

Political Science 8002
Qualitative Methods
Fall 2016
Mondays 3:00-5:30

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Office Hours: Tuesday 1:00-3:00 or by appointment

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Books for purchase:

There are several required books for the course. Copies have been not been ordered for purchase at the university bookstore, since you should have no problem locating cheap used editions of all of these. Copies of each should be on 4 hour reserve at Paley.

- Bennett, Andrew and Jeffrey Checkel, eds. *Process Tracing: From Metaphor to Analytic Tool* (Cambridge University Press, 2014)
- Mahoney and Goertz *A Tale of Two Cultures* (Princeton University Press, 2012)

I also strongly recommend that you buy a copy of the following book, since much of the qualitative methods literature uses it as a reference. It is a classic text in political science and worth adding to your book collection. There is a copy on 4 hour reserve at Paley, and it too is available cheaply online.

- Skocpol, Theda *States and Social Revolutions* (Cambridge University Press, 1979) If you are not familiar with this book, take the time sometime in the first 2-3 weeks of the semester to skim it. Focus on the discussion of methodology in Chapter One, and the argument and presentation of evidence in the first part on the causes of revolutions. (The last part of the book focuses on the consequences of revolutions; you need not read this part for our purposes.) This book is a touchstone we will be returning to consistently over the semester.

All other readings are from journal articles available electronically through Temple, unpublished manuscripts in progress, or selections from books that are available via the library's electronic reserves. Selections available on electronic reserves through the course Blackboard site are indicated with a **.

The one exception is Kapiszewski, Diana, Lauren Morris MacLean, and Benjamin Read *Field Research in Political Science* (Cambridge UP, 2015), which is on regular reserve at Paley. Depending on your research interests, you may find it useful to add a copy to your personal library.

Assignments and Course Requirements:

- Small assignments most weeks in preparation for class. These will involve writing 1-2 pages on a particular question as indicated on the syllabus below. These assignments **should be brought to class, used as a basis for discussion, and turned in at the end of class.** These, plus participation, will comprise 40% of your course grade. You may skip one assignment of your choice; otherwise there will be no extensions or provisions for late work, since these are essential for class discussion. For some weeks, the small assignment is replaced by preparation for contribution to

class discussion. Please take this preparation seriously, since we will draw heavily on your contributions during those discussions.

- Four short papers as indicated below, of about 5-7 pages each. Think of these as exercises analogous to problem sets, that emphasize thinking through the issues at hand and not just writing reactions to the reading. Developing your methods skills requires practice – you can't learn how to do research just by reading the work of other scholars. These will be chances to get your hands dirty. (15% each of your course grade) These are due on **September 30, October 28, November 18, and December 12 by email. Do not expect an extension on these deadlines.**

August 29: Introduction: what is at stake in the methods we choose to use? Please read these pieces in the order listed below.

- Mahoney, James 'Knowledge Accumulation in Comparative Historical Research: The Case of Democracy and Authoritarianism' in Mahoney and Rueschemeyer, eds. *Comparative Historical Analysis in the Social Sciences* (Cambridge University Press, 2003) pp.131-137 carefully, and skimming the rest to get a sense of how Mahoney evaluates what we have learned about democracy. (circulated electronically)
- Boix *Democracy and Redistribution* (Cambridge University Press) Chapter 2 (circulated electronically)
- Acemoglu & Robinson *The Economic Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy* (Cambridge University Press) Selections from Chapter 2 (circulated electronically)
- Haggard & Kaufman (2012) 'Inequality and Regime Change' *American Political Science Review* vol.106 #3 pp.495-516. (please download and read the online appendices for the paper along with the paper itself)

[no small assignment this week]

September 12: Concept Formation

- Collier, David and James Mahon 'Conceptual Stretching Revisited' *American Political Science Review* (1993)
- Goertz *Social Science Concepts* Chapters 2 & 3 (I will distribute scanned versions of these chapters by email)
- Roberts, Kenneth 'Neoliberalism and the Transformation of Populism' *World Politics* (1998) (focus on the strategy used to define populism rather than the empirical discussion).

[Small assignment: How does Roberts define populism? What are the strengths and weaknesses of the strategy he takes to define the concept?]

September 19: Measurement

- Adcock, Robert and David Collier 'Measurement Validity: A Shared Standard for Qualitative and Quantitative Research' *American Political Science Review* (2001)
- Goertz *Social Science Concepts* Chapter 4 3 (I will distribute scanned versions of this chapter by email)
- Munck, Gerardo and Jay Verkuilen (2002) 'Conceptualizing and Measuring Democracy: Evaluating Alternative Indices' *Comparative Political Studies*

In lieu of a written small assignment, pick **one** of the following two articles and be prepared to discuss in class:

- Bowman, Kirk, Fabrice Lehoucq, and James Mahoney (2005) 'Measuring Political Democracy: Case Expertise, Data Adequacy, and Central America' *Comparative Political Studies*
- Paxton, Pamela (2000) 'Women's Suffrage in the Measurement of Democracy: Problems of Operationalization' *Studies in Comparative International Development*

Small Paper #1 – Due Friday September 30 by email: take a concept of your choice, preferably one discussed in political science. Collect a set of at least three attempts by scholars to define the concept and operationalize it. Discuss these definitions, which form of conceptualization each uses, and how each performs on the measurement issues raised in the readings. Based on the existing definitions, develop your own conceptualization and measurement strategy for the chosen concept.

September 26: Natural experiments and counterfactuals

- **Dunning, Thad *Natural Experiments in Political Science* (Cambridge University Press) Chapters 1-4 (availability TBA)
- Blattman, Chris (2009) 'From Violence to Voting: War and Political Participation in Uganda' *American Political Science Review*
- Fearon, James (1991) 'Counterfactuals and Hypothesis Testing in Political Science' *World Politics*

[Small assignment: based on the guidelines outlined by Dunning and Fearon, evaluate the Blattman paper. What are the strengths and weaknesses of his analysis?]

October 3: What is causation?

Social science approaches the very question of causation in a variety of ways, and the choice of an approach to causation has implications for designing tests of causal processes. This week we will explore the main approaches to causation, including those based on mechanisms, and those based on average causal effect.

- **King, Keohane, and Verba *Designing Social Inquiry* (Princeton University Press 1994) Chapter 3
- **Friedman, Milton 'The Methodology of Positive Economics' In *Essays In Positive Economics* (Univ. of Chicago Press, 1966)
- **Elster, Jon (1989) *Nuts and Bolts for the Social Sciences* (Cambridge University Press) Chapter One: Mechanisms
- Mahoney and Goertz *A Tale of Two Cultures* Chapters 3-6.

[Small assignment: how do King et. al. define causation? Pick one of the other readings for this week, and explain exactly how they disagree with King et. al.]

October 10: Necessity and Sufficiency

Most qualitative research thinks about causation in terms of necessity and sufficiency. This week we will explore the logic of this approach, look at some examples, and consider the implications for research design. The readings for this week (especially the

first two) are quite technical. Please take the time to work through the examples and make sure that you understand the logic of necessity and sufficiency.

- Goertz and Mahoney *A Tale of Two Cultures* Chapter 2
- **Goertz, Gary, ed. *Necessary Conditions* Chapters 2 & 4 (note that one of these chapters is by Most & Starr, and appears under those authors' names on course reserves)
- **Ragin, Charles (1987) *The Comparative Method* (University of California Press) Chapter Two
- Recommended but not required: Braumoeller, Bear (2004) 'Causal Complexity and the Study of Politics' *Political Analysis*

[In lieu of a written small assignment: Read the list of necessary condition examples identified by Goertz in Chapter Four. Pick one example, find the article or book referenced, and come prepared to discuss how that piece conceptualizes and tests the relevant causal claim.]

October 17: Case selection

Single case studies:

- Seawright, Jason and John Gerring (2008) 'Case Selection Techniques in Case Study Research' *Political Research Quarterly*

Comparative Research designs:

- Geddes, Barbara (1990) 'How the Cases You Choose Affect the Answers you Get: Selection Bias in Comparative Politics' *Political Analysis*
- Mahoney & Goertz *A Tale of Two Cultures* Chapter 14
- Lieberman, Evan (2005) 'Nested Analysis as a Mixed-Method Strategy for Comparative Research' *American Political Science Review*

[Small assignment: come up with a research project centered on the study of a single case or a small set of cases. This means identifying an outcome of interest and a set of potential explanations for that outcome. Develop, based on the principles in the readings, a strategy for selecting your case or cases.]

October 24: Process-Tracing

- **Hall, Peter 'Aligning Ontology and Methodology in Comparative Politics' in Mahoney and Rueschemeyer, eds. *Comparative Historical Analysis in the Social Sciences* (Cambridge University Press, 2003) pp.373-406. (focus especially on the discussion of 'systematic process analysis')
- Bennett & Checkel, eds, Chapters 1, 10, and Appendix plus one (your choice) of Chapters 2, 4, and 5
- Fairfield, Tasha (2013) 'Going where the money is: Strategies for taxing economic elites in unequal democracies' *World Development* vol.47 pp.42-57. [also read Appendix A with particular care]
- Recommended but not required: for those interested in a more formal presentation of process tracing in a Bayesian framework: Humphreys and Jacobs 'Bayesian Integration of Qualitative and Quantitative Methods' *American Political Science Review* 2016

[Small assignment: taking the project you selected last week, pick one of the potential explanations you developed, and sketch a strategy for testing it via process-tracing.]

Small Paper #2: Due Friday October 28 by email. Pick an article-length empirical reading of your choice, so long as it is not discussed in detail in any of the readings for the last few weeks. Discuss how the author(s) conceptualize causation, whether explicitly or implicitly. Then describe the approach to theory testing (especially case selection) used by the authors. Evaluate whether the approach used seems appropriate, and discuss how you might improve upon it in future research.

October 31: Evidence and inference I: learning from people

On interpretation and ethnography:

- **Geertz, Clifford (1973) ‘Thick Description’ in *The Interpretation of Cultures*, New York: Basic Books.
- Wedeen, Lisa (2010) ‘Reflections on Ethnographic Work in Political Science’ *Annual Review of Political Science*
- **Scott, James C. (1990) *Domination and the Arts of Resistance* Chapters 1-2
- **Wood, Elisabeth Jean (2003) *Insurgent Collective Action* Chapter 7

On interviews:

- Mosley, Layna ed. (2013) *Interview Research in Political Science* Introduction and Chapters 1 and 4 (electronic version available through Temple’s library catalog)
- Symposium edited by Leech in *PS: Political Science and Politics* (2002) – read the whole series of short articles included here.

[Small assignment: on what sorts of issues does ethnography have a comparative advantage? Where would you prefer to use interview methods instead?]

November 7: Evidence and inference II: History and historiography

On historiography:

- Lustick, Ian, “History, Historiography, and Political Science: Multiple Historical Records and the Problem of Selection Bias,” *American Political Science Review* 90 (1996), pp. 605-618.

On the challenges of using primary sources:

- Goldhagen/Browning debate about participation in the Holocaust –selections to be distributed electronically. (Goldhagen Intro, Part 3, Part 6, and Appendix 1; Browning Preface, Chapters 1, 5, 7-9, 18, and Afterword)

[Small assignment: identify a point of disagreement between Browning and Goldhagen in their interpretation of the same piece of evidence. How might we arbitrate between their interpretations? Whose interpretation is more compelling and why?]

November 14: Fieldwork Nuts and Bolts

- Kapiszewski, Diana, Lauren Morris MacLean, and Benjamin Read *Field Research in Political Science* (Cambridge UP, 2015). Everyone should read chapters 1,3,4, and 10. Additionally, pick one of chapters 5-8 depending on your interests. Chapter 5

covers archival research, Chapter 6 covers interviewing, Chapter 7 covers participant observation and ethnography, and Chapter 8 covers survey research. (I recommend buying this book, but a hard copy is on reserve at Paley.)

- Symposium edited by Hsueh, Jensenius, and Newsome in *PS: Political Science and Politics* (2014) – read all of these (short) articles.

(no small assignment this week)

Small Paper #3 – Due Friday November 18: Identify two (academic) case study articles or books that use distinct methods to answer the same question **in the same case**.

Describe carefully the methods of within-case analysis used in each, and evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the research design choices. Coming up with a pair of sources here will be challenging; I have a few possibilities to offer you if you can't come up with one on your own.

November 28: Research Transparency

On the broader controversy about research transparency

- Humphreys, Macartan et al 'Fishing, Commitment, and Communication' *Political Analysis* vol.21 # 1 (Winter 2013) pp.1-20
- Selections from a symposium in January 2014 issue of *PS: Political Science and Politics* (pp.19-47) pieces by Lupia & Elman and Elman & Kapiszewski– read the appendix to the Lupia and Elman piece with particular care.
- Documents about DA-RT, published in the newsletter of the Comparative Politics section of the APSA, Spring 2016 issue, pp. 10-24 (circulated electronically)
- Journal editors' responses to the DA-RT initiative published in the newsletter of the Comparative Politics section of the APSA, Spring 2016 issue, pp.52-64. (circulated electronically)

On 'Active Citation' as a response to these concerns

- Moravcsik, Andrew 'Active Citation: A pre-condition for replicable qualitative research' *PS: Political Science and Politics* (2010) vol.43 #1 pp.29-35.
- 'Guide to Active Citation' (circulated electronically)

[Small assignment: Activate the footnotes (based on Moravcsik and the related instructions) in one page of a paper you wrote for another course – turn in the page of the paper and the accompanying supplementary materials]

December 5: Complicating the role of history

- **Stinchcombe, Arthur *Constructing Social Theories* (University of Chicago Press, 1968) pp.101-129 [focus on the idea of a historical cause]
- Pierson, Paul *Politics in Time* (Princeton University Press, 2004) Chapters 1-3 or Pierson *American Political Science Review* 2000, *Studies in American Political Development* 2000, and ** essay in Mahoney and Rueschemeyer, eds *Comparative Historical Analysis in the Social Sciences*. I prefer that you read the book versions (available on 4 hour reserve at Paley) but the article versions will suffice if you are not able to access the book.

- **Sewell, William (1992) ‘Three Temporalities: Toward an Eventful Sociology’ in McDonald, ed. ‘The Historic Turn in the Human Sciences’ (University of Michigan Press)
- Soifer, Hillel (2012) ‘The Causal Logic of Critical Junctures’ *Comparative Political Studies* (December)

[Small assignment: choosing one of your research designs from earlier in the semester, consider whether and how the issues raised in this week’s readings make you re-think your approach to studying your question]

Small Paper #4 – Due Monday December 12: Choose one of the following two topics:

1. Identify a mode of fieldwork that we discussed that might be relevant for your research interests, and develop a plan for how you might carry out that sort of fieldwork for a research question of interest to you. Work through the steps of the research plan that Kapsizewski et. al. lay out, and provide me with a fieldwork design for a small research project.
2. Taking a research question of interest to you, and consider how the issues raised in the week on historical causation affect how you might design a study of that question. In particular, you might consider the strategies you use to identify possible cause(s) of the outcome of interest to you, to select a case or cases for analysis, and to carry out that analysis.