

Recitation, Week 1

Ye Wang

New York University

POL-850

Spring 2018

- 1) Introduction
- 2) Announcement
- 3) Evaluating Theories
- 4) Type of Variables

About me

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- ▶ Ye Wang, third year PhD, political methodologist (what does that mean?)
- ▶ Work on statistical tools, write programs and packages in Stata, R, C++, Python, etc.
- ▶ Contact me if you need any help on statistical methods or softwares
- ▶ Office hours: Monday, 2:30 - 4:30 p.m. at #319 (19 W 4th St)
- ▶ Ask questions early and often; **make the most out of office hours**
- ▶ Feel free to email me if you have a quick question: `yw1576@nyu.edu`

About recitation

- ▶ It is extremely important to **attend both class and recitation**
- ▶ Review + STATA session
- ▶ You can either use a computer in the lab or bring your laptop
- ▶ Recitation slides/handouts will be available via NYU Classes
- ▶ Should you have a scheduling conflict, please let me know in advance

About homework assignments

- ▶ If you want a good grade, **do the homework ethically!** (30% of the final grade)
- ▶ **A printout containing only answers** rather than hand-written worksheets
- ▶ Only accept hard copy submission—no exception
- ▶ Late submission penalty—turn in homework on time
- ▶ Discuss some common mistakes/difficult problems in the following recitation rather than giving individual feedback

Why (causal) theories?

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Good theories (or scientific theories) are explanations about the world that are **empirically testable**.

What is a theory?

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Exercise

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2. (Partner exercise) Which, if any, of the following are scientific theories? If so, what is a testable hypothesis you could derive from them?
 - ▶ **Rational choice:** "People act in a manner that is consistent with their preferences."
 - ▶ **Murphy's Law:** "Anything that can go wrong will go wrong."
 - ▶ **Astrology:** "Your personality was determined by the alignment of the planets during the year of your birth."

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- ▶ Quantitative methods are based on measurement. Example: this Tax Cuts and Jobs Acts bill is going to help increasing the long-run GDP growth rate to 1.7%

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Use trade data between mainland China and Hong Kong

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Quantitative theories exam the relationship between variables.
Variables come from concepts.

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For next class

In the next session, you will be instructed in the basics of Stata, so for now:

- ▶ Google “Virtual Computer Lab NYU”
- ▶ Carefully read the instructions and install required softwares
- ▶ Familiarize yourself with Stata's interface
- ▶ If you have any problem, please bring your laptop next recitation