

5-3-1 Assignment Week 4: Modernity and the Moral Life

QUESTIONS

1. What are the two epistemological traditions?
2. What are the three primary components of modernity?
3. Technology raises what types of ethical issues?
4. As a set of beliefs and practices, _____ seeks to eradicate religion from society. It is a process occurring in _____ and _____ where religion does not play the predominate function in modeling policies and practices.
5. What is the dichotomy between the public arenas and private arenas of human existence?

ANSWERS

1. Rationalism is the view that reason alone is adequate to understand all there is to observe about the world and life. Empiricism is the opinion that all consciousness was established on savoir-faire and the intellect (pg. 90)
2. Intellectual, industrial/technological, and sociological (pg. 90)
3. Technology raises ethical issues encompassing physician-assisted suicide, abortion, treatment termination, genetic engineering, stem cell research, etc. have emerged due to new technological potential. (pg. 95)
4. Secularism; societies and cultures. (pg. 100)
5. There are many impersonal structures of society in the public domain, such as the government, corporations, educational institutions, community associations, and professional and work-related organizations. In contrast, families, friends, leisure activities, religious associations, and voluntary organizations make up the private sphere. (pg. 102)

TERMS

1. Modernity – the modern world defies simple or monolithic descriptions. It is best understood as a complex of interacting forces and variables. At its core is the pursuit of truth with anticipation of certainty. (pg. 90).
2. Rationalism- reason alone is sufficient to know all there is to discern about the world and life. The rationalists underline a division of mind and matter, but all the world could be understood by the ordering of the mind. (pg. 91)
3. Empiricism – the view that all knowledge is established on experience and the senses. One does not collect truth through innate reason but through empirical analysis and examination of the world. (pg. 91)

SUMMARY

This chapter explores the ethical predicaments in modern society. As our form of society increases our material well-being, it simultaneously lixivates the significance of our experience. Our intellectual life is dominated by scientific rationality and our practical life by bureaucratic rationality. These two forms of reason are similar. While they are very good at securing the means of life, they drain from the world the sources of meaning and significance that are customarily rooted in ethical practices such as God, community, and nature.