Is Human Life a Cosmic Accident?:
Atheists’ Contradictory Position on the Value of Human Life

Since the eighteenth-century Enlightenment, atheist and agnostic thinkers (i.e., materialists and positivists) have considered everything, including humans, as merely the product of accidental processes. This means that human life no longer has any value or moral significance. This talk will examine the way than many thinkers, such as the eminent British philosopher Bertrand Russell, espoused this view, but also contradicted themselves by implying that humans are important.

Richard Weikart is professor of modern European history at California State University, Stanislaus, and Senior Fellow at Discovery Institute’s Center for Science and Culture. He has published six books, including most recently The Death of Humanity: And the Case for Life and Hitler’s Religion. He has also published extensively on the history of evolutionary ethics, eugenics, social Darwinism, euthanasia, and scientific racism. He has been featured in several documentaries, including Ben Stein’s Expelled, as well as on many radio programs. He recently produced a documentary to commemorate the 500th anniversary of the Reformation called Exploring the Reformation and Revivals in Germany, which is available on youtube.

I. Many secularists acknowledge that human life has no special value

A. Nietzsche, Sartre, and Existentialists

B. Scientific Materialists: Dawkins, Lawrence Krauss

C. PETA (People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals)

II. But secularists seem to know that human life is valuable (which contradicts their worldview)

A. Bertrand Russell

1. Argued humans had no value, but campaigned for nuclear disarmament

2. Argued morality was only mere emotion, but was staunch moralist

B. Jerry Coyne

C. Peter Singer
Suggested Readings:

