

ultimate reality, the question of the attainability of absolute truth, and the question of the existence of absolute values.

By ultimate origins is meant the irreducible source of matter/energy, the physical universe, life, and man.

By ultimate meaning is meant the overall significance of the universe, and the overall significance of life. The issue of ultimate meaning asks such questions as What does it all mean? Is it all meaningless? Does the universe have a purpose? Does life have any meaning? If so, what is it?

By ultimate destiny is meant the goal or end toward which all things are tending. The issue asks such questions as Where is it all heading? Is there a future? Is there a final end to everything? Do human beings continue to exist following physical death? If so, what is such existence like?

The question of ultimate reality asks: What is the basic "stuff" of the universe? Did it always exist? Does God exist? Is man made entirely of material substance, or is he non-material as well? Does evil exist?

The question of absolute truth asks: Is truth relative or absolute? Can truth be known? If so, how? Is all belief merely opinion?

The question of absolute values asks: Are all values relative, time-bound, mere consensus expressions? Or are some values absolute, timeless, expressions of God's nature and will? What is man's highest good?

As a working definition of Secular Humanism, let us adopt the following:

Secular Humanism is that philosophy of life that rejects any conception of God or revealed truth, and asserts that man and man alone can and must provide his own final answers to the most basic issues and questions of life.

This working definition may be seen as being supported by current English usage, as witnessed to by Webster's New World Dictionary, Third College Edition.

The word "secular" is defined as follows: "of or relating to worldly things as distinguished from things relating to church and religion; not sacred or religious; temporal; worldly (secular music, secular schools)"

The word "secularism" is defined as follows: "worldly spirit, views, or the like; esp., a system of doctrines and practices that disregards or rejects any form of religious faith and worship; the belief that religion and ecclesiastical affairs should not enter into the functions of the state, esp. into public education."

II. What are Secular Humanism's Beliefs and Goals?

Considerable light as to the meaning of "secularism" and Secular Humanism may be gained from an analysis of the content and emphases of the basic documents of the movement.

A. Humanist Manifesto I

1. A consideration of the document itself