



Humanist Society

of
New South Wales Inc.

Affiliated with the Council of Australian Humanist Societies and the International Humanist and Ethical Union

ABN: 19 402 094 262

Dr Robyn Williams AM - **Patrons** - Dorothy Buckland Fuller AM MBE



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Our international Humanist movement carries a minimum statement of core principles: "Humanism is a democratic and ethical life stance that affirms that human beings have the right and responsibility to give meaning and shape to their own lives. Humanism stands for the building of a more humane society through an ethics based on human and other natural values in a spirit of reason and free inquiry through human capabilities. Humanism is not theistic, and it does not accept supernatural views of reality."

Individual Humanists vary their focus. Some are concerned with science, reason and confronting destructive superstitions and some pursue human rights and humanitarianism. Others focus on the Heart of Humanism – a living ethos of values and practices, which can deepen humanity, fulfil needs sustainably, furnish us with meaning, and expand our human potential.

Humanism is there in ancient Greco-Roman, Egyptian, Mesopotamian, Chinese and Indian ideas. Ancestral & indigenous hunter-gatherers approach Humanism by tuning to their environment, their bodies, their companions and their human needs. Humanists welcome all communities and cultures which make humanity central in their values. Yet Modern Humanism takes root in the conscious individualism of the Renaissance, and the freedom, civility and enterprise of the modern Enlightenment.

'Humanity' got lost while Dark Age savagery mellowed to Medieval superstition. Renaissance 'Humanitas' valued modern human qualities like understanding and compassion, as well as traditional virtues like fortitude, prudence, eloquence, and honour. Human art and science flourished again. Then, after the bloody wars of religions, Enlightenment Humanism gave us human rights, rule of law, equality, scientific inquiry, aesthetics, cosmopolitanism, transparency, civility, optimism, and inclusion.

Humanists accept our Humanity - both as limit and as potential. No gods come to help us – just our own ingenuity, curiosity, and goodwill. Judgement is based in honest examination of shared human experience. We respect the free individual, accountable to society, dependent on the natural world, but also responsible for it. Tough-minded, warm-hearted people, in a democratic, secular society, we rely on observation, experiment, rational analysis and shared review. We embrace the human spirit of imagination, and the transforming power of art. Humanists want joy in living – with health and integrity.

We respect diverse views on humane solutions. Our simple celebrations resonate with common humanity and our shared mortality. Instead of worship or prayer, we seek a deeper prosperity, and a higher sensitivity. We pursue possibilities, rather than flee from them - certainty is futile and illusory. We embrace the triumph, the tragedy, & the comedy of humanity.

Becoming a member of the Humanist Society of NSW makes you part of a local, national and global movement. Locally we share learning and ideas, and enjoy like-minded companions and mutual support. Nationally, through the Council of Australian Humanist Societies we campaign for equity, choice, and dignity, and fight persecution and injustice. Globally, through the International Humanist & Ethical Union we work for human rights, and the rational settlement of differences.

If you think you might be a Humanist consider joining our community and sharing in our pursuit of wisdom, justice, dignity and creativity in a world still plagued with militant ignorance, unwholesome consumerism, recalcitrant sexism, toxic authoritarianism, blind traditionalism, new forms of racism, and specious spiritualities.

Murray Love
President