

Study Questions
Week 9

- (1) What is the main point of the story McIntyre tells at the beginning of chapter 9? What can we deduce about social life from this story?
- (2) What is the origin of the term *society*? What do sociologists mean by society? How is self-sufficiency related to society?
- (3) What is a *social institution*? What functions do social institutions play in our lives? What are some important characteristics of social institutions?
- (4) Identify several important institutions in American society. How do these social institutions meet societal needs? Provide examples of social needs and explain how social institutions fulfill those needs.
- (5) Where do social institutions come from? How do they become *institutionalized*? How do they change? How do they differ?
- (6) What does George Ritzer mean by *McDonaldization*? What are the dimensions of this phenomenon? Does this process apply only to McDonalds? Explain.
- (7) What is meant by the term *rational*, as used by Ritzer? How is McDonalization a process of rationalization?
- (8) How have U.S. families changed in the past half century? How are these changes related to broader societal changes during the same time period? How have popular perceptions of the family differed from research findings during this time?
- (9) What do Arlene & Jerome Skolnick mean by the *triple revolution*? In what ways have these three revolutions reshaped families?