Critical Perspectives *on* Social Control *and* Social Regulation *in* Canada

edited by Mitch D. Daschuk, Carolyn Brooks, *and* James F. Popham

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About the Authors

Kayla Arisman graduated from the University of Saskatchewan in 2018 with a Bachelor of Arts Honours in sociology (highest honours) and a certificate in criminology and addictions. She is currently an MA candidate in the Department of Sociology at the University of Saskatchewan, where her research focuses on companion animals as a barrier to leaving intimate partner violence. She intends to continue on to law school, where she wants to specialize in family law. In 2018, Kayla published a paper exploring influential prostitution legislation in the *University of Saskatchewan Undergraduate Research Journal* (USURJ).

Celine Beaulieu is an undergraduate student completing a Bachelor of Arts Honours in sociology and a certificate in criminology and addictions at the University of Saskatchewan. She plans on pursuing a Master of Arts following her graduation. Her areas of research interest include criminology, Indigenous Peoples and settler colonialism, surveillance, and religious liberty practices, specifically on First Nations reserves historically.

Danielle Bird (*Nehiyaw*) is a member of the Saddle Lake Cree Nation in Alberta and has familial ties to the Mistawasis Nehiyawak in west central Saskatchewan. She graduated from the University of Saskatchewan in 2016 with a Bachelor of Arts in sociology and a minor in Indigenous studies (with great distinction). Bird is currently an MA student in the Department of Indigenous Studies at the University of Saskatchewan, where her research focuses on concepts of resilience among formerly incarcerated Indigenous women in Saskatchewan.

Kandis Boyko obtained dual bachelor degrees in psychology and sociology from the University of Saskatchewan. She uses an interdisciplinary approach in her employment in both corrections and mental health and addictions. Her research interests stem from her passion to address the stigma attached to vulnerable populations evident within her employment and academic pursuits.

Kirby Brigden graduated from the University of Saskatchewan in 2016 with a Bachelor of Arts in sociology with a minor in political studies (with high honours). She is currently an MA student in the Department of Sociology at

the University of Saskatchewan. Her research, for which she received CGSM SSHRC funding, focuses on a critical analysis of sexual violence policies at Canadian universities through contemporary feminist theoretical frameworks. In addition to topics of violence against women, Brigden is also interested in LGBTQ+ issues and advocacy.

Carolyn Brooks is department head and an associate professor of sociology at the University of Saskatchewan. Her research focuses on youth resilience, violence, and theoretical criminology. She is the co-editor, with Bernard Schissel, of three editions of *Marginality and Condemnation: A Critical Introduction to Criminology*.

Mitch D. Daschuk received a PhD in sociology from the University of Saskatchewan in 2016. His graduate research centers around youth culture, counter-hegemonic art, and punk ideology.

Cerah Dubé graduated from the University of Manitoba with a Bachelor of Arts Honours in criminology and a minor in history (with first-class honours) in 2018. She is presently a master's student at the University of Saskatchewan in the Department of Sociology. Her areas of research include violence against women, the MMIWG2S crisis, the over-incarceration of Indigenous women in the Prairie provinces, the prison-industrial complex, neoliberal risk and responsibilization discourses, and decolonial theories and strategies of de-carceration.

Matthew Ferguson is a PhD student in the Department of Criminology at the University of Ottawa and research assistant for the Carceral Cultures Research Initiative funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada.

Sean P. Hier is a professor of Sociology at the University of Victoria. He studies moral panics and social problems.

Julie Kaye is an assistant professor in the Department of Sociology at the University of Saskatchewan. Working in the areas of critical criminology, community research and organizing, and feminist, decolonial scholarship, Dr. Kaye's research examines settler colonialism and Indigenous-led responses to colonial gender violence and criminalization as well as harm reduction, consent, self-determination, and body sovereignty. She is the author of *Responding to Human Trafficking: Dispossession, Colonial Violence, and Resistance among Indigenous and Racialized Women*, which examines anti-trafficking responses in the context of settler colonialism in Canada.

Jeffrey Monaghan is an assistant professor at the Institute of Criminology and Criminal Justice, Carleton University. He is the author of *Security Aid: Canada's Development Regime of Security*, co-author with Andrew Crosby of *Policing Indigenous Movements: Dissent and the Security State*, and co-editor with Lucas Melgaço of *Protests in the Information Age: Social Movements, Digital Practices and Surveillance*.

Connor Morrison is a master's student at the University of Saskatchewan in the Department of Sociology, where he also completed a Bachelor of Arts Honours in sociology with a minor in psychology in 2019. His research areas include news media, communication technology, social media, discourse analysis, and online surveillance.

James F. Popham is an assistant professor of criminology at Wilfrid Laurier University, where he researches issues of cyber-criminality, technology, and social empowerment.

Prairie Schappert is employed by the Government of Canada. She convocated from the University of Saskatchewan in 2018 with a Bachelor of Arts with high honours in sociology, a Bachelor of Arts in psychology, achieving great distinction, and a certificate in criminology and addictions. Prairie published a paper on broken windows theory in 2017 in the *University of Saskatchewan Undergraduate Research Journal* (USURJ).

Kristen M.J. Thomasen is an assistant professor of law, robotics and society at the University of Windsor, Faculty of Law. She is also completing her PhD in law on the topic of drones and privacy in public at the University of Ottawa, where she is under the supervision of Dr. Ian Kerr, Canada Research Chair in ethics, law, and technology. Her doctoral work received a SSHRC Joseph-Armand Bombardier Canada Graduate Scholarship. Kristen researches and writes about the legal, social, and ethical implications of robotic and autonomous machines, and she teaches robotics law and policy at the University of Windsor. Prior to starting her PhD, Kristen clerked for the Honourable Madam Justice Rosalie Abella at the Supreme Court of Canada. She also clerked for the Alberta Court of Queen's Bench. Kristen is a member of the Law Society of Alberta.

Scott Thompson is an assistant professor in the Department of Sociology at the University of Saskatchewan and associate editor of the journal *Surveillance & Society*. Having been called "the genuine historian of surveillance studies," Scott primarily uses historical case studies in order to explain and address current and pressing issues in the areas of criminology, sociology, and surveillance

studies. His publications include work on surveillance and colonial/First Nations relationships, surveillance and the control of liquor consumption (*Punched Drunk*), national registration and identity cards, and the taking up of "new" surveillance technologies by police services.

Thania Vega is a PhD candidate in the Department of Politics at York University. They use feminist political economy analysis and a critical disability approach to examine the working conditions of migrant nurses at the intersections of Canadian immigration, health care, and labour-market policies. They are also a member of *Upping the Anti*'s editorial collective and an active member of CUPE 3903.

Kevin Walby is the chancellor's research chair and an associate professor of criminal justice at the University of Winnipeg. He is co-author with R. Lippert of *Municipal Corporate Security in International Context* (Routledge, 2015). He has co-edited with R. Lippert *Policing Cities: Urban Securitization and Regulation in the 21st Century* (Routledge, 2013) and *Corporate Security in the 21st Century: Theory and Practice in International Perspective* (Palgrave, 2014). He is co-editor of *Access to Information and Social Justice* with J. Brownlee (ARP Books, 2015) and *The Handbook of Prison Tourism* with J. Wilson, S. Hodgkinson, and J. Piché (Palgrave, 2017). He is co-editor of the *Journal of Prisoners on Prisons* as well as book review editor for *Surveillance & Society* and *Security Journal*.

Edward Hon-Sing Wong is a doctoral candidate in York University's social work PhD program. With a background in mental health practice and community organizing, his work centres on social work abolitionism and draws on anticolonial and anti-racist theory. His published writings include discussions of disablism within Canadian immigration policy, Canadian social work and colonialism, abolitionism in Hong Kong, and discourses of race in Canadian mental hygiene movement literature.

Karen Wood: Drawing from her professional experience as an early childhood educator, social worker, and educator, Dr. Wood's passion is fuelled by a deeply held commitment to eliminating violence that is informed by decades of community practice and academic teaching and research. As academic lead for RESOLVE Saskatchewan at the University of Saskatchewan, Karen's research explores the complexity of preventing, intervening in, and healing from the impacts of violence and abuse.

Introduction

The Study of Social Control and Social Regulation

Mitch D. Daschuk, James F. Popham, and Carolyn Brooks

After reading this chapter, you will be able to do the following:

1. Explain the concepts of social control and social regulation.
2. Identify the four foundational concepts of social control studies.
3. Name the theoretical perspectives associated with understanding social control and regulation.
4. Illustrate how "agents of socialization" shape the way that we understand the world.
5. Demonstrate how sociology helps us to understand social inequality, social conflict, and social change.

How Much Control Do We Really Have over Our Lives?

Many people would say that we have a great deal of control over our own lives. Some of us may reflect on the opportunities for self-direction that we encounter on a daily basis, from details such as choosing our outfit for the day and personal grooming to the bigger things such as our career ambitions and the relationships we form. We also may have a sense of autonomy in our leisurely pursuits, spiritual beliefs, and political opinions. In every case, we are provided with a range of options and in many ways the liberty to determine how we conduct ourselves.

How might a sociological perspective question the "freedom" to act within these examples? To answer, consider the sources of the inspiration underlying many of these decisions — for instance, the necessity of social participation within numerous social systems and institutions — and their influence over

the way we think about these options. Western society is organized around the imperative that we, as social actors, must find employment, exchange our time and energy to earn a wage, and do what we need to do to stay alive. The fact that we have choice in determining our careers or educational pursuits does not counter the principle that we have little choice but to participate with these economic practices and institutions. Simply put, as members of a society, we are required to conform to certain expectations should we wish to enjoy the benefits of collective living. We may choose how we present ourselves at work, but we have little choice in deciding whether *to* work. Much of our conduct, put another way, is regulated in accordance with the goal of ensuring the smooth operation of our social institutions, including that of the capitalist economy.

While this observation dispels the notion that we have complete control over our lives, other important questions remain. For instance, you might interject that we still have a great deal of liberty when presenting ourselves. After all, you are free to choose the music you like, the clothes you wear, and whether you style your hair with frosted tips or a combover. Beyond the institutionalized demand that we work, our day-to-day conduct is also regulated and restricted by innumerable cultural norms and expectations. For example, many young people in Canada work part-time in the retail industry. Generally, employers will mandate that employees wear a uniform or wardrobe to promote a sense of "organizational citizenship" (Stamper and Van Dyne 2003). In preparing for the day before a shift begins, can you really say that individuals employed by these companies had much "choice" in what they wore? What about the business person who wears a suit and collared shirt: can it really be said that their wardrobe choices were made out of personal choice rather than social expectation?

If you can agree that much of our daily conduct and self-presentation conform to institutional necessities, economic pressures, and cultural expectations — people *do* need jobs, after all — you might still take solace in the fact that most people nevertheless have great independence in choosing their leisure activities, politics, spirituality, or the types of entertainment that they enjoy. In other words, behind the layers of institutional and cultural expectations (such as the obligation to work and dress appropriately), we nevertheless enjoy liberties centred on our individual beliefs and preferences.

But a sociological lens invites a critical reconsideration of these assumptions. Our economic position greatly influences what forms of leisure we can reasonably afford and how much time we have outside of work hours;

gendered expectations influence our entertainment choices; and our upbringing plays a significant role in shaping our religious credos. Indeed, sociologists frequently contend that many of the personal "tastes" and "beliefs" that define us are, instead, influenced to a great degree by the specific forms of socialization that our parents, peers, and other authoritative figures impressed upon us as we first began to "make sense" of our material surroundings. The very qualities that we associate with our standing as free-thinking individuals can be traced back to the specific methods through which our significant others compelled us to recognize and interact with "the world"; these are often based on habits or ideas that were posed to us not as choices, but *inevitabilities*.

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Broadly speaking, this text provides an analysis and critical reappraisal of the factors — institutional, cultural, ideological, or other — that compel members of a society to conform to a range of social expectations. These sociological initiatives to explain how and why society presses us to conform to dominant expectations are affiliated with concepts such as social control and social regulation. Traditionally, research around **social regulation** focused on how our social institutions ensure that we engage in forms of belief and conduct that protect and reinforce the existing structure of society. These perspectives assess how the construction and enforcement of laws and institutional rules characterize some "ways of being" as normal and valid while delegitimizing or criminalizing others. These forms of analysis aspire to understand how the authority to determine "acceptable" and "unacceptable" conduct is maintained by institutions and over general publics, often promoting practices and beliefs that reinforce the legitimacy of those institutions and caution against drastic forms of change. Research pertaining to **social control**, on the other hand, focuses more so on the role played by our culture (or prevalently recognized belief and value systems that inform our understanding of the world) in impressing expectations of proper conduct and thought upon us. These perspectives consider the role that we all play in reinforcing notions of propriety, be it through compelling others to act in accordance with unwritten but widely recognized conduct expectations, or through the internal processes with which we impress expectations of proper behaviour or thought upon ourselves. The fact that both of these concepts still carry

currency within different corners of the sociological discipline demonstrate the shifting focus of social control studies — from early initiatives centred on explaining and preventing unconventional conduct to more recent analyses of how notions of "normal" are reinforced through our daily interactions. This text does not, however, privilege one term over the other. Instead, we feel these contrasting perspectives both make important contributions to our understanding of conformity and ought not be approached as mutually exclusive.

Foundational Concepts in Social Control

Though a variety of sociological traditions extend analyses related to the topics of social regulation and control, these terms rarely explicitly surface within the academic literature. Instead, sociologists have more commonly focused on closely related concepts. As we unpack the connotations that each term implies, we can gather a better sense of how sociology has approached social control research and note how the adoption of these key concepts signal shifting academic perspectives.

Deviance

The study of social control is most prevalently associated with the concept of **deviance**. Defined in a purely scientific manner, deviance refers to actions that are unanticipated or contradictory to expectations. For example, February deviates from the general rule that months have set days, and koalas are deviant bears given that they are marsupials as opposed to actual bears. In popular usage, "deviance" often implies criminality, immorality, and danger, and this is reflected in the systems and social rituals that seek to treat, rehabilitate, and reform those labelled as "deviants." Sociological analysis has sought to explain how we collectively interpret and respond to deviance, and why some forms of conduct lose their status as "deviance" while others persist (see Cohen 1985).

Normativity

Over time, the study of deviance has informed sociological reappraisals of the function of social norms and the processes through which they promote certain ways of acting, thinking, and being as normal, natural, and inevitable. The concept of **normativity** has increasingly been endorsed as a means of assessing exactly how, and why, societies come to impress expectations of "proper" conduct upon their members, and why we consensually participate in a variety of processes through which to regulate and correct those deemed abnormal.

While some perspectives correlate normativity with our innate desire to interact with predictable and safe social contexts, others suggest that expectations surrounding "normative" conduct can be found to restrict or forbid ways of being or thinking associated with underprivileged social populations (Sellin 1938). Normativity, then, is approached at different turns as a unifying social force or as a process through which to justify the regulation and correction of those groups who cannot, or do not wish to, conform. Many social thinkers have extended these accounts to explain how certain forms of conduct come to constitute "the normal" and why some ways of being become socially authoritative while others are forbidden.

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Power

Given that expectations surrounding social conduct serve to both label and justify the correction of "deviant" people, some lines of sociological inquiry approach the phenomenon of normativity as an opportunity to critically assess the distribution of **power** in society. Broadly approaching power as the capacity to make people behave or think in ways that they would not otherwise do on their own, these traditions of inquiry assess how different forms of normativity can be described as serving the interests and continued empowerment of some social groups while disadvantaging others (for discussion, see Bourdieu 1979).

Beyond noting the presence of "gender norms" or "sexual norms" and the repercussions associated with acting out of accordance with them, these perspectives allow for a deeper consideration of the interests that social conventions reinforce. Some suggest those who hold positions of power and authority within a society aspire to "shape" morality in a manner that perpetuates various forms of social inequality — most prevalently related to class, race, gender, sex, sexuality, age, ability, and belief. Our cultural and institutional landscapes are designed in ways that benefit those who have the power to create and enforce laws, and they contribute to forms of normativity that reinforce the inequitable distribution of social power.

Other traditions in social thought, however, go so far as to suggest that power imbalances are built into the very linguistic and communicative processes

Actions that can be read as "deviating from normativity," in this sense, can instead be approached as instances whereby groups develop tactics through which to resist how those with power continue to organize the world to their advantage.

through which we make sense of the material world. The conventions we use to navigate and optimize our interactions with the world serve to empower certain ways of existing and denigrate other forms of conduct as "abnormal" and threatening.

Resistance

Finally, given the emergence of perspectives affiliating deviance and norms with the inequitable distribution of power, sociologists have reappraised conduct that has traditionally been approached as forms of deviance as, instead, expressions of resistance — acts that draw attention to the inequitable distribution of power in society, articulate the negative consequences faced by some social populations, and advocate for movements toward challenging these imbalances. Actions that can be read as "deviating from normativity," in this sense, can instead be approached as instances whereby groups develop tactics through which to resist how those with power continue to organize the world to their advantage.

Sociological Perspectives on Social Control

Various traditions of sociological thought have brought theorists to different conclusions about the presence, and nature, of social control and social regulation. While the discipline offers a plurality of approaches, this section explains how, broadly speaking, certain categories begin to emerge. Each of these sociological perspectives entails central assumptions of the function of social norms and differing analyses of how they coincide with specific cultural and institutional interests.

Symbolic Interactionist Perspectives

Popularized throughout the early 1900s, **symbolic interactionist perspectives** suggest social stability is maintained as human actors develop systems of communication, and collective notions of expected practice, to achieve and reinforce an overarching consensus of how the world works. From this vantage, human beings seek a degree of comfort and security as we interact with others, and we legitimize social norms to reinforce our collective recognition of a "**natural attitude**" (Schütz 1967). Symbolic interactionism argues that

the presence of different types of beliefs or conduct expectations draw their force from the fact that a majority of the public believes the world should be ordered in a certain way and approaches deviations from these expectation as threatening practices that require regulation and deterrence. We continue to abide by normative expectations, then, as a means to ensure our own safety and security and to reinforce the authority of social norms with which we have organized our own understanding of "how the world works."

Marxist Perspectives

Inspired by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels (1970), **Marxist perspectives** suggest societies are structured by the perpetuation of unequal relationships between social groups and that our norms and institutions are designed to benefit those who already possess wealth and social authority. From a Marxist vantage, the power to shape collective norms and social institutions is distributed unequally, and those who have such power use it to ensure the continuation of their privilege and authority. We are, essentially, a society of "haves" and "have-nots" and those who "have" protect their interests by constructing norms to justify their empowerment. As Marxist sociologists explain, one particularly efficient tactic of the powerful involves embedding values and ideologies that promote their interests into our social institutions. This contributes to normative practices that justify inequitable relationships between owners and workers, promotes that we form our identities by purchasing consumer goods, and accredits processes that characterize groups that might threaten these social arrangements as "abnormal," "deviant," "and dangerous."

Critical Perspectives

Critical perspectives, most closely affiliated with the postmodernist theories of Michel Foucault (1980), focus less on the interests of those who hold positions of social power than the forms of "truth" or "knowledge" that grant them such authority. From this perspective, the very systems of communication that we use to orient our understanding of what the world expects of us, including the "truths" around which our norms and institutions are based, are structured in such a way that we grant "knowledge" the authority to determine appropriate and inappropriate forms of conduct. This perspective advocates for a critical interrogation of the forms of truth that inform the operation of our institutions and legitimize the authority of key social actors. Employing a critical perspective involves assessing the power dynamics embedded within the "facts" that inform "the practice of medicine," as opposed to considering the personal

These perspectives advance differing analyses regarding where notions of deviance and normativity draw their authority. Symbolic interactionists argue this authority stems from the collective will of the broader society; Marxist perspectives focus on the interests of those who hold positions of power; and critical perspectives interrogate the very forms of knowledge and truth that serve as the foundations of what we know about the material world.

interests and aims of any given medical professional alone. Critical perspectives contest the prospect that the "objective truths" that orient our world are value-neutral or unbiased, instead approaching these systems of knowledge themselves as possessing the power to assess and optimize the conduct of human populations.

Summary

Collectively, these perspectives advance differing analyses regarding where notions of deviance and normativity draw their authority. Symbolic interactionists argue this authority stems from the collective will of the broader society; Marxist perspectives focus on the interests of those who hold positions of power; and critical perspectives interrogate the very forms of knowledge and truth that serve as the foundations of what we know about the material world. Though differentiated by key central assumptions, all three traditions advocate for their perspectives by looking at common variables associated with the process through which we come to understand the world and our position within it. Comparing and contrasting these perspectives can consider the different ways in which they approach the study of commonly identified **agents of socialization**.

Agents of Socialization

Socialization refers to the process through which we are exposed to a range of social groups and institutions that shape our understanding of how the world works, and these cause us to become familiar with the conduct or roles we are expected to endorse in different situations. Often, socialization is approached as a multi-stage process that we continue to experience throughout our lives. The term **primary socialization** refers to situations to which we are exposed throughout our earliest years and how we become familiar with the tools through which we communicate and recognize the presence of social roles and conduct expectations. This pertains to the development of speech (learning how to form words and understanding what they represent) and an awareness of crucial social practices, such as ensuring personal hygiene, respecting the authority of parents, and becoming familiar with the forms of

conduct associated with different social roles (Derrida 1969). Once we have the capacity to communicate and a general sense of how the world works, processes of **secondary socialization** inform us of the purpose of our social systems and the specific roles we must take on in the interest of reinforcing social order. Sociologists commonly identify these actors and institutions as agents of socialization and describe their task as ensuring that commonly recognized patterns of social conduct remain orderly and predictable from generation to generation. Four of the most significant agents of socialization are the family, peer groups, educational institutions, and mass media.

The Family

Without doubt, the agent of socialization with which we become most intimately familiar is the institution of the family. Classifying the family as an *institution* may seem curious to some, given that most do not think of the institution of the family in the same way as a correctional institution (though some certainly would). However, it bears keeping in mind that *the family*, as a concept, refers to an institutionalized collection of cultural practices. While *your* family likely consists of at least one parental figure and perhaps some siblings, *the* institution of the family is based around perpetuating normative social practices centred on raising children for the benefits the smooth operation of our social systems.

From the symbolic interactionist perspective, the family is regarded as the institution with the largest influence over our primary socialization and, by extension, the specific ways that we perceive and interact with the world around us (Berger and Luckmann 1984). Beyond imparting us with communication skills, families also implicitly guide the process of how we come to recognize and abide by gender roles as well as the expectations placed upon us within different social environments. Theorists in the Marxist tradition, on the other hand, suggest that the family functions to condition our inevitable participation in the mainstream workforce and they therefore approach the family as an institution through which to manufacture our consent to participate in exploitative economic systems (Willis 1981). Finally, critical perspectives take note of the scientific literature surrounding the "functional family," arguing that this knowledge grants the institutional world the authority to intervene should parents be perceived as engaging in abnormal parenting practices (Agger and Shelton 2007).

Peer Groups

As in the case of the family, our peer groups (the people we interact with throughout the course of our day-to-day lives) also contribute to our socialization. In many cases, peer groups reinforce the socialization to which we are initially exposed in the home, yet they inform how we should conduct ourselves as we interact with the world outside our homes (see Akers 1998). Further, our peer groups inform the processes through which we engage in the construction of our notions of self and individuality, popularize forms of conduct that translate into claims to personal status, and demonstrate the negative repercussions associated with straying from these conventions.

Beyond assessing how our peer groups reinforce our endorsement of the "natural attitude," symbolic interactionist researchers note how some peer groups promote beliefs or practices that would be interpreted as "deviant" by mainstream society, yet these contribute toward survival strategies for those within marginalized populations (Sutherland and Cressey 2006). Marxist traditions suggest a peer group's primary duty, as an agent of socialization, revolves around popularizing forms of leisure or "self-building" that directly perpetuate consumerism. Peer groups, then, take on the task of promoting that we, similarly, build ourselves through the purchasing of consumer products. Critical perspectives analyze the manner in which we impress cultural expectations and forms of regulation upon each other, often based on our uncritical acceptance of the "knowledge" surrounding conduct and the corresponding compulsion to "correct" or "normalize" the conduct of others.

Education

The education system is another significant agent of socialization. Tasked with the explicit goals of imparting students with the "knowledge" required to properly interact with the world as well as ensuring students learn to conform to "proper" expectations of conduct, the institution of formal education serves to reinforce and expand processes related to primary socialization.

Symbolic interactionists argue that the school environment also serves as our initial exposure to forms of secondary socialization, as we are taught how to "properly" conduct ourselves in relation to our peers and the authority figures whom we encounter. From the Marxist perspective, the educational system's primary goal is to condition us to respect authority and develop skills that will (once again) facilitate our transition into the workforce and the social reproduction of class inequalities — with different forms of education being

extended to students on the basis of their social class standing (Gramsci 2008). Critical perspectives follow a similar line of logic, suggesting that the institution of education should best be approached as one that places youth under constant surveillance to ensure their conformity with normal expectations; this justifies that they be disciplined should they instead elect to engage in "deviant" or "abnormal" forms of conduct.

Mass Media

The fourth agent of socialization considered here is mass media. Unlike other agents of socialization, mass media does *not* contribute to the socialization process by directly interacting with individuals. While our families, peer groups, and the education system popularize social norms within the context of our lived experiences, mass media distributes information to a broad pool of diverse recipients at the same time. Whereas the socialization agents discussed above educate us on how things work *within our own social settings*, mass media informs us as to the state of the world *outside our personal surroundings*. As such, mass media is a primary resource for forming thoughts and feelings about those regions and social populations with whom we do not interact in our daily lives (see Cohen 1985; Faith and Jiwani 2002). While the news media is tasked with the role of informing us as to "what is happening" so as to ensure our informed participation in the organization of society (via the mainstream political process), entertainment media function to inform our use of leisure time and allow us the opportunity to "relax" and "wind down."

Symbolic interactionists suggest mass media content reflects the values and normative expectations that the wider society values and wishes to see reinforced (Berger 1972). The prevalence of police procedurals and superhero tales demonstrate our desire for justice and security, while situational comedies celebrate and reflect our affinity for humour and relatable content, and romantic comedies reinforce the significance of Western courtship rituals and companionship. From a Marxist perspective, the goals of mass media are far more nefarious and are perceived to further reinforce our support for the perpetuation of inequitable social systems (Horkheimer and Adorno 2002). Marxism posits that news media content aims to create a climate of fear and suspicion, often characterizing social minority groups as sources of risk and danger, to condition our consent for increasingly strict crime control methods. Entertainment media, on the other hand, functions to lead us to "tune in" to this form of media and "tune out" our day-to-day struggles and concerns — as opposed to critically assessing our position in life and whether "the way

things are" actually serves to benefit the majority of the population. Critical theorists approach media content as yet another channel through which to orient institutional notions of "proper" and "improper" conduct, as well as an agent that leads us to impress similar expectations of conduct and belief upon others, as well as ourselves.

Current Issues and Social Control

Given this overview of the key concepts and theoretical perspectives with which the social sciences make sense of social control, we now briefly consider some of the themes you will encounter throughout this text.

Understanding Inequality

In some cases, the concepts and perspectives previously presented have been applied in considering the processes through which social norms, institutional regulation, and the contents of "knowledge" have historically contributed to privileging certain groups and justifying the maltreatment of others. Normative social expectations and characterizations of deviance are approached as long-serving means to justify the cultural and structural marginalization of people and populations based on gender, sexuality, ethnicity, body type, class status, ability, "mental health," and age, as well as forming public consensus that such "deviants" *must* be subject to various forms of surveillance, regulation, "treatment," or "correction." While these initiatives often result in the social, economic, and cultural disempowerment of such "nonconformists," these groups can also engage in various forms of collective and individual resistance, be they creative forms of self-performance and self-expression, the formation of subcultural communities that champion values contrasting those of the mainstream society, or other ways to contest the "common sense" of social organization through related rites of rebellion and dissent. The perspectives introduced here do not only attempt to explain historical sources of normativity and power, but they also aim to better assess the symbolism associated with forms of deviance and resistance.

Understanding Conflict

Contemporary events and emerging forms of conflict can also be better understood by "unpacking" the forms of power and expressions of resistance that continue to unfold as a variety of groups strive for equitable treatment and the reorganization of the social landscape. At this current stage in Western

society, it could be said that many of the "commonsense" or "taken-for-granted" assumptions that have anchored the "natural attitude" are increasingly being challenged, often by groups that organize and mobilize through the use of technological and communicative capacities. The study of social control allows for a better understanding of the goals of these movements, as well as the emergent tactics — such as the use of social media — that they employ in advocating for change. These areas of study can also help us to understand how mainstream society reacts to these mobilizations – be it through institutions or the mobilization of counter-movements.

Understanding Change

Social control research also aids in the assessment of successful initiatives toward changing aspects of our social and cultural systems and contributes information that informs the social movements of the future. While we will consider a variety of case studies meant to demonstrate the extent to which normativity and power resist challenges, we will also have the opportunity to consider the slow but steady forms of progress that have materialized. These lines of inquiry also demonstrate that significant movements toward change can — and *have* — been instigated by lone individuals and dedicated groups who articulate their grievances in such a manner as to establish common ground among the various "standpoints" that we all inhabit.

A Brief Overview of the Text

This text consists of four sections. The first section provides an overview of influential theories and methods related to "deviance" and social regulation. We discuss examples of historical and present-day social regulation and power, as well as methodological approaches to understand social regulation and control. In part, this section aspires to help students understand the variety of sociological theories in this area. These chapters provide the touchstone perspectives and theorists related to the sociological study of norms, deviance, regulation, normalization, and power. Section two focuses on the construction of deviant and normalized identities, particularly related to addiction, sexuality, disability, and youth. Although we flush out a variety of perspectives on the social control of identity, from consensus to critical and feminist theories, we rely heavily on a social constructionist paradigm that focuses on the standpoints of those defined as deviant and who have experienced social control. Section three explores the culture of control. The chapters in this section raise questions about institutional social control through, for example, media

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and moral panics; the control of sex work; and misrepresentations and responses to murdered and missing Indigenous women and girls. The final section aims to familiarize readers with the process through which modern technologies have contributed to new forms of social control and the social movements that emerge to challenge traditional notions of "deviance" and engage in forms of resistance. In reinforcing the prospect that "deviant" labels and social regulatory initiatives depend largely upon the construction of knowledge, the emergence of the internet as a significant communication platform has not only ushered in an age of new surveillance technologies, but it also allows for the development and distribution of "counter-knowledges" through which dominant conceptions of deviance are increasingly being challenged.

Conclusion

At its core, the study of social regulation and social control assists us in understanding why we organize society as we do, how social norms gain authority, and the repercussions that emerge as different people or populations engage in movements toward conformity and nonconformity. Beyond analyzing how notions of deviance, normativity, power, and resistance actively shape our social world, different theoretical perspectives contribute a range of standpoints from which to consider these relationships. Symbolic interactionists suggest that we, as a society, create notions of deviance and normality to suit our collective interests. Marxist perspectives suggest those with social power shape our perceptions of "proper" and "improper" conduct to serve their interests and claims to social privilege. Critical perspectives consider the contents and social effects of the forms of "knowledge" and "truth" that orient our understanding of the material world and the systems we construct based on these truths. Whether being applied to historical case studies or current events, each of these concepts and methods of analyzing social order expands our awareness of the systems and cultural movements that, at different turns, reinforce and challenge long-standing conventions in social organization.

Meanwhile, it is useful to recognize that each of us is compelled to conform with normative social expectations, respect figures of authority, and support forms of conduct in line with the forms of knowledge and truth that we approach as "common sense" or "beyond reproach." By the conclusion of this

collection, you may have a different assessment of the amount of control you have over your own life, as well as a newfound familiarity of strategies through which to change this assessment.

Discussion Questions

1. What is one significant difference between the concepts of social regulation and social control?
2. How have you previously understood the concept of "deviance" and what are some forms of conduct that you consider to be deviant?
3. Can you identify some of the "truths" or "forms of knowledge" that have influenced your perspective regarding "the way the world works"? Have you ever had cause to second-guess their credibility?
4. Have you witnessed or participated in any acts of collective resistance? If so, for what purpose?

Glossary

agents of socialization: the social institutions that contribute toward informing us as to how the world works, as well as how we should act.

critical perspectives: sociological theories arguing that systems of communication and forms of knowledge contribute to unequal power dynamics among social groups.

deviance: actions that contrast with cultural expectations or institutional rules.

Marxist perspectives: sociological theories arguing that our social systems are shaped by powerful social groups to protect their privilege.

natural attitude: taken-for-granted assumptions that we uncritically use to inform our beliefs and social conduct.

normativity: the process through which certain behaviours and beliefs take on authority and become standardized expectations.

power: the ability to make an individual or group act in ways that they otherwise would not.

primary socialization: the process through which we become familiar with methods of communication and recognize social roles.

resistance: challenging, or refusing to abide by, normative expectations and the power of those who enforce them.

secondary socialization: the process through which we become familiar with the social roles that we are expected to fill as a means of ensuring social order.

social control: the process through which dominant cultural beliefs compel members of society to conform to conduct expectations as well as pressure others to conform to dominant conduct expectations.

social regulation: the process through which our social institutions are designed to ensure we engage in forms of belief and conduct that protect and reinforce the current structure of society.

socialization: the processes through which we become oriented with the material and social worlds.

symbolic interactionist perspectives: sociological theories arguing that our social systems are actively shaped and reinforced by popular consensus among social actors.

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