

## Post-Modernism and Mass Culture



### Warning:

This is a recently fashionable topic so many people (including commentators) do not really understand it yet! Texts do not necessarily have sections on it and those that do, may be incomprehensible. Trendy topics are sometimes fast-disappearing so be judicious in your references to post-modernism. Older texts may refer to a similar basic set of ideas as 'post structuralism'.

### Learning Objectives

- to learn something of the theoretical (if any) base to the perspective
- to be able to appreciate that it does offer a focus on the effect of the media on global society
- to be able to evaluate and criticise the theory to some extent.

### Skills

- note taking
- analysis

### Concepts, theories and questions

- modernism
- postmodernism
- media realities
- media culture
- Michel Foucault and discourses

### Recommended Reading

Taylor et al., *Sociology in Focus* (1996) p 542\*

Thompson and Priestley, *Sociology: Made Simple 2nd Ed.* (1996) p 251f\*

Haralambos and Holborn, *Sociology: Themes and Perspectives 4th Ed* (1990) p 907-14\*, 285-7

Layder, *Understanding Social Theory* (1994) p 94f

O'Donnell, *A New Introduction to Sociology* (1992) p511f (see under: **post structuralism**)

There are numerous articles in the various issues of *Sociology Review* which is held in the LRC.

**List your own references in the space below:**

## Activities

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Explain what modernism is by using dictionaries, CD ROM and texts.

### Study Skills: Note taking

- Find each of the references offered on the other side of the sheet.
- Read the section in the text carefully. If it is a long section, then read it bit by bit.
- Read it again carefully.
- Mark the page section with a sheet of paper and shut the book.
- Write down only what you can remember and understand.
- Reread the section that you are studying for one last time. Look at your notes as you read.
- If there is anything really obvious that you have missed, then add it to your notes. Otherwise, try to leave your memory notes untouched and brief.
- These short notes are all that you are ever likely to need for an exam. Long notes are very difficult to learn.
- If you are very interested in the ideas, then do go back and make more detailed notes for your own pleasure. Keep them separate from your examination learning.

### Study Skills: Evaluation and Analysis

Prepare yourself for a discussion lesson by putting together some rough notes of your own ideas based on what you have read in answer to these questions. You will need to think of examples of media productions and texts to support your views.

- Are style and image commodities to be sold?
- Do the media encourage deep thought or superficial analysis?
- Are truths ephemeral in modern society or do we share deeper moral values?
- Is objective truth possible?
- How significant is fashion and trend in spiritual, moral and intellectual life?