

Institutions of Religion

New Religious Movements

Name and date begun:

Time allocation:

4 lessons

Learning objectives:

- Students should know something of how New Religious Movements originate.
- Students should be aware of the increasing fragmentation of belief and belief systems in modern society.
- Students should understand the variety and forms that New Religious Movements can take on.
- Students should recognise that religious institutions have a 'life cycle' and that some become formalised while others die out.

Key Concepts and vocabulary

See your lesson notes in addition to the following:

- New Religious Movement
- Cult
- Sect
- Post Modernism
- Modernity
- Brain-washing
- Evangelism
- Tele-evangelism

Additional reading and references

Selfe and Starbuck (1998) *Access to Sociology: Religion* p 73 - 6

Giddens (1997) *Sociology 3rd edition* p 452 - 4

Taylor et al (1996) *Sociology in Focus* p 516 - 21

Marcus and Ducklin (1998) *Success in Sociology* p 652 - 5

Make a note of any additional sources that you have used below

Personal Development ideas

- Find out as much as you can about a New Religious Movement of your own choice. Make it clear that your interest is purely academic. You are advised not contact any of these groups directly, but to use the Internet for further information.
- If you know anyone who belongs to a NRM, then interview him or her about his or her feelings and activities. Make it clear that your interest is purely academic and that you are not willing to be a convert.

Overview of the debate

- What is the difference between a cult and a sect?
- Why are people attracted to NRM?
- What sorts of people are attracted to NRM?
- How do NRM attract converts to their beliefs?
- What are the dangers of NRM?
- Why is it necessary to warn people of the dangers of NRM?

Revision tips

- Be certain that you understand and can define the key terms in this area.
- Make sure that you have good notes on the various typologies on offer. Make it clear that your interest is purely academic

What you should have in your folder when this work has been completed correctly:

- A clear explanation of each of the glossary terms
- Acceptable lesson notes.
- Evidence that you have looked at least two textbooks and made notes.
- Evidence of a research into a minority religion.
- An essay plan and notes towards an essay to the following title:

**Examine sociological accounts of the emergence and growth of
New Religious Movements.**