

The role of education Marxism

Conflict view, see's society based on class divisions + exploitations

1. **Marxists** argue two classes- ruling class + working class
2. Ruling class own means of production, make profit exploiting working class
3. Creates class conflict
4. Social institutions such as education reproduce class inequalities + play an ideological role by persuading exploited workers that inequality is justified + acceptable

Althusser 1971: ideological state apparatus

- State consists of two elements, which help to keep them in power
- Repressive state apparatus – protect capitalist interests, police, law
- Ideological state apparatus – controls ideas, beliefs
- Education system performs reproduction of class inequality, class background of parents determines similar future for children
- Legitimation – class inequality, education convinces people that inequality is inevitable + that failure is the fault of individual

Bowles and Gintis 1976: capitalism needs workers with obedient attitude's + submissive personality + works hard/ low pay

- Role of education reproducing obedient, exploitable workers, accept social inequality,
- Close correspondence between relationships in school and those found in the workplace
- Correspondence principle – school is long shadow of work, relationships and structure of education mirrors the workplace

School – Pupils lack control over education

Work – workers lack control of production

School & work – Hierarchy of authority

School – Competition + divisions among pupils

Work – Competitions + divisions amongst workers (pay and status)

Myth of meritocracy – prevent people from recognising exploitation, Functionalists argue that education + work are meritocratic, believe everyone has equal opportunity to achieve, those who gain highest deserve them

- **Ball** argues marketisation legitimates inequality – ‘parent power’ parents in control able to choose school child attends
- **Gewirtz et al** argues that in reality middle class parents have more economic and cultural capital – more choice in schools

New labour policies

Spending on education increase after 1997

Two main aims

- **Promoting diversity and choice** (maintaining education market, competition between schools, creating specialist schools, setting up academies)
- **Reducing inequality of opportunity** (Educational maintenance allowance, education action zones, Aim higher)

Evaluation of New Labour policies

- Policies are contradictory
- New labour has left private education system untouched
- Working class still remain disadvantaged by inequality
- More education spending and focus on learning
- Some evidence academies have raised achievement

Ethnicity policies

- 1960s/70s (encourage assimilation – English as a second language)
- 1980s/90s (multi-cultural education – black studies in curriculum)
- Recently (social inclusion – schools promote racial equality)