



Network Persistence and the Axis of Hierarchy

How Orderly Stratification Is Implicit in Sticky Struggles

By Steven Rytina

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A study of how networks imply a singular axis of stratification

“This important and highly original text advances a novel interactional understanding of stratification as founded in networks and the ‘stickiness’ of social ties. This ‘minimalist’ account sees stratification sustained in the constraints of interactional social ties and generated by local—not global—rules. Offering a radical alternative to conventional accounts of stratification, Rytina shows that their insights can be understood through key features of interaction/networks with no need to move beyond local networks to the imposed ‘universal’ properties of social systems. This is essential reading for scholars seeking to understand the durability—but also the mutability—of stratification.” —Wendy Bottero, Reader in Sociology, University of Manchester, UK

“Network Persistence and the Axis of Hierarchy” shows how networks, modestly redefined as a strong, yet imperfect tendency for pairings to recur day after day, that is, stickiness, imply a singular axis of stratification. This is contrary to the nearly universal insistence that stratification is multidimensional. Reanalysis of three central mobility data sets sustains the novel claim.

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About the Author

Steven Rytina is retired from McGill University where he was associate professor of sociology. He has also taught at Harvard University and SUNY at Albany. Rytina’s research interests include mathematical sociology, theories of social structure, social networks, and stratification and mobility.

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