

Week 1

1. 45 people in the class
2. He started university in 2001 and turning 40 this year
3. One assignment is where you conduct an interview - put the extra effort it
 - a. Need ethics proposal
4. 79-81 was the average last year
5. Crimson world - former british colonies are often a mix between alternative and scientific methods in politics
6. Can look at how different departments identify their degrees - political studies, or political science
7. Some, particularly the US take a scientific approach to politics

Assumptions about positivism

1. Positivists think that there is a world that can be studied and quantified
2. If you repeat and replicate, then you will create an objective understanding of how the world works
3. They use induction to create predictions
 - a. Take one example and make it the assumption as to how behaviors work

Triumph of scientific methodologies

1. Life expectancy has doubled
2. Major innovations in technology and communications
3. Advancements in medicine and vaccines
4. Changes in warfare and conflict
5. Economic and social changes

Challenges of positivism in the social sciences

1. Law-like general predictions tentative or problematic
2. Predictions over war and the economy tend to be problematic
3. Control and replication are difficult and often unethical
 - a. Can't replicate a war
 - b. There are often too many variables
4. Law-like projections in social sciences are difficult
5. How do we separate facts from values
6. Can our senses be trusted to conduct meaningful research
7. Replication is impossible or unethical
 - a. This is often a problem in psychology as well - their best experiments are unethical to replicate
8. One of the things that we can predict, but not often well is elections
9. Question if if you take positivism, or use more critical methods to research more scientifically

Social science

1. It is impossible to replicate important historical events
 - a. Hard to draw generalizations
2. Falsification doesn't work
 - a. We amend theories rather than discard them
 - b. Cannot isolate independent and dependent variables

- c. We are in a messy social world, people lie
- d. We have a lot of our own biases

Some theories challenged by facts still taught

1. Democratic peace theory - what do you define a democracy, does not work
2. Realism
3. Marxism
4. Liberalism - lots of contradictions, we are not rational actors
5. Every international relation theory - most have been falsified
6. We still teach these theories

How reliable are our senses?

1. Eyewitness testimony is often overturned through DNA testing
2. Our way of gauging time is distorted - it is not objective, we lump things
3. Our reality changes based on our perception
4. We are influenced by power of suggestion
5. Framing dictates our answer

Other Cognitive Problems

1. confirmation bias - we seek information that confirms our ideas and disregard ideas we don't like
2. Argument from authority - people in power don't always know better
3. bandwagon effect - group think
4. Anecdotal bias - we value stories rather than systemic analysis
5. People tend to respond to emotional appeals rather than facts reason or probability
6. Beware of experts - they don't always know
7. Dunning Kruger effect - cognitive bias in which people with low ability believe they have superior aptitudes and mistakenly assess their abilities as greater than they are
 - a. The less you know about something then you know the gaps in your knowledge

Facts vs Values

1. Facts - truth about the world regardless of who observes it
2. Values - have a subjective element, vary from person to person and situation to situation
3. Double hermeneutic - those doing research have values that impact their research
4. Humans have a hard time believing that big outcomes have simple causes, so they create conspiracy theories

Need to qualitative analysis

1. Answer why questions
2. Help to understand the world

Course Outline

Assignment

1. Watch a public lecture on youtube where they discuss their empirical research
2. Write a report that summarizes the presentation, method and offer a critique from one of the major research fields that we are discussing in the course
3. This is the hardest assignment in the course
4. Find a ted talk
5. Use the methods talked about in week 2

Attendance

1. 10% for showing up

Seminar Questions

1. Once have to come up with questions on the readings
2. Know the challenges you are having
3. Talk about interesting ideas that you want to talk about
4. Pick any week you want, announce at the beginning of the week
5. Submit 3 seminar questions
6. Submit copy of the questions on blackboard
7. Talk about the issue and then frame it with a contemporary problem
8. Worth 15% of grade

Hands on Methodology

1. Can do research, ethnography, attend an event on zoom, interview, archival work, discourse analysis
2. 30% of grade
3. Ask questions next week
4. Can write an essay - just don't do martin luther king

Research Proposal

1. If you had the time what would you choose to study - combine philosophy and methodology of the course and how you will research it
2. 1700 words
3. 20%
4. Due april 17th

Other

1. No final exams
2. Slides will be posted
3. Don't read anything past the first few pages for the mahoney reading

Week 2

Lecture Two

1. He will talk about how theorists criticize their own theories - how positivists critique positivism ect
2. Talk about internal challenges

Auguste Comte

1. Origins of positivism
2. 4 phases of social thought
 - a. Theological phase - religion
 - b. Metaphysical phase
 - c. Positive state -social philosophy based on the sciences
3. We are largely in the positive stage now - we talk about what is considered scientific

Postivisims

1. Knowledge claims about the world that can be justified by experience (empiricism) nad understood through rational and logical means
2. Need to make testable claims that can be understood nationally
3. Scientific method is used to accumulate knowledge - argue that it is the superior method
4. Scientific methods is a way to understand the objective world

5. Can use your senses to investigate the objective world
6. Only things that can be tested are things that can be true about the way that the world works
7. Conclusions from our observations can be generalized in order to form universal laws
8. Science relies on induction - from specific to general - see how things work in one situation and extrapolate to say that it will always work this way
9. Experimentation and observation are used to test theories
 - a. Test things, observe outcomes and see if the theory fits or doesn't fit
10. They argue that the scientific method can and should be used in the social sciences
11. Knowledge is cumulative and applicable
 - a. Learn about the social world and apply solutions to these
12. Science should be value-free
 - a. Not about what you want to happen, about what is happening

Scientific methods aim to

1. Be parsimonious - simplest answer with the least assumptions are usually correct
 - a. Human beings like stories and patterns - this is not the scientific understanding
 - b. Create assumptions with the most evidence behind them
 - c. If you replicate an experiment and get the same answer then that is likely the truth
2. Test claims through observation and experimentation
3. Increase observations and have a clear method so that experiments can be replicated
4. Be falsifiable - aim of theories is to be proven wrong, not proven correct
5. Find causes to achieve high probability of outcome
 - a. Prove things wrong until the answer you are left with has a high degree of probability
6. Make predictions about the future using pre-existing assumptions
7. Solve problems - look at issues and try to solve them

Falsification vs verification

1. Verification proving hypothesis correct leads to self-selection bias and cherry picking of data
 - a. This is how you write an essay
2. Falsification - aim to prove theory wrong with observations, what is left is probably correct
 - a. This is how the scientific method works

Cognitive Bias - how science corrects for this

1. Clear explicit method - say how we are doing it, what observations we have of it
2. Bayesian inference/prior probability - based on what we know what is the probability of what will likely happen
3. Replication on outliers
 - a. Repeat the same methodology until you come up with a probability
4. User errors and bias limited through testing and re-testing
 - a. People replicate each other's experiments
5. Naturalism - claims about the natural world limits scope

- a. They only make assumptions about the natural world, these you can verify and re-test
- b. Don't make assumptions on the afterlife or deities
- c. Only make assumptions you can test

Development of Political Science

- 1. Political science often focuses on institutions laws or case studies
- 2. Britain in particular emphasized case studies and area specialists
- 3. Political science is often torn between stuing the world and promoting democracy and challenging authority
 - a. Do we just conduct research or are we there to participate in political life
 - b. Origins of political science emerge after WW1 to try to prevent war and conflict

Behavioral revolution 1950s and 1960s

- 1. Centered in american political science institutions
- 2. Emphasis and objective quantified approach to predict social political behavior thought stats and success
- 3. Focus on individuals
- 4. Problem solving set out to solve social issues
- 5. Became widespread in the US and Canada
- 6. The US tries to make law like predictions

American

- 1. Quantification was useful in planning WW2 - they were incredibly production in WW2
- 2. Scientific forms of management borrowed from the private sectors - like auto manufacturing
- 3. Often revolving door between private sector, academica and government
- 4. Emphasis of predictions and policy recommendations

Issues of prediction

- 1. Previous trends do not always predict future outcomes - this works in hard sciences but not in the social world
- 2. Data that apply to one demographic and circumstance but don't work in others
 - a. Sociological experiments are often performed on university students - skewing results
- 3. Assumptions about behavior often leads to policy failure
- 4. Policy makers want to make politics that have foreseeable outcomes
 - a. They like policies that are likely going to work, but it is hard to predict what is going to happen
- 5. It is expensive to commit resources to fix problems without knowing likely outcomes
- 6. Oftentimes policy makers have to contend with interest groups, current events, and ideological factors when coming up with solutions

Social housing experiment 1940s-70s

- 1. Belief that poor dilapidated housing lead to poverty and crime
- 2. Post war housing shortage - plan to provide public housing to poorer americans
- 3. Assumptions, better housing, better neighborhoods led to better people
- 4. Exacerbated problems - lobby to only put it in poor areas, social and economic isolationism and less upkeep

- a. This led to the projects in america
- b. Led to marginalized people being increasingly marginalized

Assumptions of Great Recession

1. People will pay off housing before other goods
2. Firms (banks) will not take on enough risk to ruin companies
3. Individuals will not take on more debt than they can handle
4. Homeownership correlated with responsibility and upkeep
5. Republicans and democrats put policies in place to increase home loans to poor people and minorities
6. Assumption that everyone was rational
7. People stopped paying their mortgages - banks and insurance agents nearly went under almost leading to the collapse of the global economy

The Collapse of the USSR

1. Very few people predicted that the USSR would collapse
2. It was an absolute failure of the discipline

Designing social inquiry - King, Keohane and Verba

1. Attempt to systematize qualitative research
2. Argument is qualitative and quantitative approaches should share the same logical of inferences
3. Follows the same logical of regress and induction but need to be more humble than quantitative analysis
4. It is widely studied, assessed and criticized
5. Argued that qualitative research has the same value as quantitative research
6. The method is critiqued by other positivists and other paradigms
7. These authors are the titans in the field

Positivism today

1. Hard positivists
 - a. Focus on quantification, state, causal inferences, tend to be in public opinion research or political economists
2. Soft positives
 - a. Agree with many assumptions, recognized limitations in work, often do smaller level research, smaller scale, do surveys

Criticisms of Positivism

1. Reliance on observation and experience are problematic given diversity of cultural norms
 - a. There is an availability bias
2. Problems of testability and control, humans are aware they are being analyzed
3. Difficulty in replication of studies
4. Cognitive difficulty in interpreting data
5. Difficult for observer to separate facts from values
6. People care about the things that they study - even harder to separate their values and biases

David Hume

1. Induction - from specific experiments to generalizations
2. Science is tentative and we can't predict the future

3. How do we know what we currently observe will be generally applicable
 - a. How do we know that things will continue to occur the way that they currently do, will continue to occur
4. Science is always tentative and probabilistic, but not 100% a prediction
5. Induction problem - a user error or bug in the system - we can't predict the future so we just think things will occur because it has occurred in the past

Further Criticisms

1. Is the scientific approach superior to alternative approaches, or the only way to gain knowledge
2. Ethical issues surrounding perception aspects of positive research, can it lead to social engineering
3. Calling a method or a person unscientific is often used pejoratively

Science exists in the social

1. Society isn't receptive to scientific facts always
2. Scientific conclusions are always absorbed by society
3. Society has biases and agendas
4. Science can be politicized based on preconceived notions and morality

Example social darwinism and scientific racism

1. Borrowed darwin's theory of natural selection and applied it to people
2. Argued certain races and cultures are superior from an evolutionary standpoint
3. Used to justify eugenics and racial hygiene policies
4. Scientific justification for the Nazis
5. Still use to justify economic wealth and poverty

Example Climate change

1. Widespread agreement that humans are causing climate change
2. Widespread agreement from a variety of different fields of science
3. Dissenters tend to have conflict of interest issues funded by energy companies
4. 27% of Canadians say that climate change is not conclusive, 11% says that there is no evidence to suggest that human caused climate change is real
 - a. Further, there is disagreement about policies to combat climate change

Is scientific research progressive and cumulative

1. Thomas Kuhn - argues science develops in paradigms
2. Goes through periods of normal science and accumulating information
3. Challenged by accumulation of anomalies that are incommensurate with existing theories
4. Followed by crisis and scientific revolution

Germ theory

1. Challenged existing assumptions about miasma theory
2. It started to slowly challenge existing assumptions
3. New data and information was collected
4. By 1880s old theories of miasma were refuted by the medical community
5. There emerged a new phase of assumptions in epidemiology
6. John Snow learned that people were getting cholera through a contaminated water sources

- a. People did not believe that cholera was caused by disease
- b. When London installed a plumbing system they got rid of the disease

Bloodletting

- 1. It was practiced for almost 2000 years
- 2. Bloodletting was not effective

Summary

- 1. Positivism is a reaction to a previous period of human history
- 2. Adopts assumptions of empiricism but adds the scientific method is superior
- 3. How the field of political science has been shaped

Week 3

Lecture

- 1. We are not going to go back to in-person classes - remaining online
- 2. Philosophy in realism is different from IR realism

Key assumptions of interpretive approaches

- 1. Skepticism of rejection of scientific methods in studying the social
 - a. No consistent method used
- 2. Some reject science, some don't, but human beings cannot get beyond their barriers to get access to the objective world
- 3. We Can't get outside of our biases to assess the world objectively
- 4. There are no consistent methods of studying the world
- 5. Emphasis on not predicting behaviour, but understanding it - there to build deeper understandings and generate new theories rather than hypothesis testing
- 6. Humans are reflective - we are aware when we are being studied and we act differently because of this

Interpretivism contrast to positivism

- 1. Access to reality is socially constructed
- 2. No unified method to do research
- 3. Very weak sense of prediction or none at all
- 4. Difficult to separate values from research
- 5. Ontology is relativist - depends on context, culture, and intersubjective/shared understanding
- 6. When you get away from a sense of a universal world it has ethical implications

Weber

- 1. To understand social phenomena from those experiencing it
- 2. Focus on values, actions, behaviours and social relationships
- 3. The main purpose of studying the social was to understand
- 4. Limitations of positive approach both in the subject of investigation and those conducting research
- 5. We cannot escape our own biases through method
- 6. His largest contribution was that it was impossible for the researcher, and for the subjects to get outside of themselves and examine the conditions
 - a. They both exist in the larger social world
- 7. Cannot find causal law like predictions
- 8. Humans are conscious, unpredictable and reflective

9. Social researchers hold values that are impossible to separate from investigations
10. Individualists (studies individuals)
11. Science is a value choice - can choose to believe or reject science
12. The study is a meaningful action - study what people do, not their unconscious action
13. Interested in forming ideal types
 - a. Theoretical model
 - b. Used as a measuring rod to ascertain similarities as well as deviations in concrete cases
 - c. Ex. think of a perfect liberal democracy (which does not exist) and then use it to formulate what is missing from current methods of investigation
14. Social actions
 - a. Affectual - humans act emotionally
 - b. Traditional
 - c. Value rational - values of the action to someone
 - d. Means-end-cost benefit rational analysis
 - e. Understand the rationalization of society, particularly the rise of capitalism, bureaucracy and Protestantism - how did society go from traditional norms to a rational society
15. Four social actions examples
 - a. Affectual
 - b. Traditional
 - c. Value-rational
 - d. Instrumental rationality

Rationality as rule-following

1. Why do people follow certain rules
2. All societies make rules and have rule-following and non-rule following behaviours
3. What rules exist, and what are the penalties for breaking them
4. There is no overarching morality across all societies

Formal and informal rules

1. Formal - codified in laws or policies a
2. Informal - cultural or context-specific that help to dictate social functioning or interactions
3. Laws and rules are obeyed even without direct enforcement
4. Sometimes the formal rules and informal rules contradict each other - like how the speed limit is a lot lower than how you are expected to drive
5. Informal rules can later be codified
6. Institutional informal rules - they are so institutionalized that they have very strong social ramifications that it becomes very strong with a lot of social stigmas attached to it
7. Formal rules can have informal rules surrounding them

Fashion and Rules

1. It has social and political implications
2. Western societies have changed dramatically what is viewed as normal fashion
3. Less formal attire becomes more commonplace in western culture

Narratives

1. Individuals exist in relation to society

2. Traditions form a moral framework
3. Construct stories that give meaning to the world
4. Internal and external goods, moral objects societies value
5. Ignore gaps that disconfirm information
6. Western societies value autonomy
7. Narratives are there to make us feel better and give a shared story or identity
8. They often help to hide bad things about our culture

Gaps in our knowledge

1. Humans have a limited amount of time, effort and capacity to know everything
2. The world is complex and we have to seccalix
3. Ideally serves to fill in the caps and provide explanations and common-sense understandings
4. Once filled in our cognitive process makes it difficult to alter our opinions
5. When you say something is common sense, then it is pandering to the narrative of not knowing why they do things that way

Metanarrative

1. A theory that tries to give a totalizing comprehensive account of various historical events experiences and social-cultural phenomena
2. A story that functions to legitimize power, authority and social customs

Western Civilization

1. A coherent story based on shared norms, customs and traditions
2. Collective history stemming from Greco-roman philosophy and laws
3. Emphasis on individualism and human rights
4. Creation of others
5. Ignore the historical problems and contradictions that undermine the narrative
6. It is built on slavery, colonialism and neocolonialism

Critical Rationality

1. Emancipatory project
2. Dialectical and holistic understanding of human nature

Ideology

1. A set of ideas that serve a particular class
2. Marxist argue positivism serves to isolate people and treat them as things
3. Social relations cannot be separated for analysis
4. Even culture and cultural products are tools of ideology

Criticisms

1. Interpretive approaches don't have a clear or consistent methodology
2. Can be difficult to differentiate between different actions because we cannot get into peoples heads
3. Moral objections to rule-following behaviour in certain cultures
4. Moral objections to rule-following behaviour in certain cultures
5. Limited generalization
6. Limited policy prescriptions

Interpretivism and hUman rights

1. If there is no essential truth can there be universal human rights

2. What do we do with computing morals in a globalized world
3. Other societies may not share the same rules codes or values

Problem with ideology

1. Is it ideology is or is it merely a value-rational auction

Realism

1. Bridge between interpretivism and positivism
2. Things that there is an objective world out there beyond our senses
3. Asks - how is scientific analysis possible, what mechanisms make this possible
4. Recognition of external world beyond the senses
5. Human cognition is a social relation
6. How things appear may be misleading

Reality is stratified

1. The real world - what happened, maybe not observable
2. The actual - events under lab conditions
3. Empirical - observed events through your senses

Critical and scientific

1. Debate how much we can do science and how much our baggage impedes that
2. Methodological diversity
3. Distinctions between an open and closed system
4. Natural science work because they have closed systems, but we can create some assumptions about the social world but are more humble about it
5. Social structures are maintained by agents and instructions
6. Critical realists seek panels for human emancipation

Unobservables

1. The area of the real is not necessarily observable
 - a. Positivists - if you cannot observe or test then it is not real
 - b. These can exist and have measurable outcomes
2. Science theories were hypothesized before there were tools to observe them - like germ theory
3. Unobservable social phenomena may have real-world implications
4. Ideas are not observable but they do have real-world implications
 - a. Very hard to measure their impact
 - b. Can measure in the outcome, hard to measure the role that it played
5. Hard to find what caused the effects

Criticisms

1. The distinction between scientific realists and critical realists
2. Appropriate methods for phenomena
3. How to separate the real from the actual
4. The rule of unobservables is problematic - the excuse of the unobservable to explain anything that you want
5. Are there real, permanent structures in society that can be observed?

Realism is neither positivism nor interpretivism

1. Positivists critic unobservables at the real level of analysis and if they cannot see it it does not exist

2. Interpretivism don't like casual

Week 4

Lecture - Before Break

1. This week is the wrap up of the philosophy of social science

Feminism, Critical Race Theory and rational choice theory

Feminist arguments against scientific

1. There is no objective way to understand the social world
2. Share assumptions of other critical approaches to positivism, rationalism and empiricism
3. Knowledge claims are bound by power relation
4. History has been dominated by patriarchal institutions and practices
5. There is a sexual division of labour in both the domestic and public
6. Can't unburden ourselves from the history of patriarchy

Feminist waves

1. First wave - legal rights
2. 2 - the economics of the family reproductive rights
3. 3 - reaction to second-wave, gender, race, sex and queer theory

Methodological assumption

1. Gender relations are a basic feature of all social life
2. Provides a centrality of focus for research - this provides a place of departure and study
3. Consciousness-raising
4. Transformation of patriarchy and the empowerment of women
5. All societies have gender relations so they can all be studied - they shift and are different, but they all have it
6. Some feminists are also positivists - the issue is that this is a different way of assessing social research

feminist assumption

1. Some use a mainstream approach
2. May reject positivist and empiricist assumptions - but not all, some practice them
3. Cultural practices have historically disempowered some
4. A unique history of p[erson] provides a unique position in the world
5. Some argue women that women have a superior view of the world

Standpoint feminism

1. Assumes a distinctive feminist perspective is more reliable than a scientific approach
2. Critiques that the individual makes truth claims based on intersectionalities
3. Some argue certain Universalis like the face of gender but have difficulting saying whether they are contingent or essential - will these things always be in place, or is it just historical - can the differences be less well defined
4. Emphasis on emancipatory politics or programmes
5. All knowledge is situated interpreted or local
6. Those belonging to marginalized groups are situated in ways that allow them to understand more of the world than those who are not
7. No objective way to understand the world
8. Understand power and domination - say something about who is speaking and who is in power

Feminist critical theory

1. Women are oppressed through capitalism and their gender - look at economy and system of production impact gender, domestic work is largely unpaid, pink collar professions, capitalism amplifies the existing problems in society
2. Need to examine capitalism intersectionality with gender
3. Focus has changed from looking at just the marginalization of women to looking at how that intersects with capitalism as well
4. Male jobs tend to be unionized and higher-paid
5. Men make more than women in the same job
6. Women take off more time for childhood rearing
7. Women are often not hired if of childbearing age so they don't have to take time off
8. Thought that women lack leadership skills and qualities to advance

Psychoanalytic approaches

1. Gender identity is imprinted on people at a young age
2. Femininity and masculine identity are reproduced by the family
3. Rather than absolutes gender identities exist in a continuum
4. This dichotomy can be overcome through struggle and emancipatory dialogues

Postmodern feminism

1. Agrees gender is social and cultural
2. Nothing is permanent about it as it just reproduces itself through practice
3. The category of women can be further broken down and deconstructed
4. Internal contradictions and power relations between women
5. Internal contradictions and power relations between women
6. Challenge of queer theory
7. The binary of male/female is problematic

What is meant by emancipation

1. Depends on the approach
2. Could be liberal rights - full legal rights and entitlements
3. Crucial theories often discuss intersections of class and race
4. Standpoint feminists argue opening dialogues of understanding or reexamining mainstream theories and assumptions
5. Postmodern feminists seek to challenge simplistic dichotomies and power structures
6. The struggle is important

Criticisms

1. The most salient criticisms are internal
2. Why do women have a privileged epistemological position vs other groups, particularly those who are marginalized
3. There are many feminisms and many gender theories
4. Gender is socially constructed and may not be an essential feature
5. Reform vs revolutionary struggle - is patriarchy too embedded, or can it be challenged

Critical race theory

1. The intersectionality of race and racism with other forms of subordination
2. The race is used as a methodological position of departure to study other forms of subordination

3. Race and racism is structural not only institutional
4. Outcomes are still unequal
5. Largely stems from legal theory - not that the laws are racist, the processes still play out to have unequal outcomes along racial lines
6. Recently politicized

Critical race theories and methods

1. Research focus on race and racism for people at the margins of society
2. Challenge dominant ideologies, capitalism, patriarchy, liberalism
3. Commitment to social justice
4. Centrality on experiential knowledge

Narrative of the majority

1. Used to create us vs them mentality
2. Ignores or blames victims of oppression or domination
3. Attributes success to individual characteristics rather than historical or contingent factors
4. Distorts or control the voice of the oppressed or marginalized

Martin Luther King JR

1. In 1968 he was disliked by 75% of Americans
2. Endorse federal aid program and spoke against strike busting
3. Investigated by the FBI and spied upon
4. Now holds a 90% approval rating
5. A narrative twist has occurred

Why storytelling

1. Ability to relate individual experiences of marginalization
2. Find truth through the use of narrative
3. Promote empathy by humanizing the marginalized
4. Breakdown barriers in place and demystifies
5. Facilitate discussion and challenge assumptions that the mainstream has put in place
6. Humans are storytelling creatures
7. Have a difficult time with complexity and systematic thinking
8. Hero's journey is common in myths
9. We are emotional creatures
10. React on instinct and emotion than on reason and knowledge

Criticisms

1. It is difficult to assess claims scientifically
2. Not all people who are subordinated are politicized - not necessarily going to be radicalized or trying to change their lot in life
3. There are hierarchies within racialized communities
4. Stories are not policy - what do you do with a story
5. Solutions to mitigate against both institutional and structural racism leads to backlash - people don't want to change or challenge their institutions

Rational Choice Theory

1. People will act in a way that brings them benefits and avoids harm or negative outcomes
2. Hierarchy of needs
3. People can calculate the cost-benefit analysis

4. Money is often used as a measure but people aren't always driven by economics
5. Looks at individual preferences and then aggregate preference
6. Behaviour is rational if goal-oriented, evaluative and associated across time
7. Make choices based on utility
8. It is often used to study voter behaviour

Political psychology and voting

1. Largely a sense of self-expression, not a rational calculation
2. Social factors want to be part of the community and social group
3. Voting correlates with altruism and self-interest correlates with not voting
4. Egocentric bias - we think our vote matters even if it doesn't
5. The more rationality is bounded the less it can explain
6. When there are many factors at play, the less it can explain
7. What is more rational is in the eye of the beholder

Behavioural Economics

1. Focus on emotional, psychological factors in decision making
2. People don't have perfect information but use intuition and previous information to make choices
3. Referred to as irrational exuberance or animal instincts

Wine

1. Participants say that the most expensive wine tasted the best but they bought the median wine price to drink

Rational choice and the philosophy of social science

1. Positivists like it

Conclusion

1. Feminists and critical race generally oppose scientific methodologies
2. Rational choice is the difficulty of judging human behaviour

Assignment

1. Due next week
2. Summarize research
3. What is their approach to research
4. What would an alternative paradigm approach do

Tested on

1. Do you understand it
2. Do you understand an alternative one
3. Needs to have a thesis
4. Don't care what citation style
5. Questions can email

Week 5

Lecture - Cases, Concepts and Comparisons

What is a concept

1. Abstract word or [a phrase used to distinguish an idea or object from another
2. Can be general or specific
3. Social sciences tend to stretch concepts

4. Contains historical information
5. Vary between different periods or places
6. Content etymology
7. They are elusive
8. There are professional meanings vs how they are used in popular culture
9. Concept expansion can pose difficulty when comparing different societies or even within a society between varying social groups
10. Concepts are data containers - contain what they are and what they are not, define a classification and place boundaries, used for comparison purposes
11. Ex. Democracy
 - a. Category of very general institutions or processes, or could be a specific type of government
 - b. Has a prescriptive or normative element
 - c. Has internal differences - parliamentary vs presidential
 - d. Could be general - illiberal democracies like Russia
 - e. It is context-specific
12. There can be open-ended concepts like freedom
 - a. Generally means to act without constraint
 - b. Impulses free will
 - c. Freedom from and freedom to
 - d. Usually in relation to choice
 - e. Self-determination
 - f. But we also associate things with freedom like products and services
 - g. Nobody is against freedom, because it has no real meaning
 - h. There is a freedom index by freedom house to measure what freedom is and how free countries are
13. Context laden concepts- realism
 - a. In this, it is a philosophy
 - b. It is also a theory of IR
 - c. In art it means to represent the subject truthfully
 - d. In pop culture it means instrumental reasoning or practicality
14. Operationalizing concepts
 - a. Post tends to deal with abstraction
 - b. Theorizing and being explicit about conceptual framework
 - c. Recognizing the contingency or historical boundedness
 - d. Careful categorization of concepts when trying to compare is important or comparing the same things
15. Concepts are politicized
 - a. Who is neoliberal, progressive, liberal
 - b. They carry implications with them

Goals when conducting research

1. Since words vary across time and contexts
2. Be clear with a conceptual framework
3. Define, differentiate and discuss - a good way to take up space on a paper

Ladder of Abstraction

1. High-level abstractions are general categories ex. democracy
2. Mid-level - where we tend to do most political science work, look at parliamentary democracies
3. Low level - Parlement, congress and the PMO

The problem of abstraction

1. The more abstract a concept the less it captures the social and political context
2. But too low a level leaves to context-specific analysis may say a lot about very little
3. Most political research tends to be mid-level, case-specific with bounded generalizations
4. There are costs and benefits of each

Why we compare

1. Elaboration - tell us more about each concepts we are comparing
2. Distinction - find similarities between two dissimilar concepts
3. Compare to find differences between two things
4. Mill's method of agreement - systematized it and created this theory
5. Compare two countries
 - a. A - strong institution ,homogeny, coonomgy pospoerace, temperate climate= consolidated democracy
 - b. B - strong institutions, ethnically heterogeneous, economically, weka, tropical compute = consolidated democracy
 - c. Therefore strong institutions create a democracy
 - d. Find what two countries have in common - this is method of afreemen
6. Difference
 - a. A - western, economic problem strong institution = consolidated democracy
 - b. B - western, economic problems, military defeats , absent institutions = facism
 - c. Therefore absent institutions lead to facism
7. Case studies
 - a. Usually, study topics and issues that we find interesting
 - b. Certain philosophical traditions are used to increase understanding
 - c. More scientific traditions use them to cengerate theories
 - d. Can be the start of a larger project with more cases
8. What makes for a strong case study
 - a. Positivists look to generate theories or tentative casual ingeracade that can be further tested
 - b. Critical approaches try to unveil new understandings may be used as a political tool
9. Strong case study example - making democracy work
 - a. Finds that the performance of governments are closely related to vibrancy in the region
 - b. Different historical traditions formed into different democratic results
 - c. Higher performing regions were one with a history of republicanism
10. Case studies
 - a. Tentatively answer a question of hypothesis
 - b. Be limited in scope

- c. Defined by temporal boundaries
 - d. Limited by geography, class, gender of other concept
 - e. Have a completion date
 - f. Aren't too expensive
11. The role of theory
- a. Positivism - case studies can be used to generate theories but should be testable
 - b. Interpretivisms- used for political ends or context specific
 - c. Realism- mix
 - d. Feminism - used to combat patriarchy
- 12.

Week 6

Lecture

- 1. Assignments graded by the end of reading week
- 2. Email for comments if you want comments back
- 3. Grades posted on blackboard

Current events

- 1. People respond emotionally, or in a partisan way
- 2. If people follow what the political leader says this is not politics
- 3. Path dependency - how to think about the world in a systematic way
- 4. Think about broader implications of events rather than just how you feel about them
- 5. Part of protesting is social disruption
- 6. Is the government reacting appropriately in terms of historical terms and trends
- 7. What is the role history plays in contemporary political analysis

Lecture

- 1. How do we deal with and systematize history

Path dependency

- 1. Paul Pierson - social processes that exhibit increasing corners
- 2. Once a process has started and has positive feedback it is difficult to alter
- 3. Small choices can have long term consequences

Positive feedback loops

- 1. Large set up posts preventing
- 2. Once people learn to do something it can be difficult to change
- 3. Once we know how things are coordinated it is difficult to change - we know what to expect in the future
- 4. Difficulty in planning alternatives

Politics

- 1. Starts with small events or chooses
- 2. Examines how these things develop and reproduce over longer periods of time
- 3. Look for a functional explanation - of how they fill a societal need
- 4. Discover causal sequences of events that determines outcomes
- 5. This is how small protests lead eventually to revolutions
- 6. Look at small contingent events where agency matters

Path dependency method

- 1. Path emerges

2. Self-reinforcement
3. Locks in and stabilizes
4. Or negative returns and the path departs
5. Look for how the path emerges, major players or agents, negative aspects, why they didn't work, why the path stabilizes or departs and why it works

Causal sequences

1. Deterministic casual practices or inertia
2. Once something stays in place it is hard to learn alternatives, enough positive aspects to it so it is hard to change
3. The QWERTY keyboard is institutionalized so it is too hard to change, even though it is less effective than other keyboards
4. First past the post is also contingent, and difficult and unpopular to change

Why is the electoral system so hard to change

1. Those who have the strongest interest in the system (liberal/conservative) have the least incentive to change it
2. Opposition is not unified or well funded
3. Learning cost of public choosing a different system
4. People seem satisfied with the current system

Bandwagon effect

1. Actors adopt processes when other do so despite evince
2. Amplifies out comes
3. Bandwagon effect
4. In politics tend to create an electoral victory as people want to be a part of the winning team

Critical Junctures

1. They place institutional arrangements on paths which are difficult to alter
2. When a path reaches a critical mass or contradictions appear there is too much negative feedback junctures accor
3. These can be unpredictable, as they appear in unexpected times
4. Ex. the covid pandemic was not really predictable a few years earlier
5. Endogenous shocks come from within a country, institutions or location
 - a. Easier to see origins, implications and measure effects
6. Exogenous shocks are external to a system, unrequitable, difficult to measure or model

Problem with critical junctures

1. Agency matters - blak
2. Things are difficult to predict
3. Disruption can lead to negative outcomes
4. Things are difficult to predict
5. A bunch of crisis lead to WW2 - agency matters but it can't necessarily stop things
6. In terms of covid-19 can we go back to orthodox ways of governing or are we in a new path

Agency

1. Onset of neoliberalism attributed to the main leares, but many policies started before and continued after

2. Responses to recessions and foreign policy tend to be similar regardless of agents
3. Institutions are made of people dramatic shifts do occur in society
4. The nuances matter
5. Role model effect - people emulate the role of agency

Counterfactuals

1. Find evidence if critical junctures lead to different historical or institutional development
2. Not about wild speculation but used to further examine the role of agency and contingency in path dependent analysis
3. America almost invaded Canada during the American Revolution
4. If Americans were successful the current state would have looked very different, the course of history would have changed drastically
5. If Al Gore had won the war on terror would have been conducted differently

Criticism of Path dependency

1. Too deterministic
2. Post-hoc theorizing - using history to make predictions about the future
3. Difficult to predict certain junctures, hard to know when the next one is going to matter
4. Is agency constrained - are we limited by the institutions
5. How to evaluate externalities - how do we know their impact and influence, how casual are these
6. When do counterfactuals go to war - how do we be humble and cautious with them

Usefulness

1. Great for historical institutionalism
2. Useful to view development and causes of events
3. Serve as a hint for future analysis
4. Able to identify agency and agents

I think we are doomed. Politics typically takes a really long time to change, and for laws to start to be effective, and the climate requires fairly rapid and coordinated action. Maybe science can make us be a little less doomed

Week 7

Lecture - Before Break

1. Papers were generally pretty good
2. If you want to get comments email, can do office hours after that

In today's lecture

1. Define ethnography
2. Overt vs covert ethnographic research
3. "Going native" in ethnographic research
4. Significant cases
5. Challenges of research
6. Ethical dilemmas

What is ethnography

1. Develop people and cultures by sharing experience
2. Immersion in place and lives understood
3. Commitment to chronicle aspects of lived experience and place that in conversation with prevailing scholarly themes, problems, and concepts
4. Doing a study looking at a particular theme

History

1. Borrowed from anthropology
2. Initially used to study non-western cultures and societies
3. Usually part of an interpretive paradigm though there were some attempts of scientific analysis
4. Knowledge is produced and reproduced by groups under investigation
5. Not a super scientific phrasing of the studies

What does it require

1. Time spent with a particular social group
2. Dedication to learning about the group
3. Open mind to alternative ideas and practices
4. Unique methods to gather and collect information

Why do people choose it

1. Certain groups may have a unique perspective
2. Other groups may be outside the mainstream - like extremist groups
3. Aggregate information may miss out on, or overlook particular groups

Overt

1. Open about role as a researcher
2. Letting people know that they are being studied
3. Can skew data and responses if people are aware they are under study
4. Challenges
 - a. People may be reluctant to be authentic
 - b. Researchers may give leading questions
 - c. May bring their own baggage into an interview
 - d. Reluctance of those under assessment

Covert Ethnography

1. Not informing that they are being studied
2. Assuming an identity or cover to blend in
3. Learning practices so research will not be destroyed
4. Can gain glimpse into functioning of group
5. Can be difficult to ask questions without cover being blown
6. Difficulty in transcribing notes, especially post hoc
7. Ethical issues

Open settings

1. Low cost or barriers to entry
2. Easier to attend, but harder to obtain information and take notes
3. People act differently in public than with a group of peers

Closed settings

1. Not open, difficult to get access

2. Have to learn practices to get in
3. Difficult to gather data

Challenges of going covert in closed setting

1. Safety concerns
2. Difficulty in ensuring research agenda is achieved
3. Anxiety about maintaining cover and continued access

Closed for a reason?

1. Are some communities entitled to privacy
2. Yet some interesting research has been conducted on closed settings
3. Are we entitled to some degree of anonymity
4. Is deception admirable or useful
5. Some organizations can only function if they have some secrecy

“Going native” with research

1. Not a pejorative statement - used to mean spending time immersed in a group
2. Some researchers can take years
3. Immersion in violent groups can lead to legal and ethical problems
4. Stockholm syndrome, can cause issues with research

James Clifford (1988)

1. Researched indigenous cultures and the impact of globalization
2. Criticizes previous assumptions
 - a. Who has the authority to speak for another group's culture
 - b. What are the boundaries of culture - who creates us and them
 - c. How do self and other clash when participating in research

Ehrenreich (2001)

1. Wrote nickel and dimed
2. Massive changes to the welfare state
3. She worked as a working poor person
4. Found that it is expensive to be poor - low wage jobs are physically demanding, poor food quality and excessive fees (like payday loans)
5. Tactics by employers to keep wages down and workers docile - help wanted signs, drug tests

Lauder (2003)

1. Started researching rightwing nationalist groups in Canada
2. Made connections in US and UK
3. Investigations helped get the group expelled from the Kitchener/Waterloo region

Meta Ethnographic research in Canada on HIV and women

1. Examined HIV related sociological reaction among wide range of women
2. Tracked through participation the lived experiences of these women and how they dealt with life
3. Provide prescriptions for researchers and policymakers

Social media analysis

1. Social media now allows more research into previously hidden communities
2. Allows people to connect across geographical boundaries
3. Twitter allows for research to follow patterns of behaviors

4. Influencers and thought leaders create norms and patterns on social media that others follow

Corporate Ethnography

1. Can be used to tailor marketing
2. Examine spending and consumer habits of different age groups and ethno-racial groups

Conclusions about trump voters

1. They are idiosyncratic
2. Trump acted as a rorschach test - people saw what they wanted and ignored the contradictions
3. Not solely economic
4. A more diverse coalition that portrayed in the media - but obviously still a large contingent of white people

Challenges

1. Finding access is challenging
2. Searching for authentic answer
3. Finding non-obvious ways to gather information

Is it scientific

1. Only a small sample size
2. May not be representative
3. In open setting they know they are being researched
4. Control is impossible and double blinded is impossible
5. Difficult to gather unbiased information

However

1. Some researchers argue it can help with theorizing making
2. Can be used to test theories
3. Can be used along with a more quantitative analysis

Geerts

1. Scientific analysis can be used to understand human behavior in its cultural context
2. Thin description - merely assess behavior with no context answering why
3. Thick description - recognize tensions and underlying context for behavior and action

Ethical dilemmas

1. Is it ethical to go covert among unsuspecting participants
2. Can you ask people to be informants when they may be marginalized or founded upon by their peers
3. Can and should an outsider give a voice or increase understanding of the marginalized
4. There are safety related issues
5. Should we provide a platform for racial or violent groups
6. What if people in closed circumstances say something that could jeopardize their family or career
- 7.

Week 8

Lecture - Interviews

Why Interview

1. Different perspectives
2. With enough perspectives broader generalizations can be made
3. Can facilitate a greater understanding
4. Puts a human face on topic

Who to interview

1. Consider goals
2. Examine key players or those who may provide the best insight
3. Access depends on the people and their scheduling
4. Expense of traveling and accommodations

Remember your positionality

1. Delineate your position
2. Own identities impact the topic of study and what questions are asked
3. Some write a positionality statement to separate their own bias in research or place it in its context
4. Positivists aim to overcome this with clear objective methodology and replication

Ethics

1. Make sure those you interview are not put in peril
2. Heightened consideration for members of a minority or those with a history of exploitation
3. Openness to those in the public eye or position of power are more ethical, less barriers
4. Safety of the researcher
5. Method of capturing information
6. Can the questions lead to emotional discomfort
7. Who is getting interviewed, are they doing something illegal or immoral
8. Did they have to be paid to conduct the interview
9. Are the topics related to a negative event

Open ended interview

1. General questions in an unstructured format
2. Can lead to unexpected followup question
3. Usually best to record interview
4. General questions
 - a. Behaviors
 - b. Opinions
 - c. Feelings
 - d. Background
5. Closed interview
 - a. Structure with a selection of answers provided
 - b. Little room for open ended
 - c. Good if you are interviewing a lot of people and want to aggregate the data

Scientific?

1. Closed allow for aggregation, and replication
2. Open are better for narrative and storytelling

Avoid

1. Leading questions

Hermanowice

1. Converse
2. Listen
3. Be prepared
4. Softball
5. Play innocent
6. Divide conversation into topics

How to ask tough questions

1. Don't start with it
2. Ask general biographical questions
3. Form bond with interview
4. Watch for emotional reactions
5. Lead up to difficult questions
6. End with easy or general topics

Use

1. Elite often have specific insight into causal processes
2. Marginalized people have other issues

Reliable?

1. eyewitness testimony is notoriously unreliable
2. What to do with anecdotal information or testimony that changes
3. Are we interested in hard facts, second hand accounts or tales and stories, how do we use these narratives
4. Can do more interviews with more people, or repeat interviews on the same person can help to reduce interview
5. Increasing number of interviews allows for anemones to be blessed in the aggregate, and floor up can allow for ambiguities to be evened out

Week 9

Lecture - Archives and Archival Research In Political Science

What are Archives

1. Repositories for original, one of a kind materials
 - a. Historical documents of then
2. Each archive has a mandate which guides their collections and acquisitions
3. Staffed by archivists charged with ensuring access to and preservation of these documents

Types of archives

1. Government archives - federal, provincial, municipal
 - a. Acquire records of different levels of government as well as total archives
2. Academic
 - a. University records, papers of prominent faculty member, records relevant to student groups and student life as well as materials from the trent valley
3. Religious/denominational archives

4. Business archives
 - a. Usually more records management mandate, some have old and fruitful archives however (like HBC)
5. Community archives
 - a. Organizations revolve around collecting records of underrepresented groups of people

Relevance to Political Science

1. Can offer counter-narratives
2. May highlight inter workings of government or agencies

Archival Organization

1. Organized around the donor of the materials
2. Focus on original order - kept how the creator organized them

Archives and memory

1. Often called memory institutions
2. They have historically documented and been run by a very specific group of people
3. marginalized groups are often absent in archival holdings

Privacy and freedom of information act

1. These may restrict what is available
2. Can often submit a FOI request, archivist and privacy analyst will decide what can be seen
3. These are often submitted by journalists looking at government information

Pros

1. Can be fruitful and rewarding
2. Possible that few others have seen it
3. Can provide a deeper understanding and connection

Cons

1. Time consuming
2. Can be expensive and require travel
3. No guarantee you will find what you are looking for
4. Materials may be spread across collections/archives

Module 11

Lecture - Discourse analysis and social constructivism

Constructivism

1. Role of human consciousness and ideas in political life
2. Argues social interactions create meanings - are not objective meanings out there
3. How do we understand certain things
4. Generally look at epistemological communities
5. Framework for thinking about social life and understandings
6. How identities and interests are created
7. Interested in power - knowledge and identity creation
8. Multiple realities it's - not one lens to view the social world
9. Emphasis on understanding
10. Uncovering our places in the tangle web of social reality

11. Examine agency to break normative constraints

12. Understanding rather than prediction

Why is it difficult to shift political views

1. Create community of like minded thinkers
2. Universities are usually taught by people who are passionate - either left or right
3. Social media - affiliation with people who think like you do
4. Working life - jobs attract people who share aims and goals
5. Most people take the political views of their parents
6. We form a community, and this impacts what views we form

Discourse analysis

1. Used to study language, symbols, writing, spoken word, conversation or dialogue
2. Often emphasis on the construction of language, meaning and power

Discourse analysis ask1

1. How is it constructed
2. What are the dominant power relationships in the discourses
3. Who are the dominant or non dominant people referred to
4. Who benefits from a position of privilege in this dialogue
5. Who is producing discourse - where does it come from
6. What are the signs symbols and meanings
7. What is remembered and forgotten by the collective
8. What subjects are being created
 - a. How do we characterize the other
9. How are topics reported
10. What are the stereotypes in society

Critical discourse analysis

1. Study relations between discourse, power, dominance, social inequality and the position of the analysis in such social relationships
2. Looks at discourse in the reproduction and production and challenge of dominance
3. Rejection of the positivist assumptions in political studies
4. Role of the researcher as participant
5. Focus on inequality and dominance
6. Greater understanding of social issues with the goal of change
7. Must take an explicit political space
8. Power means control often by dominant forces in society
9. Examine regulatory and institutionalized processes and common sense notions
10. Less of a coherent method, more about overall aims and goals to uncover social reproduction of dominance and power
11. Dominant speakers may effectively limit the communicative abilities of others
12. Dominant speakers control access to the public discourse and are able to directly control the public mind
13. Tend to use newspaper or news media or speeches from political leaders or powerful people
14. Look at their role of shaping popular opinion and the nature or limitations of conversation
15. How is the other characterized

Foucaultian discourse analysis

1. Evaluation of how disciplinary techniques change over time
2. Now a surveillance society and panopticism

Can it be scientific

1. Many argue it is contrary to positivist research
2. Recognition of social distinction but question how best to study it
3. There are some commonality in sentence structure between cultures, appears to be innate
4. Large portion of what is done is critical discourse analysis
5. Move towards scientific in evolutionary psychology and cognitive linguistics
6. Movements to scientific approaches have yet to make major contributions to political science

Criticisms of Critical

1. Studies not amenable to scientific objectivity and methods
2. Power relations exist everywhere, not just between dominant groups and disempowered
3. What does researching a discourse do to that discourse
4. Appropriate methods for research problematic
5. Too eclectic methods?
6. Are all discourses worth investigation and consideration