



## CHAPTER 6

# Alternatives to the Mainstream Western Ideologies

In this chapter we explore a variety of contemporary ideologies, most of which represent direct challenges to the more traditional Western ideologies we discussed in Chapter 5. Many of them cast doubt on the ability of any ideology to provide an overarching explanation of the world. This is not surprising, since they emerged amidst the catastrophic consequences of some traditional ideologies. Some of them emphasize respect for difference and diversity, recognizing the importance of powerful identity groups based on gender, culture, and ethnicity. In addition, environmentalism and forms of indigenous thought raise important questions regarding the sustainability of the West's industrialized, increasingly secular and consumerist way of life

### Chapter Outline

- **Postmodernism**
- **Feminism**
  - Liberal Feminism
  - Second-Wave Feminism
  - Socialist Feminism
  - Feminism and Intersectionality
- **Environmentalism**
  - The Economic Realm
  - The Philosophical Realm
  - Indigeneity and Green Ideals

- **Multiculturalism**
  - Phases of Multiculturalism
  - Tolerance and the Limits of Multiculturalism
  - The Limits of Multiculturalism
- **Religious Fundamentalism**
- **Conclusion**

## Key Terms

Anthropocentrism

Citizenship

Civilization

Ecocentrism

Ecological modernization

Ecologism

Epistemology

Fordism

Indigenous knowledge

Modernity

Ontology

Patriarchy

Positive discrimination

Postmodernism

Sustainable development

## Discussion Questions

1. Postmodernism has been criticized as being relativistic. What is the basis for this claim? Do you agree? What are the problems with adopting a relativist stance?
2. Women are treated differently than men in most Western societies. How might this difference be addressed? Is it a question of equal opportunity, or a problem with the way society is structured?
3. Are the current political systems enough to ensure that the environment is protected, or are significant changes required?
4. Should someone whose religious beliefs require that he or she wear a turban not be required to wear a helmet when on a motorcycle? Should it disallow him or her, assuming he or she is a veteran, from entering a Legion Hall, which has a rule against wearing hats?
5. Is there a “clash of civilizations” between Islam and the West, or is the current conflict better understood as a “clash of fundamentalisms”? Explain your answer.
6. Crazy Horse and Black Elk both noted that environmental exploitation is Western, colonial ideal and advocated for a more holistic understanding of environmentalism. Why isn’t protecting the environment a focus of Western government?
7. Multiculturalism has become a more pressing issue. It is balanced with post-9/11 politics. Why?
8. Explain the differences between first-wave and second-wave feminism. Why do modern feminists reject the monolithic value systems?
9. Why is postmodernism a direct challenge to the modernist approach?

## Further Resources

- <http://www9.georgetown.edu/faculty/irvinem/theory/pomo.html>  
A brief but useful introduction to some of the issues of postmodernism
- <http://feminist.org/>  
Home page of the Feminist Majority Foundation including links to various resources and issue campaigns
- <http://www.greenpeace.org/canada/en/splash/>  
Gateway page to the Greenpeace Canada site (choose English or French)
- <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/multiculturalism/citizenship.asp>  
Canadian Multiculturalism: An Inclusive Citizenship (choose English or French)
- <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/multiculturalism/index.asp>  
Citizenship and Immigration Canada page on multiculturalism including a variety of links
- <http://libertycounselaction.org/content/home>  
Home page of Liberty Counsel Action, a religious based activist group that “adheres to the original four tenets of The Moral Majority, which are: Pro-America, Pro-Life, Pro-Family and Pro-Moral. These tenets also include recognizing and upholding the special bond that has always existed between the United States and Israel.”
- Barber, B. (1996). *Jihad vs. McWorld: Terrorism's Challenge to Democracy*. NY: Ballantine Books.
- Eisenberg, A. and William Kymlicka, eds. (2012). *Identity Politics in the Public Realm: Bringing Institutions Back In*. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press.
- Jones, K. B. (1992). *Compassionate Authority: Democracy and the Representation of Women*. NY: Routledge.
- Razack, S., M. Smith, and S. Thobani, eds. (2010). *States of Race: Critical Race Feminism for the 21st Century*. Toronto: Between the Lines Press.
- Kermoal, N, and Altamirano-Jiménez, I., eds. (2013). *Living on the Land: Indigenous Women's Understanding of Place*. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press.