Wilson states that "freedom of thought and action is integral to the Humanist way of life." He develops the point further by saying that "Humanism is opposed to all totalitarianisms, whether political or religious--whether Communist or Fascist or known by any other name--which imposes arbitrary authority on individual thought and conduct." Wilson adds that whatever robs the individual of the free use of his mind is "anti-Humanistic."

Premise five affirms the Humanist's faith in the findings and methods of science. Wilson states that the "other faiths" have lost their hold on the Humanist, who is no longer satisfied with assertion, but demands the authority of scientific facts. Wilson concludes the point by saying that the "evolutionary world view" which science has revealed is not absolute, but offers the truest picture the Humanist can find on which to build a new world.

The final premise is a forward-looking statement of optimism. Wilson asserts that Humanists live as if they must and can depend on the intelligent cooperation of men of good will to end poverty, war, disease, and prejudice. He argues that scientific knowledge in the hands of men of good will can meet these challenges and build a free and just world.

Clearly, these six premises do not differ markedly from earlier ideas of the Humanist movement. The ideological differences between the three decades of the movement are largely ones of emphasis; more specifically, Humanism has

moved in the direction of expressing itself in a positive manner, a position of being for rather than against something.

Summary

Fundamental humanistic ideas can be traced back into ancient history, but it was the Renaissance which gave them new force and meaning. These new humanistic perspectives finally spread from Europe to America where, in the nineteenth century, they caused a severe upheaval in both religious and intellectual life. The new humanism not only permeated all of traditional religion, but found separate movements willing to dedicate themselves to the new ideology. Three such humanistic movements of the century were Unitarianism, Free Religion, and Ethical Culture, each of which was a forerunner to modern Humanism.

The early twentieth century saw a number of Unitarian ministers begin to preach an ultra-liberal doctrine they called "humanism"; and this wing of the Unitarian church was largely responsible for the formation of the new Humanist movement. By the end of the 1920's Humanism had its own modest organization and was producing its own journal.

The ideology of the new movement has never been fixed or dogmatic, but can be summarized as follows: (1) an agnostic position regarding God, immortality, and other beliefs of traditional religion; (2) a belief that truth is discovered not by the use of revelation, but through the scientific

method; (3) a belief that "religious" values are to be found in nature and life since man is a part of, and has evolved from, nature; (4) a faith in the future of man and society based on the belief that man, with the help of science, can solve most of his problems; and (5) a belief in the dignity and worth of all men and a strong concern for man's earthly welfare.

CHAPTER III

CHANNELS OF COMMUNICATION

Social movements require at least a minimum of "cultural homogeneity and a certain 'we' feeling," write Turner and Killian; and they add that the members of a social movement must be able to interact through a "chain of communication."¹ Sherif and Sherif support the idea by saying that a social movement involves geographical distance and "requires communication among the discontented and the aspiring."² As a movement, Humanism has been keenly aware of the need for communication among its membership and has established and kept open a variety of communication channels. Not only have these been largely responsible for the movement's survival and growth, but they have also resulted in Humanism's development of a common ideology and a common pattern of presentation and defense of that ideology.

The various communication media utilized by Humanism

¹Ralph H. Turner and Lewis M. Killian, Collective Behavior (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1957), pp. 21-26.

²Muzafer Sherif and Carolyn Sherif, An Outline of Social Psychology (New York: Harper and Brothers, Publishers, 1956), p. 725.

differ in kind and overlap in function. They provide for an interrelation among individual Humanists and for a method of attracting new members. The four channels to be discussed in this chapter are (1) organizational communication, (2) publications, (3) tape recordings, and (4) miscellaneous member-producing channels.

Organizational Channels

The Organizations and Their Structure

As described in the previous chapter, the scattered humanistic thinkers of the 1920's inevitably began to seek a method whereby they could speak with something of a united voice. The first step involved their banding together into small groups (the Chicago "Fellowship" of 1927 and the New York "Society" of 1929 are the earliest examples). The formation of a broader "parent" association was the next step, specifically met by the foundation of the New Humanist Associates of 1928. In those early days of the movement, of course, the central organizational structure was extremely loose, if not ineffective.

The importance of the NHA, however, increased as its journal³ grew in size and quality. After changing the national association's name twice, Humanists appear to have settled for the AHA as the permanent parent association;

³The movement's publications will be discussed later

nevertheless, the three national organizations have been somewhat similar in purpose and structure. Yet a vast change in the AHA's influence and activity did take place after 1950 (these changes to be discussed in other sections of this chapter).

Some of these early Humanist "fellowships" eventually came to be referred to as "chapters" of the AHA, suggesting a stronger tie between the local and national organizations. Although national officers and members of the board are directly elected by the Humanist membership, local chapters are independent and operate without significant national restrictions.

The only other organization of the movement (other than those designed to extend Humanism) is a rather recent establishment. In 1952 the first meeting of the International Humanist and Ethical Union was held in Amsterdam, representing a joining together of the Ethical Societies and the AHA to create a world organization related to American Humanism. The IHEU meets every five years and appears to be growing in importance and participation; however, the newness of the organization makes evaluation of it difficult. The AHA does, however, consider the IHEU to be an important aspect of the organizational structure of the movement.

Organizational Purposes and Functions

That the highly independent and heterodox Humanist

should find it necessary to associate or organize may appear strange and ironic, but his reasons are made abundantly clear by his own declarations. For example, the preamble to the constitution of the first Humanist Fellowship speaks significantly of a desire "to band ourselves together because of certain convictions we hold in common, and certain purposes whose consummation is among the major objectives of our life."⁴ This need for organization and communication was echoed by H. G. Creel, president of the Chicago Fellowship, when he wrote in the first issue of The New Humanist:

Great and effective social movements seldom spring from the efforts merely of numbers of individuals working in intellectual isolation. The program of such efforts is a social growth never the mere production of a single mind. Religious, political, scientific, and even commercial groups recognize this, providing means whereby their members may benefit by interchange of ideas and experience.

Up to the present, there has been no considerable instrumentality by which Humanists might enjoy this intercourse so necessary for the actualization of the program of Humanism, and for the working out of a program progressively more worthy and more tangible. It was to provide such mutual awareness that the Humanist Fellowship was formed in November, 1927.⁵

Thus, from the very beginning, the Humanist movement strongly recognized the need for communication through some kind of association.

But beyond a desire to communicate and to strengthen

⁴"Preamble to the Constitution of the Humanist Fellowship," TNH, I, No. 2 (1928), 4.

⁵TNH, I, No. 1 (1928), 1.

the "cause" of Humanism, individuals within the movement have also sought union for what might be termed a "need to belong." Lloyd Morain, for example, writes that the AHA not only serves as a means of communication but as a "uniting force for Humanists who are scattered in ones and twos and small groups over this country and the world."⁶ Further, a letter to The Humanist declares that a major function of the AHA is to provide the liberal in religion with "both a haven and a home" and to give members a "feeling of group purpose."⁷ Likewise, the AHA says of itself that it offers the modern-minded "a place to belong."⁸ And Professor Gardner Williams points to the inevitable discrimination aimed toward such a minority group as Humanism and states that the organizational structure of the movement provides "social corroboration" for such individual Humanists.⁹

But perhaps the most significant expression of a desire and need for belonging came from Professor Hermann J.

⁶Lloyd Morain, "The American Humanist Association," TH, XIII (January-February, 1953), 26.

⁷Paul E. Killinger, "Small, Hopeful, Helpful Groups," TH, XIX (July-August, 1959), 255.

⁸"Concerning the American Humanist Association," TH, X (July-August, 1950), 181.

⁹Gardner Williams, "Unsettled Issues of Humanism," a panel discussion, AHA Cleveland Conference (1958), Tape Recording Library.

Muller's acceptance speech upon being elected as president of the AHA in 1956. He stated:

. . . I am so glad that at last I have found you, for I have been seeking you for about half a century. Of course in all that time I have been fortunate enough to meet many persons with the same general attitude as yourselves, long before the word Humanism in its present application was known to them or to me. But just because we were not organized, because we seemed to be only scattered voices in the wilderness, life often seemed to us lonely, bitter and thankless as compared with the seemingly rich world of hypnotic illusions in which the vast majority of people lived, and from out of which they peered askance at us and our children.¹⁰

Muller's statements are particularly important, for they clearly and openly point to a social and emotional need for organizational unity. Of interest also is his reference to loneliness resulting from a minority belief, and his mention of traditional religion and its success in satisfying such human needs.¹¹

Clearly, then, a major function of all Humanist associations has been to provide communication and unity among the membership and a certain "we" feeling for the scattered individual Humanists. Underlying, or perhaps permeating, these broad purposes is, of course, Humanism's persistent desire to reach beyond the movement for new members;

¹⁰"In the Cause of Humanity," TH, XVI (May-June, 1956), 107. This statement was repeated over NBC radio in May, 1956.

¹¹Muller's complete frankness regarding the Humanist's "need to belong" would probably not appeal to many highly "individualistic" Humanists.

however, the evangelistic purpose does not substantially affect the organizational structure.

The next logical question of import involves the manner in which Humanist organizations, national and local, attempt to satisfy the need for communication and a sense of oneness; there are a number of dimensions to the movement's efforts in that direction. First of all, the local fellowships and chapters¹² play an important role as they provide like-minded Humanists and potential Humanists with a chance for direct association together. Having a large measure of independence, the local groups differ widely in function and approach. Most of them meet on a regular basis and conduct ideological discussions, study groups, book reviews, forums, or social action projects. Some of the groups function much like a church (to some extent, this was more true in the early days of the movement), providing at least a degree of ceremony and ritual. Most significantly, the chapters provide each individual with a direct means for active participation within the movement.¹³

¹²In general, chapters are directly related to the AHA, while some local groups are called fellowships and are independent, but still affiliated with the AHA.

¹³Information regarding the diverse activities of Humanist groups is scattered. On occasions, various groups have reported their specific programs and projects in the movement's publications; other information comes from Humanist discussions carried on at regional conferences which are available through the AHA Tape Recording Library. The publications, the conferences, and the tape recording library will all be discussed in this chapter.

Interaction at the local level helps keep Humanism vital, growing, and changing. Also, to the extent that there is national agreement with regard to desired action (protection of the separation of church and state is a good example), local groups may carry forward the program of the movement. As the chapters vary in size and attitude, so also do their activities and influence.

Union and communication among the various small groups, however, has been slight throughout most of the history of Humanism. Such comparative isolation has doubtless resulted from the Humanist's antipathy for the totality of orthodox religion and his special distrust of sect authoritarianism in any form. Of course, the central national organizations have served as the link between individual chapters, and this has been accomplished largely through the association's publications.¹⁴ Materials for programs, study groups, and discussions also have frequently come directly from the national association. In addition, Humanist "field representatives" have sometimes been provided as national organizational aids for local groups.

However, a pivotal point in the evolution of Humanism--especially involving the matter of communication among members--occurred in 1949 when Dr. Edwin H. Wilson became the full-time executive director of the AHA. Since that time, the

¹⁴To be discussed in the next section of this chapter.

movement has not only achieved the bulk of its growth, but has strengthened and effectively utilized the available channels of communication which bind together the individual Humanists and chapters throughout the country. The result has not been that individual chapters have lost their independence, but rather that the movement has become more closely knit as a national association. The very growth of the movement (to be further discussed later) may probably be directly related to the increasing effectiveness of national Humanist communication.

A vital communication innovation was begun in May, 1952, at which time the first meeting of the AHA "Regional Conference" was held. This national effort to increase membership involvement and communication among individual members and chapters met with success and has continued on a regular basis to date. The meetings last two or three days and include workshops, symposiums, addresses, discussion groups, business meetings (election of AHA officers, etc.), and even debates. Problems grappled with at the regional conferences are varied, but important among them are (1) philosophical and religious ideological questions, such as the meaning of the movement, where its emphasis should lie, etc.; (2) Humanist advance, or methods whereby the movement might spread its influence and increase its size; (3) specific social problems, such as mental health, world peace, civil rights, separation

of church and state, etc.; (4) methods whereby chapters may improve their programs and activities; and (5) the relationship of chapters to the AHA.

Many of the conference workshops and discussions do not result in agreement; indeed, frequently, wide areas of disagreement are brought to the surface. However, the major religious and philosophic foundations of Humanism are not often contested; matters of the movement's emphasis, direction, and role are. That disagreements do arise appears not to concern the AHA; in fact, leaders of the association persistently applaud healthy and open lines of communication as a vital element in the movement's life, and they further think of disputes as only a confirmation of the desirability and necessity of such regional conferences.¹⁵

The chain of communication begun through regional conferences would not be complete unless the "core" of what transpired there was made available to the "rank and file" of the movement. In large measure, this has and is being accomplished.¹⁶ The result is that the most important thinking of the leadership and membership, which is expressed during a conference, finds its way into the hands of the individual

¹⁵Such an attitude might be contrasted with certain examples of individual "dogmatism" and rigidity discussed in Chapters V and VI.

¹⁶As will be discussed later in this chapter, major conference activity is reported in The Humanist, and is also made available through a tape recording library.

Humanist. Seemingly, the least one could conclude is that the AHA leadership is keenly aware of the value of open and complete communication among its members.

A problem centering on organizational communication and interaction does exist, however. A lengthy workshop concerning problems of chapters (held during the 1956 AHA regional conference) was quite revealing.¹⁷ First of all, a report from a committee on "Inter-group Relations" indicated that there existed considerable organizational difficulties among the local chapters--problems such as (1) unsatisfactory programs for chapter meetings, (2) inability of groups to sustain interest in meetings over a long period of time, so that chapters often declined rather than grew, (3) inadequate leadership at the local level, resulting in part from not having full-time leaders, and (4) general inability of chapters to attract and hold young people and parents with small children. Obviously, all of these problems are closely inter-related; however, the workshop efforts to find answers to them produced little but diverse points of view without any consistent pattern. For example, some of those present suggested more aid and guidance from AHA; some suggested less; some suggested increased and more effective study groups; some suggested meetings patterned after churches--especially

¹⁷Rudolf Dreikurs (ch.), "Workshop on Problems of Chapters," AHA Chicago Conference (1956), Tape Recording Library.

Unitarianism--involving Sunday morning meetings with a "Sunday school" for children. The chairman made the suggestion that more cooperation between the various chapters and knowledge of "good" and "bad" organizational methods might ultimately result in a kind of "manual" for local chapters. At any rate, the workshop was an effort to meet local problems despite the fact that no specific and permanent answers were found.

The chapter problems listed above seemingly grow out of a common confused source within the movement. On the basis of the chapter workshop and other similar indications, Humanism does not appear to know what it wishes to become or where it is heading. For example, do Humanists wish to create another "church" even in organizational structure? Do they really hope to establish a mass movement as they so often declare? Just how important is complete local chapter independence? Do Humanists expect Humanism to become a religion, a philosophy, a social organization, a social action movement, or an anti-orthodoxy ideology? These are the kinds of questions which, although sometimes asked, have not been answered or have been answered but without accord. When such fundamental issues are resolved within the national movement, the difficulties confronting the local chapters may be alleviated.

Publications Channels

History of Publications

Doubtless, Humanism's most vital and pervasive channel of communication has been, and is, the publication of a membership journal (joining the AHA carries with it a subscription to the journal). In 1928 the Chicago Fellowship launched the first journal in the form of a modest, mimeographed publication called The New Humanist. It soon grew in size, stature, and circulation, but was abandoned after nine volumes in October, 1936. A short time later (February, 1938), however, The Humanist Bulletin began publication. The Bulletin survived only until January, 1941, after which the AHA was formed and publication of the present journal, The Humanist, began. The Humanist appears to have met with the greatest success, for after nine years as a quarterly it became a bi-monthly in 1950.

Other publications of the movement are quite recent ones. In 1952, for example, the Free Mind was begun strictly as an organizational membership publication. The Free Mind is also published on a bi-monthly basis, being mailed to Humanists on alternating months with The Humanist. Two other recent, but less important, publications are International Humanism (begun in 1955), reporting news of the International Humanist and Ethical Union, and the Student Humanist (begun in 1961), a modest bulletin for college students. Other

Humanist publication efforts which are less related to the functioning of the movement will be discussed briefly in the last section of this chapter.

Purposes and Functions of the Publications

The national association's goal of providing a communication link among its scattered members is achieved largely through the distribution of a membership journal. By putting such a journal in the hands of all its members, the AHA is exposing its readers to the core of Humanist thinking and is establishing an element of the "we" feeling. That most of the journal articles are written by leaders in the movement means that the leadership speaks directly to the membership on a regular basis.

The journal also provides a forum for Humanist thought in that members may write letters to the editor and express like or divergent views. In such a fashion (and also through the "debates" and discussions involving disagreements among the leading journal authors) an ideological dialogue is carried on. The result is that a channel providing for Humanism's growth and change, not only in emphasis but also in ideology, is established.

Historically, at least some change in purpose or focus of the journals has occurred. For example, The New Humanist was at first thought of by many as simply a place where general problems of liberal religion could be discussed.

An effort was made to avoid being exclusive or entirely humanistic in the selection of material to be printed. Actually, it was not uncommon during the early years of the journal to find an article which was ideologically hostile to Humanism. An editor's note which appeared with one such article in 1928 explained that The New Humanist was devoted "primarily" to Humanist expression, but that the scientific method involved an examination of "all the evidence."¹⁸ Five years later, an editor's note again described the journal's attempt to present both sides of various issues, but conceded that The New Humanist, which had found most of its support among Humanists, "has become increasingly representative of the humanist viewpoint."¹⁹ Despite such changes in emphasis, which have simply been the natural evolution of a growing and unifying philosophy, the journals published by Humanism have always been the major organ of expression for the movement.

What the journals have meant to the movement can be seen in part by looking at some evaluations of the journals made by leading Humanists. Charles Francis Potter, for example, wrote that The New Humanist "serves a real and growing need in America as an organ of liberal religion."²⁰ In that

¹⁸TNH, I, No. 7 (1928), 1.

¹⁹Edwin H. Wilson, "On Accepting the Responsibility of a Philosophy of Life, An Appeal," TNH, VI, No. 3 (1933), 46.

²⁰Charles Francis Potter, "Indispensable," TNH, VI, No. 1 (1933), 44.

same year, 1933, Professor Oliver Reiser argued that the journal served a unique and important purpose, being the "outstanding journal specifically devoted to the promulgation of the humanist viewpoint."²¹ Another observer stated that The New Humanist "is filling a need long felt by religious liberals."²² And E. Burdette Backus asserted that Humanism, as the most important movement in the "religious life of America, very much needs a national journal as an organ of expression."²³ Soon after The Humanist was first published, Professor Maurice Visscher wrote that the journal is "an important agent in the strengthening and unification of the liberal intellectual movement."²⁴ The purposes and functions of The Humanist were outlined in a 1954 editorial as follows:

The function of The Humanist is threefold. It serves as a first introduction to Humanism and the AHA for hundreds of new readers each year. For long-standing Humanists it provides a humanistic commentary on happenings in all fields of human endeavor. And for the general public, it attempts to be an interesting, readable, and important periodical.²⁵

As these last statements indicate, an important part of the

²¹Oliver Reiser, "Serves an Important Purpose," TNH, VI, No. 1 (1933), 46.

²²Maurice N. Eisendrath, "Fills a Long-Felt Need," TNH, VI, No. 1 (1933), 45.

²³E. Burdette Backus, "Vigorous and Able Editors," TNH, VI, No. 1 (1933), 44.

²⁴Maurice Visscher, "What Others Think," TH, II (Autumn, 1942), inside cover.

²⁵"Three Adjectives and a Shrug Are Not Enough; An Annual Appeal and Progress Report," TH, XIV (March-April, 1954), 78.

journal's function is to go outside the membership and introduce Humanism to potential Humanists.

In addition, leading journal authors, as well as numerous letters to the editor, have often shown a deep concern for keeping the journal "readable" in all walks of life. The criticism that The Humanist is too philosophic, too abstract, or too academic has not been uncommon. The housewife as well as the professor, it is argued, should be able to find meaning in the journal, especially if Humanism is to become a mass movement.

There is, then, a kind of "communicative awareness" among the leaders of the movement; however, there is neither complete clarity nor agreement concerning the precise communication role which the journal should play. For example, confusion exists regarding the extent to which The Humanist is primarily a magazine for Humanists and the extent to which it is written for non-Humanists. Humanists appear to be reluctant to say that the journal is really written and read primarily by them. At an AHA workshop, however, one leading Humanist did protest that the membership should face up to the fact that the journal is written by and for Humanists.²⁶ At the same meeting, someone insisted that The Humanist should be more bold in its ideological statements and not be guided by

²⁶Leo Koch, "Humanist Advance Through Education," a workshop, AHA Cincinnati Conference (1957), Tape Recording Library.

a concern for offending the non-Humanist reader.²⁷ What does appear clear is that the dual purpose of the journal produces some editorial frustration; however, clearly, the primary audience of The Humanist has been and will continue to be members of the movement.²⁸

Another broad but related function of the publications involves the dissemination of information among the membership. As mentioned earlier, important happenings at the regional conferences should be reported to the total membership; this is accomplished by printing in the journal the major addresses delivered at a conference, as well as other progress made there. Ideological matters are left primarily to The Humanist, but since 1952 organizational matters are printed in the Free Mind. At any rate, a member may keep in rather close "touch" with the national association and its leadership through those two publications, for every month one or the other is delivered to him. The lines of communication have not only improved but increased since 1950.

Seemingly, the increased organizational communication coupled with the journal's change from a quarterly to a

²⁷Corliss Lamont, "Humanist Advance Through Education" (Lamont's statements were made from the floor as a reaction to the panel discussion), Tape Recording Library.

²⁸This remains true although in recent years actual sales of The Humanist have been double that of AHA membership. Readers of the journal may be sympathetic to the movement without being active members of it.

bi-monthly have significantly affected the growth of the movement.²⁹ For example, the AHA reports that the first four years after the journal's change to a bi-monthly (1950-1954) saw the magazine circulation "quadrupled."³⁰ A year later the AHA reported that its membership growth since 1950 had increased 500 per cent.³¹ A still later growth figure reported in 1961 indicates that four-fifths of the total membership of the movement has been added since 1948.³² These growth figures are impressive and speak directly to the AHA's total change in emphasis and increased communication activity since Edwin Wilson became the full-time executive director in 1949.

Scope of the Publications

The general scope of the publications has already been suggested; however, there are some other aspects which should be mentioned here. The journals have always covered a wide and diffuse subject-matter area, and the AHA leadership would probably argue that no subject which has philosophic,

²⁹It is impossible to determine which activity most affects growth. Specific member-producing efforts (to be discussed later) such as Humanist lecture tours doubtless play an important role in gaining new members.

³⁰"Three Adjectives and a Shrug Are Not Enough; An Annual Appeal and Progress Report," TH, XIV, 78.

³¹"Five Years of Achievement--1949-1955," TH, XV (March-April, 1955), unnumbered insert.

³²Editor's Note, TH, XXI (July-August, 1961), 195.

religious, scientific, or "human" interest is alien to the journal.

But some more narrow areas of scope can be indicated. For instance, one major concern of the journal has traditionally been to include ideological, philosophical, and religious discussions. This means that "Humanism" is persistently discussed, as well as its relation to other philosophic and religious trends. The coverage is accomplished through major articles written in the journal and also through the regular journal section devoted to book reviews. The book reviews are important for they allow a reviewer to evaluate a new book and at the same time contrast or compare a given idea to Humanism. Again, the range of subject-matter covered by the books selected is wide.

Another aspect of the scope of the Humanist journals involves areas related to rights of religious and other minorities. For many years, a column entitled "The Sectarian Battlefront," in which matters dealing with the separation of church and state were discussed, was regularly carried in the journal. Court decisions affecting church and state separation as well as those dealing with the individual legal rights of an atheist³³ have been closely followed and reported.

Also frequently finding a place in the journals have been various scientific discussions. Advancements in science

³³The legal status of the atheist or agnostic as a conscientious objector in time of war is an example.

on many fronts are mentioned, but usually the discussion of science has centered upon its relation to man and his values. Technical scientific findings have not been reported, but the broad field of science and scientific advance has been regularly discussed.³⁴

Some small amount of fiction has been written for the journals while a somewhat larger amount of poetry has been published. That both do find their way into the journal is indicative of the magazine's scope.

Another important aspect of the publication's scope involves social reform issues. For some Humanists, the movement is fundamentally and simply an expression of concern for the plight in which many human beings find themselves; therefore, the journal rather naturally faces such social problems as slums, birth control, civil rights,³⁵ and poverty. While, admittedly, articles dealing with social problems have not dominated the journal, they have been persistently discussed throughout the years.

Perhaps the scope of the movement's journal is best represented by simply listing the major program committees

³⁴Regular columns devoted to a discussion of science which have appeared in The Humanist have included "Science for Humanity," "Science Notes," and "Reliable Knowledge."

³⁵For a period of time, a regular column devoted to a discussion of race relations entitled "All Men" was carried in The Humanist.

of the AHA which have been printed inside the cover of The Humanist for the last several years. The list includes a committee on church and state, family relations, group activities, Humanist students, human rights and welfare, public education, and world Humanism. These committees suggest the Humanist areas of concern, especially in regard to social reform and advance.

Tape Recordings Channel

Humanism's most unique channel of communication is its use of tape recordings for the purpose of the dissemination of ideas and information. Beginning in the early 1950's, the AHA began tape recording important Humanist speeches and thereafter soon established the "Tape Recording Library."³⁶ The material found in the library includes (1) Humanist interviews and speeches broadcast over radio, (2) Humanist addresses delivered before various groups (Unitarian and Humanist fellowships have been common audiences, though there have been others less sympathetic to Humanism), and (3) addresses, panels, symposiums, and workshops presented before one of the annual AHA conferences.

The purposes of the recording library are not very different from those of the journal. First of all, the tape recordings are made available through the mails to any

³⁶The AHA Tape Recording Library is located at 615 Davis St., Evanston, Illinois. Appendix II includes the library's listing of available tape recordings.

chapter or fellowship which requests them. If the tapes were, in fact, widely played, they could serve as a major link between the AHA and its scattered chapters and membership. Again, to the extent that Humanists hear the tapes, members are allowed to "listen in" on annual conferences and important Humanist speeches delivered elsewhere. But the AHA leadership thinks the library's primary function is one of providing programs for discussions in the chapters and fellowships.

While the tape recording library has been utilized since its inception, it has not been as successful as originally hoped. A number of chapters, for example, have not been satisfied with the tape recordings as a basis for programs and discussions.³⁷ As yet, the tape recordings do not serve as a vital chain of communication for the movement; however, the channel is a relatively new innovation for Humanism and its ultimate value would be difficult to assess.

Miscellaneous Member-Producing Channels

As mentioned earlier, the Humanist movement has always maintained an interest in expansion. Actually, all the channels of communication thus far listed have had as their secondary purpose the proselytizing of new Humanists. The leaders of the AHA hope that active and effective chapters will bring new members, that an interesting and readable

³⁷Dreikurs, "Workshop on Problems of Chapters," Tape Recording Library.

journal will do the same, and that all other activities designed primarily for the membership will influence the growth of the movement.

The concern here, however, is with those few communication activities which have "evangelism" as their major objective. The first such effort involves radio broadcasts of Humanist speeches and interviews, designed specifically to stimulate a wider interest in the movement. Since 1950 a number of AHA officers and leaders have appeared before the radio microphone, often over local stations located near a college or university. However, NBC's donation of time to the AHA (as a public service) through a series of programs entitled "Faith in Action" has provided the movement with its widest exposure.³⁸ The radio broadcasts have met with some measure of success, for the AHA reports that after most broadcasts "hundreds of people" write in with favorable comments and express an interest in learning more about the movement.³⁹

A second major AHA activity has been the sponsoring of lecture tours throughout the country, providing leading Humanists with a wide range of audiences. Frequently the addresses are delivered before college and university audiences, but other groups are also involved, including liberal churches and Humanist chapters and fellowships. For the

³⁸A number of AHA radio broadcasts may be found in the tape recording library and are listed in Appendix II.

³⁹Morain, TH, XIII, 29.

purpose of coordinating these tours, a Humanist Speaker's Bureau was established in 1953.⁴⁰ The efficacy of these lecture tours is impossible to measure, but they probably play a part in adding to the growth of the movement.

Another activity begun since 1950 is called the "Humanist Pamphlet Series" in which the AHA publishes various kinds of Humanist literature, most often reprints of articles which have appeared in The Humanist. The pamphlets are made available to anyone and are especially put in the hands of any Humanist who wishes to distribute them. In such a fashion the printed literature provides a means whereby Humanism may be explained to prospective members. A corollary activity is the Humanist "Book Service" through which books dealing with Humanism (and other subjects) are made available at a discount in price to AHA members and chapters for use in study groups or perhaps as introductory material for new members. These "extra" publication efforts of the AHA are in part an answer to the problem raised earlier regarding the dual purpose of The Humanist.

Summary

Humanism, like other social movements, has necessarily utilized a number of channels of communication which have helped the movement to develop a cohesiveness and establish

⁴⁰Ibid.

an atmosphere conducive to growth and change. The most vital channel within the movement has been the publication of a membership journal. Since 1928, Humanists have published a journal which has provided a forum for Humanist ideas and has played a role in molding the movement into a common ideology. Religious Humanism has also established local chapters, or fellowships, throughout the country, which have resulted in another medium of communication and have increased the possibility for interaction among the various members. A third communicative device utilized by Humanism has been a tape recording library, through which important speeches and discussions of the Humanist ideology are made available to the local chapters for study and deliberation. While there have been other communicative activities, the three above appear to be the most significant within the Humanist movement.

However, to some extent at least, the channels which help unite Humanism within also serve to attract new members to the movement. In addition, the AHA has established some communication activities which are almost exclusively devoted to attracting membership. These include Humanist radio broadcasts, Humanist lecture tours, and a Humanist pamphlet series. Significantly, most of the major channels of communication have either been added or improved since 1950, and since that time the movement has achieved its greatest measure of growth.

CHAPTER IV

IDENTIFICATION WITH SCIENCE AND THE SCIENTIFIC METHOD

Through Humanism's utilization of the various channels of communication, the movement has developed not only a common ideology, but also a common argumentative pattern whereby that ideology may be defended. All social movements, according to Alfred McClung Lee, in addition to producing a set of beliefs, develop a body of defense doctrine "serving as justification" for the movement.¹ Indeed, Humanist leaders may well have attached unusual importance to the development of a rationale or justification for their movement, because the Humanist ideology has not only been heterodox in the general sense, but in particular has been hostile to the highly valued and widely accepted Christian religion. This chapter, then, will discuss one phase of the Humanist's rhetorical efforts to justify or defend his position.

As indicated earlier, leading Humanist speakers and writers have frequently shown a concern for evangelism

¹Alfred McClung Lee, New Outline of the Principles of Sociology (New York: Barnes and Noble, Inc., 1946), p. 210.

outside their movement, but they have always found their primary listening or reading audience to be composed of other Humanists or near-Humanists. Thus, attention here will be centered upon the argumentation employed by Humanist leaders as they seek to justify and defend the movement's ideas to Humanist members. The major source of information for this analysis will be the various Humanist journals which were discussed in Chapter III; for those journals have served as the most important link between leadership and membership and have most effectively represented the movement's rhetorical pattern. Humanist statements quoted herein should be viewed as representative of the movement at large, and, for the most part, as having originated from leading or influential Humanists.

The Humanist's rhetorical defense of his ideology, which lies at the heart of his argumentative position, rests primarily upon his (1) identification with science in general and (2) his identification with the scientific method. These two are, of course, closely related and to a large extent depend upon each other. The Humanist's rhetorical approach to ethics and values, as an extension of the pattern of scientific identification, will also be discussed in this chapter.

Identification with Science in General

One important argumentative pattern of defense employed by Humanists has been that of attempting to identify

their movement with ideas, attitudes, and labels which are, in their own way, orthodox or at least widely accepted.² Perhaps the most significant attitude (and certainly the most pervasive throughout Humanist literature) with which Humanists have sought to identify has been a reliance on science--science from its broadest interpretations through its most narrow applications.³ The word "science" as used in Humanist discussions seems to have many rather loose meanings. The word has been used to mean psychology, history, biology, man's acquired knowledge, objectivity, etc. The list of meanings is long, but the point is that Humanists have tried to blend science into their movement to the extent that they have gone beyond a mere ideological assertion of a belief in science. Rather, they have achieved in their argumentation an all-pervasive identification with science.

The impression must not be left, however, that Humanism was or is an organization of scientists. As explained earlier, the movement was sparked and led from the first primarily by liberal Unitarian and Universalist ministers, Ethical Culture leaders, and ethical philosophers. In addition,

²Humanist's efforts to identify their movement with a number of commonly accepted ideals will be discussed in Chapter VI.

³Chapter II indicated how the "cult of science" in the nineteenth century served as a springboard for the humanistic trends which developed and culminated in modern Humanism. Historically, the "respectability" of science continued to grow even into the twentieth century, so that by the time that Humanism began to appear, science had acquired an aura of "goodness" and "truth," its own kind of orthodoxy.

the movement has always attracted a number of scholars from various disciplines, many of whom have, in fact, been scientists or men from the physical sciences. But scientists, in that narrow sense, have never dominated Humanism. While the literature of the movement does reveal considerable interest in scientific matters, the fundamental concern of Humanists (as discussed in Chapter III) has centered upon ethics, values, and human social problems--essentially non-scientific areas of concern.

The movement, nevertheless, early adopted as its banner or symbol the language, the spirit, and the very essence of science. Rhetorically, the leaders of Humanism have, throughout the years, attempted to identify or link Humanism with the broad stream of science and they have done so in at least two general ways.

The first method of identification can be classified as a kind of loose association of Humanism with science, culminating in something of a fusion of the two. Even before Humanism was formally organized, for example, those who were beginning to espouse the new philosophy were frequently referring to it as something closely akin to science, if not a part of science.⁴ Early efforts to define Humanism (as well as later ones) inevitably resulted in the "calling up" of

⁴Chapter V examines Humanism's use of science and scientific data as a means of refutation and attack, as contrasted to the present discussion involving defense.

scientific language (that is, reference to science or its importance or its rapid growth, etc). Indeed, a number of leading Humanists have actually preferred that the movement be called "Scientific" Humanism. Still another popular label for the ideology has been "Naturalistic" Humanism, again directly suggesting the scientific. The literature of the movement clearly reveals that few Humanists are able to discuss their ideology without considerable use of the word "science."

The culmination of such an association seems to be a rhetorical union of science with Humanism. For instance, the whole humanistic trend, writes Rev. John Brogden, is a "fusion of science and philosophy."⁵ And Professor Horace Fries significantly refers to Humanism as the "marriage of science and human aspiration."⁶ Science and Humanism become so closely identified that they do nearly become one in the sense in which the movement uses them; for some Humanist authors the two words are almost used interchangeably.

Further, Rev. John H. Dietrich writes that "science has become predominantly Humanistic in that it investigates cosmic processes for the purpose of controlling and using them for human ends."⁷ And Rev. Harold Marley says simply that

⁵John Brogden, "Trends Towards a Philosophy of Science," THB, II (March, 1939), 3.

⁶Horace S. Fries, "The Theology That Obstructs Science," TH, IV (Spring, 1944), 18.

⁷John H. Dietrich, "What Is Humanism?" TNH, VI, No. 2 (1933), 4.

Humanists are "trying to make religion scientific without reducing it merely to a science."⁸ Rev. R. Lester Mondale asserts that Humanism has found "in science" what other religions have found elsewhere, "the authority and the content" for their practical "gospel" of saving man.⁹ Clearly, all three of these men are linking Humanism and science together, illustrative of the pattern of identification.

A second way in which Humanists attempt to identify science with Humanism involves the description of science as the raison d'etre for their movement. Science is considered to be an organic part of Humanism, or Humanism is considered as a "child" of science.¹⁰ The preamble to the constitution of the first Humanist fellowship (1927) points to science as the prime reason for organizing. Specifically, the preamble speaks of a world "dominated by science" making necessary new religious awarenesses and answers in the twentieth century.¹¹ The suggestion is that science has created the atmosphere and the need for the fellowship.

The Humanist Manifesto (discussed in Chapter II)

⁸Harold P. Marley, "Religion's Greatest Adventure," TNH, VIII, No. 6 (1935), 197.

⁹R. Lester Mondale, "The Second Generation Humanists," TNH, V, No. 4 (1932), 2-3.

¹⁰Historically, this is at least partly true.

¹¹"Preamble to the Constitution of the Humanist Fellowship," TNH, I, No. 2 (1928), 4.

clearly illustrates the Humanist's dependence upon the language and spirit of science. The preface to the Manifesto, for instance, speaks of the disruption of old beliefs by science and economic changes and the necessity of coming to terms with the new knowledge gained by man. Further, proposition six of the Manifesto closes with the statement that "religion must formulate its hopes and plans in the light of the scientific spirit and method."¹² Clearly, then, the Manifesto authors are insisting that Humanism grows out of science and exists because of science.

The Humanist Manifesto also relies heavily on specific scientific language, including several affirmations of belief in actual scientific postulates. The total result is that the Manifesto is seemingly as much a statement of commitment to science as it is a statement of the Humanist's belief in humanity.

A final example which epitomizes Humanism's identification with science comes from the pen of Dr. Edwin H. Wilson. He writes that

the simple fact is that what we are calling Humanism is a subtle permeating influence growing organically out of the progress of scientific knowledge wherever that knowledge is effectively related to human life.¹³

¹²"The Humanist Manifesto," TH, XXII (July-August, 1962), 130.

¹³Edwin H. Wilson, "Humanism States Its Case," TNH, VI, No. 2 (1933), 46.

Identification with the Scientific Method

After having adopted science, the Humanist quite naturally moves on to lay claim to the scientific method.¹⁴ Again, argument goes beyond an ideological assertion of a belief in the epistemology of science; for the ultimate claim of the Humanist is that Humanism is the representative or the symbol of the methodology.¹⁵ The two general ways in which the pattern of identification is accomplished involve (1) the expression of high acclaim for the method of science and (2) the portrayal of Humanism as the spirit and embodiment of the methodology.¹⁶

Since the Humanist's epistemological commitment is so deep and pervasive, his effusive praise for the methodology is predictable. Wherever and whenever Humanists meet and talk, laudation of the wonders of the new age resulting from the application of the scientific method is abundant. The ills of the world, it would seem, diminish in direct proportion to the application of the method of science.

Professor Rudolf Dreikurs, for example, asserts that

¹⁴Actually, identification with science and the scientific method are difficult to separate and are very closely related.

¹⁵The movement's epistemology serves a vital role in refutation, as discussed in Chapter V.

¹⁶The examples cited here must necessarily be limited in order to avoid moving into the area of refutation. For example, a Humanist's praise of the scientific method usually carries either an explicit or implicit attack upon the methodology employed by orthodox religion.

only scientific research can uncover the knowable information and that knowledge is sufficient "to permit human living," so that the unknowable "need not concern man."¹⁷ Likewise, Professor Fries writes of fighting the "good humanistic fight for the method of science."¹⁸ He adds that to the extent that Humanists do apply the method of science to all areas of human conflict, "we are practicing and living the philosophy of the new age."¹⁹ What is important regarding such Humanist praise is that throughout the literature of the movement the scientific method is extolled. Generally, however, specific support for the merit or value of the epistemology is not offered; its worth is taken for granted or assumed.

The second and perhaps more significant aspect of the movement's pattern of identification centers on the Humanist's ascribing to Humanism the spirit and essence of the scientific method. The rhetorical result pictures a Humanism which embodies the spirit of inquiry and investigation, so that an objective examination of "the facts" regarding a specific matter becomes a unique humanistic procedure or characteristic.

Professor A. Eustace Haydon, for example, writes

¹⁷Rudolf Dreikurs, "The Religion of Democracy, Part II: Aspects of the Next Great Religion," TH, XV (November-December, 1955), 267.

¹⁸Fries, TH, IV, 18.

¹⁹Ibid., 22.

that the Humanist is one who "takes his naturalism seriously" and "works with the method of science in all realms."²⁰ Significantly, Haydon is asserting that the Humanist is scientific, that the application of the scientific method is somehow a uniquely "humanistic" characteristic.

J. Hutton Hynd emphasizes the Humanist's concern for examining all data before reaching a conclusion and his willingness "to prove all things," and "bear the burden of uncertainty."²¹ Again, the Humanist is pictured as the symbol of objectivity and the scientific approach.

The blending of the scientific and humanistic, however, is best dramatized in Edwin Wilson's interview with Julian Huxley. The following question and answer make the point:

Wilson: You make 'scientific' and 'humanistic' then somewhat synonymous; but there is a difference between the two words, isn't there?

Huxley: No, I didn't mean to make them synonymous. All I meant to say was that modern Humanism must be scientific because the method of science is the most efficient method yet invented by humanity for getting at more truth.²²

These statements illustrate the rather natural tendency of Humanists to interchange scientific and humanistic to the

²⁰A. Eustace Haydon, "Neo-Humanism--What Is It?" TNH, I, No. 4 (1928), 1.

²¹J. Hutton Hynd, "The Greatest Hoax in History--The Claim to Infallibility," TH, V (Summer, 1945), 61-62.

²²Edwin H. Wilson, "An Interview with Julian Huxley," TH, XI (July-August, 1951), 171.

extent that an observer might conclude that in order to be truly scientific one must first be a Humanist. Humanism's pattern of identification, then, culminates in a wedding of Humanism and science and Humanism and the scientific method. The reader will observe how this pattern is extended and developed into a refutation technique in Chapter V.

Science, Ethics, and Values

The charge that a non-theistic religion is without a foundation for morality has not been an uncommon one, and it has been frequently leveled at Humanism by its critics. As a method of defense, Humanist leaders have boldly moved into the arena of "ethics and values" and, in addition to denying the charge, have identified their movement with a positive ethical and value-oriented foundation.²³ The rhetorical attempt has been to demonstrate that Humanism means or symbolizes a concern for the highest in ethical and moral human behavior.

Rhetorically, the movement has done so by building upon its identification with science and the scientific method; that is, once Humanists had demonstrated their inseparable attachment to science, their next task was to show

²³The intention here is not to suggest that Humanists have sought to show a relationship between values and science merely as a means of answering their critics. As an argumentative position, however, the process of identifying science with ethics and values does serve as an answer to the criticism that there can be no basis for morality without a theistic belief.

the relationship of science to behavior--the suitability of the scientific approach in dealing with questions of values and ethics.²⁴ In so doing, Humanists also tended to corroborate their assertions that science and the scientific method were superior to all other approaches. Thus, a dual role is played; Humanism is able to identify itself with ethics and at the same time substantiate the merit of the scientific method.

The scientific approach to ethics has become meaningful rhetorically only in the past few years of the movement, primarily since 1950. Although ethics and values were discussed during the early years of Humanism, early discussions within the movement lacked the positive approach of more recent ones. Humanist leaders of the early years certainly insisted that theism and supernaturalism were at least superfluous, if not detrimental, in dealing with ethics,²⁵ but a clear scientific and Humanistic answer was not well developed until later. The early Humanist approach to ethics is typified by this 1934 statement:

²⁴This series of arguments has not necessarily occurred in any step-by-step time sequence; however, as this section of the study will demonstrate, one aspect of the identification of science with ethics and values has been a rather recent development within the movement.

²⁵Several criticisms of orthodox religion's approach to ethics and values of necessity appear in this section; however, such criticisms will be discussed in detail in Chapter V.

In the first place this means that ethics must be freed from its theological background, so that moral issues are considered without reference to such debatable matters as the immortality of the soul or the existence of god.²⁶

This attempt to disassociate ethics and values from traditional religion was furthered by C. J. Herrick in 1942 when he argued that man's standards and values have grown out of "the total experience of the race with things as they are and as experiences are widened, so do the codes and ethics alter to meet changing conditions." He stated that man looks to his leaders for guidance, but in the selection of values, "free man reserves the right to choose his own values."²⁷ A 1943 statement by Humanists Morain and Reiser echoed this attitude by claiming that morality does not need "supernatural sanctions" and is "man evolved."²⁸ They went on to discuss the possibility of a future "universal morality."²⁹

Professor Haydon moves closer to a specific defense of the scientific method in the field of values when he argues that the Humanist world view is based upon "modern knowledge" and that the sciences "provide the techniques for actualizing values." He further states that "masters of the scientific

²⁶Oliver Reiser, "The Social Objectives of Humanism," TNH, VII, No. 6 (1934), 24.

²⁷C. Judson Herrick, "What Churches Are For," TH, II (Winter, 1942), 135.

²⁸Lloyd Morain and Oliver Reiser, "Scientific Humanism: A Formulation," TH, III (Spring, 1943), 17.

²⁹Ibid., 18.

method in all areas of culture may furnish the analysis of problems and create the programs for the progressive realization of a good society."³⁰ Professor Van Meter Ames in a discussion of values states:

Only through understanding value in terms of what is sought and cherished is it possible to see how the good things of life can be increasingly selected, secured and enhanced. Then it can be understood how science becomes the guide.³¹

He more specifically refers to science and morality in the following:

For science effective morality and religion are relative to cultural development; and when science becomes decisive in culture, morality and religion will lose ground except as they become partners with science and learn from it to guide society.³²

Ames states the idea in another way when he says that morality and religion should be scientific and science should be moral and religious. He argues that the social sciences should study ancient religious beliefs to determine which of them are "usable."³³

In 1949, the editor of The Humanist wrote in answer to a letter to the journal that the religious needs of man "as understood by psychology and philosophy" can and should be

³⁰A. Eustace Haydon, "Inquiry: Is Humanism a Religion? Part I: Humanism Has Its World View, Techniques and Ideals," TH, II (Autumn, 1942), 105.

³¹Van Meter Ames, "Science and the Reconstruction of Values," TH, V (Spring, 1945), 14.

³²Ibid., 15.

³³Ibid.

met, but they do not depend upon "the wishful rationalization of an ancient theology whose anti-scientific record is well documented."³⁴ Such a statement, again, clearly disassociates morality from traditional religion and links morality to science.

This trend was followed by philosopher James Jarrett in 1950 when he charged that the violence promulgated "by churches in all ages" is an indication of their ethical failure; whereas, the Humanist ethical position holds that moral problems "are most effectively solved by pooled intelligence, by carefully controlled observation, diagnosis and prognosis, by the experimental testing of hypothetical solutions." He added that the Humanist is one "who recognizes the role of the economist and the political scientist, of the engineer and the social worker and the psychologist in working out answers to genuine problems of social ethics."³⁵ Jarrett has thus clearly exemplified the rhetorical pattern of identification in that he has ascribed to Humanism a unique and vigorous concern (even a deeper and more meaningful involvement than the totality of traditional religion) for human ethics and values, so that the humanistic approach becomes or symbolizes an improved ethical attitude and foundation.

³⁴Edwin H. Wilson, "Correspondence," editorial reply to a letter, TH, IX (Autumn, 1949), 150.

³⁵James L. Jarrett, "Must Religious Humanism Be Thin?" TH, X (May-June, 1950), 108.

Maurice Visscher, author of the column "Science for Humanity," continues the theme by saying that "ethics and morals have some relation to verifiable systematized knowledge." He goes on to lament: "The great pity is that the human race fails to use the information that exists about conduct and its motivation."³⁶ Sociologist Erwin Fellows wrote in 1952 that certain moral "standards" may be derived from scientific knowledge and the scientific method. A scientist, he contended, is willing to consider all available facts, to experiment, and to make changes as research dictates, rather than relying upon mere authority. "An extension of the scientific approach to questions of values," wrote Fellows, "would represent one of the most fundamental changes in human history." And he added:

If the outcome of the present moral confusion is to be other than destruction or a retreat to an irrational absolutism, the values inherent in scientific activity and organization, and compatible with scientific knowledge, must receive all possible development.³⁷

But there are still more modern attempts to interrelate Humanism, science, and ethics. For example, in 1956, Priscilla Robertson, as newly appointed editor of The Humanist, emphasized that science is becoming involved in matters of values, but that the venture is a new one because of the lack of knowledge in the area. She wrote:

³⁶Maurice B. Visscher, "Science for Humanity," TH, XI (October-November, 1951), 230.

³⁷Erwin W. Fellows, "Science in a Time of Moral Confusion," TH, XII (March-April, 1952), 62.

A certain number of scientists within the last ten years have repudiated the ethical neutrality of science and have laid barefaced claim to be arbiters of values both for individuals and for whole cultures; at the same time, many more tactful students use their science to form judgments without stating an outright philosophy of their right to do so.³⁸

She pleaded for a strong link between science and values and went on to examine some specific scientists and their involvement in ethics and values.

Another leading Humanist, research sociologist Stuart C. Dodd, writes quite specifically about the connection of science to the field of values. He feels, as does Robertson, that science is only now beginning to achieve the capacity for dealing with human values. He argues that in 1933, the year of the signing of the Humanist Manifesto, the scientific method was not well enough established in the social sciences to produce a scientific value system. He asserts that many new scientific developments have emerged since that time, and he mentions such fields as information theory, general semantics, axiology, transactional psychology, dimension sociology, and others.³⁹ He writes that scientists are nearly able to classify man's choices and goals to the point where ultimately "'The Good' becomes what is measurably most wanted by most men in most periods, places, and contexts."⁴⁰ Dodd claims,

³⁸Priscilla Robertson, "On Getting Values Out of Science," TH, XVI (July-August, 1956), 169.

³⁹Stuart Carter Dodd, "Can We Be Scientific About Humanism?" TH, XVIII (September-October, 1958), 260.

⁴⁰Ibid., 264.

then, as have many other Humanists of late, that a scientific value system is near at hand.

But perhaps the most incisive defense of the scientific method in the field of ethics is that offered by Professor Alfred Kuenzli.⁴¹ He asserts that a new source of ethical guidance is emerging out of scientific methodology and especially out of "social-psychological research."⁴² Kuenzli discusses two specific applications of science to the area of moral guidance. First, he points to the recent Supreme Court decision on integration in which, for the first time, psychological evidence was used "as a part of the basis on which a judgment of considerable ethical consequence" was decided. Next, he contends that in the field of child psychology research has resulted in some conclusions with ethical consequences. He states that evidence indicates today that the "good" family is the democratic family as opposed to the patriarchal in terms of "human happiness and fulfillment."⁴³ He concludes by claiming that by recognizing the ethical contribution of the behavioral sciences and by increasing our capacities for utilizing new data, "we can come to gain a reasonably objective basis for 'right' action and we shall have a firm foundation on which to build the good life."⁴⁴

⁴¹Alfred E. Kuenzli, "An Objective Basis for Ethics," TH, XX (May-June, 1960), 155.

⁴²Ibid., 155-56.

⁴³Ibid., 157.

⁴⁴Ibid., 159.

Perhaps the phrase which best epitomizes Humanism's application of the scientific method in the field of values is "science for humanity." "Science for Humanity" served as the title of a regular column in The Humanist for many years and has been used widely throughout the literature of the movement. The phrase implies the direct involvement of science in all the human problems confronted by modern man.

Summary

The nineteenth-century's growing fascination with science which extended into the twentieth century became the foundation for Humanism's defense of its ideology. The movement early adopted science in name and method as its banner, and, from the first, Humanist leaders went beyond a mere assertion of their belief in science to the point of identifying the scientific with the philosophic-Humanism. The rhetorical pattern involves the interchanging of science and Humanism and the scientific and Humanistic, and the implication left for a reader or listener is that one must be scientific to be a Humanist and a Humanist to be scientific.

Once the Humanist has identified his movement with science and the scientific method, he moves on to show how Humanism may also be linked with ethics and values. He does this by showing how science and its method are becoming involved with human moral behavior. The rhetorical result of the pattern is a picture of Humanism as an ideology with the

highest concern for and relation to ethical standards. Identification with ethics and values also serves the role of further substantiating the assertion that the scientific method is effective and superior, for Humanists offer specific examples of the progress made by science in the area of human behavior.

CHAPTER V

REFUTATION OF TRADITIONAL
RELIGIOUS BELIEFS

Sherif and Sherif point to the common "unrest" and discontent which motivate social movements;¹ and for Humanism that discontent has centered primarily upon traditional Christianity. What the Humanist finds most objectionable in Christianity (and, consequently, what he first seeks to destroy rhetorically) is the belief in a personal God, a belief which has been called "historic religion's most fundamental concept."² Also, since most Humanists think of themselves as philosophic naturalists, they are quick to quarrel with the supernaturalism of Christianity. Other theological and metaphysical issues surrounding Christianity, as well as many other religions, with which the Humanist chooses to disagree

¹Muzafer Sherif and Carolyn Sherif, An Outline of Social Psychology (New York: Harper and Brothers, Publishers, 1956), p. 722.

²Douglas Macintosh, "Contemporary Humanism," Humanism Another Battleline, ed. William Peter King (Nashville, Tennessee: Cokesbury Press, 1931), p. 57.

involve such claims as the existence of a soul and the possibility of individual immortality.³

Further, Humanists condemn the whole institution of organized Christianity itself and describe it as a negative force in society. An important distinction, however, regarding Christianity is that it has many faces, and some varieties of modern Christian thought differ sharply from the more traditional branches. Nevertheless, nearly all Humanists condemn the total spectrum of Christian thinking, excepting, of course, Unitarianism. Clearly, though, while Humanists are ostensibly directing their condemnation toward all of Christendom, many of their arguments seem appropriate only if viewed as aimed at fundamentalism; that is, some specific attacks fall short of a genuine criticism of certain aspects of liberal Christianity.

Some observers, both religious and secular, have protested that debates over such ancient philosophic questions as the existence of a God, for example, are fruitless and serve no meaningful purpose. That such a position may, in fact, be valid does not alter the fact that the "God question" and related religious claims have historically been given some degree of prominence both by the religionist and his

³These beliefs are all interrelated and there are, of course, many others. It should be noted that Humanists attack such views as a belief in God, supernaturalism, etc., wherever they are to be found, whether in Christianity or any other religion.

opponent. Thus, to the extent that Humanists have felt it necessary to attack various theological tenets and to the extent that traditional religionists have felt it necessary to defend such tenets, Humanism's total efforts to condemn religious orthodoxy deserve attention and analysis.

In this chapter, Humanists' attempts at refutation will be categorized in the following ways: attacks based on (1) science and the accumulated data therefrom, (2) epistemological considerations, (3) common sense and reason, and (4) the failures and harms of Christianity as an institution. Obviously, these categories are interrelated, but they are discrete enough for the rhetorical analysis intended here. In each category of argument, sufficient examples of Humanist rhetoric will be examined to illustrate the nature and worth of the rhetorical pattern.

Science and Its Accumulated Data

The first and most significant rhetorical pattern within the Humanist movement has already been suggested indirectly in earlier chapters. The movement's leaders have begun by making a number of assumptions which make science paramount in its relation to man, the universe, knowledge, and philosophic thought; after having made those assumptions, such leaders have gone on to insist that most traditional religious concepts have already been destroyed by man's accumulation of data through scientific research. Some Humanists have seen

this destruction as a recent one and have implied that certain religious claims have been somewhat justified until recent scientific discoveries rendered them false. Others have viewed religious tenets as if they were in the "process" of being destroyed by scientific data. These two points of view, however, do not differ significantly, for both rest squarely upon science, and both fall into an argumentative structure of either cause to effect or argument from authority. Examples of actual Humanist attacks will illustrate.

An early Humanist writes that the "old supernaturalism" has been replaced by "naturalism," and this means that the "old techniques of religion in so far as built on magic and supernaturalism are no longer tenable."⁴ The key words here are "no longer tenable," for the author is not charging a long-standing fallacy in supernaturalism, but is basing the fallacy upon recent scientific advances. Professor A. E. Haydon makes much the same point when he argues that orthodoxy has been "eroded by the tides of science and the winds of social change."⁵ He further points to the modern religious "quest" which can no longer "be lulled to sleep by opiates confined in old dogmas and institutions."⁶ Both men are arguing

⁴Royal G. Hall, "The Idea of God and the New Humanism," TNH, I, No. 7 (1928), 3.

⁵A. Eustace Haydon, "A Meditation on Modernism," TNH, V, No. 1 (1932), 10.

⁶Ibid., 13.

that the refutation of traditional religious beliefs has already been accomplished by science; and, significantly, both employ the past tense in much the same fashion.

Perhaps the Humanist Manifesto best typifies this rhetorical pattern and sets the tone for the movement to follow. Proposition five, for example, asserts that "the nature of the universe depicted by modern science makes unacceptable any supernatural or cosmic guarantee of human values." Moreover, the claim of proposition six is that "the time has passed for theism, deism, modernism, and the several varieties of 'new thought.'" ⁷ That these two propositions leave no room for traditional religious beliefs, and especially theism and supernaturalism, is important; for science, the Manifesto authors insist, has closed the book and the refutation is complete.

The early Humanist minister Dietrich attacks supernaturalism in another typical presentation of the movement's rhetorical pattern as he writes:

Since that discovery [that the universe is governed by natural law, as opposed to a Deity] we have learned to refer every event to natural causes, and to deny supernatural interference either in the processes of nature or in the affairs of humanity. Thus the ground has been removed from under supernaturalism, which was the very basis of the established religion. ⁸

⁷"The Humanist Manifesto," TH, XXII (July-August, 1962), 131.

⁸John H. Dietrich, "What Is Humanism?" TNH, VI, No. 2 (1933), 3.

He further emphasizes his position in another way by saying that "the achievements of science" have "undermined the whole scheme of supernaturalism," and any religion "which would fit into the modern thought-frame must be naturalistic instead of supernaturalistic."⁹ Dietrich's refutation pattern does not differ materially from the earlier citations; obviously, he is making several assumptions about science, and, on the authority of science, he is certainly ruling out supernaturalism.

E. C. Vanderlaan who, like Dietrich, was a signer of the Humanist Manifesto and a Unitarian-Humanist Minister, attacks immortality as a concept in much the same fashion, when he says:

We might like to believe that we shall never die, and that man is totally exceptional in the scheme of things-- but that is to insist that the world must be different from what we are able to discover about it; that is, like primitive man, to take refuge from facts in a world of fairy tales.¹⁰

The "facts," he is saying, have already determined the invalidity of the major religious issues, and to cling to traditional religious concepts is but to ignore what science has discovered.

Professor H. E. Barnes turns to the accumulation of historical data and asserts that the history of religion "proves the impossibility of maintaining for a minute the

⁹Ibid., 4.

¹⁰Eldred C. Vanderlaan, "Why Insist on God?" TNH, VI, No. 6 (1933), 24.

unique or revealed nature of the Jewish or Christian religions."¹¹ With great certainty, he adds that knowing the origin of religion "proves at once how absurd is the orthodox obsession with salvation in the world to come."¹² While Barnes does not here use the word "science," he is still arguing within the same pattern as others in the movement. He is insisting that present available knowledge has accomplished the task of refutation in regard to the major religious tenets.

Rev. Harold Scott bases his argument against orthodox views more explicitly on science:

Supernaturalism assumes that there are phenomena beyond human experience. If there were man could not know it. As soon as man becomes conscious of phenomena they become part of this experience which by definition is natural. There is no point in calling any part of man's experience supernatural. To do so is to introduce the notion of disorderliness. The work of the exact sciences show an orderly universe. Those who believe there is disorder in the universe have the burden of proving it.¹³

"Orderliness" in the universe, one should note, has traditionally been an argument advanced by the theist to support supernaturalism. Scott has turned the point by arguing that that which is not a part of human experience or nature must

¹¹Harry Elmer Barnes, "Has History Value to Humanism?" TNH, VI, No. 5 (1933), 18.

¹²Ibid., 19.

¹³Harold Scott, "Humanism as Religious Instrumentalism," TNH, VIII, No. 5 (1935), 171-72.

represent "disorder."¹⁴ Also, his point is much the same as Dietrich's, for both men are relying upon the "proven" conclusion that only natural law governs the universe. Later, Scott makes his point more simply by saying that science does not "sustain the alleged supernaturalism of historic religion."¹⁵

William Floyd, another original signer of the Humanist Manifesto, launches his attack against orthodox tenets in the following typical rhetorical pattern:

Now that science has resolved the traditional supernatural into the natural; now that heaven has been swept from the skies by astronomers and hell has been interred by geologists, the orthodox conception of the universe must be revised. The universe that formerly was supposed to be separated sharply into the spiritual and the material, one realm being celestial and the other terrestrial, is now believed to be a unity.¹⁶

Other Humanist rhetoric cited has reduced Floyd's argument to a simple redundancy. Like other Humanist writers, he makes assumptions regarding science which function as implied premises; but given those assumptions as a foundation, his conclusion may be valid.

Perhaps a more dogmatic refutation of the body-spirit duality and of immortality comes from the pen of author Corliss Lamont. He posits as a tenet of the Humanist philosophy the following:

¹⁴Scott's use of human experience as a criterion for knowledge raises an epistemological question to be discussed in the next section. See page 110.

¹⁵Ibid., 172.

¹⁶William Floyd, "Humanist Principles," TH, II (Spring, 1942), 1.

First, a belief, based mainly on the sciences of biology, psychology and medicine, that man is an evolutionary product of the nature that is his home and an inseparable unity of body and personality having no possibility for individual immortality.¹⁷

Although absolutistic, Lamont's statements fit easily into the movement's argumentative structure.¹⁸ His point is that the "naturalness" of the universe and man excludes all possibility of an "unnatural" immortality.

Professor Haydon, still another signer of the Manifesto cited earlier in this chapter, describes how science has "swept the ages" to tell the story of man and his earth; and how scientific knowledge has put "Gods and institutions and moral codes" into "proper perspective." He further asserts that "the absolutes, ultimates and finalities of earlier ages have vanished."¹⁹ He advances the characteristically Humanist contention that modern scientific advances have completed the job of destroying traditional religious beliefs.

The literature of Humanism is replete with just such generalizations as those made by Haydon; and they are nearly all alike in structure and tone as they describe the victory of science over religion. The following four generalizations are cited here to accentuate the persistent refrain of the rhetorical pattern.

¹⁷Corliss Lamont, "The Meaning of Humanism," TH, II (Summer, 1942), 42.

¹⁸Lamont's statement "no possibility of individual immortality," has been criticized by other Humanists as being too dogmatic. Lamont himself later agreed.

¹⁹A. Eustace Haydon, "Humanism Has Faith in Man," TH, X (January-February, 1950), 1.

First of all, philosopher Harold Larrabee criticizes those who cling so long to old beliefs and insists that had the religionists just been "logical," they would "have long since abandoned their inherited religious tenets which are so glaringly inconsistent with their scientific knowledge."²⁰ Next, sociologist Frank H. Hankins argues that the "rejection of all supernaturalism" is Humanism's most "distinguishing philosophical tenet," which places the movement in line with that phase of thought which has "paralleled the advancement of science." He argues, further, that not only does science make the idea of God invalid, but "unnecessary."²¹ A third generalization in this refrain comes from Humanism's most important figure, Edwin Wilson, who writes that "agnosticism is alone intellectually justified beneath the banner of science."²² And finally, semanticist Anatol Rapoport asserts that religious beliefs such as supernaturalism and the Resurrection can no longer be maintained, because "the evidence is overwhelmingly against these statements being true."²³ Clearly, then, Humanist leaders have persistently utilized a

²⁰Harold A. Larrabee, "150 Years of Smearing the Infidel," TH, X (September-October, 1950), 192.

²¹Frank H. Hankins, "Humanism and the Culture Stream," TH, XX (March-April, 1960), 69.

²²Edwin H. Wilson, "Pious Scientists Brought to Task," TNH, IV, No. 6 (1931), 38.

²³Anatol Rapoport, "Religion and 'Salvation,'" TH, XVI (March-April, 1956), 62.

pattern of argument which has placed traditional religious claims in the "past tense," having fallen to the march of scientific discovery.

Before leaving the discussion of this particular method of refutation, however, some brief mention of the "trend" or "tendency" aspect of the argument must be made. Doubtless, most of the Humanists cited above think of the onslaught of science against traditional religion as being a continuing one; however, the pattern of argument is sometimes directly focused on the "on-going" nature of that scientific advance. Some such arguments will be noted here, although no fundamental change in the rhetorical pattern results.

Professor Roy Wood Sellars is a representative example as he argues that the "tables are being slowly turned on the polemical field." He states that while the natural is being "filled out," the supernatural is becoming "ever more ghostly and incredible, a sort of twice-told tale."²⁴ These advances of science, he writes, have meant that the Humanist may feel less of a responsibility for disproving the existence of God and revelation and may come to see that the job of proving now rests with the supernaturalist.²⁵ While Sellars does not leave much hope for the survival of traditional religious

²⁴Roy Wood Sellars, "Naturalistic Humanism: A Framework for Belief and Values," TH, XIII (March-April, 1953), 52.

²⁵Ibid., 53.

beliefs, he does stress that the scientific battle is still in the process of being won, rather than being past history.

Likewise, sociologist Read Bain argues that the rise of science has meant that "the supernatural aspects of Christianity have steadily declined." He further states that as science progresses toward its goals, "Christianity and other world religions gradually will fuse into a secularized world religion."²⁶ In a later article, Bain writes:

Supernaturalism in all its forms is dying out. Science has been slowly destroying it for over three hundred years, with rapid acceleration during the last century. Its final stronghold is in the psychosocial realm. During the last fifty years the social sciences have made great strides toward becoming natural sciences and most of the former psychosocial mysteries have become matters of rapidly developing scientific knowledge. The Christian myth is taking its proper place among other primitive mythologies.²⁷

Bain, then, is also concerned with the continuing advance of science and he looks to the future for final destruction of traditional religion. Noteworthy is his assertion that supernaturalism is "dying out," for the evidence at hand today would certainly not support the claim that fewer people believe in supernaturalism now than have in the past. What Bain probably means is that for those who place their primary reliance in science, supernaturalism is losing ground.

²⁶Read Bain, "Basic Religion: Man Creating Himself," TH, X (July-August, 1950), 155.

²⁷Read Bain, "Scientific Humanism," TH, XIV (May-June, 1954), 116.

Finally, Wendt strongly attacks the concepts of heaven and hell and says that

they are not merely inadequate now; they are incompatible with our knowledge. And this knowledge is still preliminary and inadequate. Some day we shall have the answers to such far questions.²⁸

Wendt appears confident that certain religious claims, especially immortality, do come into conflict with modern knowledge; however, he, like Bain, is looking ahead to answers from science. Of particular note is Wendt's conviction that man has very inadequate knowledge at present, a statement not always clearly made by Humanists. Nevertheless, the rhetorical pattern of refuting the traditional religious views through the authority of science remains the same for those who feel the job of refutation is complete and those who believe orthodox religion is only in the final stages of the process of defeat.

The actual argumentative structure of the Humanist attack (in this section as well as the next) is quite clear. At one level, the argument falls into a cause and effect pattern:

Cause--Many scientific discoveries
Effect--Orthodox tenets are no longer tenable

But more properly the pattern should be viewed as an argument from authority. In a sense, Humanist rhetoric personifies science in such a way that it serves as an indisputable

²⁸Gerald Wendt, "A Time for Ethical Humanism," TH, XXI (September-October, 1961), 270.

authority for the movement's assertions. The result is as follows:

Science has discovered a world guided by natural law and has not found any evidence to support supernaturalism, theism, immortality, or any of the other claims of Christianity. Science has produced evidence in direct conflict with religious claims.

Therefore, the major Christian tenets are either untenable or false.

Science is the most reliable and modern source for truth, physical as well as philosophic. The discoveries of science are dependable and that which conflicts with them cannot be considered valid.

The key to this pattern of argument obviously lies in the connecting link between evidence and claim, for the Humanist's position rests upon the assumptions he makes regarding science and truth.

Epistemological Factors

Closely related to the foregoing pattern of refutation is Humanism's condemnation of traditional religious views on the basis of epistemological considerations. Humanists deal with the methodological question in two ways. They argue that (1) the nature of the scientific method repudiates Christian tenets and (2) religious epistemologies are old and invalid. In each case, the ends achieved are the same: religious tenets are rejected, quite apart from their validity

or invalidity, on the grounds that they were "discovered" through the use of a faulty epistemology.

The Scientific Method Utilized As Refutation

Humanist rhetoric often attacks traditional religion on methodological grounds, and the Humanist Manifesto exemplifies the pattern in the clearest possible language. Proposition five, for instance, asserts that 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.²⁹

These statements are of primal significance, for they represent the very heart and foundation of the movement's epistemological position. Clear and definite limits are placed upon what is to be "acceptable" knowledge, and any further investigation in the area of religion must be conducted scientifically. Obviously, the Manifesto, through such restrictions is excluding and rejecting most religious tenets. The methodology clearly predetermines the nature of the conclusion.

Individual Humanists also persistently follow this same pattern of argument and insist on much the same definition of "truth" as does the Manifesto. Scott, for example, says that "religious propositions must meet the same tests

²⁹"The Humanist Manifesto," TH, XII (July-August, 1962), 131.

as propositions in other fields."³⁰ He means, of course, "scientific" tests. And Floyd echoes Scott when he argues that knowledge of the physical world comes from science, and so also must knowledge concerning the "metaphysical world."³¹ Hankins, too, is clear and to the point as he discusses science as "the one universal language" and adds that

its devotees everywhere seek the same kind of truth, the only kind of truth that is universally understood and acceptable, because it is the only kind that contains within itself the means and methods of correcting its own errors.³²

Hankins, like Scott and Floyd, identifies his methodology and the kind of truth he seeks with such specificity that religious beliefs are ruled out without a contest. Thus, it is the actual "nature" of the epistemology which does the job of refutation.

Another prominent Humanist, Rev. Curtis Reese, past president of both the Humanist Press Association and the American Humanist Association, describes the movement's position as being one of

an attitude of inquiry toward the mystery that envelopes man and his world. I am increasingly convinced that for most people religion is basically a pious attitude toward

³⁰Harold Scott, "What Humanism Is," TH, VII (Winter, 1947), 131.

³¹Floyd, TH, II, 2.

³²Hankins, TH, XX, 70.

mystery. And as mystery disappears religion tends to disappear with it.³³

He goes on to say that the Humanist may not always find the answer and may at times be "baffled by the mystery," but "he will never cease to inquire."³⁴ Reese is here placing the blame for the religious-scientific conflict upon the "attitude" toward investigation held by the religionist. While he recognizes the limitations of man's knowledge, he insists that all answers to "mysteries" must come from science. Clearly, Reese's pattern of argument does not differ significantly from earlier quotations cited.

In this same stream of thought, Professor George Axtelle, another former president of the AHA, discusses the naturalistic and the scientific as the "core of common attitude" for the movement. His statements concerning the "scientific" epitomize the movement's rhetorical pattern:

The term 'scientific' has reference specifically to the nature of dependable human knowledge. Our only reliable knowledge is the fruit of a scientific way of thinking. We are generally agreed that this way of thought is not only possible but necessary in matters of religion, morals, and social policy. We believe that the test of an idea is the same in religion, morals, and social policy as it is in scientific matters.³⁵

³³Curtis W. Reese, "The Social Implications of Humanism," TH, XXI (July-August, 1961), 196. This article first appeared in The Humanist the summer of 1948; it had been delivered before the annual meeting of the AHA of that year. Reprinted upon Reese's death in 1961.

³⁴Ibid.

³⁵George E. Axtelle, "Unity in Diversity," TH, XXI (January-February, 1961), 26.

Again, this common attitude toward "truth" seems to unite Humanism against traditional religion, and that attitude, as Axtelle expresses it, is that the only reliable human knowledge comes from science.

The distinguished scientist Dr. Hermann Muller furthers the point quite succinctly in a presidential address before an AHA conference. He speaks of the prime value of scientific discoveries such as evolution and insists that we must rely upon

the conclusions based on the cooperative efforts of free honest minds served by searching eyes and probing hands. That is the kind of knowledge and the only kind that our children have a right to be taught as knowledge in our schools.³⁶

The point he is making here (as well as throughout his speech) is merely that nothing really deserves to go by the name of knowledge unless it has emerged out of scientific research.

That the Humanist does not have such knowledge about God and the universe is quite freely admitted by Dr. Gerald Wendt. He argues that we need to have "sure knowledge" about God and other questions, but that scientific research is the only way to acquire such data; we don't have the answers yet, he says, "but let us find out!"³⁷ Again, the criterion for what is acceptable data is made quite clear.

³⁶"Freedom from Ignorance," AHA Cincinnati Conference (1957), Tape Recording Library.

³⁷Gerald Wendt, "Science and Democracy in Human Progress," TH, XII (September-October, 1952), 217.

Individual Humanists have sometimes attempted to justify the scientific method at a very concrete level. Scott, for example, in contrasting the scientific method with revelation, argues that the scientific method has not led man astray and into the "contradictions" resulting from revelation. He asks of the method of science:

Is there any other fruitful way to find truth? Look about you at the things which give us as abundant a life as you have. Are these instruments of happiness the result of revelations from a supernatural world or of the scientific method?³⁸

Scott assumes that when a methodology proves to be effective in one arena (the "instruments of happiness" representing the physical or material world), it must, therefore, be the most effective in all other arenas.

Scott's defense of the scientific method is nearly duplicated by Larrabee who notes that the religionists apply the laws of nature and science in their daily lives but refuse to do so in matters of religion. He emphasizes that the scientific approach has produced marvels for mankind and that such a methodology must be inherently superior to all others.³⁹ Like Scott, Larrabee fails to demonstrate that a method of investigation which works in the material world will also work in the non-material world; he is making an assumption

³⁸Harold Scott, "The Extravagance of Religious Claims," THB, II (April, 1940), 3.

³⁹Harold A. Larrabee, "The Humanist Frontier," TH, XVIII (July-August, 1958), 240.

regarding the relationship of the physical to the metaphysical. These two specific efforts to defend the scientific method, however, do fit into the movement's main pattern of argument, for they both represent a methodological attack upon traditional religion.

Another aspect of the Humanist's epistemological attack centers on the definition of "human experience" and "nature." Dietrich, for example, in criticizing Christianity for being rigid and dogmatic, argues that Humanism has

a flexible and adjustable attitude, basing its faith entirely upon the recognized and changing facts of human experience. Its difference from theistic religion is not in its denial of God, but in its change of method. It refuses to assume the existence of god and then to interpret human experience in terms of that assumption. It has adopted the experimental or scientific method, which merely observes and accepts human experience as the basis of all thought and activity, and includes every phase of human experience in its attempt to educe a system of thought which might form a practical and working basis for human life.⁴⁰

Dietrich here recognizes that the conflict between theism and Humanism largely centers on the question of method. What is most significant, however, is his use of "human experience" as the key to the methodological issue. He is saying that all knowledge must come from human experience, a statement which might well be made by the religionist. The difference is that Dietrich thinks of human experience as sensory, or natural, or testable. Actually, his use of human experience

⁴⁰John H. Dietrich, "Is Humanism Dying?" THE, I (May, 1938), 3.

in that manner excludes the possibility of finding validity for such concepts as God and immortality, both of which might be said to go beyond nature or the "natural."

Scott echoes that position as he asserts that all human experience is natural and likely "what the psychologists say it is, the reception of data from stimuli."⁴¹ As cited earlier in this chapter,⁴² Scott goes on to spell out the natural-supernatural dilemma. He says that supernaturalism could not be experienced by man because it is beyond nature, and if it were so experienced, it would become a part of nature. At one level, the argument appears to be little more than a claim by definition, but on another level, the argument reflects a rather fundamental epistemological issue.

Professor J. A. C. F. Auer of Harvard makes a related point, but with a slight change in emphasis and language. He insists that man cannot discover or experience God because God has been defined

as infinite and man as finite, God as perfect and man as imperfect, man as bound by time and space and God as bound by nothing at all, you have taken away all points at which the two could possibly meet.⁴³

He adds that man's "power to understand" depends upon the setting up of limits and God therefore is beyond comprehension. Auer concludes that man will never be able to

⁴¹Scott, TNH, VIII, 171.

⁴²See page 98.

⁴³J. A. C. Fagginger Auer, "What Is Religion? The Answer of Humanism," TH, VI (Winter, 1946), 130.

"discover God," for there are no "lines of demarcation," no ways that God can "be set off against anything else."⁴⁴ From a scientific point of view, Auer makes the point very well indeed: that which are "beyond" nature discoveries are not likely to come out of "natural" investigations. Most significantly, he is typifying the Humanist's epistemological argumentative pattern of claiming that the nature of the scientific method refutes, rejects, and excludes the possibility of veracity among the major tenets of traditional religion.

Specific Attacks Upon Traditional Religious Epistemologies

Humanists continue their offensive by carrying the battle deeper into "enemy" territory by condemning the specific methods used by religionists to arrive at truths. Certainly, such a position is implicit in the foregoing section; however, the intent here is to point to some of the direct arguments raised against such devices as revelation and intuition, ultimately leading to a rejection of the veracity of the Bible and the authority of the Church. The two broad criticisms which Humanists direct toward orthodox methodologies are (1) that revelations are not reliable because they conflict and (2) that religious epistemologies are absolutist and anti-scientific.

Professor Oliver Reiser, in an address before the

⁴⁴Ibid., 132.

First Humanist Assembly in 1934, spelled out the movement's total position as being one of opposition to

(a) the theological doctrine of the verbal inspiration of religious literature; (b) the belief in intuition, revelation, or any other non-rational source of knowledge; and (c) the idea that institutional authority, traditions, or conventions provide an infallible guide for belief and actions.⁴⁵

To some extent at least, Reiser's three items run together. To Reiser, revelation is the cardinal evil, and all other "non-scientific" sources of truth used by religion are secondary evils.

More pointed, however, are Professor Sellars' vigorous assertions that the Humanist religion

is a religion without revelation. But, of course, it is his opinion that Christianity is also a religion without revelation because revelation is an illusion. Rather is Christianity one of the many historic religions which believed that it had a revelation. And so the humanist would demand that Christianity give up this belief in a revelation.⁴⁶

Sellars here offers little support for his charge that revelation is an "illusion"; he merely raises the issue that revelation has existed in many different religions.

Scott expands that very point with considerable specificity as he chides those who "cling to authoritative revelation from a spirit world." He builds his case as follows:

⁴⁵Oliver Reiser, "The Social Objectives of Humanism," TNH, VII, No. 6 (1934), 23.

⁴⁶Roy Wood Sellars, "Naturalistic Interpretation of Religion," TNH, III, No. 4 (1930), 2.

That revelations from a hypothetical spirit world were different in every place, India, Palestine, Arabia, China, aborigines of the tropics, and savages of the arctics seems to be no hindrance to people who had to believe or be scared to death. All great religions of the world wrote sacred books preserving their conflicting and confused messages from the spirit world . . . The confessions of faith, articles of belief and creeds, have been the attempts of later people to give plausibility to alleged voices from a spirit world by reinterpreting the old revelations in terms of current subtleties.⁴⁷

Thus, Scott effectively argues that all true and infallible revelations would have to originate from the same source and be of the same nature; this, he shows, has not been the case. That so many revelations have said so many different things in different times convinces Scott that all revelations are false.

Scott embellishes his thesis by discussing the common situation surrounding all the "great mediators" of the "incoherent messages from the spirit world," around whom were built up legends of miraculous deeds, supernatural births, strange powers, etc. All of which, Scott says, gave the messenger his authority and prestige.⁴⁸ The distressing factor for Scott is that such events have been common to so many historic religions.

Professor Ames, in contrasting the universal nature of the language of science with religious methodology, says succinctly that "revelations, myths, mystical intuitions

⁴⁷Scott, THB, II, 1.

⁴⁸Ibid.

conflict."⁴⁹ And Professor Malcolm Bissell calls such conflicts a "dilemma" and describes it as follows:

To admit that supernatural revelation has flowed through more than one narrow channel is to grant the validity of claims the sectarian must ever reject; to deny that a Gandhi or a Buddha has been God-inspired is at once to dispose of the unique efficacy of divine grace. In either case, nothing is left of the doctrine of 'one true faith.'⁵⁰

Of course, Bissell's argument does not differ materially from Scott's. He is merely insisting that there cannot be the true revelation, because revelation is not unique to any one religion or sect.

A second common mode of Humanist criticism of religious epistemology is to charge that its methods are anti-scientific, because, among other reasons, the religionist claims absolute and infallible truths. Ethical Culture leader J. H. Hynd, for example, calls the claim of infallibility "the greatest hoax in history." "Any claim to infallible authority," he argues, "by imputation or imposition is a hoax under whatever guise it may appear."⁵¹ That claim, he insists, is to be found in all the supernatural religions, and his accusation specifically includes the Roman Papacy and certain religious "parchments."⁵² He expresses a particular

⁴⁹Van Meter Ames, "Science and the Reconstruction of Values," TH, V (Spring, 1945), 12.

⁵⁰Malcolm H. Bissell, "Escape from Reality," TH, X (November-December, 1950), 261.

⁵¹J. Hutton Hynd, "The Greatest Hoax in History--The Claim to Infallibility," TH, V (Summer, 1945), 56.

⁵²Ibid., 58.

disapproval of the infallible authority of the Bible and states that it is an "incredible fact" that in many Protestant churches "the Old and New Testaments are the only authoritative books permitted to be read in the pulpit." Hynd adds that "to submit so naively to the play of such a hoax as this is to surrender the intellect and the moral life to a static and backward state of bondage."⁵³ Obviously, Hynd is condemning religion only on the epistemological grounds that it is based on infallible authority--which is a "hoax." Such a statement does not seem inappropriate to the Humanist, given his predispositions and assumptions toward science and the world.

Auer further assails absolute authority as being inherently invalid when he discusses the "inner certainty" used by theism to prove its case, and argues that such is "a two-edged sword." He explains that

the mystics were certain that their visions reflected reality. Both Ignatius Loyola and Saint Teresa were certain that they had seen the Trinity, so certain indeed that no argument would ever have persuaded them that they were wrong. Yet you and I would scarcely accept their experience as a proof for the existence of the Trinity.⁵⁴

He adds that two of the most certain men in history were Hitler and Mussolini, and they were wrong.⁵⁵ His point is

⁵³Ibid., 59.

⁵⁴Auer, TH, VI, 133.

⁵⁵Ibid.

clear enough; certainty that one has the truth or has received revealed truth is far from a guarantee of validity.

The charge that religious methodologies are non-reliable and non-scientific is furthered by William Floyd. He argues that revelation is over 2,000 years old and the general antiquity of the scriptures

militates against their sufficiency as a modern guide, for their authors, writing in a pre-scientific environment, assumed a physical world quite different from that disclosed by science; and their misconceptions influenced their delineation of a supernatural theocracy.⁵⁶

He goes on to emphasize the point made earlier in this chapter, namely, that all truths, both physical and metaphysical, must come from "scientific scholarship."⁵⁷

Professor Harold McCarthy criticizes the whole notion of intuition as already rejected by science and irrelevant to knowledge. He writes that "no intuition is self-validating and therefore every intuition must be regarded as a hypothesis to be tested rather than a conclusion to be recorded."⁵⁸ He does not eliminate intuition as a source of inspiration, but proposes that its findings be subject to strict scientific testing for validation.

Muller follows this general pattern by contrasting the information gained through science with what he refers

⁵⁶Floyd, TH, II, 1.

⁵⁷Ibid., 2.

⁵⁸Harold E. McCarthy, "Science and Its Critics," TH, XII (March-April, 1952), 53.

to as "supposed supernatural revelation or any other type of superstition."⁵⁹ Another author says that since revealed truth must be supernatural, the natural world and science may both be ignored. He expands the idea by saying that revelation has no "coercive, self-repairing quality," and one who has received revelation can completely set aside all scientific truths which conflict with his truth.⁶⁰ The argument is that traditional religious methodologies such as revelation are inherently unreliable because they are non-scientific or even anti-scientific.

Obviously, Humanists have made many epistemological attacks upon traditional religion, but the foregoing specific efforts at refutation typify the movement's rhetorical pattern.

Appeals to Common Sense and Reason

"Those who care to 'reason' will find the claims made by orthodoxy to be absurd and foolish." Such is the basic form which this pattern of refutation assumes. Humanist appeals to "common sense" and "reason" are much less significant than those in the foregoing patterns. Appeals to reason are secondary in that they rest on the assumption that answers to theological questions may be found by human inquiry and

⁵⁹Hermann J. Muller, "Modernized Magic: A Protest" (Humanist discussion), TH, XX (July-August, 1960), 227.

⁶⁰Lynn L. Weldon, "When Revelation Has Meaning," TH, XXI (November-December, 1961), 336.

investigation. This pattern differs from the preceding ones in that science is not here called upon directly as the rationale for the position.

Most of the arguments to be cited here are not new. Many of the specific attacks can be found in the writings of such men as Voltaire, Paine, Ingersoll, Darrow, and others. Also, many Humanists do not enter this particular field of polemics, for they find debates over specific religious claims to be fruitless. Furthermore, the pattern here illustrated does not represent the heart of the Humanist position and does not occupy a prominent place in Humanist literature.

The movement's appeals to common sense and reason center on refuting the ideas of God and immortality, and, as listed here, are paraphrased and condensed into a sample of the argumentative pattern.

Immortality

The following list includes a few of the common sense attacks on the concept of immortality.

(1) How is God to judge between the saint and the sinner? Most people are basically good, but find difficulty in living up to their highest ideals. Most people are both good and bad--will they go to heaven or hell? What about non-Christians? If belief in Christ is essential for eternal life, then millions of religious Jews, Moslems, and Buddhists who have lived upright and noble lives will go to hell. Is

that just? How can God punish a man for what He knew was going to be done? If God is all-powerful, why should he punish man for the sins which He could prevent but does not?⁶¹ What about the village idiot? If he does not go to hell, will he retain his idiocy in heaven or be reconstructed? If the latter, the "continuity of self" will be lost.⁶² How could a God be "so immoral that He would torture His children" because they did not select the right church or the right scheme of salvation?⁶³

(2) The entire "scramble for heaven" after death is "undignified, undemocratic, and implausible." How can any religion be "noble" which demands "special privilege" after death?⁶⁴ Man looks absurd as he evades the facts of this world by believing that "all will come out right in another world," a world about which he knows nothing.⁶⁵ Life will continue to remain a "rigid routine of totems and taboos" as long as God is sitting in judgment, for how many men dare risk eternal punishment to seek new truths and progress?⁶⁶

⁶¹Harry Ruja, "Is Immortality Reasonable?" TH, VII (Winter, 1947), 123.

⁶²Ibid., 125.

⁶³Harold Scott, "Dr. Scott Answers His Critics," Radio Interview, Salt Lake City (n. d.), Tape Recording Library.

⁶⁴Ibid.

⁶⁵Eldred C. Vanderlaan, TNH, VI, No. 6, 25.

⁶⁶Paul Eldridge, "What a Man Fears Determines His Character," TH, VII (Spring, 1947), 185.

(3) What about existence itself after death? When a man remarries after the death of his first wife, whom shall he join in heaven?⁶⁷ With such conflicts resolved, still the very idea of immortality even as a "state of bliss" would appear to be extremely "boring." The survival of the soul without the mind would constitute a "drab existence."⁶⁸ Further, if happiness is achieved through the overcoming of obstacles, how shall there be happiness in heaven where there are no obstacles? Also missing will be any pleasure achieved through biological functions. And how, indeed, will man occupy himself? By playing harps? Or by hunting and fishing as many have believed?⁶⁹

(4) How can anyone really imagine immortality to exist? For example, the mind is a function of the physical organ called a brain just as the voice is a function of the vocal chords. When the brain decomposes, the mind disappears; and how can anyone possibly conceive of a "disembodied mind wandering around in the cosmos," any more than a disembodied voice?⁷⁰ And how can there be such a "place" as heaven? It cannot really be in the sky, because there is actually no such thing as a sky and the farther up one goes the blacker

⁶⁷Ruja, TH, VII, 124.

⁶⁸Harold R. Rafton, "What Can We Believe?" TH, XIII (May-June, 1953), 121.

⁶⁹Ruja, TH, VII, 123.

⁷⁰Rafton, TH, XIII, 121.

the scene. Likewise, hell as an ancient dogma is beyond conception. Hell is more and more being ignored, for it is impossible to "think of Hell as a reality down in the solid granite that is under the earth's surface everywhere." Hell and Heaven cannot be located any more than the Greeks could locate the mountain homes of the gods.⁷¹

(5) Of course, when man's life on earth was wretched and frustrating, he may have gained some release through his delusions of eternal life. But modern life in the twentieth century, for most men at least, makes that need no longer important.⁷² But in the last analysis, even when a man is about to die or be killed, can he really find any consolation by fooling himself into believing that he is going to "a far far better place?"⁷³

Thus the Humanist argues against the concept of immortality. The arguments, of course, could not be made without the basic assumption that all things can be touched, observed, or understood by man.

The Idea of God and Some Corollaries

The movement's appeal to reason may be extended through

⁷¹Wendt, TH, XXI, 270.

⁷²Ruja, TH, VII, 126.

⁷³David A. Rickards, "What Does the World Need: More Christianity or More Humanism?" speech delivered before the Warren, Ohio Unitarian Fellowship (January, 1961), Tape Recording Library.

the following list of common attacks made against the concept of God and some related religious claims.

(1) Over 1700 Gods have been recorded, each believed to be the only true God by its followers. Belief in the Christian God is largely a matter of geography and accident of birth. How strange it is to see a person smile "indulgently" at other Gods as if they were obvious myths, and then to insist that his God, which has equally mystical and incredible qualities, is real and true. The whole "savior idea" is likewise strange, for many "savior gods appeared, died and were resurrected long before Jesus was born." Nor is the Christian idea of a God who died on a cross a unique one, because even that "dubious distinction must be shared by Jesus with at least sixteen others." The identical situation surrounds the scriptures as a guide, for there have been at least twenty-five from various religions, each held to be sacred by its followers.⁷⁴ Good Christians everywhere deny the existence of all Gods but their own, making themselves atheistic in their attitude toward the nearly 2,000 Gods. The atheist, then, only denies the existence of one more God than does the Christian.⁷⁵ Very simply, man has always created

⁷⁴Rafton, TH, XIII, 119-22.

⁷⁵Rickards, "What Does the World Need: More Christianity or More Humanism?" Tape Recording Library.

God in man's image. Gods have merely been men of majestic proportion. With equal logic the ant could say that God was an ant, but of majestic proportions. The whole structure of Christianity rests on that unproved assumption that God exists.⁷⁶ By creating his Gods man has been able to call his "package of ignorance" by the name of God. Disease, flood, conception--whatever man did not properly understand--he attributed to God; but man's increased knowledge, of course, steadily diminished the "God package."⁷⁷

(2) To imagine a God may be possible, but how can any person who has learned to think at all possibly believe in or "set up" a "God who is all-loving, all-powerful, all-seeing--and at the same time vengeful and punishing?" How can a person worship a God which is less civilized than himself? The old tribal God would not be tolerated by most civilized men today, and yet that type of God is still worshipped by many people. Such individuals were conditioned in childhood and have never had the chance to think for themselves.⁷⁸ If God does exist and is all-powerful, then everything that happens is by divine plan, and that means that disease, floods, and human suffering are the will of God.⁷⁹

⁷⁶Scott, "Dr. Scott Answers His Critics," Tape Recording Library.

⁷⁷Rafton, TH, XIII, 119-20.

⁷⁸Brock Chisholm, "It Starts with Santa Claus," editorial interview conducted by Edwin Wilson, TH, XVI (November-December, 1956), 293.

⁷⁹Rickards, "What Does the World Need: More Christianity or More Humanism?" Tape Recording Library.

In the final analysis, if there is a predetermined end with the final result fixed by a Creator, "what is man but the creator's plaything?"⁸⁰

(3) Another Christian concept, the devil, was invented simply to explain evil in a world ruled by a "supposedly good God." Why hasn't the "omnipotent God" destroyed the devil thereby ridding the world of that evil? Perhaps the answer is that the theologians would have had little left to preach about.⁸¹ Liberal Christians have, in fact, at times sought to eliminate the devil, but they have failed because he is needed to blame as a "scapegoat." Actually, if there were no devil it would be necessary to invent one.⁸²

(4) Just what difference does a belief in God make? The liberal Christian has already so altered his concept of the power of God in his life that there is little left. What does he "expect his God to do" that the Humanist cannot "expect from the neutral universe?" He (the liberal Christian) gets on so well without the rest of the "apparatus of supernaturalism," why can't he take the next logical step and give up the word "God" to which he clings?⁸³ Twentieth-century man

⁸⁰Arthur E. Morgan, "The Significance of Life," TH, XV (May-June, 1955), 123.

⁸¹Rafton, TH, XIII, 120.

⁸²John Morris, "The Devil and Madison Avenue," TH, XXI (November-December, 1961), 340.

⁸³Vanderlaan, TNH, VI, No. 6, 23.

actually only gives lip service to his belief in God. Of course, if you ask him if he believes in God you can depend on his strong affirmation, but ask him "what God is like, when he last talked about God with an adult, when God last helped or punished him, or any question which would reflect a belief in an active God, and he is likely to respond with an "embarrassed silence or an answer hastily and insincerely concocted." Ask the same man what he expects from a "man, a woman, or a gallon of gas," and he will be quite clear and definite. The conclusion is that modern man is either not really concerned with God or does not believe in him.⁸⁴ If the Humanist is right, then man has always been without God in actuality. "Are we to suppose that we are unable to get by without the spiritual crutch which we invented for ourselves in our limping past?"⁸⁵ Modern man is already largely humanized, for he does not pray when he is ill; he goes to a doctor, for he has faith in the power of man and medicine. Society has learned, despite its protestations to the contrary, that you can't "depend on God."⁸⁶

(5) Actually, everyone is an agnostic if he "thinks at all." Some only become agnostic sooner than others. In

⁸⁴Anatol Rapoport, "Signal Reactions to Religious Symbols," TH, XVIII (July-August, 1958), 201.

⁸⁵Kenneth L. Patton, "Religion Without God," TH, VII (June, 1947), 16.

⁸⁶Rickards, "What Does the World Need: More Christianity or More Humanism?" Tape Recording Library.

the final analysis, only the "unreasoning can escape agnosticism."⁸⁷ What a dilemma the intelligent and honest contemporary is "up against" when asked to believe

that Jesus who walked in Palestine was the miraculously begotten Son of God, sent to the earth to shed His blood; that those who are able to take advantage of the divine sacrifice may wash away the inherent sinfulness of their human nature, a sinfulness which natural man can do nothing to eradicate or even to diminish?⁸⁸

A series of Christian myths have been built around a simple story: "A Jewish carpenter-teacher became involved with the Roman government of Judea, and accused of treason, was crucified."⁸⁹ The religionist confuses literal and symbolic truths, especially when he tells his children Biblical stories as if they were completely factual. The religionist may sometimes admit that the whale did not swallow Jonah and that the story is a symbolic representation of Jonah's despair for having disobeyed God; however, that same Christian is slow to take the next logical step and admit that the idea of a God is only a symbolic representation of faith in brotherhood and order in the universe.⁹⁰

There is a refrain, a theme, an undercurrent running through Humanism's appeal to common sense and reason.

⁸⁷Alfred W. Hobart, "A Significant Distinction," TNH, I, No. 9 (1928), 3.

⁸⁸Max Otto, "In Defense of Secularism," TH, XII (January-February, 1952), 19.

⁸⁹Harold Scott, "Humanist Students and Biblical Study," TH, III (Summer, 1943), 77.

⁹⁰Rapoport, TH, XVI, 63-64.

Explicitly or implicitly, the Humanist argues: How can any thinking person who is willing to apply reason accept the absurd beliefs of orthodox religion? The basic argumentative structure does not differ markedly from that discussed in the foregoing sections.

Orthodox religious claims
are not reasonable; they
conflict with common sense.
They appear incredible.

Therefore, they are false.

Only that which appeals to
reason can be true. That
which conflicts with the con-
crete and testable, or which
cannot be empirically explained
must be judged as untrue.

Although such appeals may be less significant than the reliance on science and the scientific method, they do play a part in the Humanist's efforts to refute existing religious beliefs.

Evils Inherent in the Christian Religion

The Humanist, satisfied that a beleaguered orthodoxy can no longer defend the veracity of its tenets, moves the invasion to a new front. The battle here is not based upon the validity of religious claims, but rather is grounded upon the charge that traditional religion results in evil consequences for the individual and society. As in the preceding section, many of the arguments here noted may be found in the works of earlier critics of religion.

Humanists have presented four indictments of traditional religion, criticizing it (1) as narrow, absolutist, and intellectually detrimental, (2) as anti-social and intolerant, (3) as indifferent, irresponsible, and (4) as containing other ethical and moral weaknesses.

Narrow, Absolutist, and Intellectually
Detrimental

Humanism's abjuration of absolutism in any form has already been noted in several connections. Absolutism is argued against, also, for its inherent harm to the individual and society. Professor Bissell, for example, in a stern rebuke of orthodoxy writes:

For the tragedy of mankind has not been written by the searchers for the final answer, but by those who have found it. No man can hate his brother for doubting what he himself could still question. No Columbus who knows what lies beyond the horizon ventures forth to find a new world.⁹¹

Absolutism, he is saying, restricts and limits man.

Wilson objects on much the same basis when he describes organized religion as a

group of men obtaining absolute power over the thoughts and loyalties of large numbers of citizens in the name of a revelation that is spurious and on the basis of that 'revelation' upholding an anti-democratic absolutism and demanding the right to determine our social policies.⁹²

⁹¹Bissell, TH, X, 262.

⁹²Edwin H. Wilson, "The Sectarian Battlefront," TH, X (March-April, 1950), 88.

Wilson objects to the power over thought held by orthodoxy, and calls it "anti-democratic."⁹³

Priscilla Robertson describes the religionist as an "authoritarian personality" who demands that everything be simple and right or wrong, while the world is not so constructed. She argues the importance of an open mind and learning to live with uncertainty.⁹⁴

A. D. Black laments the dogma and "set creeds that claim authority and finality." Such, he insists,

constrict man's minds within a narrow rigid framework, whereas it is our sense that man's spiritual nature requires openness and freedom and stimulation to doubt and explore, to think and work out and grow.⁹⁵

He further states that religion's emphasis on absolute truth and authority result in a "rigidity and an exclusiveness and a fanaticism that is in itself a violation of the spiritual needs of man."⁹⁶ Black castigates orthodoxy on the same basis as does Robertson in the foregoing paragraph. They both believe that traditional religious authority places damaging restrictions upon the mind.

⁹³This attack is significant in that Chapter VI discusses Humanism's attempt to identify with the "democratic."

⁹⁴Priscilla Robertson, "On a Scientific Standard of Personal Ethics," TH, XVI (September-October, 1956), 223.

⁹⁵Algernon D. Black, "Can Humanism Meet Man's Spiritual Need?" TH, XIX (July-August, 1959), 197.

⁹⁶Ibid., 198.

Dr. Brock Chisholm refers to a common conception of faith as something not to be thought about or questioned, for that might lead to doubt and therefore sin. He calls this conception harmful and elaborates by saying that

it is the setting up of concepts in a child's mind that he is not supposed to question and that will persist into adulthood, that does the damage. There are many sound attitudes in some of the most theocratic and absolute religions, but they are nevertheless damaging because they are absolutistic, because they mustn't be thought about, because their validity must not be questioned. It is the threat against any questioning, the opposition to individual, independent thinking that makes trouble.⁹⁷

Chisholm has thus spelled out the harm of absolute authority in greater specificity than earlier quotations. He sees the harm as being most severe with regard to children whose minds can be more completely conditioned.

Rapoport points to the inadequacy of "the religious view" as being primarily its "insistence on 'closure.'" He charges that the religionist must carry his thinking to a point where he can "put a period and think no more." That period, he continues, is "unrealistic," and can be "disastrous" if placed too early.⁹⁸ Wendt refers to the same danger as that of having "one's innate curiosity satisfied by the authority of others" and of accepting "half-knowledge and tradition."⁹⁹

⁹⁷Chisholm, TH, XVI, 293.

⁹⁸Rapoport, TH, XVI, 66.

⁹⁹Gerald Wendt, "The Right to Understand," TH, XIII (January-February, 1953), 20.

The point is made more concrete by Wilson who carries his disapproval of absolute authority in the church to some specific doctrines of the Catholic Church. He singles out the church's opposition to birth control, to marriages between people of different religions, and to divorce. He is particularly critical of any institution which would not leave a child free to choose its own religion upon maturity, and adds: "We hold that where the religious liberties of unborn generations are signed away before a marriage transpires, such persons never know religious liberty."¹⁰⁰ Like Chisholm, Wilson objects to the indoctrination of a child, and especially the manner in which the Catholic Church demands a pledge regarding the future of its children. Wilson's other criticisms are also based squarely upon his opposition to the authority of the church.

In such fashion, then, do the Humanists find harm in orthodox religion's absolutism and narrowness.

Anti-Social and Intolerant

Humanists have persistently charged organized religion with being cruel and intolerant, with allowing practice to fall far behind preaching.

C. J. Herrick, for example, says that religious faith is at best "meaningless verbiage" and at worst a "pernicious

¹⁰⁰Edwin H. Wilson, "The Sectarian Battlefront," TH, XV (January-February, 1955), 34.

ideology with a fruitage of bigotry, intolerance and persecution."¹⁰¹ But Bissell best typifies the Humanist attack by saying that the "fruitless battle of the sects has long since told its bitter and bloody tale." He adds that "a thousand centuries of fears and forebodings, of priests and prayers and persecutions have brought us only to the inscrutable stars and the silent mountains."¹⁰² He further describes the "bloody" history of the Christian Church, and says that all revealed religions are "frauds" and tell the same story.¹⁰³ Bissell, then, would insist that the blood shed in the name of Christianity condemns the church as a failure, that the results of Christianity have been harmful, rather than helpful.

Bissell's precise point is echoed by three other Humanists. First, Professor James Jarrett speaks of the "fact of the cruelty and violence promulgated by churches in all ages."¹⁰⁴ Rev. Kenneth Patton points out that the theists have been in the majority for thousands of years with no "adequacy" of brotherly love exhibited among them. He speaks of the brutal crimes "committed in the name of the loving God

¹⁰¹C. Judson Herrick, "The Creed of Humanism," TH, XIV (September-October, 1954), 216.

¹⁰²Bissell, TH, X, 266.

¹⁰³Malcolm Bissell, "Humanist Progress," TH, IX (Summer, 1949), 103.

¹⁰⁴James L. Jarrett, "Must Religious Humanism Be Thin?" TH, X (May-June, 1950), 108.

of Jesus."¹⁰⁵ And Haydon, writing at the close of World War II, describes the horrible suffering of the War and calls the world situation "the most terrible indictment that has ever been brought against the religious leadership of the last hundred years." He points out that over all the earth are "churches, temples, mosques, synagogues, pagodas, shrines--and yet this tragedy."¹⁰⁶ Haydon's point differs somewhat from the others in that he is not talking about the history of "religious wars," instead he is condemning organized religion as a whole for not having prevented a specific "political" war.

Intolerance is another orthodox evil to which Humanists point. They accuse Christianity of racial and religious bigotry. Wilson begins by saying that the causes of anti-Semitism are "inherent in Christian doctrine." He adds that he believes many men are better than their creeds and ignore the Christian doctrine to "return to the creed of Jesus, where anti-Semitism was not to be found."¹⁰⁷ Nevertheless, he argues that the evil of intolerance is inherent in Christianity.

Anti-Semitism, as a charge against Christianity, was

¹⁰⁵Patton, TH, VII, 12.

¹⁰⁶A. Eustace Haydon, "Churches, Synagogues--And Yet Tragedy," TH, V (Summer, 1945), 53.

¹⁰⁷Edwin H. Wilson, "Anti-Semitism: A Political Weapon in Clerical Hands," TH, IV (Autumn, 1944), 112.

most frequently advanced by Humanists during and immediately following World War II. For instance, one author entitled his article "No Security for the Jew in Christendom."¹⁰⁸ Another author accuses Christianity of persistent indoctrination of its members toward a belief in Christian superiority and Jewish inferiority, thereby laying a foundation for anti-Semitism.¹⁰⁹ Still another writer asserts that the Roman Catholic hierarchy has given tacit approval to several frank cases of anti-Semitism.¹¹⁰

Humanists thus argue that Christianity has failed because its followers have perpetrated cruelty in the name of the church and have been guilty of intolerance against minority groups, especially against the Jew.

Indifferent and Irresponsible

Humanists, with their concern for solving the social problems of the day, are highly critical of Christianity for not involving itself deeply enough in those problems. Melvin Rader raises the common cry when he chides those well-fed people talking of love, while ignoring others' hunger; and those who cry for peace without fighting to "create and

¹⁰⁸Paul Eldridge, "No Security for the Jew in Christendom," TH, VI (Winter, 1946), 157.

¹⁰⁹Karl W. Chworowsky, "Is Protestantism Anti-Semitic?" TH, IV (Autumn, 1944), 97.

¹¹⁰J. J. Murphy, "Catholic Anti-Semitism," TH, IV (Autumn, 1944), 103.

organize peace."¹¹¹ Most importantly, he argues that even when religion is concerned with injustice, it operates under the "illusion" that things can be corrected through "mental fiat," that ends may be discussed while means are neglected.¹¹² He is arguing that something inherent in religion's view of the world makes it ineffective in correcting the ills of society. Gordon Kent makes the same general point this way:

Traditional religion shorts the circuit and kills the potential of human energy. It relies on God to do for man what man alone can do for himself. The spur of effort is responsibility.¹¹³

Kent argues that the belief in God inherently obstructs man's social action.

Another Humanist criticizes the notion that God "calls" people to certain tasks and locations and states that "there are few Fosdicks in the slums." He asks, "Why is God made to be the master of immobility?"¹¹⁴ Harry Ruja feels that Christians get so involved in the compensations "of the next world" that they overlook the possibilities of this one.¹¹⁵ Jarrett insists that organized religion tends to divert more and more time away from ethics "to ritual and

¹¹¹Melvin Rader, "World Community and a World Conscience," TH, III (Autumn, 1943), 109.

¹¹²Ibid., 110.

¹¹³Gordon Kent, "Humanism by the Millions," TH, III (Summer, 1943), 65.

¹¹⁴Fred I. Cairns, "Light Breaks Through," TH, VII (Summer, 1947), 26.

¹¹⁵Ruja, TH, VII, 126.

ceremonial observance of rules."¹¹⁶ These three men are saying that the primal emphasis of religion is not where it should be, that supernaturalism, immortality, and ritual are all obstacles to social progress and action.

Floyd says that traditional religion and neo-orthodoxy insist on man's "helplessness" and make him dependent upon supernatural guidance."¹¹⁷ And E. C. Lindeman succinctly expresses his regret that some people he had known "had found God, but in their search had somehow lost Man."¹¹⁸ This criticism of Christianity's indifference toward man is best epitomized by Wilson and Auer. Wilson accuses religion of "robbing man to pay theology."¹¹⁹ Auer calls it "emptying the house of man in order to enlarge Heaven."¹²⁰

Humanists, then, consider orthodoxy inherently ineffective, even irresponsible and indifferent, with regard to the social problems of the day.

Other Ethical and Moral Weaknesses

Humanism's final attack on the evils of religion

¹¹⁶Jarrett, TH, X, 108.

¹¹⁷Floyd, TH, II, 3.

¹¹⁸Eduard C. Lindeman, "Ethics of a Life," TH, VIII (Autumn, 1948), 118.

¹¹⁹Edwin Wilson, "Render Unto Man the Things That Are Man's," TH, X (September-October, 1950), 232.

¹²⁰J. A. C. Fagginer Auer, "Religion as the Integration of Human Life," TH, VII (Spring, 1947), 159.

focuses on the whole ethical and moral structure of Christianity. Professor M. A. Larson condemns Christianity's attempts to influence ethical behavior through the use of fear of eternal punishment. This, he says, "does not work," and he points to the hundreds of millions of God-fearing men who have lived lives of wickedness, whereas many who have not feared or believed in God have lived highly moral lives. Larson notes that the key to the system is that any religion which uses rewards and punishment gained through creeds, rituals, atonements, sacrifices, etc., rests upon the assumption that "god is corruptible and that his favors can be purchased through appeasement." He elaborates by discussing the inequalities of the system and compares the repentent man on the scaffold who is "saved" and the lifelong noble man who is condemned. The only way immortality could work effectively, he continues, is for rewards for an ethical life to be equal and just, and to remove the "purchasing" of God's favors.¹²¹ Larson does not argue the invalidity of the idea of immortality, but rather he is attacking its efficacy as a moral and ethical foundation.

Dr. Rudolf Dreikurs also objects to the principle of rewards and punishment. He condemns the idea of fear which surrounds sin and he writes that as society becomes more democratic and men are recognized as equals rather than superior

¹²¹Martin A. Larson, "Christian and Humanist Ethics," TH, XX (March-April, 1960), 99.

and subordinate, sin will lose its effectiveness as a social symbol.¹²² Dreikurs rejects the whole foundation of the Christian ethical system as inherently weak.

J. P. Warbasse says that the church has failed in its ethical quest, and people should come to do good deeds because the deeds themselves have merit and because those good deeds are a road to happiness. By the religionist's standards, he argues, to try for complete happiness here and now is considered selfish, but to try for bliss in another world is considered "glorious."¹²³

Wilson states that "those who rule in the name of God" are more loyal to theocracy than they are to democracy. The church, he writes, opposes humanistic ideas and democracy because their chief aim is "to glorify God"; this means that the "moral measure" becomes the advancement of the church.¹²⁴ In Wilson's mind the entire Christian moral and ethical focus is misplaced; he finds the church and God to be the wrong standards.

Finally, in a discussion of a new basis for ethics, Kuenzli writes that the tragedy of churches is that "they have not been able to give persons very satisfactory moral guidance,

¹²²Rudolf Dreikurs, "Humanism--A Philosophy for Daily Living, TH, X (July-August, 1950), 167.

¹²³James Peter Warbasse, "The Selfish Way to Happiness," TH, XI (October-November, 1951), 215.

¹²⁴Edwin H. Wilson, "The Sectarian Battlefront," TH, XI (November-December, 1951), 283.

especially on some of the larger questions of the day. He points out that the churches are "notoriously divided" on ethical and moral questions; that theatre going, birth control, square dancing, etc., "will send you to hell in some of the churches but not in others."¹²⁵ Kuenzli's point, like that of other Humanists, is simply that the churches have failed in the area of ethical and moral guidance; and they have failed because the fundamental structure of their emphasis is wrong.

Evaluation of the Humanist's Argumentative Pattern

An inescapable observation concerning the Humanist's pattern of refutation is that he is a child of the nineteenth-century iconoclastic tradition; to a measurable degree, the discourse of this chapter is colored and structured by the Humanist's zeal to "crush" his ideological opponent--orthodox Christianity. As a result, some rather definite argumentative "deficiencies" emerge.

First of all, a number of prominent Humanists tend to express themselves or argue in language which could only be called "absolutistic" or "dogmatic." In significant numbers, Humanists "close the book" on such complex theological questions as the existence of God, the possibility of immortality, the existence of a soul, and the validity of

¹²⁵Alfred E. Kuenzli, "An Objective Basis for Ethics," TH, XX (May-June, 1960), 155.

revelation. Such an inclination is particularly conspicuous since Humanists constantly chide traditional religion for that very propensity. "Dogmatism" among the Humanists would be well represented by Harold Scott and Corliss Lamont, although they are in no sense isolated examples.

A related weakness is the Humanist tendency to claim that the evidence "proves" more than it does in fact prove. This proclivity to overstate claims is particularly evident in the movement's use of science and the scientific method as supports. The assertion is often made that "scientific truth" proves an anti-religious claim; doubtless, scientific scholarship would frequently find concurrence difficult.

Another major weakness within the Humanist pattern of argument is the tendency to consider all Christianity to be orthodox or fundamental, thus ignoring the totality of liberal Christianity. Many of Humanism's strongest criticisms only fit a small segment of modern Christianity. One Humanist admits that he himself has been accused of "beating a dead horse," meaning that he was criticizing aspects of religion which no longer existed. This particular Humanist denied the charge, but not altogether convincingly.

One must also consider that most Humanist arguments rest on the assumption that all theological matters are best settled through the application of science and the scientific method. While making such an assumption is certainly not

wrong per se, reasonable rhetorical practice would call for the advocate more clearly to "spell out" and support the assumption, or, indeed, to admit at least that the position involves an assumption.

That the primary reading and listening audience for the Humanist advocate is in general agreement with the movement's ideology and makes the foregoing assumption about the world is no doubt true. Thus, rhetorical caution is not demanded by the Humanist audience; nevertheless, one wonders if the nature of the audience affords sufficient justification for argumentative carelessness.

One might also wonder why Humanists persist in attacking traditional religion, especially before Humanist audiences who already recognize orthodoxy's weaknesses. To say that the Humanist is really writing in an effort to "convert" the non-Humanist who may "overhear" is an unsatisfactory explanation. Perhaps a better answer is that social movements unite around a disapproval of the status quo; thus, the movement of Humanism "stays alive" or maintains purpose and direction by persistently condemning orthodoxy--whether it be a "dead horse" or not. In achieving that purpose the refutative arguments analyzed in this chapter appear rhetorically effective.

CHAPTER VI

IDENTIFICATION WITH COMMONLY ACCEPTED IDEALS

The final argumentative pattern to be considered involves the Humanist's efforts to justify his ideology by identifying it with a number of broad human ideals, ideals which have probably achieved nearly universal acceptance in Western culture. Neither the nature nor the structure of the general argumentative design employed differs markedly from that of the earlier discussed defensive pattern of identification.¹

This chapter will examine Humanism's identification with the following ideals: (1) democracy and the democratic way; (2) the good life, human happiness, and human fulfillment; (3) peace, security, a progressive and advancing social order; (4) open-mindedness, fairness, tolerance for all people and views; and (5) the religious. Admittedly, such ideals are generalized and at points appear to merge, but they are discrete enough for separate examination.

Ostensibly, Humanist's identification with commonly

¹Identification with science and the scientific method, discussed in Chapter IV.

accepted human ideals would serve to narrow the Humanist-Christian area of disagreement by establishing some degree of "common ground" between the two camps; however, the converse has been the result. The reason lies with the extent to which Humanists have chosen to accentuate the ideals.² The conflict between Humanism and traditional Christianity is further heightened by the Humanist's overt tendency to describe specific ideals as if they were somehow in contradiction to Christianity. But the pattern of identification considered in this chapter is primarily a defensive one in which Humanists are seeking a justification for their ideology, rather than a condemnation of their opposition.

Democracy and the Democratic Way

Humanist discourse throughout the history of the movement has been interspersed with references to "democracy" and the "democratic way." Spokesmen for Humanism have sought to link their ideology with these highly abstract concepts,

²As the Humanist emphasizes certain human ideals such as human happiness, human fulfillment, etc., the ideological result is an anthropocentric view of life which is inimical to traditional Christianity.

perhaps because of the aura of "rightness" which has so long surrounded them,³ but whatever the reasons, it is clear that Humanists have characterized their ideology as democratic.

That no precise meanings may be found for democracy and the democratic way is obvious, but Humanist usage of the two abstractions has produced some loose definitions. Some Humanists, for example, seem to equate the democratic directly with the scientific, where all ideas are treated "equally" through testing and examination. Others appear to make the definition of democracy pivot on the distinction between authoritarianism and "freedom." Still other Humanists would prefer to think of democracy and the democratic way as symbols of a ~~humanistic~~ view of man. At any rate, Humanists do not necessarily use the words to refer to a specific political or economic ideology or system.

The argumentative pattern of identification has been accomplished by (1) calling for an extension of a democratic world, (2) contrasting Humanism as a democratic religion with

³There are probably a number of reasons why democracy has been given a prominent place in Humanist discourse. One reason may have been to answer the critics of Humanism who have sometimes labeled the movement as "un-American" and "unpatriotic." Such charges may have arisen because of the Humanist's heterodox religious views, or perhaps because of his long-standing discontent with certain aspects of the economic system of capitalism. For the latter, see proposition fourteen of the Humanist Manifesto (Appendix I). Another possible reason for Humanism's endorsement of democracy may be the "anti-authoritarianism" connoted by the concept.

the so-called anti-democratic religions, and (3) by characterizing Humanism as the epitome of democracy. These three positions are indeed highly generalized, and, partly for that reason, sometimes overlap.

The first endeavor to link Humanism with democracy is summarized in the assertion that Humanism, after all, is only seeking to extend democracy to all mankind. Democracy in this sense seems to refer either to man's freedom to work out his own destiny, unhampered by any form of authoritarianism, or to the establishment of effective methods of investigation allowing for the collective resolution of all public problems. The preamble to the constitution of the first Humanist fellowship, for instance, includes this indicative statement: "We conceive our task, in the broadest sense, to be the promotion of cultural democracy."⁴ Apparently, the authors of this early constitution were using "cultural democracy" to refer to a spirit of fair play and free inquiry extended to the widest areas of human life. What is important with regard to the pattern of identification, however, is that the word democracy was chosen as a focal point.

Corliss Lamont describes a major tenet of Humanism as being a "far-reaching social program," which involves the establishment throughout the world of "peace and democracy on

⁴"Preamble to the Constitution of the Humanist Fellowship," TNH, I, No. 2 (1928), 4.

the foundation of a cooperative economic order, both national and international."⁵ Lamont writes a few years later that

the best way to summarize the social and economic aims of Humanism is to say that this philosophy supports the widest possible extension of democracy to all aspects of human living.⁶

Lamont thus argues that a major Humanist goal is the extension of democracy to "all" aspects of human life; by "all" he means such areas as religion, social problems, and any other phase of human concern. He is here using the democratic nearly as a synonym for the scientific, and is actually calling for an extension of the application of science into wider human areas.

Rudolf Dreikurs, in describing aspects of "the next great religion" (his description is of tomorrow's Humanism), sees democracy as an integral part of such a religion. He writes that

the interests of society are preserved by its religious concepts; the democratic society will develop religious concepts which guarantee the democratic process for the benefit of all.⁷

Dreikurs finds an inherent relationship between democracy and the ideal religion, and suggests that the more democratic

⁵Corliss Lamont, "The Meaning of Humanism," TH, II (Summer, 1942), 42.

⁶Corliss Lamont, "Humanism and Democracy," TH, VII (Summer, 1947), 1.

⁷Rudolf Dreikurs, "The Religion of Democracy, Part II: Aspects of the Next Great Religion," TH, XV (November-December, 1955), 267.

society becomes, the more democratic (and Humanistic) religion will become. By rather direct implication he insists that the ideal future religion will be a Humanism merged with democracy. Such a pattern of argument is not atypical of the movement, for Humanists frequently argue that they are the "true" promoters of the democratic society.

Secondly, Humanist leaders attempt to identify their movement with the democratic by contrasting a democratic Humanism with an authoritarian Christianity.⁸ What Humanist groups have in common, writes William Floyd, is that they are "right-minded people who believe in the democracy of man on earth rather than the kingdom of God in heaven."⁹ A belief in "the democracy of man," says Floyd, sets the Humanist apart from the religionist. The validity of such a charge is dubious at best; nevertheless, Floyd is following the pattern of associating a belief in Humanism with a belief in democracy.

Dreikurs writes that the "democratic religion will oppose such [authoritarianism, supernaturalism, and any attempts to suppress disagreement] as the Christian religion opposes the devil."¹⁰ Like Floyd, Dreikurs is contrasting

⁸Discussions of the scientific method appearing in Chapters IV and V are related to and illustrative of this method of identification.

⁹William Floyd, "Inquiry: Is Humanism a Religion? Part V: Ethical Humanism Is a Better Characterization," TH, II (Autumn, 1942), 109.

¹⁰Dreikurs, TH, XV, 267.

the democratic Humanist philosophy with an inherent authoritarianism in traditional religion. In other words, democracy is an integral part of Humanism but is antithetical to Christianity.

The third method of identification involves a loose association of Humanism with democracy and the democratic in such a way that Humanism appears to be the embodiment of the democratic. For example, A. E. Haydon writes that Humanism is "the philosophy of democracy and science, inclusive of all phases of culture and wide as the world."¹¹ He adds that among other things Humanism is "consecrated" to a "democratic fellowship of all mankind."¹² And Read Bain argues simply that Humanism is "consistent" with democracy.¹³ Both men are arguing that Humanism is democratic and symbolizes democracy. Of further significance is Haydon's connecting of "science and democracy," for it is the essential character of both with which he hopes to identify Humanism. As mentioned earlier, the scientific and the democratic are not very distinct as they are referred to by Humanists.

The same pattern was revealed in 1943 when Edwin Wilson called together a number of liberal religionists,

¹¹A. Eustace Haydon, "Humanism," TH, VI (Autumn, 1946), 54.

¹²Ibid., 57.

¹³Read Bain, "Basic Religion: Man Creating Himself," TH, X (July-August, 1950), 159.

primarily Humanists, for a conference with the revealing title "Conference on the Scientific Spirit and Democratic Faith." The conference discussions were focused on the relationship of the scientific religion to democracy, and the group predictably concluded that the scientific approach to religion was the very essence of democracy.¹⁴ Van Meter Ames epitomizes the pattern when he says that "in our country science has strengthened democracy and democracy with science gives Humanism a chance. Give Humanism a chance and the world has a chance."¹⁵ These two instances illustrate how Humanists are able to tie science, democracy, and Humanism together so closely that the three appear to merge.¹⁶

The Good Life, Human Happiness,
and Human Fulfillment

Humanists next lay claim to and "ownership" of the search for human happiness, the belief in good will, and the desire for the fullest possible development of human personality. This anthropocentric foundation may not be a universally accepted ideal, especially with the degree of emphasis Humanists give it; on the other hand, no religious group

¹⁴E. Burdette Backus, "Science and Democracy," TH, III (Summer, 1943), 79.

¹⁵Van Meter Ames, "Humanism for 1951," TH, XI (January-February, 1951), 4.

¹⁶Of course, the identification of science with Humanism was discussed in Chapter IV. The patterns involved are not essentially different.

would likely oppose directly "human happiness" or its corollaries.

Humanists try to identify rhetorically their movement with the good life by labeling the search for happiness as the true goal of man (either a goal which exists or should exist), and then by picturing Humanism as the most concerned and best able to meet that challenge. Humanists would not likely assert that theirs is the only philosophy with such an ideal, but their argument leaves the impression that Humanism is the most devoted or most energetic spokesman for such high human aspirations. Humanists go further in claiming that that aspect of Christianity which is dedicated to the good life on earth is, in fact, humanistic and already a major part of the foundation of Humanism.¹⁷

The goal of man, writes A. D. Fick, is the "complete realization of the highest possibilities of every individual personality," and that growth potential can be "limitless."¹⁷ And Hector Hawton describes the goal of Humanism as being "a sane and ordered society in which men can realize to the full the rich potentialities of their nature."¹⁸ Likewise, Wilson, in defending the position that Humanism is more than a

¹⁷Arthur D. Fick, "Inquiry: Is Humanism a Religion? Part III: It Depends on the Definition," TH, II (Autumn, 1942), 107.

¹⁸Hector Hawton, "Humanism: The Third Way," TH, XI (November-December, 1951), 268.

philosophy, writes that the movement goes beyond a rejection of supernaturalism and moves into a "devotion to the good life as the mark of the religious."¹⁹ These three men are certainly ascribing as a characteristic attribute of their movement the search for broad human happiness. While they are not contending that their goal is unique, they are also not acknowledging that they are, in fact, joining with millions of others from a myriad of philosophies and religions, including Christianity.

Quite significantly, Professor Paul Kinney refers to Humanism as the "inclusive term for all boosters of human happiness. Let us unite," he continues, "in building a humanist world."²⁰ In so doing, Kinney requests that "boosters of human happiness" should be renamed Humanists, for that is supposedly what Humanism symbolizes.

"Strip" Humanism of its "embellishment," writes John Dietrich, and its aim is simply "to make the world a place which is conducive to the living of a worthy human life, and then help men in every possible way to live such lives."²¹ The same idea is expressed by A. E. Haydon when he says that

¹⁹Edwin H. Wilson, "Humanism: A Philosophy or a Religion?" book review of Humanism as a Philosophy, by Corliss Lamont, TH, IX (July, 1949), 90.

²⁰Paul Kinney, "Humanism Is Inclusive," TH, VIII (November, 1948), 150.

²¹John Dietrich, "What Is Humanism?" TNH, VI, No. 2 (1933), 6-7.

Humanism is much more than a philosophy of life; it is a "new orientation" pointing toward the "realization of the good life for all men."²² Further, he writes that Humanism dares to believe that "good will backed by modern techniques, wisdom and resources can make the old religious dream take on the form of actuality." He adds that Humanism is "the tide of the future," that it is a "new cultural climate luring the multitudes to new hopes in all lands."²³ Dietrich and Haydon thus identify Humanism as the essence of the search for the good life. Apropos also is Haydon's expression, "a new orientation," through which he, like Kinney, portrays Humanism as an attitude symbolic of "goodness." Indicative too, are Haydon's optimistic statements regarding the future of man in a "new" Humanist world.

Two other leading Humanists continue the refrain with little alteration. The first writes that the time has come for the old religious concepts to be replaced by a broad "reverence for the real universe, for the richness of life and for the dignity of man."²⁴ The phrase, "the dignity of man," indicatively permeates the writing and speaking of Humanists almost as if it were a unique tenet of the movement.

²²A. Eustace Haydon, "Inquiry: Is Humanism a Religion? Part I: Humanism Has Its World View, Techniques and Ideals," TH, II (Autumn, 1942), 104.

²³Ibid., 105.

²⁴Gerald Wendt, "A Time for Ethical Humanism," TH, XXI (September-October, 1961), 276.

A second Humanist maintains that the goal of Humanism is "to foster, redirect, coordinate, and harmonize, science, religion, art, and all other human activities in the interest of more efficient and satisfying life of all mankind."²⁵ Again, the movement's identification with the good life is apparent.

Finally, some of the primary values of Christianity are directly claimed by Humanists. Professor Archie J. Bahn argues that the best of Christianity is epitomized in Humanism, that the "de-dogmatized" Christian is already a Humanist. Most importantly, he asserts that "Jesus himself was a great humanist."²⁶ Such an identification with Christian ideals is not an atypical Humanist appeal; indeed, for those Humanists cited above who picture Humanism merely as a broad attitude toward "goodness," praise for the leading Christian figure Jesus is quite in keeping with the rhetorical design involved.

Peace, Security, Progressive and
Advancing Social Order

As a corollary to the above pattern of identification, the movement's spokesmen refer to a future Humanist world of peace and security, of an elevated world order achieved through a universal Humanist orientation. In essence, the

²⁵C. Judson Herrick, "The Creed of Humanism," TH, XIV (September-October, 1954), 219.

²⁶Archie J. Bahn, "Humanism and Sect Membership," TH, I (Summer, 1941), 55.

Humanist contends that the "salvation" of the world pivots on the degree to which Humanism is embraced; or, at the very least, Humanists say that they are seeking a better world for all men.

Hamilton Fyfe typifies the pattern when he writes the following:

When the Humanist view prevails, the very idea of war will be outlawed. Anyone speaking of it even as a possibility will be put on the same level as a man who should discuss murdering members of his own family.²⁷

Opposition to war, according to Fyfe, is in actuality a unique characteristic of Humanism, that other ideologies are less likely to be so inherently opposed to war.

The pattern is continued by Hector Hawton when he describes Humanism as the "third way," and says that man does not have to be forced to choose between Christianity and Communism. He maintains that Humanism is a way out of the crisis, "the only way." He asserts that if Humanism were adopted and molded into a world federation, mankind might be guided "safely through this age of transition."²⁸ Thus, the desire for world peace and harmony is again directly tied to Humanism.

Similarly, Oliver Reiser and Lloyd Morain emphasize the global orientation of Humanism and they speak repeatedly

²⁷Hamilton Fyfe, "Humanism as a World-Unifying Force," TH, XIII (January-February, 1953), 18.

²⁸Hawton, TH, XI, 268.

about the importance of men cooperating together to build a good society. They picture a "humanized" and "socialized" use of the scientific method making it possible to "guarantee peace and security to all men."²⁹ Roy Wood Sellars also talks of a future improved through Humanism and suggests that Humanism has the possibility of providing "direction for human living which promises much for this distraught and bewildered epoch."³⁰

Attempts to identify Humanism with a secure and harmonious world are both numerous and consistent. Wilson, for example, urges all regardless of belief who are going the same direction to "travel with us," the way to "fulfillment in creative living of free men in a harmonized world."³¹ With a similar tone, the 1954 annual AHA appeal states that as Humanism becomes widely accepted "it can become a world-unifying faith, a common area of agreement around which many of our present problems can be solved."³² Further, Professor Reiser says that the movement of Humanism may well become the

²⁹Lloyd Morain and Oliver Reiser, "Scientific Humanism: A Formulation," TH, III (Spring, 1943), 16.

³⁰Roy Wood Sellars, "Humanism as a Religion," TH, I (Spring, 1941), 8.

³¹Edwin H. Wilson, "Is Humanism Religious?" THB II (June, 1940), 3.

³²"Three Adjectives and a Shrug Are Not Enough; An Annual Appeal and Progress Report," TH, XIV (March-April, 1954), 76.

"spear-head of the advancing frontier of intellectual and social progress."³³ Professor Martin Larson expresses the idea by saying that a "general social elevation can be achieved through the cultivation of a Humanist conscience, especially in the young."³⁴ Finally, R. W. Sellars talks of a transition toward Humanism which means that people's attitudes will be altered as they are "conditioned differently toward life." The hope of Humanism, he says, is that "the society of the future will be healthier in mind and body, better adjusted to life as it is."³⁵

These few Humanist statements should suffice to exemplify the movement's pattern of identification with the values inherent in a peaceful and harmonious world, ~~an ad-~~vanced and progressive social order, and a happy and satisfied mankind. The various Humanists so closely identify the movement with those values that an aura of peacefulness and harmony seems to surround Humanism.

Open-Mindedness, Fairness, Tolerance
for All People and Views

That Humanists oppose rigid creeds and consider their ideology creedless has already been mentioned. Indeed, it

³³Oliver Reiser, "Humanism and Creative Morality," TNH, VI, No. 4 (1933), 12.

³⁴Martin A. Larson, "Christian and Humanist Ethics," TH, XX (March-April, 1960), 101.

³⁵Roy Wood Sellars, "Religious Humanism," TNH, VI, No. 3 (1933), 9.

is not uncommon for a Humanist speaker or writer to preface his statements with "since Humanism has no creed, I speak only for myself." At any rate, Humanism identifies with what is a commonly held value, namely, that an open mind is to be preferred to a closed mind, tolerance is superior to intolerance, flexibility is better than rigidity.

Haydon effectively epitomizes the pattern by stating that the Humanist can never be arrogant toward other views than his own, for he does not know all the answers; nor will he ever be dogmatic, because his is the more "poised and gentle spirit" of understanding and sympathy. He adds that the Humanist is also able to understand the "intolerance" of those who hold certain dogmas as "eternal truths."³⁶ Thus, Haydon argues that Humanism is not only free of dogma, but is understanding of those who are dogmatic.

Lamont writes that Humanism is never dogmatic and believes in questioning all ideas, including its own. He continues by saying that the Humanist view is always open to new facts and can never be "restricted to any final formulation."³⁷ Lamont's suggestion that Humanism will examine all facts and ideas is not markedly different from the movement's general identification with the scientific method discussed

³⁶A. Eustace Haydon, "Humanism Has Faith in Man," TH, X (January-February, 1950), 2.

³⁷Corliss Lamont, "Comments on the Humanist Manifesto," TH, XIII (May-June, 1953), 138.

in Chapter IV. At some points Humanists specifically refer to the scientific method; however, at other points (those being discussed here), the expression is of a belief in a more general attitude of open inquiry.

Another example, which is almost tautological, may be found in C. J. Herrick's acceptance speech as Humanist of the Year. He states that wherever Humanists find resources for the enrichment of human life, "we" must use them "with understanding and tolerance for many beliefs and faiths that we ourselves do not share."³⁸

Bahn furthers the pattern of identification when he writes that the sectarian claims that his way is the only way, while Humanism admits of "many ways." He adds that there are many ways to happiness and when the Humanist "excludes a way," he becomes a sectarian.³⁹ And Fyfe protests that Humanism is not "a set of doctrines," for it has no articles of faith and does not call for allegiance."⁴⁰ Finally, Dietrich continues the refrain by contending that the Humanist is in "no sense dogmatic" about his views and is always ready to alter them "the moment additional knowledge suggests such an alternation."⁴¹

³⁸C. Judson Herrick, "Humanism of Today and Tomorrow," TH, XVI (May-June, 1956), 111.

³⁹Bahn, TH, I, 54.

⁴⁰Fyfe, TH, XIII, 14.

⁴¹Dietrich, TNH, VI, No. 2, 7.

Thus, Humanists portray their movement as the truly open-minded and tolerant ideology, setting it apart from other philosophies and religions. That the movement is in fact often conspicuously dogmatic in its statements has already been demonstrated;⁴² indeed, some Humanists approach the dogmatic in their very denial of dogmatism. Nevertheless, the point is that Humanists do claim for themselves the fair and broad-minded attitude; they do so to the extent that humanistic and open-mindedness appear to blend together into one.

The Religious

The quintessence of the Humanist's endeavor to identify with the commonly accepted ideal lies with his application and adoption of the word "religious." Ironically, while the word may be associated with the "good" and the "just," it is also firmly linked with the orthodox and supernatural opponents of Humanism; nevertheless, Humanism very early chose to lay claim to the word and even to go so far as to call itself "Religious Humanism."⁴³ Perhaps the discovery of the word religious, in the sense in which the movement uses it, is a debt which Humanists will always owe to John Dewey.⁴⁴

⁴²See especially the first two sections of Chapter V.

⁴³That label was also used in the Humanist Manifesto. It must be remembered, however, that some Humanists still prefer "philosophic" or "philosophy" to "religious" and "religion." Corliss Lamont is such an example.

⁴⁴Dewey was a signer of the Humanist Manifesto. He also was a member of the American Humanist Association during the last ten years of his life.

For it was Dewey who called for a replacement of "religion" with the "religious," the religious being essentially a humanistic attitude toward man and the universe--"the common faith of mankind."⁴⁵ The rhetoric of the movement is permeated with Dewey and his somewhat unusual use of the word religious.

Since earlier pages have already cited passages using "religious" in that broad sense, a few additional Humanist statements should suffice to make the point here. Sellars, for example, speaks of the "daring" to bring together two such "profoundly symbolic" words as "humanism and religion." The ultimate union which can and must come, he argues, will be when "religion will become humanistic and humanism religious."⁴⁶ And Rev. R. Lester Mondale asks what it is that Humanism can offer as against Christianity. He feels that Humanism can offer an "at-homeness" in the universe through a "flowering out of the self into its fullness," which means that Humanism ultimately should be entitled to "be called a religion in the fullest sense."⁴⁷ The new generations of Humanists, he goes on to say, are finding their "very salvation in just such a Humanism."⁴⁸ Sellars and Mondale, then, quite easily blend religion and the religious into Humanism.

⁴⁵John Dewey, A Common Faith (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1934), p. 87.

⁴⁶Sellars, TH, I, 5.

⁴⁷R. Lester Mondale, "The Second Generation Humanists," TNH, V, No. 4 (1932), 7-8.

⁴⁸Ibid., 8.

Rev. Harold P. Marley discusses the evolution of Humanism to the status of religion and writes that all people will eventually learn that "to live well, to live harmoniously with others, and to be creative is indeed to be religious."⁴⁹ Several years earlier, he quite succinctly expressed the idea by contrasting those religionists who were attempting to "salvage god from religion" with those Humanists and other liberals who were trying to salvage "religion from god."⁵⁰ Marley, in both cases, employs "religion" in the sense mentioned above. He clearly typifies the movement's pattern of identification as he "borrows" from Christianity the "spirit of goodness," the religious attitude in its best sense, and then carefully fuses it into Humanism; to Marley, Humanism becomes that which was the best in Christianity.

Summary

Doubtless, Humanists would point to the ideals listed in this chapter: the dignity of man, brotherhood, democracy, happiness, tolerance, fairness, and peace as the religious or theological center of the movement. And the Humanist's abiding social concern tends to support his religious claims. The word "religious" is so tightly bound up with the movement

⁴⁹Harold P. Marley, "When Humanism Becomes a Religion," TH, IV (Spring, 1944), 26.

⁵⁰Harold P. Marley, "Religion's Greatest Adventure," TNH, VIII, No. 6 (1935), 197.

that likely an individual Humanist, who might not object to being called an "infidel," a "radical," or an "atheist," might strongly protest upon being called "irreligious."

Certainly the Humanist seeks to identify himself with many specific ideals such as truth, beauty, justice, honor, love, and others. A final word, however, must be said regarding the anthropocentric propensities of the movement, a position which is inherent and evident, either explicitly or implicitly, throughout this chapter as well as previous chapters. That man is the ideological heart of Humanism is obvious, and the literature of the movement is replete with claims of the potential, the power, and the worth of man. As mentioned earlier, few ideologies, including orthodox Christianity, "oppose" man or deny his value and importance; thus, man is, in a broad sense, a universal good, a commonly accepted ideal. In identifying with man in the five senses considered in this chapter, the Humanist identifies with a kind of superior innate value, a superordinate ideal commonly held. Of course, when "man becomes the measure" to the extent that he crowds out theological considerations such as theism and supernaturalism, Christianity cannot be expected to concur. Nevertheless, the Humanist's simple refrain that man has value and that his well-being is a worthy goal represents an aspect of the rhetorical pattern of identification with that which is widely accepted.

Apparently, the argumentative pattern of identification with human ideals does serve a function for the individual Humanist and provides him with a meaningful rationale for his ideology. Argumentatively, however, Humanism does seem to over-extend its ideological position; efforts to identify with so many ideals result in a Humanism (traditionally very "exclusive") seeking to become "all-inclusive." Further, the defensive arguments often appear mechanical and contrived, almost as if Humanists were frenetically trying to associate their ideology with all that is "good" in Western civilization.

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSIONS

Religious Humanism has grown out of a long-fermenting social, cultural, philosophic, and religious milieu. The nineteenth-century upheaval in American religious and intellectual life, galvanized by the influx of European ideas, provided a foundation for the development of Humanism as a movement. Indeed, modern Humanism may properly be described as the culmination and embodiment of many ultra-liberal and heterodox philosophic and religious currents of the last half of the nineteenth century and the early part of the present century.

The prime target of the "new thought" of the nineteenth century seemed to be Christian Fundamentalism which most strongly resisted the intrusion of the new "radical" ideas. For a time the actual survival of orthodoxy was threatened, but a religious "adjustment" under the name of "Modernism" prevented any such organizational collapse. Modernism took many forms, but its principal effort to adjust centered on a shift in emphasis from the traditional goal of saving man's soul to the modern goal of saving man himself, saving him from earthly suffering. The shift in

emphasis was tantamount to a new "humanistic" morality and a general humanizing of the religious perspective. The new humanism was directly related to and accompanied by a strong scientific awareness and an abiding faith in human reason.

The organizational result of such ferment was, first of all, a new humanistic Christianity, sometimes referred to as the "Social Gospel" or in the broader sense mentioned above--Modernism. But a second aftermath of the nineteenth-century revolt was the emergence of movements, separate from institutional Christianity, which espoused a "pure" humanism, a humanism in which theology either played little or no part. Notable examples were Unitarianism, Free Religion, and Ethical Culture. These three movements embraced the new interest in science and the new humanistic orientation without reservation.

Twentieth-century organized Humanism grew directly out of such movements, and actually represented an effort to unite all the ultra-liberal humanistic thinkers; the result was that by the late 1920's modern Humanism was organized as a national association. That movement has continued to grow and today is a significant religious and philosophic ideology and has come to represent a true religious option for many in the twentieth century. This study has attempted to isolate and examine the argumentative patterns within the Humanist movement which have emerged out of more than thirty

years of Humanist writing and speaking. The following are the conclusions.

1. Communication has played a key role in the growth and development of Humanism. Humanists have utilized a number of channels of communication, most of which have served dual purposes: (1) to communicate with and unite the scattered followers of the movement and (2) to "convert" outsiders to the new ideology. Seemingly, Humanist leaders have never fully agreed upon the extent to which each of these functions should be emphasized. Although this study has been concerned primarily with communication within the movement, there has been a full awareness of the evangelistic purpose which has sometimes conflicted with internal communication.

2. The most essential channels of communication employed by Humanists have been those which surround the organizational structure itself and those which are established by the organization's publications. Throughout the history of the movement, communication among individual Humanists around the country has been carried on through a loose organizational structure composed of a national association representing the various local fellowships and chapters. The local groups have always enjoyed complete autonomy, sometimes complete independence, from the parent association. Indeed, the looseness of the organizational structure has probably hindered the general growth of Humanism; however, many of the

followers of the ideology originally become disenchanted with orthodox religion because of its rigid authoritarianism, and could not have been expected to settle for anything less than "independence." The Humanist movement, nevertheless, has been moving toward a closer relationship between the national association and the local chapters. This trend is most noticeable since 1950, and the rapid growth of Humanism since that date may in part be accounted for by the changing relationship.

One important organizational attempt to unite leadership and membership more closely has been the recent establishment of annual regional conferences during which ideological discussions are held, goals of the movement are restated, and other organizational problems considered. Clearly the annual conferences have proved to be the most successful organizational techniques yet discovered by Humanists for binding together their members.

The other major channel of communication has been the movement's publications. A journal published by the national association and put in the hands of each member has provided a vital link among individual Humanists. A constant ideological dialogue has been carried on through the journal and at least a measure of interaction between membership and leadership has been made possible; a degree of movement cohesiveness has thereby been established. That the journals have always

served the dual purposes mentioned above seems not to have seriously handicapped their efficacy; indeed, Humanism likely could not have survived without such publications.

Other less important channels of communication have also been used by Humanists. For example, a membership bulletin dealing largely with organizational matters was begun a few years ago. Another recent communication innovation has been a tape recording library through which major Humanist addresses and discussions have been made available to the membership. In addition, evangelism has been carried on through such channels as a speaker's bureau which arranges Humanist lecture tours, general radio broadcast activity, and distribution of Humanist literature to non-Humanists.

The channels of communication within the Humanist movement have been diverse and have met with a measure of success. In general, they have served the goal of unifying the scattered individuals into a "we-oriented" movement and have kept the lines of communication relatively open. The national association has sharply increased and improved its communication activity in recent years, presumably recognizing more fully the value of communication.

3. An examination of the rhetoric within the Humanist movement, primarily that which appears in the journals, reveals that some major argumentative patterns have emerged.
In a broad sense, there have been two patterns--defensive

and offensive. Patterns of defense represent attempts to justify or provide a rationale for the movement's existence and ideology; offensive patterns represent Humanism's rhetorical condemnation of those aspects of the status quo which initially created the need for a separate movement.

4. Two argumentative patterns of defense have been employed by Humanists, both of which culminate in an over-emphasis. The first defensive pattern centers on issues which have always been integral aspects of the Humanist ideology. Humanists have sought to associate or identify their movement with science and the scientific method. They have gone beyond a simple inclusion of such concepts in their ideology and have attempted to make Humanism the embodiment of them. Humanist spokesmen for the movement have striven to interchange science and Humanism in such a way that Humanism becomes an extension of science; an observer is left with the impression that science is symbolized through Humanism, that the two are inseparable. Likewise, the methodological impression left by the argumentative pattern is that in order to be scientific one must first be a Humanist, that to be a Humanist one must use a scientific epistemology, and that scientific and Humanistic are actually synonymous adjectives.

In an extension of that argumentative design, Humanists have tried to identify their movement with a high standard of ethics and values. Building on their identification

with and their praise of science and the scientific method, they have gone on to argue that the scientific approach to human behavior is the natural and superior one. Rhetorically, they have connected human morality with Humanism, so that moral behavior becomes, in fact, Humanistic behavior. Humanists have strongly emphasized the relation of science to human actions only during the past ten or fifteen years, a period in which science has become increasingly involved with questions of behavior.

Doubtless, this pattern of identification seems natural and satisfying to individual Humanists, in part at least because of the aura of respectability which surrounds science and morality. However, the extent to which Humanists attempt to identify their ideology with such ideals somewhat distorts the meaning of the movement, and also results in the false impression that only the Humanists can really be considered scientific or moral.

The second broad pattern of rhetorical defense differs only slightly from the first. Humanists have tried to identify their ideology with several other nearly universally accepted human ideals. These ideals, however, are less an integral part of Humanism than science and morality. The pattern has focused on efforts to associate the movement with abstract ideals such as democracy, the good life, brotherhood, tolerance, world peace, and human happiness. Each

ideal has been portrayed as an inherent characteristic of Humanism, sometimes even as a distinguishing attribute of the ideology. The ideals have been pictured as best symbolized in Humanism. Inevitably emerging out of this pattern of identification (and to some extent from the previous pattern also), are the Humanist's innate proclivities toward evangelism. The rather direct rhetorical suggestion left by the pattern is that for the ideals to be achieved Humanism must become a majority viewpoint. The implication left is that peace and happiness will only be obtained when the world becomes a Humanist world. Thus, the extent of the identification cannot be rhetorically justified. Further, the tendency to employ universal ideals as a means of contrasting Humanism with other ideologies does not seem warranted.

5. Humanism's rhetorical pattern of offense is perhaps the most vital and significant pattern within the movement; at the same time, it carries with it some major argumentative deficiencies. The Humanist rhetorical attack upon traditional religion might properly be called the sine qua non of Humanism, for it was the dissatisfaction with orthodox religion which first sparked the formation of a separate movement. It is the "enemy," more than a common positive goal, which, after all, gives birth to revolutions, social upheavals, and social movements. Without orthodoxy to

condemn, Humanists could probably not have been united or even isolated into a separate ideological current.

Specific argumentative patterns of refutation are clear. The first involves the use of the broad field of science as an authority, an authority which supposedly has already successfully destroyed the foundation of traditional religion. Humanists assert that the accumulation of data through science has rendered most religious tenets false. Major Christian tenets with which the Humanists have been most concerned with refuting have been the existence of a God, the existence of immortality, the existence of a soul, and the existence of a body-spirit duality. Humanists charge that recent scientific discoveries have made such claims groundless, and one is anti-scientific to cling to them.

The next mode of attack is an extension of the first one into an epistemological argument. The Humanist charges that truth can be discovered only through an application of the scientific method, that any claim derived from other than empirical sources must of necessity be false. Obviously, once the methodological rules have been established, the conclusions are predetermined; traditional religious claims have not and perhaps cannot be based on scientific investigation.

Both these lines of argument quite clearly pivot on an assumption about truth, science, and religion. Humanists

argue from an a priori foundation that all truths--metaphysical, physical, religious--must be the fruit of empirical investigation, that only science and the scientific method can provide meaningful answers to man's questions, that any knowledge acquired by other methods cannot be trustworthy. In general, Humanists have neither corroborated nor acknowledged this assumption; however, the rhetorical effectiveness of the entire argumentative scheme depends upon an audience's willingness to accept such a premise. Presumably, the Humanist employs the argument effectively for other Humanists by omitting substantiation for the assumption; indeed, the confirmed Humanist is likely to supply it for the speaker or writer. Conversely, the non-Humanist audience may well be unwilling to grant the assumption unless it is supported. Yet, from an ethical point of view, one wonders whether (even before a Humanist audience) such a vital premise may responsibly be elided. At the very least, a responsible rhetorical approach would seemingly demand that greater attention be given to the epistemological assumption and that the argument be presented with less finality.

Any extension of this point leads to the inescapable observation that many individual Humanists have fallen into a scientific dogmatism, a dogmatism not different in kind from that which they have so vociferously condemned in orthodoxy. Ironically, the Humanist cloaks his rigidity in the

guise of the spirit of science and scientific inquiry. On the other hand, if the Humanist's assumptions regarding the nature of truth are granted, his position becomes consistent and justifiable. The charge of dogmatism, of course, cannot be hurled at all Humanists; however, dogmatism may be viewed as an observable propensity within the movement.

A less significant aspect of the Humanist's pattern of refutation involves the claim that common sense and reason conflict with traditional religious beliefs. The argument here is that any reasonable examination of such beliefs as God and immortality results in the conclusion that they are absurd and mendacious, riddled with contradictions and impossibilities. Again, this entire polemical position presupposes that religious claims may be validated through the use of human reason and investigation. Many of the arguments are indeed persuasive and impressive; and to the Humanist, who is eager to grant the initial premise, they probably ravage any and all of the tenets of traditional religion.

The final refutative argument hinges on an insistence that organized religion has failed, has caused much human suffering and war, and has contained an anti-humanistic value system. Here the Humanist launches a concrete and rhetorically well-corroborated argument; however, he fails to distinguish sufficiently between orthodox and liberal Christianity. That which he attributes to all religion is usually a

characteristic of the older fundamental sects and is frequently as alien to modern or liberal Christianity as it is to Humanism.

That the argumentative pattern of refutation has been built on something less than a solid foundation, and that Humanists tend to make rigid pronouncements, exaggerate, and over-generalize, must surely be recognized. Nevertheless, as a means of uniting the movement around common attitudes, the rhetorical pattern has served most effectively.

Religious Humanism, in its thirty-seven years of movement activity, has earned a place in twentieth-century American religious and philosophic thought. In trying to formulate, justify, and communicate an ideology, Humanists have developed some rather definite patterns of argument, and these patterns are perhaps as symbolic of their movement as are the specific Humanistic ideals themselves.

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APPENDIX I

THE HUMANIST MANIFESTO

The time has come for widespread recognition of the radical changes in religious beliefs throughout the modern world. The time is past for mere revision of traditional attitudes. Science and economic change have disrupted the old beliefs. Religions the world over are under the necessity of coming to terms with new conditions created by a vastly increased knowledge and experience. In every field of human activity, the vital movement is now in the direction of a candid and explicit humanism. In order that religious humanism may be better understood we, the undersigned, desire to make certain affirmations which we believe the facts of our contemporary life demonstrate.

There is a great danger of a final, and we believe fatal, identification of the word religion with doctrines and methods which have lost their significance and which are powerless to solve the problem of human living in the Twentieth Century. Religions have always been means for realizing the highest values of life. Their end has been accomplished through the interpretation of the total environing situation (theology or world view), the sense of values resulting therefrom (goal or ideal), and the technique (cult), established for realizing the satisfactory life. A change in any of these factors results in alteration of the outward religions through the centuries. But through all changes religion itself remains constant in its quest for abiding values, an inseparable feature of human life.

Today man's larger understanding of the universe, his scientific achievements, and his deeper appreciation of brotherhood, have created a situation which requires a new statement of the means and purposes of religion. Such a vital, fearless, and frank religion capable of furnishing adequate social goals and personal satisfactions may appear to many people as a complete break with the past. While this age does owe a vast debt to the traditional religions, it is none the less obvious that any religion that can hope

to be a synthesizing and dynamic force for today must be shaped for the needs of this age. To establish such a religion is a major necessity of the present. It is a responsibility which rests upon this generation. We therefore affirm the following:

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 the 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 co-operative 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 co-operative 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 co-operate 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 it; and (c) endeavor to establish the conditions of a satisfactory life for all, not merely for a 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.

So stand the theses of religious humanism. Though we consider the religious forms and ideas of our fathers no longer adequate, the quest for the good life is still the central task for mankind. 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.

Signers of the Manifesto

J. A. C. Fagginger Auer
 E. Burdette Backus
 Harry Elmer Barnes
 L. M. Birkhead
 Raymond B. Bragg
 Edwin Arthur Burt
 Ernest Caldecott
 A. J. Carlson
 John Dewey
 Albert C. Dieffenbach
 John H. Dietrich
 Bernard Fantus
 William Floyd
 F. H. Hankins
 A. Eustace Hardon
 Llewellyn Jones
 Robert Morss Lovett

Harold P. Marley
 R. Lester Mondale
 Charles Francis Potter
 John Herman Randall, Jr.
 Curtis W. Reese
 Oliver L. Reiser
 Roy Wood Sellars
 Clinton Lee Scott
 Maynard Shipley
 W. Frank Swift
 V. T. Thayer
 Eldred C. Vanderlaan
 Joseph Walker
 Jacob J. Weinstein
 Frank S. C. Wicks
 David Rhys Williams
 Edwin H. Wilson

APPENDIX II

TAPE RECORDING LIBRARY OF THE AMERICAN HUMANIST ASSOCIATION*

NBC "Faith in Action" interviews - approximately 15 minutes each

TAPE NO.

1. Julian Huxley - "Evolution and Human Destiny" - November 1954. Two 15-minute periods. NBC interviewed Dr Huxley during his lecture tour in this country.
2. Horace M. Kallen - "Individualism and the American Way of Life"
William H. Kilpatrick - "Moral Values in Public Education" Both recorded July 1953.
William H. Kilpatrick - "A Tribute to John Dewey" - August 1953 (with Dale DeWitt).
3. Arthur E. Morgan and George Stoddard - "Can Know-How Save the World?" Two 15-minute periods. NBC staff members interview two prominent Humanists on a continuing theme of the Humanist program: "Science for Humanity."
4. Gerald Wendt - "Time to Live" - May 1956.
Hermann J. Muller - "Humanism in the 20th Century"
5. "Where Does Modern Man Stand Today?"
"Faith in Action" series. The theme of the series is man's role in today's society. Dr. Edwin H. Wilson conducts the two interviews. Presented on NBC January 19 and 26, 1958.

*This list includes all the AHA tapes available up to 1960; others have been added since that time. The list is a copy (in form and numbering) of that distributed by the Tape Recording Library, with only slight abridgments regarding tape descriptions and their lengths.

- #1. Professor Charles Frankel, Chairman, Department of Philosophy, Columbia University, talks on "What About Man's Future," commenting on the "Age of Anxiety."
 - #2. Dr Harold Taylor, President, Sarah Lawrence College, Bronxville, New York, talks on "Science and Education Today."
-
6. S. I. Hayakawa - "Language: Key to Human Understanding" - an address given to San Francisco Chapter of the AHA.
 7. Julian Huxley - "Evolution and Human Destiny" - In this radio address Dr Huxley really sums up lectures given in India. Presented in San Francisco, October 1954.
 8. Alma Reed - "The Humanism of Orozco."
 9. Harold Scott - "Dr Scott Answers His Critics" - radio interview by Austin Alsop, Salt Lake City.
 10. V. T. Thayer - "Let's Keep Our Public Schools Public"
 11. Edwin H. Wilson - Two talks on Humanism given on WOSU University Symposium, March 1954. 30 minutes each.
 12. Edwin H. Wilson - three 15-minute interviews: "The Humanist Position" - WLW; "Humanist World Congress" - given the morning Dr Wilson stepped off the plane from Paris after returning from the First World Congress of IHEU; "Humanism's Answer to Fear and Confusion."
 13. Edwin H. Wilson - "Humanism - A World Movement" - New Orleans lecture, February 1955.
 14. Annual Meeting and Conference, AHA, Chicago, Illinois, 1958. Merit Awards to Dr Ralph Blount and Dr Walter Verity.
Vashti McCollum - "Ten Years of the McCollum Decision"
William H. Kilpatrick - Humanist Pioneer - "Moral Values in Education"
Oscar Riddle - Humanist of the Year - "Is Organized Religion Responsible for Moral Impasse?"

15. "The Transactional Approach to Human Behavior"
 "Arthur F. Bentley's Place in American Thought"
 by Sidney Ratner, Institute for Advanced
 Study, Princeton, New Jersey.
 "The Word 'Transaction'," Arthur F. Bentley,
 Paoli, Indiana (read by Dr Ratner).
 "The Transactional Approach to the Psychology
 of Perception," Harold Mooney, Ohio State
 University.
 "Transactions in Politics and Government,"
 Richard W. Taylor, Northwestern University.
 This is another of the symposiums presented
 at the Indianapolis regional conference in
 October 1956.
16. Hermann J. Muller - "Science for Humanity."
17. Dr Brock Chisholm - "The Psychological Foundations of
 Peace," presented to the Chicago Chapter,
 October 1956.
18. Dr Wallace W. Culver - "Religion as a Social Phenom-
 enon." Presented to the Philadelphia Ethical
 Society, December 1957.
19. Dr Brock Chisholm - "Learning to Live in a New Kind
 of World."
20. Julian Huxley - "Evolution and Human Destiny" -
 Chicago lecture, October 1954.
21. Harold Larrabee and Edwin J. Lukas - "Conformity,
 Dissent and Democracy." IHEU New York Con-
 ference, January 1955.
22. Priscilla Robertson - "What Shall I Tell My Chil-
 dren?" - an article written for Harper's
 Magazine, August 1952, by the Editor of The
Humanist, and read by Adelaide Winston.
23. Maxine Greene - "Humanism in the 18th Century."
24. Dr Alfred Emerson - "Is There Purpose in the Uni-
 verse?" A talk presented to the Chicago
 Chapter, AHA, April 1958.
25. Dr Rudolf Dreikurs - "A Humanistic View of Sex."
 Presented to the Chicago Chapter, October
 1956.
26. "The Investigator." This is a take-off on the McCarthy
 investigation.

- 27. Dr Charles Morris - "Varieties of Human Values."
Given at the Chicago Conference, October 1956.
- 28. J. Talbot Winchell - "How General Semantics Advances
the Aims of Humanism." San Diego Chapter,
August 1956.

Tapes 29 through 33 are all from the program of the Annual Conference and Meeting of the American Humanist Association held in Cincinnati, Ohio, on March 1 and 2, 1957.

- 29. "Humanism and Mental Health" - Public Meeting under the auspices of the Cincinnati Chapter, AHA. Panel discussion comprised of Dr Karl Heiser, Professor Read Bain, Dr William Moore, Dr John A. Ordway, and Dr Charles Francis Potter.
- 30. Dr Hermann J. Muller, President, AHA, presiding. Dr Robert Risk speaks on "Humanism's Interpretive Task"; Dr Edwin H. Wilson gives "A Definition of Humanist Advance."
Workshop: "Humanist Advance Through Education" - Dr John Kirk, Dr Leo Koch, John W. Meyers, Priscilla Robertson.
- 31. Workshop: "Humanist Advance Through the Arts" - Professor Van Meter Ames, Dr Corliss Lamont, Professor Keith McGary.
- 31. Dr George Geiger - Antioch College - gives a philosopher's view of "Humanism, Scientific Method and Values."
- 32. Workshop: "Humanist Advance Through Social Action" - Ernest Morgan, Dr. J. J. Kessler, Vashti McCollum, Adelaide Winston.
- 32. Workshop: "Humanist Advance Through Intergroup Cooperation" - Dr Joseph Sanders, Dr Gardner Williams.
- 33. Humanist Awards: Honoring - Dr Charles Francis Potter as "Humanist Pioneer." Honoring - Mrs Margaret Sanger as "Humanist of the Year"; response by her son, Dr Grant Sanger.
- 33. Dr Hermann J. Muller, Annual Presidential Address: "Freedom from Ignorance."
- 33. Dr Chauncey Leake - "Science, Humanism and Ethics."
This is the last of the Cincinnati tapes.

34. Paul Blanshard - "Literary Censorship and Bookburning." Mr Blanshard deals here with the censorship problem in this country. Presented at the AHA Conference, March 1956.
35. Dr Rudolf Driekurs - Workshop on Problems of Chapters. Presented at the Chicago Conference, March 1956.
36. "Religion and the Presidency" - a discussion presented on NBC-TV, June 1, 1958. Panel consisting of John A MacKay, President of Princeton Theological Seminary, Representative Eugene J McCarthy, the Very Rev. Francis Sayre, Jr, Dean of Washington Cathedral, Washington, D. C., and Glenn L Archer, Executive Director of POAU.
37. The Rev. David K. Fison - "The Trumbull Park Integration Problem." The brave program of the pastor of the South Deering Methodist Church to integrate all members of his congregation lead to eviction from his apartment.
38. Glenn L. Archer, Executive Director of POAU, speaks on "The Ramparts We Watch." Dr Archer tells what lies behind the ban on Martin Luther TV film in Chicago, and the attacks on Billy Graham. He also discusses the drive on state legislatures to provide funds for parochial school buses.
39. Paul Blanshard - "An Imaginary Cross-Examination of Cardinal Spellman." A dramatic presentation upholding religious liberty as it was originally recorded at National City Christian Church during the 8th national conference of POAU on Church and State in Washington, D. C.
40. Edwin H. Wilson, Executive Director of AHA talks on "Naturalistic Humanism." This talk was presented over radio station WILL, University of Illinois, in the summer of 1957.
41. Side #1 Anatol Rapoport - "Semantics as Related to Ethics, or A Contemporary Man's Search for an Affirmative Way of Life." Presented to the San Francisco Chapter of AHA.
42. Segregation-Integration - Some psychological realities. Panel discussion. Presented to the American Othopsychiatric Association, March 1957.

43. The Rev. Leslie Pennington and Douglas B. Anderson - "Mysticism and Unitarianism," a discussion at an orientation meeting of the First Unitarian Church of Chicago, March 13, 1958.
44. "Which Way to Peace" - Panel discussion on various methods of achieving a long-lasting peace. Panelists: Robert Nicholson, Professor of History, University of Illinois (Atlantic Union approach); The Rev. Paul G. Macy, Executive Director, F. O. R. (Fellowship of Reconciliation approach); William R. Roalfe, Professor of Law and Librarian, Northwestern University School of Law (American Association for the United Nations approach); Lawrence Scott, Director of Peace Education, Friends Service Committee (Friends Service Committee approach); Theodore Lentz, Director, Attitude Research Laboratory, St. Louis, Missouri (Attitude Research approach. Moderator: The Rev. David H. Cole, Pastor, First Universalist Church of Chicago.
45. Harold R. Rafton - "The Challenge of Humanism." Paper read by the Adult Study Group of The Society and Church of the Unity (Unitarian) Church of Winchendon, Massachusetts.

Tapes 46 through 49 are from the Ann Arbor Conference of the American Humanist Association held on December 6-7, 1957.
Conference theme: "Approaches to World Peace."

46. Wilfrid Knapp - "The Outlook for Peace." 20 minutes.
John Stoessinger - "The Non-Military Work for Peace of the United Nations."
47. Douglas Anderson - "God and Man in Europe," a report to the Chicago Chapter, AHA, in November 1957.
48. "Communications as a Key to Understanding and Peace" - Panel discussion. Chairman - Ralph Gerard. Participants - Anatol Rapoport, Kenneth Boulding, Morris Tanowitz.
49. Stuart C. Dodd - "Can We Be Scientific About Humanism?"
Hermann J. Muller - "Radiation Damage and the Avoidance of War."
50. Dr Brock Chisholm - "Humanism Today," presented to the Humanist Fellowship of Victoria, British Columbia, on June 8, 1958.

51. "Esperanto." This is a short recording made by the Humanist Center of St. Louis to demonstrate what Esperanto is and to give you an idea of how easy it is to learn this international language.
52. Dr George Axtelle - "Moral Values in Education." An interview, in the NBC "Faith in Action" series, by Dr Edwin H. Wilson, Executive Director, AHA, of the Chairman of the Department of History and Philosophy of Education, School of Education, New York University. Interview broadcast August 17, 1958.
53. Bernard J. Diggs - "Contemporary Trends in Philosophy."
54. Leo F. Koch - "Sins of Orthodoxy." Discussion of the harm done by orthodox religious belief.

Tapes 55 through 57 are from the program of the Cleveland Conference of the AHA held in November 1958.

55. Dr Robert W. Tufts - "Economics and Peace."
Samuel Jacobs - "Disarmament in Relation to Unemployment."
Professor Theodore W. Schultz - "Human Wealth and Economic Growth Implications for Rich and Poor Countries."
56. "Unsettled Issues of Humanism" - A discussion by Professor Oliver L. Reiser and Professor Gardner Williams; Professor John R. Kirk, Chairman.
57. Dr. Hermann J. Muller - "The Search for Ways to Peace" AHA Presidential address.
Dr Rudolf Dreikurs - "Family Communication." Demonstration of family communication problems and their solutions.
58. "Can Modern Man Live Without Supernaturalism?" - A discussion-debate between William Hawk, Jr, and an Episcopalian minister.
- 1-1. Armin Elmendorf - "One World or No World."
59. "The Emotional Aspects of Humanism" - Panel discussion by Dr Edwin T. Buehrer, Dr Alfred Emerson, and Dr A. Eustace Haydon.
Anatol Rapoport - "Signal Reactions to Religious Symbols." Read by J. E. Chambers.

- 60. "Open Occupancy and Housing Discrimination." Radio broadcast over station WNMP, Evanston, Illinois. Discussed by Professor Joseph Hackman and Dr Grace Jaffe.
 Side #2 "Should Capital Punishment be Abolished?" TV broadcast-WTTW-Chicago, Illinois. Hans Mattuck, Illinois Committee to Abolish Capital Punishment, discusses this with Lawrence Jennison, Assistant State's Attorney for Cook County, Illinois.
- 61. "Religion in an Age of Science" - Dr. Harlow Shapley.
- 62. "Threat of Nuclear Fallout--Hope at Geneva." Presented to the Committee for SANE Nuclear Policy.
- 63. Dr Brock Chisholm - "Prescription for Survival."
- 64. "The 8 Steps to Peace" - Sound tracks of films presented by ABC TV August and September 1959, by the Pierce Butler, Jr. Foundation for Education in World Law. 8 talks.
- 65. "John Dewey and Humanism." Two talks by George Geiger and John Herman Randall presented on "Faith in Action" NBC radio series.
- 66. "The Fallacy of Fear" - Dr. Rudolf Dreikurs talks on Our Anxiety Age.