

Hierarchy and Organisation

Most people take the conditions they work and live in as a given and think that it is normal that societies are stratified and that organisations are hierarchical. Many even think that this is the way it should be—and are neither willing nor able to think that it could be otherwise. This book raises the awareness of hierarchy, its complexity and longevity. It focuses on a single but fundamental problem of social systems such as dyads, groups, organisations, and whole societies: *Why and how does hierarchical social order persist over time?* In order to investigate the question, author Thomas Diefenbach develops a general theory of the persistence of hierarchical social order. This theory interrogates the problem of the persistence of hierarchical social order from very different angles, in multidimensional and interdisciplinary ways. Even more crucially, it traces the very causes of the phenomenon, the reasons and interests behind hierarchy as well as the various mechanisms which keep it going.

This is the first time such a theory has been attempted. With the help of the theory developed in this book, it is possible to interrogate systematically, comprehensively, and in detail how peoples' mindsets and behaviours as well as societal and organisational structures and processes enable the continuation of hierarchy.

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