

## **Modernity and Postmodernity**

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## **MODERNITY AND POSTMODERNITY (extract)**

**Ian Woodward, Griffith University**

The concepts modernity and postmodernity refer to particular historical epochs and also to multifaceted sets of ideological, aesthetic, economic and political processes. Modernity refers to the features of social and economic organization which consolidated in Western Europe and America around the 1850s and extended until late into the twentieth century. Modernity had its origins in Enlightenment philosophy and science of the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries. Postmodernity refers to the cache of rapid social and economic changes which have occurred predominantly in western societies, but also increasingly global in reach, since around 1970. The historical origins of postmodernity can be traced to earlier events and periods in the 1950s and 1960s, however the exact temporal origins of both modernity and postmodernity are frequently matters of debate amongst historians and sociologists.