

Institutions of Religion

Post Modernism and the New Age

Name and date begun:

Time allocation:

4 lessons

Learning objectives:

- Students should know something of post modernism as a theoretical base for the analysis of society.
- Students should be able to recognise New Age belief systems.
- Students should be able to evaluate whether New Age beliefs provide proof of post modernism or not.
- Students should recognise that a number of theories are available to account for the growth of New Age belief.

Key Concepts and vocabulary

See your lesson notes in addition to the following:

- Modernism
- Post modernism
- Deconstruction
- Discourse
- Self spirituality
- Detraditionalisation
- Consumer culture
- Relativism

Additional reading and references

The New Age is surprisingly poorly covered by the main texts, so if you discover a good reference or an interesting Website – then it is your duty to share it with the rest of the class and with your teacher!

Selke and Starbuck (1998) **Access to Sociology: Religion** see index

See any of the main texts and the school Website for information about post modernism.

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

Personal Development ideas

- Find out as much as you can about New Ageism by looking at any New Age shop and seeing the variety of products on offer.
- Look at some New Age books in bookstores to see what types of belief are on offer.

Overview of the debate

- What is modernism?
- What is post modernism?
- What types of beliefs can be interpreted as New Age?
- Is the existence and popularity of New Age philosophy proof of post modernism?
- What other social factors underlie the popularity of 'alternative' wisdom?

Revision tips

- Be certain that you understand and can evaluate post modernism as a theoretical perspective.
- You should be able to identify New Age beliefs in operation.
- Be certain that you can refer to some of the key writers in this area and apply their theorising to the New Age debate.

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 newspapers and magazines and identified examples of New Ageism as they appear.
- Evidence of research into the prevalence of New Age belief in our culture.
- An essay to the following title

Evaluate the evidence to support the view that the growth of New Age philosophies is proof of post modernity.