

## HUM REPORT 13.02.18

At the meeting on the 13<sup>th</sup> February Laurence Smaje led a discussion

### Are Humanists too Human Centred

Man regards himself as different from animals. Since the Enlightenment, late 18<sup>th</sup> century, man has begun to question orthodoxy. In consequence beliefs and values change. Humanists aspire to moral progress over religious values. Man is different from animals as he/she makes choices animals are instinctive in their behaviour.

A view generally held is that humans have progressed increased their knowledge and understanding of the world and themselves Knowledge is a goal. Humans learnt to co-operate

Stephan Pinker in his book “ The better angels of our nature” maintains his data collection over many years sees the world as less violent today .For example cruel .punishments are more or less unknown- the death penalty no longer exists in many countries,,slavery is abolished and to be gay is not a moral failure.

He claims there is more tolerance of different religions. In the discussion not everyone was convinced this is true.

In 1948 a Declaration of Human Rights was drawn up It is a bench mark to which most countries would, hopefully, eventually accept.

Humanist aspire to higher moral values, recognise differences and promote tolerance.

### Book recommended by Laurence

Doland Cummings	Debating Humanism
John Gray	Straw Dogs
Julien Huxley	Humanist Frame
Denis Noble	Dance to tune of life
Stephen Pinker	The better angels of our nature