

McDonaldization of the society



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McDonaldization It is safe to say that nearly every person in American from the age of a child can identify the gold arches peeking from highways across the country. McDonald's has established itself as the king of retailing and the Mecca of guilty-pleasures. McDonaldization is the concept founded by George Ritzer that compares modern American society to the fast-food establishment McDonalds. McDonalds, the pioneer of the fast food industry, is known for consistency in service and product across the board. Such precedence is supported by the structure of operation based on four main components.

Components of McDonaldization The four main components of McDonaldization are efficiency, calculability, predictability and control (Ritzer). Efficiency refers to the most methodical means of achieving an outcome based on product and cost effectiveness. Efficiency is evident in McDonalds' structure as the processes have been so structured and devised to reduce product time and cost. Calculability is the ability to evaluate a process based on quantifiable measurements. The increase of technology has been a large driver in allowing companies (and individuals) to easily calculate results.

This increase has fueled the shift of value from quality to quantity (Ritzer). Predictability is the expectation of service and product to remain consistent from one venue to another. McDonald's ensures it's product, service time, offering and venue are consistent whether a consumer is in Florida or Utah. The final component, control, describes a need to be able to manipulate surroundings. In McDonalds chains there is a recognizable hierarchy of power, which keeps control throughout the divisions of the company.

In modern society, the most straightforward way of implementing control is through the integration of nonhuman technology. When human-driven tasks are replaced by robotic technology the processes, already defined, are more readily monitored and handled. While these characteristics increase the overall performance of an institution, they have several negative effects on those involved. The combination of these attributes has led to the displacement of goals, poor quality and a lack of human potential.

The displacement of goals can be explained as the shift of focus of an outcome. The primary goal of the first McDonald's was unlikely the vision of grandeur in profitability and category domination. After the spread of popularity and franchising of the corporation, a shift to efficiency and calculability of profit became dominant. Poor quality is the result of efficiency, calculability, predictability and control's focus to produce an outcome using the fastest time and the least amount of resources.

Through doing this, the product quality is compromised. For example, McDonald's may produce fast burgers at a low price, but the quality one would find in a full service atmosphere is dramatically lower. The implementation of technology within institutions, in this case the kitchen's and register's of the franchise, make the process more reliable and quicker, but also fail to challenge human's potential in computing and their ability to follow a set of processes. McDonaldization's Effects on Dating Rituals

McDonaldization is clearly seen in many aspects of society, more recently these characteristics have arisen in America's dating rituals. After the pre-arranged-partner philosophy of relationships phased out in America, the “

by-chance” love notion was widespread. While the media has had a large impact of how dating rituals are viewed, technology has fueled the spread of social networking, community-based social networking such as Facebook and Twitter, along with dating-specific sites such as Match. com and Zoosk. com that have changed how people search for the right one.

Today’s dating rituals have evolved to fit the four characteristics that have swept through the rest of American society: efficiency, calculability, predictability and control. Efficiency is most evident in dating rituals, as each and every moment invested into the process should be seen as beneficial to a future relationship. By using dating websites or “stalking” a potential mate on Facebook, an individual looking for love can immediately rule out potential candidates based on several artifacts such as a profile picture, activities, groups, personal preferences in entertainment and any other personal attributes.

Outside of using social networks to aid in finding a mate, these attributes have trickled into the non-technologically driven suitors. Speed dating is a more dated example of how efficiency has affected relationship standards. By meeting as many people as possible in an allotted time, people can pick and choose their top candidates in the time that it would normally take to spend on one date. The product of such efficiency has led to the loss of intimacy and personality in first time date situations.

The main goal of finding the most compatible match based on notions of chemistry and romance has shifted to finding the most compatible person in the least amount of time. Calculability has become easier than ever in terms

of calculating the status of a relationship. Websites allow people to block a user, rate-a-date or “ skip” potential mates. The current obsession with updating a “ relationship status” has made the race to identify and calculate a phase of a relationship a larger ordeal than ever before.

Once a slow-paced getting to know you course of mating has been hastened as people strive to reach the outcome of a successful relationship.

Furthermore, as the use of social networking to select a mate makes the accessibility to getting in touch with others, people often calculate the likelihood of finding their mate in terms of probability (“ I have dated this many people, so this next person should be lucky number...”) versus calculating the experience on quality of conversation, natural chemistry and likeability. Dating websites have brought a whole new meaning to the calculability of the dating process.

Through standardized testing of individuals signed up for a dating service, a computer can statistically calculate the compatibility of two people.

Predictability in the dating process has spawned through the use of technology as a catalyst in creating expectations for individuals in dating. Reality TV shows and dating shows have served as a poor example of how dating should really be causing individuals in real life to form false beliefs that the first date will always be smooth sailing and will result in “ instant-love”.

When the result of the date is less than the aforementioned product of a date, the individual instantly resorts to finding the next potential candidate. The element of control as seen in dating rituals has taken to a viral level as

people become increasingly obsessed with control with the rise of technology. The implementation of technology on the dating industry has given people the tools necessary to control how they are perceived by the public, as well as given control in picking “ the right one”.

By being able to simply ‘ browse’ potential candidates, the person searching is able to search various categories and pages upon pages of other hopefuls, overlooking anyone that does not immediately catch their eye. While the McDonaldization of the dating process has led to many happy relationships and helped people who maybe would have never found ‘ the one’ find love, it has also affected the hunt in many negative ways. While online dating increases the chances of compatibility, it also cuts out the romanticism of finding one’s true love sporadically.

The “ story to tell grandchildren” will be minimized to, “ we were “ mathematically compatible”. The overall quality of the dating process, meeting a person, the courting process and the infamous first date will be rushed as the quantity of dates increases. Such convenience and control has watered down human-instinct to find a partner. As McDonaldization has crept into American society, it’s positives and negatives are evident.

Efficiency, calculability, predictability and control give an individual a sense of power and familiarity to an individual and make goods and services more available to all demographics of society. However, these results are simultaneously creating more issues and needs to be met. Next time you are tapping your foot waiting on that local deli-made sandwich wishing it were as fast as a double cheeseburger, take a look around and you just may find the

one standing in line next to you is worth your time. Works Cited Ritzer, George. 2011. The McDonaldization of Society 6. Thousand Oaks, CA: Pine Forge Press: SAGE, Inc.