

DISCUSSION--PERRY: FORMS

Perry, Wm. G., Jr. 1970. Forms of intellectual and ethical development in the college years. Holt, Rinehart & Winston. (2nd edit.)

Read and do discussion worksheet: (1-3), 8-11, 29-40, 44-45, 51-53, (122-123), 145-148, (211-213), and handout of selected passages .

In doing worksheet you need not include the items in parentheses in the topical outline but should use them in making sure you understand Perry's scheme and in discussing implications etc.

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. **Comment:** Note that you will need to make a careful study of the entire assignment for the Discussion Worksheet and Discussion. The following questions should supplement rather than replace your own analysis and assessments.
- *2. What does Perry mean by multiplicity and by relativism? (Note that "relativism" as used by other authors often includes both of these, sometimes with an emphasis on what Perry terms multiplicity. To sidestep this confusion, some subsequent authors use contextualism in place of Perry's relativism.)
3. Perry notes ". . . he has realized that he thinks this way not because his teachers ask him to but because this is how the world 'really is,' this is man's present relation to the world." Explain in 1 or 2 sentences (pg. 40), the significance of "present" in this thought.
4. In discussing the value assumptions implicit (and explicit) in the scheme (pp. 44-45), Perry states "the values built into our scheme are those we assume to be most commonly held in significant areas of our culture, finding their most concentrated expression in such institutions as colleges of liberal arts, mental health movements and the like." From some of Perry's material and other sources I would suggest that acceptance of these values (and the requisite view of the nature of truth) is less frequent among natural than social scientists and is relatively rare among certain political and religious groups. Select one group which you believe is likely to reject Perry's scheme and discuss how you think they might characterize "growth" along this scheme. (You may find the "selected passage" from pg. 131 helpful.)
5. Note that the process Perry describes is not an idyllic ascent, like that of a balloon, but rather an uphill struggle through a series of briar patches. Perry discusses the countervailing forces for and against movement on pgs. 51-52.
- *6. Summarize the countervailing forces for and against intellectual development.
7. From your own experience, would you say that Perry's scheme accurately portrays a common developmental sequence?

8. (For your own reference, to be shared only if you choose) What level are you now at? Can you remember specific experiences illustrating various earlier stages? Do you remember specific circumstances which triggered your transitions between stages? Note: this may be tough. If you make a snap judgement you may be wide of the mark. Think about it.
9. At what level should the ideal senator be? The ideal president? Would the general public vote for such people? Does Perry's scheme make you optimistic or pessimistic about the possibilities for democracy?
10. Does the scheme have implication for education? At what levels should teaching occur in a class of diverse students?

(NOTE: Some of these questions were developed by Dr. David Parkhurst.)