The keynote speaker was Jacques Berlinerblau, Associate Professor of Jewish Civilization at George-town University. Sardonically echoing fundamentalist attacks on secular Jews, he described the latter as broken, unreconstructed and imperfectly "deformities in the seed of Abraham." (His ironic comments drew laughter from the audience.) He sees two types of secular Jews: the organized, those who are linked but not shackled by Judaism; and the non-organized, the vast majority of secular Jews. His Manifesto for us includes: Shock the professors (for visibility, in order to be more than a blip on the screen of Judaism); learn the techniques from Chabad (whose outreach is so successful); reject denominationalism (post-denominalism is inclusive Judaism); understand and relate to other Jews; trust secular rabbis and get them out there (again for visibility, to make people aware of our movement); the need for money (no bread, no Torah); the need for buildings (I suggested he use the term "edifice complex," which he liked a lot); and reclaim the term "secular."

Lori Lipman Brown, former director of the Secular Coalition for America, said that secular Americans must have a voice to promote secular government. She finds "under God" in the Pledge of Allegiance to be divisive and urges secularists to work with theists on our shared values.

Ron Aronson, Distinguished Professor of the History of Ideas at Wayne State University, asked us to stop being polite to people who pray (for us) and to stop being invisible, noting that the number of atheists in the United States is now 36 million and that the percentage of atheists in Canada is even higher. He likes the term the "new new" atheist (post-atheist), which he noted that none of the Golden Rules mentions God, but that reason and science cannot visit you in the hospital, pointing to the need for community. While we should pursue happiness, we should settle for "happyish" and dignity. Unfortunate-