

# [Chief problems in defining postmodernism](https://assignbuster.com/chief-problems-in-defining-postmodernism/)

As we know the postmodernism is indefinable. However, it can be described as a set of critical, strategic and rhetorical practices using concepts such as difference, repetition, the trace, the simulacrum, and hyper-reality to against other concepts such as presence, identity, historical progress, epistemic certainty, ect. (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, Postmodernism pra. ) In the Oxford Dictionary, postmodernism be described as ‘ a late 20th -century style and concept in the arts, architecture, and criticism, which represents a departure from modernism and is characterized by the self-conscious use of earlier styles and conventions, a mixing of different artistic styles and media , and a general distrust of theories’.

(Oxford Dictionaries, pra. 2)For a long time, countless artists and theorists try to define the term modernism and postmodernism, but it was found too hard to distinguish them.

By the opinions of Paul Smethurst, postmodernism could be presented as a reaction of modernism, but this is a complex and slippery relationship defining modernism as much as postmodernism. (Paul Smethurst, 25) In this short paper, I will discuss one of the chief problems in defining postmodernism. The main issue in defining postmodernism are time and the ambiguity between modernism and postmodernism, the term “ postmodernism” first entered the philosophical vocabulary in 1979, with the publication of The Postmodern Condition by Jean-Francois Lyotard. ( Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, Postmodernism pra.

), but after WW? , the flame of postmodernism has already burning. In America, WW? and the failure of the Vietnam War, enhance the anti-war emotional, coupled with the cold situation of international environment; make people lost hope of the reality of life and human society. In counter-culture field, tendency of against the mainstream and negative emotion of eternal value appear. The side effects of industrial development brings environmental pollution, energy shortages, toxic waste, nuclear danger and many other hidden dangers, people have raised doubts on the scientific method.

In French, work with concepts developed during the structuralist revolution in Paris in the 1950s and early 1960s, including the influence of Marx and Freud. For this reason they are often called “ poststructuralists. ” They also cite the events of May 1968 as a watershed moment for modern thought and its institutions. (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, Postmodernism pra.

2) Much of the significant artistic activity of the period since 1945 managed a compromise between modernist and postmodernist ideas, and some artists are very difficult to categorize in the respect. Christopher Butler, 125) It makes the timeline between modernism and postmodernism become fuzzier. However, suggests that postmodernism is an art movement in Europe and the United States around 1960s; it is an attack upon modernity or a complete departure from it. Rather, its differences lie within modernity itself, and postmodernism is a continuation of modern thinking in another mode.

Bibliography Butler