

Study Questions, Week 7

(1) What is the sociological definition of a *group*? Using this definition, identify a few groups you have belonged to in your life.

(2) What is a *social fact*? How does the concept of a social fact help us understand the nature of groups and organizations?

(3) Provide a definition for the following types of groups:

- | | |
|---------------------------|-----------------------|
| •Primary groups | •Reference groups |
| •Secondary groups | •Dyads |
| •In-groups and out-groups | •Coalitions |
| •Focus groups | •Formal organizations |

(4) What is the purpose of a *secondary group*, and how does this differ from the purpose of a *primary group*? Provide examples of secondary groups and explain the structure of each.

(5) What is meant by a *small group*? Why do sociologists study small groups? What have sociologists learned about group behavior from studying *dyads* and *triads*?

(6) Provide examples of *formal organizations*. What characteristics distinguish formal organizations from other types of groups? What functions do formal organizations fulfill in American society?

(7) Weber described a particular type of formal organization, the *bureaucracy*. What, according to Weber, are the unique characteristics of bureaucratic organizations? What is positive about bureaucracies? What is negative about bureaucracies?

(8) The term *organizational culture* is sometimes used to describe bureaucratic workplaces. What does organizational culture refer to? Think of an organization you belong to; how would you describe its organizational culture?