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Journal of the American Academy of Religion, Volume 74, Number 1,
March 2006 , pp. 157-171 (Article)

Published by Oxford University Press

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All Generalizations Are Bad: Postmodernism on Theories

Robert A. Segal

The ramifications of postmodernism for theology have been discussed voluminously. I want to consider the ramifications of postmodernism for the social scientific study of religion, which above all means for theories of religion. Those ramifications are wholly negative: postmodernism opposes theories, and does so because it opposes generalizations. Objections to generalizations and thereby to theories in the social sciences long antedate the rise of postmodernism, but earlier objections are on modernist grounds. Postmodernism is oblivious to these criticisms and instead assumes that criticism begins with postmodernism itself. Where at least some modernist criticisms are not easily answerable, all postmodern criticisms are easily answerable, for all of them rest on confusions about theorizing.

THERE IS BUT ONE proper way to study religion, and it is the modern, not the postmodern, way. The heart of the modern study of religion is theorizing. Theories are generalizations. They purport not merely to describe all religions but also to account for them—to account for both the origin and the function of all religions. Theories recognize differences

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Journal of the American Academy of Religion March 2006, Vol. 74, No. 1, pp. 157–171
doi:10.1093/jaarel/lfj026

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Advance Access publication January 19, 2006

among religions but seek similarities. They are subject to revision and even abandonment. Theories hail from, above all, the social sciences: anthropology, sociology, psychology, and economics. The most apt metaphor for the modern study of religion is that of diagnosis. It is not that religion is an illness but that the scholar is like the doctor and the religious adherent like the patient. Just as the patient has the disease but defers to the doctor's diagnosis, so the adherent has religion but defers, or should defer, to the scholar's analysis. The scholar, not the believer, is the expert. The scholar's medicine kit contains what the believer lacks: theories. In religious studies, as in medicine, the doctor knows best.

The postmodern approach to religion is the avowed opposite of the modern one. Theorizing is to be spurned. For in seeking only similarities among religions, theories deny differences, where the focus should lie. Had George Eliot been writing *Middlemarch* today, she would have been expected to scorn Causabon not for failing to finish his *Key to All Mythologies* but for starting it. Theories are suspect. Not merely do they account for all religions uniformly, but their accounts reflect the backgrounds and interests of the theorists.¹ The goal of religious studies should be the appreciation of the distinctiveness of each religion. The most suitable metaphor for the postmodern study of religion is that of conversation, which in days of yore was called dialogue. The believer is the equal of the scholar. The two are "conversation partners."

In his introduction to *Critical Terms for Religious Studies* (1988) Mark C. Taylor maintains that the postmodern approach to religion is superior to the modern one:

For interpreters schooled in postmodernism and poststructuralism, the seemingly innocent question "What is . . . ?" is fraught with ontological and epistemological presuppositions that are deeply problematic. To ask, for example, "What is religion?" assumes that religion has something like a general or even universal essence that can be discovered through disciplined investigation. . . . But what if religion has no such essential identity? What if religion is not a universal phenomenon? What if religion has not always existed or has never existed? . . . Investigators create—sometimes unknowingly—the objects and truths they profess to discover. Some critics claim that appearances to the contrary notwithstanding, religion is a *modern Western invention*. . . . The very concept of religion entails a level of self-consciousness that is distinctively modern.

"To make peace between premodern typologies and postmodern *différence*," it is necessary to develop comparative analyses that do not

¹ On the postmodern rejection of social scientific theories, see Rosenau (1992: 81–85).

presuppose universal principles or reinscribe ahistorical essences. Whether or not it is possible to realize such a comparativist program, many critics schooled in poststructuralism insist that the very effort to establish similarities where there appear to be differences is, in the final analysis, intellectually misleading and politically misguided. When reason is obsessed with unity, they argue, it tends to become as hegemonic as political and economic orders constructed to regulate whatever does not fit into or agree with governing structures. (1998: 6–7, 15)

This statement captures all, or almost all, of what is wrong with postmodernism. Let me take up the problems one by one.

THE CONFUSION OF UNIVERSALITY WITH ESSENCE

Contrary to Taylor, theories of religion do not claim to have uncovered the “essence” of religion. Essence is a metaphysical issue. Theorizing is a merely empirical enterprise. Theories claim to have discovered only the conditions for the emergence (origin) and perpetuation (function) of religion. By no means do most theories claim to have discovered even the necessary and sufficient conditions for the emergence and perpetuation of religion. For example, Max Weber offers only necessary, not sufficient, conditions for religion. For him, priestly religion requires a cult, but not every cult produces a priesthood. Similarly, the development of metaphysics and of ethics requires a priesthood, but not every priesthood produces them. By contrast, Emile Durkheim offers necessary as well as sufficient conditions for religion: put a bit simplistically, whenever a group amasses regularly, there will be, and will continue to be, religion. The explanations offered by most theories do not profess to be even sufficient. Rather, they claim to be merely probabilistic. Their modestly claim is that if certain conditions exist, religion will likely, not always, arise. If those conditions continue to exist, religion will likely, not always, last. And other conditions may also produce and perpetuate religion.

THE CONFUSION OF UNIVERSALITY OF DEFINITION WITH UNIVERSALITY OF EXISTENCE

Theories, as generalizations, perforce offer universal definitions as well as accounts of religion. But contrary to Taylor, they do not thereby assume that religion itself is universal. E. B. Tylor argues that, as far as reliable evidence goes, there has always been religion, but he does not rule out a period before religion, and he hardly rules out the demise of

religion. J. G. Frazer maintains that a stage of magic preceded a stage of religion, which is presently being altogether succeeded by a stage of science. Freud and Jung maintain that religion goes back to earliest times, but Freud awaits the end of religion and Jung assumes it. Marx and Engels contend that there has not always been religion and that there will not always be religion. Taylor asks what if religion has never existed. My innocent reply: in that event don't collect critical terms for the study of a nonexistent subject.

THE CONFUSION OF INVENTION WITH DISCOVERY

To begin with, the concept of religion is not a modern invention, as Taylor himself concedes. Herodotus describes the varieties of religions in the known world. The Hebrew Bible contrasts Israelite religion to those of its neighbors. But even assume that something more elusive is meant by the claim that "religion" is a modern Western invention. Certainly the claim is made relentlessly nowadays—most recently and most exhaustively by Daniel Dubuisson in his *The Western Construction of Religion* (2003), though, to be sure, Dubuisson deems religion a hoary Christian invention rather than a modern secular one. Whatever the origin of the concept, there is a difference between asserting that it arose in a particular context and asserting that it thereby fails to apply to any other time or place. Dubuisson strives to show, not simply to pronounce, that the category does not apply beyond the situation of its origin, in which case it should be abandoned. Because he tries to make good his claim, his procedure is wholly modern and not a whit postmodern.

The postmodern contention of Taylor, or of "some critics," is that no testing is necessary. Religion, because created by the modern West, not merely may prove but must prove a misfit elsewhere. But how can postmodernists be so confident? They can be so only by confusing invention with discovery. To quote Taylor again, "Investigators create . . . the objects and truths they profess to discover" (1998: 7). But how does Taylor know? It can only be that knowledge of the time and place of the origin of definitions and theories reveals this insight to him. But to deny the possibility of discovery on the grounds that one knows the point of invention is to commit the genetic fallacy.

THE CONFUSION OF STUDENTS WITH NATIVES

Against those who, like Frazer, assumed that "primitives" possess magic or religion *rather than* science, Bronislaw Malinowski argued that in fact "primitives" have science as well as magic and religion. That

“primitives” do not themselves use the term “science” did not faze him. By contrast, postmoderns would be apoplectic. For them, the issue is not whether the term “religion” fits but who concocted it. Taylor thus praises Jonathan Z. Smith for alerting us to the danger of mistaking “our” categories for “theirs.” As Smith declares in his contribution to the Taylor collection, “‘Religion’ is not a native term; it is a term that is created by scholars for their intellectual purposes and therefore is theirs to define” (1998: 281, reprinted in 2004: 193–194). What Smith warns of “religion,” he warns of other standard terms in religious studies as well.

Are we to believe that modern theorists have been unaware that their vocabularies are their creation and are not part of the lingo of the cultures to which those vocabularies have been applied? Did Jung naively think that “archaic man” chatted away about his “archetypes”? If not, then what are being told? That the terms *may* not fit other cultures? Who would have assumed otherwise? Only one option is left: that our terms *cannot* fit, and cannot fit exactly because they are ours, not theirs.

To make this claim is to confuse roles. No doctor defers to a patient in making a diagnosis. The patient may harbor the ailment, but the doctor is trained to identify it. Deferring to the patient confuses the subject—the patient—with the student—the doctor. The doctor may solicit information from the patient, who is the equivalent of the informant, but the diagnosis rests with the doctor.

In his introduction to *Imagining Religion* Smith collapses the relationship between subject and scholar into solipsism: “*there is no data for religion*. Religion is solely the creation of the scholar’s study . . . Religion has no independent existence apart from the academy” (1982: xi). But why must there be any divide between “data for religion” and religion as “the creation of the scholar’s study”? Why not a created category that happily fits the data? Why can scholars never get outside themselves to the subject of their study? Do the phenomena that natural scientists study come with name tags? If not, then how are scientists able to get outside themselves to the world?

Unlike Dubuison, Smith wants to retain, not abandon, the category religion, but only as long as we remember that we created it: “the student of religion, and particularly the historian of religion, must be relentlessly self-conscious” (1982: xi). Self-consciousness, however, refers to only the origin of the term. It has no bearing on the propriety of our continued use of the term to identify beliefs and practices similar enough to be labeled religious and different enough from others labeled political, economic, or psychological. To say otherwise is again to commit the genetic fallacy.

THE CONFUSION OF EXPLANATION WITH EFFECT

Theories of religion assess religion—on the basis of their like or dislike for the effects of religion. With postmodernism comes a new level of assessment: now one likes or, usually, dislikes not religion but *theories* of religion—on the basis of their effect *on* religion and in turn on the basis of the effect *of* religion. The inspiration here comes from Michel Foucault, and the fullest application of Foucault to theories of religion is Russell McCutcheon's *Manufacturing Religion* (1997).

Rather than attacking all theories of religion, McCutcheon attacks only the religionist theory typified by Mircea Eliade. Where others have long faulted Eliade's theory itself, McCutcheon faults the *effect* of Eliade's theory. He objects to the religionist theory, or "discourse," not simply because it ignores the nonreligious origin and function of religion but even more because, in so doing, it supposedly sanctions whatever political effect religion has. McCutcheon even denies that the political consequence is unintended. Citing Eliade's own well-documented alliance with the fascistic Romanian Iron Guard, he asserts that the conception of religion as otherworldly is a calculated method of masking how worldly in both origin and function religion really is. The religionist discourse "manufactures" the theory of religion not merely to give religiosity autonomy, as has conventionally been argued, but also to deflect attention away from the political origin and function of religion:

By overlooking the importance of these additional [i.e., material] aspects of human existence, . . . one avoids confronting the relations between material, cultural productions (e.g., a myth one studies) and the concrete political and economic conflicts and inequities of the people under study. By avoiding the study of such relations, scholars may not necessarily be promoting these imbalanced distributions of wealth or influence, but they certainly minimize the significance of such factors. (McCutcheon 1997: 13)

Where Marx and Engels maintained that religion serves to perpetuate inequality, McCutcheon contends that a *theory* of religion does so. I myself would never have imagined that avaricious capitalists had need of an academic theory to spur them on. But even if one grants the religionist theory its clout, the theory can still be true. To say otherwise is to commit what I have dubbed the functionalist fallacy: the fallacy of refuting or confirming a theory on the basis of its effect. For me, Eliade's theory should be treated like any other theory, which means tested to determine its truth. If true, it should be retained, regardless of its effect. The task of theories, to reverse Marx in his *Theses on Feuerbach*, is merely to interpret the

world and not to change it. To demand that theories contribute to the elimination of religion is to confuse a theory with social policy. When Taylor calls the quest for similarities not only “intellectually misleading” but also “politically misguided,” we get the same assessment of theories by their political ramifications.

McCutcheon ties his repudiation of the religionist theory to an opposition to theorizing itself. Somehow the attribution of religion to a spiritual need makes all religions the same—the prerequisite for any theory: “In other words, the assumption that, in essence, religion is socially and historically isolated is further entrenched by . . . the comparative method, which abstracts a posited sameness from instances of material difference” (McCutcheon 1997: 9). How McCutcheon’s alternative approach—the attribution of religion to a political need—makes all religions different, and thereby impervious to generalization, it is not easy to see.

THE CONFUSION OF FAILED THEORIES WITH ALL THEORIES

Suppose that all theories of religion to date have failed to account for the origin and function of religion. Theories can fail for multiple reasons. For example, they may turn out to account for some religions but not all. Or they may account inadequately for the origin or function of all religions. For the brand of postmodernism inspired by Jacques Derrida, theories fail because they prove self-contradictory: they are undermined by the presence of contrary currents in the texts that present the theories.

The most brilliant application of Derridean deconstructionism to theories of religion is Tomoko Masuzawa’s *In Search of Dreamtime*, the subtitle of which is *The Quest for the Origin of Religion* (1993). Masuzawa, who also contributes to the Taylor volume, assumes that classical theories of religion sought above all the historical, one-time origin of religion. She lumps religionist theories with social scientific ones and takes as her prime targets Durkheim, Freud, Eliade, and Friedrich Max Müller. Against them, she argues that their own texts undermine their intentions. Like Pirandello’s characters, their texts take on a life of their own.

For example, Durkheim’s definition of the sacred as the ideal society is supposedly undermined by the continual appearance in *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life* of another definition: the sacred as the opposite of the profane. What Masuzawa writes of Durkheim applies to the other theorists as well: “The ‘opponent’ of the master thesis continually disappears and reappears; it does not really develop; it just keeps haunting the text” (1993: 7). Freud’s attribution, in *Totem and Taboo*, of

the origin of religion to the sons' rebellion against their tyrannical father is supposedly undercut by Freud's own characterization of this would-be historical deed as fantasy. Contemporary theorists of religion, epitomized by Eliade, may formally reject the quest for the origin of religion as unsolvable, but they remain obsessed with believers' own quest for the origin of religion. That quest is in turn undone by the locating of the origin of religion outside of history, in mythic time, and is undone still more by the use of myth to recover the past, to make the past present, thereby overriding history.

Masuzawa's argument is tenuous. Classical theorists primarily sought the recurrent, not the historical, origin of religion, as Durkheim makes explicit near the outset of his *Elementary Forms* (Durkheim 1965: 20). Even Freud, who in *Totem and Taboo* comes closest to seeking the historical origin of religion, seeks only the first *stage* of religion. Furthermore, classical theorists were as much after the function of religion as after the origin, recurrent or historical. Contemporary theorists are no different.

More important, the presence in theories of inconsistencies argues for the provisional state of the theorizing and not, as for Masuzawa, for any systematic undermining of the effort. Even suppose that all classical theorists failed in a common quest for the historical origin of religion. What follows? That subsequent theorists dare not try? Does the failure of even all quests to date doom all future ones? Does the quest for the historical origin of religion become impossible rather than merely difficult?

THE CONFUSION OF THE QUEST FOR SIMILARITIES WITH THE DENIAL OF DIFFERENCES

Unlike some other postmodernists, Taylor seems to grant room for similarities in the study of religion—as long as differences remain, and remain dominant. But why are differences more significant than similarities? The argument is question-begging: only if one *presupposes* that differences are somehow deeper than similarities can one dismiss similarities as superficial. If one were to presuppose that differences are trivial, as some of us do, then they become superficial.

Moreover, how does one know that beneath apparent differences may not lie similarities? Unless Taylor knows *a priori* the ultimate outcome of the quest for similarities, how can he declare that “the very effort to establish similarities where there appear to be differences is, in the final analysis, intellectually misleading”? Maybe the very effort to establish differences will be intellectually misleading. Only actually trying will tell. Quoting Derrida will not. An emigré to a foreign country is typically struck first by the differences with home, but later often comes to notice the similarities.

The “privileging” of differences means the rejection of theories, for theories are generalizations. But theories do not deny differences. They deny the importance of differences. Theories do not bar the quest for differences. They simply do not undertake it themselves. Their goal is precisely to account for similarities. And even for postmodernists that quest is unavoidable, for differences begin only where similarities end.²

MODERNIST CRITICISMS OF THEORIES

From the postmodern attack on social scientific theories and theories of religion, one would innocently gather that the challenge to theories began only with postmodernism. In fact, the challenge began within modernism and on modernist grounds. Ironically, the challenge—which has by no means altogether been met—is far more severe than anything that postmodernism can muster.

Objections to Theories as Scientific

Objections to theories come from all corners. Objections to specific theories must be distinguished from objections to theorizing, which is the issue here. One set of objections to theorizing is to the claim that social scientific theories are scientific. If the theories fall short of their own purported standard, then the application of them to religion must fall short.

Many of the objections to social science as science rest, however, on an erroneous view of what makes natural science science. The assumption that, to be scientific, the social sciences dare not go beyond observables—behavior—to unobservables—beliefs and emotions—is erroneous. The natural sciences begin with the observable world but venture beyond it to account for it. True, there have been philosophies of science, notably instrumentalism, that have refused to leave the observable realm, but the sciences themselves have not. B. F. Skinner’s methodological behaviorism rests on the erroneous assumption that psychology can be scientific only by sidestepping the mind.

The assumption that, to be scientific, the social sciences must be predictive is equally erroneous. John Stuart Mill, defender par excellence of the scientific status of the study of humans, cites “tidology,” or the study of tides, as an indisputable science that nevertheless makes inaccurate predictions (1988: 31). Certainly meteorology, which Mill then cites, is likewise a science, even if it, too, continues to make inaccurate predictions.

² For a defense of the quest for similarities, see Segal (2001).

So, too, is medicine. Mill simply distinguishes between the exact and the inexact sciences, which means presently, not inherently, inexact. Thus astronomy was once an inexact science that has since become an exact one, as likely has tidology, and as yet may the social, or “moral,” sciences.

Alasdair MacIntyre has argued that “law-like generalizations” in the social sciences fall short of their counterparts in the natural sciences (MacIntyre 1981: 84–102). And for him fall short they must. For where science predicts, there is “systematic unpredictability in human affairs” (MacIntyre 1981: 89). MacIntyre does recognize that laws in the natural sciences, and so also in the social sciences, can be merely probabilistic. But he contrasts statistical generalizations in the social sciences to those in the natural sciences. That contrast in fact rests on a misunderstanding of the nature of statistical laws (Salmon 1992: 416–417). Furthermore, his contrast also rests on an exaggerated view of laws in the natural sciences, where, notably, *ceteris paribus* clauses are also to be found (Hempel 1988: 150–151). Ironically, as ever more precise instruments have been created, the accuracy of predictions in exact sciences such as astronomy and physics has decreased (Salmon 1992: 406). The most fundamental laws of physics may turn out to be inherently probabilistic, in which case there will never be perfect prediction.

There are other arguments continually touted against, to invoke Skinner’s title, a science of human behavior. It is said, for example, that the cause of human behavior is mental rather than physical and that science deals with only the physical world. But the equation of science with materialism is false. The relation of the mind to the brain remains an open scientific question. Philosophers of science such as Carl Hempel allow for mental as well as physical causes of human behavior. Reasons are considered simply a variety of cause (Hempel 1965: 463–487).

Moreover, few social scientists are themselves materialists. That is, few deny the *existence* of culture and other forms of mental life. Even as resolute a social scientific materialist as the anthropologist Marvin Harris seeks to *explain* culture materially, not to deny the reality of it. He even grants that the superstructure “may achieve a degree of autonomy” from the infrastructure (1980: 56). Marx himself scarcely denies that religion or any other aspect of the superstructure exists. For Marx, though not for Lenin or at times Engels, the superstructure may even operate independently of the infrastructure. The error, or illusion, is the assumption that the superstructure explains itself—that the origin and function of religion are religious rather than economic. Freud and Jung say the same of their version of the superstructure—consciousness.

Objections to the Study of Human Beings as Scientific

If one set of objections to social scientific theorizing is that the social sciences do not qualify as scientific, another set of objections is that the human world, including religion, defies scientific study.

The assumption that insofar as humans are free, their behavior cannot be predicted confuses prediction with control. Whereas free will versus determinism remains a perennial issue, the notion of compatibilism distinguishes between *knowing* a person's future behavior and *causing* that person's future behavior. A psychiatrist who knows a patient well enough to be able to predict the patient's behavior is not causing the patient to behave in that way. Lay persons readily predict the behavior of those whom they know well. The behavior of whole categories of persons, not one of whom may be known personally, can be predicted.

If for Hempel and others reasons, or meanings, are a kind of cause and can therefore be studied scientifically, for "interpretivists" like R. G. Collingwood (1946) meanings are distinct from causes. To be sure, the term "interpretation" is used in varying ways. "Interpretation" may refer simply to the attribution of human behavior to mental causes, with "explanation" referring to the attribution of human behavior to physical causes. By this tame usage, which is found, for example, in Max Weber (1964), Hempel would qualify as an interpretivist, though he himself would subsume interpretation under explanation. By another usage, one found in both Paul Ricoeur (1983) and Clifford Geertz (1973), an explanation alone seeks to account for behavior. An interpretation, by contrast, seeks the message, or theme, of the behavior. Here explanation and interpretation are answers to different questions rather than different answers to the same question: why do persons become and remain religious?³

For Collingwood, interpretation cannot be subsumed under explanation because meanings, which interpretation provides, cannot be subsumed under causes, which explanation provides. The difference between causes and meanings is not that between physical and mental states. Even if all causes are physical, there is a deeper difference between them and meanings: the logical relationship between each of them and the behavior each prompts. Causes are separate from the behavior they bring about. Meanings are not separate, in which case what they bring about are their *expressions* rather than their *effects*.

To use Collingwood's own example, to say that the *cause* of Brutus' stabbing Caesar was a hunger for power would be to say that power

³ On the differing uses of interpretation, see Segal (1992).

hungering was a trait in Brutus separate from the stabbing, which was the effect of that trait. To say that the *meaning* of Brutus' stabbing was a hunger for power would be to say that power hungering was a trait in Brutus expressed outwardly in the stabbing. The deed becomes part of the meaning, or *definition*, of power hungering. As a cause, power hungering says only what brought about the deed. As a meaning, power hungering in addition categorizes the deed *as* power hungering. Indeed, to say *what* Brutus did—sought power—is to say *why* he did it. As Collingwood famously puts it, "When he [the historian] knows what happened, he already knows why it happened" (1946: 214). This distinction between interpretation and explanation is to be found not only in Collingwood but also in the philosopher of history William Dray (1957) and the Wittgensteinian philosopher Peter Winch (1958). For all three, the distinction is that between history, used broadly to include much of social science, and natural science. Furthermore, all three, together with Geertz, tie interpretation to the particular and tie explanation to the general. Postmodernists should rejoice!

Donald Davidson (1963) has argued against the interpretivist claim that reasons cannot be causes because reasons are part of the behavior they spur. Davidson notes that causal relationships between events in the world, such as Brutus' stabbing Caesar, can be described in more than one way. Brutus' stabbing Caesar is describable as either the expression or the effect of a hunger for power. Davidson accepts the interpretivist view that an interpretation not only accounts for a behavior but also classifies and thereby redescribes it, but he argues that there can be a causal as well as a meaningful redescription. Moreover, a redescription that is not also an explanation fails to connect the classification to the behavior that it is supposed to classify. Unless Brutus' hunger for power *caused* him to stab Caesar, the stabbing can scarcely be *classified* as power hungering.

The issue is not whether all of the philosophical objections to social scientific theorizing have been met. Davidson himself stresses the difficulty of formulating laws that connect reasons to actions. The issue is that the objections rest on a proper grasp of theorizing. Postmodern objections do not.

POSTMODERN IGNORANCE OF PHILOSOPHY AND SOCIOLOGY

Postmodern criticisms of theorizing in religion arise in conspicuous ignorance of philosophical problems such as those of induction and falsification. Absent is any recognition of the alternatives to the received

model of scientific explanation worked out by, above all, Hempel. As valuable and as varied as the contributions on comparativism are in the collection *A Magic Still Dwells* (Patton and Ray 2000), none uses any of the work done in analytic philosophy to advance its case. The subtitle of the book almost turns a philosophical matter into a matter of fashion: "Comparative Religion in the Postmodern Age."

To me, what is missing most from postmodern approaches to religion is any familiarity with the ramifications of contemporary sociology of science. Take the Edinburgh "strong program" of David Bloor (1991), Barry Barnes (in Barnes *et al.* 1996), and Steven Shapin (1994). This program offers a comprehensive rationale for the activity that should make postmodernists salivate: the contextualizing of theories. According to the program, the holding of all beliefs, true and rational ones no less than false and irrational ones, is to be accounted for sociologically rather than intellectually. Where the contributors to *Critical Terms* either ignore the issue of truth, limiting themselves to the issues of origin and function, or else conflate the issues, the Edinburgh sociologists distinguish the issues, take on truth as well as origin and function, and argue that all evaluations of scientific theories are dictated by nonintellectual factors. Would-be intellectual justifications purportedly mask sociological imperatives, including ideological ones. Epistemology becomes sociology. The boldness of this nonpostmodern approach to theorizing in science makes the postmodern approach to theorizing in religion pitifully innocuous.

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