

## Lecture 5 – Postmodernism D: Consequences I, Part 2

*“Postmodernism is nihilism with a smile.” Unknown*

### Key Terms

Pragmatism, skepticism, pessimism, relativism

### Objectives

\*Identify ways in which postmodernism manifests itself in our culture.

\*Outline how postmodernism has influenced our views of authority and the religious experience.

### D. Consequences I (cont.)

1. Human reason is inadequate to lead us to truth (cont.)

b. Democracy – everyone has the right to their own views (American democracy)

c. Pragmatism – truth is what will work for me

-New Age movement

-Our churches

-Truth = authenticity

d. Skepticism – a generation of skeptics

Examples:

e. Pessimism

-rejection of optimism

-young people

-“nihilism with a smile”

2. Rejection of authority –

If there is not truth then there is nothing or no one that can command respect or deserve submission.

There is an absolute lack of respect for authority, and a suspicion of authority.

This results in:

a. Trust in myself

b. Privatization of religious experience

c. Deconstruction of everything sacred

d. No style or art is better than any other

e. There is a playful aspect to this

3. Moral relativism (There are no transcendent moral commandments)

a. Individual choice

### Questions & Answers

Criteria by which we can judge art?