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| **SOCIAL CLASS IN THE UK – THEORIES AND DEBATES** |
| **CHANGES IN THE HISTORICAL CLASS STRUCTURE****Marxism vs Weberian** | **CLASS IS NECESSARY AND SOCIETY IS MERITOCRATIC****Divided/meritocratic** | **THE RICH HAVE GOT RICHER****Polarisation** | **THE WORKING CLASS HAS CHANGED AS A RESULT OF POLARISATION** |
| Marx’s ideas have probably been more influential than any other political thinker and has had a huge impact about how we think about inequality in our society. Overview of Marxist ideas p.186-187 OCRProblems with Marxism p.187 OCRHow is Weber different to Marx? p.188 OCR | Divisions in society are necessary. Inequality is a fact of a functioning society. Those people who are the most talented get the best jobs. Society benefits from competition. Social classes still remain, but can be viewed as a system of social stratification.Theories linked to: Functionalism and the New RightParsons- Davis and Moore- p.195 OCR Saunders – p.196 OCRWhat criticisms do Breen and Goldthorpe make:Key concepts- meritocracyvalue consensusReal life examples: | The gap between the rich and poor has widened in society and the m/c has been stretched out or has been polarised into different camps. The rich have got richer, and the poor poorerTheories linked to: Marxists and some neo-MarxistsRelevant studies/theories:Scott (1991)- p.198/200 OCRWestergaard and Resler (1976)- p.331 BrowneFind some statistics that would support the argument that the rich are getting richer: How is proletarianisation/polarisation different to embourgeoisment? (see over the page) | This gap has meant that neo-Marxists believe that the proletariat are no longer able to start a revolution. The traditional identities of the working class have changed but they still make up the largest groupTheories linked to: neo-MarxistsRelevant studies/theories:TRADITIONAL WORKING CLASS IDENTITIES:Lockwood – p.336 BrowneWillis’ lads – p.203 OCRAccording to OCR p.203 how have working class identities changed?PROLETARIANISATIONBraverman- (1974) 204 OCR Wright (1997) – p.196 OCRSeabrook – 196 OCR Key concepts: proletarianisationProblems with proletarianisation argument: p.204 OCR |
| **THERE IS A GROWING MIDDLE CLASS, which is not united****VS****VS****Fragmentation** | **THE MIDDLE CLASS IS UNITED** | **IMPACT OF GLOBALISATION****Social class is less significant in the UK because of its globalised nature** | **CLASS LACKS SIGNIFICANCE TODAY****Dead/irrelevant** |
| Traditional class structure has split and is no longer coherent. There is no unity in the upper, middle or working class. Boundaries are blurring, which means the working class is becoming more like the middle class. Social inequality is a feature of society. Theories linked to: Broadly Weberian and some neo-MarxistsRelevant studies/theories:Goldthorpe (1980)- p.203 OCRRoberts et al (1977) – 202 OCRSavage et al (1992)- p.202 OCROther views: Bourdieu (neo Marxist)- (previous knowledge)How are neo-Marxist and Weberian arguments similar about this debate ? p.202 OCRWhat problems are there with the embourgeoisement argument ? p.204 OCRKey concepts- embourgoisement | Giddens (1973) – Browne p.334How would Marxists and Functionalists view the nature of the middle class? p.335 Browne | Globalisation involves all parts of the world becoming increasingly interconnected, so that national boundaries become less important (to some degree). There is now a global elite, who are not just united by their wealth but also by their shared ideas, interests and political influence. They are not bound by national boundaries. Define transnational capitalist class - p.340 BrowneSklair – p.340 BrowneImpact of migration on class structures - p.341-2 BrowneReal life examples: | Class divisions are not useful or applicable in the contemporary UK. People’s identities are not shaped in the same way by class- other factors are more significant for inequality.Theories linked to: Some PostmodernistsRelevant studies/theories:Pakulski and Waters (1996)- p.339 BrowneBeck- risk societyDiamond and Giddens – New Egalitarianism-p.367 ChapmanPostmodern societyFragmentation of identityReal life examples:Which approach do you agree with the most out of these arguments? |
| **THE UNDERCLASS – the social class below the working class, sometimes known as the lumpenproletariat** |
| This is a contested concept. Some sociologists see this group as being characterised by individuals who would rather live off the state than work (New Right) and those who think this group includes people who are excluded from society and experience economic disadvantage. Weberian/Marxist views – Runciman/ Roberts – p.205 OCRNew Right views- Murray- p.205 OCRReal life examples: |