

# Conclusions

Department of Government  
London School of Economics and Political Science

- 1 Mixing methods?!
- 2 Where do we go from here?
- 3 Where have we been?

**1** Mixing methods?!

2 Where do we go from here?

3 Where have we been?

# What can be mixed?

- Anything!
- Either:
  - Methods that complement each other (trade-offs)
  - Methods that can inform each other
- Common pairings
  - Large-n quantitative and in-depth case studies
  - Process-tracing methods with large-n or medium-n
  - Interviews or archival work with anything else
  - Observational and experimental methods

Mixing methods?!

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# Mixing Methods: Why?

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- Compensate for limitations of a given research design with the strengths of an alternative
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- Strengthen a single causal claim with multiple forms of evidence

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  - *Conceptual* replication
  - Accumulation

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- Triangulation
  - *Conceptual* replication
  - Accumulation
  
- Integration
  - “Synergy”

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  - Do the inferences drawn from different research designs agree?
  - How would we know if they agree *enough*?
  - What do we conclude from non-replication?

# Triangulation: Example

- Brexit
- Large- $n$  analysis of survey data
- Analysis of aggregated, district-level results
- Qualitative interviews and/or focus groups



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  - What is a reasonable theory?
  - How do we measure our concepts?
  - What are plausible mechanisms?
  - Have we missed any confounding factors?

# Integration: Example 1

- Brexit: Qualitative driving quantitative
- Long-form qualitative interviews to identify how Britons think about Brexit
- Large-n survey analysis that measures concepts identified in interviews

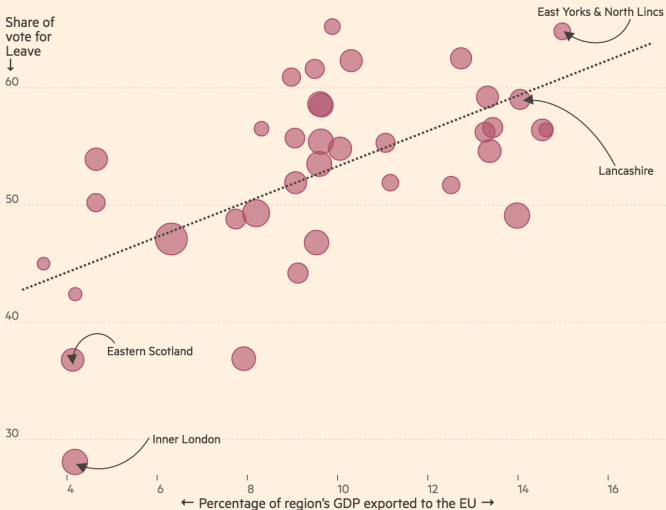
# Integration: Example 2

- Brexit: Quantitative driving qualitative
- Quantitative analysis regional voting patterns
- In-depth case studies of:
  - “Typical” cases
  - “Deviant” cases
  - “Extreme” cases



## Leave vote was strongest in regions most economically dependent on EU

The regions with the highest share of votes for Leave also tend to be the most economically intertwined with the EU. A higher percentage of East Yorkshire & Northern Lincolnshire's economic output is sold to other EU countries than is the case for any other UK region, yet 65 per cent of its electorate voted to Leave



Referendum results: Press Association  
EU trade research: John Springford, Philip McCann, Bart Los and Mark Thissen  
Graphic by John Burn-Murdoch / @burnmurdoch

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- Research is messy!
- Most findings are probably false!
- Contradictory findings drive new research!
  - Scope conditions
  - Heterogeneity
  - Bad conceptualization
  - Bad measurement
  - Bad methods
  - Bad inferences from evidence

Mixing methods?!

Where do we go from here?

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- Content analysis, qualitative coding
- Discourse analysis, framing analysis
- Quantitative Comparative Analysis (QCA)
- Focus groups, elite interviewing
- Archival/historical evidence-gathering
- Interpretative and post-positivist methods
- Political theory



- Factor analysis, principal components, IRT
- Regression trees, classifiers, SVM
- K-means clustering, hierarchical clustering
- Nonparametric statistics
- Bayesian statistics
- Time series analysis and panel data
- Quantitative text analysis
- GIS, spatial data, mapping
- “Big data”

# Continuing Your Research

- LSE Groups<sup>1</sup>
- Dissertation (GV390)
- Some research-based GV3xx courses

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<sup>1</sup><https://info.lse.ac.uk/staff/divisions/Teaching-and-Learning-Centre/TLC-events-and-workshops/LSE-GROUPS>

<sup>2</sup><https://www.coursera.org/>, <https://www.edx.org/>,  
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- Online education<sup>2</sup>
- Postgraduate study

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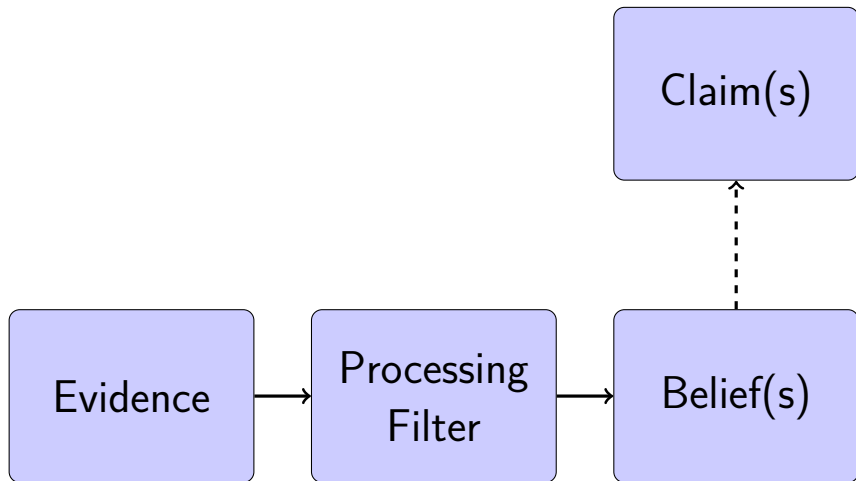
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# Claims

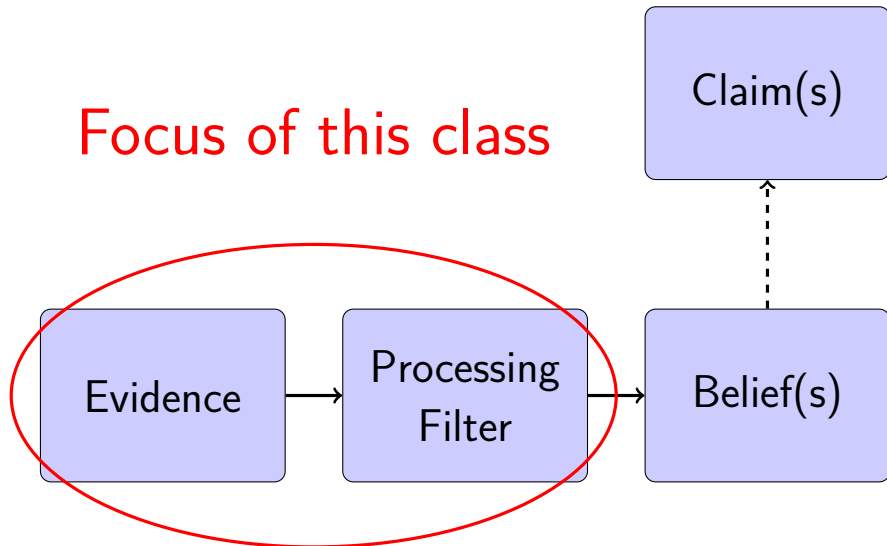
- Politics is full of claims
- The credibility of claims depends on the strength of evidence and argument
- This class aims to give you tools to:
  - make credible claims, *and*
  - evaluate claims made by others

# Drawing Inferences



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Focus of this class





**What have we  
learned since  
then?**

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# **The Exam!**

**What do you think will be  
on the exam?**

# The Exam!

The exam has three parts:

- 1 Short-answer questions
- 2 Essay analysing/evaluating an empirical article
- 3 Research proposal section

Sample paper is on Moodle.

# Part B Readings

- Young and Soroka (2012) (MT7)
- Goffman (2009) (MT8)
- Campbell and Ross (1968) (MT11)
- Tannenwald (1999) (LT3)
- Lange, Mahoney, vom Hau (2006) (LT4)
- Doner, Ritchie, Slater (2005) (LT4)
- Hibbs (1978) (LT8)
- Cusack, Iversen, Soskice (2007) (LT9)
- Bhavnani (2009) (LT10)

