

1. Record Nr.	UNINA9910778861003321
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Titolo	Durable inequality [[electronic resource] /] / Charles Tilly
Pubbl/distr/stampa	Berkeley, : University of California Press, c1998
ISBN	1-283-29171-1 9786613291714 0-520-92422-3 0-585-09318-0
Descrizione fisica	1 online resource (312 p.)
Disciplina	339.2
Soggetti	Income distribution Equality
Lingua di pubblicazione	Inglese
Formato	Materiale a stampa
Livello bibliografico	Monografia
Note generali	Description based upon print version of record.
Nota di bibliografia	Includes bibliographical references (p. 247-290) and index.
Nota di contenuto	Front matter -- Contents -- Acknowledgments -- 1. Of Essences and Bonds -- 2. From Transactions to Structures -- 3. How Categories Work -- 4. Modes of Exploitation -- 6. How To Hoard Opportunities -- 6. Emulation, Adaptation, and Inequality -- 7. The Politics of Inequality -- 8. Future Inequalities -- References -- Index
Sommario/riassunto	Charles Tilly, in this eloquent manifesto, presents a powerful new approach to the study of persistent social inequality. How, he asks, do long-lasting, systematic inequalities in life chances arise, and how do they come to distinguish members of different socially defined categories of persons? Exploring representative paired and unequal categories, such as male/female, black/white, and citizen/noncitizen, Tilly argues that the basic causes of these and similar inequalities greatly resemble one another. In contrast to contemporary analyses that explain inequality case by case, this account is one of process. Categorical distinctions arise, Tilly says, because they offer a solution to pressing organizational problems. Whatever the "organization" is-as small as a household or as large as a government-the resulting relationship of inequality persists because parties on both sides of the categorical divide come to depend on that solution, despite its drawbacks. Tilly illustrates the social mechanisms that create and

maintain paired and unequal categories with a rich variety of cases,  
mapping out fertile territories for future relational study of durable  
inequality.

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