

Peer Review

Review of: "In Search of Social Control: Conceptual Tools for Control in the Sociologies of Erving Goffman, Pierre Bourdieu, and Michel Foucault"

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The paper entitled *"In Search of Social Control: Conceptual Tools for Control in the Sociologies of Erving Goffman, Pierre Bourdieu, and Michel Foucault"* constitutes a significant and enriching contribution to the field of social sciences, examining the mechanisms of social control through widely recognized theoretical perspectives. Its focus lies in the articulation of conceptual tools that facilitate the analysis of both classical contexts and the emerging challenges posed by globalization and technological transformations, thereby establishing its considerable relevance to contemporary debates. The selection of reference authors is particularly judicious. Goffman, Bourdieu, and Foucault provide complementary interpretative frameworks that enable a comprehensive analysis of the dynamics of power and control, spanning micro-level, symbolic, structural, and discursive dimensions. This approach underpins the construction of a robust theoretical foundation, offering significant potential for understanding the complexity of contemporary social phenomena.

The article is commendable for its clarity in presenting the fundamental concepts of each author, which aids in the comprehension of their respective theoretical contributions. Nevertheless, there is a discernible inclination towards extensive descriptions of well-established theories, which might constrain the space available for deeper problematization or applied analysis. While this does not undermine the merit of the work, it does highlight opportunities for further enrichment through a more integrated exploration of the perspectives under consideration. For instance, a deeper engagement with the intersections between Goffman's notion of "total institutions," Bourdieu's concepts of *habitus* and field, and Foucault's technologies of power could elucidate areas of

convergence and tension, thereby enhancing the theoretical dialogue. The article employs rigorous academic language and maintains a coherent structure, contributing to its readability and the precise communication of complex ideas. However, its theoretical orientation could benefit from the inclusion of empirical examples or practical applications to better demonstrate the applicability and utility of the conceptual tools discussed. The integration of case studies or references to contemporary phenomena –such as digital surveillance or the influence of social media on contemporary forms of control– would serve to significantly enrich the analysis and broaden its scope.

From a methodological perspective, the paper focuses on theoretical reflection, a choice that is both valid and relevant. Nevertheless, considering how the proposed categories might be operationalized in empirical research would introduce a practical dimension that could further strengthen the proposal. Moreover, the inclusion of more recent literature, particularly regarding social control in technological contexts, would contribute to updating and expanding the scope of the study, aligning it more closely with contemporary issues. The text is distinguished by the clarity with which it presents the fundamental concepts of the three authors, offering a valuable resource for those seeking to engage with the theoretical underpinnings of social control. However, the integration of empirical examples or concrete cases would significantly enhance the work. Demonstrating how the ideas of Goffman, Bourdieu, and Foucault might be applied to analyze current phenomena –such as digital surveillance, social media, or public health policy– would create a stronger link between theory and practice. Similarly, a more detailed examination of specific institutions, such as schools, prisons, hospitals, or technology platforms, could provide the article with an applied dimension, broadening its appeal to an interdisciplinary audience.

In theoretical terms, the article could benefit from a more critical engagement with the interplay between the perspectives it examines. While the concepts of Goffman, Bourdieu, and Foucault are treated extensively, exploring their intersections offers fertile ground for deeper analysis. For instance, examining how Goffman's notion of "total institutions" relates to Bourdieu's categories of *habitus* and field, or how Foucault's technologies of power interact with Bourdieu's forms of symbolic control, could highlight areas of convergence and tension between these frameworks. Such an approach would not only enrich the conceptual framework but would also underscore the originality of the work. Another area for potential improvement is the updating and diversification of the bibliography. Although the article makes appropriate use of classical references, incorporating recent studies would enhance the relevance of the discussion. For example, contemporary research on

digital surveillance (e.g., Byung-Chul Han, Shoshana Zuboff), algorithms, or the dynamics of control in social networks could expand the analysis and connect the theoretical frameworks to emergent global issues.

Regarding structure and style, the article benefits from its rigorous academic language and clear organization. However, certain sections exhibit a degree of descriptive redundancy, which may dilute the argumentative impact. A more concise synthesis of widely recognized concepts, such as Foucault's panopticon, could free up space for more original reflections and the development of critical insights that contribute to innovation in the analysis of social control. Such adjustments would not only enhance the flow of the text but also sustain the reader's engagement. Furthermore, reflecting on the contemporary implications of the theories addressed and critically problematizing the concept of social control could add another layer of depth to the article. Analyzing how the dynamics of control have evolved within the contexts of digitalization, globalization, and the ethical challenges posed by mass surveillance could further enrich the discussion. This form of reflection would connect classical frameworks with present-day debates, thereby reinforcing the significance and relevance of the proposal.

Declarations

Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.