

World Views:

Understanding how your world view affects every aspect of your life.

- A world view is a systematic understanding of reality.
- Your world view is the starting point for your understanding and interpretation of reality, as well as your understanding of right and wrong, morality, ethics, and whether there is meaning in life.
- Everybody has a world view whether they realize it or not.
- It is critical to understand both your world view as well as the concept of world views in order for you to make any sense out of life.
- All world views must answer certain basic questions:
 - Origin.
 - Condition.
 - Meaning/Purpose.
 - Morality/Ethics.
 - Salvation/Redemption.
 - Destiny.

All world views must answer these questions in a way that:

- Corresponds to reality (external).
 - Is logically consistent (internal) .
 - Has relevance to real-life.
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- In America, most people are not aware of these issues, and do not understand the consequences of ideas and beliefs.
 - World views are generally based more in philosophy than in science.
 - Frequently, philosophies are intermixed with science and pseudoscience.
 - Without critical thought and analysis, it is almost impossible to discern the Truth.
 - In America, it is generally assumed that all world views are equally valid, and cannot be evaluated using any logic or reason.
 - In America, people have a right to choose their philosophies, and institutions do not have a right to dictate philosophy.
 - After this class, you will know that world views have several important questions to answered, and that they can be evaluated to a large extent using reason and critical thinking. They cannot be proven (hence faith).

Ideas Have Consequences:

“When you present man with an concept of man that is not true, we may well corrupt him. When we present him as an automation of reflexes, as a mind machine, as a bundle of instincts, as a pawn of drive and reactions, as a mere product of heredity and environment, we feed the nihilism to which modern man is, in any case, prone. I became acquainted with the last stage of corruption in my second concentration camp, Auschwitz. The gas chambers of Auschwitz were the ultimate consequence of the

theory that man is nothing but the product of heredity and the environment-or, as the Nazi's liked to say "of blood and soil." I am absolutely convinced that the gas chambers of Auschwitz, Treblinka, and Maidanek were ultimately prepared not in some ministry or other in Berlin, but in the desks and lecture halls of nihilistic scientists and philosophers..."

Victor Frankl, Holocaust survivor and psychologist.

An Introduction to Apologetics

Apologetics:

- Apologia (Greek)-to give a word back.
- Providing a formal defense of Christianity.
- An essential function of the early church.
- Has largely been abandoned by the Church in the face of the increasing influence of naturalism, existentialism, and other non-theistic philosophies, as well as New Age movement and other pseudo-spirituality movements.

Why study apologetics?

- Understand there is a rational basis for your faith.
- Strengthen your faith.
- Help yourself, your friends, family, and children deal with the challenges to Christianity in our society.
- More effectively witness to others.
- Be able to understand the relevance of Biblical teachings in our society, especially in the context of the University.

Naturalism:

(Evolution of a Bad Idea.)

What Is Naturalism?

- Naturalism is a philosophy.
- It is frequently assumed that science must have a naturalistic starting point ("Scientific Naturalism")
- Nature is all there is. There are no outside (supernatural) influences that have worked in the universe. The universe, by DEFINITION is a closed system.
- Naturalism does not require that you to be an atheist, but in naturalism, a creator does not do anything.

A Brief History of Naturalism:

- Naturalism has been around for thousands of years.
- It became an important Philosophy and challenge to theism after Charles Darwin published "The Origin of the Species".

- Naturalistic or atheistic theories had failed historically due to the absence of a plausible mechanism for the creation of life.
- After Darwin, there was a plausible naturalistic creation story.
- After the Enlightenment and a philosophical movement called “Positivism” (August Comte), the Darwinian explanation was accepted by the scientific and university establishment as “fact”, despite well documented problems with the evidence for the theory.
- Science became defined as finding the best naturalistic explanation for a problem.
- Naturalism became identified with science.
- Naturalism is now the starting point of the theoretical sciences in Western Society.
- Charles Darwin made it possible to be “an intellectually fulfilled atheist.”
- Religion, by definition includes supernatural elements, and is therefore outside of the naturalistic understanding of the universe.
- Religion is therefore relegated to a position of being outside of “reality” and is therefore false or fantasy, and easily dismissed as irrelevant.

Logical Flaws of Naturalism:

- Naturalism lacks sufficient explanatory power for the origin of the universe.
- If Nature is all there is, then nature has to be able to do its own creating.
- Something then must come from nothing.
- This is not a matter of fact that has been proven, it is a logical necessity of the theory that is built in to the presuppositions of the theory itself.

The Existential Consequences of Naturalism

Or : Suicide, why not give it your best shot?

Origin of Meaning (Christianity)

- The universe is created according to a plan.
- Purpose is part of design.
- Meaning is inherent in creation and life itself.
- Human life has even additional value, as we are created in God’s image.
- Human life has even additional value, as God has sent his Son to redeem us.
- Therefore, meaning is inherent, not based in the subjective.
- Creation will be remade in perfection.

Origin of Meaning (Naturalism)

- Life is the end result of purposeless, material processes. “Matter in mindless motion.”
- We are here by chance. We are here because we are here.
- There is nothing else but what we see.
- We are in essence dirt, sentient, then maggot food.

- Our ultimate destiny is a dark, cold, ever expanding universe. There is NO place to run or hide from this.
- Meaning is inherently subjective.
- Meaning only comes from your individual interpretation of life's events.
- One may choose to assume that life either has meaning or does not have meaning.
- People are free to assume that there is meaning, there simply no rationale to do so.
- It is not possible to logically argue that life has inherent meaning or worth.
- The school of thought that would advocate that life still has meaning is humanism.
- Significant meaning becomes even more difficult to defend in a dying universe.
- **Aldous Huxley Wrote:** "I had motives for not wanting the world to have meaning; consequently I assumed that it had none, and was able without any difficulty to find satisfying reasons for this assumption. Most ignorance is vincible ignorance. We don't know because we don't want to know. It is our will that decides how and upon what subjects we shall use our intelligence. Those who detect no meaning in the world generally do so because, for one reason or another, it suits their books that the world should be meaningless..."
- **Aldous Huxley Wrote:** "For myself, as, no doubt, for most of my contemporaries, the philosophy of meaninglessness was essentially an instrument of liberation. The liberation we desired was simultaneously liberation from a certain system of morality. We objected to the morality because it interfered with our sexual freedom; we objected to the political and economic system because it was unjust. The supporters of these systems claimed that in some way they embodied the meaning (a Christian meaning, they insisted) of the world. There was one admirably simple method of confuting these people and at the same time justifying ourselves in our political and erotic revolt: We could deny that the world had any meaning whatsoever..."
- **Stephen Jay Gould:** "We are here because one odd group of fishes had a peculiar fin anatomy that could transform into legs for terrestrial creatures; because comets struck the earth and wiped out the dinosaurs, thereby giving mammals a chance not otherwise available (so thank your lucky stars in a literal sense); because the earth never froze entirely during an ice age; because a small and tenuous species, arising in Africa quarter of a million years ago, has managed, so far, to survive by hook and by crook. We may yearn for a 'higher' answer-but none exists. This explanation, though superficially troubling, if not terrifying, is ultimately liberating and exhilarating..."

Consequences of Meaninglessness:

- Nietzsche understood that with the death of God comes the loss of a point of reference.
- Relativism becomes predominant with the loss of a reference point.
- Confusion, despair and hopelessness are logical outworkings of these systems.
- Jean Paul Sartre said "The last remaining task of philosophy is to justify why not commit suicide."
- Narcissism (putting yourself at the center of the universe) is a logical outworking of naturalism.
- Narcissism is strong in American Culture.
- Examples of this are the "Self-Esteem" movement.
 - This movement persists despite the evidence that increasing self esteem is

- associated with increase risk of violence to others.
 - Shirley McClain is another great example of this. She has taken narcissism to epic levels with self deification: “I am God”.
 - “I call Christianity the *one* great curse, the *one* great intrinsic depravity, the *one* great instinct for revenge for which no expedient is sufficiently poisonous, secret, subterranean, *petty* -- I call it the *one* mortal blemish of mankind.” **Friedrich Nietzsche**
 - “In Christianity neither reality nor religion come into contact with religion at any point”- **Friedrich Nietzsche**
 - “Life is but a dream, a foolish and grotesque dream”-**Mark Twain**
 - “It may be that our role on this planet is not to worship God but to create him”-**Arthur C. Clarke**
 - “Nobody realizes that some people extend tremendous energy trying to be normal”- **Albert Camus.**
 - “I like pigs. Dogs look up to us. Cats look down on us. Pigs treat us as equals.”- **Winston Churchill.**
 - “I am free of all prejudices. I hate everybody equally”-**WC Fields.**
 - “By means of shrewd lies, unremittingly repeated, it is possible to make people believe that heaven is hell -- and hell heaven. The greater the lie, the more readily it will be believed.” **Adolf Hitler**
 - “I use emotion for the many and reserve reason for the few.”-**Adolf Hitler**
 - “The victor will never be asked if he told the truth.”- **Adolf Hitler**
 - “What luck for the rulers that men do not think.”- **Adolf Hitler**
 - “All generalizations are wrong, including this one”-**Blaise Pascal**
 - “If you want to imagine the future, imagine a boot stamping on a human face forever”- **George Orwell**
 - “History is the version of past events that people have decided to agree upon”- **Napoleon**
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- Under a Naturalistic World View, meaninglessness is the most plausible conclusion.
 - This leads to embracing philosophies of Nihilism, Existentialism, Hedonism.
 - Certainly, hedonism and despair have clearly been dominant in our culture as expressed through literature, music, the arts, and popular culture.
 - One can choose to still say that life has meaning, this will usually result in an humanist stance.
 - People are likely to be better behaved as humanists than they are as either existentialists or nihilists.
 - In a contest between the humanists and the nihilists, the humanists only win when the nihilists run out of bullets.
 - These are good examples of World Views shaping the philosophy of the culture, and working their way out of philosophical frameworks, into the universities and the culture as a whole, and into the minds of the citizens.
 - Thank God we are exporting our suicidal, psychotic culture to the rest of the world...
 - With the marginalization of religion, the mental health profession is now looked to for providing answers to existential questions, something that it cannot do.

2 Perspectives on Suffering:

- **Christ:**
 - Be of good cheer because I have overcome the world.
- **Nietzsche:**
 - Be of good cheer because life is meaningless.

Pain and Suffering Under Naturalism:

- Under Naturalism, life is without meaning or purpose, therefore pain and suffering are devoid of purpose.
- Without any meaningful reason, why stick around and be miserable?
- Why not engage in every form of self-indulgence that seems reasonable, such as sex, drugs, violence... “eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow we die”?

Morality Under Naturalism

- Under Christianity, morality flows from God, is an absolute standard, that is above human desire, social whim, political correctness, or dictates of society.
- Under naturalism, there are no objective moral values. All morality is relative, “changes with the times”... It is also subject to modification by people.
- “Homo mensura” Man is the measure of all things.
- WHICH man is the measure?
- If life has no meaning, why be moral?
- Can anything be right or wrong under naturalism?
- Nietzsche understood that without meaning, there are no rules.
- He taught that the “hero” was the one who showed courage in the face of despair. His Übermensch (superman) was the one that was strong enough to enforce his views on others.
- Hitler was a follower of Nietzsche. The atrocities of the Nazi regime are a logical extension of Nietzsche's ideas, which are a logical extension of naturalism.
- Mussolini and Stalin were also followers of Nietzsche. Stalin was a seminary student (as was Nietzsche) before rejecting God and following his own path of destruction.
- If all morals are truly relative, then how can you say that Mother Theresa was better than Adolph Hitler.

Destiny Under Naturalism

- Under Christianity, destiny is assured.
- Under naturalism, destiny is also assured.
- You are dirt, you are alive, then you are maggot food.
- Naturalists have tried for years to get around this aspect, but the attempts are usually empty.

