

Postmodernism will fail because of its own internal contradictions

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Don't you just love this post-modernism lark? No truth, no rules, no absolutes. You just make it make it up as you go along. Which is going to make writing this article a whole lot easier I can tell you. Nine hundred words they asked me for. Well here they all are. The End.

What's that? You've counted and I've only written fifty-nine? Well, I don't care. I've gone all post-modern now, so I'm not bound by your elitist, mathematical truth-claims. This is my reality and nine hundred is whatever I say it is. Come to think of it, why am I writing this in the Queen's English? Why should my creativity be repressed by mere linguistic convention? Why shouldn't I spell the way I want too? Use grammar the way I wants to? And what's the point of punctuation And while I'm at it, what's to stop me from punctuating my prose with random fish words Botticelli? In fact, why shouldn't I just close my eyes and blindly stab at the keyboar*nd fab n oiew snjbdj4936 m0-9865 gopeh-yht: -*+384Y% ^££_+[nmrfb...

Well, I think I've made my point. Or rather the leading post-modernist philosophers make it for me. Their writings preach deconstruction, but are themselves constructed according to the rules of language. They condemn hierarchy, yet the closed world of post-modern academia is as stratified as any. Deconstructionist journals quote Derrida, but of Monsieur Derrida's cleaning lady there is not a word. And while they count the imposition of one man's 'truth' on another as the worst of all crimes, they feel no embarrassment in imposing upon the taxpayer come pay-day. For all their contempt for tradition, post-modernists do love a bit of good old-fashioned hypocrisy.

And yet they have a point. While we can reject their rejection of truth, we can't but concede that the shared reckoning of that which is true diminishes day by day. This poses no problems for our post-modern PM, whose own values rub along with everyone else's by the simple expedient of their non-existence. But for the Conservative, and still more the Christian Conservative, the implications are profound. How can one justify a politics of principle in a society with no common sense of right and wrong? Christian Conservatism - out-of-date in the 20th Century, out-of-bounds in the 21st? Here are five reasons why not:

Truth will prevail

First, the lesson of history. The post-modernists would argue that the politics of faith are necessarily the politics of repression, but the record shows otherwise. William Wilberforce, Lord Shaftesbury, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Mahatma Gandhi, Charles de Gaulle, Martin Luther King, Lech Walesa, Alexander Solzhenitsyn, Desmond Tutu, Corrie Aquino, Aung San Su Kyi - not all Christians and not all Conservatives, but all men and women of faith who fought against oppression, not for it. The secular Left may imagine itself as the fount of all freedom, but the truth is that their revolutions were fountains of blood.

Second, the reality of the present. How can a Conservative and Christian vision of society be restored, when the institutions in which that vision was established are no longer pre-eminent, if indeed they exist at all? The answer is that it isn't the absence of a friendly establishment that is the problem, but the presence of a hostile one. Post-modernists argue that no institution is owed automatic respect from the people or an exclusive franchise from the state. But if this applies to the institutions of the religious Right, it must apply as much to those of the secular Left. Organised religion has survived and even flourished outside of the state's enfolding embrace. The secular establishment should be given the same opportunity.

Third, the promise of the future. How can we build any sort of society in a nation stripped bare of common reference points? Because we'll have to. There is no such thing as a neutral world-view around which a post-modern establishment can be sustained, no default position from which to referee other world-views. The cultural institutions of our time may stand against us, but their grip is slipping. Just as the broadcasters lose their power to a million websites, so will

all institutions succumb to a tide of fragmentation. We need to embrace a future in which society will be built from the bottom-up, not the top-down. We know that communities informed by Conservative, Christian principles will be the strong ones, able to prove their worth to a post-modern world that takes nothing on trust.

Fourthly, the perspective of eternity. Our values are condemned as old fashioned, out of date, reactionary. At best we cling to a past that cannot be recovered, at worst we pose an authoritarian threat to contemporary freedoms. But Conservatism is neither reactionary nor progressive. Our values are not tied to the timeline. Good and bad have co-existed in all times and places. We do not excuse an evil because it is old, or curse a blessing because it is new.

Fifthly, faith in God. We believe in mixing religion and politics. We do so because our hope that religion will re-form politics is greater than our fear that politics will corrupt religion. Christianity is not about power, but the surrender of power. We believe in an all-powerful God who lived amongst us as a man of no power at all. For those that fear the oppressive potential of faith, there can be no better example.