

Exercise #5: Evaluating Causal Claims

Due Tues. 11/6

This assignment is designed to help you think about causal claims while keeping in mind material about causality. It is a relatively short assignment that takes into account that you are also learning R.

Turn in a one-page document that addresses the following:

- (1) Restate or revise the hypothesis from Exercise 3. Briefly say why the independent variable should be related to the dependent variable.
- (2) Does your hypothesis suggest a causal claim? (If it does not, come up with one that does.) Under a heading “causal reasoning,” develop a paragraph that discusses the logic of the hypothesized causal claim. This means identify: a) the cause and effect, and b) the underlying causal mechanism. Are there any intermediate linkages in the (presumed) causal chain? Be careful not to confuse intermediate linkages (or intervening variables) with causal mechanisms (logic or reason for the hypothesized relationship).
- (3) Develop an alternative rival hypothesis. In other words, identify another variable that might account for the relationship between your independent and dependent variable, and explain why it might.