
Module 2533: CULTURE AND SOCIALISATION
Option A: Religion
Unit One: Religious Institutions

Sociology Department, Greenhead College, Huddersfield

Learning Objectives

By the end of this unit you should be able to:

1. Identify the key features of a church, denomination, sect and cult
2. Explain the relationship of these institutions to society and to each other
3. Assess classifications and explanations of New Religious Movements
4. Explain the appeal of religion to 'spiritual shoppers' and by social profile including class, gender, ethnicity and age

Key

Skills

The activities in this study guide will give you the opportunity to develop the following key skills:

1. Communication: oral presentation, report-writing, discussion
2. ILT: using the Internet, CD Roms, word-processing software
3. Working With Others: paired work, group research, small group presentations
4. Improving Own Learning: self-evaluation, target-setting

Use this box for important information - personal targets, deadlines, assessment etc

Planning your work

The activities in this guide will help you to cover all the key ideas in this unit. You may not have to do them all. You will discuss activities with your teacher to determine which can be done as a class, in groups, or individually. You will also discuss how your work is to be presented and assessed.



Resources

The following resources are suggestions only. Your teacher may wish to add to or amend the list. You will find that particularly useful resources are indicated in the margin, e.g. R1 means use resource 1.

Books:

- R1 Taylor et al *Sociology In Focus*
- R2 Kirby et al *Sociology in Perspective*
- R3 Haralambos and Holborn *Sociology: Themes and Perspectives*
- R4 O'Donnell *A New Introduction to Sociology*
- R5 Bird *Investigating Religion*
- R6 Selfe and Starbuck *Religion*
- R7 Fulcher and Scott *Sociology* pp.317-350

Internet

- R8 Hewett School <http://www.hewett.norfolk.sch.uk/curric/soc/religion/rindex.htm>
- R9 Sociology Site <http://www.hartland64.freemove.co.uk/socindex.htm>
- R10 Sociology Central <http://www.freemove.virgin.net/chris.livesey/home.htm>
- R11 ATSS <http://www.atss.ac.uk>
- R12 Sociosite <http://www.pscw.uva.nl/sociosite/TOPICS/index.html>
- R13 Socioweb <http://www.socioweb.com/~markbl/socioweb/>
- R14 <http://www.cti.itc.virginia.edu/~jkh8x/soc257/profiles.htm>
- R15 <http://www.newreligiousmovements.org>
- R16 The Guardian <http://www.guardian.co.uk> Click on 'Archive'
- R17 The Source <http://www.statistics.gov.uk>

Extracts

- R18 The Sociology of the New Religions
- R19 The New Christian Right

CD Rom

- R20 The Guardian and Observer
- R21 Social Trends

Video

- R22 Waco

- R23 Jonestown
- R24 Christian Fundamentalism
- R25 The Koran and the Kalashnikov
- R26 The Nation of Islam
- R27 Heaven's Gate

ACTIVITY ONE: The problems of defining religious organisations

Margin Notes

Sociologists use a range of terms to try to define and classify religious groups and organisations

The aim of this activity is to try to define these terms and to examine the usefulness and difficulties involved in applying definitions to different groups.

Task One
 In pairs or small groups investigate the terms below and produce a definition of each:

- Church
- Denomination
- Sect
- Cult

Task Two
 Make a copy of the table below and compile the details required in each box.



R1, R2, R3, R4, R5
 R8, R9, R10, R11,
 R12, R13

FEATURE	CHURCH	DENOMINATION	SECT	CULT
Scope	National (or international); very large membership; inclusive	National (or international); large membership	Local (or national); exclusive	Local; exclusive; small membership
Internal Organisation				
Life span				
Attitude to wider society				
Attitude to other religious groups				
Attitude to members				
Type of membership				
Social background of members				
Examples (4 of each type)				

ACTIVITY TWO: New Religious Movements



R6, R8, R112, R14, R15,
R16, R18

R6, R8, R12, R14, R15
R16, R18, R27

The term 'sect' and 'cult' have tended to be replaced by the term 'new religious movements' by sociologists. Roy Wallis attempts to identify key similarities between new religious movements (NRMs).

He recognises three different types of NRM:

1. **World rejecting**
2. **World accommodating**
3. **World affirming**

Task One:

Your task in this activity is to use Wallis's typology and analyse how it can be used to enhance your understanding of NRMs.

In groups of four investigate one of these types of NRM.

Stage One

The first stage of your investigation is to:

1. Find out what the key characteristics are of the type of NRM you are studying
2. Identify one or two NRMs which fall within your typology

Stage Two

You should now prepare a short presentation on the main beliefs and attitudes of your chosen NRM

Your presentation should cover the following themes:

- What does the NRM believe about God
- Is there any belief in a Messiah or judgement day
- Are members expected to live in a separate community
- What are the NRMs beliefs about the role of the family

You will need to produce:

1. A word-processed handout
2. A summary OHT
3. Material for a wall display on NRMs

Remember to be creative and a quality job is needed !

Use this space for planning and ideas

R3



Bibleman - a God-fearing superhero as seen on American TV!

R7, R14, R15, R16, R19,
R24, R26

Task Two: Evaluating Wallis's Typology

Read pages 471-472 in R3.

Produce a spider diagram showing:

1. Beckford's assessment of the usefulness of Wallis's typology
2. Stark and Bainbridge's:
 - Reasons for rejecting typologies of religious organisations
 - Criteria for comparing religious organisations
 - Distinction between sects and cults
 - Sub-division of cults

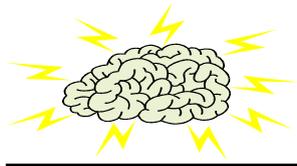
Extension Task:

Two other areas of recent research for sociologists of religion have been the 'New Christian Right' and what have become known as 'religions of ethnic protest', such as the Nation of Islam.

Investigate these two areas by producing an information leaflet outlining their main beliefs.

ACTIVITY THREE: Explanations for the growth and development of NRMs

Margin Notes



This activity will give you the chance to look at a range of explanations for:

1. the growth of NRMs
2. the development of NRMs once they have become established.

Task One:

The aim of this task is to help you think about why some individuals join NRMs.

Stage One

On your own, jot down as many reasons why you think an individual may join an NRM.

Stage Two

In pairs, compare your lists and choose the best four reasons from them.

Stage Three

Each pair should form a group of four with another pair, compare lists, and choose the best four reasons. Share these with the rest of the class.

Use this space for ideas

Task Two:

Explanations for the growth of NRMs focus on the following concepts:

- Marginality
- Relative deprivation

Which of the reasons you developed in task one fit into the categories above ?

Task Two:

In groups of four imagine that you are a team of sociologists working closely with an organisation which helps parents come to terms with their son/daughter's

Margin Notes



R3, R6, R8, R15, R18
R22

R3, R6, R8, R15, R18
R22

Margin Notes

2. The internal ideology of the sect and wider Society

- Development of world-rejecting sects
- Development of world-accommodating sects
- Development of world-affirming sects

You will need to produce:

- A word-processed information leaflet
- Materials for a wall display

Use this space for planning

ACTIVITY FOUR: Evaluation

I feel confident in the following areas of this unit	I need to improve my understanding of the following areas of this unit	I am going to improve my understanding of these areas by doing the following

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KEY SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

Key Skill	Evidence
Communication	
Working with others	
Information Technology	
Improving own learning	

Sociology Department Greenhead College

**OCR Sociology
AS Module 2533
Culture and Socialisation**



Option A: RELIGION

Unit One

RELIGIOUS INSTITUTIONS