Political Analysis: Introduction and Research Design

Week I 15 January, 2018 Prof. Andrew Eggers

Our aims

- Improve your ability to assess evidence on empirical questions.
- Give you the tools to do your own data analysis.

Assessing evidence on empirical questions

For example:

- Does first-past-the-post discourage political engagement compared to other electoral systems?
- Do majority-Islamic countries have worse human rights records, controlling for wealth and other factors?
- Does satellite technology help avoid interstate wars?
- Does decentralization of the political system change its political culture? (Prelims specimen exam paper)
- What causes party systems to change over time? (Prelims specimen exam paper)
- What explains the rise of populism in advanced democracies? (Prelims specimen exam paper)

Of Time and the Development of Partisan Polarization

Laura Sloker University of California, Berlinkey M. Keel Jannings University of California, Santa Sarbura

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Simulating Developmental and Period Efforts in Party-Issue

Constraint

We have suggested that growing party-local constraint at

the individual level requires a relatively stable partiant

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However, another possible explanation for the rising constraint levels is that the class of 1960 was merely opending to pack and forces that were affecting after heres passing through the same historical time - a long-tone period effort. There is, in fact, a hist of that in the more limited parent panel. In this scenario, constraint gather have been fighted by party-differences that have bene more pronounced or less sensertain since the 1965s Researchers have found increased public awareness of party differences on issues in recent decades, as didec rated on below. These kinds of charges in particult cars have also condecidentially contributed to the increased linkages observation Tables (

Thus we are full with item confunctions for the oberroril proofs in the particultions linkage: (1) publical learning processes associated with aging, and (2) period dicts associated with more distinctive party devisions. Only by analysing/inequitabled data on multiple cohorts strar as extended period of time can we begin to distingold between these two effects and, more critically, we ill argue, the interaction between them, whereby onto ing collects are more affected by changing party dearago than are slider once to order to cherify the processor at search, we first present simulations of party inner conmaint under three different scenarios of partiant dearages. In doing so we minimoduce the mining part of our original model in Figure 1, samely, annexical variations is also found by comparing up colores at one moment in

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partian environments. These simulations chelds the sestanday between learning processes and contest. They also at horh convertation that as more here toned and not lational Illuction Nuder cross-section data storkhing House, 19873 to 2004

The Stability of Political Affiliations and Attitudes

Although commonly accuried, the properties about the climing sponsors across-the adult life quar-has sately been subjected to the scratter of long term panel data. We use panel data from the political socialization project to genmate support for this proposition and to expand upon it. We have observations for the posth sample across all ling some for around moments and across these serves for others, thus permitting us to look at the patterns of permission up to ap 10. In addition, we have three and we wave date for the parent sample. Table 1 presents the continuity and kinets (c) for (2) commonly used at studied measures." The correlations indicate attractional continuity across adjacent years of observation. In ordot to convey a sense of ble-stage progression, the age range has been affined to each panel's calendar time. with the parental range being represent in terms of mean

Walks employed sectors when a weather other youth and from 10 to 34, whereas continuity was much more pronounced over the next sheads, a trend found for a number of other prioritations as well densings and Markov 1984). Across the third time theme -- as the result. and been 20 in 10 where principal is completeness and inglass, a particularly arrowing hait gives the mach/lenger ine que operand ly the third period. Significantly, the 11 measures range widdly in terms of primals objects. parties benut, and the political excentuates that have been refer and the therm since 1967. The strength similarity is at to dry the Ballhood of instruction effects involving his stops, political kinters, and the stability of particular entrades News and Back 1999.

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The share simulations what markers is the partnering of constraint brock across obtain and across time, such this shadow tools, which are arbitrary. The second deriving is defined by according regal obtains and address one account achieves and denring up in the salide in-the years prior to 2000.

The second more designed conduction steps the participants similar positions on the issue and 1976, or adaptint a party difference emerged? Table 61. One can think of this as representing, for example, the onsergence of a party detente on racial issues, with the Democratibeing more liber of and the Republic and more concernation on policies aimed at promoting sacial equality. Second aspects of the simulation findings-lineary emphasis.

Hand, the oblar solution are how sequencies, here upon to change than are the younger otherts. Compare, for example, the changes across 1970 to 3000 for the 1970

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hort during the same two time frames. These incremented

gains in stability bound young adulthood, point toward a

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nervise is instructive and the results are similar to these

based on long-term surveys of special populations (3)

win, Colum, and Newcomit 1981, Sean and Eask 1998 Viewed this was, in eight of the 12 measures the overall

pattern is one of early gains and then gradual increases or little or no-change over the constituing years.

the energy generation. A generational accounting for

this comptionalism proposes party tics as simply being

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Phillip g. Miller and Banks 1996, shap-61, whereas alide

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tation with high affective mass. At this point we cannot

choose between these alternative explanations, but the se-

stability with angust to the arrest issues approached by

evaluation of the women's movement and the legilization of marijuane constitute the other two exceptions. These

were emergent insure a the class of 1963 came of political age and developed their political alientities. By contrast,

the issue hit the parental generation when they were al-

mady well into middle age and found themselves trying

The Linkage of Issue Positions

and Party Identification

In indicated above, we expect that the increasing stability

of partianship and political attitudes will be matched by

a strongthening linkage between the two. People is a rea

sendilis stable party around should increasingly come to

and respond by bringing their policy views and particula

allilation into protor digenerat. In architeg, they would either come to adapt the policy viewe advocated by the

party with which they identify or adjust their partiant of

Effation to be consistent with their issue commitments as its association of both." This would be true regardless of the

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specific learning mechanism involved--if, for complepolitical experience brings about a clearer sense of the parties' issue stateon, which then drives the enhanced tie ren attude and partianship or if political cope cience onlyances the thousance with which publical and also become primed, which then generates the righter band log. Seats and bank 1990).

We also appears adjustments in constraint to be more neuronal during the "improvisionable years" of pourse adultional, which is when the protont prim in anti-standing of party differences are likely to accur? This ton follows from Converse's argument that "rates of learning result/decline with the trainances and prochelegical interferences of more advanced up? (1988, 144). It also assess with Asheric (2012) Beyrslaw updating model of how parts differences in a make party system and learned, which shows that the value of new information Auditors with up. Finally, the reportation of nonlinear gains in party-local constituint is field to the expectation

"In TRU, and the digit wheel access in the avoid-testing much decaylin that there are "any reportion differences in the formation and the patholess counter of the truth of the type is nearly decaylin to different accession of any patholess count the pathole decayling a patholess counter of the truth of the truth of the truth of the truth operation of the truth of the pathole decayling access which are patholess on a pathole of the truth operation of the truth operation of the truth of the truth operation ope ers to college, is all the stores competing in the disk local walks about the her point (1981) 1997 as one is related deep shoring

of acadimentity in operators to change. As particus and issue attitude become more crystalland; they should be has subject to the adjustment that builds constraint.

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One test of this hypothesis consists of using the seinfection panel day to observe the associations/between edited attracts and party dentification processing. We meries the analysis to the possib sample in asile moulafromings of a fuller range of the life cycle and political developments between the early 1986s and late 1986s. Ya Mr J process the findings, gauged in terms of Peaces comfution coefficients." For the most part, the expected enoughening does next with the process of time. Bells tendigs for all but one indicator irreduction of Machel are demonstrably higher in 1987, assaily by a very hely margin, that are these in 1963 and 1973. Equilably sinkingis the dramatic tise with respect to idealing californial ration particum increasingly place themselves where they "Available" on the 7 point liberal concernative contin num. Overall, these results underscore the learning new classification with these adults fored internactions with the political cotom. People caperience more politics, and thus make more arms of publics, as they ago. That the pattern arms the years is not always monotonic suggests the contribu-tion of doors term period effects, more printedly as in the

Very similar made are band using represent coefficients dealers instrug party identification on tone attitude as the de-mattern system.

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and Eabor Unions (8) were obtained using the It-100 wolk of the Budley Thermometer. In the sedisation study the term "Nagrees" was used in 1907 while "Backs" warmend in 1975, 41, "Minner's Liberation New nest" and in 1973-93, "Wennell Measurer' and in 1997 NBS documents similar dana

Question: The Political Socialization Study

- 9. Londination of Marinessa 7 paint scale and could be the use of marijuana should be made legal" and "the possibles for using marijuants should be at higher tan they are now
- 10. School Theogenetism, 3-point scale: lifter an introduction that described the issue and libered out these with an opinion, the question continued with "Toyou think the procession in Wahington should use to it that white and York children go to the same abasis or size out of the area as it is more of its business" "Depends' suprems were could in the 11. Praser in Acheol, 3-point scale: After an introduction
- that incomed the inner and illevel out these with no-spinion, the question continued with "Which its on dials-also head to devel to cart calshe with a prayer or religion-does not belong in the shock? "Depends' responses were coded in the -

Overlage Task block in the NEU leader

- 11. 64 enment Social Spending, 7 print sole anchored by "the government should provide linear services, over its areas such as health and education, its or dar to coduce spending? and "it is important for the promotion to previde many more services even if it means at increase in spending."
- 13. Limited Grossmanni formed by averaging the reguarantee in three bound choice questions (2) that the re greenment the letter, or Tau, there are more things that processes doubl be doing. (2) One, we need a strong prominent to handle today's com-plex-scenesis problems, or Two, the first market can handle these problems: without government being in-volved. (1) thus, the main traces government has bearms higger over the years is because it has getters in sub-od in-things that people-should do for themselver. or Ten, provident has become bigger because the problems we then have become bigger. Respondence with missing data on two or more compressed wait deley party constraint

- never be premitted. 3. The law should premit also tion only in case of case, incost, or when the summer's life is in sharper. 3. The law should permit abortion he means other than rupe, incost, or danger to the sath life, but only after the send for the abortion has been dearly could also & By law, or exempt density despectes and to obtain an aboritom as a matter algemental design in the 1971 and 1976 MPI surveys represe option working was slightly different
- 13. Car Walts around a passar (home 11) holing they monotor toward "Gay more and its bians, that is, he meanwaits' and 120 responses to the question. He prolatest or oppose lates in protect homoscenade against job discrimination? "Pepends" and "Day (Know" or questions more coded in factorize the factor and oppose responses. Cases with missing data on both componext variables were continued.
- Traditional Values are upper responses from two liak art paratients: 22 "The server blootple are contributing to the brookdown of our society," (2) "This scene to would have many lower problems if there were non englass on trailtional healty tim." Reponse samp diven agent strength in disagree strength Case the mining data on other variable were emired
- 17. Church Mundance hand on a gastion about for quency with which respondent attended vices. The coast gautine wording changed in 1990 Repotent were coded. I = Drary week or more for quently. I disent compared, once or being a month F = 3 few times a year, server, or no colligious profes
- 14 NEE Index Composition New Deal Issues: Items 3, 7 12-13. Race and Cander Issues: 4-7. Californi Issues: 14.17

References

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Page 7 Analdi, Color, and Davakine M. New 1981 Addeed Attracts out the 110 Spec Mathem United sty of Wacmain Proc.

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Of Time and the Development of Partisan Polarization

Laura Staker University of California, Revisity M. Keel Jannings University of California, Santa Sarbura

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Simulating Developmental and Period Efforts in Party-Issue Constraint

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not made as durp as these regimenal by the yearth or

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gains in stability beyond young adulthood, point toward a

plateauting effect in the middle to late middle years. Comining the youth and percet pench scouts in a makeduit life upon collecting. Splitting of this sort is stally, but the

nervise is instructive and the results are similar to these

based on long-term surveys of special populations UK

win, Colum, and Newcomit 1981, Sean and Eask 1998 Viewed this was, in eight of the 12 measures the overall

pattern is one of early gains and then gradual increases or little or no-change over the constituing years.

percental PD subday substantially seconds that loand in

the energy generation. A generational accounting for

this comptionalism proposes party tics as simply being

generally more velatile in the other is coming of oge after

Philips g. Miller and Banks 1996, shap 41, whereas all

cale-sufficienties allows for your greater strengthening of

of particular as a concrete, frequently weathered over

tation with high affective mass. At this point we cannot

choose between these alternative explanations, but the se-

stability with angust to the arrest issues approached by

evaluation of the women's movement and the legilization of marijuane constitute the other two exceptions. These

were emergent insure a the class of 1963 came of political age and developed their political alientities. By contrast,

the issue hit the parental generation when they were al-

mady well into middle age and found themselves trying

to graft these insure onto previous dentities

salts do show the uniqueness of PED Much lower part

analog well after middle due to the unique leatures

The three exceptions must bred attention. First,

partian environment. These simulations chelds the restanday between learning processes and contest. They also at kork reputation that as met elemented against lational Illuction Nuder cross-section data storkhing House, 19873 to 2004

The Stability of Political Affiliations and Attitudes

Although commonly accuried, the properties about the climing sponsors across-the adult life quar-has sately been subjected to the scratter of long term panel data. We use panel data from the political socialization project to genmate support for this proposition and to expand upon it. We have observations for the posth sample across all ling some for around moments and across these serves for others, thus permitting us to look at the patterns of permission up to ap 10. In addition, we have three and we wave date for the parent sample. Table 1 presents the continuity coefficients (c) for (2) commonly used attitudinal measures.7 The correlations indicate attitudinal continuity across adjacent years of observation. In ordet to convey a sense of ble-stage progression, the age range has been affined to each panel's calendar time. with the parental range being represent in terms of mean -

youth and from 10 to 34, whereas continuity was much more pronounced over the next sheads, a trend found for a number of other prioritations as well densings and Markov 1984). Across the third time theme -- as the result. aged been 20 in 10 - three principal is consider inglass, a particularly proving he's given the machinespe ine que represented by that third period. Significantly the 11 measures many widdle in terms of primals objects. question format, and the political exclusitudes that have been refer and the therm since 1967. The strength similarity is at to dry the Ballhood of instruction effects involving his stops, political kinters, and the stability of particular animakes Neuro and Bank 1990).

Descring on the parent panels from the same project minimum the image of declaring openness. The gains posted by the partons across the first two panel periods

"he for againstic to deals dear the measure. The contin-cultures on tot adapted the measurement sense. Tota data means are use field to dear the patients of data(patients rest to and an field to taken the patient of data(patients mean). in pull Roomith 1991 : Comparisons of conductors coefficie natio due to the matio He' surger distribution. However, he uses priors down

Walks employed sectors when a weather other

The Linkage of Issue Positions and Party Identification In indicated above, we expect that the increasing stability of partianship and political attitudes will be matched by a strongthening linkage between the two. People is a rea sendilis stable party around should increasingly come to

ed the incorporation. Alternationing the particu and respond by bringing their policy views and particula attilation into protor algoritori. In architeg, they would either come to adapt the policy viewe advocated by the party with which they identify or adjust their partiant of Effation to be consistent with their issue commitments or its some of both." This would be true regardless of the

"He quantizes of relative of balance processes is generating higher con-mutant is an important range but is not come of to the apparents in this article. We extend to the inner in the combining however,

Automatical Actuality of the

time (helding across columns). No "generation eridient (holding across the disgonale): Overall, the execut of the party charage in the electronic, indiced by the arreage constraint coefficient (as bettern row), is constant

The description of the matters is the partnering of constraint broke across obtain and across time, say this absolute truth, which are advised. The record descript is obtained by according-regal obtains and which are account obtains are denoing up in the tables in the years prior to 2000.

The second more designed conduction steps the participants similar positions on the issue and 1976, or adaptint a party difference emerged? Table 61. One can think of this as representing, for example, the onsergence of a party detente on racial issues, with the Democratibeing more liberal and the Renablicant more concernation on policies aimed at promoting sacial equality. Second aspects of the simulation findings-lineary emphasis.

Hand, the oblar solution are how to prototion, how open to change than are the younger otherts. Compare, for example, the changes across 1970 to 3000 for the 1970 political opprisme brings about a clearer sense of the parties' issue stateers, which then drives the anhanced tie ren attude and partianship or if political cope cience onhances the thousancy with which political antialso become primed, which then generates the righter band log. Seats and bank 1990).

We also appert adjustments in constraint to be more neuronal during the "improviouslyle years" of young adultional, which is when the protont prim in anti-standing of party differences are likely to accur? This tion follows from Converse's segament that "rates of learning result/decline with the trainances and people legical interferences of more advanced up? (1988, 144). It also assess with Asheric (2012) Beyrslaw updating model of how parts differences in a make party system as learned, which shows that the value of new information Auditors with up. Finally, the reportation of nonlinear gains in party-local constituint is field to the expectation

"In TRU, and this of high offset extens in the avoid-network much decaylin that there now "are reported differences in the formation and the patholess constraints" in prior is designed has anoth decaylin in MD and constrained in game over the test in priority. Accept is a thread-maximum law game over the test in priority. Accept is a finite and constrained in game over the test in the TRU. The patholess shall be also provided accept three one pays in TRU. The patholess shall be also provided accept three one pays ers to college, is all the terms competing in the disk local walks about the her point (1981) 1997 as one is related deep should and division between the parties energed in g. MitCarlo, Park

of mediscarity in openness to change. As partiant and issue attitudes became more crystalland, they should be has subject to the adjustment that builds constraint.

One test of this hypothesis consists of using the seinfection panel day to observe the associations/between political attitudes and party dentification across time. We meries the analysis to the possib sample in asile moulamage of a fuller range of the life cycle and political developments between the early 1980s and late 1980s. To Mr 2 process the findings, gauged in terms of Pearson comfigien coefficients," for the ment part, the expected enoughening does next with the process of time. Bells tendigs for all but one indicator invaluation of Machel are demonstrably higher in 1987, smally by a very hely margin, that are these in 1963 and 1973. Equilably sinkingis the dramatic tise with respect to idealing californial ration particum increasingly place themselves where they "Available" on the 7 point liberal concernative contin num. Overall, these results underscore the learning new classification with these adults fored internaction with the political cotom. People caperience more politics, and thus make more arms of politics, as they age. That the pottern across the years is not always monotonic suggests the contribu-tion of doors term period effects, more printedly as in the

Very similar made are found using represent coefficients dealers tracing party identification or tone attitude as the de-referent results.

1.4

the s

4-4. Evaluation of Hacks (4), Minner's Micrometel (7), 14. Abertian, 4 point scale: 1. By law, abortion should and Eabor Unions (8) were obtained using the It-100 wolk of the Budley Thermometer. In the sealiantion study the term "Nagrees" was used in 1987 while "Backs" waveverfat 1973, 97, "Minner's Liberation Mars net" and in 1875-83, "Wennel' Measurer' and in 1997 NBS documents similar dana

Question: The Political Socialization Study

- 8. Leplineties of Merlinson, 7 point scale andread by the use of marijuana should be made legal" and "the possibles for using marijuants should be at higher tan they are now 10. School Theogenetism, 3-point scale: lifter an introduc-
- tion that described the issue and libered out these with an opinion, the question continued with "Toyou think the procession in Wahington should use to it that white and York children go to the same abasis or size out of the area as it is more of its business" "Depends' responses were could in the 11. Praser in Acheol, 3-point scale: After an introduction
- that incomed the inner and illevel out these with no-spinion, the question continued with "Which its on dials-also head to devel to cart calshe with a prayer or religion-does not belong in the shock? "Depends' responses were coded in the -

Overlage Task block in the NEU leader

- 11. 64 enment Social Spending, 7 print sole anchored by "the government should provide linear services, over its areas such as health and education, its or dar to coduce spending? and "it is important for the promotion to previde many more services even if it means at increase in spending."
- 13. Limited Grossmanni formed by averaging the responsores three housed choice questions (1) thus the is preminent the hoter, or Tan, there are more things that processes doubl be doing. (2) One, we need a strong prominent to handle today's com-plex-scenesis problems, or Two, the first market can handle these problems: without government being in-volved. (1) thus, the main traces government has bearms higger over the years is because it has getters in sub-od in-things that people-should do for themselver. or Ten, provident has become bigger because the problems we then have become bigger. Respondence with missing data on two or more compressed wat ables are conitrail

Larks COMPANIES AND IN SECT DESIGNATION never be premitted. 3. The law should premit also tion only in case of case, incost, or when the summer's My is in danger. 3. The law should permit abortion

- he means other than rupe, incost, or danger to the sath life, but only after the send for the abortion has been dearly could also & By law, or exempt density despectes and to obtain an aboritom as a matter algemental design in the 1971 and 1976 MPI surveys represe option working was slightly different 13. Car Walts around a passar (home 11) holing they
- monotor toward "Gay more and its bians, that is, he meanwaits' and 120 responses to the question. He prolatest or oppose lates in protect homoscenade against job discrimination? "Pepends" and "Day (Know" or spectrum were coded in factories the faces and oppose responses. Cases with missing data on both compoand variables were contribut.
- Traditional Values are upper responses from two liak art paratients: 22 "The server blootple are contributing to the brookdown of our society," (2) "This error to would have many lower problems if there were non englass on traitional landy tim." Regioner samp diven agent strength in disagree strength Case the mining data on other variable were emired
- 17. Church Mundance hand on a gastion about for quency with which respondent attended vices. The coast gautine wording changed in 1990 Repotent were coded. I = Drary week or more for quently. I disent compared, once or being a month F = 3 few times a year, server, or no colligious profes
- 14 NEE Index Composition New Deal Issues: Items 3, 7 12-13. Race and Cander Issues: 4-7. Californi Issues: 14.17

References

Instruction, March, and Refs L. Instalant. 1988. "Moningial Realignment in the U.S. Blackweit," *Instrumed of Politics 40* (Pagest): 420–53.

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Page 7 Available Colors, and Theodore M. New 1981 Advent Mittado our de 156 Spin Madoon Union aly al Wassing Pers. 5

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Assessing evidence better: exams and essays

Explain the basis of empirical evidence you cite.

"Evans and Tilley say X, but Fisher says Y"

"Evans and Tilley's regression analysis of the British Election Study indicates X, but Fisher (using the same data) says Y once we properly control for age and education"

Assess the empirical evidence you cite.

"Evans and Tilley say X."

"Evans and Tilley say X, but their analysis does not account for important factors ..."

"Evans and Tilley say X, but their analysis only indirectly addresses the question because ..."

"Evans and Tilley say X, and their analysis is particularly credible because..."

Assessing evidence better: the rest of your life

Department for International Development How to Note March 2014

Assessing the Strength of Evidence

Contents

ntroduction	2
Background: research and evidence in DFID	2
Why does the strength of evidence matter?	2
What is the purpose of this guidance note?	2
Scope and coverage of this Note	3
A note on terminology	3
Applying this guidance note	4
Part I: Describing a single study	5
Type of research	5

Doing your own data analysis

Then: Data hard to get and (learn to) process; only specialists did data analysis



Now: Data easy to get and (learn to) process; everyone can do data analysis







What you'll learn

download the Lijphart dataset
D = read.csv("http://andy.egge.rs/data/L.csv")
make a scatterplot
plot(D\$womens_parl_representation_2010, D\$enviro_performance_index_2010)
add a regression line
abline(lm(D\$enviro_performance_index_2010 ~ D\$womens_parl_representation_2010),
col = "red", lwd = 2)



D\$womens_parl_representation_2010

Why should I learn to do my own data analysis?

- To better assess evidence
- To produce your own evidence: tutorial essay, research paper, dissertation, beyond
- To get a job, or do more interesting things at a job: "the intern who stopped making coffee"
- You may not know yet why!

Political Analysis: a snapshot

Lectures by week:

- I. Introduction and Research Design (AE)
- 2. Concepts and Measurement (AR)
- 3. Descriptive Statistics and Visualization (AR)
- 4. Case Selection (RH)
- 5. Bivariate Relationships (AE)
- 6. Multivariate Relationships (AE)
- 7. Inference (AE)
- 8. Synthesis and Review (RH)

Data labs by week:

- 2. R basics
- 4. Descriptive statistics
- 6. Regression analysis I

8. Regression analysis II

For the time & location of lab sessions, see email from PPE office.

Lecturers:



Andrew Eggers



Andrea Ruggeri



Robin Harding

Assessment: 2000-word essay (on one of three questions related to Lijphart's claims about effects of consensus democracy) to be submitted by 12 noon Tuesday 1 May 2018

You won't understand what you're doing in the labs or the essay assignment unless you attend the lectures and/or read the textbook.

Books in the course



Main concepts, techniques



Thematic context in which to apply those ideas

Software in the course



The programming language we will use



The user interface we will use (the program you should download)

Google	R logistic regression
	r logistic regression r logistic regression glm r logistic regression tutorial r logistic regression predict
	About 6, /40,000 results (0.80 seconds)

One way to get help when you're stuck

A typology of research questions

Descriptive questions:

- What proportion of UK citizens support leaving the EU?
- Do democracies have better human rights records than non-democracies?

Explanatory questions (reverse causal questions):

- Why do democracies seldom fight wars against each other?
- Why are incumbent legislators so likely to win re-election?
- What caused the French revolution?

Forward causal questions:

- What is the effect of campaign spending on election outcomes?
- What is the effect of consensus democracy on political stability?









Consider this question: "Is respect for human rights higher in democracies than in non-democracies?"

Requires

- defining concepts (democracy, respect for human rights), deciding on a procedure for measuring them (Week 2)
- communicating the resulting measures (Week 3) and their relationship (Week 5)



Characteristics of reverse causal questions ("why" questions)

Some start from a single event and seek to explain why it happened.





Characteristics of reverse causal questions ("why" questions) (2)

Others start from a **pattern** and seek to explain why it holds.





A pattern:

democracies tend not to fight one another

	country	exec_parties_1945_2010	exec_part
1	ARG	-8.93	-3.43
2	ALC: N	-0.73	-9.65
з	AUT	0.43	0.64
4	8AH	-1.50	-1.10
5	GAR	-1.28	-1.10
6	461	3.14	1.10
7	901	-1.43	-5.42
	CAR	-1.00	-1.03
9	CR	-0.37	-9.38
10	06%	1.31	1.35
11	826	1.58	1.48
12	FRA	-8.86	-8.89
13	GER	0.78	9.63
14	GRC	-8.64	-0.55
15	205	0.53	0.55
16	IND	0.65	9.63
17	245	9.17	9,38



How do we assess explanations?

A good explanation

- is, or would have been, useful for prediction
- includes an account of how the causes produced the effects (mechanisms, or theory)
- converts a puzzle into a "matter of course" (Peirce, 1903) [inevitability]
- is "hard to vary" (Deutsch, 2011), i.e. doesn't work if you alter elements of it

For more on answering explanatory questions, see Andrew Gelman and Guido Imbens, "Why ask why? Forward causal inference and reverse causal questions", unpublished manuscript 2013.



Mill and reverse causal questions

Mill's methods clarify why explanation in the social sciences is messy.



John Stuart Mill A System of Logic (1843)

Suppose all of the potential causes can be enumerated and accurately measured. Then these two methods will *in certain circumstances* tell us the cause of an outcome:



Problems with applying Mill's methods in social science research

- What if there is more than point of agreement or difference?
- How do you know if you have listed all of the potential causes?
- How do you judge agreement when factors are not binary?
- What if there is measurement error or randomness?
- What if two causes both need to be present?



"... in the sciences which deal with phenomena in which artificial experiments are impossible (as in the case of astronomy), or in which they have a very limited range (as in mental philosophy, social science, and even physiology), induction from direct experience is practiced at a disadvantage in most cases equivalent to impracticability." (Mill, A System of Logic)



Answering reverse causal questions in a messy world

There are important phenomena we don't know or can't observe.

=> Mill's methods can't be applied. (He knew that!)

Explanations in social science will be messy & contested.





Research design for reverse causal questions

Types of explanations:

- 1) **Theoretical**: "I offer a theory that shows how the observed pattern is actually not puzzling at all."
- 2) Empirical: "I produce a new measure of [democracy, spending, public opinion] that shows how the observed pattern is not puzzling at all."
- 3) Combination of theoretical and empirical: e.g. "Democracies do not fight each other considerably less than would be expected when you consider their wealth."

In social science, there can be many "good" explanations for a phenomenon and no clear way to choose one.



Forward causal questions: What is the effect of X on Y?

We think in terms of **counterfactual scenarios**.

what would	1
have happened	
if I had taken the aspirin?	÷
(treatment)	

what would have happened **vs** if I had **not** taken the aspirin (control)



Fundamental problem of causal inference (Holland, 1986): We only ever observe **one of these** for any

particular individual.



Fundamental problem of causal inference (1)

Consider these forward causal questions:

- Does aspirin relieve headaches?
- Does a job training program increase participants' income?
- Do door-to-door campaigns increase voter turnout?
- Does consensus democracy increase political stability?
- (1) How does the **fundamental problem of causal inference** apply?
- (2) Could we measure the effect with a "before-and-after" comparison?



Fundamental problem of causal inference (2)



http://xkcd.com/552/



The problem with the before-and-after design





But sometimes the "before-and-after" design is convincing!

When I flipped the light switch, the light turned on.

George W Bush approval rate before 9/11 57%; after 88%.

Why is it convincing in these cases?



Approval rating of U.S. President, from Kellstedt

Figure 2.1. Presidential approval, 1995-2005.



Dealing with the fundamental problem of causal inference

We make comparisons among outcomes we do observe

and

we clearly state the assumptions under which our comparisons will give the right answer.



http://xkcd.com/552/



What makes the "before-and-after" plausible

Comparison: Same unit(s), before and after an intervention.

Key assumption: No change in outcome if treatment not applied.





The gold standard: randomized control trial (RCT)



How would you use an RCT to study

- the effect of aspirin on headaches
- the effect of a job training program on income
- the effect of door-to-door campaigns on voter turnout
- the effect of consensus democracy on political stability

What is the key assumption under which correlation implies causation?



The most common design: regression analysis

Comparison: Different units at the same point in time, possibly controlling for other variables. (see Week 6)

Key assumption: Confounding variables (a.k.a. selection bias) are properly accounted for.



Chocolate consumption per capita (kg)

Nobel Prizes and chocolate consumption



Implications (1)

Every time you read an article/book in Politics (IR, Economics), ask what kind of research question is being asked:

- Descriptive (what is X? what is relationship between X and Y?)
- Explanatory/reverse causal (what explains/caused Y?)
- Forward causal (what is the effect of X?)



Implications (2)

For research addressing **explanatory** questions:

- keep in mind the fundamental messiness, and where it comes from
- note the kind of explanation (theoretical, empirical, both) being offered

For research addressing **forward causal** questions:

- ask what RCT one could hypothetically run
- note the kind of design actually used (RCT, before-and-after, regression analysis, etc), the assumptions under which correlation implies causation in this design, and ask whether these assumptions are met



John Stuart Mill says: social science is hard!

"Nothing can be more ludicrous than the sort of parodies on experimental reasoning which one is accustomed to meet with, not in popular discussion only, but in grave treatises, when the affairs of nations are the theme....'How can such or such causes have contributed to the prosperity of one country, when another has prospered without them?" Whoever makes use of an argument of this kind, not intending to deceive, should be sent back to learn the elements of some one of the more easy physical sciences."