

## Postmodernism

<b>Issue</b>	<b>Christianity</b>	<b>Post-Modernism</b>
<b>Theology</b>	<b>Trinitarian</b>	<b>Atheism</b>
<b>Philosophy</b>	<b>Supernaturalism</b>	<b>Anti-Realism</b>
	<b>(Faith and Reason)</b>	
<b>Ethics</b>	<b>Moral Absolutes</b>	<b>Cultural Relativism</b>
<b>Biology</b>	<b>Creationism</b>	<b>Punctuated Evolution</b>
<b>Psychology</b>	<b>Mind/Body Dualism</b>	<b>Socially-Constructed Selves</b>
<b>Sociology</b>	<b>Traditional, Church</b>	<b>Sexual Egalitarianism</b>
<b>Law</b>	<b>Divine/Natural Law</b>	<b>Critical Legal Studies</b>
<b>Politics</b>	<b>Justice, Freedom, Order</b>	<b>Leftism</b>
<b>Economics</b>	<b>Stewardship of property</b>	<b>Interventionism</b>
<b>History</b>	<b>Creation, Fall, Redemption</b>	<b>Historicism</b>

**Atheism** is the belief that there is no God, no supernatural Creator, no divine Moral Lawgiver and no ultimate judge of man's actions. **Religious pluralism** is the belief that one must be tolerant of all religious beliefs because no one religion can be true. The PM is skeptic of absolute truth, a skeptic that there is a discernable foundation for knowledge and a skeptic of metanarratives (an overarching story that defines reality). PM's believe that religious claims are based on preference rather than on objective standards. They do not like any religion that professes absolutes so that includes Judaism, Islam and Christianity.

The PM **Philosophy** is that truth is derived from the community opinion. The believe that there is no universal truth (other than there is no universal truth) and author the phrase "that may be true for you but not for me." They **deconstruct** the meanings of words to the end that it is not the author's intent that is important but the reader's interpretation. Words have no meanings. They hold a belief known as "**anti-Realism.**" Traditionally Truth (with capital T) was understood as the relationship between the real, objective world and statements that correspond to the real world. It is known as the "**correspondence theory of truth.**" PM's claim that this kind of truth is impossible to achieve and thus words cannot be used in the pursuit of truth.

PM **Ethics** is not based on universal or unchanging principles. Ethics is the logical outgrowth of a prior commitment to a particular theology. If there is no "grand narrative" then each little group decides its own ethics.

**Biology.** Neo-Darwinianism came into vogue in the 1930's expanding Darwin's theory to include change by genetic mutation. Punctuated equilibrium or punctuated evolution arose in the 1970's theorizing that evolutionary change happens abruptly in small, isolated populations. PM's loosely hold to the "punctuated evolution" model but since there are no absolutes they cannot hold absolutely to it. After all it is a metanarrative.

**Psychology.** PM's believe that the soul is really not there but that we are actually each an amalgamation of "selves" without a unifying factor. We are left to the changing whims of our social condition telling us who and what we are. Man is a culture being not a natural being. It is not simply saying that there are different sides to our personality but that we have no central personality. PM psychologists are now asserting that there is more than one self. We all have Multiple Personality Disorder.

**Sociology.** PM's see the social order as consisting of economics, law, and the state and living within this order is "the essence of our life" since our culture determines who we are. Life is merely a summary of the cultural aspects of the social community since there is no unified self. The view ecclesiastical institutions as dangerous to the health of democratic societies. **Sexual egalitarianism (an equality of all viewpoints)** considers marriage the greatest

of evils. This term means to allow each person to define his or her sexuality and proposes that all sexual preferences are equally valid. In education all must be politically correct and teach that all truth is relative, all cultures are equally deserving of respect (except Western culture in practice) and that all values are subjective except racism, sexism, classism, and homophobia are universally evil. It should also teach children that science's claim to yielding truth is no better than any other method chosen.

**Law.** The West's legal system is grounded in certain beliefs including the structural integrity of law, its ongoing nature, its religious roots and its transcendent qualities. PM's believe the source of knowledge and justice is the problem. They attack the concepts of objective reason and truth. The **Critical Legal Studies** movement critiques laws concerning their focus on "progressive political change rather than efficient government. They dissect a law to discover its subjective meaning, no matter what the law objectively states. They believe that objective reality does not exist. Laws are made to maintain those in power. It is a focus on rhetoric rather than logic

**Politics.** There is no PM political theory but rather a set of conflicting propositions that emerge from the ambiguities of social change. **Leftism** is an ideological approach to politics emphasizing the state's role in bringing about social justice, with a special focus on helping the poor or those oppressed due to race, gender, or sexual orientation. It is an "end justifies the means" approach, but there is no identifiable "end." A major tool in this is the manipulation of language so that things that were once considered shameful, immoral, or bad are now viewed as "progressive." Examples from their writings:

- believing in the sanctity of heterosexual marriage is a mark of backwardness.
- expressing belief in a male Christ is a mark of bigotry.
- campaigning for abstinence education is restrictive.
- not allowing children to be taught the homosexual lifestyle is a throwback to religious narrow-mindedness.

They actually seek utopian ideals of a decent and civilized society in the place of God's will, moral law, laws of history and facts of science.

**Economics.** PM psychology sees human beings as fictions, meaning there is no unified, rational self and no permanent understanding of who we are. What we call "human beings" are actually "social constructions." Capitalism is bad because it produces one-sided individuals who lack the ability to perceive the whole. They are socialists = collectivists = everyday economics.

**Interventionism** is a welfare-state capitalism.

**History.** PM's use the term "historicism" to describe the view that all questions must be settled within the cultural and social context in which they are raised. Answers to questions cannot be found by appealing to some external truth but

rather only to the norms and forms within each culture that ask the question. They see no need to “learn from history” since history may only prove that it didn’t work at that time. PM’s doubt that accurate telling of history is possible because they blur the difference between fact and fiction and some even claim that all historical accounts are fiction. Their idea is to rewrite the past to serve an ideological purpose and to empower oppressed social groups.

**There are no absolutes?**

**There are no certainties?**

**Then one becomes one’s own god.**

### **Examples and illustrations:**

1. **Atheism** is the belief that there is no God, no supernatural Creator, no divine Moral Lawgiver and no ultimate judge of man’s actions. **Religious pluralism** is the belief that one must be tolerant of all religious beliefs because no one religion can be true. The PM is skeptic of absolute truth, a skeptic that there is a discernable foundation for knowledge and a skeptic of metanarratives (an overarching story that defines reality). PM’s believe that religious claims are based on preference rather than on objective standards. They do not like any religion that professes absolutes so that includes Judaism, Islam and Christianity.

**When Nietzsche said “God is dead” he meant that belief in God was no longer necessary because the modern mind held that science and reason were the standards for truth about reality. The PM mind cannot rightly say they are an atheist because maybe they are not, since self-proclamation is an absolute statement.**

**An atheist uses deconstructionism concerning the writings of the world including the Bible. They alter the writer’s intent and claim that the Biblical authors were only writing about their own subjective experiences and not eternal truth. Thus prophecy which comprises 40% of the Bible is not significant because they were written by mere men and not inspired by God, since He doesn’t exist-but they are not sure.**

**Religious pluralism takes over. We must be tolerant of all religious beliefs since no one can be sure which one is right. We see this in the consistent call to accept Islam, Hinduism etc. The belief that “all paths lead to heaven” flies in the face of John 14:6.**

**PM thinking is now in Christianity through what is known as the “emerging church” or “emergent church movement.” While they have many positive things going including a strong emphasis on community and service, they also have some troubling traits. (1) denial of inerrancy; (2) skeptics of foundational knowledge; (3) a too generous orthodoxy. Denial of inerrancy is a denial of God. 2 Tim 3:16-17**

Some become atheists because they think Darwin answered the question of life's ultimate origins. Others view God's moral order as "too restrictive." Some look at evil in the world and decide that no loving God could allow such a situation. Atheists consistently believe that Theists are weak and ignorant. They push religious pluralism in order to raise their credibility as a valid belief system.

Religious Pluralists hold the PM position that perspectives and preferences dictate reality. If you are standing on a train track with a train approaching it doesn't make any difference what you think about the train. If you don't move it will really run over you. Real people will end up in a real hell regardless of whether or not they believe the doctrine.

If there is no God then man must solve man's problems.

So how do they try to do that?

2. **Philosophy.** PM's believe that truth is derived from the community opinion. They believe that there is no universal truth (other than there is no universal truth) and author the phrase "that may be true for you but not for me."

They **deconstruct** the meanings of words to the end that it is not the author's intent that is important but the reader's interpretation. Words have no meanings.

They hold a belief known as "**anti-Realism.**" Traditionally Truth (with capital T) was understood as the relationship between the real, objective world and statements that correspond to the real world. It is known as the "**correspondence theory of truth.**" PM's claim that this kind of truth is impossible to achieve and thus words cannot be used in the pursuit of truth.

**PM's rule the day in colleges in the area of social studies and humanities but the modern viewpoint is still ruling in the sciences, math and engineering.**

They hold that there are no metanarratives, universal explanations that are true. It is an anti-worldview worldview.

They hold all words to be analogies to other words which are determined by the readers preferences not by the author's intent. Truth is arrived at by community opinion which may have no correspondence to reality. The community may believe the world is flat and since they believe it therefore it is true. Since there is no God to them, man establishes what is true and what is not.

- a. **PM's move away from the authority of universal science toward narratives of local knowledge.**
- b. **They reject the notion of universal rationality; reason is always situated within particular narratives, traditions, institutions and practices.**
- c. **They reject unifying, totalizing, universal schemes in favor of new emphases on difference, plurality, fragmentation and complexity.**
- d. **They reject that a person is an autonomous individual with a rational consciousness that transcends his or her particular place in culture, language, history and gendered body.**
- e. **They agree with Nietzsche that God has become unbelievable, as have the autonomous self and the meaning of history.**
- f. **They believe that what we know about things is linguistically, culturally and socially constructed.**
- g. **They believe that language stands for the socially constructed order within which we think and move and have our being.**

**Consider their phrase "that is just your interpretation." They believe in authorial intent when they are the authors. Along with the statement, "that may be true for you but not for me." Why should I believe a person who makes a statement like that since they are trying to impose on me a statement they believe to be true. Their statement is self-defeating.**

**An example of distorting language is found in the Roe v. Wade decision when John Marshall called the constitution a "living, breathing document" and thus opened its interpretation to what the justices determined rather than what the founders meant.**

**Confucius said, "when words lose their meanings, people lose their freedom." They can easily redefine the words of the Bible that define sin so they are no longer sin, in their minds. No sin, no need for a savior. But they realize there is a problem, so they must save themselves. But for what reason? Eternity?**

**3. Ethics.** PM ethics are not based on universal or unchanging principles. Ethics is the logical outgrowth of a prior commitment to a particular theology. If there is no "grand narrative" then each little group decides its own ethics.

**PM's, along with secular humanists and Marxists ground their ethical system in atheism, naturalism and evolution.**

**The community may believe that multiple wives is not sinful, but that doesn't change the scripture. The community may believe that drinking to the point of intoxication is not sinful, but that doesn't make it a legitimate function. The community might believe that abortion does not stop a beating heart, but are they right?**

**After denying the existence of God, PM writers deny the existence of a universal moral reality. If there is no objective moral reality then why concern ourselves with ethical issues? PM's still search within their worldview for a standard of right and wrong. They believe that there is a "right action" (righteousness) cannot seem to define it. They believe that their view of ethics is better than the Nazis.**

**Simply put ethics are that which help us to survive as part of "survival of the fittest." They believe that the end justifies any means to achieve it. It is all about self preservation and promotion.**

**4. Biology.** Neo-Darwinianism came into vogue in the 1930's expanding Darwin's theory to include change by genetic mutation. Punctuated equilibrium or punctuated evolution arose in the 1970's theorizing that evolutionary change happens abruptly in small, isolated populations. PM's loosely hold to the "punctuated evolution" model but since there are no absolutes they cannot hold absolutely to it. After all it is a metanarrative.

**PM's entertain worldviews deny the existence of a Creator, a creation event, and the supernatural. John Dewey believed that we are special because we can take charge of our own evolution.**

**A true PM however will hold that there are no metanarratives. It is your truth, not ours. They offer no other explanation of origins.**

**PM is anti-science in many respects. They speak in terms of chaos theory and the unpredictability of science, the uncertainty of evolution. They believe that what is called "science" in one culture is "voodoo" in another. They believe in only one principle which is "anything goes." (oops another absolute). They look to the mistakes of science and throw it all out. The PM only holds to a form of evolution because evolution had no end in mind but rather everything was by chance.**

**Christians acknowledge that scientists do have biases and presuppositions, but we also assert that true knowledge about reality is possible. This is where PM and Secular Humanism are different.**

**PM biology has no ethical standards concerning research. Although the Nazis approached things from a different standpoint, the results are the same. Anything is ethical.**

**5. Psychology.** PM's believe that the soul is really not there but that we are actually each an amalgamation of "selves" without a unifying factor. We are left to the changing whims of our social condition telling us who and what we are. Man is a culture being not a natural being. It is not simply saying that there are

different sides to our personality but that we have no central personality. PM psychologists are now asserting that there is more than one self. We all have Multiple Personality Disorder.