

Schedule – Advanced Process Tracing – ECPR Winter School 2012

Day 1

1st session (8.00-9.30) – Introduction

- Beach and Pedersen (forthcoming) *Process Tracing: An Introduction*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press. Chapter 1.
- Blatter and Blume (2008) ‘In Search of Co-variance, Causal Mechanisms or Congruence? Towards a Plural Understanding of Case Studies.’, *Swiss Political Science Review*, 14(2): 315-356.
- Mahoney, James. 2008. Toward a Unified Theory of Causality. *Comparative Political Studies* 41(4/5): 412-436.

➤ Introductory lecture, plenary discussion, presentation of own research

2nd session (10.00-11.30) – Causal inference and the Bayesian logic of inference

- King, Keohane and Verba (1994) *Designing Social Inquiry: Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, pp. 75-97.
- Mahoney, James. 2000. Strategies of Causal Inference in Small-N Analysis. *Sociological Methods Research* 28(4): 387-424.
- Beach and Pedersen (forthcoming) *Process Tracing: An Introduction*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press. Chapter 3.
- Howson, Colin and Peter Urbach. 2006. *Scientific Reasoning: the Bayesian Approach*. Third Edition. La Salle II: Open Court, pp. 13-26, 91-130.

➤ Lecture on inference

➤ Discussion of questions (please prepare answers beforehand!)

1. When is more evidence better, and under what circumstances is this not the case. Discuss using the Raven’s Paradox example (see Howson and Urbach).

2. What are the differences between KKV’s suggestion that we disaggregate a case (e.g. temporally by splitting a negotiation into t_0, t_1, \dots, t_n) and the analysis of a causal mechanism in process tracing ($X \rightarrow n_1 \rightarrow n_2 \rightarrow n_3 \rightarrow Y$)?

3. Discuss the 'scientific nature' of Schimmelfennig's theorization. Based on Bayesian logic, does he develop poor ad hoc hypotheses?

Afternoon project work based on text

- Schimmelfennig, Frank. 2001. The Community Trap: Liberal Norms Rhetorical Action and the Eastern Enlargement of the European Union. *International Organization* 55(1): 47-80.

Exercise Day 1

1. Describe Schimmelfennig's research design. Is it PT? If so, what type of PT is he engaging in? What is the scope of the inferences that he makes?

2. Describe the causal mechanism of rhetorical action. To what degree is the posterior updated based on the evidence provided (esp pp. 68-76)?

3. Discuss the 'scientific nature' of Schimmelfennig's theorization. Based on Bayesian logic, does he develop poor ad hoc hypotheses?

** 2-3 page answer to exercises to be turned in by 9.00 tomorrow **

Day 2

1st session (8.00-9.30) – Causal mechanisms

- Beach and Pedersen (forthcoming) *Process Tracing: An Introduction*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press. Chapter 2.
- Gerring (2010) 'Causal Mechanisms: Yes, But...', *Comparative Political Studies*, 43(11): 1499-1526.
- Hedström and Ylikoski (2010) 'Causal Mechanisms in the Social Sciences.', *Annual Review of Sociology*, 36: 49-67.
- Machamer, Peter. 2004. Activities and Causation: The Metaphysics and Epistemology of Mechanisms. *International Studies in the Philosophy of Science* 18(1): 27-39.

➤ Lecture

➤ Discussion based on (please prepare answers beforehand):

1. Develop a plausible causal explanation that can explain why economic development (X) results in democratization (Y) in terms of X → Y (see Gerring).

2. Translate this X:Y causal theory into a multi-part causal mechanism.

3. In your opinion, can/should we model causal mechanisms as intervening variables? What are the advantages and disadvantages of doing so?

4. Discuss the necessity of the four conditions that Gerring lists on p. 1515:

- a) all causal mechanisms (M) connecting X to Y are measurable
- b) M serves as the exclusive and exhaustive pathway between X and Y,
or
- c) if M consists of multiple pathways these are isolated from each other (no reciprocal causal impact)
- d) M is caused by X and not by another factor

2nd session (10.00-11.30) – Conceptualizing causal mechanisms

- Beach and Pedersen (forthcoming) *Process Tracing: An Introduction*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press. Chapter 4.
- Goertz (2006) *Social Science Concepts*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, pp. 27-67.

➤ Lecture

➤ Discussion of own projects and concepts

Afternoon project work based on your own dissertation. Exercise due tomorrow by 9 am.

Exercise Day 2

1. Describe a causal theory from your own research (X -> Y).
2. In your own research, are the independent and dependent variables conceptualized as variables or in set-theoretical terms (conditions)? If the former is the case, how could the variables be ‘translated’ into set-theoretical terms?
3. Delineate a causal mechanism between X and Y for this theory.

**** EVENING – we will plan on having an evening dinner together ****

Day 3

1st session (8.00-9.30) – Operationalization – basic principles

- Beach and Pedersen (forthcoming) *Process Tracing: An Introduction*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press. Chapter 5.
- Bennett (2010) ‘Process Tracing and Causal Inference.’, in Brady and Collier (eds) *Rethinking Social Inquiry*. 2nd Edition. Lanham MD: Rowman & Littlefield.

➤ Lecture

➤ Discussion based on own research

**** prepare empirical tests based on one’s own research to be discussed ****

2nd session (10.00-11.30) – Improving test strength

- Moravcsik, Andrew. 1999. A New Statecraft? Supranational Entrepreneurs and International Cooperation. *International Organization* 53(2): 267-306.

➤ Small group work followed by plenary discussion based on questions:

1. Discuss whether Moravcsik’s hypotheses on policy expertise (pp. 281-282) can be understood as a causal mechanism. Why or why not?
2. In the case of the negotiation of the Maastricht Treaty (pp. 290-292), how does he ‘test’ the policy expertise hypotheses? Discuss in Bayesian terms.

Afternoon project work based on your own dissertation.

Exercise Day 3

1. Using Bayesian terminology, describe an empirical test of a theoretical hypothesis in your own research. How could the test be improved in terms of increasing the certainty and uniqueness of the test?

**** due by tomorrow at 9.00 ****

Day 4

1st session (8.00-9.30) – Evaluating evidence

- Beach and Pedersen (forthcoming) *Process Tracing: An Introduction*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press. Chapter 6.
- Lustick (1996) 'History, Historiography and Political Science.', *APSR*, 90(3), pp. 605-618.
- Lebow, Richard Ned. 2001. Social Science and History: Ranchers versus Farmers?. In *Bridges and Boundaries: Historians Political Scientists and the Study of International Relations*, ed. Colin Elman and Miriam Fendius Elman, 111-136. Cambridge: MIT Press.
- Larson, Deborah Welch. 2001. Sources and Methods in Cold War History: The Need for a New Theory-based Archival Approach. In *Bridges and Boundaries: Historians Political Scientists and the Study of International Relations*, ed. Colin Elman and Miriam Fendius Elman, 327-350. Cambridge: MIT Press.

➤ Lecture

➤ Discussion based on questions:

1. In your opinion (and based on your own research), can political scientists rely on secondary sources as a source of evidence?
2. Discuss whether the following sources can be interpreted as 'hard' primary sources:
 - a. internal government reports
 - b. minutes of meetings (confidential and for internal use)
 - c. verbatim diary entries
 - d. corroborated memoirs
 - e. lengthy interviews with participants

2nd session (10.00-11.30) – Evaluating evidence – discussion

- Lieshout, Robert H. Mathieu L.L. Segers and Anna M. Van der Vleuten. 2004. De Gaulle, Moravcsik and *The Choice for Europe*: Soft Sources Weak Evidence. *Journal of Cold War Studies* 6(4): 89-139.

➤ Small group work based on questions:

1. Evaluate in Bayesian terms the evidential weight of the evidence produced by Moravcsik in support of his claim that de Gaulle engaged in 'deliberate deception'. Can the provided evidence be used to update our confidence in his claim? (see Lieshout et al, pp. 100-110)
2. Discuss what type of test Moravcsik uses to test the 'producer lobbies exert pressure on decision-makers through peak organizations' part of the commercial interest causal mechanism (see Lieshout et al, pp. 110-116).

Afternoon project work based on your own empirical material from dissertation.

Exercise Day 4

1. Describe how you evaluate evidence for bias in your own research.
2. How can you ensure that potential bias is kept at a minimum in your research? Describe with examples how you have attempted to avoid bias.

Day 5

1st session (8.00-9.30) – Mixed-methods?

- Beach and Pedersen (forthcoming) *Process Tracing: An Introduction*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press. Chapter 7.
- Lieberman (2005) ‘Nested Analysis as a Mixed-Method Strategy for Comparative Research.’, *American Political Science Review* 99(3): 435-451.
- Rohlfing, Ingo. 2008. ‘What You See and What You Get: Pitfalls and Principles of Nested Analysis in Comparative Research.’, *Comparative Political Studies* 41(11): 1492-1514.

➤ Lecture and discussion

2nd session (10.00-11.30) – Using process tracing in practice

- Discussion of research designs of students (no readings) in small groups
- final plenary discussion of the uses and limits of PT

Prepare a short description of your research design using the framework in the appendix of B&P, discussing in particular:

- 1) why you chose the variant of PT
- 2) how key concepts are conceptualized and how the mechanism(s) are formulated
- 3) what empirical tests can be formulated (if testing or explaining)
- 4) what types of inferences can be made and not made in your research design
- 5) how evidence is evaluated

** final exercise due by Monday February 27 (email to derek@ps.au.dk) **