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The Rationalization of Everything? Using Ritzer's McDonaldization Thesis to Teach Weber

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ABSTRACT

Today's students have grown up in a world structured by the forces of rationalization, making it difficult for them to comprehend the scope and magnitude of the transformations Weber described. In this paper, we outline a plan for helping students appreciate Weber's theoretical achievements, as well as teaching them to think more critically about what constitutes the "good life" in rationalized societies. We use Ritzer's best-selling book, *The McDonaldization of Society*, as a vehicle for encouraging students' interest in Weber's work. We describe a set of field exercises that bring Weber to life and provide rich material for active learning.

Max Weber ([1905] 1998; 1946) argued that the process of rationalization, once unleashed upon the world, transformed social life forever. By loosening the hold of custom and tradition, rationalization led to new practices that were chosen because they were efficient, rather than customary. Weber argued that because of the "technical superiority" of the bureaucratic form, it would come to dominate all forms of human organization like an "iron cage" in which humans were eternally trapped. Weber's ideas continue to inform sociological theorizing today. For example, building on Weber's insights, the institutional approach has spawned a robust stream of work in organizational sociology (Powell and DiMaggio, 1983; Scott, 1995).

Students have grown up in a world structured by the forces of rationalization, and thus they often have difficulty comprehending the scope and magnitude of the transformations Weber described. Students' taken for granted world includes fast food, 24/7 operating hours, instant world-wide communications, and other practices described by Ritzer (2000). Because they are immersed in it, the rationalized world seems natural to them, rather than socially constructed. Students who bring this natural and unproblematic view of rationality into a Sociological Theory course pose a challenge to instructors wishing to teach Weber's ideas on bureaucracy and rationality.

In this paper, we describe a plan for helping students appreciate Weber's theoretical achievements, as well as teaching them to think more critically about what constitutes the "good life" in rationalized societies. We use Ritzer's (2000) best-selling book, The McDonaldization of Society, and a set of field exercises to bring Weber to life and provide rich material for active learning in the classroom.

RATIONALITY AND THE IRON CAGE

Although Weber's substantive writings were varied, the theory of rationalization lies at the heart of much of his most important work (see, for example, Weber [1905] 1998; [1914] 1979; 1946). Social order in the Western world changed drastically with the rise of two great forces of modernity—capitalism and bureaucracy. Instead of treating humans as individuals, these systems operated through the application of universal standards and regulations. Weber argued that these new forces triumphed over the old established order because they were *rational*. Unencumbered by the myriad idiosyncrasies of individuals or the power of tradition, these new systems could carry out their activities much more efficiently than older ways of doing things.

Bureaucracies were the epitome of modern social organization in Weber's mind. They are organized along rational lines, highlighted by the abstract, universal, and regular execution of authority and application of standards (Weber 1946). Weber's (1946) theory of bureaucracy highlights six dimensions: fixed offices; hierarchy; documentation; credentialism and training; hardening of tasks into occupations; universal standards applicable to all. These principles of organization allow for the efficient and predictable coordination and execution of human action. Because of their ability to handle the tasks of an increasingly complex society with relative ease, bureaucracies emerged as *the* modern form of social organization, and they profoundly changed social life. The modern world, organized according to principles of rationality, became disenchanted and routine. The power of tradition gave way to the power of standard.

TEACHING WEBER

It certainly would not be difficult to convince an instructor teaching Sociological Theory of the importance and centrality of Max Weber's ideas to the curriculum. Our survey of syllabi included in the most recent ASA *Resource Book for Teaching Sociological Theory* (Lemoyne 2001) revealed that readings and discussions of Weber's theories accounted for an average of 1.3 weeks per semester, making him the most frequently discussed *individual* in a typical theory course, followed by Marx (1.2 weeks) and Durkheim (1.0 weeks). When combined with "neo-Weberians" and other spin-offs, Weber's ideas account for a significant portion of both classical and contemporary Sociological Theory courses.

Unfortunately, many of the "classics" of Sociological Theory are the most stress-inducing readings for undergraduate students. The readings' often-arcane language and obscure examples can easily lead to confusion and panic. In the case of Weberian theory, students' confusion is compounded because many of the processes and structures that comprise the substance of these theorists' writings are virtually omnipresent. They have influenced students' lives from the day they were born, becoming part of their taken for granted world. Thus, rationalization and standardization seem perfectly natural, and students may find it hard to grasp their socially constructed nature.

Despite the inherent difficulty in teaching and learning Weber's theories, a thorough and comprehensive understanding of these ideas is vital for students majoring in Sociology or taking a course in Theory. If they understand the processes of rationalization, students have a foundation for other Sociology classes in work and organizations, social stratification, and economic sociology, among others. Weberian

theory can also provide students with a more sophisticated understanding of the ways in which social structures shape their own lives.

Several innovative methods for teaching Weber and the other "classics" have been proposed. Many of them emphasize active learning and/or cooperative learning. Active learning techniques (in the form of exercises) are beneficial for several reasons. "They can help students develop critical thinking, teamwork, communication skills, independence, and long-term memory of class concepts" (Woodberry and Aldrich 2000: 241). Exercises immerse students in the material, help to clarify abstract concepts in students' minds, and turn students from passive agents in the classroom to active creators of knowledge for themselves. Active learning is particularly suited to a course in Sociological Theory. By encouraging students to discuss concepts and readings with their peers, cooperative learning assuages fears surrounding theory, discourages passivity, and facilitates an active process of theorizing (Reinhardt 1999). Research has shown that cooperative learning increases students' mastery and motivation, and helps them to see things from the perspectives of others (Johnson, Johnson, and Smith 1991; McKeachie 1999). Exercises allow instructors to avoid dependence on lectures, which can create a "norm of silence" among students and help to reinforce the widespread belief that a course in theory is "boring" (Segady 1990). Students almost always respond enthusiastically to active and cooperative learning techniques in evaluations (Aldrich 2001).

Several authors have described active and cooperative learning techniques for understanding sociological theory generally, and Weber, specifically. Donaghy (2000) used a television talk-show format to engage students in discussions of major sociological

theorists and their ideas. The format appeared to help students overcome the anxiety associated with theory and also to demonstrate theory's relevance to everyday life. She divided the class into teams and had each team present to the class a simulated television program in which the political candidates, news analysts, talk show guests, or other participants were theorists whom the class had studied. Interviews focused either on the substance of the theorist's ideas or on current events interpreted through a specific theoretical lens.

In another application of popular culture, Gontsch-Thompson (1990) used Margaret Atwood's novel *The Handmaid's Tale* to pique students' interest in theory. She asked students to apply classical theories to the fictional society described in the book. Atwood's book is well suited to a comprehensive theory course because it allows for an integration and analysis of gender as a social construct in its own right, and also for an analysis of the (often overlooked) role of gender in classical theoretical paradigms.

Hale (1995) described an exercise in which students interviewed three individuals about their experiences with a topic selected by the class. Students then analyzed the content of their interviews, using insights gained through reading and discussing Weberian and other sociological theories. Other authors have emphasized the utility of writing as a tool to help students understand the usefulness of classical sociological theory. Segady (1990) assigned a short paper in which students explained declining church attendance and the rise of cultic activity by using Weber's writings on rationalization and disenchantment as a theoretical framework. Such assignments, Segady argued, allow students to see first hand how seemingly obsolete sociological theories actually have contemporary relevance.

"MCDONALDIZATION" AND RATIONALIZATION

We build on previous exercises by describing a hands-on approach to teaching Weber's ideas. In this exercise, students venture into the off-campus world and observe rationalization and rationality in action. We use Ritzer's *McDonaldization of Society* as a pivotal link between students' observations and Weber's theory of bureaucracy and rationality.

In his book, Ritzer offered a Weberian-inspired framework for understanding the structure of modern bureaucracies and the penetration of rationality into almost every aspect of post-modern life, including birth, child-rearing, education, and death. "McDonaldized" organizations are characterized by four dimensions (Ritzer 2000: 12-14)—"*efficiency*, or the optimum method for getting from one point to another,…*calculability*, an emphasis on the quantitative aspects of products sold and services offered,…*predictability*, the assurance that products and services will be the same over time and in all locales,…and *control* over people who enter the world of McDonalds" through nonhuman technology. The four dimensions of McDonaldization bear an obvious resemblance to the Weber's original definition of "bureaucracy." Indeed, bureaucracy was the embodiment of formal rationality for Weber, just as McDonald's and McDonaldized organizations are for Ritzer. In his book, Ritzer amplified and extended Weber's theory of rationalization to include many non-bureaucratic, yet fully rationalized, modern-day institutions.

The McDonaldization of Society is very well suited to lower-level undergraduate courses. First, its style is readable and very intelligible to those unfamiliar with the standard jargon of sociological analysis. Ritzer defines and explains terms thoroughly

and precisely. Undergraduate students typically comment very favorably on the book. Second, the cases selected to demonstrate the *McDonaldization* concept are exceptionally familiar to most students. Indeed, part of Ritzer's point is that sometime, somewhere, almost everyone has come into contact with a McDonaldized organization. Finally, because fast-food outlets are adjacent to campus and thus accessible, they provide excellent opportunities for student observation.

Despite the book's popularity among students and instructors alike, we found only one published exercise that utilized the McDonaldization framework. Daughaday (1997) asked students write a series of short, open-ended letters to a real or imaginary person, in which they addressed several issues, including formal rationality and irrationality. She reported that only a small minority of students offered criticism of the book or the exercise. Indeed, she noted "Students seemed to have fun in creating these letters and could relate easily to Ritzer's argument" (Daughaday, 1997: 237)

Because students respond so favorably to the text, and because the required field observations present little or no burden to undergraduates, we feel that the exercise described below is a useful and valuable way to demonstrate the concepts of rationality, bureaucracy, and McDonaldization to students.

THE EXERCISE

The exercise described here was originally developed for an introductory sociology course and, after being used several times, was subsequently expanded into a unit for a course on social theory. It has also been used in a course on the sociology of work. The unit is carried out over three 50-minute class periods, comprising a section of the course on rationality and bureaucracy. We have also carried out a four-day version of

the exercise, described in table one. The two exercises share three days in common, but the four-day unit allows for observations and discussions of non-human technology and control. This optional day is particularly suited to classes in the sociology of work and organizations in which technology and control are central topics (Blauner 1964; Edwards 1979). Based on out analysis of the *ASA Sourcebook* presented above, the unit lasting three days is one day shorter than the average time spent on Weber in typical theory courses, and the four day unit does not exceed it.

During the unit, students read selections from Max Weber's essay "Bureaucracy" (1946) and *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* ([1905] 1998), in addition to chapters 1-9 from Ritzer's *McDonaldization of Society*. Upon completion of the exercises and the unit, students should show not only an improved understanding of Weber's and Ritzer's theoretical constructs, but also better comprehend how rationalizing processes affect social structures.

[Table 1 about here]

For the first day of the unit, students read the selections from Weber and chapters one and two from *The McDonaldization of Society*. Before beginning the exercise in class, they are given an un-graded quiz to test their understanding of Weber and for use as a baseline from which to judge the success of the exercise (Appendix #1). Upon completion of the quiz, students are given an observation form, labeled "Observing McDonald's" (Appendix #2), to be completed before the next class meeting. They gather into teams (or groups—we use the terms interchangeably here) to look over the forms, discuss them, and ask questions about them. We discuss this form at the beginning of

class, rather than at the end, to emphasize its importance and to make sure everyone is prepared to conduct the observations.

The first day of the unit is intended to introduce students to the material and to get them comfortable with treating McDonald's as an analytical case worthy of sociological investigation. We also begin to discuss the major dimensions of Ritzer's thesis. To this end, students are asked to individually set down on paper, in as much detail as possible, the steps involved when someone eats at McDonalds or another fast food restaurant. They use the form labeled "Thinking About McDonald's (Appendix #3). At this time, students also note whether they have worked in a fast food restaurant, and if so, which one and what jobs they held. The experiences of former employees can be used to enrich the class's understanding of the totality of the processes Ritzer describes. After this individual recollection exercise is completed, students re-group. In their groups, they have two tasks. First, they share the results of their recollection for approximately 10 minutes. Second, they discuss the following new questions:

1) Did you ever have any bad experiences at McDonalds?
2) Were any of your expectations unfulfilled?
3) Compare McDonalds to a non-fast food restaurant. In what ways do they differ? How are they the same?

After discussing the questions in groups, the class assembles again to discuss each group's answers. We put their ideas on the board, using the students' own words. Each group gets a chance to make one contribution and then the next group is asked for its contribution. In the discussion, students typically not only note the predictability of the process, but also emphasize the role that customers' expectations play in the process of

rationalization. After completing the discussion, we sum up by going over the goals of the exercise. If the students have not already done so, we make certain that each of the points on the board has been linked to a concept from Ritzer.

Before the next class meeting, students read chapters 3-5 from Ritzer's *McDonaldization* and complete the assignment given in Appendix #2, which involves observing a local McDonalds or other fast-food restaurant. Students are asked to record information surrounding the processes involved in ordering and consuming food, and also some structural characteristics of the organization. By recording on paper what they have observed in each of the two assignments, students have the necessary information for future discussions and comparisons with their team members. Instructors might also use this as an opportunity to make points about validity, reliability, objectivity, and bias in sociological methods involving field observations. We encourage our students to accurately record what they observe, without specifically looking for examples that support the theories of Weber and Ritzer. We remind students that we will discuss the observations during the following class, and discuss problems that may arise if they enter the field with premeditated expectations about what they will find.

The next class is intended to reinforce the concept of predictability, and to illustrate and explain efficiency and calculability, as Ritzer uses the terms. During this second class meeting, students share the results of their fast food observations with their team members. Each member explains the observation site and runs through the observed cycle of interaction between customers and employees. Teams are also asked to compare their observations to the steps they drew up during the previous class meeting, and to discuss the structure of the establishment they observed and how the managers

controlled the behavior of employees. Teams are asked to prepare a skit in which they portray a "typical" interaction between customers and employees. Depending on the time available, two or three skits are presented in front of the class before the discussion begins.

As a class, we explore why students' recollections of the process at McDonald's are typically very close to what they actually observed, and in the process, demonstrate the predictability dimension of Ritzer's thesis. We also discuss the structure of the organization, and how their empirical observations demonstrate (or occasionally fail to demonstrate) the efficiency dimension of Ritzer's thesis. During the discussion, the class is also asked to compare these ideas to those discussed in the previous Weber readings. We focus the comparison of Ritzer and Weber on two themes. First, we discuss Weber's 6 dimensions of bureaucracy, and how closely the fast-food restaurants they observed conform to the definition and in what ways they do not. Second, we ask the students to discuss how the 6 dimensions of bureaucracy outlined by Weber might lead to predictable and efficient outcomes.

If instructors choose to implement the optional third day of the exercise (described below), then they hand out the next observation form, labeled "Use of Nonhuman Technologies to Control Humans" (Appendix 4) during the last five minutes of this second class meeting. This assignment is to be completed outside of class before the next meeting, in addition to reading chapter 6 of *McDonaldization of Society*. We hand out these forms at the end of class, rather than the beginning, because we want to clearly separate the concept of nonhuman technologies from those of predictability and efficiency. Students spend these final minutes reading the forms and asking questions if

necessary. Students are encouraged to choose an on-campus site for this assignment, in which they answer questions about the use of non-human technology to control human behavior. We give them several examples, such as "walk/don't walk" lights at intersections, dormitory doors that require electronic cards for entry, and automatic teller machines in the student union. They can also return to the fast-food restaurant, if they choose.

We present the third day of class as an option. Some have expressed concern that the original four-day unit occupies too much class time. However, this optional third day on technology and control may be time well spent in certain classes, especially those on work and organizations. Excluding this optional third day should not compromise the overall effectiveness of the unit. During this third day, students again assemble in groups to discuss their completed Non-Human Technology form (Appendix #4), and to answer question from another form, labeled "Non-Human Technology for Control" (Appendix #5). Each student in the group describes the technology he/she observed and explains how the technology worked and what purpose it served. After these explanations, groups are asked to discuss examples in which the use of nonhuman control did <u>not</u> serve its purpose, or in which the humans under control did <u>not</u> cooperate.

After each group has chosen the best example of a failed attempt at controlling humans with nonhuman technology, they are shared and discussed with the whole class. Groups with particularly vivid examples demonstrate them to the rest of the class via a role-playing exercise. In the ensuing discussion, we focus on the pervasive nature of

non-human controls in the modern world, and the extent to which they can be subverted if humans refuse to cooperate. Discussions may be centered on the following questions[1]:

1) Are all machines controlling of humans?
2) Is an ATM machine more controlling than a human bank teller?
3) How does technology that is used and controlled by humans differ from technology that controls humans?

This discussion gives us an opportunity to raise the issue of agency and human intention in Weber's work.

We spend the last day of the exercise summarizing and evaluating Weber's and Ritzer's theories. Students come to this class having read chapters 7-9 of *McDonaldization.* The class discussion is centered on two major themes. The first is what Ritzer calls "the irrationality of rationality." Class discussion includes consideration of the following questions:

-Does the process at McDonalds compromise quality? Why or why not?

-Given the way McDonalds is structured, is there any way to recover some of the quality that is lost?

We try to ensure that students' answers are linked to the "irrationalities" Ritzer highlights, including problems such as the dehumanization of work in McDonaldized settings, red tape, poor-quality work and products, and the misguided anger of employees and customers.

The second major theme involves an analysis of the merits and/or shortcomings of Ritzer's theoretical framework. In a theory course, students are not only expected to understand the theories they read, but also to be able to engage in the process of theory

[1] The authors thank an anonymous reviewer for clarifying remarks about this discussions

construction and criticism. Because Ritzer's book is so accessible and deals with such a familiar topic, it provides ample opportunities for students to sharpen these skills. Discussion during this part of the class is centered on the following questions:

-How useful are the 4 dimensions Ritzer uses as an analytic tool?

-Are they exhaustive?

-What assumptions does Ritzer make?

-How does this framework apply to the other examples Ritzer uses?

-What are Ritzer's units of analysis?

-Can we derive testable hypotheses from this theory?

-Is the framework value free?

Throughout the unit, we invoke Weber's original theory of rationality often, and regularly make comparisons between Weber's and Ritzer's theories. In the final analysis, we ask students to evaluate the comparability of the two different frameworks. Students are encouraged to think about the ways in which Ritzer has updated and built upon Weber's original theory of rationalization, while at the same time acknowledging the contemporary relevance of Weber's theory. We spend the remainder of the last day applying the theories to more sophisticated spheres of social life. While fast food provides students with an accessible and familiar case to build their understanding of the theories, we have found that more complex institutions, such as medicine and higher education, make fine examples with which to challenge and enhance student's understanding of rationalization and bureaucracy. Instructors may also wish to use this time to discuss other aspects of Weber's work, such as the "iron cage" of rationality, power and authority, or the emergence of bureaucracy.

ASSESSMENT

This exercise is intended to help instructors teach Weber's theory of bureaucracy and the "Iron Cage" of rationality, and demonstrate to students its applicability to modern organizations. We recently carried out these exercises in classes at a large, public university in the Southeastern United States. The units on rationalization were part of three classes: a first year seminar on sociological thinking, a course in the sociology of work, and an upper division class on sociological theory, but we believe that the set of exercises is applicable to other courses as well. Overall, our experience with the incorporation of active learning techniques in this unit on Weber, Ritzer, and rationality has been quite positive.

In a recent Theory class, 50 percent of the students reported that the various exercises helped them to understand both Weber's theory of rationality and bureaucracy and Ritzer's McDonaldization thesis a "great deal," and another 35 percent reported that they helped at least "somewhat." Students commented that "the exercise was well set up and was easily performed," and that "it was an interesting way to see the [McDonaldization] concept." "I see [the theories] a whole lot simpler now." Upon completion of the unit, we re-administered the quiz given at its inception. Comparison of the responses to the quiz questions revealed that our students' understanding and mastery of Weber's theory of rationality and bureaucracy improved markedly over the course of the unit. The mean quiz score improved from a score of 7.5/10 before the exercises to 8.9/10 after them, raising the mean quiz score from a C to a B+. We are confident that the exercise helps students to move beyond simple

recollection towards a higher level on Bloom's taxonomy by allowing them to apply the concepts and evaluate their applicability.

The exercises appeared to help students make direct links between the theories of Ritzer and Weber. By examining the structure of McDonalds directly and with a critical eye, students commented that Weber's six dimensions of bureaucracy were accurate, and that indeed many social phenomena (religion, eating out, and education) had become disenchanted as a result of rationalization. After the unit, students were quick to make likes between the structures Weber described and the outcomes Ritzer describes. Perhaps more importantly, though, were the links students were able to draw between these theories and their every-day experiences. As students continued to interact with rationalized organizations and non-human technologies throughout the semester, they began to demonstrate an appreciation for the socially constructed nature of rationalization.

LIMITATIONS

Although the exercises were successful, several potential problems with them are worth noting. First, some students may find accessibility a problem. If the local McDonald's is not within walking distance, some students may not have enough time to carry out observations before they are due in class. Several things can be done to overcome this problem. Students should be given enough time to plan and execute their observations, such as by having the first class in the unit on Friday and the next class the following Monday. Also, we emphasized that *any* fast-food restaurant would be an appropriate location for observation. Students' teams can be helpful in this situation, as

they can be encouraged to observe with their teammates, turning the observation into a socializing opportunity for them.

Second, a small number of students had a hard time taking seriously a sociological theory based on an organization known for its Happy Meals and a clown. Although only a few students reacted in this manner, such a response has instructional value, offering a "teachable moment." McDonald's does indeed play a central role in Ritzer's theory. If students have a difficult time looking beyond the specifics surrounding McDonalds, we use this situation to discuss the concept of the *ideal type*. In discussing this concept, students are encouraged to see that Ritzer is not merely theorizing about McDonald's, but also constructing a theory of social organization. McDonald's is a widely recognizable organization that best embodies the four dimensions of Ritzer's framework. In our discussion, we focus on the generalizability of the framework, the contribution of Ritzer's emphasis on McDonald's to his theory, and the value of the ideal type in constructing and understanding social theory.

Lastly, a few students mentioned that the observations and discussions became monotonous, and reported feeling that "the observation sheets are making us write the same things over and over again," and that too much time was spent observing non-human technology "because we all pretty much know about the technologies used already." Although cynicism is unavoidable in some cases, instructors can take steps to avoid it, or turn it into a subject of discussion. The instructions for each observation should be made very clear before they are undertaken. It is for this reason that we ask students to discuss the observation forms with their team members and with the class before carrying out the actual observations. Also, the goals and objectives of each

observation should be made explicit during the classes following the discussions. Instructors should make efforts to keep the dimensions of Ritzer's thesis conceptually distinct in both the observations and the discussions.

Students may also be encouraged to explore the use of non-human technology in spheres outside of the fast-food industry. This way, redundancy will be reduced and the applicability of Ritzer's framework to all aspects of life will be highlighted. If some students continue to express boredom, discussion can be directed to "sacred" spheres of life, and how the four dimensions of McDonaldization apply there. Although it may be obvious and easy to see McDonaldization as alive and well at McDonald's, students may not fully recognize rationalization's application to less obvious cases, until they are pointed out in class.

CONCLUSION

Weber's contributions to sociological theory are vitally important, and yet they can be difficult for undergraduates to grasp. Their lives have taken shape in a world increasingly structured by the forces of rationality. As the process of rationalization becomes more fully realized, it is crucial that students of sociology comprehend the impact of these forces on the social world. By utilizing active learning techniques and Ritzer's popular and accessible *The McDonaldization of Society*, we have developed a unit on rationalization that has proven very successful in piquing students' interest in the process and also improving their understanding of it. We feel that our exercises clarify both rationality and McDonaldization by allowing students to venture out into the McDonaldized world and see the process in action for themselves.

The exercises we have described aid in the teaching of Weber and rationality for several reasons. First, the resources required for carrying them out are readily available. Most towns and cities in the U.S. have at least one McDonaldized organization suitable for observation. Secondly, McDonald's and the McDonaldized form are familiar to students. This familiarity allows all students to take an active and informed role in the discussion of the observations and the readings. The combination of readings and observations about McDonald's helps students to learn the concepts of McDonaldization, bureaucracy, and rationality. The clarity created by these exercises gives instructors a solid foundation on which to build discussions of Weber's theory of rationality, and to demonstrate the applicability of his ideas to the modern world

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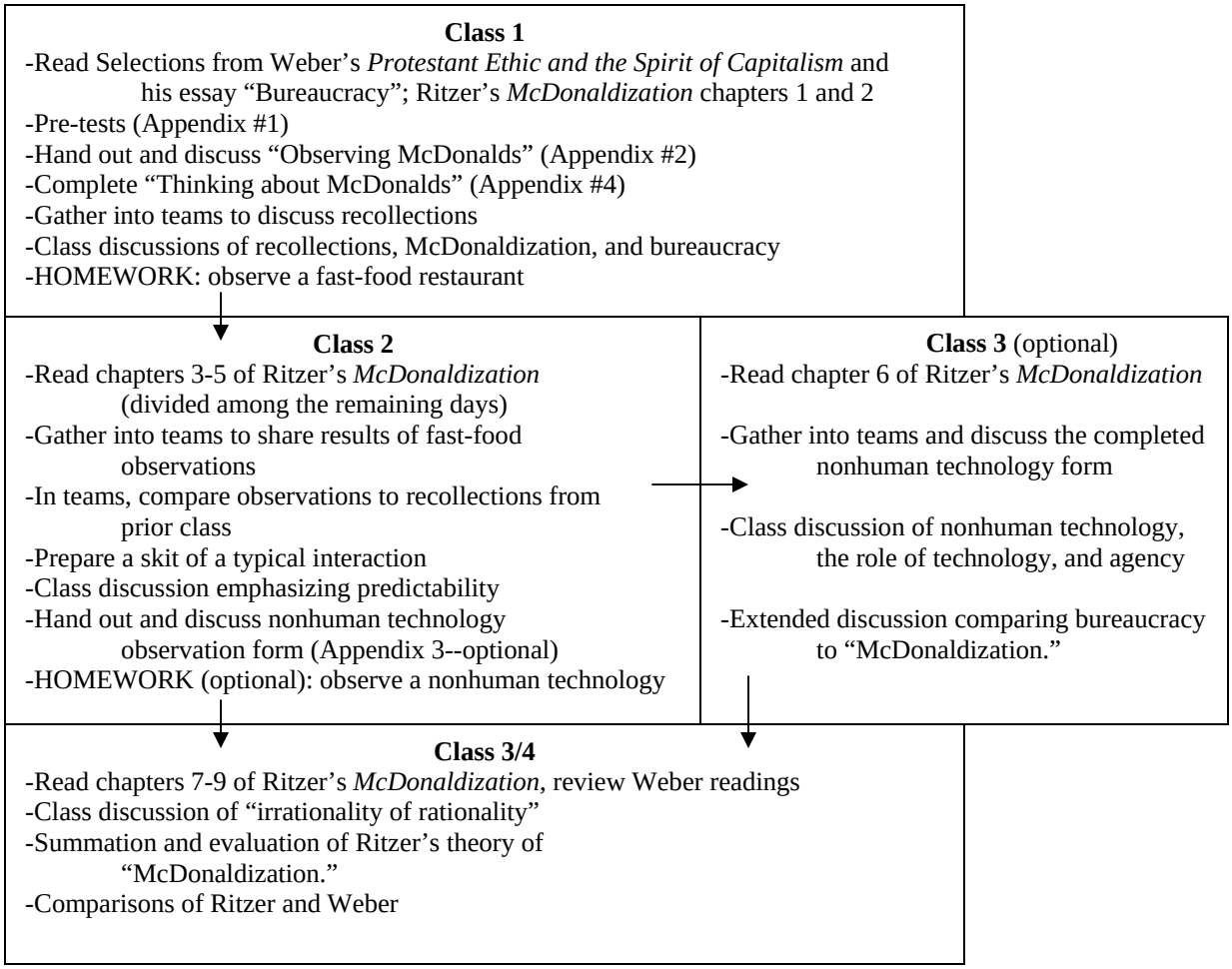
Table 1

Three and Four Day Exercise



Appendix 1

Pre- and Post-unit Quiz on Max Weber

1) Define bureaucracy

2) Why has bureaucracy spread in the modern world?

3) Do you think that bureaucracy and rationality are equivalent? Why or why not?

4) How relevant are Weber's ideas for understanding the twenty-first century? Why?

Appendix 2

Observation Form #1
Observing McDonald's

Goals of the assignment: to observe the interaction at a fast food restaurant (preferably McDonald's, but it could be another one, such as Burger King, Chik-Fil-A or Hardees, but NOT a pizza restaurant) and describe what you see.

Pick a site: Choose a fast food restaurant that has counter service. Sit at a booth where you can observe what is going on at the counter and behind the counter.

Observations to be filled out as you observe or shortly thereafter:

1. What is the complete cycle of interaction between a customer and the employees behind the counter? Write it out in terms of its steps.

    a. What does the employee say?

    b. What does the employee do?

2. How many different jobs are there behind the counter? Write down some possible job titles for them.

3. Is someone obviously in charge? How do you know?

4. How is he/she controlling what the employees are doing?

Appendix 3

In-class Discussion Form #1
Thinking about McDonalds

1) Please recreate, on paper, the steps taken when ordering a meal at McDonalds. In as much detail as possible, outline the steps a customer takes when ordering and eating a meal at McDonalds, from the moment s/he enters the restaurant to the moment s/he leaves. Please include any gestures or language that is typical in this encounter.

2) Have you ever worked in a fast food restaurant? Which one? What did you do there?

Appendix 4

Observation Form #2
Use of Nonhuman Technologies to Control Humans.

Choose a location on campus (or off, if you wish) where you can observe humans being controlled by some form of non-human technology. In class, we mentioned traffic lights, entrances to buildings, and ATMs. Answer the following questions:

Where did you conduct your observations?

Who was being controlled (describe by their statuses and roles)?

How many people were being controlled? _____

Describe the technology used to control them and explain briefly how it worked:

Appendix 5

In-class Discussion Form 2
Non-human Technology for Control

In your team, please share the results of your observations (Observation Form #2: the use of a non-human technology to control humans) and answer the following questions:

First, explain to each other (1) where you conducted your observation, (2) who was being controlled (described by their statuses and roles), (3) how many people were being controlled, and (4) how the process actually worked.

Second, did the process *always* work (people were *always* controlled) or did it **NOT** work sometimes?

a. **IF** it did **NOT** always work, why not?
b. **IF** it **DID** always work, why?

Third, choose **ONE** of the examples from your group and be prepared to explain it to the class. IF you can, create a *skit or role-play* simulation to show how it worked.