

Epicurean Philosophy Vs. Humanism

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"Humanism" has meant so many things throughout history, I tend to avoid it at this point. Cicero's usage 2,000 years ago informs its contemporary, academic usage of as "Liberal Arts". Renaissance "humanism" needs to be contextualized alongside a cultural movement driven by wealthy patrons funding of major art projects. Some early American colonists saw their revolution as being "humanistic" (against the proposition of the Divine Right of kings), and Marxists in the 1920s adopted the word to refer to the transformative nature of their politics and economics. It has also been championed by modern Unitarians to emphasize the human aspect of their Christ. The generalized definition includes half of all thinkers throughout history, in which case, most of the pre-Socratic naturalists, and later Epicurus, would easily fall in this category (or, essentially, *any* naturalists). Interestingly, the phrase "Secular Humanism" was first employed by religious detractors of *Secularism*, but then, as happens, their secular opponents later adopted the the term as a badge.

So, if philosophers, liberal scholars, financiers, clergy, laity, colonists, revolutionaries, and religious critics are all comfortable using the term "humanism", then *that word* may have functionally run its course. I usually only run into it from two sources: (1) *contemporary critics of religion* and (2) *Pope Francis*, and that seems strange.