

The Ideas and Values of Modernity

- **Progress is everything**
 - Everything can be controlled or made better by understanding it; *'Knowledge is power'* (quote commonly attributed to Francis Bacon).
 - Progress inherently improves life. Progress overrides morality. These values are epitomised by the questionable morality of the Industrial Revolution, and also in the rise of “industrialised warfare”, a transition epitomised by the First World War.
 - In **modernist thinking** the **new** is inherently **better** than the **old** – the result of a growing mistrust of traditional ways and a rejection of received patterns of behaviour.
 - Production became a measure of identity and worth – your place in the system defined much about you and what your life had to be like
- **Human reason can solve or explain everything, even if it takes time**
 - Science and technology became all important as the means to reach these solutions which make life better
 - When there is a problem posed by human life, a technical, scientific or mechanistic solution will solve it.
 - The idea of praying to ‘an active, living God who creates and sustains the universe in every moment’ falls out of fashion.
- **The truth is out there...**
 - **Truth is objective** - truth is seen as an absolute “thing” which is out there waiting for people to discover. When they do, it will apply everywhere. If it’s true then it’s true for everybody.
- **Everything in its place and a place for everything**
 - The machine is the model of social organisation, and bureaucracy flourishes as movements become institutions or organisations
 - Everything has to be clearly categorised and unambiguous

- Education became subdivided into specialist disciplines each of which had its “experts”.
- o Strict division between the public and private realms; compartmentalised view of life...
 - Religion became a private matter for leisure time; Church increasingly became something you do on Sundays.