

of those), most basically Humanism is an acceptance of the human condition, an acceptance that becomes a way of looking at reality. It is the acceptance that human beings have built a human cultural reality full of thoughts and feelings that filters and reconstructs all our experiences through its evolving culture perspective.

I do not claim that is the definition of Humanism organized humanism would accept but it is my Ethical Humanist understanding of the essence of the humanist understanding. And although many Ethical Culturalist would assume we fit more closely Bullock's second mode, the nature or scientific approach, we actually start from the human experience. Our foundation is the human relational experience and as part of our religious approach we accept Bullock's scientific mode as part of our way of understanding life.

On the negative side this understanding of Humanism is the acceptance that we are not experiencing pure, uninterpreted reality. We have no choice but to look through human eyes. Human consciousness humanizes natural experience and in the process creates an artificial human world. The cultural experience has shaped human nature and as we approach life we can carry a deeply held but possibly flawed understanding of life. We put a conscious grid on life that is full of ideas that shape our lives. That can become accepted gospel even when it promotes the good of the few to the detriment of the many.

On the positive side, this view of humanism is acceptance that humankind through its collective cultural effort has taken nature to greater heights. Human life has made conscious the striving that is part of all life. It has created gods and science. Part of the grid we place on life is judgment about what is good and what is bad, what helps life and what hurts it. We have humanized the universe as we reconstruct it in our minds to become part of our cultural human world.

As with Naturalism, we see no other possibility than to accept that we live in a humanist reality. And that is wonderful. As the latest product of evolving nature we have created a conscious, relational reality that is at its core ethical. Our religious humanism incorporates the belief in human power, belief in science and reason along with the driving force of the dreams and desires of individual human beings. Our world begins in the feelings and thoughts of all of us.

References - Appendix page 9-10.