

Qualitative & Multi-Method Research

Newsletter of the
American Political Science Association
Organized Section for Qualitative and Multi-Method Research

Contents

Symposium: Conceptions of Historical Time: Looking Beyond Time on the Clock	
<i>Introduction: Complexities of Historical Time</i>	
Marcus Kreuzer	2
<i>The Temporal Dynamics of the Franchise Expansion: Timing, Tempo, and Reversals</i>	
Stefano Bartolini	3
<i>What Do We Mean By Historical Legacy?</i>	
Jason Wittenberg	7
<i>The Nexus of Time: Generations, Location of Time, and Politics</i>	
Tim Luecke	9
<i>Capturing Time: Measuring the Age of Party Systems</i>	
Marcus Kreuzer and Vello Pettai	14
<i>What is Time for Sequence Analysis?</i>	
Philippe Blanchard	17
Symposium: Deconstructing Social Science Concepts	
<i>Introduction</i>	
Rudra Sil	22
<i>Questions about Causes</i>	
Frederic Charles Schaffer	23
<i>Puzzle</i>	
Jillian Schwedler	27
<i>“I’m Not a Concept”: Cinematic Reflections Concerning the Politics of Concept Formation</i>	
Douglas C. Dow	30
Announcements	34
<i>QMMR Section Awards</i>	34
<i>IMM Conference Group Awards</i>	35
Article Notes	37

APSA-QMMR Section Officers

President: Lisa Wedeen, University of Chicago
 President-Elect: Peter Hall, Harvard University
 Vice President: Evan Lieberman, Princeton University
 Secretary-Treasurer: Colin Elman, Syracuse University
 QMMR Editor: Robert Adcock, George Washington Univ.
 Division Chairs: Derek Beach, Univ. of Aarhus, Denmark
 Ingo Rohlfing, University of Cologne, Germany
 Executive Committee: Timothy Crawford, Boston College
 Dara Strolovitch, University of Minnesota
 Mona Lena Krook, Rutgers University
 Juan Luna, Universidad Católica de Chile

Letter from the Editor

Robert Adcock
 George Washington University
adcockr@gwu.edu

This issue of the newsletter testifies to the intellectual vitality and diversity of the panels that our section sponsors at the annual APSA meeting. Both of the symposia in this issue have their roots in section panels, and my thanks as editor go to David Waldner (Division Chair for the 2012 meeting) and Ben Read and Diana Kapiszewski (Division Chairs for the 2013 meeting) for their hard work in preparing the section’s program over the last two years.

Although the 2012 annual meeting was unfortunately canceled due to Hurricane Isaac, the meeting’s planned panel on “Dimensions of Time” has an intellectual legacy in the symposium “Conceptions of Historical Time: Looking Beyond Time on the Clock.” My thanks to Marcus Kreuzer for serving as the guest editor of the symposium, and for laboring tirelessly to bring elements of the original APSA panel together with additional contributors to produce the rich set of contributions appearing here.

The second symposium, “Deconstructing Social Science Concepts,” grows more immediately out of a panel of the same title at this year’s APSA annual meeting co-sponsored by the section and IPSA Research Committee #1 (Concepts and Methods). I want to thank Fred Schaffer and fellow panelists for revising their conference papers into newsletter pieces very quickly (and, moreover, during the academic year) so that they could appear in this issue, and to Rudy Sil for generously writing an introduction at the drop of a hat.

Finally, in closing, I’d like to highlight an innovation in this issue of the newsletter. In addition to QMMR’s traditional announcement of its section award citations, we are also reporting the awards of the Interpretive Methodologies & Methods Conference Group (IMM) of the APSA. While these awards are not financed or administered by the section, the two organizations have convergent interests and substantial overlap in their memberships, and they have closely cooperated in consistently co-sponsoring APSA panels.

Symposium: Conceptions of Historical Time: Looking Beyond Time on the Clock

Introduction: Complexities of Historical Time

Marcus Kreuzer

Villanova University

markus.kreuzer@villanova.edu

Virginia Woolf once noted that “there is an extra-ordinary discrepancy between time on the clock and time in the mind” (Cited in Gaddis 2002: 19). She meant to underscore the complexity of understanding time as it combines objective, mechanical elements with contextual and subjective ones. Political science has come a long way from the days when scholars mistook studying something that occurred in the past for studying actual temporal dynamics (Sewell 1996; Bartolini 1993); political science now employs myriad temporal concepts that permit analyzing time in all its complexity. This symposium takes an inventory of some of these concepts in order to push beyond the current consensus that time matters and draw greater attention to different ways in which time matters in our analysis of social phenomena.

Calendric Time and Its Limitations

The starting point for exploring what Pitrim Sorokin and Robert Merton called “social time,” on which social scientists focus, is the time mapped out by the calendar and the clock—the most basic, objective but also thinnest conception of time (Sorokin and Merton 1937). Calendars and clocks have long been the basic measurement instrument of time. Ever since societies began following the celestial motions in the sky, they have devised various timekeeping devices (i.e., sundials, clocks) and time-recording schemes (i.e., calendars, chronicles). All these efforts share in common attempts to ground time in the celestial cycles and to find solutions for the “fact that neither the number of days in a lunar cycle nor the lunar cycles in a year are nice round numbers” (Falk 2010: 31). While societies differed in how their calendars scheduled leap years or varied the length of months, they all share in common efforts to benchmark time against an external, physical, and hence objective celestial reality. The calendar’s ability to measure time was subsequently refined by the invention of clocks that gave structure to the time within a single day. The refinement, incidentally, originated in monasteries and served monks to more reliably coordinate their common prayers (Mumford 1934: 12–13).

This calendric time and time on the clock thus are ontologically the least ambiguous and epistemologically most fundamental forms of time. But, they also are “empty,” “uniform, homogeneous...[and] shorn of qualitative variations” (Sorokin and Merton 1937: 621, 623). They are, in short, of limited use for analyzing social phenomena. The cultural critic Lewis Mumford recognized this point when he argued that the clock “disassociated time from human events and helped

create the belief in an independent world of mathematically measurable sequences: the special world of science. There is relatively little foundation for this belief in common human experience” (Mumford 1934: 15–16). Sorokin, Merton, and Mumford’s point, shared by historians and historically-minded social scientists, is that calendric time is too thin to meaningfully represent many complex social phenomenon, temporal dynamics, or history for short.

What then is historical or social time and how is it capable of adequately capturing temporal dynamics? As the following contributions will show, there are some promising but also varying answers to this question.

Historical Time and Its Variations

On the grander scale, the break with, or maybe rebellion against, thin and calendric time began “when men began to think of the passage of time not in terms of natural processes—the cycle of seasons, human life span—but of a series of specific events in which men are consciously involved and which they can consciously influence. History, says Burckhardt, is the ‘break nature causes by the awakening of consciousness’” (Carr 1961: 157). On a smaller, social science scale, skepticism towards thin, calendric notions of time is almost as old as social science itself and particularly strong among scholars interested in political development. Such scholars long have emphasized that many political phenomena lack the uniformity and the clock-like properties of physical phenomena because they are historically situated, interdependent across time, and, thus, subject to complex temporal dynamics (Pierson 2000, 2003; Skocpol 1984; Katznelson 2003). They consequently have emphasized that historical time requires the reconfiguration of the fixed, independent and mechanical units of chronological time into more varied, interdependent, and complex forms of time that are better capable of rendering legible the temporal complexities experienced by individuals and societies. These efforts have given rise to a multitude of conceptions of time and thus require us to think of time not as a singular, but as a plural (Zerubavel 2003; Kern 1983).

The following contributions are meant as a first step to bring together some conceptualizations of historical time that currently are used in social science. All these conceptions can be thought of as refinements of two basic core elements that are found in any study of political development. Studying political development is in its crudest version a form of chronicling, of reporting the mere temporal order of events. Such chronologies are crude in the sense that they correspond to the stereotype of history as “one damn thing after another” that pays little attention to the continuities between the chronicled events. Such chronologies are to historical analysis what the metronome is to music—it just measures the beat of time. A slightly more advanced form of historical analysis concerns itself with continuities and discontinuities. It clusters time into moments of change and no change, into episodes of transience and durability, or into moments of critical junctures

and subsequent path dependencies.

The following contributions build on and, in many ways, refine this dual concern with chronology and continuities and discontinuities by thinking more systematically about starting and end points and the temporal interactions among various units of analysis. The contributions in this symposium are ordered to go from the ones with least to the most complex treatment of time. Here is a quick preview.

Stefano Bartolini uses the franchise expansion in Europe to talk about timing, tempo, and reversals. *Timing* compares the starting points and permits differentiating the order in which and how closely in time identical events occurred. *Tempo* compares the time elapsed between the starting and end point of a phenomenon to measure how quickly or slowly a phenomenon unfolded. *Reversals*, in turn, capture instances of temporary change where the endpoint returns to the starting point.

Jason Wittenberg's study of post-communist Eastern Europe confronts him with the challenge of explaining varying patterns of democratic consolidation after an allegedly uniform and shared communist experience. He and other scholars have unraveled this erstwhile paradox by drawing attention to the varying legacies left by both the communist and pre-communist periods. Legacies thus capture temporal dynamics in which part of a phenomenon ceases to formally exist while informally continuing to exert important and oftentimes very long-term influence.

Tim Luecke's focus on generations echoes on a smaller scale Jason Wittenberg's analysis of legacies. The concept of generation establishes a bridge between events unfolding on calendric time and the biological life cycles of individuals. It stipulates that some events along calendric time are more important than others and that individuals are more socializable at earlier than later stages of life. And so, generations can form when a cohort of young people experience together a particularly important set of historical events.

Marcus Kreuzer and Vello Pettai analyze how the organizational continuities and discontinuities of political parties affect the overall continuity of a party system. This interaction has been long studied and described in terms of varying rates of institutionalization or consolidation. They introduce a new measure of effective party system age which is capable of not only quantitatively measuring the aggregate durability of party systems but also differentiating distinct patterns of development.

Philippe Blanchard combines discussion about conceptions of time with particular methodologies for studying them. He describes how sociologists have developed sequence analysis to systematically study the interaction of three temporal dimensions: timing, order, and duration. His contribution manages to efficiently combine a synopsis about the key elements of sequence analysis with some illustrations of what insights it is capable of generating into better understanding temporal dynamics.

References

Bartolini, Stefano. 1993. "On Time and Comparative Research." *Journal of Theoretical Politics* 5:2, 131–167.

- Carr, Edward Hallett. 1961. *What is History?* New York: Vintage.
- Falk, Dan. 2010. *In Search of Time: The Science of a Curious Dimension*. New York: St. Martin's Press.
- Gaddis, John Lewis. 2002. *The Landscape of History*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Katznelson, Ira. 2003. "Periodization and Preferences: Reflections on Purposive Action in Comparative Historical Social Science." In *Comparative Historical Analysis in the Social Sciences*. James Mahoney and Dietrich Rueschmeyer, eds. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), 270–304.
- Kern, Stephen. 1983. *The Culture of Time and Space 1880–1918*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Mumford, Lewis. 1934. *Technics and Civilization*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Pierson, Paul. 2000. "Not Just What, but When: Timing and Sequence in Political Processes." *Studies in American Political Development* 14, 72–92.
- Pierson, Paul. 2003. "Big, Slow-Moving and Invisible: Macrosocial Processes in the Study of Comparative Politics." In *Comparative Historical Analysis in the Social Sciences*. James Mahoney and Dietrich Rueschmeyer, eds. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), 177–207.
- Sewell, William. 1996. "Three Temporalities: Toward an Eventful Sociology." In *The Historic Turn in the Human Sciences*. Terrence J. McDonald, ed. (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press), 245–280.
- Skocpol, Theda. 1984. "Emerging Agendas and Recurrent Strategies." In *Vision and Method in Historical Sociology*. Theda Skocpol, ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), 356–391.
- Sorokin, Pitirim A. and Robert K. Merton. 1937. "Social Time: a Methodological and Functional Analysis." *American Journal of Sociology* 42:5, 615–629.
- Zerubavel, Eviatar. 2003. *Time Maps: Collective Memory and the Social Shape of the Past*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

The Temporal Dynamics of the Franchise Expansion: Timing, Tempo, and Reversals

Stefano Bartolini

European University Institute, Florence
stefano.bartolini@eui.eu

The development of political rights, and in particular, the right to vote, was the end result of a long historical process going back to the eighteenth century and was rooted in the development of civic rights (Marshall 1964; Bendix 1978). [...] The development of voting rights should not be seen as linear development of previous and requisite rights of expressions, association, and opposition. [...] It is difficult to find a common dimension along which to rank-order national cases. However, I distinguish cases along an *early versus late* [timing] dimension, a *sudden versus gradual* [tempo] dimension, and a *continuity* dimension (with or without important reversals). [...]¹

Timing/Earliness

How many individuals were allowed to vote during the nineteenth century is divided into four periods: 1830–1880, 1881–1917, 1918–1944, and 1945–1975. [...] In the 1848–1880 period, three countries stand out as early comers to relatively

large suffrage. France, after experimenting with several formulas in the post-Napoleonic period from 1815 to 1846, suddenly introduced universal male suffrage (the suffrage had already been equal since 1831) for citizens over twenty-one years in 1848, with an increase in the electorate from about 1–2% to 36% (Huard 1991; Cole and Campbell 1989). In Switzerland, universal male suffrage for citizens twenty years of age or more was introduced with the constitutional reform that followed *Sonderbund* [war] in autumn 1847, bringing the enfranchised electorate to about 30%. Swiss citizens, however, had never really been subjected to any regime *censitaire* and had a long tradition of general voting in the mountain cantons (Martin 1980 [1928 1st edition]: 252). So, in the Swiss case, there was less of a break with the past. Finally, Denmark introduced equal male suffrage in the wake of the 1848 revolution, and this produced a radical change from autocracy to proto-democracy in the kingdom. The principle, however, was tempered by many more restrictions than in the other two cases (De Kiriaki 1885: 82–99; Carstairs 1980: 75–77), and it was applied to men over age thirty. This resulted in a smaller enfranchised electorate, standing at about 25% (Elklit 1980: 366–396).

The fourth early-comer to high levels of male suffrage was Germany. The short-lived Frankfurt Assembly of 1848 was elected by universal male suffrage, and after that date many German states could count on a fairly large male electorate. In particular, in the primary election in the Kingdom of Prussia, every male citizen twenty-four years of age or more was entitled to cast a vote (Vogel et al. 1971), although the suffrage was not only indirect but also highly unequal (Casertano 1911: 204). Two elections held in 1867 for the Reichstag of the North Confederation involved universal male suffrage (for citizens twenty-five years of age or more), and the electorate was estimated to be about 35% of the adult population. After 1871, all elections were direct, equal, and male universal.

In the middle of the nineteenth century, all the other countries had very restrictive suffrage requirements; with electorates ranging between 3% and 8% of the population twenty years old or more, it makes little sense to distinguish between them. One case that can possibly be singled out is that of Norway. The 1814 Norwegian constitution introduced the most liberal voting qualification of the time, enfranchising about 25% of all men (Rokkan 1966: 247). This corresponded to roughly 10% of the population aged twenty years or more, which, up to 1848, was the highest-franchise level in Europe. However, 1848 passed unnoticed in Norway and the electorate remained stable at around 9%, even declining to 8% in the 1870s. By that time, the Norwegian franchise could no longer be regarded as comparatively high.

By the late 1880s in Austria, Sweden, and the United Kingdom, the electorate has passed the 10% threshold. In Austria, the first direct elections to the lower house were held in 1873 (in previous elections, the deputies had been indirectly elected by provincial diets), with an enfranchised electorate of about 10%. Similarly, in Sweden, the establishment of a second chamber and of centrally recorded elections came after 1866 and throughout the 1870s the electorate was about 10%. Finally, in Britain, the electoral reforms of the 1867–1872 period brought

the electorate to about 15% of the male population twenty years of age or older.

The 1880–1920 period is the crucial phase of suffrage extension. The first countries to extend the right to vote substantially were Ireland and Great Britain through the reforms of the mid-1880s, which introduced a uniform household franchise, uniform lodger franchise, and a uniform 10-pound occupation franchise in every borough and county throughout the country while leaving ownership franchise differentiated. The electorate was increased by 80% by these measures and reached about 30% of the adult population (Butler and Cornford 1969). Three other countries enlarged their electorate to reach a third of the adult population, corresponding roughly to universal male suffrage, before the turn of the century: Belgium (1894 first election), Austria (1896), and Norway (1900). The Belgian 1893 reform that suddenly increased universal male suffrage was introduced for the national assembly for male citizens age twenty-five or more, increasing the electorate from 3.9% to 37.3%, even though huge inequalities were maintained (Glissen 1980: 338–365). In Austria, elections to the lower house (the *Abgeordnetenhaus*) continued to be held according to a curia system that divided the house into four classes. The total enfranchised electorate was estimated at about 12–13% in the 1890s. The 1896 reform added a fifth curia (72 seats compared to the 353 deputies of the other four), which had a general character and male universal suffrage. This brought the enfranchised population to about 36% of the adult population. Finally, in Norway, the suffrage increased slowly from 10% to 16–17% by the end of the nineteenth century through gradual reforms that extended suffrage from property and occupational requirements to those of citizens paying a minimum tax on income (1885). In 1898, universal suffrage for men aged twenty-five years or more was achieved, bringing the electorate to about 35% (Rokkan 1970). Later, the Norwegian electorate continued to grow by marginal increases and progressive enlargements, thus, in 1907, a proportion of the female electorate (about 48%) was enfranchised, in 1913 universal suffrage for adult women was introduced (it had been preceded by women's universal suffrage at the local level in 1911), bringing the enfranchised adult population to 77%, the second highest level of enfranchisement in Europe, at that time after Finland. Overall, the Norwegian pattern of extension was gradual and consistent.

Finland represents the unique case of a relatively late and extremely sudden male universal suffrage (but early female suffrage). Between 1809 and 1867, a four-diet system represented the heads of noble families, the clergy, the city dwellers (one or two representatives for each town or group of towns), and the peasants (one representative by jurisdictional district). From 1872 to 1904, the procedures and qualifications for voting did not change fundamentally, except for allowing school and university teachers and civil servants to vote in the clergy curia. The franchise was probably very restricted in this period. In 1904, an increase of the electorate brought the enfranchised adult population to about 9%. The 1906 reform, following the temporary loosening of the Russian hold on Finnish political affairs, suddenly introduced

universal male and female suffrage (over twenty-four years of age) direct and secret elections, and even proportional representation. In a single reform, the new Finnish unicameral Parliament (*Eduskunta*) was elected by 76% of the adult electorate (Myly and Berry 1984: 9–27).

The Netherlands, Italy, and Sweden adopted universal male suffrage last. In Italy, the Zanardelli Reform Act of 1882 had significantly increased the electorate to about 13% by lowering the male voting age from twenty-five to twenty-one and by reducing the tax, wealth, and educational requirements. Before this reform, 80% of the electorate was given the right to vote on the basis of tax and property qualifications; after the reform this percentage dropped to 34.7%, while 63.5% were included due to their intellectual and educational capacities (Ballini 1985, 1988; Schepis 1958). However, in the period of antisocialist legislation starting in 1894, electoral registers were revised and educational tests were made more stringent, with the result of actual disenfranchisement of almost 5% of the adult population. The electorate fell back to pre-1880 levels until the 1912 electoral reform, which introduced almost universal male suffrage (for men over thirty) and brought the electorate to 42% of the adult population. The Swedish pattern of franchise development resembles the Italian one closely. Although no marked disenfranchisement occurred in Sweden, the electorate remained fairly stable throughout the 1880s and 1890s around 10% of the adult population and rose to about 15% in the first decade of the twentieth century. In 1909, only a couple of years before Italy, almost universal male suffrage for citizens twenty-four years of age and over was introduced, doubling the electorate from 15.8% to 32.8%. The pattern of the Netherlands differs from those of Italy and Sweden, as the first steps of suffrage enlargement took place earlier and the whole process was more gradual. The reform of 1887 doubled the electorate from 5.7% to almost 12% of the adult population by lowering economic requirements. A second doubling of the electorate from 11% to 20% took place with the reform of 1896, which enfranchised large parts of the lower middle classes, many highly qualified workers and sections of the rural proletariat and small farmers and tenants. The electorate grew to almost 28% of the adult population at the last pre-World War I election (1913), and universal male suffrage was introduced after the war in 1918.

The final stage of enfranchisement concerned the female electorate and in most cases, it was a sudden decision. Only two counties had enfranchised women before World War I: Finland in 1907, together with men, and Norway between 1909 (for women whose own or husband's income exceeded a minimum) and 1915. In Austria, Denmark, and Germany, female enfranchisement took place in a single step immediately after the war between 1918 and 1919. The United Kingdom and Ireland enfranchised women thirty years of age or more (with certain minimal limitations) in 1918, completing the process in Ireland in 1923 and the United Kingdom in 1928. In both cases, the age limit was brought down to twenty-one years, as for men. The Netherlands and Sweden extended suffrage to women in 1921 and 1922, respectively. Finally, Italy, France, and Belgium granted female suffrage only after World War II, be-

tween 1945 and 1948. Well in the rear came Switzerland, which gave suffrage to women at the national level only in 1971, 123 years after the same right was granted to men.

This brief description shows that a simple and straightforward classification of national experiences is difficult even along a single [timing] dimension such as earliness/lateness. Beyond the four clear-cut cases of France, Germany, Switzerland, and Denmark, the relative positions of the countries have changed from decade to decade. Thus, Switzerland and France, which were in the lead up to the 1860s, formed part of the group at the lowest level by the 1920s. Denmark's early start was followed by a stagnation that allowed several countries to catch up with it by the 1870s and 1880s. Germany is probably the only country that consistently maintained its position in the first ranks.

Tempo

Considering the same historical data in terms of the rapidity or lengthiness with which suffrage was extended clarifies whether similar levels at a given time were the result of gradual growth or sudden expansions of the electorate. [...]

In the vast majority of cases, enlargement of the suffrage proceeded in relatively large steps. Sudden and large changes doubling the electorate occurred where there was female enfranchisement in all but three cases. Only in Norway, Ireland, and the United Kingdom did female enfranchisement proceed in two main consecutive steps: in 1909–1915, 1918–1923, and 1918–1929 (I refer, as usual, to the first elections under new rule). Changes in male suffrage were more highly differentiated, but in this case too, jumps predominate over gradual evolution. If a jump is defined as an increase of more than 10%, a change of at least this size is present everywhere except in the four early-comers (France, Germany, Switzerland, and Denmark), which, after their early sudden enlargement, remained at the same level for almost seventy years, until after World War I. Early-comers could not have gradual development, so cases of early and gradual enlargement are as impossible as those of late and gradual enlargement. All the other cases were characterized by larger or smaller jumps. Going from the earlier to the later jumps, the cases are the following: The United Kingdom produced the first important jump of about 13% in 1885 and again of about 13% in 1918; Ireland jumped by 18–19% at the same time; Belgium, by 33.4% in 1894; Austria, by 22% in 1896; Norway, by 18.2% in 1900; Finland, by almost 30% in 1907; Sweden, by 16.7% in 1911; Italy, by 27.2% in 1913; and the Netherlands, by almost 12% in 1918. The size of these changes varied. The most sudden increases, affecting a third of the adult population, were no doubt experienced by Belgium at a very early stage and by Finland and Italy later. Austria's sudden increase affected about a fifth of the adult population in 1896. Ireland (1886), Norway (1900), and Sweden (1911) experienced smaller jumps, to around 18% of the adult population. Finally, the Netherlands had only one jump, which came very late, after World War I, and was also the smallest—just above the 10% limit, like the two British increases. Any other changes not mentioned here can safely be considered gradual adaptations

Table 1: Rate Growth Per Decade in the Male Electorate

Countries	1860-70	1870-80	1880-90	1890-1900	1900-10	1910-20
Big Jumps						
Belgium	0.001	0.02	0.00	3.38	0.05	0.33
Finland	stable ^a	stable ^a	0.10 ^b	0.10 ^b	2.96	-0.14
Italy	0.01	0.86	0.31	-0.29	0.27	2.87
Intermediate Jumps						
Austria	n.a	0.24	0.01	2.12	0.39	0.60
Norway	-0.03	0.09	0.32	2.22	0.04	0.50
Sweden	n.a	0.09	-0.03	0.23	1.98	0.05
Minor Jumps						
Ireland	0.10	0.05	2.07	Stable	n.a.	0.33
Britain	0.62	0.15	1.29	-0.08	0.02	1.29
Netherlands	-0.39	0.07	0.58	0.97	0.64	1.17
Early and Sudden Increase						
Denmark	0.07	0.11	0.17	-0.04	0.11	0.44
France	0.25	-0.21	0.02	0.14	0.02	0.00
Germany	Stable	0.32	0.12	0.09	0.04	1.02
Switzerland	Stable	Stable	-0.04	-0.04	-0.09	0.30

due to small modifications in economic and/or capacity requirements and in revisions of the electoral lists.

In Table 1, the average yearly increase in (only) the male electorate from the 1860s to the 1920s is reported. Countries are regrouped according to the size of major increases, and the table offers information about the location and size of the major increases. Following the table from top to bottom, there is a decline in the size of the per annum increases in the case of major enlargements and a growing level of per annum increases in the decades that are not characterized by any major redefinitions of the franchise. The Netherlands shows the most clear-cut case of gradual enlargement. It presents a jump exceeding 10% only in the final phase after World War I. In all the other decades (but one), the average increase is considerably higher than in the other cases, indicating a process of truly progressive enlargement of the electorate. In the three decades preceding the final granting of universal male suffrage after World War I, the electorate was increased by about 6%, 10%, and again 6%, for a total of 22%. Britain, despite its reputation for very gradual development, presents two peaks, while in other decades the rates of growth are close to zero. Ireland shows a relatively important increase in the 1880s—bigger than that in Great Britain (2.07% versus 1.29%)—but, unfortunately, there are no data for the 1890s and 1900s. Norway is also usually associated with gradual development, but the increase in universal male suffrage in the 1890s was big. Gradual development characterized the pre-1890 and post-1900 periods, but in the 1890s the Norwegian electorate increased by about 20% of the adult population.

Without forcing national cases too much into the comparative framework, I can now provide in Table 2 a classification of the Western European enfranchisement process along the two dimensions of its timing and tempo. The most difficult case to classify is that of the Netherlands, whose development

is unquestionably gradual, but which in terms of timing is a relative latecomer until the end of the first decade of the twentieth century. We could thus classify it as gradual and intermediate as well as gradual and late. I have, after much thought, placed the Dutch case in the intermediate timing group because the levels of enfranchisement in the 1890s and 1900s were considerably higher than those of Italy and Sweden (classified as latecomers).

Reversals

A third dimension of suffrage enlargement is the existence or absence of reversals, that is, the more or less linear nature of the enlargement itself. France is the classic case for which the “early, sudden, and followed by reversal” category was originally developed. It is not correct, however, to concentrate on the Restoration reversal vis-à-vis revolutionary times, when the outstanding characteristic of the French pattern remains that of very early universal male suffrage. After 1848, a revision of the electoral lists (the law of May 31, 1850) attempted to restrict the franchise by demanding, as a prerequisite, three years of residence in the voting place. However, this reform had only minor effects: The electorate changed from 9,837,000 in 1849 to 9,836,000 in 1852 to 9,490,000 in 1857, rising again to over 10,000,000 in 1863, which can hardly be regarded as mass disenfranchisement.

In Denmark, the original democratic promises of the 1848 revolution were to some extent muted in the following decade. Confrontation between the king and the conservatives, with their strongholds in the first chamber, and the rurally supported liberals in the second chamber resulted in a minor democratization of the constitution itself. In 1866, suffrage was also restricted, but the impact of such change was felt particularly in the *Landsting* (the first chamber), where higher property qualifications were introduced. However, strictly from the

Table 2: Comparative Enfranchisement: Timing and Tempo

		Timing		
		Early	Intermediate	Late
Tempo	Sudden	Fr, De, Ge, Sz	Be	Fi, It
	Intermediate		Au, No	Sw
	Gradual		Ir, UK, Ne	

point of view of the suffrage, these conflicts were manifested more clearly in the stagnation of a relatively high but not yet universal male suffrage throughout the 1850s and 1860s. No real signs of significant disenfranchisement are evident in the post-1849 figures (Svasand 1980: 97–124).

The only case of a franchise reversal that has significant implication for our analysis is that of Italy in the 1890s. The revision of the electoral registers carried out in 1894 reduced the electorate from 2,934,00 in 1892 to 2,121,000 and constituted a clear rupture in the process of growth initiated by the reform law of 1882. Almost a third of the electorate lost its right to vote in 1895. Moreover, this disenfranchisement was without doubt one of a set of measures set up by the government in a clearly antisocialist operation (Mastropaolo 1980: 398–411). The effects of the disenfranchisement lasted for a long time; it took seventeen years and five elections before, in 1909, the electorate reached the same numerical level at which it had been in 1892. This revision was of great political importance because, without it, Italy would show only a very gradual pattern rather than a sudden and late development. So, only in Italy do we find disenfranchisement that combines size, lasting influence, and a clear antisocialist political orientation. [...]

Note

¹ This contribution is taken from pp. 206–220 in Stefano Bartolini's *The Political Mobilization of the European Left, 1860–1980* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000) in which he analyzes the interaction between patterns of the franchise expansion and formation of socialist parties. For the copyright notice see the book's copyright page. Reprinted with the permission of Cambridge University Press.

References

- Ballini, Pier Luigi. 1985. "Le elezioni politiche nel Regno d." *Italia. Appunti di bibliografia, legislazione e statistiche.* *Quaderni dell'Osservatorio Elettorale* 15, 141–220.
- Ballini, Pier Luigi. 1988. *Le Elezioni nella storia d'Italia, dall'Unità al fascismo: profilo storico-statistico.* il Mulino.
- Bendix, Reinhard. 1978. *Kings or People: Power and the Mandate to Rule.* Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Butler, David and J. Cornford. 1969. "United Kingdom." In *International Guide to Electoral Statistics.* Stein Rokkan and Jean Meyriat, eds. (The Hague: Mouton), 330–351.
- Carstairs, Andrew M. 1980. *A Short History of Electoral Systems in Western Europe.* London: Allen & Unwin.
- Casertano, Antonio. 1911. *Il diritto di voto.* Vol. Pierro: Naples.
- Cole, Alistair and Peter Campbell. 1989. *French Electoral Systems and Elections since 1789.* Aldershot: Gower.

- De Kiriaki, Alberto S. 1885. *Della Riforma elettorale.* Rome: Forzano.
- Elklit, Jörgen. 1980. "Election Laws and Electoral Behavior in Denmark until 1920." In *Wählerbewegungen in der europäischen Geschichte.* Otto Büsch, ed. (Berlin: Colloquium Verlag), 366–397.
- Glissen, John. 1980. "Zur Entwicklung des Wahlrechts im Benelux-Raum 1814 bis 1922." In *Wählerbewegungen in der europäischen Geschichte.* Otto Büsch, ed. (Berlin: Colloquium Verlag), 338–364.
- Huard, Raymond. 1991. *Le suffrage universel en France: 1848–1946.* Editions Aubier.
- Marshall, T. H. 1964. *Class, Citizenship and Social Development.* Garden City: Doubleday.
- Martin, William. 1980 [1928]. *Histoire de la Suisse.* 2nd ed. Lausanne: Payot.
- Mastropaolo, Alfio. 1980. "Electoral Processes, Political Behaviour and Social Forces in Italy from the Rise of the Left to the Fall of Giolitti, 1876–1913." In *Wählerbewegungen in der europäischen Geschichte.* Otto Büsch, ed. (Berlin: Colloquium Verlag), 97–124.
- Mylly, Juhani and Michael Berry. 1984. *Political Parties in Finland.* Turku, Finland: University of Turku.
- Rokkan, Stein. 1966. "Electoral Mobilization, Party Competition and National Integration." In *Political Parties and Political Development.* Joseph LaPalombara and Myron Weiner, eds. (Princeton: Princeton University Press), 241–265.
- Rokkan, Stein. 1970. *Citizens, Elections, Parties: Approaches to Comparative the Study of the Process of Development.* Oslo: Universitetsforlaget.
- Schepis, Giovanni. 1958. *Le consultazioni popolari in Italia dal 1848 al 1957: profilo storico-statistico.* Editrice Caparrini.
- Svasand, Lars. 1980. "Democratization and Party Formation in Scandinavia." In *Wählerbewegungen in der europäischen Geschichte.* Otto Büsch, ed. (Berlin: Colloquium Verlag), 398–411.
- Vogel, Bernhard, Dieter Nohlen, and Rainer-Olaf Schultze. 1971. *Wahlen in Deutschland: Theorie, Geschichte, Dokumente 1848–1970.* Berlin: Walter de Gruyter.

What Do We Mean By Historical Legacy?

Jason Wittenberg

University of California, Berkeley
witty@berkeley.edu

In the nearly quarter century since the collapse of communism a great many outcomes, from patterns of democratic consolidation and electoral behavior to state-society relations and cultural attitudes, have been attributed to legacies of the past. Some of these outcomes, such as a mistrust of politics or the dominance of the state sector, are attributed to legacies from the communist past. Other outcomes, such as nationalist conflict or enduring support for rightist parties, are traced back to the interwar period and beyond. What unites this research and

related efforts to account for outcomes in other parts of the world is an abiding sense that to fully understand the present it is necessary to take account of the past. Yet beyond this common goal there is little consensus on what we as researchers mean when we conclude that an outcome is a historical legacy. This essay offers a preliminary assessment of that meaning.

To do this it is helpful to lay out the structure of an archetypal legacy argument. There are three components to such an argument. One is an outcome (or pattern of outcomes) that appears inexplicable, or at least not fully explicable, given circumstances contemporaneous with that outcome. For example, why should populations in Eastern Europe after 1989 have been so mistrustful of politics and political parties (Jowitt 1992)? One would not necessarily expect this given the fact that most of the parties were new, and that after roughly four decades of dictatorship the citizenry finally had an opportunity to determine its own fate. The propensity of some peoples to resist Soviet occupation is likewise not readily explainable by reference to any obvious distribution of social or economic characteristics (Darden forthcoming). The same might be said for the pattern of voter turnout in the former German Democratic Republic (Kashin and Ziblatt 2011) and of why some post-communist countries have become consolidated democracies while others have not (Pop-Eleches 2007).

A second component is a purported antecedent to the outcome that is identified as either a cause or a correlate of that outcome. The antecedent might take the form of a measurement of the outcome at a prior period, in which case it is sometimes claimed that the outcome has persisted. For example, Wittenberg (2006) showed high correlations between post-communist support for rightist parties across Hungarian municipalities and electoral results from the last democratic national parliamentary election before the advent of state-socialism. In the case of inter-war anti-Jewish discrimination in Germany, Voigtländer and Voth (2012) find a correlate in the pattern of anti-Jewish violence that occurred during the 14th century Black Death epidemic, in which Jews were blamed for spreading disease.

The identified antecedent might be a potential causal factor rather than a correlated outcome. For example, Grosfeld and Zhuravskaya (2012) link differences in contemporary support for conservative religious parties across Polish territories to whether the territory had once belonged to the Habsburg or to the Russian empire. Likewise, Becker et al. (2011) find that there is greater mass trust of public institutions in areas governed by the Habsburg Empire than in neighboring areas ruled by either the Ottoman or Russian empires. Peisakhin (2013) demonstrates that Ukrainians on the formerly Habsburg side of the long-defunct border between the Habsburg and Russian empires have more antipathy to Russia (and greater sympathy for Ukrainian nationalism) than their Ukrainian neighbors who happen to live on the formerly Russian side, even though those areas had been in the Soviet Union (and undergone Soviet socialization) for decades.

A third component is a mechanism or channel that fills in (or at least purports to fill in) the causal links leading from the

antecedent to the outcome to be explained. For example, Voigtländer and Voth (2012) claim that medieval anti-Semitism disappeared in those German towns where trade openness raised the cost of discrimination against outsiders and persisted into the interwar period where such openness never took root. Grosfeld and Zhuravskaya (2012) contend that support for religious parties in regions of Poland formerly in the Habsburg Empire can be traced back to Austria's more tolerant attitude to the Roman Catholic Church, which led to higher church attendance and ultimately more conservative politics. Likewise, Wittenberg (2006) maintains that pre-communist attachments to right-wing parties were more likely to survive state-socialism where the communists failed to destroy local church institutions. Peisakhin (2013) finds that pre-Soviet Ukrainian historical identities were transmitted even through the ideologically hostile Soviet regime if parents were consistent enough in the political messages they telegraphed to their children.

Identifying the mechanism is invariably the most speculative part of the argument due to the difficulty of tracing the effect of the candidate mechanism through time. The degree of difficulty is related to the temporal distance between outcome and antecedent. In the case of the medieval correlates of inter-war anti-Jewish discrimination, for example, it would be necessary to measure trade openness and eliminate alternative explanations over a period of nearly six centuries, a daunting task in the best of circumstances. Having a more temporally proximate antecedent can help, but not in all circumstances, because the difficulty of validating the mechanism is also related to the magnitude of social disruption between outcome and antecedent. Those who study Habsburg legacies on contemporary political behavior can trace their mechanism over decades rather than centuries, but these decades were marked by destructive wars and dictatorship, rendering less visible evidence for mechanisms such as churches.

Considering the three components together we can now say something more about what counts as a legacy. First, what we call the "legacy" is the outcome to be explained, not the antecedent or the mechanism of influence. This is not always clear in individual studies because not all legacy arguments are explicitly framed as such. Nevertheless, it is possible to rephrase the result of any legacy-type argument in a way that makes the intended legacy clear. Thus, for example, the legacy identified by Wittenberg (2006) is the pattern of support across municipalities for rightist parties in post-communist Hungary. The legacy in Grosfeld and Zhuravskaya (2012) is the current pattern of support for religious parties across regions in Poland.

Second, an outcome qualifies as a legacy only if it cannot be fully explained except by reference to an event or state of affairs that occurred prior to the outcome but ceased to occur at some point before the outcome is observed. In the phrasing of Stinchcombe (1968), the outcome must have "historical" causes, such as the religious policies of the long-extinct Habsburg Empire or Soviet-era repression. Thus, although a legacy connotes continuity with the past, it cannot exist without a discontinuity of causal factors. In studies of the commu-

nist and former communist world the most important causal discontinuities coincide with the fall of communism. Popular fear of the police in post-communist Eastern Europe, for example, might be viewed as a legacy of Soviet-era police practices that ceased to exist once communism fell. But regime change is not a necessary (nor perhaps even a sufficient) condition for ensuring the causal discontinuity necessary for an outcome to be a legacy. For example, one might well point to late Soviet economic output as a legacy of Stalinist ideas of central planning. In short, a legacy is best characterized as an aftereffect of an antecedent cause that no longer operates, regardless of whether or not the underlying continuity spanned two regimes.

Finally, the temporal label we give a legacy relates to the time period of the antecedent, not of the mechanism of transmission. We refer to post-communist popular fear of the police or mistrust of political parties as *communist* legacies, for example, because we have traced the fear and mistrust back into the communist period. Similarly, Voigtländer and Voth (2012) trace the interwar pattern of German anti-Semitism back to the Middle Ages, yielding a medieval legacy. It is worth noting that in the case of many legacies the identified antecedent may itself be considered an outcome with an earlier associated antecedent. In Eastern Europe mistrust of political parties, for example, may well have originated long before the advent of state-socialism. Likewise, the observed pattern of anti-Jewish violence in medieval Germany almost certainly had roots going back to even earlier centuries. It is not wrong to label the legacy according to the antecedent we have identified, but the label should not be used to infer that the outcome of interest is not in fact a legacy of an even earlier period.

References

- Becker, Sascha O., Katrin Boeckh, Christa Hainz, and Ludger Woessmann. 2011. "The Empire is Dead, Long Live the Empire! Long-Run Persistence of Trust and Corruption in the Bureaucracy." Discussion Paper No. 5584, Institute for the Study of Labor, Bonn, Germany.
- Darden, Keith A. Forthcoming. *Resisting Occupation: Mass Schooling and the Creation of Durable National Loyalties*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Grosfeld, Irena and Ekaterina Zhuravskaya. 2012. "Persistence Effects of Empires: Evidence from the Partitions of Poland." Unpublished manuscript.
- Jowitt, Kenneth. 1992. *New World Disorder: The Leninist Extinction*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Kashin, Konstantin and Daniel Ziblatt. 2011. "A Missing Historical Variable? The Long Run Effects of Nineteenth Century Landholding Patterns on Contemporary Voting in Central Europe, 1895–2009." Unpublished manuscript, Harvard University.
- Peisakhin, Leonid. 2013. "Long Run Persistence of Political Attitudes and Behavior: A Focus on Mechanisms." Paper presented at the 2013 American Political Science Association Meeting, Chicago.
- Pop-Eleches, Grigore. 2007. "Historical Legacies and Post-Communist Regime Change." *The Journal of Politics* 69:4 (November), 908–926.
- Stinchcombe, Arthur L. 1968. *Constructing Social Theories*. Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press.
- Voigtländer, Nico and Hans-Joachim Voth. 2012. "Persecution Per-

petuated: The Medieval Origins of Anti-Semitic Violence in Nazi Germany." *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*, online access May 8, 2012.

Wittenberg, Jason, 2006. *Crucibles of Political Loyalty: Church Institutions and Electoral Continuity in Hungary*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

The Nexus of Time: Generations, Location of Time, and Politics

Tim Luecke

Mershon Center for International Security Studies
Ohio State University
luecke.7@osu.edu

In 2008 Barack Obama was elected to be the first African-American president of the United States of America. While most of us grasped the historical significance of this moment, there were clear differences in how its meaning was interpreted. To draw on a personal experience, when I talked to my ailing grandfather at the time, he expressed a tremendous amount of admiration for President Obama and seemed to hold him in the highest regards. But when we ended the conversation he said: "I am still surprised that the Americans are willing to elect a *Negro*." A couple weeks earlier, my five-year-old daughter had asked me why this election was such a big deal. When I tried to explain to her that it was important because for the first time in history a "black man" would be president of the most powerful country in the world, she pointed to a picture of Obama and his family and said "He is not black, he is brown!" These differences in interpretation of one and the same event do not reflect differences in race, class, nationality, gender, or even personalities, but instead they result from the fact that the three of us were, and still are, members of different generations and thus are anchored in different temporal locations.

The concept of generations has been used widely in political science and the social sciences more generally.¹ However, at the same time, the general value and contribution of a generational approach to the study of politics has remained unclear. As a matter of fact, generational scholars themselves disagree heavily on what the correct definition of the term "generation" actually is.² In the few pages to follow, I intend to solve this conceptual confusion by arguing that the "generation" is first and foremost a unit of analysis that designates the temporal location, or position, of actors in time. This temporal location is constituted by the intersection of three temporal processes which are crucial for shaping how we experience time and what "time" we experience. These three processes are the cycle of daily life, individual life course, and collective history. The position of actors at the nexus of these three temporal processes matters because different locations in time translate into different attitudes, worldviews, beliefs, cognitive schemata, individual or collective memories. All definitions of the concept of generations first and foremost constitute units of analysis that identify the location that actors occupy in time.

Generational analysis is based on the idea that our experience of events depends not only on the events and their “content” themselves, but also on the background of collective history and the age at which we experience those events. Generational analysis thus provides us with access to the temporal experience of the people whose behavior we study and it allows us to study the political effects and implications that arise out of the interaction between generations that are located at different points in time.

The Problem of Generations

The conceptual confusion surrounding the concept of generations in political science is a reflection of a long-ranging debate within the literature on generations. Since the time of August Comte, who has been credited with providing the first systematic treatment of the concept of generations (Jaeger 1985: 275), scholars have disagreed heavily over the correct way to conceptualize the term, and still to this day a number of seemingly incompatible definitions exist in the literature. The three most prominent concepts are the notion of (1) genealogical generation, (2) cohort, and (3) social, historical, or political generation. The concept of genealogical generation, or kinship notion of generations, primarily refers to the distance between parents and off-spring. A cohort is “defined as the aggregate of individuals (within some population definition) who experienced the same event within the same time frame” (Ryder 1997: 68). The concept of social, historical, or political generation, finally, refers to cohorts who have undergone a series of formative events during their time of youth that shapes the outlook of those cohorts for the remainder of the life-course (Fogt 1982; Edmunds and Turner 2002, 2005; Luecke 2013; Mannheim 1997). In contrast to cohorts, historical or social/political generations share a sense of generational consciousness or belonging (Fogt 1982; Mannheim 1997). Even though the genealogical definition is certainly the oldest, going back to ancient Greece (Bertman 1976) and Egypt, most contemporary social scientists have either adopted a cohort approach or the concept of social generations. The debate between proponents of cohort analysis and those who favor the concept of social generations continues to divide generational studies to this day, and has obfuscated the general explanatory contribution of generational analysis to the point where some have suggested that the concept of generations is analytically useless (Hardy 1997).

The Solution: Generation as a Temporal Unit of Analysis

I argue that this skepticism towards generational analysis is unwarranted and that we can resolve the problem of generations and the apparent conceptual confusion by defining the more abstract concept of “generation” itself. The “generation” constitutes the genus for less abstract conceptualizations used in the literature, such as “genealogical generation,” “cohort,” and “social/political generation.” In order to define the genus, we need to uncover the attributes shared by all sub-level concepts. The three concepts discussed all share the fact that they locate individuals and/or groups in the process of time. A “generation” is therefore defined as a unit of analysis that

indicates the location in time that actors occupy. Let me briefly discuss the idea of “location in time” and address the conception of time that underlies this definition.

The idea of a temporal position, or location, has maybe been most clearly articulated by Anthony Giddens (1984). According to Giddens, all actors are positioned at the intersection of three fundamental temporal processes, namely (1) the “*duree* of daily life,” (2) the “life span of the individual,” and (3) the “*longue duree* of institutions” (Giddens 1984: 35), or what I will refer to as “collective history.” As Giddens points out, these three temporal processes unfold in distinct ways. Daily life and the time of institutions are cyclical, in the sense that the perception of time arises through the repetition of daily/institutional practices and routines. In contrast, the life span of the individual is irreversible and finite, comprising a set of definite stages through which the individual and her body pass towards death.

These three temporal processes interact with one another and shape how actors experience “their time.” Events that take place during our daily life only acquire meaning and the potential to disrupt daily routines against the background of a shared history that shapes collective expectations about the future. At the same time, events that reproduce or disrupt daily routines are processed differently depending on which life-stage, such as “childhood,” “youth,” “adulthood,” and “old age,” we occupy at that moment in our life-cycle. While childhood is predominantly the domain of socialization, youth has been generally recognized as the life-stage at which individuals develop and stabilize not only their personal identity but also their political worldviews. Events experienced during youth will therefore have a deeper impact on the political outlook of youth than on older members of society whose political beliefs have already stabilized and are less likely to change (Fogt 1982). All actors are positioned at the nexus of these three temporal processes; we experience the present (daily life) at a particular stage in our life that intersects with collective history, the time of social institutions and practices. And this temporal position, or location, consequently shapes how individual and collective actors perceive and interpret events that take place in the present, how they remember the past and what “past” they remember, and what their expectations are for the future. In short, our position in time to a large extent shapes our worldviews and consequently our political beliefs and behavior.

Giddens’ model of temporal positioning is essentially synonymous with what Karl Mannheim called a “generation location.” Drawing on the work of Max Weber, Mannheim developed the concept of generation location in analogy to the notion of “class-position,” which he defined “as the common ‘location’ (*Lagerung*) certain individuals hold in the economic and power structure of a given society as their ‘lot’” (Mannheim 1997: 34; Fogt 1982: 10–11). By analogy, a generation can be defined as a group of individuals that share a similar location *in time*: “Individuals who belong to the same generation, who share the same year of birth, are endowed, to that extent, with a common location in the historical dimension of the social process” (Mannheim 1997: 35). What Mannheim did not seem

to recognize, however, is that all generational concepts, even the “positivist” or cohort approach, are based on that very same idea. For that reason, I want to suggest that we replace the term generation location simply with “generation.”

Once we define the genus “generation” as a temporal unit of analysis, it becomes clear that concepts such as genealogical generation, cohort, and social/political generation are more specified, sub-level concepts that, in contrast to the “generation” itself, are suitable for distinct types of empirical analysis. The fact that there exist a variety of different generational concepts is therefore not the result of conceptual problems related to the idea of generations, but instead it merely reflects the fact that scholars with different underlying ontological, epistemological, or methodological orientations have used generational analysis in a variety of ways and for a variety of analytical purposes.

This implies that generational analysis can be used to complement research across political science sub-fields and methodological paradigms. If we want to study differences in presidential leadership style between, let’s say George H. W. Bush and his son George W. Bush, we could adopt the genealogical concept of generations. If we are interested in determining whether there are differences in political attitudes across age groups on the basis of longitudinal survey data, we might use a cohort approach. If we adhere to a constructivist ontology, we might adopt the concept of political generations, whose members identify with one another via generational discourses that create a sense of generational consciousness. In every case, complementing our theories and analytical frameworks with generational analysis will provide us with better access to the temporality of politics. Generational analysis, in short, can be used by any scholar who is interested in studying politics in and across time.

The Time of Generations

The concept of time that underlies generational concepts is not synonymous with “logical” time, or calendar time, which conceives of time as something that progresses in a one-dimensional and linear fashion. Instead, generational analysis is based on time understood as “time as experienced” by those whose political actions we study and try to explain. Given that time is one of the most fundamental dimensions of human experience, it certainly seems important to take the temporal experience of our “objects of study” seriously. By providing us with a unit of analysis to indicate the temporal location of individuals and/or groups, the concept of generations allows us to analytically access and study how the interaction of different generations that experience, and therefore quite literally live in, different times affects politics.

Applications and Implications: The Value-Added of Generational Analysis

The general explanatory contribution of generational analysis is that it allows us to study the interactions of groups located in different positions in time and how these interactions impact political outcomes. Moreover, as a unit of analysis that indicates the location of peoples in time, it provides us

with a unique way to access the way that the people whose behavior we study actually perceive their time. As such, generational analysis provides another step towards taking the temporality of politics more seriously. But what exactly should we expect to “see” by adopting a generational perspective that we were not able to analytically capture before?

Given that all politics takes place in time, the range of possible applications for generational analysis is correspondingly large. However, let me draw on my opening example in order to highlight some key applications and implications of using the generation as a unit of analysis for studying politics. Generational differences result from the fact that cohorts enter the social system at different points in time, which means that they are socialized into the political system against the background of a different collective history and in the context of a different set of events that occur over their life-course. For example, my grandfather grew up during the last and disastrous years of the Third Reich and the ensuing period of German reconstruction. He therefore experienced events that I was never able to live through, since I had not been born at the time. I, on the other hand, grew up during the 1980s and the political events that I first consciously experienced as such were the end of the Cold War and German re-unification. As a consequence, despite the fact that my grandfather played a direct role in my own socialization, our worldviews, political beliefs, and so forth, differ due to the fact that we were members of two different generations. Despite the fact that our lives overlapped for a considerable period, we therefore lived in different “times.” One major implication of a generational perspective on politics is therefore that at any given point in calendar time, several generations actually co-exist in qualitatively different “times.” In contrast to a perspective of time that neglects the significance of temporal experience, a generational perspective conceives of time not as a “point,” but as a space of temporal experience, and society at any given point in time is stratified by a number of age groups, such as “childhood,” “youth,” “adulthood,” or “old age,” which have access to different resources and therefore affect political outcomes in different ways.

As the example of the 2008 election illustrates, members of different generations that co-exist at the same time are likely to perceive and interpret one and the same event in very different ways. While my grandfather had a difficult time believing that an African-American could become president, my daughter did not even understand why Obama’s skin color would matter at all because she had not yet been socialized into the idea of “race.” At the same time, the political worldviews of different age groups will be affected differently by one and the same event. As stated above, youth is widely considered the life-stage in which individuals develop their basic political orientations. The implication is that events, such as political assassinations, economic crises, wars, or revolutions will have a stronger and deeper formative effect on generations who are in their youth during their occurrence than on those who have fully transitioned into adulthood or old age. Older generations will be less affected by new, potentially formative, events than youth because their political worldviews and general outlook

have already developed and stabilized. In contrast to political research that does not take into account temporal experience, a generational perspective therefore suggests that how events are perceived and interpreted depends on what “time” we live in. This also provides a generational perspective with the potential to forecast and possibly to predict how generations that have undergone formative experiences in their youth will act politically in the future, once they enter the age of adulthood and occupy positions of power in both society and state.³

Communication

The fact that different generations quite literally live in different times has important implications for the success or failure of political communication. Generational differences imply that even when members of two different generations are socialized into one and the same ideas, such as for example “democracy,” they will attribute different meanings to the concept, since they were socialized into the idea at different points in time. As Julian Marias puts it, “[w]e cannot understand the meaning of what a man says unless we know *when* he said it and *when* he lived” (Marias 1967: 7). An increase in generational differences is related inversely to the extent to which individuals and/or groups share the political outlook and worldview and therefore decreases the chance for successful communication. However, being part of the same generation can actually help actors to overcome problems of communication that might arise, for example, out of differences in nationality. Generational differences between actors therefore constitute both positive and negative scope conditions for successful communication.

Reproduction of Political Order

Generations constitute carriers of social and political knowledge and the succession of generations constitutes a crucial mechanism to explain the transmission of social knowledge and the reproduction of social and political order. As Berger and Luckman (1967) have noted, the fact that social institutions appear as “natural” or “timeless” can only be explained through the transmission of social knowledge from one biological generation to the next, since only a new generation can “forget” the creation of the social knowledge that constitutes the institution and therefore confront it as a social “fact.” For example, in stark contrast to my grandfather, my daughter will (hopefully) grow up in a world where it is “normal” for an African-American woman or man to become president of the United States. This yields, for example, the hypothesis that changes within ideational structures brought about by norm entrepreneurs (Finnemore and Sikkink 1998) require at least a genealogical generation, or about 25–30 years, until they are fully institutionalized and perceived as a taken-for-granted part of social reality.

Adopting the generation as a unit of analysis can also prove valuable for studying the emergence, life-cycle, and death of norms, political discourses and practices, or social institutions. While my grandfather grew up in a time in which it was appropriate to use the word “Negro,” I was raised during a time when this term had become clearly inappropriate. My

daughter in turn is growing up during a time when this term is not only inappropriate, but rarely used anymore, and she might be part of the first generation for which the concept of “race” itself starts to lose its meaning.

Political Change

It seems fair to say that Barack Hussein Obama would probably not have become president of the United States without the deep and fundamental changes that were brought about in American and Western culture more generally by the members of the Sixties Generation. And if anything, the election of president Obama has given testimony to the idea that generational change constitutes a potentially powerful causal mechanism for bringing about political change. Several age cohorts, and therefore potentially millions of people, identify with a political generation (Jervis 1976), and for this reason, “[t]he phenomenon of generations is one of the basic factors contributing to the genesis of the dynamic of historical development” (Mannheim 1997: 61). Generational change brought about by political generations that have become radicalized by their formative experiences are analogous to what Thomas Kuhn has called “paradigm shifts” (Kuhn 1996; Roskin 2005), and they can result in significant changes in society’s political culture. For that reason, generational analysis has often been adopted by scholars who are interested in the emergence and effects of social movements, but it can also be adopted in order to study changes in elite preferences.

Conclusion

This short article was barely able to scratch the surface of the potential of generational analysis for the study of politics. I have neither provided a detailed discussion of the genealogical generation, the cohort, or political generations, nor have I explained how one applies any of these concepts in actual research. However, the goal of this article was not to present a full-fledged framework of generational analysis that can readily be applied by political scientists. Instead, I tried to limit myself to the more modest, yet still difficult, task of articulating the general contribution of generational analysis. In pursuit of this task, I defined the genus “generation” as a unit of analysis that locates people in the process of time. The explanatory contribution of any kind of generational analysis is that it allows us to take into account the temporal experience of those whose political actions we study seriously and to study the political implications that emerge from the interactions of generations that occupy different positions in time.

Notes

¹ In American Politics, examples include Beck (1984); Carpini (1986); Huntington (1974); Miller (1992); Putnam (2000). In Comparative Politics, see Abramson and Inglehart (1987, 1992); Beissinger (1986); Inglehart (1977). In International Relations, see for example, Holsti and Rosenau (1980); Jervis (1976); Klingberg (1996); Roskin (2005); Steele and Acuff (2012). Prominent examples in sociology, social psychology, and history include Abrams (1982); Berger (1960); Bourdieu (1977); Edmunds and Turner (2002, 2005); Eisenstadt (2003); Elser (1982); Feuer (1969); Heberle (1951); Jeffries (1974);

Kuhn (1996); Marias (1967); Nora (1996); Pilcher (1994); Roseman (1995); Schuman and Rieger (1992); Schuman and Scott (1989); Vincent (2005); Wohl (1979).

² Steele and Acuff (2012: 5), for example, point out that “[g]enerations may be conceived of in a number of different ways.” Also, see Corsten (1999); Fogt (1982); Kertzer (1983); Jaeger (1985); Pilcher (1994); Rintala (1963).

³ Peter Singer at the Brookings Institute, for example, used surveys conducted by the PEW Research Center in order to predict the foreign policy outlook of the next generation of American leaders. Singer, Peter: “D.C.’s New Guard: What does the next generation of American leaders think?” http://www.brookings.edu/reports/2011/02_young_leaders_singer.aspx, retrieved March 4, 2011. Also, see Luecke 2013, chapter 2.

References

- Abrams, Philip. 1982. *Historical Sociology*. Somerset, UK: Open Books Publishing.
- Abramson, Paul and Ronald Inglehart. 1987. “Generational Replacement and the Future of Post-Materialist Values.” *The Journal of Politics* 49:1, 231–241.
- Abramson, Paul and Ronald Inglehart. 1992. “Generational Replacement and Value Change in Eight West European Societies.” *British Journal of Political Science* 22:2, 183–228.
- Beck, Paul A. 1984. “Young vs. Old in 1984: Generations and Life Stages in Presidential Nomination Politics.” *PS: Political Science and Politics* 17:3, 515–524.
- Beissinger, Mark. 1986. “In Search of Generations in Soviet Politics.” *World Politics* 38:2, 288–314.
- Berger, Bennett. 1960. “How Long Is a Generation?” *The British Journal of Sociology* 11:1, 10–23.
- Berger, Peter and Thomas Luckmann. 1967. *The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge*. New York: Anchor Books.
- Bertman, Stephen, ed. 1976. *The Conflict of Generations in Ancient Greece and Rome*. Amsterdam: Gruener.
- Bourdieu, Pierre. 1977. *Outline of a Theory of Practice*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Carpini, Michael X. Delli. 1986. *Stability and Change in American Politics: The Coming of Age of the Generation of the 1960s*. New York: New York University Press.
- Corsten, Michael. 1999. “The Time of Generations.” *Time & Society* 8:2, 249–272.
- Edmunds, June and Bryan S. Turner. 2002. *Generations, Culture and Society*. Philadelphia: Open University Press.
- Edmunds, June and Bryan S. Turner. 2005. “Global Generations: Social Change in the Twentieth Century.” *The British Journal of Sociology* 56:4, 559–577.
- Eisenstadt, Shmuel N. 2003. [1956]. *From Generation to Generation*. New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers.
- Esler, Anthony. 1982. *Generations in History: An Introduction to the Concept* (published by author).
- Feuer, Lewis. 1969. *The Conflict of Generations: The Character and Significance of Student Movements*. New York: Basic Books.
- Finnemore, Martha and Kathryn Sikkink. 1998. “International Norm Dynamics and Political Change.” *International Organization* 52:4 (Autumn), 887–917.
- Fogt, Helmut. 1982. *Politische Generationen: empirische Bedeutung und theoretisches Modell*. Opladen: Westdeutsche Verlag.
- Giddens, Anthony. 1984. *The Constitution of Society: An Outline of a Theory of Structuration*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Hardy, Melissa, ed. 1997. *Studying Aging and Social Change*. London, UK: Sage Publications.
- Heberle, Rudolf. 1951. *Social Movements: An Introduction to Political Sociology*. New York: Appelton-Century-Crofts.
- Holsti, Ole and James Rosenau. 1980. “Does Where You Stand Depend on When You Were Born? The Impact of Generation on Post-Vietnam Foreign Policy Beliefs.” *Public Opinion Quarterly* 44:1, 1–22.
- Huntington, Samuel. 1974. “Paradigms of American Politics: Beyond the One, the Two, and the Many.” *Political Science Quarterly* 89:1, 1–26.
- Inglehart, Ronald. 1977. *The Silent Revolution: Changing Values and Political Styles Among Western Publics*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Jaeger, Hans. 1985. “Generations in History: Reflections on a Controversial Concept.” *History and Theory* 24:3, 273–292.
- Jeffries, Vincent. 1974. “Political Generations and the Acceptance or Rejection of Nuclear Warfare.” *Journal of Social Issues* 30:3, 119–136.
- Jervis, Robert. 1976. *Perception and Misperception in International Politics*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Kertzer, David. 1983. “Generation as a Sociological Problem.” *Annual Review of Sociology* 9, 125–149.
- Klingberg, Frank L. 1996. *Positive Expectations of America’s World Role: Historical Cycles of Realistic Idealism*. Lanham: University Press of America.
- Kuhn, Thomas S. 1996. *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Luecke, Tim. 2013. “Generations in World Politics: Cycles in U.S. Foreign Policy, the Construction of the ‘West,’ and International Systems Change, 1900–2008.” PhD diss., Ohio State University.
- Mannheim, Karl. 1997 [1952]. “The Problem of Generations.” In *Studying Aging and Social Change*. Melissa A. Hardy, ed. (London: Sage Publications), 22–65.
- Marias, Julian. 1967. *Generations: A Historical Method*. Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press.
- Miller, Warren. 1992. “Generational Changes and Party Identification.” *Political Behavior* 14:3, 333–352.
- Nora, Pierre. 1996. *Realms of Memory: Rethinking the French Past*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Pilcher, Jane. 1994. “Mannheim’s Sociology of Generations: An Undervalued Legacy.” *The British Journal of Sociology* 45:3, 481–495.
- Putnam, Robert. 2000. *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*. New York: Simon & Schuster.
- Rintala, Marvin. 1963. “A Generation in Politics: A Definition.” *The Review of Politics* 25:4, 509–522.
- Roseman, Mark, ed. 1995. *Generations in Conflict*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Roskin, Michael. 2005 [1974]. “From Pearl Harbor to Vietnam: Shifting Generational Paradigms and Foreign Policy.” In *American Foreign Policy: Theoretical Essays*. John Ikenberry, ed. (New York: Pearson Longman), 312–333.
- Ryder, Norman B. 1997. “The Cohort as a Concept in the Study of Social Change.” In *Studying Aging and Social Change*. Melissa A. Hardy, ed. (London: Sage Publications), 67–92.
- Schuman, Howard and Cheryl Rieger. 1992. “Historical Analogies, Generational Effects, and Attitudes Toward War.” *American Sociological Review* 57:3, 315–326.
- Schuman, Howard and Jacqueline Scott. 1989. “Generations and Collective Memories.” *American Sociological Review* 54:3, 359–381.
- Steele, Brent J. and Jonathan M. Acuff, eds., 2012. *Theory and Application of the “Generation” in International Relations and Politics*.

- New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Vincent, John A. 2005. "Understanding Generations: Political Economy and Culture in an Aging Society." *The British Journal of Sociology* 56:4, 579–599.
- Wohl, Robert. 1979. *The Generation of 1914*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Capturing Time: Measuring the Age of Party Systems

Marcus Kreuzer

Villanova University
markus.kreuzer@villanova.edu

Vello Pettai

Tartu University, Estonia
vello.pettai@ut.ee

The wide-ranging literature on political development shares a common focus on analyzing changes through time and using continuity as one of its key concepts.¹ It is filled with terms like institutionalization, consolidation, or path dependency, which all denote continuity through time. The literature on political development also differentiates levels of continuity using nominal categories like high, medium, or low. These nominal categories are vague and limit the precision with which political development can be analyzed. This paper therefore introduces age as an indicator that allows measuring spatial and temporal variations of continuity in a precise and quantitative fashion. Specifically, it presents the notion of effective party system age (EPSA) to measure the organizational and electoral continuity of party systems. The paper has three parts. First, it describes the basic intuition behind the measure and discusses its operationalization. Second, it illustrates the measure's utility by presenting a few of the prototypical developmental trajectories that we found in the analysis of 27 post-war party systems. Third, it contrasts EPSA with other widely used party system indicators and demonstrates the distinct ways in which it captures temporal dynamics as well as explicates the distinct ontological assumptions on which it rests.

Basic Intuition

Party systems vary tremendously in the complexity of their histories. On one end, there are party systems, like the American one, which have been largely unchanged, while, on the other end, there are the sort of transient post-communist party systems which have been the focus of our research (Kreuzer and Pettai 2003). One standard way to represent the transient quality of party systems is through graphic time lines that invariably become cluttered with changing party labels and a flurry of arrows that lovingly document every fission, merger, alliance, or party death (Grofman et al. 2000; Pettai and Kreuzer 1999). Historical narratives usually accompany such graphs to explain the complex organizational trajectories that they represent. Such graphs and their accompanying descriptions were useful to us only up to a point because they made it difficult to cross-nationally compare the development of party systems.

In our research, we therefore started to think of capturing the developmental trajectories of party systems in a more parsimonious and quantitative fashion.

The notion of effective party system age is the result of this effort to capture time more effectively. It is built on the intuition that the durability of a party system is the net result of the continuity of parties' organizations as well their electoral strength. A key quality that sets transient party systems apart from durable ones is the short-lived nature of political parties and their electoral support. In such party systems, parties cease to exist because they die outright, merge with others, break apart and continue as new parties, form temporary alliances, or are replaced by brand new start-up parties² (Hug 2001; Sikk 2006; Tavits 2007; Mainwaring and Scully 1995). Voters, in turn, find it difficult to form lasting allegiances with transient parties and thus switch their votes frequently and are just as likely to vote for new parties as they are for established ones.

Table 1 demonstrates this basic intuition with some data from the three post-communist Baltic party systems. It differentiates between established and various forms of novel parties and reports the respective vote shares they received in each election. If we follow the vote share of established parties (i.e., the area below the dotted line), we see very different patterns of institutionalization across the three party systems. The Estonian party system becomes more and more institutionalized after little continuity in the initial two elections. Lithuanian parties, by contrast, were rather durable in the first two elections and then began to die. The durability of Latvian parties, in turn, fluctuates up and down.

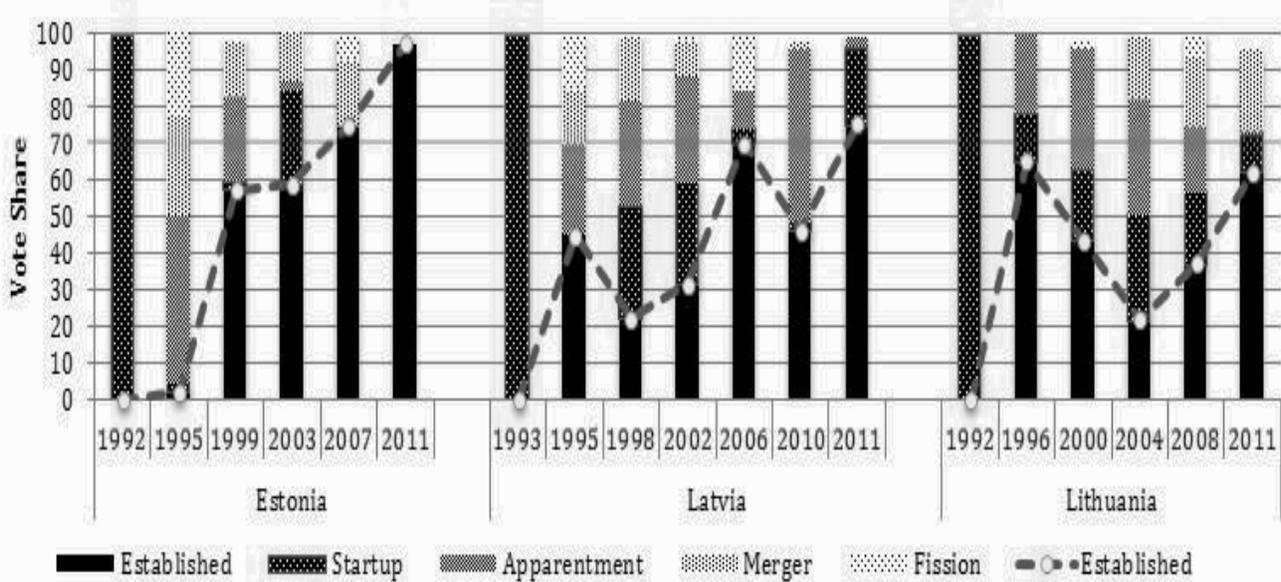
The goal of the effective party system age is to turn the descriptions offered by Table 1 into a single, more succinct indicator.

Operationalization

The effective party system age is modeled after actuarial measures that are used to aggregate individual ages into larger overall population-wide age patterns. Table 2 illustrates how parties' organizational age and electoral strength are aggregated in the EPSA measure. The second column and columns three to eight differentiate parties between novel and established parties. Novel parties include brand-new upstart parties, fission parties, mergers, or temporary electoral alliances. Established parties, in turn, are all those parties whose organizational status remained unchanged between a pair of elections. We further differentiate established parties by their age, which increases each electoral cycle by the number of years that passed since the last election. We then weigh the age of each party by its electoral size and cumulate the resulting effective individual party ages into the overall effective age of the entire party system. The EPSA thus integrates the organizational durability of individual parties with the continuity of their electoral support.

Table 2 illustrates the translation of parties' age and electoral strength into the aggregate effective party system age through two scenarios. Scenario 1 represents an American-style, highly durable party system that reaches its maximum

Table 1: Baltic Parties by Origin and Vote Share



age during each election. As a result, its effective age is identical to its natural age. The novel parties all ran for the first time in 1980 and subsequently remained organizationally unchanged and continued to win a 100% of the vote share. The party system therefore increases its effective age with each electoral cycle by four years.

Scenario 2 operates the same as scenario 1 until 1992. During this election, established parties lose 50% of the vote share to novel parties. For EPSA, it does not matter whether the novel parties are brand new start ups or re-organizations of existing parties; what matters is these parties experienced an organizational discontinuity which resets their ages to zero. In 1992, half the vote share went to parties that survived intact since the 1980s and now are 12 years old. The other half of the votes went to novel parties whose age was zero. The effective age thus drops from eight in 1988 to six in 1992. From 1992 onwards, the novel parties turn out to be so short-lived that they are replaced at the next election by a set of entirely new parties. The established parties, by contrast, remain intact. So, with half of the vote share going to parties with age zero and the other half going to parties with vote shares that increase each electoral cycle by four years, the effective party system age increases by only two out of the possible four years after 1992.

Observed Patterns

The ability to measure the continuity of party systems with the help of EPSA also permits us to map the development of a party system through time. To illustrate this capacity of the EPSA, we collected data from 27 democracies from the present all the way back to the post-war period or whenever they transitioned to democracy. We observed three distinct developmental patterns: age growth, age collapse, and age drift. Figure 1 represents the development of five party systems that had particularly distinct patterns.

Age growth is defined by organizational continuity and durability of electoral support to the point where the effective party system age grows at rates of a least or above 50% of the rates of the natural age. It is the most common pattern in advanced industrialized party systems. In Figure 1 it is represented by Sweden, Portugal after the mid-1980s, as well as Canada and Italy before the 1980s. Norway, Denmark, UK, Germany, Austria, and Switzerland represent additional party systems with this kind of age growth pattern. In the post-communist setting, this pattern is found in Estonia and Czech Republic. The prominence of age growth suggests that a path dependent logic is at work through which early-mover parties acquire advantages over later-formed parties that are so significant as to allow them to endure organizationally as well as electorally (Kreuzer 2009).

Age drift involves a modest growth of the EPSA at rates at or below 50% of the natural age rate for a time period of four or more consecutive elections. It is the second most common pattern. In Figure 1, it is represented most clearly by Israel, Portugal before the mid-1980s, Canada after 1988, and Italy after the early 1990s. Other party systems with age drift are France after 1962, Greece before 1967, Belgium after 1968, Netherlands, Latvia and Lithuania.

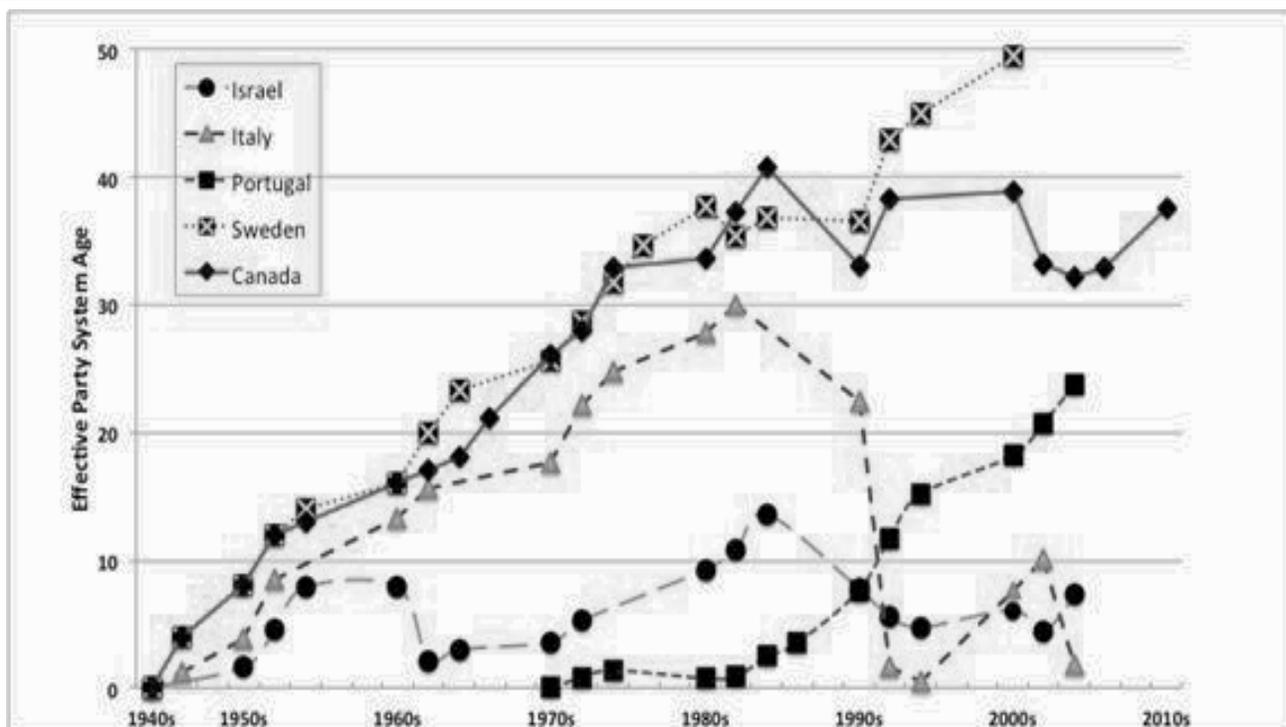
Age collapse is defined by a prolonged age growth followed by precipitous age loss, which we define as losing more than 25% of the effective party system age within three elections or less. Age collapse thus shares with age drift a loss in age, but it differs because the losses are chronologically concentrated and thus more dramatic. Age collapse is relatively rare and can be found only in Italy during the 1990s and Greece after 2010. Both were the result of complex interactions between major international events (i.e., the end of the Cold War, financial crisis) and significant domestic scandals (i.e., corruption).

Table 2: Party System Age

Scenario 1	Novel ↓	Established Parties -->						Σ %	Effective Age	Natural Age
		2x	3x	4x	5x	6x	7x			
1980	100							100	0.0	0
1984	0	100						100	4.0	4
1988	0		100					100	8.0	8
1992	0			100				100	12.0	12
1996	0				100			100	16.0	16
2000	0					100		100	20.0	20
2004	0						100	100	24.0	24

Scenario 2	Novel ↓	Established Parties -->						Σ %	Effective Age	Natural Age
		2x	3x	4x	5x	6x	7x			
1980	100							100	0.0	0
1984	0	100						100	4.0	4
1988	0		100					100	8.0	8
1992	50			50				100	6.0	12
1996	50				50			100	8.0	16
2000	50					50		100	10.0	20
2004	50						50	100	12.0	24

Figure 1: Aging Patterns



Unobserved Patterns

Age growth, drift and collapse have two logical corollary patterns—age cycling and age inversion—that we were unable to observe in any of the twenty-seven cases. Age cycle would involve the slow gradual return of a growth pattern after either an age collapse or drift. Such a return of growth would be followed again by another collapse or drift, thus completing a cycle. Age inversion, in turn, would involve a temporary collapse in party system age and a quick return to prior age levels. It would require that one or several very old parties lose virtually all their votes for a period, while remaining organizationally intact and continuing to age. These parties then would regain, in a Phoenix-like fashion, their lost votes and thereby lead to an inversion of the earlier age collapse. Moreover, the novel parties that contributed to the initial age collapse would disappear as the old parties return to their old electoral strength.

What are the implications of the fact that we were unable to observe age cycling or age inversion?

We think that our inability to observe these two patterns underscores that EPSA captures a conception of time that is thicker than one represented by existing party system indicators. Existing measures such as volatility or the effective number of parties (ENEP) rest on a thin conception of time because they function like temperature or other measures of physical phenomena. They treat each measurement as a single snapshot, taken at a particular point in time, and assume it to be independent from others. Such indicators thus capture variations in degree rather than substantive changes in kind. They fluctuate within pre-set bands within which they trend in a cycle-like manner up or down without ever deviating too much from an equilibrium point.

EPSA captures a thicker conception of time because it makes fundamentally different ontological assumptions about the functioning of party systems (Abbott 1988; Hall 2003). It assumes that the age of parties is inter-dependent over time and that parties qualitatively change over time. A party that has been in existence for thirty years is qualitatively different from one that was just started. And the position of a party system of parties with varying ages, in turn, reflects qualitative differences in those party systems. The EPSA directly measures the compositional transformation of party systems, whereas existing measures focus on attributional changes of parties that assume the composition of party system to be largely unchanged. In capturing these compositional changes, the EPSA ultimately measures the qualitative transformation that we associated with the term political development. And in doing so it ultimately allows us to move from using rough and nominal categories for differentiating degrees of continuity to using more precise, numerical measures.

Notes

¹ This article is drawn from a larger paper by the authors “Time as Age: Measuring the Durability of Party Systems.” That forthcoming paper discusses the more technical and operational aspects of this measure in far greater detail and also presents a more extensive analysis from our data set.

² The technical details for classifying the different novel parties are discussed in further detail in Kreuzer and Pettai (forthcoming).

References

- Abbott, Andrew. 1988. “Transcending General Linear Reality.” *Sociological Theory* 6:2, 169–186.
- Grofman, Bernard, Evald Mikkel, and Rein Taagepera. 2000. “Fission and Fusion of Parties in Estonia, 1987–1999.” *Journal of Baltic Studies* 31:4, 329–357.
- Hall, Peter. 2003. “Aligning Ontology and Methodology in Comparative Politics.” In *Comparative Historical Analysis in the Social Sciences*. James Mahoney and Dietrich Rueschmeyer, eds. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), 373–406.
- Hug, Simon. 2001. *Altering Party Systems. Strategic Behavior and the Emergence of New Political Parties in Western Democracies*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.
- Kreuzer, Marcus. 2009. “How Party Systems Form: Path Dependence and the Institutionalization of the Postwar German Party System.” *British Journal of Political Science* 39:3, 671–697.
- Kreuzer, Marcus and Vello Pettai. 2003. “Patterns of Political Instability: Affiliation Patterns of Politicians and Voters in Postcommunist Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania.” *Studies in Comparative International Development* 38:2, 73–95.
- Kreuzer, Marcus and Vello Pettai. Forthcoming. “Time as Age: Measuring the Durability of Party Systems.”
- Mainwaring, Scott and Timothy Scully. 1995. *Building Democratic Institutions: Party Systems in Latin America*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Pettai, Vello and Marcus Kreuzer. 1999. “Party Politics in the Baltic States: Social Bases and Institutional Context.” *East European Politics and Societies* 13:1, 148–190.
- Sikk, Allan. 2006. “Highways to Power: New Party Success in Three Young Democracies.” Unpublished manuscript, Tartu University, Estonia.
- Tavits, Magrit. 2007. “Party Systems in the Making: The Emergence and Success of New Parties in New Democracies.” *British Journal of Political Science* 38:1, 113–133.

What is Time for Sequence Analysis?

Philippe Blanchard

University of Lausanne, Switzerland
Philippe.Blanchard@unil.ch

Any rigorous approach to temporal phenomena in the social sciences involves a model of time, that is, a simplified representation of it, in order to keep what is seen as essential and to drop or minimise what is not.¹ This holds true for any kind of method, be it narrative history, duration models, life course histories, process-tracing, Markov models, or auto-biography. My purpose in this paper is to explicate the way time is modelled by sequence analysis (SA), a new approach to longitudinal data brought to the social sciences in the 1980s (Blanchard 2011; LaCOSA 2012; Blanchard et al. forthcoming 2014). The importance of sequences has been long recognized and studied in various ways (Abbott 1995: 96–103), but SA has renewed and improved the way they are conceptualized and analyzed. By drawing on around the 120 empirical and methodological papers published to date on this method in the

social sciences, I will first recall and illustrate its principles, then discuss its implications for the conception of social and political time.

SA is a set of concepts, methods, and tools that describe and model populations of sequences. A sequence is a series of spells chosen among an alphabet. Typically when studying professional sequences, spells are the successive positions occupied by an individual, such as <intern, junior employee, senior employee, retired>. The alphabet is the list of possible positions that an individual can hold and the sequence population is a company or a country of which individuals are members. Originally developed by computer scientists and geneticists, from the 1980s SA appeared particularly suited to several classical objects in history and in the social sciences. After some adaptation to the specific theoretical and empirical needs of these disciplines, recourse to SA spread to work trajectories, family life course, series of actions or symbols investigated by anthropologists (such as dance steps) and trajectories of spatial mobility for geographers. In the 2000s, SA was extended to political issues such as ministers' careers, stages of social mobilizations, and activist careers.

Two traditions of SA have developed (Blanchard forthcoming 2013). One focuses on modelling large populations and connecting sequences with the mainstream statistical reasoning based on variables. The other tradition, emphasized here, is more descriptive, based on smaller datasets, *ad hoc* coding, and detailed interpretation of trajectories. In spite of this divide, SA holds a singular position in the landscape of social methodology. It is run by means of statistics but it produces few explicit numerical summaries. It preserves a tight contact with the data and manipulates concrete sequences and sub-sequences, thereby avoiding formal play with abstract variables. Both SA traditions follow the same goal: pragmatically representing objects that were long paid little attention and treated by inappropriate methods.

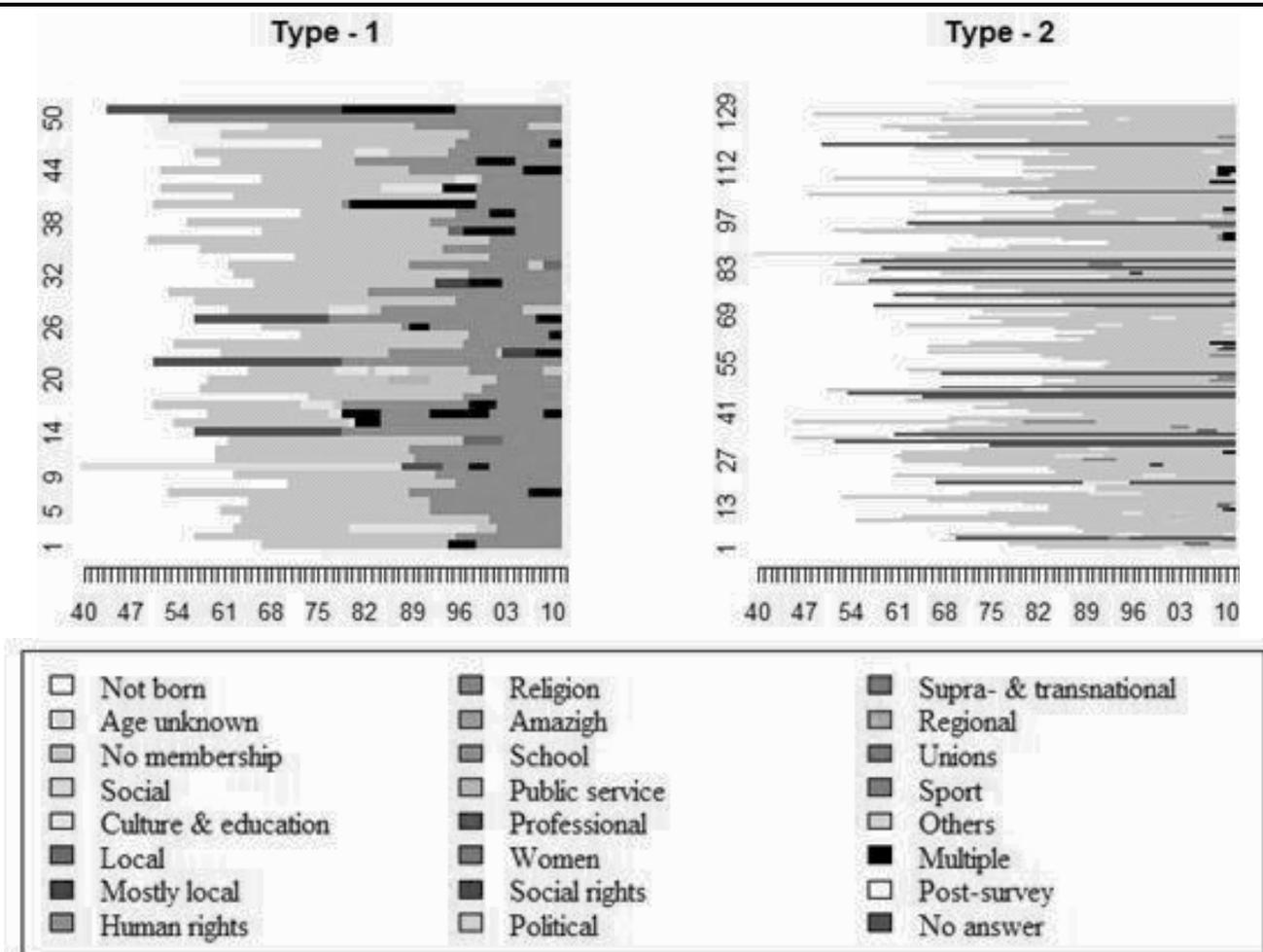
I illustrate this second tradition by drawing on a research project on political trajectories of members of ten Moroccan parties along the last six decades.² The goal was to figure out sequence patterns of how people get involved in politics, then sometimes stay or leave. As an illustration, Figure 1 represents two clusters of memberships in seventeen kinds of associations³ for respondents affiliated with the *Parti Socialiste Unifié (PSU)*. The PSU is a successor to the historical independence movement and various Marxist-Leninist organizations of the 1970s. It now is a single party that encompasses a large part of the non-governmental Left. The graphs have already been processed by means of software specifically devoted to sequences (Gabadinho et al. 2011). The horizontal axis at the bottom maps calendric time, starting in 1940 and ending in 2011. The length of the vertical line corresponds to the start and end dates of the questions asked of subjects about their associational membership. This time period has been converted into year after year color squares. One horizontal line represents one individual trajectory, on a yearly basis (x axis), from young age with no membership (light grey) to survey time (2011). Each category of association is represented by one color, with black for more than one category at a time.

The analysis of the PSU members raised the following questions: which kinds of membership configurations can be observed, both simultaneously and along time? Are there time patterns that repeatedly occur in a sequence population, that is, similar series of successive spells that can be observed in distinct trajectories? If so, what prototypical organizational trajectories can be distinguished and how do these trajectories relate to social and ideological profiles? In answering these questions, SA's core approach is similar to a small-N comparative reasoning: comparing sequences by pair as precisely as possible. The similarity between sequences A and B is assessed according to their composition: What spells (positions, actions, etc.), in what quantity, and in what order. The more common spells they contain, in similar proportions and in similar order, the more "similar" they are. After establishing scores of similarity between all pairs among the population at hand, one may gather resembling sequences and create a typology. Thanks to the flexibility of the method, sequence patterns may repeat exactly identically or with some minor variations, either simultaneously or with time-lags. Types of sequences are then characterized by dominant spells and dominant spell combinations, as well as by exogenous features (Lesnard 2006).

Figure 1 exhibits two distinct profiles of commitment, from a four-type typology that is not included here. Type 1 is composed of militants who have all been human rights activists at some moment and for some time, and who were members of other organizations. (i.e., shorter darker shaded areas in different places along their trajectory line). Additional treatments show that this cluster is a group of mainly masculine members and older than other PSU members. They benefited from the development of state-funded universities and experienced intergenerational upward social mobility. Many were hired as secondary teachers or other public professions and constitute a sort of elite group inside the party. This minority played an important ideological role for the party, due to its radical atheism or agnosticism and its opposition to Islamic parties. By contrast, Type-2 members claim no or just short late memberships (i.e., long light gray areas on the left of the trajectory line). A younger population from the main cities, with more heterogeneous professional and ideological characteristics, this cluster plays a minor role in the PSU. Although much more numerous than Type 1, many of them are more likely to leave the PSU because they were less likely to coalesce into a cohesive and influential community. By examining the full typology, one would draw out the interpretation and get a complete view of the interactions between trajectories at the levels of individual, groups and party.

One may also compare profiles of trajectories in two groups defined *a priori*, from which real or fictitious prototypical sequences may be extracted. Figure 2 compares the electoral trajectories between the PSU and the *Union Socialiste des Forces Populaires (USFP)*, the largest leftist party, present in the government since 1998. Real prototypical electoral careers (see black arrows at the right of graphs) obviously differ. PSU members are marked by rare and recent electoral tries, while USFP members have led more, older campaigns, with more success. Figures 1 and 2 exemplify the added value of sequ-

Figure 1: Two Kinds of Profiles of Affiliations for PSU Members
 Extracts from a four-type typology. Legend gives list of all possible categories of associations



ences compared to more static approaches to political engagement (Fillieule and Blanchard 2013). Unrolling year-by-year trajectories in associations and elections tells much more about the reasons and motives of engagement than numbering memberships and mandates at one or two time-points. Members with comparable cumulative accounts of political experience may have undergone dissimilar trajectories, which is what SA uncovers in a unique manner.

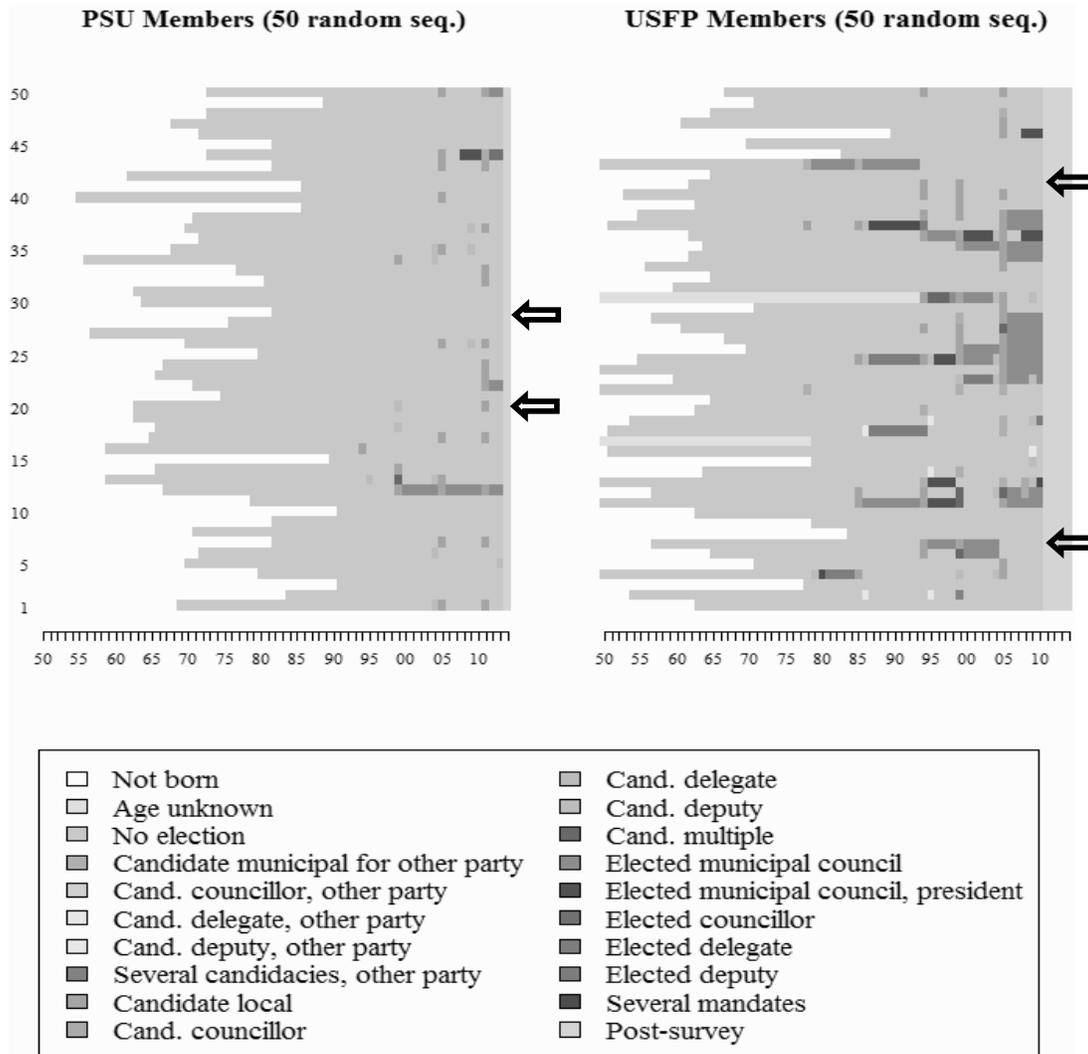
We may now address directly the question: What conception of time does SA employ? More precisely, how much of the richness of social and political times does SA seize? Does it remain within the realm of Cartesian time, that is, the standard linear and mathematical time, inspired from astronomy, that conquered the Occident after the scientific and industrial revolution (Elias 1984)? Does it cling to the common and standardized “Temporal Esperanto” that Sorokin and Merton (1937) saw emerging in response to urbanization and social differentiation. Or does SA address more complex views of social time that form the basis of a unique collective rhythm within a community (Durkheim, 1912), competition between distinct social times based on distinct activities and time horizons (Gurvitch 1950), or polychronous local times opposed to the monochronous Western Time (Hall 1983)?

SA conception of time is thick and rich because it encompasses three dimensions: duration, order, and timing. Let us consider individual Ahmed (individual #1 in the bottom line of, Fig. 1, Type 1), who is a man of 44 years at survey time, coming from an urban area in northern Morocco. His associational sequence will be defined first by the *duration* of the stable sub-sequences (SSSs) that compose it. He spent 28, 4, and 12 years in three successive kinds of associational involvement, (corresponding to light shade, black, and dark shade, respectively). Second comes the *order* of SSSs. Ahmed had first no membership, then two: one in the Moroccan Association for Youth Education and one in the Moroccan Association for Human Rights. Finally he held one continued membership in the latest. Third is the *timing* of SSSs, that is, the transition dates: Ahmed changed his activities in 1995, 1999, and 2011, in other words at 28, 32, and 44 years old.

Each dimension reveals one aspect of the trajectory’s specificity within the sample. Regarding *duration*, Ahmed was only involved in the human rights sector, except one period of 4 years between 1995 and 1999 when this involvement was combined with another sector. This seems to show a more exclusive dedication to human rights than for example Mounir (column #17 in Figure 1, Type 1), who is a sixty-year-old man

Figure 2: Comparison of Electoral Careers for PSU and USFP Members

Red rectangles mark representative sequences.



from Tanger, who cumulates 17 years of other involvements over three periods (1982–1986, 1991–1999, 2008–2010). But most of these additional involvements were in movie clubs, places of intense political debates and protest against the regime, especially in the 1970s. Therefore Mounir is probably even more politicized than Ahmed. Second, *order* also differentiates between otherwise similar sequences. Take the example of line 4 in Figure 2, USFP example. This individual held a mandate as the president in a municipal council followed by simple member of council. This order indicates a downward electoral career, while the contrary can be seen as an upward career (#5 same chart). Third, *timing* involves events and period effects. PSU militants would be prevented from running for any election during the state repression in Morocco in the 1970s and 1980s. But some did so after the relative liberalization in the 2000s, although with little success due to their radical leftist opposition (Figure 2, PSU).

Overall duration, order, and timing properly summarize what is at stake in SA. No other method effectively comprehends these three dimensions for a full sequence population (Abbott

1992: 440 sq.; Abbott 1995: 103 sq.). As such, SA already develops more than a strict Cartesian, mathematical approach to social time.⁴ But SA goes beyond embracing these three fundamental dimensions of time. If *duration*, *order*, and *timing* are properly adjusted in the analysis, more complex time patterns emerge. Let me cite two of them: *tempo* and *generations*. *Tempo* is characterized by sub-sequences repeating with some regularity. For example, some activists run for local elections about every six years. Whether they succeed or not, campaigning does contribute to shape a political career. It is important to differentiate activists according to their involvement in elections, but also according to the regularity with which they campaign.

Generations are another kind of complex time pattern that SA can contribute to enlighten (Pilcher 1994). Generations gather individuals going through similar experiences, at similar historical moments and often at a similar age or at similar degrees of seniority in the process under study. As for activists, the homogenous birth dates in Type-1 associational trajectories (Figure 1), all between the mid-1950s and early 1970s, are not

coincidental. These members witnessed, and sometimes endured, the same human rights infringements in their early years of involvement, and all had founding experiences of clandestinity, police violence, arrest, or prison. This will bear important consequences: common memory, common values, coalitions within the organization, and similar conceptions of how the cause should be advocated.

To conclude, time for SA is not simplistic, formal, or mathematical. It relies on systematic data collection and coding and on calculation algorithms, but also on proper sociological knowledge of the data at hand and on the analyst's intuition. Its core tool for sequence comparison enables taking into account the complexities of rhythms that are not the same at all moments and in all places, for all individuals, organizations, and groups. Time is made of distinct, intricate, sometimes contradictory rhythms (Gurvitch 1950). The flow of actions can be continuous or fragmented, steady or unsteady, long- or short-lasting, as a consequence of the embedment of social rhythms in social structures and power relationships. In the case of engagement trajectories, SA shows the entanglement between historical and biographical times, between steady periods and critical events, between synchronized and lagged bifurcations.

Beyond this example, the flexible analytical power of SA holds true for individuals, but also for organizations or any kind of stable actor going through diachronic steps. It also fits for long-term processes (biographies, history of political regimes, comparative macro-historical phenomena—e.g., Wilson forthcoming), but also for short-term (game interactions, conversations, crises involving many actors) and intermediate-term (regime transitions, international relations, participation behaviour—e.g. Buton et al. 2012) ones. It is time to move from synchronic models to the dynamics of sequences.

Notes

¹ Many thanks to Marcus Kreuzer for his careful comments on earlier versions. High resolution versions of Figures 1 and 2 are available from the author and will be posted on the newsletter's website (<http://www.maxwell.syr.edu/moynihan/cqrm/Newsletters/>).

² The project relies on a series of retrospective life course surveys conducted between 2008 and 2012 in ten political organizations. The survey was passed face to face and through self-administered paper questionnaires among delegates during the congresses. Delegates were asked to recall their trajectory in political and non-political organizations since their first engagement, as well as electoral candidacies and mandates. Along these they replied to questions about their social and ideological characteristics. The surveys are part of the project "Careers of Party Members in Authoritarian Context," conducted by Pr. M. Bennani-Chraïbi, University of Lausanne, and a Swiss-Moroccan team (Bennani-Chraïbi forthcoming), and funded by the Swiss National Science Foundation.

³ Party and trade union memberships were investigated but they are not represented here.

⁴ There exists other typologies of time dimensions, which will not be discussed here.

References

Abbott, Andrew. 1992. "From Causes to Events: Note on Narrative Positivism." *Sociological Methods and Research* 20, 428–455.

- Abbott, Andrew. 1995. "Sequence Analysis: New Methods for Old Ideas." *Annual Review of Sociology* 21, 93–113.
- Bennani-Chraïbi, Mounia. Forthcoming. "L'espace partisan marocain: un univers polarisé?" *Revue Française de Science Politique*.
- Blanchard, Philippe. 2011. *Sequence Analysis for Political Science*. Working Papers of the Committee on Concepts and Methods, International Political Science Association: <http://www.concepts-methods.org/WorkingPapers/PDF/1082>.
- Blanchard, Philippe. Forthcoming 2015. "Validity, Falsifiability, Parsimony, Consistency, Precision, and So on': les vicissitudes de l'innovation méthodologique." In *La sociologie d'Andrew Abbott*. Morgan Jouvenet and Didier Demazière, eds. (Paris: EHESS).
- Blanchard, Philippe, Felix Bühlmann, and Jacques-Antoine Gauthier, eds. Forthcoming 2014. *Advances in Sequence Analysis: Methods, Theories and Applications*. London: Springer.
- Buton, François, Claire Lemerrier, and Nicolas Mariot. 2012. "The Household Effect on Electoral Participation. A Contextual Analysis of Voter Signatures from a French Polling Station (1982–2007)." *Electoral Studies* 31:2, 434–447.
- Durkheim, Emile. 1912. *Les formes élémentaires de la vie religieuse*. Paris: Presses universitaires de France (*The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life*. 2001. Oxford World's Classics).
- Elias, Norbert. 1984. *Über die Zeit. Arbeiten zur Wissenssoziologie II*. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp (*Time, An Essay*. 1991. Oxford: Blackwell).
- Fillieule, Olivier and Philippe Blanchard. 2013. "Fighting Together. Assessing Continuity and Change in Social Movement Organizations Through the Study of Constituencies' Heterogeneity." In *A Political Sociology of Transnational Europe*. Niilo Kauppi, ed. (Basingstoke: ECPR Press), 79–108.
- Gabado, Alexis, Ritschard Gilbert, Studer Matthias, and Müller Nicolas. 2011. *Mining Sequence Data in R with the TraMineR Package: A User's Guide*. Department of Econometrics and Laboratory of Demography, University of Geneva.
- Gurvitch, Georges. 1950. *La vocation actuelle de la sociologie*. Paris: Presses universitaires de France, chap. "Les temps sociaux."
- Hall, Edward T. 1983. *The Dance of Life: The Other Dimension of Time*. New York: Anchor.
- LaCOSA (Lausanne Conference on Sequence Analysis). 2012. University of Lausanne, Switzerland. <http://www.unil.ch/sequences2012>.
- Lesnard, Laurent. 2006. "Optimal Matching and Social Sciences." CREST Working papers 2006-01. Paris: INSEE
- Pilcher, Jane. 1994. "Mannheim's Sociology of Generations: An Undervalued Legacy." *British Journal of Sociology* 45:3, 481–495.
- Sorokin, Pitirim and Robert Merton. 1937. "Social Time: A Methodological and Functional Analysis." *American Journal of Sociology* 42:5, 615–629.
- Wilson, Matthew C. Forthcoming 2014. "Governance Built Step-by-Step: Analyzing Sequences to Explain Democratization." In *Advances in Sequence Analysis: Methods, Theories and Applications*. Philippe Blanchard, Felix Bühlmann, and Jacques-Antoine Gauthier, eds. (London: Springer).

Symposium: Deconstructing Social Science Concepts

Introduction

Rudra Sil

University of Pennsylvania
rudysil@sas.upenn.edu

Over the past quarter century, discussions over methodology have become increasingly nuanced. These discussions evince both a diffuse spirit of pluralism and sophisticated efforts to articulate shared standards for different approaches. There have been significant advances in modeling and statistical analysis, alongside innovative styles of ethnography, fuzzy-set qualitative comparative analysis, and field experiments being carried out across a wider range of locales and regions. We have also seen the rapid proliferation of multi-method research strategies, which have, in turn, revived debates over the dangers posed by incommensurability and by the possible misalignment of ontology and methodology. It is not clear that these developments have brought us closer to a consensus on what constitutes “good” social science. What is clear is that social scientists of different stripes appear to possess a greater degree of self-awareness when it comes to the goals, assumptions, and trade-offs underlying their methodological choices.

Yet, far less attention has been paid to the problematic aspects of the *vocabulary* that social scientists rely upon to characterize their investigations. This is especially true in the case of certain fundamental terms in scholarly endeavors that are also part of our ordinary, everyday conversations. In their social scientific incarnation, these terms are assumed to refer to the same objects and principles in different approaches, and the functions they perform in our scholarship are assumed to be standard and unproblematic. Very little effort has been devoted to uncovering the hidden attributes or multiplicity of meanings that lurk behind words that make their way from the realm of ordinary conversation to the realm of constructs structuring social scientific inquiry.

This in itself does not reduce the value of all social scientific research. For any given research product, a discrete, well-defined audience may well be able to negotiate a common understanding of terms regularly used in the context of a particular approach in a particular field of study. However, as we imagine wider audiences engaging our scholarship—some drawn from other fields within our discipline, some from other disciplines, and perhaps some from beyond the academe—it is incumbent upon us to be more self-aware of the hidden meanings and ambiguities behind terms commonly used to guide the construction of social scientific inquiry. This is as true for interpretive work and comparative-historical research as it is for statistical analysis and formal modeling. It is in this context that we can best appreciate the significance of the contributions to this symposium.

Frederic Schaffer’s essay offers a distinctive treatment of

the term, “cause.” There have been numerous treatises on causality, many of them quite sophisticated and highly technical. Schaffer’s distinctive contribution is to reveal how the different uses of the term “cause” in ordinary language can influence the different assumptions behind the search for causes in social scientific inquiry. For example, while some focus on “causes” as extraordinary phenomena that lie beyond the everyday thoughts and motives of actors, others treat any search for “causes” as inherently a mechanistic endeavor that is at odds with a search for a deeper understanding of ordinary human motivations and actions. The difference between these perspectives is not only a function of different epistemologies; it is also the result of the unacknowledged meanings of “cause” stemming from the different ways the term is put to use in questions that arise in ordinary conversations.

Jillian Schwedler similarly delves into “puzzle,” a term intended to signify the starting point of social scientific inquiry. A “puzzle,” we assume, is worthy of investigation not only because it demands an answer but because the answer provided can also fill a gap in our knowledge. Analyzing a “puzzle” is presumed to be a more objective process that contributes to knowledge cumulation; this is distinct from solving a “problem,” which involves actions and choices that have specific normative implications in a given society. Schwedler’s contribution reminds us that there is as much fuzziness in the boundary between puzzle and problem in social scientific work as there is in our ordinary uses of the two terms.

Douglas Dow digs even deeper by seeking to deconstruct the notion of a “concept,” a term many see as logically prior to all other components of social scientific inquiry. Drawing upon analogies to uses of the term in popular culture, Dow draws our attention to the way in which the designation of a “concept” in social science is an important political act that is open to both contestation among scholars and resistance on the part of subjects. In this way, Dow seeks to make us more self-aware about the potential for reproducing power inequalities that inhere in the very act of formulating a concept, whether in society or in social science. Far from being unproblematic categories for representing “reality,” concepts in social science are perhaps the things that are most in need of critical reflection.

Of course, engaging in such deconstructionist exercises carries with it the danger of excessive navel-gazing. Social scientists can get paralyzed by endless conversations and unresolvable debates over the unstated assumptions behind words they must necessarily rely upon when formulating research designs and presenting findings. Yet, it is not difficult to guard against this problem in an environment where there are so many inducements to keep moving forward with our research agendas. There is a far greater danger in going about “research as usual” without being more self-aware of the hidden meanings and ambiguities that inhere in the terms we commonly rely on to structure our social scientific investigations.

Questions about Causes

Frederic Charles Schaffer

University of Massachusetts, Amherst
schaffer@polsci.umass.edu

Political scientists talk about “causes” all the time.¹ Yet they have long and deep disagreements about what it means to call something a cause and whether political science accounts should aim to explain causally at all. People (including political scientists) also talk about causes in everyday contexts, and it is to this everyday talk that technical political science understandings of causation are ultimately tethered. In this essay, I ask: “What is it that people do when they ask and answer questions about the causes of human action in everyday contexts?” in order to explore a few difficulties that political scientists have encountered in thinking about causation.

Note that I refrain from examining how we talk about causation in the non-human world (e.g., questions like “What caused the Big Bang?”). People may be doing different things when they ask about the causes of human action on the one hand and non-human occurrences on the other, and a comparison of the two is beyond the scope of this essay. Nonetheless, it is important to point out that talk about the causes of human action is not parasitic, at least historically, on talk about causation in the non-human world. Causal talk in both English and Latin (from which the English-language word “cause” derives) was, from the beginning, directed at explaining human action.

Ordinary and Scientific Languages

In positing a relationship between ordinary and scientific languages that is worthy of investigation, I am self-consciously taking a position at odds with a fairly common view articulated here by Sartori: “Whatever else ‘science’ may be, its necessary, preliminary condition resides in the formulation of a *special and specialized language*...whose distinctive characterist[c] is precisely to correct the defects of ordinary language” (1984: 57–58). By this view, it is misguided to investigate connections between ordinary and technical uses of a term, because scientifically reconstructed technical terms have been intentionally created to depart from ordinary use.

I do not think, however, that reconstructive efforts ever fully succeed. Contestation and confusion still surround the meaning of many reconstructed political terms. Despite countless efforts at reconstruction, there is still little consensus among political scientists and philosophers, for instance, about what power, freedom, politics, or democracy “really are,” or how the divergent meanings attached to these terms fit together. Furthermore, and relatedly, reconstructed terms are susceptible to what Keller (1992: 10) calls “slippage.” Slippage occurs when the meaning of a term shifts back and forth between its technical (i.e., reconstructed) and ordinary meanings. An example of slippage can be found in Skocpol’s use of “social revolutions” in *States and Social Revolutions*. Her reconstructed definition of this term is as follows: “Social revolutions are rapid, basic transformations of a society’s state and class structures; and they are accompanied and are in part carried through by class-based revolts from below” (1979: 4). Yet, as Motyl explains, Skocpol does not adhere consistently to this definition, and sometimes draws instead upon ordinary meanings of “revolution.”

At times [social revolution] connotes transformations or, more simply perhaps, change; at other times, it clearly is meant to stand for some notion of popular upheaval; at still other times, Skocpol suggests that revolutions and crises are the same, that is to say, that revolutions are merely enormous problems and challenges. (1992: 103)

Skocpol’s reconstructive efforts, in short, do not allow her to break free from ordinary use.

The larger point is that reconstructed terms remain bound to the ordinary terms from which they are derived. Ryle explains how this connection holds for elemental words like “cause”:

The concepts of *cause, evidence, knowledge, mistake, ought, can*, etc., are not the prerequisites of any particular group of people. We employ them before we begin to develop or follow special theories; and we could not follow or develop such theories unless we could already employ these concepts. (1953: 170–171)

Technical ways of talking about causes, Ryle is right to argue, are premised on ordinary ways. Consequently, we may gain insight into some of the difficulties political scientists have encountered in thinking about “cause” by taking a careful look at ordinary uses of this word.

Cause Questions

What is it, then, that we do when we ask and answer questions about the causes of human action in ordinary contexts? As a starting point, consider the following two “what caused person X to” questions:

- (A) What caused Henrietta to arrive late?
- (B) What caused Henrietta to arrive on time?

Assuming that Henrietta usually arrives on time, question A sounds natural and correct in a way that question B does not. It would sound odd to ask what caused Henrietta to arrive on time if she in fact usually arrives on time. Indeed, we normally ask “what caused person X to” questions when the person about whom we are asking *deviates* from (rather than continues on) some normal, habitual, or expected course of action for that person or for people in general.² All the questions below, for this reason, sound natural to the ear:

- What caused the contractor to fall from the roof?
- What caused Lincoln to issue the Emancipation Proclamation?
- What caused the young singer to take her own life?
- What caused the pastor to say such a rude thing?

Peters (1958: 10) characterizes questions of this type as “cases of lapses from action or failure to act...when people as it were

get it wrong.” While some “what caused” questions do imply that someone got something wrong—failing to prevent oneself from falling from a roof, for instance—such is not always the case. We cannot conclude, for instance, that Lincoln got something wrong by issuing the Emancipation Proclamation. What we can say is that this act was, from a certain perspective, surprising. Insofar as Lincoln declared in his inaugural address that he had “no inclination” to interfere with slavery in the states where it existed, his subsequent decision two years later to proclaim the freedom of slaves in many of those states was indeed remarkable and calls for explanation. At the same time, it would sound odd to ask what caused, say, the normally courteous pastor to say something polite. Insofar as we have come to expect this pastor to say polite things, we would not typically think to inquire about the causes of his politeness.

We can also ask “what caused person X to” questions when a person’s beliefs, views, motives, or the like come to deviate from what is expected for or from that person or people in general.

What caused Rand Paul to see the virtue of our beliefs [when just last week he condemned them]?

What caused Snooki to believe what her father said [everyone knows her father is a liar]?

What caused Anders Behring Breivik to think that it is okay to go to a youth camp and slaughter children?

In contrast, it would sound odd to ask what caused some “normal” Norwegian man to think that it was not okay go to a youth camp and slaughter children, for we do not expect Norwegian men to hold such a view.

Another observation we can make about “what caused person X to” questions relates to the types of answers that we ordinarily give to them. Suffice it to say that there are a whole range of answers that would normally be considered appropriate, depending of course on the context:

What caused the contractor to fall from the roof?

She lost her balance.

She got distracted.

She chose not to wear her safety harness.

What caused the young singer to take her own life?

She could no longer afford the cost of her anti-depressants.

She blamed herself for her sister’s death.

She was protesting what she considered to be an unjust war.

What caused Rand Paul to see the virtue of our beliefs [when just last week he condemned them]?

He had a change of heart.

He gave the issue some deeper thought.

He finally stopped listening to his father.

Contrary to those who might suppose that inquiring about causes is to ask about “external” forces rather than “internal” motives, reasons, and understandings, we see that it can sound

perfectly natural to talk about motives, reasons, and understandings in response to “what caused person X to” questions, depending on the context. Accounts that focus on choosing, protesting, blaming oneself, giving thought, having a change of heart (as well as yearning, believing, deciding, wanting, perceiving, etc.) may all be acceptable answers to inquiries about what caused a person to do something.

Cause Questions, Continued

We can make similar observations about other kinds of cause questions. Consider, first, “what caused X to” questions, where X is not a person, but an institution, country, group of people, or the like:

What caused the Americans to rebel?

What caused the United Nations to send troops to Bosnia-Herzegovina?

What caused the Soviet Union to collapse?

In such questions, we endow the group, institution, country, etc. with agency or structure, and are moved to ask about causes because we are surprised at some action that they have taken (rebellious, sending troops) or at a change to an expected, normal, or healthy state that they have experienced (collapsing). And in answering such questions we may well find it natural, in the right context, to adduce motives, reasons, and understandings (“The Americans wanted more autonomy,” “The Soviet people no longer believed in Communism,” etc.).

Or consider “what caused X” questions, where X is a (human) event or process:

What caused the French revolution?

What caused the decline of the Roman empire?

What caused the housing bubble in the United States?

Again, in answering this type of question, we may well find it natural to adduce motives, reasons, and understandings (e.g., “It was greed that caused the housing bubble”). As well, when we ask this type of question we point attention to the occurrence of something surprising (though without identifying who or what may have caused it). It sounds natural to ask “What caused the housing bubble in the United States?” but we would not normally ask what caused a housing bubble to not occur, unless of course we had good reason to believe that it could or should have occurred, in which case we might ask something like “Why was there no housing bubble in Switzerland [even though so many other countries experienced one]?” It would sound odd or clumsy, in contrast, for someone to ask instead “What caused there to be no housing bubble in Switzerland?” When we ask cause questions, we inquire about occurrences that depart in some way from what is normal, habitual, or expected. It is for this reason that “what caused there to be no” sounds awkward: Nothing happened to provoke our surprise. In contrast, we do ask why questions even when “nothing happened.” Thus it sounds natural to ask “Why was there no revolution in India?” or “Why has there never been a revolution in India?” but blundering to say “What caused there to be no revolution in India?” and downright ugly to utter “What caused there to never be a revolution in India?” Tellingly, a

search of Google Books yields more than 200,000 results for “why was there no,” but zero occurrences of “what caused there to be no.”

We also need to examine cause questions in the present tense, which complicates a bit the observation that we ask cause questions about deviations from the normal, habitual, or expected. The present tense, after all, can be used in cause questions (and in the English language generally) to indicate that the phenomenon in question occurs repeatedly. Take, for instance, the following questions:

What causes poverty?

What causes revolutions?

What causes almost all Americans to follow industrial callings? (to quote Henry Reeve’s translation of Tocqueville’s *Democracy in America*, Volume II, Book II, chapter XIX).

In each of these questions, the present tense is used to indicate that the phenomenon in question (poverty, revolutions, Americans following industrial callings) occurs or appears again and again. Yet even in these cases, the “what causes” question is used to indicate that the phenomenon is in some way unexpected or abnormal. Take as an example the quote from Reeve’s translation of *Democracy in America*. Tocqueville observes that in European countries like France, only a limited number of people take up industrial and commercial occupations, whereas in the United States almost everyone does, an oddity that he seeks to explain. For this reason, Reeve finds it appropriate to translate Tocqueville’s original “*ce qui fait pencher*” with “what causes.” It is also noteworthy that just as with past-tense cause questions, answers to “what causes” questions can include motives, reasons, and understandings (“It’s a sense of injustice that causes revolution,” etc.).

One additional observation about “what causes” questions is in order. There are contexts in which to ask “why” is to ask something different from asking about “cause,” and such differences are particularly pronounced in questions posed in the present tense. When we ask, say, “Why is there war?” we seem to be inviting a set of answers that does not overlap completely with the answers that we invite by asking “What causes war?” To the “why” question someone may well answer “There is no good reason for war; it serves no purpose,” an answer that would sound odd to the “what causes” question. Some “why” questions, it appears, can be construed to mean “What grand purpose does X serve?” or “What larger meaning should we attribute to X?” in a way that “what causes” questions cannot.

Of What Significance?

There are still other kinds of cause questions, most notably “What is/was the cause of X?” and “What are/were the causes of X?” Without belaboring an analysis of these question types, let me just say that their uses do not appear, at first blush at least, to be grossly different than those of the cause questions examined above. There is, to be sure, a much finer analysis one could work up of what we do when we ask all the different types of cause questions, and the ways in which we

do different things when we ask why and cause questions. This essay has only nicked the surface of these topics. Nonetheless, the present analysis does suggest that despite some differences between the various kinds of cause questions, we can identify two similarities in their use. In all of the permutations here examined it seems that (1) we inquire about causes when we are surprised, and (2) it is perfectly acceptable when answering such questions to invoke reasons, motives, and understandings as causes, context permitting. Of what significance are these two observations for political scientists?

Reasons, Motives, and Understandings as Causes

That we often assign motives, reasons, and understandings as causes in everyday contexts is noteworthy for two reasons. On the one hand, it points to the potential poverty of causal accounts offered up by those positivist scholars who for whatever reason choose to disregard motives, reasons, and understandings. King, Keohane, and Verba (1994: 110), for instance, warn against using concepts like motivation or intention in causal explanations because these concepts are “abstract, unmeasurable, and unobservable.” What is needed, they argue, are concrete indicators of such concepts that can be observed and measured. By this view, if something cannot be measured it cannot be part of a causal account. But what are we to make, say, of the woman who shouts out, moments before taking her life at the gates to the Pentagon, that she intends to do so to protest the prosecution of a war she finds unconscionable? How are we to “measure” her statement and the context in which she made it? What are their size, amount, or degree? To the extent that we cannot answer such questions with precision, King, Keohane, and Verba tell us, we must forgo talk of motives or intentions in our causal account, a move that would surely leave us with an impoverished or incorrect understanding of what caused the woman to take her own life.

On the other hand, and relatedly, the insight that motives, reasons, and understandings often figure into our everyday causal accounts points to the untenability of the position taken by some interpretivist scholars who eschew inquiring about causes because to do so, they contend, necessarily means inquiring about external, mechanical forces. Gunnell (1968: 193), for one, seems to adopt such a position when he argues that “any thoroughgoing attempt to explain action and the relationship between mental episodes and observed behavior in causal terms, that is, [in] the language of physical events, will necessarily founder.” Gunnell here mistakenly conflates giving a causal account with giving a casual account couched solely in the language of physical events. Yet we have seen that people often adduce reasons, talk about motives, and reference understandings when they give causal accounts in everyday contexts. A distinction between “mental” accounts on the one hand and “causal” accounts on the other does not hold up.

One gets the sense that Gunnell is reacting to those in the scientific community who have sought, following in the footsteps of Hume, to define causality in mechanical terms as observable patterns of regularity that are contiguous in time and

place (that which precedes the other is called the “cause” and the other the “effect”). Imagine, as Hume (2007 [1777]) did, one billiard ball hitting another.

We should not forget, however, that even within the realm of philosophy there are other ways of conceptualizing causality. The most enduring, surely, is that of Aristotle (*Metaphysics*, Book I Chapter iii, 983a, b), who identified four kinds of causes: formal (“the ‘reason why’ of a thing”), material (“the matter or substrate”), efficient (“the source of motion;” it is this type of cause that most resembles Hume’s conception), and final (“the purpose or ‘good’”).³ Much could be said about this Aristotelian approach, but I limit myself to noting that Aristotle’s more expansive conception of causality is today attracting the attention of political scientists who are critical of the narrower Humean tradition (e.g., Wendt 2003; Kurki 2008).

Be that as it may, it is important to note that Aristotle did not write about “cause.” He wrote about “αἴτιον” (aition). The English-language word “cause” comes from the Latin word “*causa*,” which itself apparently derives from “*caudo*,” or “I strike, cut” (Conway 1923: 62; De Vaan 2008: 101), and may have meant something like “giving blow for blow” or “tit for tat” (De Villiers 1926: 404). By extension, *causa* came also to mean “dispute,” and in classical times it was used in the legal realm to mean “lawsuit” (ibid.). The *Oxford Latin Dictionary* lists a number of meanings for the term, among them:

A legal case, trial.

A case or plea considered from the point of view of its merits, a (good, etc.) case.

A ground (of action), justificatory principle, (good) reason.

A motive, reason (for an action).

Both the place of *causa* in the realm of law and an understanding of *causa* in terms of reasons and motives have carried over into the English language. In the legal realm, judges and lawyers in the United States often speak of “having good cause,” “challenging for cause,” “probable cause,” and “cause of action”—all of which are used to refer in some way to having proper or adequate reasons for acting in particular way. In these uses, “cause” does not refer to a mechanistic force but to a reason that justifies taking a specific course of action. Such specialized but stock uses in the realm of law again point to how central reasons and the like are to extra-scientific (or more precisely, extra-Humean) ways in which people talk about “causes.”

Surprises

In our ordinary-language use, we ask cause questions when we encounter surprises for which we want explanation. We ask them when the routinized or the expected is violated. By Hume’s conception, in contrast, to invoke the language of causes is to take notice of uniformity. To ask about causes in ordinary language is to inquire about the irregular, to investigate Humean causes is to seek regularity.

This difference between cause as an explanation of surprise and cause as an account of regular conjunction maps in one intriguing way onto the distinction that Arendt (1958: 38–

49, 191) draws between action and behavior. Action, by Arendt’s conception, is singular and unpredictable whereas behavior is conformist and predictable. It is interesting and perhaps troubling to note that a good deal of political science research is premised upon and investigates behavior in this Arendtian sense. The rational choice approach to studying politics, for one, is premised upon people behaving in routinized, predictable ways. For this reason, rational choice models, as one proponent concedes, “are not usually useful for explaining acts of extraordinary heroism, stupidity, or cruelty” (Geddes 2003: 181). But it is often acts that we perceive to be extraordinarily heroic, stupid, or cruel which provoke us to pose “what caused” questions:

What caused the passerby to run into the burning building to save a person she had never met?

What caused President Bush to decide that going to war against Iraq was in the national interest of the United States?

What caused the father to disown his son?

Some political science research, to be sure, does investigate the extraordinary, even if it is not always couched in “what caused” questions. To cite just two examples, Fujii (2009) asks what caused neighbors to kill neighbors during the Rwandan genocide, while Monroe (2006) asks what caused ordinary people to risk their own lives in order to rescue Jews during World War II. At the heart of both Fujii’s and Monroe’s books are in-depth interviews that the two authors conducted with the actors in question. Fujii and Monroe examine carefully the stories that people tell to access the reasons and motives that stood behind the extraordinary actions that interest them. But the kind of narrative analysis undertaken by Fujii and Monroe is relatively rare in political science. Many political science tools—rational choice and statistical modeling to name just two—are not geared towards investigating the extraordinary. When one searches only for Humean patterns of observable regularity (sometimes referred to as “generalization” or “general laws”), only behavior in the Arendtian sense receives attention. In short, there is sometimes a disjuncture between the kinds of (surprising) human actions about which people think to ask causal questions and the kinds of tools political scientists have developed to explain (regularized) human behavior. Consequently, when political scientists forgo investigating the extraordinary only because it cannot be adequately explored by tools developed to explain the ordinary, they divert our attention from some of the causal questions we most want to ask.

Conclusion

There are, in summary, three lessons that I draw from this inquiry into the ordinary use of cause questions. First, positivist scholars who eschew consideration of motives, reasons, and understandings when investigating the causes of human action are in danger of providing accounts that are misleading or off the mark. Second, interpretivist scholars who refrain from investigating causal questions because they believe to do so necessarily entails providing only mechanistic explana-

tions mistakenly conflate causal accounts in general with Humean accounts of causality, and thereby overly restrict the scope of their analyses. Third, the kinds of tools political scientists have developed to explain regularized human behavior direct attention away from inquiry into the extraordinary, and thus too from some of the causal questions we most want to pose.

I must also make one final point. If political scientists in seeking explanation for surprising human actions were to ask only cause questions—even ones that invite investigation into reasons, motives, and understandings—their inquiries would be dangerously constrained and potentially misguided. Cause questions, after all, are premised on the asker having accurately interpreted the situation, but misinterpretation is always possible. To the question, “What caused the contractor to fall from the roof?” someone with more intimate knowledge of what happened might reply, “She didn’t fall, she jumped” and thereby challenge seeing the event as an accident. We must always be willing to step back and ask more fundamentally, “What’s going on here?”⁴

Notes

¹ I thank Robert Adcock, Ivan Ascher, Xavier Collier, Barbara Cruikshank, and Dvora Yanow for their insightful comments on earlier drafts. The usual disclaimers apply.

² I understand “normal” to include both a descriptive sense (conforming to a regular pattern) and a moral sense (conforming to a moral norm). Consequently, the deviation can be from either a regular pattern of action or an established moral norm, or both.

³ I quote here the English translation of Hugh Tredennick.

⁴ In invoking the question “What’s going on here?” I invite you, the reader, to reflect on how the problems explored in this essay relate to those examined by Schwedler in her contribution to the symposium.

References

- Arendt, Hannah. 1958. *The Human Condition*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Conway, Robert Seymour. 1923. *The Making of Latin: An Introduction to Latin, Greek and English Etymology*. London: J. Murray.
- De Vaan, Michiel. 2008. *Etymological Dictionary of Latin and the other Italic Languages*. Boston: Brill.
- De Villiers, Melius. 1926. “The Philological Value of *Causa* in Roman Law.” *South African Law Journal* 43, 403–407.
- Fujii, Lee Ann. 2009. *Killing Neighbors: Webs of Violence in Rwanda*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
- Geddes, Barbara. 2003. *Paradigms and Sand Castles: Theory Building and Research Design in Comparative Politics*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.
- Gunnell, John. 1968. “Social Science and Political Reality.” *Social Research* 35, 159–201.
- Hume, David. 2007 [1777]. *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Keller, Evelyn Fox. 1992. *Secrets of Life, Secrets of Death: Essays on Language, Gender and Science*. New York: Routledge.
- King, Gary, Robert O. Keohane, and Sidney Verba. 1994. *Designing Social Inquiry*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Kurki, Milja. 2008. *Causation in International Relations: Reclaiming Causal Analysis*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Monroe, Kristen Renwick. 2006. *The Hand of Compassion: Portraits of Moral Choice during the Holocaust*. Princeton: Princeton

- University Press.
- Motyl, Alexander J. 1992. “Concepts and Skocpol: Ambiguity and Vagueness in the Study of Revolution.” *Journal of Theoretical Politics* 4:1, 93–112.
- Peters, R. S. 1958. *The Concept of Motivation*. New York: Humanities Press.
- Ryle, Gilbert. 1953. “Ordinary Language.” *Philosophical Review* 62:2, 167–186.
- Sartori, Giovanni. 1984. “Guidelines for Concept Analysis.” In *Social Science Concepts: A Systematic Analysis*. Giovanni Sartori, ed. (Beverly Hills: Sage).
- Skocpol, Theda. 1979. *States and Social Revolutions: A Comparative Analysis of France, Russia, and China*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Wendt, Alexander. 2003. “Why a World State Is Inevitable.” *European Journal of International Relations* 9:4, 491–542.

Puzzle

Jillian Schwedler

Hunter College and the Graduate Center, CUNY
js1287@hunter.cuny.edu

In political science, there appears to be a growing consensus that while methodological pluralism either is or ought to be embraced, everyone still needs to have a puzzle at the center of her research. But what is a puzzle? How do we find them, and what are we supposed to do once we have one? Can there be productive political inquiry without puzzles? In this paper, I examine the centrality of puzzles to methodological debates about how to do political science. I will draw some distinctions between puzzles, problems, and other kinds of questions, but I most especially want to raise some critical doubts about the consensus on structuring political inquiry in ways that prioritize finding answers.

What could possibly be wrong with finding answers? Certainly, if we cannot explain things for which we previously had no compelling answer, how are we to learn, to expand our ability to understand political phenomena, to increase our knowledge, to advance our paradigms and gain theoretical traction? Before answering these questions, let’s first look at puzzles.

Part 1: What Is a Puzzle, and Why Do We Need Them?

In its simplest form, a puzzle is something in need of an answer or a solution. It is a surprising circumstance, set of relations, condition, phenomenon, behavior, or outcome for which our existing knowledge does not immediately offer a means of comprehension.

In political science, the terms “question” and “problem” are sometimes used almost interchangeably with “puzzle,” as in “What is your question?” Oral and projected presentations typically include an early statement of a clearly identified research question, problem, or puzzle that structures the inquiry and, hopefully, peaks the audience’s curiosity. The ensuing discussion then articulates the precise methodology and data that were used to provide an answer or answers, hopefully with counterintuitive insights. In a job talk, the kiss of death is

to not have—or to not be able to articulate—a clear research question.

I think it's fair to say, therefore, that there is a general consensus that good political science ought to try to provide answers to questions and solutions to puzzles. When an interlocutor asks the (sometimes annoying) question, "What is your dependent variable?" what she really wants to understand, in a broad sense, is what the author is attempting to explain. In this way, all manner of questions structure our research, helping us to clarify our own research project while explaining its importance to others.

But the insistence on a research question of some kind is not the same as the insistence on a puzzle. Puzzles are a particular *kind* of question. Central to the notion of a puzzle is that something is actually in *need* of an explanation. "Why" did something happen a certain way? Because of X, Y, and Z. Later in this article, I argue that this normative framing of how political inquiry *should* be done—by placing puzzles at the center of our research—actually *limits* our ability to advance broader understandings of important political phenomena.

But first, I would like to examine different types of puzzles that are common in political science: first, the kind for which no answer is readily at hand; and second, the kind for which the answers suggested by previous studies do not seem to apply. An example of the first kind of puzzle might look something like this:

*Why did the Soviet Union disintegrate so suddenly in 1989?*¹

One might call this a "no previous explanation" puzzle. It is a major political development but one for which we might have no precedent and thus little existing knowledge to answer the "why" question, at least not until we study the event and break it down into its component parts, and perhaps not even then.² Sometimes, of course, seemingly confounding events can indeed be explained upon closer inspection, whether by carefully examining the micro details or by showing that the event may be explained by looking at smaller but connected pieces of the puzzle.

An example of the second kind of puzzle, the kind for which previous explanations do not seem to apply, might look something like this:

Why did Islamists begin to cooperate with communists and socialists in Jordan in 1993 when they refused to do so just a year earlier—and had refused to do so for decades before that—even though earlier coordination would have given them a majority bloc in parliament?

One might call this a "surprising outcome or behavior" puzzle. This kind of puzzle is the mainstay of rational choice theories, which frequently focus on explaining behavior that initially appears irrational, or that deviates surprisingly from earlier patterns. Many answers to these puzzles are based on revealing factors (such as limited information), institutional constraints, or alternative motivations that explain *why* an actor behaved in a manner that initially appeared (to us) to be irrational. Rational choice scholars do not, of course, have a mono-

poly on the "surprising outcome" puzzle. The one I mentioned above about Islamists cooperating with communists and socialists is central to my last book (Schwedler 2006). But I want to emphasize that both kinds of puzzle require an answer, and scholarship is usually only considered successful, or a contribution, if it provides one, even if only a tentative one. And what's more, the more counterintuitive or surprising that answer turns out to be, the more exciting the results and thus the greater the likely impact of the work.

So we have two kinds of puzzles: "no-previous-answer" puzzles, and "surprising outcome" puzzles. Note that my distinction between two kinds of puzzles is for illustrative purposes only, and in fact many puzzles have dimensions of both, as well as other dimensions not articulated here.

A third kind of question also emerges in political science literature, one that is framed not around a "why" puzzle but instead asks more broadly, "What is going on here?" This sort of framing question is more common in some qualitative methods and particularly in interpretive methods, which seek to understand complex processes rather than identify causal variables. Process tracing, for example, is an approach that seeks to advance explanation by unpacking the micro processes of a larger movement or series of events, such as explaining how a political group divides over time or how a revolution escalates from small-scale protests. While "what is going on" questions may be gaining ground, the puzzle-centric "why" questions continue to dominate the field.

Part 2: Where Do Puzzles Come From, and How Do I Find One?

Since we apparently need puzzles to be good political scientists, where can we find them? Finding a puzzle can itself be a bit puzzling, as puzzles are not simply "out there" to be discovered, like colored eggs in an Easter egg hunt. They do not exist objectively in the world, although some portions of the research design literature—and perhaps many dissertation advisors—often imply as much. "Go find a puzzle, and don't bother me until you do!"

Of course, puzzles exist only in our heads...or in our literature, which is to say essentially the same thing. Events are puzzling not because no explanation exists, but because the knowledge we have, the sources that we believe should provide an answer, simply don't do so. Sometimes this is because we aren't looking in the right places—social science has a major problem with reinventing the wheel, packing old theories in new boxes, inventing new concepts, often without even recognizing it (Lichbach 1992). For example, one might reasonably argue that the literature of the past decade on resilient authoritarianism in the Middle East actually said little if anything that was substantively different from the literatures on corporatism and clientalism of the 1950s and 60s. But the Middle East seemed to provide a puzzle—why it was immune to the global wave of democratization—and we congratulated ourselves when our "new" insights were recognized by publication in major journals. Here I am picking on my own area of regional expertise because it seems most fair to do so, but I suspect that many areas of study have similar problems. That

is, our search for puzzles and their answers miss the fact that we may already have perfectly useful bodies of literature that could provide adequate answers to things we still find puzzling.

What I am trying to point to is that our search for exciting and compelling puzzles is sometimes, perhaps most times, structured at least partly by our entirely reasonable professional ambitions to contribute something new to “the literature.” This could be because we really hope to make a contribution, or perhaps because we want tenure or that promotion, or even because it’s just what we were taught to do. Concept entrepreneurialism is a disease we might wish to avoid, but it is fairly virulent. Even more, I believe we suffer if we fail to acknowledge and reflect seriously on how these factors structure our search for puzzles to animate our research agendas. In this way we may see puzzles where they do not exist, but find professional rewards for identifying, solving, and naming them anyway.

Let me turn briefly to the related but distinct idea of a research “problem” and how it differs from a puzzle. The notion of a “problem,” as mentioned above, is also sometimes used to loosely refer in general to a research question. But often “problem” refers to some pressing real world issue that, like a puzzle, is perceived to need a solution. So, for example, the problem of water shortages in many parts of the world, or problems of unemployment, political apathy, resilient authoritarianism, low voter turnout, and so on, all are troubling situations that demand remedy, they demand solutions. Problems are unapologetically framed in normative terms: they are situations that we believe are in need of fixing.

Anne Norton (2004) has drawn important distinctions between puzzles and problems. She argues that puzzles are often method-driven, in that they are shaped largely by perceived gaps in the existing literature or weaknesses in existing theories, and the pursuit of answers is treated as objective and neutral, not political in and of itself. Problems, by comparison, are often the mainstay of policy studies, but emerge across the subfields. They are taken up by “scholar-activists” who are committed to the idea that they have an ethical requirement to use their pursuit of knowledge to seek to improve the human condition.

I want to develop one point she touches on, and to take it further than she does. Given that much funding is advanced to support social science research by government agencies and agenda-driven non-profit organizations, “problems” are often reframed into seemingly neutral or value-free “puzzles” that then emerge at the center of whole research agendas. For example, the explosion of terrorism studies since 9/11—a field that was already established but relatively marginal within the discipline—has produced a flood of literature on questions such as:

What are the social bases of terrorism? When and why do various social movements turn to political violence as a strategy or tactic?

Or, here is a version of this agenda framed as a puzzle:

Why, given virtually identical social, educational, and

The reframing of the “problem” as a “puzzle” produces a variation finding framework, one for which an answer must exist, thus structuring our research agenda around attempts to find it. But whereas a problem is explicitly framed in reference to some condition for which we might hope to find a remedy or solution, the puzzle is reframed in such a way that the inquiry is no longer as readily acknowledged (or even recognized) as normative. It is re-imagined to be neutral in terms of research design, even if the “value” of the research for policy is openly addressed. So, if social, economic, and educational differences fail to explain differences in terrorism recruitment, the puzzle is to discover what factor or factors do explain that variation. The solution to that puzzle may therefore also provide an answer to what everyone agrees is a pressing problem. I am not suggesting that political scientists should not attempt to produce engaged scholarship that addresses real-world problems. But I do believe that we should recognize the normative nature of such enterprises, as well as the potential implications of our role in knowledge production.

Part 3: The Trouble with Answers

As Bernard Grofman (2001) has put it, finding answers to puzzles is like solving mysteries. But is there necessarily an answer to every valid research question? And what counts as an “answer” anyway?

Puzzles are particular kinds of questions because they demand to be solved; success is achieved when they can be explained in a way that renders them no longer puzzles at all. To the extent that political inquiry is modeled along a positivist science model, the overall goal is to build theories, potentially nomothetic theories that explain larger and larger groups of phenomena or at least mid-range theories (King, Keohane and Verba 1994; Brady and Collier 2004). Central to the Lakatosian research paradigm taught in many political science doctoral programs is the goal of explaining everything that an earlier theory explained, plus more. The progressive research paradigm aims to explain more and more puzzles under a single theory.

Certainly this is not the only way to do science, although some will tell you that it is. But in thinking about puzzles and the ways in which they structure our research agendas, the ways in which finding, asking, and answering them is central to how we evaluate, celebrate, or condemn scholarly contributions, I want to lend my voice to those who argue that even if questions remain central to our analyses, they need not be limited to “why” questions, questions of the sort that demand solving.

As mentioned above, other sorts of questions bring exciting insights, even if they do not start as puzzles at all. Sometimes the answers are puzzling to the extent that they reveal surprising results. Indeed, sometimes these results are unexpected because they reveal our ignorance, our lack of knowledge about some circumstance, set of relations, condition, phenomenon, behavior, or outcome that we didn’t think was a puzzle at all.

For example, Frederic Schaffer (1999) has turned one assumption about voting on its head. A typical question about elections in the Middle East, for example, is this puzzle: Why is voter turnout higher in cases where the votes mean little than in cases where voters might actually affect the outcome? A great question, to be sure, and a certainly a puzzle (although one which certainly does not have a single answer). But Schaffer asks not why people do or do not vote, but what is it that people are doing when they engage in the behavior we recognize as voting? Typically, we assume that this presents no puzzle: They are choosing among candidates the one or ones they wish to see succeed, for whatever collection of reasons. But as Schaffer shows, choosing candidates is not necessarily what people are doing, or only what they are doing, what they understand voting to mean, or what they hope to achieve from that process. A puzzle question here would never allow for the sort of inquiry that yields these insights, as it would require the identification of an apparent confounding situation as a starting point.

These sorts of questions, the sort that ask what is going on here, or how do we understand this process or that situation, these sorts of questions are not puzzles per se, and, far too often they are dismissed as mere description. But is accurate description of the micro processes of political behaviors, events, and practices, not extraordinarily valuable in and of itself? Description is not neutral, of course, as it takes a viewer to select the features worth describing. The best of these sorts of interpretivist analyses therefore do far more than describe, they unpack meaning not only in terms of what the people we are studying understand themselves to be doing. They also fold their inquiry to unpack our own assumptions and expectations, and ask why we expect to find things a certain way.

This framework, it seems to me, fundamentally rejects puzzles as central to political inquiry, not because there are not things we should study simply because we find them puzzling, but because the fact of our finding them puzzling must necessarily be part of our object of inquiry.

Notes

¹ This question is central to one of the chapters in Grofman 2001.

² See, for example, Hochschild 2004.

References

- Brady, Henry, and David Collier, eds. 2004. *Rethinking Social Inquiry*. Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield.
- Grofman, Bernard. 2001. "Introduction: The Joy of Puzzle Solving." In *Political Science as Puzzle Solving*. Bernard Grofman, ed. (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press), 1–11.
- Hochschild, Jennifer L. 2004. "Three Puzzles in Search of an Answer from Political Scientists (with Apologies to Pirandello)." *PS: Political Science and Politics* 37:2, 225–229.
- King, Gary, Robert O. Keohane, and Sidney Verba. 1994. *Designing Social Inquiry: Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Lichbach, Mark. 1992. "Nobody Cites Nobody Else: Mathematical Models of Domestic Political Conflict." *Defense Economics* 3:4, 341–357.
- Norton, Anne. 2004. "Political Science as a Vocation." In *Problems*

and Methods in the Study of Politics. Ian Shapiro, Rogers M. Smith, and Tarek Masoud, eds. (New York: Cambridge University Press), 67–82.

Schaffer, Frederic. 1999. *Democracy in Translation*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Schwedler, Jillian. 2006. *Faith in Moderation: Islamist Parties in Jordan and Yemen*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

"I'm Not a Concept": Cinematic Reflections Concerning the Politics of Concept Formation

Douglas C. Dow

University of Texas at Dallas

dougdown@utdallas.edu

A creative opportunity for exploring the politics of conceptual analysis occurs in *Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind* (2004), one of the most philosophically interesting films produced in the past decade.¹ The specific moment in the film may be described succinctly, as the scene involves a brief exchange between the two main protagonists. Clem, played by Kate Winslet, argues with Joel, played by Jim Carrey. Joel walks into the Barnes and Noble where Clem is working as a self-described book-slave. The introverted Joel struggles awkwardly to ask Clem out on a date and to wiggle back into her good graces a few days after a first encounter had ended disastrously. He asks her for a second chance at a real date. Clem replies:

Clem: Look man, I'm telling you right off the bat, I'm high maintenance, so...I'm not going to tip toe around your marriage or whatever it is you've got going there. If you want to be with me, you're with me.

Joel: OK.

Clem: Too many guys think I'm a concept or I complete them or I'm going to make them alive. I'm just a fucked up girl who is looking for my own peace of mind. Don't assign me yours.

The original screenplay makes Clem's pushback even more emphatic: "Joel, I'm not a concept. I want you to just keep that in your head. Too many guys think I'm a concept..."² Clem's assertion that she has been taken for a concept is striking and unusual enough. Adding further ambiguity is the fact that, while the original screenplay makes clear Clem's belief that she has been misrecognized, the final film version leaves open the possibility that she may in fact be a concept who is protesting at how she has been conceptualized. The complexities of this exchange expand even further when we recall that, in the context of *Eternal Sunshine's* narrative, we are locked completely in Joel's mind. The entire scene is Joel's act of remembrance, as he conceptualizes Clem as a woman rejecting her own conceptualization.

What if we were to take seriously Clem's perception that she has been rendered a concept by Joel and other men? What

might it mean if Clem was a concept, at least to Joel, in a way that shared significant traits with the terms, the words and phrases, of our political vocabulary? What if we, as students of politics, imagined that our concepts could stand next to us, talking back? The example may initially appear surprising to many social scientists concerned with the practical problems of concept formation (Gerring 2001; Collier and Gerring 2009). I believe a deeper interpretation of this cinematic moment can help academics think more self-reflectively, and more politically, about their use of concepts.

Clem uses the concept of a concept in an admittedly unusual way, and if we chose, we could simply explain it away. She is annoyed that Joel, who does not yet know her personality, may hold preconceived notions of what kind of woman she is, and she aggressively pushes back. Viewers might imagine Clem's resistance to the way she perceives her identity to be flattened by Joel's projections of who she may be, and how she has been assigned a specific functionality within Joel's narrative of their relationship, as one whose assigned role will be to "complete" him. Her claim to have been mistaken for a concept may just be Clem's dramatic way of declaring that she does not exist for Joel beyond a simplistic idea in his mind. This is a perfectly acceptable interpretation of Clem's words, which does no violence to either this particular conversation or to our understanding of the rest of the film. However, it also dispels too quickly much of the ripe potential for interpretation. After all, saying "you don't know me" is not the equivalent of "I'm not a concept."

The moment when Clem pushed back against Joel may resemble an exemplary performance of the necessity of mediating social and interpersonal interactions through the medium of conceptual thought. *Eternal Sunshine* is not offering an extended psychological or philosophical analysis of concept formation. By thinking seriously about just how Clem may be taken for a concept, we can think differently about a number of the conventions about the formation and deployment of concepts within social science and historical methodological literature. It may give us a way of linking a critical approach to concepts with a number of literatures that have not been part of our conversation about concepts. I would like to articulate and exemplify three ways in which Clem's accusation permits us to see differently the process of understanding concepts. First, by personifying a concept, Clem allows us to see the degree to which our various discourses of concept analysis instrumentalize the concept. Second, thinking through Clem's resistance to her own conceptualization grants insight into the associations between concept formation and the social and linguistic processes of subject formation. Third, the link Clem makes between being mistaken for a concept and fulfilling a role in someone else's story-line reveals how indebted to structural metaphors concept analysis is, to the effacement of theories of narrative.

"Too Many Guys Think I'm a Concept": Objectification or Personification?

We may begin with what is Clem's most arresting claim, that she has been mistaken in the past for a concept. This mis-

recognition is given an interpersonal and gendered dimension, for it is men (guys) in particular who have misrecognized her. The idea itself opens up the prospect of imagining a more thoroughly intersubjective process of concept formation. What if we were to consider the possibility of "Clem as personified concept" in the context of the terms, the metaphors, and the figures of speech that have arisen around academic studies of concepts? Careful analysis of concepts occurs in a multiplicity of disciplines, including psychology, cognitive science, education, linguistics, and the philosophy of mind. Within most of these discourses, concepts are often understood as a formulation of thought, one step removed from its social formation in a word or phrase. With the concept poised between the solitary realm of thought and our social world of language, one key question within these various scholarly discourses concerns how the individual can be said to know or understand a concept, or be capable of distinguishing one concept from another.

This question is commonly posed in terms of possession, as in "how do I know I possess a concept?" The philosopher of mind, Christopher Peacocke, in his influential treatise *A Study of Concepts*, identifies what he calls the "possession conditions" of concepts, i.e., those mental dispositions that make up the necessary and sufficient condition for a subject to truly process an individuated concept (Peacocke 1995). Philosopher Joseph Levine has put the question somewhat differently, by asking "what it's like to grasp a concept" (Levine 1995). Literature on cognitive development and early childhood education concentrating on learning and competency speak regularly of concept acquisition (Margolis 1998; Carey 2009). Scholars that follow the Wittgensteinian understanding of concepts as performing specific functions rearticulate the question as "how a concept is used" or "what a political actor is doing with a specific concept" (see Skinner 2002). Thinking about the relationship between meaning and use invites a range of other metaphors. Giovanni Sartori, speaking more directly to political scientists, has taught several generations to talk about conceptual stretching, for example (Sartori 1970).

Possessing, acquiring, using, grasping, stretching. The proliferation of figurative speech common in the literature of a variety of disciplines invokes images of concepts as things, property to be owned and controlled, instruments to be used, manipulated, and appropriated and otherwise acted upon. Understanding concepts as mental representations, terms, words, or other signs, the interpersonal dimensions to the deployment of concepts remains hidden. Thinking instead about a concept as a human being as opposed to a mental representation, the violent, as well as the juridical, elements of these metaphors are more strikingly revealed. It suggests the indebtedness of these metaphors to the basic classifications of Roman jurisprudence, dividing, according to the canonical formulation of Gaius, all legal topics into the categories of persons, things, and actions. We may be reminded, in this context, of the further overlaps between epistemology and jurisprudence in, for example, John Locke's theories of the human understanding based on what he termed a "forensic" view of personhood, or the continuing importance of C.B. Mac-

Pherson's paradigm of possessive individualism.

Clem's personification of a concept, whether or not it's a social fact or a misperception, helps to transform conventional epistemological questions of concept possession into a more politically contested environment of intersubjective relations, in which the dividing lines between person and thing, subject and concept, are no longer as clear. Our philosophical engagement with the question of concepts need not just be based in ideas of mental images and representations; what does it mean for Clem to recognize herself as a concept or to recognize herself as having been taken as a concept? It also helps us to recognize just how many of the concepts we use are concepts of identity.³ Even those terms that are not directly related to personal identity have the potential to shape and limit the experiences of others. In reacting to Christopher M. Kotowski's definition of violence as "illegal action to do physical harm to persons or property in violation of recognized social norms," the sociologist Lewis A. Coser (1984–1985: 736) once replied "Thus, when a French cop hit me over the head during an antifascist demonstration in the late 1930s that wasn't violence at all, even though it hurt like hell." The conceptual use of violence constituted the horizon of experiences.

"Don't Assign Me Yours": Concept Formation as Interpellation

The second point of interest in the exchange between Clem and Joel is not just that Clem has asked a new question about what it might mean to be a concept, but that she actively contests her identification. W.B. Gallie's (1968) phrase "essentially contested concepts" has become a familiar way for addressing the proliferation of meanings, definitions, and uses of the core descriptive and evaluative concepts in the social sciences.⁴ Most philosophers and political scientists have taken this to mean that there is a multiplicity of ways in which a key concept may be used, and that there exists no neutral or objective method for adjudicating between these competing usages. However, the politics of such conceptual contestation has been imagined narrowly. This is, in part, a result of the juridical metaphors of possession and use, which allows scholars to imagine conflict over different meanings of a term to look somewhat like entrepreneurs offering their commodity on an open market.

Clem allows us to perceive concept formation as part of a social and radically intersubjective project, based in power relations, hints of violence, domination, subjection, as well as protest and resistance. Clem resists what, from this perspective, looks like her interpellation. Does Joel, or the other "guys" to whom Clem refers, attempt to interpellate Clem? What are the conditions of her resistance? Are political scientists in a position analogous to Joel, in their deployment of a descriptive and evaluative vocabulary toward the subjects of their research?

In Louis Althusser's canonical account of the process of interpellation, ideology comes to constitute the nature of an individual subject's identity through the social process of "hailing" them in interpersonal interactions (Althusser 1971). The famous exemplar given by Althusser to exemplify this process

is that of a policeman on the street, calling out to someone walking down the street, "hey, you there." The individual stops, turns toward the police, and in the turning toward the hailing figure, takes a step toward becoming a fully social subject, enmeshed in these relationships of authority. Althusser's broader point is that this act of power does not merely repress the individual subject who turns toward the call, but instead constitutes the subject within social relations.

To take one example of conceptual interpellation, in *Minority Rights: Between Diversity and Community*, Jennifer Preece (2005) explains that the term minority was first applied to religious, racial, ethnic, or linguistic groups during the 1919 Paris Peace Conference, concluding World War I. The term allowed for special diplomatic arrangements, and the term can be used to explore these special arrangements, or to narrate movements from outsider to insider status. However, as Preece goes on to explain, the concept "minority group" can also be used to erase or marginalize populations. Concerning the same concept, the historian of late antiquity, Peter Brown (2013), has argued, speaking of the basic stereotypes in conventional scholarship on late antiquity, that "It is as if the large Christian churches of Syria, Mesopotamia, and Egypt had fallen silent at the moment of the Muslim conquest. They are treated as having become religious 'minorities' overnight." The formation and circulation of the concept of a 'minority' may become one vehicle of control, marginalization and erasure.

Social theorists have followed the lead of Michel Foucault and Judith Butler in exploring the conditions under which these social dramas of interpellation may be resisted, disobeyed, and potentially subverted. *Eternal Sunshine's* social drama of Clem's resistance to her own conceptualization highlights the absence of a robust reciprocal interest between, on the one hand, those scholars interested in the politics of recognition and subject formation, and, on the other hand, academics engaged with the social scientific literature on concept formation.

"...Or I'm Going to Make Them Alive": Concept and Narrative

A glance at the wide variety of methodological terms coined in order to talk more systematically about concepts reflect a deep debt to structuralism, especially the linguistic structuralism initiated by Saussure: semantic fields. Conceptual mapping. Concept adjacency. Conceptual matrix. Concept clusters. Conceptual constellations. These terms all reveal paradigms for thinking about concepts that borrow from architecture, geography, and other spatial configurations. Even Wittgenstein's famous analogy to family resemblances encourages the diagramming of family trees. The relationship between different concepts becomes the main way for exploring how concepts work. Representations are described in their topographical functioning.

Clem's speech helps to make more visible this reliance on structuralism, and an absence of a fully temporal dimension to this syncretic study of concepts. In Clem's initial resistance to Joel, she makes an intimate link between the process of concept formation and certain familiar types of narrative: "Too

many guys think I'm a concept or I complete them or I'm going to make them alive." Self-realization through the romantic attentions of a significant other is an ancient idea, represented most canonically by Aristophanes in Plato's *Symposium*. More contemporarily, the idea of the vibrant whimsical woman coaxing out of his shell the overly insular young man, or the awkward and depressive hero rejuvenated by the attentions of his partner's quirky life-force, all point explicitly to the well-known narrative conventions of the Hollywood romantic comedy, exemplified as early as 1937 by Katherine Hepburn's character in *Bringing Up Baby*. The introverted Joel and the brash, unconventional and loud Clem fit the behavior patterns for this type of storytelling. Clem's role in this male-dominated story line is made possible by her conceptualization. About a year after *Eternal Sunshine* came out in 2004, a term was coined by a film critic to signify the concept that Clem claims Joel has formulated for her—Manic Pixie Dream Girl.⁵ This concept marks a role that one plays within the narrative shaped by men. It has been a central character trope of many romantic comedies. Through Clem, the film is acknowledging the conventionality of the genre. More than just the generic conventions, *Eternal Sunshine* recognizes and resists the degree to which the central narrative structures of so many Hollywood romantic comedies have been emplotted from a male point of view.

Clem's linkage reminds us that the framework for evaluating the fittedness of concepts is not limited to their descriptive characteristics, if description is understood in its spatial dimensions. It is important to also reflect upon their role within narration, and yet it is much less common to think about the relationship between concepts and narration. This allows us to take into consideration work on narrative construction as we think about conceptual analysis and concept formation. Might we not think about the way in which key concepts may be best understood in terms of their functionality in a narrative, as opposed to their location within a descriptive matrix? While not all of the key concepts used by students of politics can be understood in terms of narrative, there are many instances in which the authority of a concept owes less to its descriptive power and more to its part in the emplotment of a series of events. The common dichotomy between description and evaluation leaves out an equally important interpretive distinction between description and narrative (Alpers 1983).

Let me give one brief example. In his review of a recently published book on the Battle of Bunker Hill, historian T.H. Breen (2013) notes that most historians of the period frame their analysis around a conflict between loyalists and patriots. In this context, the term patriot connotes a revolutionary enterprise, in which individuals share a common project of establishing a new republic. Such aspirations simply were not (yet) held by most participants at Bunker Hill in 1775, and thus as a descriptive or evaluative term for understanding the intentions of historical actors in the early stages of the colonial crisis, the concept of patriot has manifest problems. If the goal of the author is to narrate the founding moments of a republic, the functionality of the term patriot is more evident. Breen suggests, as an alternative, that we think of these colonial fighters of New England as insurgents. This alternative term is

offered in a knowingly controversial way since, in light of the narratives of insurgencies, and counter-insurgency tactics in the wake of the Afghanistan and Iraq wars, the concept is now associated with the idea of belligerents with contested claims to legitimacy. In selecting between patriots or insurgents, the choice is not likely to be found by the descriptive authority of either term, but rather by the choices the author will make in how to emplot a narrative.

Conclusion

Eternal Sunshine is, generically speaking, a comedy. As Hayden White (1973: 9) reminds us, in the comedic plot "hope is held out for the temporary triumph of man over his world by the prospect of occasional reconciliations of the forces at play in the social and natural worlds." If Joel represents the various disciplines of social science and Clem speaks as his personified and resistant conceptual apparatus, are there opportunities to emplot a comedic resolution? The character of Clem reveals the degree to which individuals are well aware that they are recognized through the use of concepts. The literature concerning recognition and inter-subjectivity has long explored the linguistic dimensions of the formation of one's political and social status, but it has not been something often reflected in the literature concerning concepts.

I have briefly raised as an analogy the suggestion that, as social scientists, political theorists and historians, we are akin to Joel, requiring the deployment of a sophisticated conceptual vocabulary for description, narration, and evaluation. We think in critical and sophisticated ways about how to formulate and deploy these concepts, but too rarely do we think about the resistance to conceptualization by the subjects of such acts. Commenting upon the power inequalities inherent in concept formation does not relieve political actors, whether they are academics or not, of their reliance upon a rigorous and fulsome political vocabulary. It may be possible, however, to begin articulating criteria of rigor and accuracy that actively involve dimensions of communication between those who may utilize a specific concept, and those whose lives and experiences are rendered legible by those concepts. Concepts may be recognized as rigorous in part by their capacity to accurately bear evidence of their own politically contestable status. Might we openly acknowledge, in other words, what happens when our concepts begin to talk back?

Notes

¹ A film that contains elements of science fiction, romantic comedy, as well as a thriller involving an extended chase scene across the main character's mental landscape, *Eternal Sunshine* has elicited a number of books and articles that explore its multiple themes, including the ethics of memory, the misuses of technology, and the film's relationship to what Stanley Cavell has called the comedy of remarriage. See, for example, Meyer (2008); Grau (2009); Day (2011); Cavell (1981).

² Kaufman (2004: 129).

³ Recent titles added to Polity's Key Concepts series of monographs include mental illness, aging, consumption, disability, care, poverty, minority rights. Not only are these concepts that would not have had their own monographs a generation earlier, but they each involve terms that relate to dimensions of personal identity.

⁴ For an excellent overview and evaluation of the debates over Gallie's original article, see Collier, Hidalgo, and Maciuceanu (2006).

⁵ The conventionality of the concept before the term was coined opens up opportunities for a discussion of the relationship between a concept and a word or sign. I will not take up this topic here, however.

References

- Alpers, Svetlana. 1983. *The Art of Describing: Dutch Art in the Seventeenth Century*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Althusser, Louis. 1971. *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays*. New York: Monthly Review Press.
- Breen, T.H. 2013. "Our Insurgency: From Concord to Bunker Hill." *The New York Review of Books* (July 11).
- Brown, Peter. 2013. "Recovering Submerged Worlds." *The New York Review of Books* (July 11).
- Burgett, Bruce and Glenn Hendler, eds. 2007. *Keywords for American Cultural Studies*. New York: New York University Press.
- Carey, Susan. 2009. *The Origin of Concepts*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Cavell, Stanley. 1981. *Pursuits of Happiness: The Hollywood Comedy of Remarriage*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Collier, David, Fernando Daniel Hidalgo, and Andra Olivia Maciuceanu. 2006. "Essentially Contested Concepts: Debates and Applications." *Journal of Political Ideologies* 11:3, 211–246.
- Collier, David and John Gerring. 2009. *Concepts and Method in Social Science: The Tradition of Giovanni Sartori*. New York: Routledge.
- Cannolly, William E. 1993. *The Terms of Political Discourse*, 3rd ed. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Coser, Lewis A. 1984–1985. "Review of *Social Science Concepts: A Systematic Analysis*." *Political Science Quarterly* 99:4 (Winter), 735–736.
- Day, William. 2011. "I Don't Know, Just Wait: Remembering Remarriage in *Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind*." *The Philosophy of Charlie Kaufmann* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky), 132–154.
- Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind*. 2004. (Focus Features Universal Studios).
- Gallie, W.B. 1968. "Essentially Contested Concepts." In *Philosophy and the Historical Understanding*, 2nd ed. (New York: Schocken Books), 157–191.
- Gerring, John. 2001. *Social Science Methodology: A Critical Framework*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Goertz, Gary. 2005. *Social Science Concepts: A User's Guide*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Grau, Christopher, ed. 2009. *Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind: Philosophers on Film*. New York: Routledge.
- Kaufman, Charlie. 2004. *Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind: The Shooting Script*. New York: Newmarket Press.
- Levine, Joseph. 1995. "On What It's Like to Grasp a Concept." *Philosophical Issues* 6, 38–43.
- Margolis, Eric. 1998. "How to Acquire a Concept." *Mind and Language* 13:3 (September), 347–369.
- Meyer, Michael J. 2008. "Reflections on Comic Reconciliations: Ethics, Memory and Anxious Happy Endings." *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 66:1, 77–87.
- Peacocke, Christopher. 1995. *A Study of Concepts*. Cambridge: MIT Press.
- Preece, Jennifer Jackson. 2005. *Minority Rights: Between Diversity and Community*. Cambridge: Polity.
- Sartori, Giovanni. 1970. "Conceptual Misinformation in Comparative Politics." *American Political Science Review* 64:4, 1033–1053.
- Skinner, Quentin. 2002. *Visions of Politics, Volume One: Regarding*

Method. New York: Cambridge University Press.

White, Hayden. 1973. *Metahistory: The Historical Imagination in Nineteenth-Century Europe*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press.

Announcements

Giovanni Sartori Award for Best Book on and/or Using Qualitative Methods

Recipient: Kristen Renwick Monroe, University of California, Irvine
Ethics in an Age of Terror and Genocide: Identity and Moral Choice (Princeton University Press, 2012).

Committee: Ingo Rohlfing, University of Cologne; Richard Ned Lebow, Dartmouth College; and Jason Seawright, Northwestern University.

Ethics in an Age of Terror and Genocide takes up the very important question of what causes genocide? In answering this question, Monroe explains why some people help the persecuted while others remain passive. Monroe conducted rich interviews with bystanders, Nazi supporters, and rescuers of Jews during the Holocaust and finds that identity plays a major role in understanding political behavior.

The book represents an exciting intersection of interpretive concerns and methodology with a theoretical and explanatory agenda that is traditionally scientific. The presentation of synthetic interview transcripts followed by a rigorous analysis represents a systematic and transparent way of bringing qualitative modes of inquiry into work on political behavior. *Ethics in an Age of Terror and Genocide* thus represents a remarkable piece of research both in terms of substance and methodology.

Alexander George Award for Best Article or Book Chapter on and/or Using Qualitative Methods

Recipient: Hillel Soifer, Temple University: "The Causal Logic of Critical Junctures." *Comparative Political Studies* 45:12 (December 2012), 1572–1597.

Committee: Anna Grzymala-Busse, University of Michigan; Candice Ortals, Pepperdine University; and Ariel Ira Ahram, Virginia Tech.

"The Causal Logic of Critical Junctures" is an innovative and thoughtful analysis of critical junctures, a concept that is frequently invoked but seldom theorized or examined. Soifer goes well beyond the black box of "loosened strictures" and shows both how reduced constraints make change possible during a critical juncture, and the conditions under which changes occur within the boundaries of the juncture. The article is especially noteworthy for the clear linking of theoretical claims with empirical examples from prominent works: The article's examples are varied (from ISI to civil rights movement), showing how critical junctures work (and can be better specified) in many social/historical contexts. This is an innovative, important article that is impressive both for its theoretical acuity and the valuable clarifications it provides.

Sage Award for Best 2012 APSA Paper on and/or Using Qualitative Methods

Recipients: Carolyn M. Warner, Arizona State University; Ramazan Kilinc, University of Nebraska, Omaha; and Christopher W. Hale, Arizona State University: "Religion and Public Goods Provision: Experimental and Interview Evidence from Catholicism and Islam."

Committee: Markus Kreuzer, Villanova University; Isabella Alcaniz,

University of Maryland; and Anne-Marie D'Aoust, Université du Québec, Montreal.

The paper investigates what motivates members of religious groups to provide semi-private, material welfare benefits to fellow members. The research focuses on Catholic and Islamic groups in Ireland, France, Italy and Turkey. The paper offers a thoughtful symbiosis between methodological ingenuity and engaging an interesting substantive question. It thus nicely illustrates the goals of the QMMR section of letting methodology be the servant of important research questions rather than the other way around.

More specifically, the paper impressed the committee for three reasons. First, the paper is theoretically carefully grounded. It draws on the literature on collective action and offers a very detailed review of the specific sub-literature on public goods and demonstrates its applicability to studying religious groups.

Second, the paper engages an important public policy question. It asks what motivates private and religiously inspired individuals to provide social assistance to fellow believers. In engaging this question, it contributes to the better understanding of the role religion plays in social policy. What makes the analysis particularly interesting is the comparison of not just Catholicism and Islam but Islamic groups in Catholic settings and Catholic groups in an Islamic setting (i.e., Turkey).

Third, and most pertinently, the paper tackles a number of challenging methodological issues related to the nettlesome question of explaining the formation of preferences that motivate the provision of private social assistance. Understanding the formation of such preferences requires facing the challenge of validly describing them, reliably measuring them and convincingly linking them to particular outcomes. All too often, preferences are inferred from observed behavior and their causal impact is inferred from statistical findings. The authors avoid such indirect and secondary engagement with the preference formation process through careful research design. The authors conducted interviews with over 200 individuals and administered essay-primed field experiments with over 800 subjects. The paper thus offers an unusual and very time-consuming combination of interviewing and experiments. This combination provides a wealth of very fine-grained evidence that provides not just compelling support but also puzzling disconfirmation of some of the authors' various hypotheses.

David Collier Mid-Career Achievement Award

Recipient: Diana Kapiszewski, Georgetown University

Committee: Gary Goertz, University of Notre Dame (chair); Colin Elman, Syracuse University; and Lisa Wedeen, University of Chicago.

The committee unanimously and enthusiastically agreed that Diana Kapiszewski has made significant contributions on all three dimensions on which the Collier Award is based: research, research methodology, and institution-building in the qualitative and multi-method field. Kapiszewski's *High Courts and Economic Governance in Argentina and Brazil* (Cambridge University Press, 2012) is a standout contribution to the study of judicial politics in the field of comparative politics. It is a masterful small-N comparison of two quite different patterns of Supreme Court-Executive relations. The field research underpinning the volume includes more than 200 interviews, a colossal survey of newspaper articles, and the use of a wide range of other primary source materials. It is a major empirical contribution that vastly improves our knowledge of the courts in these countries. It clearly demonstrates the power of qualitative research to generate fresh insights about comparative politics. Kapiszewski's substantive research also includes two co-edited books, and several articles that

develop and use qualitative techniques.

In addition to providing an exemplary study based on field research, Kapiszewski has made important contributions to the methodology of field research itself. Her coauthored book manuscript *Field Research in Political Science* (forthcoming, Cambridge University Press) is the best work of its kind within the discipline. It is impressive in its sound and sensible advice, its broad coverage of the range of issues that arise in field research, and its sophisticated approach to linking field research to different kinds of research designs. Kapiszewski has also taken a lead role in developing new understandings of research transparency, and in exploring the promise and limits of secondary data analysis.

Kapiszewski's institution building includes playing a leading role in the section, including serving as APSA division co-chair, and co-leading the field research short course for several years. She has served as a module leader for several years at the Institute for Qualitative and Multi-Method Research. Most recently, Kapiszewski has been a key participant in APSA's openness initiative, and she is currently serving as co-director of the Qualitative Data Repository.

Best Qualitative and Multi-Method Submission to the American Political Science Review in the Preceding Calendar Year

Recipient: Katherine Cramer Walsh, University of Wisconsin, Madison: "Putting Inequality in Its Place: Rural Consciousness and the Power of Perspective." Published in *American Political Science Review* 106:3 (August 2012), 517-532.

Committee: Tim Buthe, Duke University; Amy G. Mazur, Washington State University; John Gerring, Boston University.

Katherine Cramer's manuscript asks why people vote against their interests. She seeks to go beyond the long-standing debate on this question, which pits values against interests as explanations of redistributive preferences by emphasizing group consciousness (i.e., group-based social identity, especially in rural areas) as a crucial factor in how citizens make sense of politics and thus how interests are translated into preferences. To reconstruct how people in rural areas make sense of their lives, Cramer employs interpretivist methods in the context of ethnographic field research. In language that remains accessible to scholars who do not have the author's deep knowledge of interpretivism, the article conveys compellingly why and how participant observation allowed the author to make a significant contribution that is part complement, part challenge, to the causal claims in the more positivist literature on public opinion. The article combines the fruitful application of a multi-methods approach to an intrinsically important question with an extraordinary level of methodological self-consciousness and an extended discussion of the methods employed, which make the piece truly exemplary of QMMR work and prompted the committee to select it enthusiastically for the best-APSR-submission award.

Interpretive Methodologies & Methods (IMM) Conference Group Awards

The Interpretive Methodologies & Methods Conference Group (IMM) is excited to announce the recipients of the 2013 Hayward Alker Best Paper Award, Charles Taylor Book Award, and Grain of Sand Award.

Hayward Alker Best Paper Award

Presented for the conference paper by a Ph.D. student that best demonstrates the uses of interpretive methodologies and methods for the study of politics. This award honors the memory of Hayward R.

Alker, a tireless champion of interpretive methodologies, from his own humanistic critique of mainstream political science to his role in developing and promoting interdisciplinary, historically grounded, linguistically and hermeneutically-informed approaches and his commitment to nurturing and encouraging graduate students and young scholars.

Recipient: Devorah Manekin, University of California, Los Angeles, "Collecting Sensitive Data: On the Challenges of Studying Violence in Conflict." Paper presented at APSA 2011.

Committee: Renee Cramer, Drake University; Brent Steele, University of Kansas; and Rich Holtzman, Bryant University (chair).

Devorah Manekin's "Collecting Sensitive Data: On the Challenges of Studying Violence in Conflict" is a quality representation of everything that we try to pursue and advocate for in interpretive research. Her paper concerns scholars who research violence in areas of conflict and their need to navigate issues that are politically contested and emotionally charged. As Devorah explains, the very classification of an act as "violent" is subject to bitter conflicts of interpretation, since, depending on the context, violence may be viewed as permissible and necessary or as illegitimate and aggressive. Those who were involved in the violence have deep stakes in ensuring that their interpretations of events are recognized and accepted. As a result of these conflicts of interpretation, the research encounter can become a site for negotiation of meaning and legitimacy. Devorah's "doubly-reflective" research explores some of the challenges that she faced while studying military violence in the Second Intifada, drawing in particular on seventy in-depth interviews conducted with Israeli former combatants. The resulting work not only offers insightful understandings into how violence was understood by its practitioners and, in turn, how it was enabled and sustained, but also explores, systematically, the notion of how selected methods shape research questions and outcomes. This paper proves instructive both for scholars as they begin their careers doing fieldwork and pursuing interpretive methodologies, and for more 'seasoned' ones who need to consider the reflexive implications and challenges stemming from their work.

Charles Taylor Book Award

Presented for the best book in political science that employs or develops interpretive methodologies and methods. This award recognizes the contributions of Charles Taylor to the advancement of interpretive thinking. His 1971 essay "Interpretation and the Sciences of Man," which powerfully critiqued the aspiration to model the study of politics on the natural sciences and cogently explains how "interpretation is essential to explanation" in the human sciences, along with his many other articles, book chapters, and volumes, have long been a source of inspiration for scholars seeking to develop and apply an interpretive approach to the study of politics.

Recipient: Sharon Sliwinski, University of Western Ontario, for *Human Rights in Camera* (University of Chicago Press, 2011).

Committee: Raymond Duvall, University of Minnesota; Victoria Hattam, New School; Anne Norton, University of Pennsylvania (chair).

Human Rights in Camera does that critical theoretical work Sheldon Wolin referred to as "making the familiar unfamiliar." Sliwinski shows us that human rights are not revealed by reason alone, but through an experience of seeing, "imagined and idealized on the wings of aesthetic experience." The spaces of human rights become difficult to map. Are they the spaces of violence and violation or are they the distant sites where the visual artifacts of those violations are circulated? Sliwinski reminds us that the language of "crimes against hu-

manity" emerges out of the heart of darkness, from an African-American denouncing the horrors of the Belgian Congo. The time of human rights is no longer limited to the twentieth century. The history of trauma and the visual is enriched by her recollection of the effects of the Lisbon earthquake on Kant, Goethe, and the Enlightenment. We are all familiar with Lee Miller's photographs of Dachau. These have become iconic, and in that transformation have been made easy to recognize, easy to read. Sliwinski unsettles those readings. She teaches us to look again, to recognize the photograph taken not only of but in the boxcar loaded with corpses, by a photographer who has placed herself among the dead.

Throughout the work, Sliwinski draws on the literature of trauma; on aesthetic theory, on the politics of sensation, and on political economy. We are asked to remember the development of photographic technology, the imbrication of photographic technologies and the mass media, and that Miller's iconic photographs of the Holocaust were published in *Vogue*. Sliwinski does not turn away from the difficult ethical issues presented by photography and spectatorship. She has shown us that bearing witness is not without its dark pleasures and moral dangers.

We congratulate Professor Sliwinski on her admirable book. She has brought newness into the world. We look forward to seeing how her work changes the terrain of inquiry in the social sciences and the humanities.

Honorable Mentions: Daniel Levine, University of Alabama: *Recovering International Relations: The Promise of Sustainable Critique* (Oxford University Press, 2012) and Timothy Pachirat, New School: *Every Twelve Seconds: Industrialized Slaughter and the Politics of Sight* (Yale University Press, 2011).

Grain of Sand Award

Presented to a political scientist in recognition of longstanding and meritorious contributions to interpretive studies of the political and to the discipline itself, its ideas, and its persons. This award draws combined inspiration from the opening lines of William Blake's "Auguries of Innocence" and Wislawa Szymborska's "View with a Grain of Sand." Echoing Szymborska's "We call it a grain of sand," the award underscores the centrality of meaning making in both the constitution and study of the political; drawing on Blake's "To see a world in a grain of sand," the award honors the capacity of interpretive scholarship to embody and inspire imaginative theorizing, the intentional cultivation of new lines of sight through an expansion of literary and experiential resources, and the nourishing of a playfulness of mind so necessary to the vitality of social science.

Recipient: James C. Scott, Yale University

Committee: Patrick Thaddeus Jackson, American University; Cecelia Lynch, University of California, Irvine; Julie Novkov, SUNY Albany; Ido Oren, University of Florida; Timothy Pachirat, New School; Peregrine Schwartz-Shea, University of Utah; Dvora Yanow, Wageningen University (chair).

Ever since his book *The Moral Economy of the Peasant: Rebellion and Subsistence in Southeast Asia* (1976), Jim Scott has demonstrated how the meaning-making of the people in the settings one studies is central to political understanding and analysis. Drawing on years of field research in Southeast Asia, Scott brought fine-grained attention to ethnographic detail into conversation with high-level theory to produce sophisticated and persuasive accounts of the centrality of contextualized meaning-making to the operation of power. This respect for actors' own understandings of how power impacts their lives and livelihoods continues in his subsequent books. In research that parallels feminist theorizing, *Weapons of the Weak: Everyday*

Forms of Resistance (1985) and *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts* (1990) offered pointed critiques of research approaches that assume that the meaning(s) of human “behavior” is (are) self-evident.

Scott’s historical sensibility and focus on the possibility of democracy and freedom are on display in *Seeing like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed* (1998) and *The Art of Not Being Governed: An Anarchist History of Upland Southeast Asia* (2009). Their eclectic use of sources and evident curiosity make them arresting works of social science, enriching our understanding of knowledge and politics, and of the politics of knowledge. Finally, his most recent book, *Two Cheers for Anarchism: Six Easy Pieces on Autonomy, Dignity, and Meaningful Work and Play* (2012) makes an incisive case, in simple, often witty language, for a politics that challenges the centralization of authority.

Scott’s approach to mentoring and training parallel the political sensibilities evident in his scholarship. Never a hand-holder or micro-manager, Scott excels at creating space for his students to pursue their own visions. His approach to graduate training, outlined in a compelling extended interview in Gerardo L. Munck and Richard Snyder’s *Passion, Craft, and Method in Comparative Politics* (2007), demonstrates a desire to mentor original thinkers and risk-takers rather than to reproduce technicians or intellectual schools of thought in the discipline.

Throughout his scholarship and mentoring, Scott demonstrates the importance of an understanding of, and respect for, lived experience. The actors who people his writings are driven by a passion for justice, a desire for dignity, or a hubris made possible and dangerous by power. He draws on a rich array of evidence (among these surveys, photographs, memoirs, fiction, and poetry); and his analytic explanation is not driven by a presumption of simplicity.

For these reasons, Jim Scott’s body of work has been and continues to be an inspiration to interpretive (and other) scholars who pursue humanistic research and knowledge. His writings indeed make it possible for us to see a world in a grain of sand.

**Advanced Topics in Set-Theoretic Methods and QCA,
Carsten Q. Schneider
ECPR Winter School in Methods and Techniques,
Vienna, February 16–21**

This course addresses advanced issues that arise if and when scholars embrace notions of sets and their relations. While it is a course about set-theoretic methods writ large, most of the time, we will discuss issues that are specific to Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA). Although much effort has been put into developing standards of good practice, still many important issues remain unresolved, and even sometimes unaddressed. This has given rise to a recent wave of literature skeptical of set-methods, in general, and QCA, in particular. In this course we not only discuss the issues raised by these critiques, but go beyond them and explore the hitherto under-used potentials of set-theoretic methods. The topics addressed are set-theoretic multi-method principles and practices; set-theoretic theory evaluation; robustness and uncertainty; time and set-theoretic methods; two-step QCA; and contemporary QCA critiques. More detailed information, including a day-to-day reading list and prerequisite knowledge can be found in the course syllabus (<http://ecpr.eu/Events/Panellist.aspx?EventID=17>). Information on course registration and credits are detailed at <http://ecpr.eu/filestore/files/methodsschools/2014WS/CourseFees.pdf>.

Ahmed, Amel and Rudra Sil. 2012. “When Multi-Method Work Subverts Methodological Pluralism—or, Why We Still Need Single-Method Research.” *Perspectives on Politics* 10:4, 935–953.

While acknowledging the many forms and contributions of multi-method research (MMR), we examine the costs of treating it as best practice on the grounds that it reduces method-specific weaknesses and increases external validity for findings. Focusing on MMR that combines some type of qualitative analysis with statistical or formal approaches, we demonstrate that error-reduction and cross-validation are not feasible where methods are not sufficiently similar in their basic ontologies and their conceptions of causality. In such cases, MMR may still yield important benefits—such as uncovering related insights or improving the coding of variables—but these can be readily obtained through collaboration among scholars specializing in single-method research (SMR). Such scholars often set the standards for the application of particular methods and produce distinctive insights that can elude researchers concerned about competently deploying different methods and producing coherent findings. Thus, the unchecked proliferation of multi-method skill sets risks forfeiting the benefits of SMR and marginalizing idiographically-oriented qualitative research that fits less well with formal or quantitative approaches. This would effectively subvert the pluralism that once gave impetus to MMR unless disciplinary expectations and professional rewards are predicated on a more balanced and nuanced understanding of what various forms of SMR and MMR bring to the table.

Ahram, Ariel I. 2013. “Concepts and Measurement in Multi-method Research.” *Political Research Quarterly* 66 (June), 280–291.

This article argues that concept misformation and conceptual stretching undermine efforts to combine qualitative and quantitative methods in multimethod research (MMR). Two related problems result from the mismatch of qualitatively and quantitatively construed concepts. Mechanism muddling occurs when differences in the connotation of qualitatively and quantitatively construed concepts embed different causal properties into conceptual definitions. Conceptual slippage occurs when qualitatively and quantitatively construed concepts use incompatible nominal, ordinal, or radial scales. Instead of gaining leverage from the synthesis of large- and small-N analysis, these problems can push MMR in two diametrically opposed directions, emphasizing one methodological facet at the cost of the other.

Bennett, Andrew. 2013. “The Mother of all Isms: Causal Mechanisms and Structured Pluralism in International Relations Theory.” *European Journal of International Relations* 19:3, 459–481.

Theorizing under the rubric of paradigmatic ‘isms’ has made important conceptual contributions to International Relations, but the organization of the subfield around these isms is based on flawed readings of the philosophy of science and has run its course. A promising alternative is to build on the philosophical foundation of scientific realism and orient International Relations theorizing around the idea of explanation via reference to hypothesized causal mechanisms. Yet in order to transform the practice of International Relations theorizing and research, calls for ‘analytic eclecticism’ must not only demonstrate that scientific realism is a defensible epistemology amenable to

diverse methods; they must provide a structured and memorable framework for diverse and cumulative theorizing and research, field-wide discourse, and compelling pedagogy. I introduce a ‘taxonomy of theories about causal mechanisms’ as a structured pluralist framework for encompassing the theories about mechanisms of power, institutions, and legitimacy that have been providing the explanatory content of the isms all along. This framework encourages middle-range or typological theorizing about combinations of causal mechanisms and their operation in recurrent contexts, and it offers a means of reinvigorating the dialogue between International Relations, the other subfields of political science, and the rest of the social sciences.

Chatterjee, Abhishek. 2013. “Ontology, Epistemology, and Multimethod Research in Political Science.” *Philosophy of the Social Sciences* 43:1, 73–99.

Epistemologies and research methods are not free of metaphysics. This is to say that they are both, supported by (or presumed by), and support (or presume) fundamental ontologies. A discussion of the epistemological foundations of “multimethod” research in the social sciences—in as much as such research claims to unearth “causal” relations—therefore cannot avoid the ontological presuppositions or implications of such a discussion. But though there isn’t necessarily a perfect correspondence between ontology, epistemology, and methodology, they do constrain each other. As such it is possible to make methodological choices that are at odds with one’s (implicit) ontology or argue from an ontology that is inconsistent one’s choice of methods. Yet lack of recognition of this fact has hampered methodological discussions in political science, especially with respect to the discussion on the merits of multimethod research. The ontology implicitly accepted in such discussions is “reductionist” and “regularist,” that is, one that respectively defines causes in terms of noncausal relations and states of affair and affirms that such noncausal relations are regularities in nature. This article will argue that any attempt to fit “multimethod” research (where “multimethod” signifies some combination of inferential statistics and case studies) within this narrow ontology is destined to fail since such a metaphysics logically cannot accord case studies a necessary or sufficient role in the establishment of causal relations. However, there are metaphysical positions within the ambit of an empiricist philosophy of science that can accommodate multiple methods without contradiction. The article discusses two such ontologies and suggests ways in which they might allow the establishment of a coherent epistemological foundation for multimethod research, however, within a decidedly empiricist philosophy of science.

Cienki, Alan and Dvora Yanow. 2013. “Why Metaphor and Other Tropes? Linguistic Approaches to Analysing Policies and the Political.” *Journal of International Relations and Development* 16:2, 167–176.

The articles in this special issue on linguistic approaches to analysing policies and the political share the goal of taking language seriously, achieved through detailed attention to linguistic usage in its respective contexts. They reflect a stance common to both cognitive linguistic and interpretive/constructivist approaches, namely a view of language as integrally constituting the world it presents, reflecting, at least in part, its users’ experiences of that world. One key form of language use discussed is that of metaphor. Rather than being seen as merely a poetic device, metaphor is viewed in several of the articles as playing a pivotal role in the framing of policy or political issues, which it does by casting one idea in terms of the imagery of another. For example, talking about a political entity, such as a country, in

terms of it being a kind of container can invite certain inferences about how political states function—in this case, reasoning about inclusion of members within the state ‘container’ vs. exclusion from it. The research shows that metaphors often have important ties with categorisation, the categories used being determined in part by the words we use to name concepts. In addition to metaphor, metonymy also plays a significant role. The articles show the intimate relationship between political language and political acts.

Collier, David, Jody LaPorte, and Jason Seawright. 2012. “Putting Typologies to Work: Concept Formation, Measurement, and Analytic Rigor.” *Political Research Quarterly* 65:1, 217–232.

Typologies are well-established analytic tools in the social sciences. They can be “put to work” in forming concepts, refining measurement, exploring dimensionality, and organizing explanatory claims. Yet some critics, basing their arguments on what they believe are relevant norms of quantitative measurement, consider typologies old-fashioned and unsophisticated. This critique is methodologically unsound, and research based on typologies can and should proceed according to high standards of rigor and careful measurement. These standards are summarized in guidelines for careful work with typologies, and an illustrative inventory of typologies, as well as a brief glossary, are included online.

Gerring, John. 2012. “Mere Description.” *British Journal of Political Science* 42:4, 721–746.

This article attempts to reformulate and resuscitate the seemingly prosaic methodological task of description, which is often derided in favour of causal analysis. First, the problem of definition is addressed: What does this category of analysis (‘description’) refer to? Secondly, a taxonomy of descriptive arguments is offered, emphasizing the diversity contained within this genre of empirical analysis. Thirdly, the demise of description within political science is charted over the past century, with comparisons to other disciplines. Fourthly, it is argued that the task of description ought to be approached independently, not merely as a handmaiden of causal theories. Fifthly, the methodological difficulties of descriptive inference are addressed. Finally, fruitful research areas within the rubric of description are reviewed.

Goertz, Gary and James Mahoney. 2012. “Concepts and Measurement: Ontology and Epistemology.” *Social Science Information* 51:2, 205–216.

This article discusses some ontological and epistemological differences in qualitative and quantitative approaches to concepts and measurement. Concept formation inevitably raises the issue of ontology because it involves specifying what is inherent and important in the empirical phenomenon represented by a concept, e.g., ‘What is democracy?’ Qualitative researchers adopt a semantic approach and work hard to identify the intrinsic necessary defining attributes of a concept. Quantitative scholars adopt an indicator-latent variable approach and seek to identify good indicators that are caused by the latent variable. Concepts and measurement also raise epistemological issues about the nature and quality of knowledge. In quantitative analyses, the challenges of knowledge generation are closely linked to ‘error’, understood as the difference between an estimated value and a true value. By contrast, in qualitative analyses the challenges of knowledge generation are more closely linked to ‘fuzziness,’ understood as partial membership in a conceptual set.

List, Christian and Kai Spiekermann. 2013. "Methodological Individual and Holism in Political Science: A Reconciliation." *American Political Science Review* 107:4, 629–643.

Political science is divided between methodological individualists, who seek to explain political phenomena by reference to individuals and their interactions, and holists (or nonreductionists), who consider some higher-level social entities or properties such as states, institutions, or cultures ontologically or causally significant. We propose a reconciliation between these two perspectives, building on related work in philosophy. After laying out a taxonomy of different variants of each view, we observe that (i) although political phenomena result from underlying individual attitudes and behavior, individual-level descriptions do not always capture all explanatorily salient properties, and (ii) nonreductionistic explanations are mandated when social regularities are robust to changes in their individual-level realization. We characterize the dividing line between phenomena requiring nonreductionistic explanation and phenomena permitting individualistic explanation and give examples from the study of ethnic conflicts, social-network theory, and international-relations theory.

Mahoney, James. 2012. "The Logic of Process Tracing Tests in the Social Sciences." *Sociological Methods and Research* 41:4, 566–590.

This article discusses process tracing as a methodology for testing hypotheses in the social sciences. With process tracing tests, the analyst combines preexisting generalizations with specific observations from within a single case to make causal inferences about that case. Process tracing tests can be used to help establish that (1) an initial event or process took place, (2) a subsequent outcome also occurred, and (3) the former was a cause of the latter. The article focuses on the logic of different process tracing tests, including hoop tests, smoking gun tests, and straw in the wind tests. New criteria for judging the strength of these tests are developed using ideas concerning the relative importance of necessary and sufficient conditions. Similarities and differences between process tracing and the deductive-nomological model of explanation are explored.

Schatz, Edward and Elena Maltseva. 2012. "Assumed to Be Universal: The Leap from Data to Knowledge in the *American Political Science Review*." *Polity* 44:3, 446–472.

The language scholars use to describe research findings has potentially enormous implications for how a science of politics develops. Consider the history of marked and unmarked terms in the *American Political Science Review*. Modifiers that mark reported data as spatially or temporally "different" (versus linguistically leaving the data unmarked and thus implying that the information is universal and "normal") reflect predominant power relations. Marking, furthermore, can contribute to future power relations. Finally, knowledge claims that are made without acute attention to the marking of data are likely to be faulty. Because the implications for a science of politics are neither politically nor analytically innocent, political scientists should reveal (rather than conceal) and foreground (rather than background) the geographic and temporal origins of their data.

Schneider, Carsten Q. and Ingo Rohlfing. 2013. "Combining QCA and Process Tracing in Set-Theoretical Multi-Method Research." *Sociological Methods & Research* 42:4, 559–597.

Set-theoretic methods and Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA) in particular are case-based methods. There are, however, only few guidelines on how to combine them with qualitative case studies. Contributing to the literature on multi-method research (MMR), we offer the first comprehensive elaboration of principles for the integration of QCA and case studies with a special focus on case selection. We show that QCA's reliance on set-relational causation in terms of necessity and sufficiency has important consequences for the choice of cases. Using real world data for both crisp-set and fuzzy-set QCA, we show what typical and deviant cases are in QCA-based MMR. In addition, we demonstrate how to select cases for comparative case studies aiming to discern causal mechanisms and address the puzzles behind deviant cases. Finally, we detail the implications of modifying the set-theoretic cross-case model in the light of case-study evidence. Following the principles developed in this article should increase the inferential leverage of set-theoretic MMR.

Sekhon, Jasjeet S. and Rocio Titiunik. 2012. "When Natural Experiments Are Neither Natural nor Experiments." *American Political Science Review* 106:1, 35–57.

Natural experiments help to overcome some of the obstacles researchers face when making causal inferences in the social sciences. However, even when natural interventions are randomly assigned, some of the treatment–control comparisons made available by natural experiments may not be valid. We offer a framework for clarifying the issues involved, which are subtle and often overlooked. We illustrate our framework by examining four different natural experiments used in the literature. In each case, random assignment of the intervention is not sufficient to provide an unbiased estimate of the causal effect. Additional assumptions are required that are problematic. For some examples, we propose alternative research designs that avoid these conceptual difficulties.

Vis, Barbara. 2012. "The Comparative Advantages of fsQCA and Regression Analysis for Moderately Large-N Analyses." *Sociological Methods & Research* 41:1, 168–198.

This article contributes to the literature on comparative methods in the social sciences by assessing the strengths and weaknesses of regression analysis and fuzzy-set qualitative comparative analysis (fsQCA) for studies with a moderately large- n (between approximately 50 and 100). Moderately large- n studies are interesting in this respect since they allow for regression analysis as well as fsQCA analysis. These two approaches have a different epistemological foundation and thereby answer different, yet related, research questions. To illustrate the comparison of fsQCA and regression analysis empirically, I use a recent data set ($n = 53$) that includes data on the conditions under which governments in Western democracies increase their spending on active labor market policies (ALMPs). This comparison demonstrates that while each approach has merits and demerits, fsQCA leads to a fuller understanding of the conditions under which the outcome occurs.

Qualitative and Multi-Method Research

The George Washington University
Department of Political Science
Monroe Hall 440
2115 G Street, N.W.
Washington DC 20052
USA

Nonprofit Org. U.S. Postage PAID TUCSON, AZ Permit No. 271
--

Qualitative and Multi-Method Research (ISSN 2153-6767) is edited by Robert Adcock (tel: 510-301-4512, fax: 202-994-7743, email: adcockr@gwu.edu). The production editor is Joshua C. Yesnowitz (email: jcyesnow@bu.edu). Published with financial assistance from the Consortium for Qualitative Research Methods (CQRM). Opinions do not represent the official position of CQRM. After a one-year lag, past issues will be available to the general public online, free of charge, at <http://www.maxwell.syr.edu/moynihan/programs/cqrm/section.html>. Annual section dues are \$8.00. You may join the section online (<http://www.apsanet.org>) or by phone (202-483-2512). Changes of address take place automatically when members change their addresses with APSA. Please do not send change-of-address information to the newsletter.