

## THE AFFIRMATIONS OF HUMANISM: A STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES\* ∞

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**WE ARE COMMITTED** to the application of reason and science to the understanding of the universe and to the solving of human problems.

**WE DEPLORE** efforts to denigrate human intelligence, to seek to explain the world in supernatural terms, and to look outside nature for salvation.

**WE BELIEVE** that scientific discovery and technology can contribute to the betterment of human life.

**WE BELIEVE** in an open and pluralistic society and that democracy is the best guarantee of protecting human rights from authoritarian elites and repressive majorities.

**WE ARE COMMITTED** to the principle of the separation of church and state.

**WE CULTIVATE** the arts of negotiation and compromise as a means of resolving differences and achieving mutual understanding.

**WE ARE CONCERNED** with securing justice and fairness in society and with eliminating discrimination and intolerance.

**WE BELIEVE** in supporting the disadvantaged and the disabled so that they will be able to help themselves.

**WE ATTEMPT** to transcend divisive parochial loyalties based on race, religion, gender, nationality, creed, class, sexual orientation, or ethnicity and strive to work together for the common good of humanity.

**WE WANT TO PROTECT** and enhance Earth, to preserve it for future generations, and to avoid inflicting needless suffering on other species.

**WE BELIEVE** in enjoying life here and now and in developing our creative talents to their fullest.

**WE BELIEVE** in the cultivation of moral excellence.

**WE RESPECT** the right to privacy. Mature adults should be allowed to fulfill their aspirations, to express their sexual preferences, to exercise reproductive freedom, to have access to comprehensive and informed health care, and to die with dignity.

**WE BELIEVE** in the common moral decencies: altruism, integrity, honesty, truthfulness, responsibility. Humanist ethics is amenable to critical, rational guidance. There are normative standards that we discover together. Moral principles are tested by their consequences.

**WE ARE DEEPLY CONCERNED** with the moral education of our children. We want to nourish reason and compassion.

**WE ARE ENGAGED** by the arts no less than by the sciences.

**WE ARE CITIZENS** of the universe and are excited by discoveries still to be made in the cosmos.

**WE ARE SKEPTICAL** of untested claims to knowledge, and we are open to novel ideas and seek new departures in our thinking.

**WE AFFIRM HUMANISM** as a realistic alternative to theologies of despair and ideologies of violence and as a source of rich personal significance and genuine satisfaction in the service to others.

**WE BELIEVE** in optimism rather than pessimism, hope rather than despair, learning in the place of dogma, truth instead of ignorance, joy rather than guilt or sin, tolerance in the place of fear, love instead of hatred, compassion over selfishness, beauty instead of ugliness, and reason rather than blind faith or irrationality.

**WE BELIEVE** in the fullest realization of the best and noblest that we are capable of as human beings.

\*BY PAUL KURTZ

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