



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



[About us](#)

[Facebook site](#)



[Meetings](#)

[Celebrants](#)

[Articles](#)



[Words & Ideas and Introduction to Humanism book order](#)

[For Children](#)

[For Students](#)

[Religion | state](#)

[Membership](#)

[Members' page](#)

[Contacting us](#)



[Charles Darwin day](#)

NEW

[Hall hire](#)

[Guide to readings in this site](#)

President's Welcome 2016

Humanism is a richly varied philosophy, and each Humanist has their own unique perspective. In this respect we are no different from any other human beings. One way we do differ, though, is that we accept our humanity in both its limitations and its potentials. As far as we can tell, there are no gods to help us. Human ingenuity, curiosity, learning and goodwill are all we have to work with. Humanists base their judgments in honest examination of shared human experience. Humanism respects the free individual, accountable to society - dependent on the natural world, yet also responsible for it.

The path of Humanism can be traced through the millennium of ancient Greek thought from Thales to Hypatia, as well as parts of Egyptian, Mesopotamian, Chinese and Indian thought. Indigenous hunter-gatherers tuned to their environment, their bodies, their companions and their human needs, also epitomise the Humanist approach. But as a distinctive movement, Humanism has its roots in the conscious individualism of the early Renaissance, and its flowering in the freedom, civility and enterprise of the modern Enlightenment.

While we appreciate the struggles of our ancestors, their architecture and their craftsmanship, we feel that humanity got lost in the savagery of the Dark Ages, and the superstition of the Middle Ages. But the rise of Renaissance 'Humanitas' allowed the fullest development of human virtues - both modern human qualities like understanding, benevolence, compassion, and mercy and traditional character traits like fortitude, judgment, prudence, eloquence, and honour. Human art and science flourished again.

Then, after the bloody distractions of the Reformation and Counter-Reformation had run their course, Enlightenment values of human rights, rule of law, equality, scientific inquiry, aesthetics, cosmopolitanism, transparency, civility, optimism, and inclusion laid the basis of the modern Humanist project. Despite these 'western' origins, Humanists also welcome the contributions of diverse communities and cultures from around the world, where these make humanity central in their customs and valuations.

Ours is an earthly wisdom, based on observation, experiment, rational analysis and mutual review. Humans are an integral part of nature. Ethical values develop from human needs, under the test of experience. We embrace the human spirit of imagination, and the transforming power of art, words, and music for personal growth and fulfilment. Humanists cultivate joy in living.

Instead of worship or prayer, we seek a deeper prosperity, and a higher sensitivity. We pursue life's possibilities, rather than flee from them. Humanists find happiness and meaning in relationships, shared enjoyment, and creatively nourishing the full diversity of human needs and hopes. The demand for certainty is futile and illusory. Instead, we embrace the triumphs, the tragedies, and the comedy, of Humanity.

Humanism is both a lifestance and a community, fostering health and integrity. Humanists are tough-minded, warm-hearted people, trying to do good in the world, to grow in discovery, and to lead richer lives. We participate in democracy, upholding equality and liberty in an open, secular society. We work to protect nature's diversity and beauty. We aspire to well-being for all, and respect diverse views on humane solutions to life's problems.

Our lifestyle is ethical, imaginative, purposeful and rational in facing the challenges of our times. Our simple celebrations resonate with our common humanity, in the acceptance of our shared mortality.

Authentic Humanism is always a learning process, drawing people to be deeply conscious of their common humanity, and to see the world more clearly. Humanists live in meaningful and peaceful companionship, aware this is the only life we will ever know.

Becoming a member of the Humanist Society of NSW makes you part of a local, national and global movement. Locally we share ideas, learn together and enjoy like-minded companionship and mutual support. Nationally, through the *Council of Australian Humanist Societies* we campaign for gender equity, reproductive choice, and dignity in dying, and fight racism, persecution and injustice. Globally, through the *International Humanist & Ethical Union* we work for peace, human rights, and the rational settlement of differences, as well as detecting and opposing specific persecutions aimed at the non-religious. 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 beset with vacuous consumerism, recalcitrant sexism, mindless traditionalism, and specious spiritualities.

Murray Love
President

[Back to previous document](#) | [HomePage](#)

Copyright with copyright components. If you copy please acknowledge this source.