



On Humanism (Thinking in Action)

Richard Norman

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What is humanism and why does it matter? Is there any doctrine every humanist must hold? If it rejects religion, what does it offer in its place? Have the twentieth century's crimes against humanity spelled the end for humanism?

On Humanism is a timely and powerfully argued philosophical defence of humanism. It is also an impassioned plea that we turn to ourselves, not religion, if we want to answer Socrates' age-old question: what is the best kind of life to lead? Although humanism has much in common with science, Richard Norman shows that it is far from a denial of the more mysterious, fragile side of being human. He deals with big questions such as Darwinism and 'creation science', matter and consciousness, euthanasia and abortion, and then argues that it is ultimately through the human capacity for art, literature and the imagination that humanism is a powerful alternative to religious belief.

This revised second edition includes a new chapter on the debates between 'the New Atheists' such as Richard Dawkins and Christopher Hitchens and their religious critics, asking why the two sides in the debate so often seem to be talking past one another, and suggesting how the conversation could be made more fruitful.

Richard Norman is a committed humanist and the author of many books including *The Moral Philosophers* and *Ethics, Killing and War*. He was formerly Professor of Philosophy at the University of Kent, Canterbury

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