

POLI 437: International Relations of Latin America

^T Note. These Rivers are
both of them Navigable, and all
the Cannon and Stores for Acapulco
are Carried from the North to the
South Sea by them.



TODAY

How to read good

The problem of causality

Reading big tables

READING BETTER

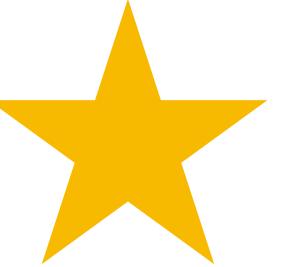
Amelia Hoover Greene on reading political science better

Better = efficiently + good notes

Good note-taking → easier review

The theory bridges the meso- and microlevels and predicts the likelihood of violence as a function of control. On the one hand, political actors do not need to use violence where they already enjoy high levels of control and cannot use selective violence where they have no control whatsoever; having no access to information, they may use indiscriminate violence, but it will be counterproductive. Instead, they want to use selective violence in contested areas, where they have incomplete control. On the other hand, individuals want to denounce only where it is safe for them to do so; this is the case where their victims have no access to the rival political actor and, therefore, lack the option of *counterdenunciation*. In turn, this option is related to control: the higher the level of control for one actor, the lower the presence of the rival one and, hence, of the option of counterdenunciation. The prediction is that violence is most likely to occur where one actor is near hegemonic, not where this actor is in full control or is being contested. Violence, in other words, is most likely where the organizational demand for information meets its individual supply. Outside this space, violence is less likely: political actors may demand information but individuals will fail to supply it (or veto its transformation into violence); and individuals may supply information but political actors won't act on it because they know that defection is unlikely. In short, the prediction is, rather ironically, that strategic political actors won't use violence where they need it most (in the most contested areas) and, likewise, strategic individuals will fail to get rid of their enemies where they are most willing to denounce them (in the areas fully controlled by one actor).

The empirical test requires the specification of variables that effectively circumscribe the space of violence. There are two key variables: the likelihood of individuals "defecting" to the opposite side must be high enough for political actors to be willing to resort to violence, and the likelihood of counterdenunciation or retribution facing individual denouncers must be low enough for them to be willing to denounce their neighbors. To an important extent, however, defection and most denunciations tend to be "invisible" processes. Fortunately, the operationalization of these variables exploits an essential feature of control, namely its inverse correlation with defection and denunciation: the higher the level of control, the less likely are individuals to defect (because the risks of getting caught are likewise high) and the more likely they are to denounce (because the risks of retribution are low). I compare the theory's predictions with anecdotal comparative data (Chapter 8) and test the hypotheses with data from a micro-comparative study I conducted in Greece (Chapter 9). The evidence is far from optimal, but optimal evidence does not exist for problems such as those explored in this book. It is, however, extremely suggestive and constitutes an important step in the direction of systematic and comprehensive testing. I also use the theory's mispredictions as a tool for capturing the causal mechanisms at work. Because the theory uses a rationalist baseline, its predictive failures may be a way to grasp the work of noninstrumental factors, such as norms and emotions. Finally, I conduct a series of out-of-sample tests across Greece, including a replication in an ethnically divided area of the country and the testing of additional implications using data on 136 villages collected from local histories, ethnographies, agricultural studies, research papers, and interviews.

- **Abstract:** short. motivation of study, argument, data, results, almost the Tweetable version
- **Introduction:** basically an extended version of the abstract 
- **Lit Review:** Who else has written about X? What have they said? How is this different?
- **Theory:** argument for why X causes Y, or the model 
- **Data:** Description of data sources; where does it come from? Limitations?
- **Results:** What did they find? Does the theory/argument bear out? 
- **Conclusions:** Implications of research for future work, summary

SIGNPOSTS

Research articles/books are not mystery novels

Most sections appear in order!

Look for **signposts** that point to valuable info

Category	Signposts	Why it Matters
Causal Questions	 "accounts for", "causes", "explains." Also watch out for clumps of questions, especially those that start with "Why" or "How."	This stuff will tell you what the main question of the article is, or help you figure out what the question you've already identified actually means.
Summary/Restatements	 "In other words", "That is", "In short", "In brief", "This book/chapter/article addresses", "I focus on"	This stuff is gold. Often a single paragraph will tell you "in short" or "in brief" what the whole argument is. Often an article will do this several times! How helpful!
Conclusions	"conclude(s)", "draws the conclusion", "thus", "therefore", "I/we determine"	Closely related to summaries and restatements, though not quite overlapping, these signposts often indicate a main finding or the resolution to a debate.
Assumptions	"assume", "assumption", "taken for granted", "expectation", "based on", "supposed"	Can identify either the author's own assumptions or the assumptions of others. Often incredibly important in an assessment of the overall argument.
Lit Review/Counterarguments	"some scholars", "some analysts", "others", "critics", "may object"	These phrases help identify two things: the background or context of the article, including debates it addresses, and possible counterarguments to the article -- often counterarguments and background are the same thing.
Lists and Emphasis	 Any time you see "First", "second", "third", etc., or any time text is presented in <i>italics</i> , boldface , with <u>underlines</u> , pay attention.	If it's a list, make sure you know what it's a list OF. If it's emphasized, figure out why.

CAUSALITY IS DIFFICULT



Ash
@ashcammm

Social
sciences

literally only want one thing
and it's fucking disgusting

2017-10-22, 1:56 AM

“How does X **affect** Y”?

It turns out knowing is
very difficult

RATS AND INSULIN

Does the new drug **cause** cancer?

100 rats, 50 (randomly) get insulin, 50 get placebo

Measure amount of cancer tissue in each

Table 1

	rat	drug	cancer_tissue
1	1	drug	-2.31
	2	placebo	-0.111
	3	placebo	0.0751
	4	placebo	1.17
	5	placebo	0.934
	6	drug	-2.40
	7	placebo	0.864
	8	drug	-2.31
	9	drug	-1.77
	10	drug	-0.845

Calculate average **cancer rate** in each group

% of rats with cancer, insulin = 12%

% of rats with cancer, placebo = 4%

Sounds like this drug causes cancer (at least in rats)

Note how **simple** this is! Just taking averages

Note also **no before and after**

Colombians the most unfaithful in Latin America

by Manuela Kuehr | October 4, 2010

Trending

'Sinaloa Cartel paid Uribe to facilitate drug trafficking route between Colombia and Mexico'



Colombia's strike leaders call for new mass protests on Monday



Bogota police violently ends peaceful salute to global protests movements



Colombians are the most unfaithful in Latin America with 66 percent of men and women admitting to having cheated on their partner at least once, **a survey published on Monday showed.**

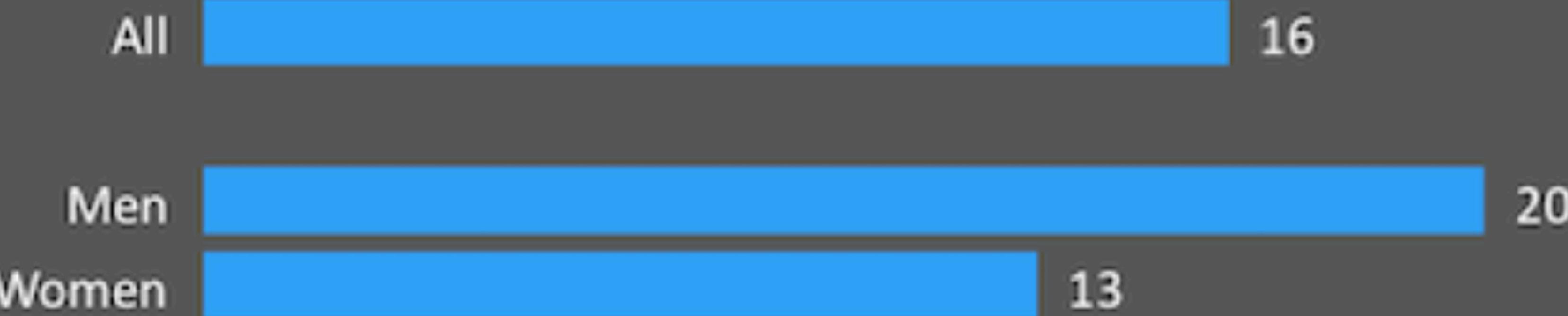
The internet survey conducted by Grupo de Diarios America (GDA) on sexuality questioned more than 13,000 people in 11 Latin American countries. Results show 63 percent of Latin Americans confirming they have had sexual relations outside the partnership at least once.

Colombians also consider themselves sexier than others, the survey showed, with 87.8 percent of the interviewed men and women say they are comfortable with their bodies. In addition, 88.8 percent of Colombians state that they feel they are the most attractive sexually within the whole region.

Most of the infidelities were confessed by men, with 70 percent of men admitting to having cheated "once or twice." Twenty-six percent of Brazilian men said they have done it "more than three times," followed by Costa Ricans with 22.3 percent and Colombians with 21.7 percent. Sixteen percent of Brazilians also confessed to being unfaithful to their current partner.

The Demographics of Cheating in America

*% who reported having sex with someone
other than spouse while married*



RESEARCH QUESTION:

Does **having kids** cause people to have more affairs?

Go out and survey people (Data: Psychology Today in 1969)

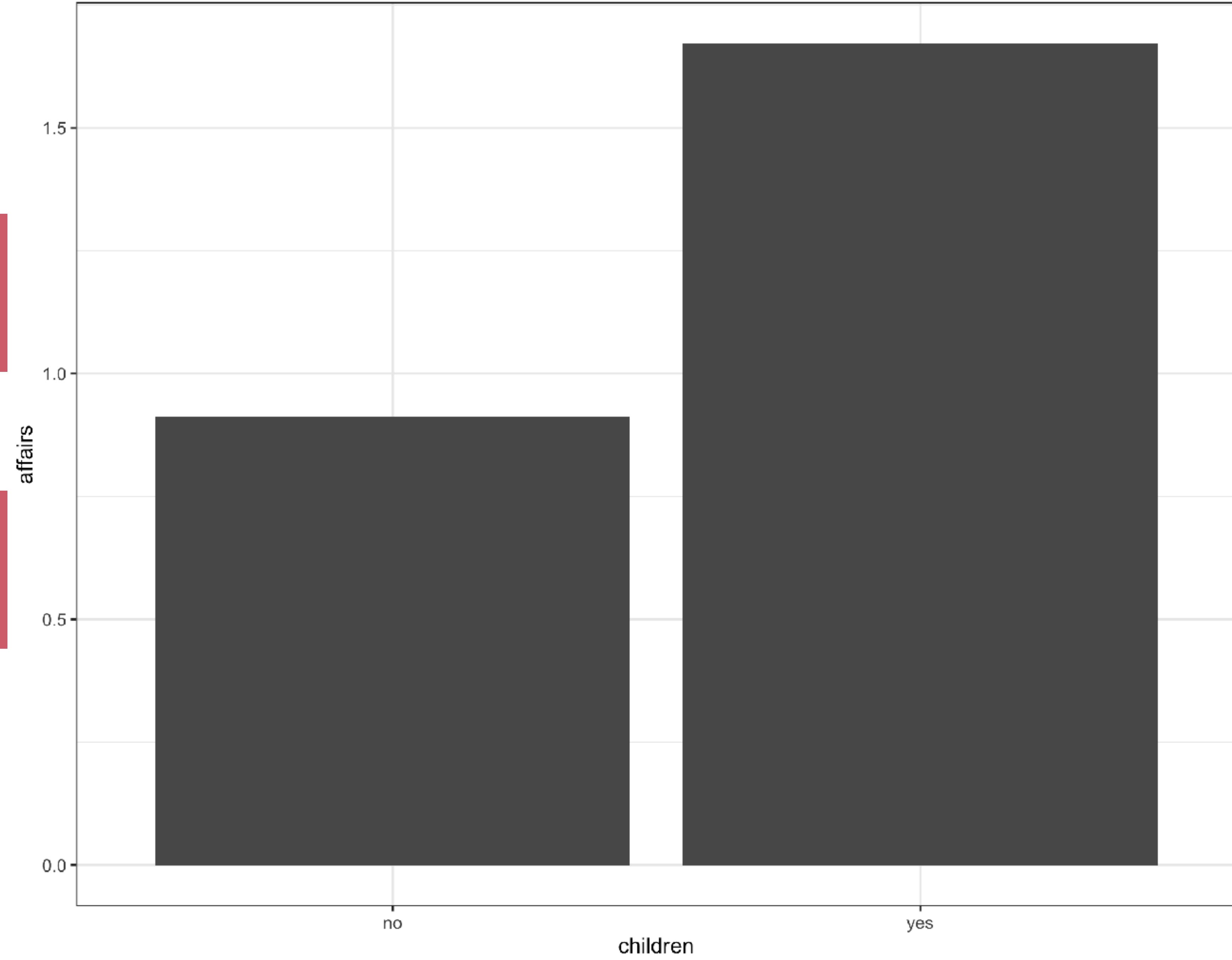
Ask how many affairs they've had, if they have kids, other stuff

Table 1

	affairs	gender	age	children
1	0	male	22	no
2	0	male	42	yes
3	0	male	22	no
4	0	female	27	yes
5	0	male	37	yes
6	0	male	57	yes
7	0	female	22	no
8	0	female	22	no
9	7	male	42	yes
10	0	female	22	no

Avg. affairs, kids =
1.6

Avg. affairs, no
kids = .9



Can we conclude that having kids
causes people to have affairs?

How is this different from the rat
example?

THE DIFFERENCE

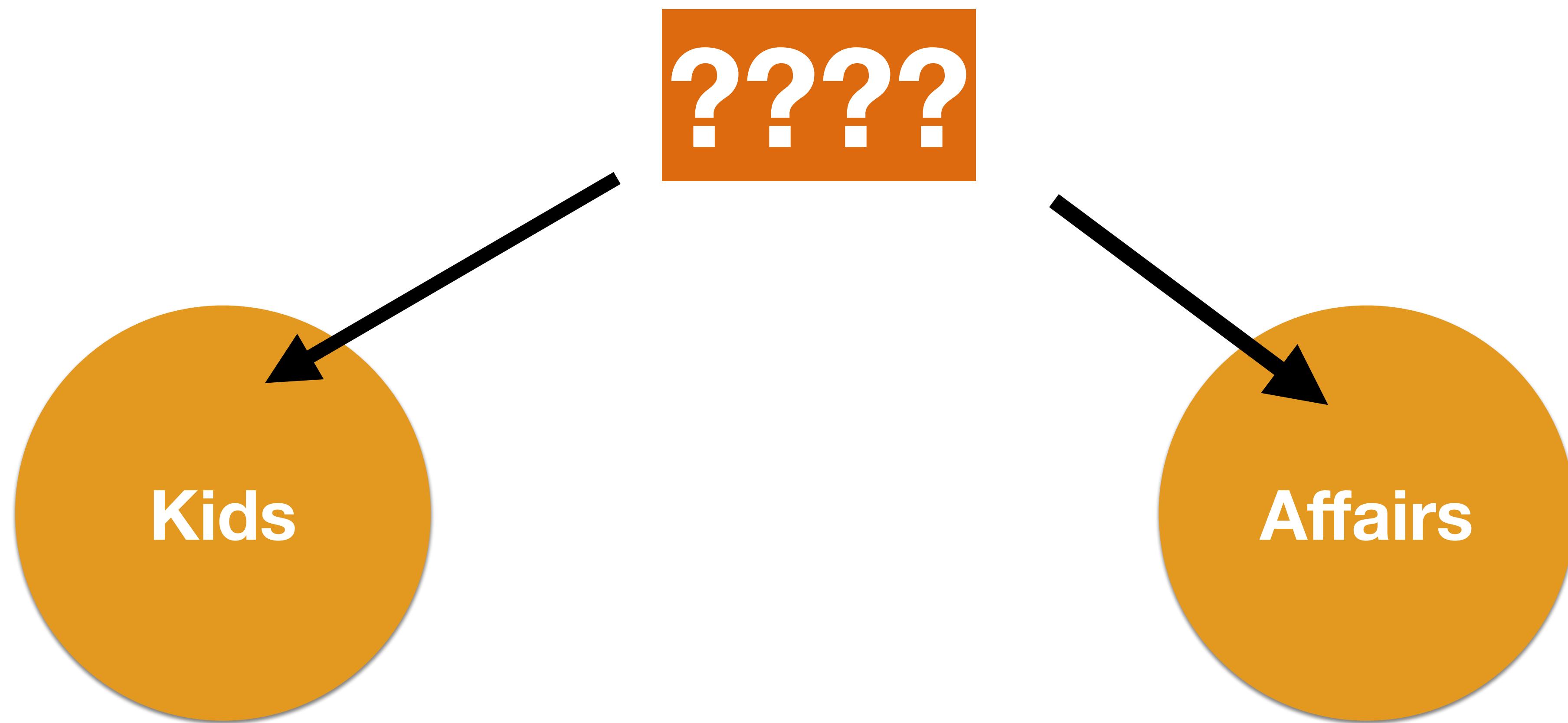
We **randomly** give the rats the drug,
and they don't get to **choose**

People **choose** whether to have kids
or not and they **choose** whether to
have an affair

THE PROBLEM

Since people can **choose**, certain kinds of people might choose to have affairs *and* to have kids

But the kids don't **cause** the affairs; there's some **confounding variable** messing all this up



Some people in our data have been married 2 years; others 15 years

How might **how long a couple has been married** be a confound here?

Longer marriage = more likely to have kids AND more likely to have affairs

So if we're worried about length of marriage, what could we do?

THE SOLUTION

Look at the difference in average # of affairs between couples with and without kids...

...comparing people who have been married the same amount of time

THE SOLUTION

For people married < 5 years...

Are people with kids more likely to cheat than people without kids?

For people married 5-10 years...

Are people with kids more likely to cheat than people without kids?

THE SOLUTION

If people with kids still have more affairs (in each of these groups), then we know **it's not because of years of marriage**

This is called **controlling** or **adjusting** for a confounding variable

BACK TO THE RATS

Why don't we worry about this kind of thing with
the rats?

Because we **randomly** assigned the insulin; it is
therefore very unlikely that there is some lurking
confound

TIP OF THE ICEBERG

Quantitative Methods

Syllabus Schedule Assignments Reference  Slack



Quantitative Methods

POLI 301: The Political Science Discipline

Spring 2021

Department of Political Science

University of South Carolina

Instructor

 Juan F. Tellez

 343 Gambrell Hall

 juan.f.tellez@gmail.com

 @juanftellez14

 Schedule an appointment

Course details

 MWF

 January 11–May 5, 2021

 10:50-11:40 AM

 Online

Contacting me

E-mail and Slack are the best ways to get in contact with me. I will try to respond to all course-related e-mails and Slack messages quickly, but also remember that life can be busy and chaotic for everyone (including me!)

Controlling is just one of many approaches, but it's the most common

SCANDALS



Do scandals **hurt** presidential approval?

THE BIG REGRESSION TABLES

Table 2 Political scandals, economic performance, and presidential approval autoregressive dynamic lag models

	I	II	III Fixed-effect	IV Brazil exc.	V Brazil exc.	VI FE: Brazil exc.	Polit Beha
Scandal	0.019	0.020	0.022	0.019	0.022	0.022	
	-0.743	1.681	-0.565	-0.961	3.311	3.311	
	0.850	2.589	2.401	1.080	3.021	3.021	
Scandal _{t-1}	-0.051	6.840***	5.125**	-0.112	8.771	8.771	
	1.128	2.187	2.367	1.452	2.331	2.331	
Unemployment	-1.020*	-0.963*	0.223	-1.263**	-1.211	-1.211	
	0.550	0.544	0.580	0.602	0.591	0.591	
Unemployment _{t-1}	1.044*	1.034*	-0.501	1.286**	1.281	1.281	
	0.558	0.558	0.579	0.607	0.606	0.616	
Inflation	-0.034***	-0.032***	-0.046***	-0.0488***	-0.045***	-0.055***	
	0.010	0.011	0.009	0.012	0.012	0.012	
Inflation _{t-1}	0.021***	0.022***	0.021***	0.021***	0.021***	0.020***	
	0.003	0.003	0.006	0.003	0.003	0.003	
Growth	0.369	0.475	0.808**	0.252	0.421	0.421	
	0.307	0.295	0.325	0.306	0.291	0.291	
Growth _{t-1}	-0.024	-0.054	-0.085	-0.072	-0.161	-0.161	
	0.323	0.319	0.307	0.329	0.311	0.311	
Trade	-39.74**	-38.85**	-24.410	-40.89**	-38.99**	-23.410	
	15.780	15.580	17.310	15.890	15.620	17.630	
Trade _{t-1}	40.19***	39.86***	36.33**	41.79***	39.71**	34.48***	
	15.130	15.000	17.050	15.460	15.270	17.410	
Polity	1.578*	1.319*	0.224	1.723**	1.367*	0.399	
	0.840	0.762	1.210	0.842	0.756	1.241	

Researchers are trying
to control for all sorts
of confounds

Here: effect of scandals
→ prez approval

INTERPRETING TABLES

Table 2 Political scandals, economic performance, and presidential approval autoregressive dynamic lag models

	I	II	III Fixed-effect	IV Brazil exc.	V Brazil exc.	VI FE: Brazil exc.
Scandal						0.023
Scandal _{t-1}						0.306
Unemployment	-1.020*	-0.965*	0.225	-1.265***	-1.214***	2.720
	0.550	0.544	0.580	0.602	0.597	6.834**
Unemployment _{t-1}	1.044*	1.034*	-0.501	1.286**	1.281**	2.663
	0.550	0.550	0.550	0.550	0.550	0.110
Inflation						0.621
Inflation _{t-1}						-0.451
Growth	0.369	0.475	0.808**	0.252	0.422	0.616
	0.307	0.295	0.325	0.306	0.292	-0.055***
Growth _{t-1}	-0.024	-0.054	-0.085	-0.072	-0.165	0.012
	0.323	0.319	0.307	0.329	0.318	0.020***
Trade	-39.74**	-38.85**	-24.410	-40.89**	-38.99**	0.006
	15.780	15.580	17.310	15.890	15.620	0.769**
Trade _{t-1}	40.19***	39.86***	36.33**	41.79***	39.71**	0.333
	15.130	15.000	17.050	15.460	15.270	-0.186
						0.317
						-23.410
						17.630
						34.48**
						17.410

TEMPLATE

“A one-unit increase in X is associated
with a ____ in increase/decrease in Y”

Scandal = “presidents who suffer scandals have .7 less points of approval on average than those without scandal”

Table 2 Political scandals and approval

	VI FE: Brazil	0.023
Scandal	-0.743	1.681
	0.850	2.589
Scandal _{t-1}	-0.051	6.840***
	1.128	2.187
Unemployment	-1.020*	-0.963*
	0.223	0.233
Unemployment _{t-1}	-1.263**	-1.214**
	0.621	0.621
Inflation	-0.112	8.774***
	1.452	2.336
Inflation _{t-1}	-0.110	2.663
	-0.451	-0.451
Growth	0.306	0.306
	0.616	0.616
	-0.055	-0.055
	0.012	0.012
	0.020	0.020
	0.006	0.006
	0.769	0.769

INTERPRETATION

Scandal vs. no scandal...

An increase in unemployment...

Different wording, why?



Continuous:
Price (\$), income, age, height,
unemployment



Discrete:
Republican/Democrat, in the
south/not in south (states),
scandal/no scandal



“for every additional dollar of income there is an increase in prez approval rating of 10 points”



“Compared to women, men are 4% less likely to vote”

Y = test scores

Table 2: OLS models for four standardized tests

	VARIABLES	(1) Reading	(2) Math	(3) Listening	(4) Words
Not small vs. small	Small class	6.47*** (1.45)	8.84*** (2.32)	3.24** (1.42)	6.99*** (1.60)
Class doesn't have aide vs. class has aide	Regular + aide class	1.00 (1.26)	0.42 (2.14)	-0.58 (1.32)	1.27 (1.42)
Student not white/Asian vs. yes	White or Asian	7.85*** (1.61)	16.91*** (2.40)	17.98*** (1.70)	7.08*** (1.91)
Student is boy vs. girl	Girl	5.39*** (0.78)	6.46*** (1.12)	2.67*** (0.74)	5.03*** (0.94)
Student does not receive FRL vs. yes	Free/reduced lunch	-14.69*** (0.91)	-20.08*** (1.33)	-15.23*** (0.90)	-15.97*** (1.07)
Teacher not white/Asian vs. yes	Teacher white or Asian	-0.56 (2.66)	-1.01 (3.80)	-3.68 (2.59)	0.46 (3.07)
Years (actual number)	Years of teacher experience	0.30** (0.12)	0.42** (0.20)	0.25* (0.15)	0.30** (0.14)
Teacher does not have MA vs. yes	Teacher has MA	-0.75 (1.25)	-2.20 (2.08)	0.50 (1.24)	0.24 (1.46)
	School fixed effects	X	X	X	X
	Constant	431.69***	475.52***	531.28***	428.97***

WHAT ABOUT THE STARS?

You should be more confident in
the results the **more data** you have
and the **stronger** the effect

The stars quantify this confidence

Basically, at least one star =
we're confident result is
statistically significant

*** p < 0.001, ** p < 0.01, * p < 0.05

WHAT ABOUT THE (NUMBER)?

Standard error used to determine
statistical significance
(and other stuff)

$$\frac{\text{coefficient}}{\text{Std. Error}} \geq 2 \approx \text{Significant}$$

BACK TO CONTROLS

Used to see if a result **persists even after controlling for confounds**

In this example, there is no **statistically significant** relationship between scandals and presidential approval, controlling for these other factors

Table 2 Political scandals, economic performance, and presidential approval autoregressive dynamics

	I	II	III Fixed-effect
Scandal	0.019	0.020	0.022
Scandal _{t-1}	-0.743	1.681	-0.565
Unemployment	0.850	2.589	2.401
Unemployment _{t-1}	-0.051	6.840***	5.125**
Inflation	1.128	2.187	2.367
Inflation _{t-1}	-1.020*	-0.963*	0.223
Growth	0.550	0.544	0.580
Growth _{t-1}	1.044*	1.034*	-0.501
Trade	0.558	0.558	0.579
Trade _{t-1}	-0.034***	-0.032***	-0.046***
Polity	0.010	0.011	0.009
	0.021***	0.022***	0.021***
	0.003	0.003	0.006
	0.369	0.475	0.808**
	0.307	0.295	0.325
	-0.024	-0.054	-0.085
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	-39.74**	-38.85**	-24.410
	15.780	15.580	17.310
	40.19***	39.86***	36.33**
	15.130	15.000	17.050
	1.578*	1.319*	0.224
	0.840	0.762	1.210

Class for today has an activity

NEXT WEEK

Impossible summary of LA history