

# Summary for chapter 2 in the power and everyday practice

[Sociology](#)



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Summary "Thinking about Power" 23 September In "Chapter Two: Thinking about power," Brock explored several theories on the organization of power. She explained two schools of thought that impact the theorization of power: modernism and postmodernism. Modernism opposed deterministic beliefs about reality, and instead, it proposed that human reason can be used to explain and control the natural environment and human behaviors.

Postmodernism challenged the grand narratives or generalized claims about history. Postmodernists assert that history is fragmented and irregular, so they must tap subjugated knowledge to make sense of reality.

Karl Marx is a modernist because he believed that scientific methods, through historical materialism, can unearth the truth and help people challenge false belief systems. Marx argued that people should challenge existing capitalist structures of power, in order to attain social transformation, where an equitable distribution of power and wealth exists.

Antonio Gramsci proposed that coercion can exist through "cultural hegemony," where people agree that corporate interests serve their personal interests too (Brock, 2012, p. 17). He argued that maintaining hegemony is a complex process, but people can fight it through counter-hegemonic actions.

Michael Foucault shifted sociological questions to "how" through his genealogical method. He examined the intricacy and contingency of historical events and everyday activities. He argued that power is historically produced and represented the ethical and political values of their times.

Furthermore, Foucault asserted that power and knowledge have a circular relationship, where exercising power creates knowledge and this knowledge

reinforces power. Liberalism believes that full citizenship is critical to political participation and economic progress. Neoliberalism contends that power is accessible to those who can attain it. It promotes the liberalization of markets through its free market ideology, where states support the privatization of public goods and services. This theory is highly individualistic and focuses on self-motivation and self interests.

#### Reference

Brock, D. (2012). Chapter Two: Thinking about power: Exploring theories of domination and governance. In D. Brock & R. Raby, *Power and everyday practices* (pp. 17-32). Toronto: Nelson Education.