

1. Outline and explain two ways globalisation has shaped the formation of social class identities [10]

One way globalisation has shaped the formation of social class identities is through changes to the way in which people are employed. One of the impacts of globalisation has been the relocation of working-class jobs in manufacturing to other areas of the world that have lower labour costs. As many working-class communities in the UK were based around heavy manufacturing such as coal mining and steelwork, this has had a negative impact on their identity. Charlesworth found that closure of industry in South Yorkshire had led to the development of working-class cultures that were centred around drinking and impersonal relationships and that their identity was based upon the economic limitations that they faced as a result of the deprivation in the area. Furthermore, sociologists such as Mac an Ghail, have argued that this deindustrialisation has led to a 'crisis of masculinity' which is a result of globalisation and rapid changes to employment opportunities for working-class males.

A second way in which globalisation has shaped the formation of social-class identities is through consumption. This is particularly the case with middle-class and upper-working class workers who have higher levels of individualism than the traditional working class. The process of globalisation has opened up new experiences to these social classes, and they see discovering new experiences as part of their identity. Urry argued that this has produced the tourist gaze, as individuals look to more exotic places to discover and utilise their economic capital to purchase tailor-made experiences that provide them with unique experiences and provide them with status amongst their peers. This can be supported by Lawler, who argued that the middle class look to develop their tastes for higher culture, and they achieve this through venturing to exotic locations and obtaining cultural knowledge from those countries, widening their cultural capital in the process.

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## Item A

Sociologists argue that we live in a consumer society and that our patterns of consumption reveal a lot about who we are. Additionally, some argue that individuals gain status from the goods they consume.

2. Applying material from item A, analyse two ways in which consumption shapes individual's identities [10]

One way in which consumption shapes individuals' identities is through 'gaining status' (Item A). Postmodernists argue that we live in a media-saturated society and that this allows individuals to form their own identity from the images and messages that they are bombarded with. Strinati argues that this media-saturation has led to the development of a celebrity culture, through which people look to imitate those with high status. This is achieved through consumption, often of goods advertised by celebrities or influencers, with the illusion that purchasing the good will allow the individual to change their identity to one similar to the celebrity selling the goods. However, Bauman argues that this is merely an illusion, and that identity is not changed through consumption as many are unable to afford the goods.

A second way in which consumption can shape individuals' identities is through living in a consumer society (Item A). Clarke and Critcher argue that individuals identities are often formed through leisure, but that this is controlled by capitalism. They argue that in order to maximise profits, capitalist limit leisure choices available to individuals to those that are the most profitable for businesses. As a result, individuals are not able to freely choose their leisure activities and this limits the formation of their identity. Furthermore, they argue that leisure activities are often a smokescreen, presenting an ideology that benefits capitalism more than individuals. Leisure, particularly sporting participation, provide positive benefits for capitalism, as workers feel less frustrated after leisure activities, whilst engaging in health and fitness, produces more effective and efficient workers. For example, workplaces offering wellness services such as yoga classes to reduce stress, rather than deal with structural inequalities created by capitalism. However, critics would argue that this also provides benefits for the individual.