A Study of Property and Knowledge Inheritance in 19th Century Scania, Sweden

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Abstract

Knowledge and property are both inheritable from parents to children, and who receives the inheritance is influential in deciding which children maintain or advance in social class in societies where social mobility exists. Since knowledge and property have different characteristics, it is expected that there would be a difference between the two in how they affect the ultimate social status of the children who receive them. This is a study of those affects, using a public genealogical database of thousands of individuals who existed in Scania, Sweden throughout the 19th century, during a time where primogeniture inheritance was the norm. Analysis was done to see whether knowledge and property inheritance followed typical primogeniture patterns in the resulting social class of children based on birth order of the children.