

Key Ideas

Post-Modernism

- Culture and Identity (especially identities relating to gender, age, ethnicity)
- Centred and Decentred individuals
- Critical of Meta-Narratives (Grand Theories of Society like Marxism)
- Rejection of positivism (science as ideology)
- Post-Fordist production techniques
- Deindustrialisation
- Consumerism / Consumer Culture
- Class analysis "irrelevant" / "outdated"
- In-groups and out-groups ("One of Us or One of Them")
- Social Construction of reality (Subjective realities not objective realities)
- Reject ideology of "progress"
- New Social Movements
- Post-Industrial society / Post-Structuralism
- Globalisation
- Hyper-realities (media)

Key Names: Foucault, Derrida, Baudrillard, Bauman, Lyotard, McRobbie, Bell.

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Theoretical Perspectives

Key Criticisms

Post-Modernism

- In Sociology, modern twist on (old) Interactionist ideas
- If all knowledge is relative (has same status) why should anyone believe views of postmodern writers?
- Post-Modern society is ideology invention (does not exist)
- Over-emphasis on individuals, consumers, choice, etc.
- Under-emphasis on how "choice" is socially-created / produced
- No empirical evidence to support post-modernist "theories"
- Ignores power structures in society
- Capitalism does not produce empowered, knowledgeable, consumers
- Social class clearly related to life chances
- "Science" is not simply an ideology (describes empirical reality)

Key Critics: Gellner, Giddens, Habermas, Hall. (In addition, criticism has come from various sociological / non-sociological perspectives - Marxism, Feminism, New Right).

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Theoretical Perspectives