



High school friendship: James Moody, Race, school integration, and friendship segregation in America, *American Journal of Sociology* **107**, 679-716 (2001).
(Tilly & Castañeda 2007)

24

McDonaldization (Ritzer)

1. What is the **objective** of this text?
 - The objective of this text is to argue that the standardization and “rationalization” of the workplace is not a good prospect for both employers and employees. This “rationalization” is dubbed “McDonaldization” because McDonald embodies some of the same concepts of creating a hyper rational workplace to maximize efficiency.
2. Briefly explain what is meant by "The **McDonaldization** of Society".
 - The **McDonaldization** of Society is the processes by which society becomes hyper focused on maximizing efficiency, and applying a rational view of how humans work. This includes prospects such as minimizing the travel time to work.
3. What are the main features of “McDonaldization”?
 - The main features of McDonaldization are (1) focus on high efficiency, (2) ensuring predictability in systems, and (3) calculability (quantity over quality), (4) the control of workers, and (5) the substitution of non-human technology.

4. Define **efficiency** in McDonaldization?

- In McDonaldization, **efficiency** is characterized as the minimization of the cost of creating as much of a need as possible. For instance, eating with family (a need) may be replaced by TV dinners, since it is more efficient, and less time is spent while doing that activity.

5. What are the means through which efficiency is usually increased?

- The means through which efficiency is usually increased is by (1) bureaucracies, which separate the goals into more well-fitting goals, (2) the focus on efficiency in all aspects of one's life.

6. Define **calculability** in McDonaldization?

- **Calculability** in McDonaldization is the ability for companies and everyone to track the achievement of goals, typically not in qualitative measurements, but shallow quantitative measurements that do not truly get at the heart of the question.

7. Define **predictability** in McDonaldization?

- **Predictability** in McDonaldization is the idea that every process must occur the exact same way when it comes to quantitative analyses. By focusing on **predictability**, there are no surprises that can hinder the bottom line of companies or people.

8. Define **control** in McDonaldization?

- Control in McDonaldization refers to the idea that, when working, companies have total and unambiguous say in what employees do. Predictability and control go hand in hand, wherein we must control what the outcomes are. For instance, superiors always exert control on subordinates.

9. What are some **consequences** of McDonaldization?

- Some of the consequences of McDonaldization are the irrationality of rationality, which shows that the McDonaldization of society ironically negatively affects the bottom line of the company, even though it is meant to positively do so. Another

consequence relates to the “saddening” of employees, since the control exerted by companies create an environment of oppression and carelessness.

Images of Organization (Morgan)

1. What is the **objective** of this text?

- The objective is to present a view into common types of organizations, as well as describing the types of organizations that are present today.

2. How are organizations defined?

- Organizations are defined as “a pattern of precisely defined jobs organized in a hierarchical manner through precisely defined lines of command or communication.” This text emphasizes on the mechanical aspect of organizations, wherein organizations are meant to work as a machine, and not as many humans put together to accomplish a goal.

3. What does the author mean by "**mechanization**"?

- By **mechanization**, the author means the turning from dynamic, human jobs into extremely mechanistic, computer-like, definitions of the jobs people are supposed to do in companies. People working in these organizations are meant to work as many independent parts all working together like a machine.

4. What does the “mechanistic” view of organizations tend to emphasize?

- The mechanistic view of organizations tends to emphasize the absolute obedience to a set of systems intended to make workers work in a certain way, without differing away from the system. In this, the humans must behave as small machinery parts.

5. What does it tend to ignore?

- It tends to ignore the human aspect of people. When people attempt to behave as computer parts, some of them become too complacent, bored, and unable to perform as they should. Thus, the mechanistic view of organizations tends to ignore that by constraining humans to a specific set of systems, one may achieve a decrease in productivity, as opposed to the desired increase.

6. Define **Taylorism** (Scientific Management)?

- Scientific Management is the set of ideas by which scientific analysis of work productivity is achieved. In particular, as the text describes, it emphasizes (1) shifting responsibility to the managers instead of the worker, wherein managers must do all the thinking and the workers all the working; (2) scientific analysis to arrive at the most efficient method to work; (3) selecting the most qualified person to perform the job; (4) training workers to become qualified, and (5) constant monitoring of employees to ensure they perform up to par.

7. Describe the relationship between the transfer of **knowledge** from the worker to the manager on one hand, and the shift in **power** from worker to manager on the other.

- Because managers begin holding the ability to plan and create plans of action, workers now do not have that ability. Instead, workers are only meant to work on what the managers plan and create. Therefore, the power that the managers possess under Taylorism increases, because the managers hold all of the knowledge of the job.

8. Define **Fordism**.

- Fordism is the idea that employees behave like an assembly line, with 30-40 second intervals of high intensity work, and high output. In addition to these characteristics, in Fordism there is typically an increase in expected worker productivity, causing high stress and strain on workers.

9. Define **bureaucracy**. Give an example.

- The **bureaucracy** is the different layers in an organization that ensure quality control within the organization by either delaying or having some sort of verification process on systems. Although there are many different types of bureaucracy, they typically share the idea that they are composed of people working for the organization.

10. What are the **challenges** these organizational structures (i.e., Taylorism, Fordism, bureaucracies, etc.) are facing in the XXI century?

- Some of the challenges of Taylorism facing the XXI century are the fact that workers may become slighted, and maybe even oppressed, under such systems wherein workers may not organize and plan the work that they do.
- Some of the challenges of Fordism is the high turnover rate that it creates since it places a heavy strain on workers. Its favor of assembly-line-like work also creates weaknesses where if a system fails, the entire assembly line may fail.
- Some of the challenges of bureaucracies are the fact that they are slow to change and effect. The reason for this is because of the many standards that are present in between each layer of the bureaucracy.