

ENERGY AND INSTITUTION SIZE

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ABSTRACT

Why do institutions grow? Despite a century of scientific effort, there is no consensus on this topic. I propose a new approach to studying institutions that focuses on energy consumption. As energy use increases, institutions tend to become larger. I show that this growth of institution size can be thought of as the growth of hierarchy. In short, as energy use grows, societies tend to become more hierarchical.

Keywords: energy, institution size, growth, hierarchy, society