

Celebration of the Other Humanists

by

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To enlighten those outside our community burdened with the misconception that humanism is the province of academia, I raise my beer mug in salute to the Other Humanists. Ours is an incredible experience, to believe in the human spirit sustained by man's ability to think and understand; to have faith in yourself, your mind, your ability; to grasp that the meaning of life is individually established; to embrace humanitarianism without the expectation of reward; to courageously live without the need to pander to the supernatural.

We are not all among the intellectual elite; we were not all endowed with exceptional intellects and coddled in the halls of academia. The Other Humanists are simple people, auto mechanics, accountants, public servants, etc., but we have earned the title by maximizing the talent provided by accident of birth. We were humanists before we knew the word or discovered the organizations. We were not indoctrinated from youth or in collage but we were raised perhaps in Catholicism and fought hard to make our way in the world. We studied, thought and concluded religion to be contradictory and deficient. We found faith in ourselves, our reason, and in humanity in its purest form, not sullied by supernatural beings. We did not look at a menu of possible worldviews and chose humanism, we accepted ourselves as we are, put faith in our reason and abilities and now find there are many like us who independently reached the same conclusion.

We learned to trust the human spirit, to trust our minds. We learned an individual cannot build character or be considered moral through the actions of another or of a god. The strength of a person's character is not measured by comparison to others or contributions to society or religion but by the personal effort of the individual to maximize their strengths and overcome their weaknesses. Religious or societal norms do not define us. Circumstances of birth such as beauty, athletic ability, talent or IQ are not the measure of a man; rather the true measure is the essence of life created by the individual for them self despite circumstances of birth.

We are not confused by the difference between the mind and the body. We value the human spirit over all else even while we understand that consciousness may be nothing more than complex interactive circuitry. We still are what we create ourselves to be. Anything significant about the individual is created by that individual, good or bad.

We know truth is essential; evangelism through misinformation, exaggeration or deceit is corrupt. Time spent in worship or in prayer isn't a definition of character or morality. "Belief alone" is a ridiculous standard and is counterproductive to character building. Believing in a god "just is case" is hypocrisy; if a god exists as commonly defined she obviously can see through

deception. There is no threat to the atheist from such a god; justice does not reject a good person.

We value other humans, not because we are commanded by the supernatural, or because we are promised happiness on earth or eternally in the netherworld, or threatened with everlasting hellfire, but because we ourselves reached the humanitarian conclusion. We defined our own morality in allegiance to ourselves and to the folks sharing this limited existence.

In adversity we have survived not by falling to our knees begging favor from the supernatural, but are sustained by our will and the love and assistance of our life partners.

We believe in science and reason, but we retain a certain amount of humility and believe there could be limits to man's knowledge. That man has yet to decipher the secrets of the cosmic doesn't prove the existence of a god, just the limits of our current understanding.

We believe that another human has just as much right to exist and to think and to control their own destiny and therefore do not seek to inflict our values on any one.

Consider the satisfaction of a character build brick by brick through hard work by the common man, perpetuated not by intellect or indoctrination but by reason and resolve. Alone, yet cheerfully sharing the world with others, fully aware that there is only one chance for fulfillment and yourself to rely on.

Humanism is not the property of the intellectual elite. All of us can find faith in ourselves, reject the supernatural, create our own essence and adopt a morality based on principles of humanitarianism. Congratulations to the Other Humanists who, as a result of individual determination, live life as proud, self created and self sustained, rational humanitarians.