

Nature of a Dominance Hierarchy

Corporate Machiavelli | 22 October, 2020 | by machiavellicorporate

Contents:

- 1) Preamble
- 2) Macro and Micro
- 3) What Wins Status
- 4) Power > Merit
- 5) Status Throughout History
- 6) Pareto Distribution
- 6A) Lives of Quiet Desperation
- 6B) Exponentially Increasing Inequality
- 7) Feedback Loops, Why Wealth is Pareto Distributed
- 8) Pyramid Structure
- 9) Competition Heating Up
- 10) Exploitation, Top Down
- 11) Life and Death Stakes
- 12) Biochemistry and Hierarchies
- 13) Male Ambition, Female Hypergamy
- 14) Unsatiated Ambition and Hypergamy
- 15) Envy's Evolutionary Purpose
- 16) Hierarchies are Eugenic
- 17) Status is Zero Sum
- 18) Male Reproduction is Zero Sum
- 19) Male Outcomes, Greater Variance
- 20) Wealth Inequality and Violence
- 20A) Inequality Erodes Social Trust
- 20B) Intense Inequality Limits Upward Mobility
- 20C) Real World Examples
- 20D) Historical Trends
- 21) Revolution and Political Preferences
- 22) Polygamy Drives Violence
- 23) Economic Systems, Productivity and Inequality
- 24) The Ideal Civilization
- 25) High Status Halo
- 26) Power Is Valued Over Virtue
- 27) Invisibility From Low Status
- 28) Epilogue
- 29) Relevant Reading

1) Preamble:

All animals inevitably organize themselves into hierarchies, and humans are no exception.

With simple animals such as lobsters, the hierarchy is determined by nothing more than brute strength; the most dominant lobster is whichever is best at winning wrestling matches. Chimpanzees are more

complex than lobsters; a chimp hierarchy is determined to some degree by brute strength, but also by popularity and political maneuvering.

Humans are the most complex animal on the planet, and our hierarchies are determined very little by physical strength. Yes, being tall and muscular does win a man status, but rank within human hierarchies is far more determined by things such as intelligence, competence, likeability, and worldly wealth (money, power). The most powerful men on the planet as of this writing are Jeff Bezos and Vladimir Putin, both of whom are conspicuously small.

The aim of this essay is to describe traits that are ubiquitous to all human hierarchies, whether they be American society, Russian society, a corporation, or simply the pecking order of a gang in West Baltimore.

2) Macro and Micro:

It is important to distinguish between a *macro dominance hierarchy* and a *micro dominance hierarchy*.

A macro hierarchy is a large group a person can be a part of, designated by a geographical area; everyone within the entirety of a city, or the entirety of a country. The word 'society' is a euphemism for 'macro dominance hierarchy'.

A micro hierarchy is a smaller group a person may be a member of, such as a family, or a particular corporation.

The country America is a macro hierarchy of more than 300 million people. Meanwhile, the employees of a corporation form a micro hierarchy with only a few dozen or hundred people.

3) What Wins Status:

What wins a person status varies from one hierarchy to another.

In virtually all macro hierarchies having a high level of wealth (relative to others) grants a person high status.

In virtually all micro hierarchies having a high level of competence with a task affecting the group wins a person high status.

In some hierarchies, engaging in violence wins one status (particularly if it's violence against members of the outgroup; members of an enemy tribe). On the other hand, there are hierarchies where engaging in violence instantly causes one to become low status.

If you are member of a gang in West Baltimore then engaging in a fist fight and winning may cause your status to rise. However, if you are an associate at a law firm and you decide to engage someone in a fist fight your status will instantly drop to zero; you will be summarily fired.

4) Power > Merit:

Tragically, most hierarchies are based on nothing more than arbitrary power.

Meritocracies are rare; hierarchies where status is based primarily on competence are the exception, not the rule. Competence is always a factor in determining one's status, but almost never is it the only factor. In most hierarchies, status is determined by some mixture of competence, likeability, and arbitrary power.

A person's level of status and power are not precisely the same thing, but in most cases they are so closely correlated as to be all but indistinguishable.

Status is venue dependent in the sense that a person can have high status in one venue or group, and low

status in another.

5) Status Throughout History:

In hunter-gatherer societies, status competition between men usually takes the form of fist fights and physical violence. Often status is determined based on who is best at waging war against rival tribes. Sometimes it's determined by who is best at hunting wild animals and providing food for the tribe.

In capitalist societies, status competition between men usually takes the form of who has the highest income, the biggest net worth, or the most impressive job title.

6) Pareto Distribution:

In virtually every dominance hierarchy, whether macro or micro, worldly wealth is pareto distributed. This is a statistician's way of saying that a minority of people get almost everything, and most people get little or nothing.

People who are rich, powerful, and high status are the minority, while people who are poor, powerless, and low status are the majority.

Throughout human history, most societies have had 3 classes: the bottom 90% who are poor, the top 10% who are upper class, and the top 0.1% who are rich. The existence of a 'middle' class has been a historical exception; the overwhelming majority of people being poor has been the historical rule.

Universities teach you that everything of consequence is normally distributed; a bell curve distribution. Sadly this is inaccurate; in almost every human society it is the case that wealth and power are *pareto* distributed.

Every society is an oligarchy in the sense that in every society a minority of people wield virtually all the political power; a minority of people are on the winning side of the pareto distribution. It is the will of the few, not the will of the many, that rules.

6A) Lives of Quiet Desperation:

"The mass of men lead lives of quiet desperation" -Henry David Thoreau

Tragically, it is the case that in most societies the bottom 90% of men are nothing more than cheap labor for the top 10% of men.

Quality of life is pareto distributed; most people are miserable, a minority are happy.

Quality of life correlates very closely with worldly wealth; in every society that has ever existed life for people at the top of the hierarchy has been astronomically better than life for people at the bottom.

6B) Exponentially Increasing Inequality

Because wealth is pareto distributed, a person 1 level above you will have exponentially more wealth than you, and as you move up the hierarchy the wealth gaps between one level and the next immediately above gets *bigger* rather than smaller.

Essentially, the wealth inequality between a person at the 99th percentile and the 90th percentile, is far bigger than the inequality between a person at the 90th percentile and the 80th percentile. As such, increasing one's hierarchical status doesn't have diminishing marginal returns; it has *exponentially increasing* marginal returns.

7) Feedback Loops, Why Wealth is Pareto Distributed:

The main reason wealth is pareto distributed is *feedback loops*.

A positive feedback loop is a phenomenon in which one good thing happening dramatically increases the probability that an additional good thing will happen. One good thing leads to another, and another, and another.

The reason extremely rich people exist is due to a runaway positive feedback loop that took them up into the stratosphere.

A negative feedback loop is a phenomenon in which one bad thing happening dramatically increases the probability that an additional bad thing will happen; the reason most poor people never manage to escape poverty is because they are constantly being wrecked by negative feedback loops.

Positive feedback loops cause the rich to become richer, while negative feedback loops cause the poor to become poorer, or at least stay trapped in poverty. This inevitably leads to wealth being pareto distributed.

8) Pyramid Structure:

An extension of the pareto distribution is this; society has a *pyramid shaped* hierarchy. Each level has fewer people than the one below it and more people than the one above it.

It has been said that every person on the planet is no more than 6 handshakes away from one another. With a planet of 7 billion people this claim seems exaggerated, but as you go up the pyramid of a society, it becomes more and more practical that every person at the current level could be within 2-3 handshakes of one another.

Among the poor there are many; it is impossible to get to know everyone. However among the rich there are few, and it is very practical to know everyone or almost everyone.

If you make it to the top of the profession you work in, you will know every person within your industry, even if you don't know everyone towards the top of your society.

9) Competition Heating Up:

At each level of the pyramid, it becomes exponentially more difficult to break in to the next level above.

There is the logistical matter of there simply being *fewer and fewer open spots available* as you move up the pyramid.

More importantly, as you go higher up the pyramid you are dealing with more and more competent competitors. At the bottom level, moving up requires prevailing against people who are both lazy and stupid. However if you are in the middle, moving up an additional level requires prevailing against people who are both highly motivated and competent.

10) Exploitation, Top Down:

Rules are written by those in power, for those in power. Every system is rigged in favor of the powerful and against the powerless.

Communists refer to the phenomenon of the powerful exploiting the powerless as 'Capitalist Exploitation', however in doing this communists underestimate how deeply rooted the problem is.

Exploitation isn't a consequence of capitalism; it's a consequence of human nature. In every hierarchy the powerful exploit the powerless; it happens in every society, not just capitalist societies.

In some societies the mechanisms of exploitation are overt and brazen, in others they are covert and subtle, but the existence of top down exploitation is universal to every hierarchy.

Generally speaking those towards the top of the hierarchy write rules that ensure they can stay at the top and no one else can rise; the powerful design rules that *limit* upward mobility, rather than rules that enhance it.

If you are at the bottom of the hierarchy, the probability that you will be able to make it to the top of the hierarchy without breaking any rules is practically zero.

11) Life and Death Stakes:

In every macro hierarchy one's relative rank is often a matter of life and death, if for no other reason than because the higher you are in the hierarchy the better your access to medical care will be.

If your status is extremely high, then rest assured that if you become ill you will be given the best medical care available. On the other hand, if your status is low you will get shoddy medical care with delays, or none at all.

For a billionaire, getting cancer means a few unpleasant trips to chemotherapy. For a homeless man, it means being left to die in the streets.

In every society it is the case that some people's lives are considered to be immensely important while others' are considered to be worthless.

Being at the pinnacle of the macro hierarchy means having easy access to the best medical care on the planet and having almost zero probability of being sent to do dangerous tasks.

Being at the bottom of the macro hierarchy means having unreliable access to medical care (or none at all), and a very high probability of being sent to do dangerous tasks (see coal miners and cannon fodder).

The lower you are in the hierarchy, the higher the probability is that you will die at a young age. When people are competing for money or for hierarchical position understand that what they are really fighting over is probability of survival.

The conflict is intense because the stakes are high; the stakes are life and death.

In the game of power, the stakes have always been life and death and they probably always will be. If you were a 16th century courtier (see Machiavelli) failure in the game could lead to execution or exile. Exile of course was nothing more than a death sentence carried out in slow motion; a man banished from the kingdom would have no hope of surviving on his own.

If you live in 2020 America, failure in the game of power means not making money, not being able to pay the rent/mortgage, becoming homeless, and starving to death in the street. This is a very high probability outcome for most Americans; 80% of the population lives paycheck to paycheck. They are one error away from homelessness.

12) Biochemistry and Hierarchies:

Your brain closely tracks what your relative status is in the hierarchy you live in, and assumes that if you are low status you are in danger (causing your cortisol levels to rise) and if you are high status you are safe (causing your cortisol levels to fall).

The assumption that life at the top of the hierarchy is safe and life at the bottom of the hierarchy is dangerous is an accurate assumption in most hierarchies most of the time (see the 'Life and Death Stakes' section above).

Your brain also regulates the release of serotonin based on what it detects your relative status to be; when

you are high status, your brain detects this and releases high levels of serotonin. When you are low status, your brain detects this and restricts the release of serotonin.

The biochemical state that is typical of depression, and the biochemical state that is caused by having low status in a hierarchy, are identical; low serotonin. As the 48 Laws said, “powerlessness will make you miserable.”

Notably, the part of the brain that tracks your relative status is older and more deeply engrained than the part of your brain that tells your lungs to breathe. So far as the human mind is concerned, the game of power is more important than air.

There are those who will claim they do not care about their relative status or relative level of wealth; they care only about their absolute level of wealth. Such people are worthy of laughter; they are lying, mostly to themselves. Whether you care to admit it or not, the serotonergic system in your brain cares *intensely* about your relative status.

High serotonin tends to *inhibit* emotions, both positive and negative. The practical consequence is that high status people with their high serotonin levels find it easier to restrain both their enthusiasm and their fear; they feel positive and negative emotions, but mildly enough such that they can still control themselves.

On the other hand, low status people with their low serotonin levels find it difficult to restrain their emotions; they are more likely to get carried away with enthusiasm and do something that feels good in the moment but that they later regret. They are also more likely to become overwhelmed with fear.

If you have never lived toward the bottom of a macro dominance hierarchy, then at least part of your own psychology is alien to you. You don’t know what you would be like if you were at the bottom of a hierarchy and low serotonin; hopefully you will never find out.

Some men are calm and confident when they are high status, and humble yet determined when they are low status. Such men deserve your respect.

Sadly, most men are narcissistic when they are high status and resentful when they are low status.

13) Male Ambition, Female Hypergamy:

Women have evolved to be hypergamous; this is an academic way of saying that women consider high status men to be attractive and low status men to be unattractive.

In order for a woman to consider a man attractive his status must at *minimum* be as high as her own, and ideally be as high as possible.

Women mate up and across dominance hierarchies, men mate down and across dominance hierarchies.

Female hypergamy has exerted immense evolutionary pressure on men. Specifically, it has led to ambitious men (men motivated to take the necessary action to move up a given hierarchy) reproducing more than unambitious men (men who did not bother with taking action to move up the hierarchy they lived in). Unambitious men have been culled to the point where men who are completely indifferent regarding their relative status in the hierarchy they live in are today almost non-existent.

Many people (usually women) ask questions such as “Why are men so competitive?”. The answer is simple; men are intensely motivated to attain high status *relative to other men* because all the men throughout history who didn’t bother with taking the necessary action to attain high status remained low status, were thereby unattractive to women, and were eliminated from the gene pool.

Both men and women desire to attain high status. The difference is that men desire high status *far more intensely* than women do, and with good reason; a man’s reproductive success depends on him attaining

high status, a woman's does not. If a woman is low status she can still be attractive to men, but if a man is low status he will automatically be considered unattractive by women.

From an evolutionary perspective, a male has more to gain by attaining high status than a female does. For a female attaining high status is helpful; for a male it is *absolutely necessary*.

When you see men engaging in extreme behavior for the sake of having a shot at getting rich, realize that they aren't trying to attain wealth; they are trying to attain status. A high level of wealth on an absolute basis isn't the motivator; it's a high level of wealth *relative* to other men living in their society.

Extreme Behavior could mean borrowing money to start a business, risking bankruptcy, and working 80 hours a week. It could also mean risking death in combat for the sake of having a shot at becoming a 'war hero' (a position of immensely high status).

It's not about wealth; it's about status and power.

Most ambitious men are simple; they just want to win. They don't particularly care how. Whether it's winning high status by becoming a successful banker or lawyer, a successful entrepreneur, or a decorated war hero, what matters is that high status is attained, not the specific means by which it is attained.

You can manipulate most men into doing just about anything by telling them "Do X, and it will win you status". Conversely, you can deter them from doing just about anything by telling them "Don't do Y, because it will cause you to lose status."

Obviously, for the sake of persuasion you shouldn't use language that is so direct; it would seem awkward at best and absurd at worst. However, many rulers throughout history have subtly emphasized some actions as causing one to win status and others causing one to lose status, as a means of manipulating men into taking or not taking certain actions.

The main way armies have recruited young men has always been by telling them something along the lines of "Soldier is a high status position; join our army, and you will win status."

14) Unsatiated Ambition and Hypergamy:

Men are ambitious, women are hypergamous.

Most men are tortured by unsatiated ambition; their actual level of status is far beneath the level of status they desire.

Most women are tortured by unsatiated hypergamy; the actual man they are paired with is far inferior to the type of man they desire.

A man lives a fulfilled life by making something of himself, a woman lives a fulfilled life by marrying and having children with such a man.

If you are a man who attains a position of sky high status, it will be true that other men want to be you and women want to sleep with you.

15) Envy's Evolutionary Purpose:

The evolutionary purpose of envy is obvious, at least for men. Envy motivates you to surpass those who are higher status than you are. This makes you more attractive to women, and enhances your reproductive opportunities.

More sinisterly, envy may motivate you to kill the men who are higher status than you are. This indirectly improves your reproductive opportunities because it eliminates your competitors in the sexual marketplace.

Morally acceptable? No. Effective? Yes. Natural selection and sexual selection are completely amoral

processes.

Envy is so built into our genetic code that we've created entire ideologies driven by it (see Karl Marx and Communism).

16) Hierarchies are Eugenic:

Dominance hierarchies are eugenic in the following sense; men who have the traits needed to get to the top and stay at the top of the hierarchy have greater reproductive success than men who lack such traits, because women consider men towards the top of the hierarchy to be more attractive than men towards the bottom.

17) Status is Zero Sum:

People are more motivated by the relative inequality, than by the absolute level of well being. — Brett Weinstein

Status is an intrinsically zero sum game; you can only be 'high' status insofar as someone else is low status. This is an ugly reality that nobody wants to be true, but nonetheless it is true.

Not everyone can be a winner. Someone has to be low status; ensure that 'someone' is not you.

18) Male Reproduction is Zero Sum:

Males are in zero sum competition with one another for reproductive opportunities, females are not.

If a man impregnates a woman, that prevents any other man from having a child by her (at least for the next year or so). However, when a man impregnates a woman it does *not* in any way prevent other women from having children by him.

Male reproduction being a zero sum competition explains why men compete against other men far more intensely than women compete against other women.

It also explains why male on male homicide is common, while female on female homicide is almost unheard of. When a man kills another man, he is eliminating one of his competitors in the sexual marketplace and thereby enhances his own reproductive opportunities; a woman killing another woman would get no such benefit.

You could blame the existence of violence on male competitiveness. To be fair, the reason males are competitive in the first place is because they want to appeal to female hypergamy.

19) Male Outcomes, Greater Variance:

Male life outcomes are more variable than female life outcomes. Among men there are more spectacular successes, and also more catastrophic failures.

Most people who make it to the pinnacle of any given macro hierarchy will be male (most billionaires are men). Most people who end up at the bottom of any given macro hierarchy will be male (most homeless people are men).

There are 2 reasons for this: IQ Variability and Risk Aggression

IQ Variability

Male IQ is more variable than female IQ; most geniuses are men, and most idiots are men. At an IQ of 130+ most people are male, and at an IQ of 70- most people are male.

In every macro hierarchy, IQ is a significant driver of success; high IQ smart people tend to rise up the hierarchy while low IQ dumb people tend to fall down the hierarchy.

Male IQ being more variable than female IQ makes it such that most people smart enough to be capable of rising to the top of the hierarchy are men, and also most people dumb enough to fall all the way down the hierarchy are men.

Risk Aggression

Men are more risk aggressive than women, and it seems to be the case that amongst men those with the highest testosterone levels are the most risk aggressive.

Men taking more risks than women leads to there being more spectacular successes among men, and also more catastrophic failures among men.

Taking lots of risks dramatically increases the probability of rising to the top of the hierarchy, and also the probability of being thrown down to the bottom.

If you are adopting a child and get to choose whether to take a boy or a girl, know this; having a daughter is a low risk low reward bet, having a son is a high risk high reward bet.

20) Wealth Inequality and Violence:

Many people assume that poverty is what drives violence, but this is incorrect.

Inequality is what drives violence. In areas where everyone is poor, violence is rare. In areas where everyone is rich, violence is rare. In areas where some people are very rich and others are very poor (relative to one another), there is endless violence.

The Gini coefficient of a given geographic location (city or country) predicts the homicide rate within that geographic location more powerfully than any other variable. Gini coefficients measure economic inequality, while homicide rates measure violence.

The violence that takes place in high Gini coefficient locations rarely takes the form of poor people banding together, killing rich people, and stealing their wealth. Yes such things have happened (see the French Revolution), but they are rare.

Usually, the violence takes the form of young men who are poor getting into arguments with one another about petty matters, the arguments escalating into fist fights, and the fist fights occasionally ending with one of the young men dead.

The explanation as to why inequality drives violence is straightforward; **as inequality rises the competition for power intensifies; so far as seizing power is concerned violence is the nuclear option.**

The most common trigger for violence is disrespect; a young man who is poor (low status) has been insulted or perceives he has been insulted, and he responds by initiating combat.

The emotional circuitry driving such a young man is simple; *to be on the losing side of inequality is humiliating. The pain of humiliation can easily be converted into anger, and excessive amounts of anger can drive a person to violence.*

20A) Inequality Erodes Social Trust

As inequality rises, social trust deteriorates.

It is generally the case that societies with high Gini coefficients are low trust societies, and societies with

low Gini coefficients are high trust societies.

The inverse relationship between inequality and social trust does seem to be *causal*; it seems to be the case that intense inequality causes social trust to deteriorate.

Intuitively this makes sense; when the gap between the richest people and the poorest people is big, maintaining the pretense that “We are all in this together!” becomes impossible.

20B) Intense Inequality Limits Upward Mobility

As inequality rises, upward mobility becomes more rare.

The explanation for this is straightforward; as inequality rises the distance between one rank in the hierarchy and the one immediately above it gets bigger, and as ranks get farther and farther apart, moving up 1 rank becomes more difficult.

To be clear, even in low Gini coefficient areas where upward mobility is high, upward mobility is still *rare* (even in places where rags to riches stories are the most common, they are still outliers).

20C) Real World Examples

In a society such as South Africa where inequality is very intense (Gini coefficient around 60%), you will find that homicide is common, social trust is low, upward mobility is rare, and politics is always one inch away from escalating into a civil war.

In a society such as Denmark where inequality is very gentle (Gini coefficient around 20%), you will find that homicide is rare, social trust is high, upward mobility is common, and politics isn't all that serious.

Of the effects previously listed (Violence, Social Trust, Upward Mobility), the one most strongly correlated with inequality is violence; the male on male homicide rate.

20D) Historical Trends

In most societies throughout history, intense levels of inequality (Gini coefficients of 40%+) have been the rule, while gentle levels of inequality (Gini coefficients of 30%-) have been the exception.

Most societies have no ‘middle’ class; they only have a minority who are spectacularly rich, with the majority of people being poor.

21) Revolution and Political Preferences:

Leftwing people tend to assume all inequality is caused by crookedness; the only reason the rich have more wealth than the poor is because they exploit the poor. Rightwing people tend to assume all inequality is caused by merit; the only reason the rich have more wealth than the poor is because they are smarter and harder working. Both sides are usually correct, to some degree.

In every society, crookedness is part of what drives inequality. Merit also is, in the sense that in every society high IQ people tend to be better at attaining positions of power and making money than low IQ people.

Generally speaking it is the case that conservatives (Rightwing) stand for the interests of powerful people towards the top of the hierarchy. To be conservative is to desire to maintain the status quo, and powerful people *want* to maintain the status quo since under the status quo things are going well for them (relatively).

On the other hand, liberals (Leftwing) usually stand for the interests of powerless people towards the bottom of the hierarchy. To be liberal is to desire change, and those towards the bottom of the hierarchy

desperately desire change since under the status quo their lives are terrible (at least relative to those at the top of the hierarchy).

It seems to be the case that as inequality intensifies, politics becomes more polarized; the Leftwing makes calls for revolution, while the Rightwing becomes reactionary and demands that nothing ever be changed. As inequality rises, the probability of civil war or violent revolution increases.

Every society has a ceiling on inequality, in the sense that every society has some finite degree of inequality it can tolerate before it collapses with a violent revolution.

Many revolutionaries promise to eliminate or at least reduce inequality, but in truth *every society has elites, both before a revolution and after a revolution*. Most revolutions are nothing more than a *circulation of elites*; throwing out the old elites, and putting new elites in place (Vilfredo Pareto made this point).

Almost all violence (including violent revolutions) is carried about by young men with high testosterone levels.

To prevent violent revolution you must ensure that young men living towards the bottom of the macro hierarchy are sufficiently in love with the status quo, such that they are not willing to risk death in combat for the sake of tearing it down.

Revolution is a high risk high reward option; after the revolution, your life could be a lot better, or a lot worse. It's also possible that the revolution could result in you being thrown into prison or killed.

When you're at the bottom of the hierarchy, your life is terrible (on a relative basis) so you have little or nothing to lose; to a man with little to lose, a high risk high reward bet is appealing.

On the other hand, if you are at the top of the hierarchy your life is great (relatively speaking). You have a lot to lose, so taking a high risk high reward bet like revolution is very unappealing. The probability that revolution would result in your life getting better is low, the probability that revolution could lead to your life getting worse or you getting killed is quite high.

As such, it makes sense that those towards the bottom of hierarchies often find revolution to be appealing, while those towards the top of hierarchies almost never do.

When civilization collapses, or an existing power structure or hierarchy collapses, there is an opportunity to seize power. If your civilization and the power structures you must deal with are *completely rigid, they have no change whatsoever*, then the probability of you rising from the bottom to the top is zero.

Those towards the top of a hierarchy want stability; they want nothing to change, so that they can keep their lofty position. Those towards the bottom of a hierarchy want revolution, or at least change, which may give them the opportunity to seize power.

It sounds so obvious when it is said outloud, yet in real life people often ignore this.

They look at relatively poor young men launching revolutions, and think they are fools. In truth, they are acting rationally. They have nothing to lose except their lives, and their lives are miserable. They have everything to gain. Perhaps in the new order, they will have power.

22) Polygamy Drives Violence:

TLDR: Polygamy is pathological because it leads to a significant percentage of men being involuntarily single, and many of these men become resentful and violent.

“Western civilization was built on monogamy – one woman for every man. A winner takes all game with lopsided mate distribution is not a sustainable civilizational model. The contemporary presence of this model is indicative of civilizational decline. The west is on a downswing.” -

Illimitable Man

Among monogamous societies, you will find that some are peaceful and some are violent. Among polygamous societies, *all of them* are very violent.

Just as wealth is pareto distributed, the romantic success of heterosexual men is pareto distributed; women consider a minority of men (top tier men) to be extremely attractive, and most men to be unattractive.

In monogamous societies, the distribution of wives amongst men is *not* pareto distributed; each man has 1 wife.

In polygamous societies, the distribution of wives amongst men *is* pareto distributed; a minority of men have many wives, an additional minority of men have one wife, and a huge percentage of men (perhaps a majority) have zero wives.

The reason polygamous societies are violent is rather straightforward; the men who have no wives (and who know they probably never will) have been hit with an evolutionary death sentence; zero reproductive opportunities.

These involuntarily single men tend to become resentful about their romantic failure, and since from an evolutionary perspective they have nothing to lose (zero reproductive opportunities) many of them turn to violence.

For the sake of keeping society stable, banning polygamy is critical. From a legal perspective this means making polygamy against the law. From a political perspective, it means showing people propaganda that encourages monogamy (Disney movies that make marriage between 1 man and 1 woman look both normal and desirable).

Even in monogamous societies, there will be some percentage of men who end up involuntarily single; no women want them. However, the percentage of men who fall into this category will be far lower in a monogamous society than what it would be in a polygamous society.

The most dangerous thing in the universe is a young man with high testosterone levels who is convinced he has nothing to lose; ***only Satan knows the thing a man is willing to do when he has nothing to lose.***

Part of the reason single men are far more likely to engage in violence than married men is this; a wife represents *something to lose* (if you do something foolish like impulsively engaging in combat, she might leave you).

23) Economic Systems, Productivity and Inequality:

Every economic system increases the total amount of material wealth on an absolute basis, and also increases inequality; when wealth is created, it is distributed inequitably. Free Market Capitalism is no exception to this.

Productivity (wealth being created) is good, and intensifying inequality is bad (since it drives up the homicide rate). As such the uncomfortable question is this; what degree of inequality *should* a society be willing to tolerate, for the sake of getting more productivity?

Leftwing Communists tell you that the correct tolerance for inequality is zero; no inequality should be tolerated at all. Of course, this is pathological since the only societies that have managed to attain zero inequality have been societies where everyone has nothing.

Rightwing Libertarians tell you that the correct tolerance for inequality is infinity; the free market should be allowed to create wealth, and there is no degree of inequality that ever qualifies as a "problem". This is also pathological, since allowing inequality to become too intense can make a

society so violent that it collapses or is always on the verge of collapse.

24) The Ideal Civilization:

Fill it with high IQ people (since high IQ people are good at creating wealth, and low IQ people are incapable of creating wealth).

Have free market capitalism (since this will result in wealth being created).

Have mechanisms in place to keep economic inequality down to a tolerable level. Don't let the Gini coefficient go north of 40%. Progressive tax rates and socialized healthcare should be enough to do this, but if not, occasionally raising taxes on the richest 10% of the population should do the trick.

Enforce monogamy; ban polygamy, so that the intrasexual competition amongst men doesn't become too intense.

25) High Status Halo:

When people perceive your status is high, it gives you a kind of halo effect, in much the same way that being physically attractive gives a person a halo effect.

When you are high status people assume you are honest and competent. Being perceived as high status also makes people more willing to help you, since they assume you wield the power to repay a favor in a meaningful way. Most critically, being perceived as high status makes people *more hesitant to harm you*, since they assume you wield the power to retaliate in a meaningful way.

Every society has an unspoken rule; **crimes committed against high status people are punished far more harshly than crimes committed against low status people.**

If you murder a rich person, the probability you will be executed for it is far higher than if you murder a poor person. Equal protection under the law has never existed, and sadly it probably never will.

It is also the case that in every society crimes committed *by* high status people are punished less harshly than crimes committed by low status people.

These 2 dynamics taken together makes it such that the most harshly punished crimes are those committed by low status people against high status people, and the most leniently punished crimes are those committed by high status people against low status people, if they are even punished at all.

In every society the lives of some people are considered to be immensely important while the lives of others are considered to be worthless.

If a billionaire falls ill, he will immediately be given the best medical care on the planet. If a homeless man falls ill, he will be left to die.

If a billionaire is murdered, law enforcement will travel to the ends of the Earth to arrest and prosecute the perpetrator. If a homeless man is murdered, law enforcement will expend little to no energy on finding the perpetrator.

Predatory men target people who are low status because they perceive (correctly) that the probability of being punished is far lower if their victims are of low status rather than high status.

The point is this; making people perceive you are high status is not just an exercise in vanity for the sake of stroking your ego. There are consequential tactical benefits to people perceiving you are high status; they become more willing to help you and more hesitant to harm you.

26) Power Is Valued Over Virtue:

A powerful man is more respected than a good man.

If people perceive you are powerful and evil, they will gladly do you favors since they assume you wield the power to repay their favors.

If people perceive you are virtuous and powerless, people will scoff at your request for a favor. Yes, there are instances in which appearing virtuous and powerless may win you sympathy and thereby win you assistance, but such cases are the exception rather than the rule.

27) Invisibility From Low Status:

When you are low status, you're invisible. People pay very little attention to you, and expend no energy into analyzing your body language, vocal tonality, word choice, and personality.

Conversely when you are high status you are highly visible; people expend an immense amount of energy into analyzing your personality.

When you are high status people put effort into charming you and fear offending you, whereas when you are low status people put zero effort into charming you.

For reasons detailed in the previous section (High Status Halo), it is generally a good idea to make people overestimate your status; it makes them more willing to help you.

However, there may be situations where it is useful to make people perceive you are low status even if you aren't; it can give you a cloak of invisibility.

For the sake of spying, it is generally wise to have a cover identity that is of low or medium status, and certainly not ultra high status; this way nobody bothers with doing rigorous investigation into your background.

If you want to get to know someone's personality well, you need to make them perceive that your status is far lower than theirs.

Why?

When people perceive your status is higher than their own, they instinctively monitor what they say (use PowerTalk rather than StraightTalk) and monitor their body language; they instinctively wear a mask that they think will charm you, and go out of their way to avoid offending you.

As such, to get to know a person's real personality (without a mask, or with as little mask as possible), you must observe them when they perceive your status is equal to or far below theirs.

28) Epilogue:

The top and the bottom of any macro dominance hierarchy are 2 separate universes; one is Heaven and the other is Hell.

If you are at the bottom, you must get to the top *no matter how high the price may be*.

As Baltasar Gracian said, "A good end gilds all, no matter how unsavory the means."

29) Relevant Reading:

War and Status:

<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/out-the-ooze/201601/the-psychology-going-war>

<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/out-the-ooze/201512/if-you-give-man-gun-men-evolution-ma>

[ss-shootings](#)

TLDR: Men go to war so that they can win status via being successful at combat. Men want status because it makes them attractive to women.

Homicide Wins Status:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M3XYHPAwBzE>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jxBSKLxt3Wc>

TLDR: 25 minute mark, "The motivation for homicide isn't money; it's for women"

Status is the marker for attractiveness, from women to men.

Women will marry across and up dominance hierarchies, men will marry across and down.

Part of the reason men are aggressive and they compete with each other is because they want women.
Jordan Peterson

Depression and Hierarchies:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vKXD8ZEwAmw>

Hierarchies and Serotonin:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fAwJgoLXXBg>

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vfl98_tQqDY

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1V9qbgM9bTg>

Kate Pickett on inequality:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZV4cdUz3puE>

TLDR: "Disrespect is the most common trigger for violence. Issues of respect and status become much, much more heightened in an unequal world. Where you have more inequality, status matters more."

Richard Wilkinson on inequality:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cZ7LzE3u7Bw>

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FYt08ZZm_Ao

Martin Daly on Inequality:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=snurTL813Mk>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-asltUUvcGU>

Archived from theredarchive.com