Essay 1, Chapter 3: "The Failure of the Common View"

Chapter 3: "The Failure of the Common View"

Notes on chapter 3 of #Hunter 's book, To Change the World. Standard Evang. model of cultural change doomed bc its rooted in idealism.

[Note (not in orig. tweets): The standard evangelical model = if we change people's thinking, change their worldview, then society will change from the grassroots up. We will change society by changing minds.]

Grassroots individuals who believe the right worldview don't change culture. Such "idealism" ignores that culture is not just ideas.

It misses the material and institutional dimensions of cultural change. Power lies in institutions and mat'l arrangements.

#Hunter quote: "In sum, idealism leads to a naivete about the nature of culture and its dynamics that is, in the end, fatal." (27)

"Every strategy and tactic for changing the world that is based on this working theory of culture and cultural change will fail."

#AndyCrouch doesn't fare much better. Crouch's model in "Making Culture": Xns will change culture by making things and floating it on the market. #Hunter responds that this still contains a democratic and individualistic bias. Not all cultural goods are created equal.

[Note: That is to say, some cultural goods exist at the centers of cultural influence, and some are quite marginal. Evangelicals, as we will see, tend to be experts in the latter.]

The cultural market is not free. It is governed by institutional and ethical norms that operate autonomously, but thru the market.

Therefore, Christians wanting cultural change must look to institutions (like the church) for change.

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