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Chapter 1 : Enlightenment - HISTORY

The Enlightenment was as much an accumulation of modern discourses as a real historical phenomenon, and, according to the author of this text, needs to be re-evaluated in relation to the empirical academic disciplines in which modern practitioners work.

Garland Publishing, Introduction In recent days, much has been said of a postmodernist analysis in the social sciences. Indeed, a number of comparisons occasionally arise in the literature between modernist and postmodernist analysis, usually as an introduction to some further study. Little, however, has appeared that takes as its primary goal a comparison of the two perspectives. Accordingly, this essay is more didactic and pedagogical in orientation. We have identified eight dimensions as a basis of comparison. Although presented as dichotomies, the differences often fall along a continuum; some tend toward further polarization, others become discontinuities, such as the differences between the centered and decentered subject, the privileging of disorder rather than order, the emphasis on Pathos rather than Logos, etc. A considerable amount of literature from those who are committed to the modernist approach is of a defensive sort when confronted with the epistemological directions advocated by postmodernist analysis. The first tactic generally is to dismiss its claims as old wine in new bottles, followed by incorporating the postmodernist premises and concepts within the discourse of modernist thought. Old wine in new bottles! It is necessary to recognize that postmodernist analysis is indeed premised on radically new concepts, and discursive redefinitions will not help further progressive thought in the social sciences. What we do have are dueling paradigms: Modernist thought had its origins in the Enlightenment period. This era was a celebration of the liberating potentials of the social sciences, the materialistic gains of capitalism, new forms of rational thought, due process safeguards, abstract rights applicable to all, and the individual it was a time of great optimism Milovanovic, a, a; Dews, ; Sarup, ; Lyotard, ; Baker, Postmodernists are fundamentally opposed to modernist thought. Sensitized by the insights of some of the classic thinkers, ranging from Marx, to Weber, to Durkheim, Freud, and the critical thought of the Frankfurt School, postmodernist thought emerged with a new intensity in the late s and early s. Most of the key concepts of modernist thought were critically examined and found to be wanting. Entrenched bureaucratic powers, monopolies, the manipulative advertisement industry, dominant and totalizing discourses, and the ideology of the legal apparatus were seen as exerting repressive powers. In fact, the notion of the individual free, self-determining, reflective, and the center of activity was seen as an ideological construction, nowhere more apparent than in the notion of the juridic subject, the so-called reasonable man in law. Rather than the notion of the individual, the centered subject, the postmodernists were to advocate the notion of the decentered subject. Postmodernist analysis had its roots in French thought, particularly during the late s and early s. Here, with the continued disillusionment with conventional critical thought a transition from Hegelian to Nietzschean thought took place. Deleuze, Guattari, Derrida, Lyotard, Baudrillard, Foucault, Kristeva and many others were to emerge bearing the banner of postmodernist thinking. Feminists from the postmodern tradition were to become key thinkers. Such theorists as Irigaray, Moi, and Cixous were to apply much of this thought to gender construction. The central figure in developing alternative notions of the subject, the determining effects of discourse, and the nature of the symbolic order was Jacques Lacan. Novel conceptions of space, time, causality, subjectivity, the role of discourse, desire, social structure, roles, social change, knowledge, and the nature of harm, justice, and the law were developed and continue to be developed in postmodernist thought. The call is for the abandonment of a center, privileged reference points, fixed subjects, first principles, and an origin Sarup, This essay will outline the differences between the modernist and the postmodernist paradigm. As Thomas Kuhn said many years ago, paradigms tend to crystallize around key validity claims that become premises for scientific thought. Occasionally, as in the case of postmodernist thought, a revolutionary new science with entirely new premises develops and becomes the body of knowledge from which new questions are asked and entirely new discoveries are made. Modernist versus

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postmodernist thought To clarify some of the more salient differences, we have selected eight dimensions for comparison. These dimensions include the nature of: This essay will highlight the major differences that have emerged by the early s. Accordingly, we will list the dimensions and comment briefly on each. We should add, whereas the modernist assumptions seem more descriptive, the postmodernist add a prescriptive dimension. Contrary to many modernist critics, postmodernism is not fatalistic, cynical, and nonvisionary; rather, what the new paradigm offers is a more intense critique of what is, and transformative visions of what could be. Society and Social Structure Key Concepts: Much of the dominant literature of modernist thought can be traced to the work of structural functionalism or totalizing theory. Theorists such as Durkheim, Luhmann and Parson, stand out as exemplary. A good part of this literature rests on an underlying homeostatic, tension-reduction, or equilibrium model. Freud, for example, rests his views on some conception of tension-reduction as the operative force in social structural development. Perhaps we can trace much of this to Newtonian physics and its influence. The central question is one of order. It is seen as desirable without further explanation. In fact, some, such as Parsons, define deviance in terms of distance from some assumed acceptable standard of normativity. Modernist thought is focused on totalizing theory the search for overencompassing theories of society and social development. Some discoverable foundation was said to exist. These logics slumbered in anticipation of their correct articulation. These were the transcendental signifiers that were discoverable. Much of the often-mentioned consensus paradigm, too, can be placed within the modernist paradigm. Thus metanarratives are still replete with assumptions of homogeneity, desirability of consensus, order, etc. Postmodernists begin their analysis with privileging disorder rather than order. Their starting point is paralogism: No permanent stable order is possible or even desirable. No center or foundation exists. In fact, as we shall show below, since no precise center exists, or since no possibility exists for precisely specifying initial conditions, then, the process of iteration will produce disproportional and unanticipated effects. This concept implies both relative stability as well as continuous change i. Contrary to structural functionalism and its privileging of homeostasis, postmodernists see the desirability of ongoing flux and continuous change captured by the notion of far-from-equilibrium conditions. It is within these conditions that dissipative structures flourish. Accordingly, some have offered the notion of structural coupling and constitutive theory to explain the movement of information between structure and environment Luhmann, ; Hunt, ; Jessop, ; Henry and Milovanovic, , Implied is the coexistence of multiple sites of determinants whose unique historical articulations are never precisely predictable. Due to inherent uncertainties in initial conditions, iterative practices produce the unpredictable. Here, the focal concern is on tolerance and support for the incommensurable. Assumed is the existence of perpetual fragmentation, deconstruction, and reconstruction. Advocated is the facilitation of the emergence of marginalized, disenfranchised, disempowered, and other excluded voices. In his offerings, orderly disorder should be privileged. During the s and s, the development of the conflict paradigm in the social sciences marked some movement toward the postmodernist approach, but the promise fell short. Chaos theory is increasingly becoming a key element in postmodern analysis. We find application of chaos theory to psychoanalysis Deleuze and Guattari, ; Milovanovic, a, a ; to literature Serres, a, b; Hayles, , ; to criminology T. Young, a; Pepinsky, ; to law Brion, ; Milovanovic, a ; to psychology Butz, , a, b ; to sociology Young, b, ; Baker, ; to business and management Leifer, ; and to political science Unger, Others such as Charles Sanders Peirce anticipated some dimensions of this approach see especially his essay on the doctrine of chance and necessity, Nietzschean and Lacanian thought, rather than Hegelian thought, are inspirational to postmodernist thinkers. Feminist postmodernists traced to the former have perhaps contributed the most important insights. Julia Kristeva, Luce Irigaray, Helene Cixous, and Toril Moi, to a considerable extent, have borrowed ideas from them in their elaboration of given phallogocentric social structures and their possible alternatives a useful overview is found in Sellers, ; Grosz, ; for an application in law, see Cornell, , ; Milovanovic, a: This, then, becomes the question of functional integration. In the specified balance of the I-me that many social theorists advocate Durkheim, Mead, etc. A person is relegated to role-taking. The operative metaphor we offer is a member of a symphony

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orchestra. Postmodernists see things differently. Roles are essentially unstable and are in a dialectical relationship between centrifugal and centripetal forces. And this is desirable. Whereas roles in the modernist view would be similar to what chaos theorists refer to as limit attractors they tend toward stereotypical closure, roles in postmodernist analysis would be very much like torus or strange attractors. A strange attractor can appear as two butterfly wings where instances of behavior may occur in one i. Where the two cross, maximal indeterminacy prevails. There exists, in other words, local indeterminacy but a relative global stability, an orderly disorder. Others have advocated a simultaneous disidentification and identification with various discursive subject positions, a process by which reidentifications are produced JanMohammed, ; McLaren, a. Stability can only be maintained by the impositions of external forces i. For the postmodernist view, the call is to be a jazz player and poet. Modernist thought has privileged the idea of the individual, a person who is assumed to be conscious, whole, self-directing, reflective, unitary, and transparent. Here individual desires are said to be in need of synchronization with given sociopolitical systems. Alternatively, we have homo economicus. The Enlightenment period was one in which the individual or the centered subject was discovered. Nowhere better has it been expressed than in Cogito, ergo sum. Desire, for the modernists, is inscribed on the body; it is territorialized Deleuze and Guattari, Desire must be tamed, captured within the coordinates of various dominant discourses. Here desire begins with a lack, the price it pays for its inauguration into the Symbolic Order, and the biography of the self is one in which repetition drives the organism in its attempt to fill the void see also Dews, In the more passive form of adaptation, the person is driven toward homeostasis, tension-reduction, catharsis, etc. Thus we have the interpellated Althusser, , spoken Silverman, or the good subject Pecheux, Postmodernist thought has offered the idea of the decentered subject.

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Chapter 2 : Post-Modern Enlightenment: The Philosophy

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Chapter 3 : Postmodernism and Christianity - Research Resources

Enlightenment Borders is the middle volume of a three-volume set of G. S. Rousseau's essays on eighteenth-century British studies issued last year by Manchester University Press.

Here be Enlightenment The Philosophy An "Enlightened Philosophy" is any philosophy rooted in the era of Enlightenment, or the Age of Enlightenment. The Age of Enlightenment refers to a culture movement in the 18th century that was every bit as diverse as it was, well, enlightened. According to Immanuel Kant, an Enlightenment philosophy, the enlightenment was There are several different forms of enlightenment philosophy, but the one that I adhere to is the French Continental Form, which is one of boundless optimism, but the one thing all forms of the Enlightenment have in common is a strong optimism about the future, and a belief in progress and science as the source to cure all ills for humanity. The current political "heirs" to the Enlightenment today would be progressives, although some Libertarians also count as heirs to the philosophy for all the issues I have with Ayn Rand, her philosophy is certainly one rooted in Enlightened thought. Here, use spark notes to find out more about the Enlightenment. Romanticism and the Counter-Enlightenment Philosophies Romanticism sprouted in the late 18th and early 19th centuries. Where the Enlightenment would stress rationality, the Romantics would stress intuition and imagination. Romantics were not all overly-emotional dimwits, however; there was a lot of good that came out of the Romantic era, and the belief that the imagination held rule over all and that there was an untamed beauty about nature created some astonishingly good poets and authors. John Keats, Lord Byron, Percy Shelley, and other famous literary figures made their mark during this period. As a philosophy, however, Romanticism is remarkably lacking. The anti-rationalist and relativist approach to the world undermined Enlightened rationalism and the scientific method, our only real tool for learning more about the world around us. Meanwhile, the rest of the Counter-Enlightenment Philosophies would only be so good; the largest criticism from them was opposed to the scope of Enlightenment reason: Others will charge it narrowed it. Other accusations are leveled at the misuse of Enlightenment ideas which I will let stand; fair accusations are fair accusations. However, abuse does not negate use, nor does it mean that Enlightened Philosophies are somehow wrong because individuals abused them and the seemingly anti-religious, atheistic most Enlightened philosophers were actually deists nature of the movement. Berlin has stated that the modern descendant of the Enlightenment is monism, while the modern descendant of the counter-Enlightenment has been pluralism. I disagree vehemently; Enlightenment philosophy has lead to the creation of technology that has made our life better, and the counter-Enlightenment has no claim on science or scientific theory, which is based on rationalism and materialism, both of which are descendants of the Enlightenment. You can being to see where the split is at now. Realism - the last redoubt of the Enlightenment Every movement has a counter-movement, and the Romantics were no different. Arising to question the Romantics were the Realists, who embodied some of the ideas of the Enlightenment that the Romantic and counter-Enlightenment philosophies worked hard to wipe away. Realism believes in an objective reality, while objecting the over-emotional and over-imaginative Romantic movement. These, however, generally refer to the art involved. Realism was not so much a philosophy as it was an outgrowth of Enlightened ideas made manifest in artwork, in much the same way that Romanticism strongly resembled an outgrowth of Counter-Enlightenment ideas made manifest in artwork. Nothing is certain, not even this statement Arising in the early part of the 19th century, Modernism was a flat out rejection of the lingering sentiments of Enlightenment through Realism , as well as a flat out of a benevolent, all-powerful creator God. Modernism rejects tradition, and opted instead to embody what it believed the new social, political, and economic standards of their era. Modernism is an "umbrella term", much like counter-Enlightenment, which incorporates movements such as the Dada movement, the surrealist movement, minimalism and postminimalism, and pop art. The movement really picked up after World War II. Futurism is often considered a modernist movement, as well. Modernism in generally rejected tradition, stressed freedom of expression,

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radicalism, and primitivism. It is generally accused of being reductionist, while others including many of the movement, accused it of becoming institutionalized. By the 50s and 60s, Modernism was inescapable for the most part, in the form of either cinema, architecture, or art work. The rejection of Modernism started to formulate during this period, however, which leads us to our next topic. This term does not have a good reputation on this blog. While I feel that modernism had some high points the reductionist view point, the emphasis on freedom of expression, and the move to reject the idea of an interventionist, or theistic, God, Postmodernism took the whole world and flipped it upside down. To the post-modernist there is no objective truth, and any observations are merely a way of shuffling the deck. It is the penultimate-example of relativity, which so many on the left throw themselves into with relish. Postmodernism gave us the idea that reality may not be all we see, and that science is just one tool in a bunch of tools. While it may sound like I have it out against postmodernism I do not, I also got my first real understanding of philosophy by being dunked head first in postmodernism. Like everything, postmodernism is not all evil, useless, or destroying the fabric of western society as we know it. The linguistic application for postmodernism - crafted first by Derrida - is very useful in understanding language. Likewise, application of postmodernism criticism on the soft sciences can help further understand things, by positing differences from a relativistic view point for instance, history, anthropology, and archeology all benefit from having the postmodernism approach applied. There was more than one morality or truth back then, and it helps to remember that. There is no more than one truth to gravity. If you jump from a story building, you will fall. You will likely be seriously injured. Postmodernism enhances a sense of cynicism about the world, but not to the degree that Romanticism did. Which brings me to my last philosophy Post-Modern Enlightenment - aka my blog Yes, I am egotistical enough to call this a new philosophy. I take an Enlightenment approach to the world tempered by some aspects of Romanticism, Modernism, and Postmodernism. I am firmly optimistic about the future, and have a strong and solid faith in humanism and in progress, knowing that technology has only improved the quality of life with each passing generation and strongly believing it will continue to do so. I make use of deconstruction techniques when I argue and debate, and believe that relativity is best applied in small doses to the soft sciences, but holds no place in the hard sciences. There is objective truths, there are objective moralities that is, the moralities that make a civilization work. The irony today is that many of the movements that claim to project an absolute truth do nothing of the sort. The current Religious Right has many of their techniques taken right out of the playbook of postmodernism criticism; especially their criticism of science. The irony being that they will criticize postmodernism while using it against their enemies. The current Republican Party takes quiet a bit out of the modernist and postmodernist approach to media and language; that words have no inherent meaning and, with enough repetition, can mean anything I want them too thus, we get things where "empathy" becomes a defining trait among the Nazis, and rationalism and reason are held slave to a belief in an objective truth as described by a book several thousand years old riddled with inconsistencies. The goal of this blog is to highlight the toxic spread of this anti-rationalism, rooted out of the modernist, postmodernist, and ultimately the romantic and counter-Enlightenment movement of the past, using Enlightenment and the more useful points of romanticism, modernism, and postmodernism to do it.

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The Enlightenment was both a movement and a state of mind. The term represents a phase in the intellectual history of Europe, but it also serves to define programs of reform in which influential literati, inspired by a common faith in the possibility of reason, explored the powers and uses of reason. The powers and uses of reason had first been explored by the philosophers of ancient Greece. The Romans adopted and preserved much of Greek culture, notably including the ideas of a rational natural order and natural law. Amid the turmoil of empire, however, a new concern arose for personal salvation, and the way was paved for the triumph of the Christian religion. Christian thinkers gradually found uses for their Greco-Roman heritage. The system of thought known as Scholasticism, culminating in the work of Thomas Aquinas, resurrected reason as a tool of understanding but subordinated it to spiritual revelation and the revealed truths of Christianity. The intellectual and political edifice of Christianity, seemingly impregnable in the Middle Ages, fell in turn to the assaults made on it by humanism, the Renaissance, and the Protestant Reformation. The Renaissance rediscovered much of Classical culture and revived the notion of humans as creative beings, and the Reformation, more directly but in the long run no less effectively, challenged the monolithic authority of the Roman Catholic Church. For Martin Luther as for Bacon or Descartes, the way to truth lay in the application of human reason. Received authority, whether of Ptolemy in the sciences or of the church in matters of the spirit, was to be subject to the probings of unfettered minds. The successful application of reason to any question depended on its correct application on the development of a methodology of reasoning that would serve as its own guarantee of validity. Such a methodology was most spectacularly achieved in the sciences and mathematics, where the logics of induction and deduction made possible the creation of a sweeping new cosmology. The success of Newton, in particular, in capturing in a few mathematical equations the laws that govern the motions of the planets, gave great impetus to a growing faith in the human capacity to attain knowledge. At the same time, the idea of the universe as a mechanism governed by a few simple and discoverable laws had a subversive effect on the concepts of a personal God and individual salvation that were central to Christianity. Inevitably, the method of reason was applied to religion itself. The product of a search for a natural rational religion was Deism, which, although never an organized cult or movement, conflicted with Christianity for two centuries, especially in England and France. For the Deist, a very few religious truths sufficed, and they were truths felt to be manifest to all rational beings: Beyond the natural religion of the Deists lay the more radical products of the application of reason to religion: The Enlightenment produced the first modern secularized theories of psychology and ethics. John Locke conceived of the human mind as being at birth a tabula rasa, a blank slate on which experience wrote freely and boldly, creating the individual character according to the individual experience of the world. Supposed innate qualities, such as goodness or original sin, had no reality. In a darker vein, Thomas Hobbes portrayed humans as moved solely by considerations of their own pleasure and pain. The notion of humans as neither good nor bad but interested principally in survival and the maximization of their own pleasure led to radical political theories. Where the state had once been viewed as an earthly approximation of an eternal order, with the City of Man modeled on the City of God, now it came to be seen as a mutually beneficial arrangement among humans aimed at protecting the natural rights and self-interest of each. The idea of society as a social contract, however, contrasted sharply with the realities of actual societies. Thus, the Enlightenment became critical, reforming, and eventually revolutionary. Locke and Jeremy Bentham in England, Montesquieu, Voltaire, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Denis Diderot, and Condorcet in France, and Thomas Paine and Thomas Jefferson in colonial America all contributed to an evolving critique of the arbitrary, authoritarian state and to sketching the outline of a higher form of social organization, based on

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natural rights and functioning as a political democracy. Such powerful ideas found expression as reform in England and as revolution in France and America. The more rarefied the religion of the Deists became, the less it offered those who sought solace or salvation. The celebration of abstract reason provoked contrary spirits to begin exploring the world of sensation and emotion in the cultural movement known as Romanticism. The Reign of Terror that followed the French Revolution severely tested the belief that an egalitarian society could govern itself. Learn More in these related Britannica articles:

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Chapter 5 : EPub Free Enlightenment Crossings Pre And Post Modern Discourses Anthropological Reader

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As a recent study put it: This - the return of metaphysical totalisation of a Hegelian kind - is what I would like to call the enigma of postmodernism. It employs a sophisticated synthesis of themes taken from Derrida, Foucault and Lacan among others which is representative of a wide range of postmodern theory today. In many ways, the Phenomenology is a reply to Kantian philosophy, with its insistence on the ultimate unknowability of the real nature of things and its implication that we also cannot really know ourselves or others. Correspondingly, Kant elevates the universal injunction of moral duty above the partiality of action and the context-bound nature of cultural traditions. For Hegel, this blindness in the midst of Enlightenment is intolerable. We are driven, Hegel supposes, by a desire for self-identity which includes a desire to really know the nature of things and other people. In confronting nature, consciousness realises that it sets the rules up that govern the split between the knowledge of appearances and the truth of the Real as we might say today. Consciousness becomes self-consciousness and looks to find its self-identity as a self-conscious being in the social world of the struggle for recognition. But independent self-consciousnesses confront each other first as objects, striving to determine the identity of the other while themselves remaining free. This initiates the master-slave and subsequent dialectical pairs, culminating in the dialectic of the unhappy consciousness. The unhappy consciousness is a Kantian moralist, split hopelessly between the universality of its political convictions and ethical certainties, and the particularity of the knowledge of the world that informs its actions. The unhappy consciousness wants its acts to be culturally recognised as having universal significance; but it is hypocritical, since it denies this possibility to others and ultimately to itself. It lapses into virtuous contemplation and moralising, while the vicious way of the world proceeds unhindered. It is only when self-consciousness realises that the universality of action flows from its being a particular contribution to a collective project that this internal split is reconciled and cultural universality mutual recognition is achieved. Ethical life is universal when the cultural traditions are universal and self-conscious - when humanity begins to fashion itself consciously in the medium of universal culture. The French Revolution had, for Hegel, opened just such a period: Hegel argued that this universality was developing all around and had only to be brought to consciousness. Although postmodernism sets its face against this vision of reconciliation and mutual recognition, Hegel is evaluated as occupying a special place in the struggle between the Enlightenment and modernity: In a first sense, he represents the highest point of rationalism: History and society, therefore, have a rational and intelligible structure. But, in a second sense, this synthesis contains all the seeds of its own dissolution, as the rationality of history can only be affirmed at the price of introducing contradiction into the field of reason. It would, therefore, be sufficient to show that this is an impossible operation, requiring constant violation of the method that it itself postulates - as was already demonstrated in the nineteenth century by Trendelenberg - for the Hegelian discourse to become something very different: Postmodern discourse theory locates itself with the process of secular decentring characteristic of modernity. Marx decentred a united humanity from the centre of the Hegelian totality by showing how the universality of humanism was an ideology in the service of class domination. Marx famously claimed that history was made not by the universal human subject but by class subjects engaged in class struggles. Freud demonstrated that consciousness is not the centre of judgement and will but rather that unconscious impulse and desires drive consciousness. Postmodern discourse theory therefore proposes that no identity is ever complete. It is on the contrary criss-crossed by divisions, defined in opposition to its various others, and penetrated by a constitutive lack of wholeness that is its very condition of possibility. We simply have to recognise, it is argued, that the social and cultural systems we have and can imagine - the actual and possible symbolic orders - are contingent

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and political, not universal, rational, or the immanent the goal of humanity and history. In fact, the total of these three illusions of Enlightenment can be summarised by the fourth - the essentialist conception of the social totality. The concept of society as a unitary, and fully intelligible, structural totality, which is divided into base and superstructure, has been fiercely criticised by postmodernism. Taking advantage of the linguistic distinction between the signifier word sound or graphic mark, the signified meaning and the referent the object or concept, postmodern discourse theory draws upon deconstruction for an argument linking the construction of cultural meaning through signification to the political process whereby one meaning becomes normative. This field is in effect that of play, that is to say, a field of infinite substitutions only because it is finite, that is to say, because instead of being an inexhaustible field, as in the classical hypothesis, instead of being too large, there is something missing from it: In the absence of a complete totalisation, a structure only exists as a field of significations within which an ambiguous and temporary order is established by a multiplicity of mutually substituting centers. The creation of a temporary structural order is conditional upon the exclusion of some marginalised term which threatens the order of the structure and prevents ultimate closure. The Eightfold Way of Postmodern Discourse Theory With this combination of discourse analysis, postmarxist politics and insights from post-structuralist philosophy, postmodern discourse theory creates a powerful synthesis that seeks to be about as far from Hegel as it can possibly be. Power is an empty place. Modernity is characterised by a democratic revolution that renders power an empty place. Consequently, no individual or group can occupy the locus of power that provides the imaginary unification of society. The political parties in democratic politics are all aware of the gap between the universality of the people and the particularity of their own identity. Recognition of the constitutive nature of this gap is the condition of possibility for modern democracy. Only particular claims to universality can be made. Postmodern discourse theory argues that there is a chasm between the universal and the particular, but it challenges the idea that a radical choice must be made between the universalisation of the particular and the particularisation of the universal. The fundamental claim of discourse theory is that by rethinking the notions of the universal and the particular we can account for their mutual conditioning. This happens through alliance politics, where broad historical alliances of social groups make a bid for the empty place of power under the sign of some universal say, progress, for instance. In this process the coalition partners modify their own identities through the production of internal consensus and seek to exclude some antagonist from decision making and the definition of cultural value say, militant unions, for instance. There is nothing outside of the field of discursivity. In the absence of a fixed centre, complete totalisation and hence complete closure, becomes impossible. The partial fixation of meaning produces an irreducible surplus of meaning which escapes the differential logic of discourse. The field of irreducible surplus is called the discursive or field of discursivity in order to indicate that what is not fixed is discursively constructed within a terrain of unfixity. Discursivity provides the condition of possibility and impossibility of a particular partial fixation of meaning. So while the unfixed elements of a discourse belong to the field of discursivity, the partially fixed moments of a concrete discourse do not. Meaning is partially fixed by the intervention of an empty master signifier. The privileged discursive points that partially fix the play of signification are termed empty signifiers or master signifiers. The master signifier creates and sustains the identity of a discourse by constructing a knot of definite meanings. What happens is this: No discursive totality is completely closed no identity is completely fixed. Any attempt to expand a hegemonic discourse necessarily involves a totalising reduction of the field of the infinite play of meaning. For postmodern discourse theory, the operation of closure is impossible but at the same time necessary; impossible because of the constitutive dislocation which lies at the heart of any structural arrangement, necessary because without that fictitious fixing of meaning there would be no meaning at all. Discursive totalities are constructed by exclusion. Hegemonic articulation ultimately involves some element of force and repression. It involves the negation of identity in the double sense of the negation of alternate meanings and options and the negation of those people who identify themselves with these meanings and options. The negation of identity tends to give rise to social antagonism. According to Laclau and Mouffe, the

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only alternative to the essentialist logic of a fundamental ground is that the limits of discourse are set by some constitutive beyond. A discourse, or a discursive formation, establishes its limits by means of excluding a radical otherness that has no common measure with the differential system from which it is excluded, and that therefore poses a constant threat to that very system. Postmodern discourse theory proposes that this constitutive outside is coterminous with social antagonism, and concludes that social antagonism is the condition of possibility and impossibility of the social. The unity of society is mythical. The function of myth is essentially hegemonic: Myth thereby becomes transformed into a social imaginary. A social imaginary is a horizon in the sense that it is not one object among other objects, but rather the condition of possibility for the emergence of any object. In this sense, the Christian millennium, the conception of progress held by the Enlightenment and positivism, and the communist dream of a classless society are all social imaginaries. The promise of modernity is a democracy as an agonistic pluralism. Democratic politics are conditional upon the recognition of the indeterminate character of the universal and the rejection of all attempts to fix its final meaning. Different political forces will nevertheless attempt to hegemonise the content of the universal. Within such an agonistic democratic society, enemies would not be destroyed, but turned into adversaries whose politics we might not agree with, but whose existence would be legitimate and should be tolerated. The limit for the agonistic inclusion of enemies as legitimate adversaries is, of course, those who apply anti-democratic means in their attack on the basic democratic values and procedures. According to Laclau and Mouffe, poststructuralist philosophy might help to sustain such an agonistic democracy that is capable of transforming enemies into adversaries. The Hegelian Reply The standard Marxist reply to postmodern discourse theory is a hostile rejection. It is accused of creating a normative vacuum, of being a theoretically agnostic descriptivism leading only to a logical pulverisation of the social, of being unable to distinguish between institutions and ideologies, of involving a fatal semiotic confusion between the signified and the referent. Postmodern discourse theory is very far from being any of these. Which is not to say that it really understands its own claims - far from it. The only way to arrive at an adequate Marxist critique of postmodern discourse theory is via the passage through a Hegelian criticism of Laclau and Mouffe. The Hegelian reply to postmodern discourse theory is as powerful as it is simple. Postmodern discourse theory presupposes exactly what it omits: Laclau and Mouffe are caught in the standard performative contradiction of postmodernism, namely, in the very gesture with which they deny the possibility of a shared universe of meanings they demonstrate that their argument relies on such a totality for its intelligibility. In the moment in which the theory is articulated, the discursive totality it represents is by definition unintelligible to every other discursive framework. Yet the theory makes a direct appeal to the Left in particular to adopt postmodern discourse theory. Now, the postmodern reply might be that their discourse overlaps with a number of other discourses structuralism, Marxism, post-structuralism, hermeneutics and therefore has some elements but not all in common. Hence its intelligibility stems from the shared meanings it holds with a handful of other discourses, not from some intersubjective totality. Since a discourse constructs the frame of objectivity, we can suppose that a discourse provides the criteria for the objectivity of an interpretation. We are dealing here with cases of semantic ambivalence. Take for instance the term hegemony, held in common by Marxism and postmodern discourse theory. So we have to suppose a region of shared meanings in the overlap between discourses. It follows that postmodern discourse theory must be a discursive totality that includes the discourses to which it appeals, by a totalising appropriative critique. There is no a priori reason why the totalisation performed by the discourse of Laclau and Mouffe has to stop at the Left. This is, in other words, a shamefaced totalisation, a hidden reference to totality, a totality that dare not speak its name. Indeed, the evidence of this secret or implicit appeal to totality is scattered all throughout postmodern discourse theory. And we also recall that any political symbol possesses a surplus of meaning relative to the political struggles it represents. The master signifier is of course the political symbol par excellence. We can pursue this criticism further. Since this is the revolution that inaugurates modernity, it must be a modern revolution. That is to say, it must obey the rule set forth by postmodern discourse theory of the gap between the universal and the particular. Yet the democratic

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revolution affects all politics within modernity. It is therefore a universal revolution: This democratic revolution is an ongoing process. Therefore every particular project - every bid for hegemony - contributes to this universal project, insofar as it is democratic i.

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Chapter 6 : Postmodernism - Wikipedia

Enlightenment Crossings: Pre- and Post-modern Discourses: Anthropological by Rousseau, G. S.. Manchester: Manchester University Press, Hardcover. Superficial marks and light scores on jacket.

Martin Heidegger[edit] Martin Heidegger rejected the philosophical basis of the concepts of "subjectivity" and "objectivity" and asserted that similar grounding oppositions in logic ultimately refer to one another. Instead of resisting the admission of this paradox in the search for understanding, Heidegger requires that we embrace it through an active process of elucidation he called the " hermeneutic circle ". He stressed the historicity and cultural construction of concepts while simultaneously advocating the necessity of an atemporal and immanent apprehension of them. In this vein, he asserted that it was the task of contemporary philosophy to recover the original question of or "openness to" Dasein translated as Being or Being-there present in the Presocratic philosophers but normalized, neutered, and standardized since Plato. To do this, however, a non-historical and, to a degree, self-referential engagement with whatever set of ideas, feelings or practices would permit both the non-fixed concept and reality of such a continuity was requiredâ€”a continuity permitting the possible experience, possible existence indeed not only of beings but of all differences as they appeared and tended to develop. Such a conclusion led Heidegger to depart from the phenomenology of his teacher Husserl and prompt instead an ironically anachronistic return to the yet-unasked questions of Ontology , a return that in general did not acknowledge an intrinsic distinction between phenomena and noumena or between things in themselves de re and things as they appear see qualia: In this latter premise, Heidegger shares an affinity with the late Romantic philosopher, Friedrich Nietzsche , another principal forerunner of post-structuralist and postmodernist thought. In direct contradiction to what have been typified as modernist perspectives on epistemology , Foucault asserted that rational judgment, social practice, and what he called " biopower " are not only inseparable but co-determinant. Instead, Foucault focused on the ways in which such constructs can foster cultural hegemony , violence, and exclusion. His writings have had a major influence on the larger body of postmodern academic literature. This crisis, insofar as it pertains to academia, concerns both the motivations and justification procedures for making research claims: As formal conjecture about real-world issues becomes inextricably linked to automated calculation, information storage, and retrieval, such knowledge becomes increasingly "exteriorised" from its knowers in the form of information. Knowledge thus becomes materialized and made into a commodity exchanged between producers and consumers; it ceases to be either an idealistic end-in-itself or a tool capable of bringing about liberty or social benefit; it is stripped of its humanistic and spiritual associations, its connection with education, teaching, and human development, being simply rendered as "data"â€”omnipresent, material, unending, and without any contexts or pre-requisites. The value-premises upholding academic research have been maintained by what Lyotard considers to be quasi-mythological beliefs about human purpose, human reason, and human progressâ€”large, background constructs he calls " metanarratives ". These metanarratives still remain in Western society but are now being undermined by rapid Informatization and the commercialization of the university and its functions. We are now controlled not by binding extra-linguistic value paradigms defining notions of collective identity and ultimate purpose, but rather by our automatic responses to different species of "language games" a concept Lyotard imports from J. Richard Rorty[edit] Richard Rorty argues in Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature that contemporary analytic philosophy mistakenly imitates scientific methods. In addition, he denounces the traditional epistemological perspectives of representationalism and correspondence theory that rely upon the independence of knowers and observers from phenomena and the passivity of natural phenomena in relation to consciousness. As a proponent of anti-foundationalism and anti-essentialism within a pragmatist framework, he echoes the postmodern strain of conventionalism and relativism , but opposes much of postmodern thinking with his commitment to social liberalism. Jean Baudrillard[edit] Jean Baudrillard , in Simulacra and Simulation , introduced the concept that reality or the principle of " The Real " is short-circuited by the

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interchangeability of signs in an era whose communicative and semantic acts are dominated by electronic media and digital technologies. Baudrillard proposes the notion that, in such a state, where subjects are detached from the outcomes of events political, literary, artistic, personal, or otherwise, events no longer hold any particular sway on the subject nor have any identifiable context; they therefore have the effect of producing widespread indifference, detachment, and passivity in industrialized populations. He claimed that a constant stream of appearances and references without any direct consequences to viewers or readers could eventually render the division between appearance and object indiscernible, resulting, ironically, in the "disappearance" of mankind in what is, in effect, a virtual or holographic state, composed only of appearances. For Baudrillard, "simulation is no longer that of a territory, a referential being or a substance. It is the generation by models of a real without origin or a reality: Eclectic in his methodology, Jameson has continued a sustained examination of the role that periodization continues to play as a grounding assumption of critical methodologies in humanities disciplines. He has contributed extensive effort to explicating the importance of concepts of Utopia and Utopianism as driving forces in the cultural and intellectual movements of modernity, and outlining the political and existential uncertainties that may result from the decline or suspension of this trend in the theorized state of postmodernity. Like Susan Sontag, Jameson served to introduce a wide audience of American readers to key figures of the 20th century continental European intellectual left, particularly those associated with the Frankfurt School, structuralism, and post-structuralism. Thus, his importance as a "translator" of their ideas to the common vocabularies of a variety of disciplines in the Anglo-American academic complex is equally as important as his own critical engagement with them. Douglas Kellner [edit] In *Analysis of the Journey*, a journal birthed from postmodernism, Douglas Kellner insists that the "assumptions and procedures of modern theory" must be forgotten. His terms defined in the depth of postmodernism are based on advancement, innovation, and adaptation. Extensively, Kellner analyzes the terms of this theory in real-life experiences and examples. Kellner used science and technology studies as a major part of his analysis; he urged that the theory is incomplete without it. The scale was larger than just postmodernism alone; it must be interpreted through cultural studies where science and technology studies play a huge role. The reality of the September 11 attacks on the United States of America is the catalyst for his explanation. This catalyst is used as a great representation due to the mere fact of the planned ambush and destruction of "symbols of globalization", insinuating the World Trade Center. One of the numerous yet appropriate definitions of postmodernism and the qualm aspect aids this attribute to seem perfectly accurate. He questions if the attacks are only able to be understood in a limited form of postmodern theory due to the level of irony. Similar to the act of September 11 and the symbols that were interpreted through this postmodern ideal, he continues to even describe this as "semiotic systems" that people use to make sense of their lives and the events that occur in them. He finds strength in theorist Baudrillard and his idea of Marxism. The conclusion he depicts is simple:

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Chapter 7 : Dueling Paradigms: Modernist v. Postmodernist Thought - Critical Criminology

The "enlightenment" is as much an accumulation of modern discourses as a real historical phenomenon, and needs to be reevaluated in relation to the empirical academic disciplines in which modern practitioners work.

Etymology[edit] The Late Latin adjective *modernus*, a derivation from the adverb *modo* "presently, just now", is attested from the 5th century, at first in the context of distinguishing the Christian era from the pagan era. The terms *antiquus* and *modernus* were used in a chronological sense in the Carolingian era. For example, a *magister modernus* referred to a contemporary scholar, as opposed to old authorities such as Benedict of Nursia. In early medieval usage, *modernus* referred to authorities younger than pagan antiquity and the early church fathers, but not necessarily to the present day, and could include authors several centuries old, from about the time of Bede, i. The Latin adjective was adopted in Middle French, as *moderne*, by the 15th century, and hence, in the early Tudor period, into Early Modern English. The early modern word meant "now existing", or "pertaining to the present times", not necessarily with a positive connotation. Shakespeare uses *modern* in the sense of "every-day, ordinary, commonplace". The term *modernity*, first coined in the 18th century, in this context assumed the implication of a historical epoch following the Renaissance, in which the achievements of antiquity were surpassed. Phases[edit] Modernity has been associated with cultural and intellectual movements of the 18th century and extending to the 19th century or later. Toulmin, 1955. According to Marshall Berman, 1967, modernity is periodized into three conventional phases dubbed "Early," "Classical," and "Late," respectively, by Peter Osborne. There was a great shift into modernization in the name of industrial capitalism. Finally in the third phase, modernist arts and individual creativity marked the beginning of a new modernist age as it combats oppressive politics, economics as well as other social forces including mass media. Laughey, Machiavelli argued, for example, that violent divisions within political communities are unavoidable, but can also be a source of strength which lawmakers and leaders should account for and even encourage in some ways. Strauss. Machiavelli in turn influenced Francis Bacon. Kennington, chapt. Both these principles are enshrined within the constitutions of most modern democracies. Starting with Thomas Hobbes, attempts were made to use the methods of the new modern physical sciences, as proposed by Bacon and Descartes, applied to humanity and politics. Berns. Notable attempts to improve upon the methodological approach of Hobbes include those of John Locke, Goldwin, Spinoza, Rosen, Giambattista Vico, xli, and Rousseau, part 1. Modernist republicanism openly influenced the foundation of republics during the Dutch Revolt. Bock, Skinner, and Viroli, chapt. Orwin and Tarcov, chapt. A second phase of modernist political thinking begins with Rousseau, who questioned the natural rationality and sociality of humanity and proposed that human nature was much more malleable than had been previously thought. By this logic, what makes a good political system or a good man is completely dependent upon the chance path a whole people has taken over history. This thought influenced the political and aesthetic thinking of Immanuel Kant, Edmund Burke and others and led to a critical review of modernist politics. On the conservative side, Burke argued that this understanding encouraged caution and avoidance of radical change. However more ambitious movements also developed from this insight into human culture, initially Romanticism and Historicism, and eventually both the Communism of Karl Marx, and the modern forms of nationalism inspired by the French Revolution, including, in one extreme, the German Nazi movement. Orwin and Tarcov, chapt. On the other hand, the notion of modernity has been contested also due to its Euro-centric underpinnings. This is further aggravated by the re-emergence of non-Western powers. Yet, the contestations about modernity are also linked with Western notions of democracy, social discipline, and development. Regilme, In the most basic terms, Anthony Giddens describes modernity as Portrayed in more detail, it is associated with 1 a certain set of attitudes towards the world, the idea of the world as open to transformation, by human intervention; 2 a complex of economic institutions, especially industrial production and a market economy; 3 a certain range of political institutions, including the nation-state and mass democracy. Largely as a result of these

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characteristics, modernity is vastly more dynamic than any previous type of social order. It is a society—more technically, a complex of institutions—which, unlike any preceding culture, lives in the future, rather than the past Giddens , Other writers have criticized such definitions as just being a listing of factors. They argue that modernity, contingently understood as marked by an ontological formation in dominance, needs to be defined much more fundamentally in terms of different ways of being. The modern is thus defined by the way in which prior valences of social life James , 51—52 This means that modernity overlays earlier formations of traditional and customary life without necessarily replacing them. Cultural and philosophical[edit] The era of modernity is characterised socially by industrialisation and the division of labour and philosophically by "the loss of certainty, and the realization that certainty can never be established, once and for all" Delanty With new social and philosophical conditions arose fundamental new challenges. Modernity may be described as the "age of ideology. For Marx, what was the basis of modernity was the emergence of capitalism and the revolutionary bourgeoisie, which led to an unprecedented expansion of productive forces and to the creation of the world market. Durkheim tackled modernity from a different angle by following the ideas of Saint-Simon about the industrial system. Although the starting point is the same as Marx, feudal society, Durkheim emphasizes far less the rising of the bourgeoisie as a new revolutionary class and very seldom refers to capitalism as the new mode of production implemented by it. The fundamental impulse to modernity is rather industrialism accompanied by the new scientific forces. In the work of Max Weber , modernity is closely associated with the processes of rationalization and disenchantment of the world. Contemporary sociological critical theory presents the concept of " rationalization " in even more negative terms than those Weber originally defined. Processes of rationalization—as progress for the sake of progress—may in many cases have what critical theory says is a negative and dehumanising effect on modern society. Yet the wholly enlightened earth radiates under the sign of disaster triumphant. Power can move with the speed of the electronic signal — and so the time required for the movement of its essential ingredients has been reduced to instantaneity. Bauman , 10 Consequent to debate about economic globalization , the comparative analysis of civilizations, and the post-colonial perspective of "alternative modernities," Shmuel Eisenstadt introduced the concept of "multiple modernities" Eisenstadt ; see also Delanty Modernity as a "plural condition" is the central concept of this sociologic approach and perspective, which broadens the definition of "modernity" from exclusively denoting Western European culture to a culturally relativistic definition, thereby: Secularization[edit] Modernity, or the Modern Age, is typically defined as a post-traditional , [citation needed] and post- medieval historical period Heidegger , 66—67, 66— Central to modernity is emancipation from religion , specifically the hegemony of Christianity , and the consequent secularization. Modern science In the 16th and 17th centuries, Copernicus , Kepler , Galileo and others developed a new approach to physics and astronomy which changed the way people came to think about many things. Kepler used mathematics to discuss physics and described regularities of nature this way. Galileo actually made his famous proof of uniform acceleration in freefall using mathematics Kennington , chapt. Francis Bacon , especially in his *Novum Organum* , argued for a new experimental based approach to science, which sought no knowledge of formal or final causes , and was therefore materialist , like the ancient philosophy of Democritus and Epicurus. But he also added a theme that science should seek to control nature for the sake of humanity, and not seek to understand it just for the sake of understanding. He also argued openly that human beings themselves could be understood as complex machines Kennington , chapt. The initial influence was upon the movements known as German Idealism and Romanticism in the 18th and 19th century. Modern art therefore belongs only to the later phases of modernity Orwinand Tarcov , chapt. For this reason art history keeps the term "modernity" distinct from the terms Modern Age and Modernism — as a discrete "term applied to the cultural condition in which the seemingly absolute necessity of innovation becomes a primary fact of life, work, and thought". And modernity in art "is more than merely the state of being modern, or the opposition between old and new" Smith Advancing technological innovation, affecting artistic technique and the means of manufacture, changed rapidly the possibilities of art and its status in a

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rapidly changing society. Photography challenged the place of the painter and painting. Architecture was transformed by the availability of steel for structures. Theological[edit] From theologian Thomas C. Pascendi Dominici Gregis states that the principles of Modernism, taken to a logical conclusion, lead to atheism. The Roman Catholic Church was serious enough about the threat of Modernism that it required all Roman Catholic clergy, pastors, confessors, preachers, religious superiors and seminary professors to swear an Oath Against Modernism Pius X from until this directive was rescinded in Generally, the large-scale social integration constituting modernity, involves[citation needed] the:

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Chapter 8 : What is post-modern Christianity?

ABBRI, FERDINANDO A N T O N E L L O L A V E R G A T A *Università della Calabria, Cosenza* G. S. ROUSSEAU, *Enlightenment Borders. Pre- and post-modern discourses. Medical, scientific, Manchester and New York, Manchester University Press, , xv + pp.* G. S. ROUSSEAU, *Enlightenment Crossings. Pre- and post-modern discourses.*

Introduction The new way of thinking as opposed to modernism: Postmodernism is the cultural worldview that now penetrates and owns our society. This worldview deeply values the following: In many ways we are transitioning away from the "modern" values of rationalism, science, dogmatism, individualism, pragmatism, capitalism, nationalism, compartmentalism, and veneered religiosity. The postmodern cultural context is very similar to that of the New Testament. Moreover, since many of these values are intrinsic to the Christian worldview, the church can use them as a bridge to our culture and society. We also understand and affirm that some postmodern values and ideas are in dynamic tension with Christianity, and we seek to gently but firmly challenge these, both in ourselves and in our culture. What is postmodernism and what does it have to do with the church? We are witnessing a broad based backlash against reason in our culture. This backlash is widely promoted in contemporary higher education. The argument is that every time somebody claims to be in possession of the truth especially religious truth, it ends up repressing people. So its best to make no claims to truth at all. Rejecting objective truth is the cornerstone of postmodernism. In essence, postmodern ideology declares an end to all ideology and all claims to truth. That question requires us to understand how postmodernists conceive the past three hundred years of western history. Postmodernism abandons modernism, the humanist philosophy of the European Enlightenment. Naively, postmodernists charge, modernists assumed that the mind was a "mirror of nature," meaning that our perceptions of reality actually correspond to the way the world is. From this presumption, modernists built a culture that exalted technological achievement and mastery over the natural order. Expansion-minded capitalism and liberal democracy, outgrowths of modernist autonomous individualism, subjugated the earth to the eurocentric, male dominated paradigm. But modernism planted the seeds of its own undoing. As arrogant, autonomous modernists conquered the globe and subjugated nature in the name of progress, oppressed and marginalized people have responded. Postmodernists say that the idols of autonomous reason and technological proliferation have brought the modern age to the brink of disaster. The "myth of progress" ends up in a nightmare of violence, both for marginalized people and for the earth. Rather than seeing humanity as an ocean of individuals, postmodernists think of humans as "social constructs. All of our thinking is contextual. Rather than conceiving the mind as a mirror of nature, postmodernists argue that we view reality through the lens of culture. Consequently, postmodernists reject the possibility of objective truth. Reality itself turns out to be a "social construct" or paradigm. In the place of objective truth and what postmodernists call "metanarratives" comprehensive world views, we find "local narratives," or stories about reality that "work" for particular communities--but have no validity beyond that community. Indeed, postmodernists reject the whole language of truth and reality in favor of literary terms like narrative and story. Postmodernists hold that the pretense of objective truth always does violence by excluding other voices regarding other world views to be invalid, and marginalizing the vulnerable by scripting them out of the story. Truth claims, we are told, are essentially tools to legitimate power. The dogmatist, the totalizer, the absolutist is both naive and dangerous. A growing number, especially among the emerging generation, believe that reason and truth are inherently political and subversive. According to the voices in contemporary culture that shape "Generation X" thinking, claims to truth are clever disguises for the pernicious "will to power. Openness without the restraint of reason, and tolerance without moral appraisal are the new postmodern mandates. This openness to postmodern ideas makes many conservative Christians nervous.

Chapter 9 : Hegel and Postmodern Discourse Theory

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Hegel and Postmodern Discourse Theory talk by Geoff Boucher at Hegel-Marx-Derrida Seminar, Melbourne 18th February An enigma surrounds 'postmodernism'. The postmodern condition is supposed to be characterised by 'incredulity towards metanarratives,' by a hostility towards totalisation and by a rejection of the abstract universalism of Enlightenment rationality.