

# Towards Scientific Humanism

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## Introduction:-

**Scientific Humanism** can be called as a form of **Naturalism**. In this sphere of Humanism, human beings are viewed naturalistically. They are placed in the natural world and with the lower animals, plants , minerals etc. **Their intellectual, moral and aesthetic senses, their power to identify good and as well as bad will, all are regarded as a result of a long evolution from the animal status.**

## **Scientific Humanist and his area of interest:-**

**A scientific Humanist is fully committed to the use of scientific method. He believes that, every kind of moral and social problems can be solved by proper understanding and application of effective scientific method.**

He also sees no valid ground for believing men and women to be isolated creatures in nature.

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On the other hand, he regards them as an integral part of the great complexity of things. He rejects **Pure Reason** and **Revelation** as sources of light in order to understand the **Human Nature** or the **Art of Life**. Rather **he takes initiative to analyze all the happenings in the contemporary world with the help of a naturalistic viewpoint.**

## **Scientific Humanist and his ethical values:-**

**The scientific Humanist does not want to loose truth (moral values) In order to cop up with the race for gaining earthly prosperity. He strongly beliefs that it is important for a man to have true values. Similarly, he opines that every man should be free from any untrue value which would harm him irreparably.**

**To him, truth is not an absolute one , yet are not mere fantasies. To him, truth is a kind of a ethical base on which his image a has been established and has become reliable.**

## Scientific Humanist and the World of Desires:-

The scientific humanist is very much keen to liberate himself from the prejudice against desire. He shows his disregard about excessive obsession for worldly gains. But, it can not be said that, he is fully against moderate desires. He accepts the fact that men and women have wants and desires. He believes that desire is the only driving power to attain a good and as well as happy life. **Apart from intelligence, knowledge, imagination and creativity , it's the desires which are playing as an accelerator to attain whole amount of happiness.**

**in short, he is the propagator of a kind of moderate and sober happiness.**

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Scientific Humanists propounds that, some day , too, the world of affairs may encourage instead of discourage moral progress. In that context, no one can achieve his moral growth without being in a reciprocal relationship with others. This very perspective can be addressed as a moral program of a Scientific Humanist.

But one can not deny the fact that **sometimes there remains a kind of disparity between their proclaimed encouragement for the cause of moral prosperity and their deeds against moral integrity.**

## Scientific Humanism and the world of contemporary religion:-

“ In contrast with the great believers who imposed their noblest dreams by faith upon the universe , there have been men in all cultures who clipped the wings of their hopes and built a more modest ideal in the everyday world of fact. **Though life might not be altogether lovely, they made the best of life. With no hope to help from gods , and no faith in life immortal , the beauty of human comradeship became more precious.....”**

The above mentioned excerpt from the book –***The Quest of the Ages*** written by eminent Scientific Humanist, **Mr. Haydon** encapsulates the viewpoint of the Scientific Humanists on how they regard the arena of contemporary religion.



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Humanists with a scientific rationality reject the dualism which asserts about the final authority of religion in the realm of value and authority of science in the realm of fact. **They refuse to divide the experienced world into two realms and they uninquasly regard man's unending search for a livable life as the final authority of the very world.** Apparently, 'Quest of a good life v in a good world'' is the motto of their entire thoughts and deeds.

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“Within the flickering inconsequential acts of separate selves dwells a sense of the whole which claims and dignifies them. In its presence we put off mortality and live in the universal. **The life of community in which we live and have our being is the symbol of this relationship. The acts in which we express our perception of the ties which bind us to others are its only rites and ceremonies.**”

*(Human Nature and Conduct by John Dewey)*

This very excerpt shows the fact that how inter-relation and collective living between man and his respective society has become the only observable rite of the religious idea conceived by the Scientific Humanists.

## Renaissance ideal and its influence on Scientific Humanism:-

It has widely been accepted that, **Renaissance philosophy** which highlighted the capability and desire of universal mankind and **started to unravel the hidden follies of stringent medieval scholasticism** influenced the scientific insight of Humanism in its incipient days. Constant stressing on one's moral prosperity, involving himself in order to grow a kind of pro-community, anti-theistic austere religion, believing in moderate a sober kind of 'desire' – all these discussed attributes were actually spawned in the context of **15<sup>th</sup> century Florentine Renaissance**.

## Scientific Humanism and its shortcomings:-

It is a matter of concern that, sometimes this very edition of **Scientific Humanism** tends to become a medium to fulfill the zest of materialistic superpowers. **The two world wars , occurred during the span of 1914-1918 C.E. and 1939-1945 C.E. are the two distinct examples where the rational and humanistic insights of Science was repeatedly being curbed in order to quench the thirst of war-monger countries.**

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But there was scientist like *Boyd H. Bode* who always tried to uplift the moral basis of **Scientific Humanism** even within the context of utter negativity. **Through his lectures, books, articles, he whole heartedly suggested to increase the meaning and joy of life on earth by making use of the best intellectual and moral tools.** By placing **naturalistic modernity** above the **traditional religious outlook** and also by saving the **great ideals of the human spirit**, he created a base on which Scientific Humanism had been able to spread its wings than earlier.

## Summery:-

So, it can be realized that, **Scientific Humanism is not a manifestation of materialism and at the same time, it is not a superstitious or an intellectualized spiritualism.** The Scientific Humanist does not say that every experience of life can be substantiated by a test tube or every interest can be weighed on a scales. **He always admit that, something in everything always escapes the hardcore technique of measurement. On the other hand, he also acknowledges the importance to adjust with the new world order or the new moral or intellectual climate in order to live a desired life.**

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The **Scientific Humanist** can also be addressed as a **Humanist Scientist** with a laboratory point of view and a human understanding. Historian Morris Gorran says that, **Scientific Humanism has got its widened acceptance than mainstream world of science as in this sphere the two apparent oppositional tenets like Humanism and Science have been assimilated to each other.** According to him, as there is a **mixture of moral/ethical insight of Humanism and hard core scientific notion, Scientific Humanism** can police the contemporary society against tyranny, intolerance and despotism.

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It can also be said that, the Scientific Humanist can look forward to build up a scientific worldview which can bind all kind nationality, class, race together. *Hilter's* distorted ideal, that **“one should educate the German people from childhood on, to the exclusive acknowledgement of the right of their own nationality, and one should not poison our children’s hearts with the curse of our ‘objectivity’”** has been denied forever by the said Scientific Humanist.