2. NEW RIGHT

- They emphasise the importance of the individual and free choice

Saunders

- He doesn't see stratification as an inevitable part of all societies
- Argues that a society based on social inequality would only be possible if force was used (e.g. the threat of death or imprisonment) which would ensure that everyone did their jobs to the best of their abilities as they wouldn't be motivated by economic rewards
- Points out that everyone should enjoy legal equality
- Supports the principle of equality of opportunity - this refers to everyone having the same opportunity to compete for unequal rewards
- Argues that a degree of inequality is desirable and functional in order to motivate people to compete, as long as everyone has a chance to compete

He is critical of attempts by left-wing governments (e.g. labour) who try to equalise society but he sees them as misguided, for example:

- In education, there's an emphasis on working class children to do good as middle class children however, he points out that middle class children are probably more able and intelligent and deserve to do better compared to working class children

Criticism

- Saunders is mistaken to assume that capitalist societies based on the free market usually offer individuals more freedom than socialist/communist societies who seek to make people equal

Murray: The underclass

- Argued that a dependency culture was created as a result of US government policies of providing welfare benefits for groups such as the unemployed and lone parent families - this led to poor people not feeling motivated to better themselves because they were allowed to remain dependent on the state

The underclass consists of people trapped at the bottom of society.

- They're a drain on taxpayers paying for their benefits
- They tend to poorly socialise their children, this means that they generally underachieve at school and turn to crime

He pointed out that there are signs that Britain was developing an underclass.

- Increasing rates of births outside marriage, crime and youth unemployment were signs that the irresponsible attitudes found in the underclass were affecting certain neighbourhoods in the UK
- He called for a reduction in welfare benefits and less government intervention to reduce poverty
- He argued that disadvantaged social groups such as lone parents and the unemployed need to be encouraged to stand on their own feet rather than expect the state to support them
Criticism

- Murray’s work is highly controversial and has been criticised by British sociologists.
- Critics point out that most people without jobs and on benefits want to work and earn a decent living thus Murray describes a minority of people’s attitudes as the underclass.
- It’s unclear who is responsible for the problems created by the underclass.
- Murray sometimes blames groups such as the unemployed for behaving irresponsibly, he also blames the welfare state for encouraging this kind of behaviour by giving benefits.
- His work only focuses on those at the bottom end of society.
- He makes no links between the wider pattern of social class inequality and the growing gap between the rich and poor in trying to understand why poverty is an increasing problem in Britain and the USA.
● Competition between companies creates boom periods which are followed by recessions
● Eventually, a crisis leads to the collapse of the whole capitalist system

**Overthrow of capitalism**

● Marx argued that the working class had the power to overthrow capitalism because the workers were in the majority and thus had a potential by uniting in a revolution
● Marx argued that the capitalist class preserved an ideology that justified capitalism and its inequalities through the political system, law, media, religious beliefs and the education system
● Marx was convinced that once the working class realised the nature of their exploitation, they would rise up and overthrow capitalism
● He believed that a new economic system called communism would replace capitalism where the means of production would be shared by the whole community
● This meant that everyone would contribute something to society and, instead of wages, they would receive what they needed in terms of food, accommodation and healthcare
● This means that social classes based on economic inequalities would disappear and thus communism would result in a classless society
● Marx predicted that the working class would become class conscious because they would experience extreme misery and poverty and thus seek to transform the capitalist society

**EVALUATION**

Marx

● His ideas have had a huge influence on political thought and inspired the rise of socialism and communism which has led to revolutions in countries such as Russia
● He has influenced many sociologists who have used his ideas to analyse the workings of capitalist societies and the nature of social class inequalities in them

Criticism

● Many critics point out that the communism that was practised in societies was an even more oppressive system than capitalism and it didn't deliver what it promised
● Marx has been accused of being an economic determinist or reductionist - meaning that his ideas are based on the economic relationship between the bourgeoisie and proletariat
● Accused as being one dimensional and trying to explain all inequality in terms of economic differences
● Main criticisms of marxism:
  1. **Economic determinism**
     ● Marx claimed that all societies can be explained in terms of the economic system and economic relationships
     ● However, a variety of factors may influence an individuals opinion or behaviour e.g. religion