



Peter Csermely, Semmelweis University, Budapest, Hungary

Weak Links

Stabilizers of Complex Systems from Proteins to Social Networks

Why do women stabilize our societies? Why can we enjoy and understand Shakespeare? Why are fruitflies uniform? Why do omnivorous eating habits aid our survival? Why is Mona Lisa's smile beautiful? – Is there any answer to these questions? This book shows that the statement: "weak links stabilize complex systems" holds the answers to all of the surprising questions above. The author (recipient of several distinguished science communication prizes) uses weak (low affinity, low probability) interactions as a thread to introduce a vast variety of networks from proteins to ecosystems. Many people, from Nobel Laureates to high-school students have helped to make the book understandable to all interested readers. This unique book and the ideas it develops will have a significant impact on many, seemingly diverse, fields of study.

Contents: Introduction: How the Links Were Formed.- A Principle is Born: The Granovetter-Study.- Why do we Like Networks?.- Network Stability.- Weak Links as Stabilizers of Complex Systems.- Atoms, Molecules, Macromolecules.- Weak Links and Cellular Stability.- Weak Links and the Stability of Organisms.- Social Nets.- Networks of Human Culture.- The Global-Web.- The Eco-Web.- Conclusions and Perspectives.

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