Theories of ideology

Introduction

An ideology is a set of shared views which help people to make sense of the world. E.g. religious, political, scientific.

However, it can be seen to distort ideas about the world, conceal interests of a group, legitimise behaviour, misleads people, resistant to opposition and criticism.

Mention definitions of beliefs, science and religion

Paragraph 1 (Marxist ideas)

Beliefs about the ruling class ideology –

R/c have control over how society functions because of wealth, exploit the w/c.

Prevent change as w/c believes inequality is a natural part of life, link to biblical quotes.

Marx believed that eventually the w/c would see through r/c ideology and overthrow the r/c, creating a communist society.

However, it isn’t going to happen, capitalism is too strong, we are too materialistic, communism hasn’t worked in other countries.

Paragraph 2 (Neo-marxist ideas) –

“hegemony” – The R/C ideology can be challenged.

W/c become aware of the exploitation and become organic individuals who become class consciousness and spread their awareness.

Mannheim – All belief systems are one sided, will promote ideas which benefit certain groups.

Two types – Ideological thought (Justification for keeping things as they are e.g. patriarchal ideology) and Utopian though (Justifies social change and tries to help the underprivileged e.g. feminist perspective)

Free floating intelligentsia who are unbiased and arrive at a total “worldview” that will benefit society as a whole.

However, there will always be bias due to culture etc. No one is neutral enough to come to a conclusion without using their own beliefs to make the decision.

Paragraph 3 (Feminist ideas) –

See gender inequality as legitimised by patriarchal ideology.

Patriarchal ideas in science – justify the exclusion of women from education, would create a “new race” who aren’t interested in having typical feminine vocations.

Patriarchal ideas in religion – Used to define women as inferior to men. Women are seen as impure during menstruation (Christian and Islam), keep women in a subordinate place.

Read booklet for conclusion

Beliefs in society revision page