

MY457: Seminar 2 Guiding Questions

2026-02-10

Paper:

Paper 1: Homola, J., Pereira, M. M., & Tavits, M. (2020). Legacies of the Third Reich: Concentration camps and out-group intolerance. *American Political Science Review*, 114(2), 573-590..

Paper 2: Pepinsky, T. B., Goodman, S. W., & Ziller, C. (2024). Modeling spatial heterogeneity and historical persistence: Nazi concentration camps and contemporary intolerance. *American Political Science Review*, 118(1), 519-528.

Guiding Questions:

1. General

- Across both papers, what is the causal question of interest?
- What is the treatment (variable)? What is the outcome (variable)?
- What is the theory that connects cause and effect?
- What is the causal inference problem here? Why can the authors (of Paper 1) not just collect the location of concentration camps and current opinions/vote share, and run a bivariate regression? It might be good to draw a DAG.

2. Measurement and research design

- What is the unit of analysis / what are the observations?
- What is the level of treatment assignment?
- What is the conditioning set that the authors of Paper 1 propose? What is the conditioning set that the authors of Paper 2 propose? It might be helpful to draw some DAGs.
- What do you think of their disagreement?

3. Presentation

- What do you think of the data visualisations presented in Paper 1? Do they miss anything? How would you have tackled this?
- What about the presentation of results?

4. Estimation

- According to the authors of Paper 1, sequential g-estimation allows them to control for post-treatment covariates. What estimand does this approach target, according to the authors?
- What is the point of using sequential g-estimation, according to the authors? What do you think of the authors use of the method?
- What assumptions does sequential g-estimation require? You might consult Acharya, Blackwell, & Sen, 2016. Do you believe they are plausible?