Original Research Paper Physical Education

Need of Humanism for Society

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ABSTRACT The word humanism has a number of meanings, and because there are so many different meanings it can be quite confusing if you don't know what kind of humanism someone is talking about. Literary Humanism is a devotion to the humanities or literary culture. Renaissance Humanism is the spirit of learning that developed at the end of the Middle Ages with the revival of classical letters and a renewed confidence in the ability of human beings to determine for themselves truth.

KEYWORDS :

INTRODUCTION:

The spirit of Renaissance Humanism is often misunderstood as an uncritical glorification of humanity an all good and idealistic portrayal of it. But it is hardly so. Humanism as practised in the Renaissance revitalized the predetermines-free will debate with the famous Luther-Calvin conflict. Humanity was only seen as a fundamental category which was chosen by the Humanists as a grid through which to explore the world. It was the conception of an anthropocentric universe as opposed to the older theocentric universe, moving from the microcosm to the macrocosm. 'Studia Humanities'' was the methodology used in the sphere of education by these Humanists. A great emphasis was given on the arts and literature studies, something which has now established itself as the discipline of 'humanities'. There was great focus on rhetorical discourse and the text (Biblical primarily). The Humanists were rigourous textual scholars. They believed in the labour of finding out classical texts and a close textual study to arrive at critical positions.

Happiness and the creative realization of human needs and desires, individually and in shared enjoyment are continuous themes of humanism. Cultural Humanism is the rational and empirical tradition that originated largely in ancient Greece and Rome, evolved throughout European history and now constitutes a basic part of the Western approach to science, political theory, ethics and law. Philosophical Humanism is any outlook or way of life centred on human need and interest. Sub categories of this type include the two following. Christian Humanism is defined by Webster's Third New International Dictionary as a philosophy advocating the self-fulfilment of man within the framework of Christian principles. This more human oriented faith is largely a product of the Renaissance and is a part of what made up Renaissance humanism.

The divine, in various forms, has played a central role in many cultures throughout human history. Human cultures across time have wondered how to find the divine, how to know the divine, and how to please divine. Humanists reject this focus. Placing human beings firmly in the center of their worldview, Humanists ask: "How, in this one life we have, might we make the most of our time here for ourselves and for others?" For Humanists, human concerns come first; they trump tradition, dogma, or creed. Humanists seek to discover what best promotes human flourishing while leaving behind those beliefs and practices that would prevent humanity from achieving its full potential.

This drive to improve human life can be expressed in three core values: reason, compassion, and hope. Humanists value reason, or the use of the intellect and practices like the sciences and philosophy, as the best way to generate accurate knowledge about the world we inhabit. They reject supernatural explanations for phenomena. They are driven by compassion, or the idea that all people—regardless of nationality, ethnicity, race, creed, sexual identity or other characteristic – are fundamentally of equal moral worth. Humanists also look to the future in hope, believing that human beings, if working together, can build a better world.

Secular Humanism is an outgrowth of 18th century enlightenment rationalism and 19th century free thought. Many secular groups, such as the Council for Democratic and Secular Humanism and the American Rationalist Federation, and many otherwise unaffiliated academic philosophers and scientists advocate this philosophy.

This has been going on since the early years of the century where the Secular and Religious traditions combined and made Modern Humanism. Secular and Religious Humanists both share the same world views as shown by the signing of the Humanist Manifestos I and II. The signers of the Manifestos were both Secular and Religious Humanists.

Religious Humanists maintain that most human beings have personal social needs that can only be met by humanism. They do not feel that one should have to make a choice between meeting these needs in a traditional faith context versus not meeting them at all. Individuals who cannot feel at home in traditional religion should be able to find a home in non-traditional religion.

In general both philosophies agree that reason is taken over religion. In finding what all humanists believe you have to look towards the Humanist Manifesto. There are two versions of the Manifesto. The first one was written and signed in 1933 and since then there has been a Humanist Manifesto II, written and signed in 1973. I will concentrate on the second manifesto because it includes everything involved and more than the first. There are generally seventeen common principals to the manifesto not including the preface, introduction and conclusion. Those seventeen are divided into five topics including: Religion 1-2, Ethics 3-4, the Individual 5-6, Democratic Society 7-11 and World Community 12-17. Those seventeen I will focus on the seventeen common principals as they are the basis of Humanism.

REFERENCES:

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