

LECTURE 1 New kind of evidence: Archival Research.

A. Uses, Strengths and Weaknesses

Unique to social science/humanities – primary use in history.

specific strengths
specific weaknesses.

1. Uses: When would you use archival research?

- investigate events in the past
- to get a complete picture- hard to do for ongoing events
(ex: Iraqi WMD)
- address issues of change over time,
(ex: how much has women's status changed since Durkheim? compare rates of institutionalization, suicide, popular depictions to get norms)

2. Strengths of archival research:

a. Multiple levels of evidence

- individual, community, macro-social

b. Detailed description of events

multiple viewpoints, multiple levels, over time, objective, subjective
more complete evidence than any other form of data collection

c. Timing and sequence can be established: the historical record

necessary but not sufficient for assessing causality

post hoc ergo propter hoc fallacy

homo economicus would even challenge the necessary part (“full information”)

can be established, but not manipulated – importance of the counterfactual

3. Weaknesses of archival research:

a. Survival bias

- it has to survive through time for you to see it

institutional preservation bias

period bias (wars destroy many documents)

- so absence of evidence needs to be interpreted carefully

b. All information is filtered

- “objective” official records

- often numeric, can be coded directly

- but are they complete?

e.g. legal example- no outcomes (verdict not recorded)

- “subjective” materials

- often text, must be coded thematically

a number is a number, but this requires coding meaning

- writer’s perspective matters (researcher’s perspective too)

c. Problem of interpretation given difference in time

e.g. 300 years since 1692, what did they think witchcraft was?

B. Types of Evidence

1. Objective Evidence – examples and evaluation

Almost all records that remain are governmental and church related because these institutions persist.

They almost always preserve a money trail or laws-e.g. Domesday

a. Wills are meat and potatoes for historians. Wills are used to show:

-family ties

-changes in family structure

- primogeniture
- second marriages
- status of women
- family size, extended family

-patterns of contesting wills - shows broken norms

strengths:

- population of wills - comparison possible across regions and overtime
- show linkages among people (“social” facts)

weaknesses:

- skewed towards propertied classes
- incentive to subvert inheritance taxes- ever present in common law
- people not receiving bequests may be as important as people receiving them

b. Tax Records – also common, are used to show

-economic mobility of individuals

- prosperity of regions
- geographic mobility/turnover
- changes in economic structure and sources of wealth

strengths:

- extensive information, over time
- show relations between state and individual/other units

weaknesses:

- Skewed towards the wealthy classes
- Incentive to shelter income/wealth no less strong
- Have to have the tax rate schedule to interpret within a community and to compare across communities, ex: local property taxes

c. Court Transcripts, used to show:

- Efficacy of social control mechanisms in the community
- Health of the body politic
- Structural tensions (e.g. land boundary disputes)
- Individual tensions (e.g. Godfrey in court 81 times in 10 years)
- Evolution of legal procedure (e.g. role of jury, witnesses, lawyers...)

strengths:

- long time frame
- mix of objective (legal) and subjective (testimonial) information

weaknesses:

- only nets the afflicted - people with problems (how many here ever been in court?)
- variable quality (depends on the transcriber)

2. Subjective Evidence

a. Personal Writing: Diaries, sermons, letters -- used to show:

- what consciously motivates the individuals
- frame of reference, norms expectations

strengths:

- can be used to verify or challenge official records of events (e.g. abdication vs. removal)
- biases can be good – to show the differences in beliefs/interpretations that give rise to conflict

problems:

- Skewed toward the literate
- Unknown recruitment patterns w/in literate- Who writes diaries? Are they representative?
- Bias of writer must be kept in mind (not necessarily a weakness unless you forget it is there-then it is your weakness)

b. Public Writing: Obituaries, Newspapers, Books: used to show

- publicly recognized events
- life course history
- contemporary context
- public conscience

strengths:

- verification of other sources
- richer description of events because they are often synthetic

problems:

- reliability/bias of writer must be kept in mind
- form vs. content (woodcut)
- hard to assess relative importance(if on the front page of the NYT, does this represent the nation, state, city, NYT editorial board?)

Next time: How do they set up the problem – note the use of falsification first in ch. 1

II. Case Study: *Salem Possessed*

LECTURE 2 *Archival Research*

For next time: pp. 37-79

B. Research question and hypothesis

1. Perspective
2. Magnitude
3. Plausible alternative explanations and outcomes
4. ID critical precipitating difference

1. How do B&N set up the problem?

What do they think needs to be explained?

There were witches, they were found and hanged?

a. Historical perspective:

Looking back, we code the notion of “witchcraft” very differently

i.e. not real.

But people then believed/acted as if it was real. Our perspective allows us to ask a very basic question

If it wasn't witchcraft that caused their behavior, what did?

Dynamics of group conflict, boundary maintenance, factionalism

Proximate cause – “witchcraft”— allows conflict to crystallize along latent social cleavages.

b. How big was this? Relative to what?

Other places has outbreaks of witchcraft accusation,
but Salem was the biggest (p20)

- 142 accused (15 from village) p 190
- 19 hanged (only 15 in the prior 50 years) p 31
- The accusation and trials completely absorbed the village for over a year despite major efforts to end the frenzy from both inside and outside the community.

February 1692	first accusation
October 1692	court of O&T dissolved (p19-20)
April 1693	last cases dismissed, general pardon (p20)

c. Examine the plausible alternative explanations and outcomes

not over determined

use counterfactuals to identify what needs to be explained

- Why weren't the girls thought to be witches?
- Why wasn't it turned into:
 - an opportunity for observation and teaching (p 25)
 - religious revival (p 27)?

d. Critical precipitating difference?

The interpretation of adult leadership quote p30/p23

How does this change what needs to be explained?

- Who had something to gain? Cui buono? Incentive, motivation?
- How might it answer questions? Resolve anxiety?
- Think of the Puritan creed: The fundamental question in life is:

Are you chosen?

Will see how this fits in- visible saints (the chosen) known by their work/success in this life.

Fun fact: Calvin estimated about 20% of the population could be regarded as chosen

How do you know, how do others know, if you are saved?

one way is by looking at whether you have done well in this world that would be an indication that God favors you

leads to “Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism” (Weber)

Wealth is a sign of grace – not to be enjoyed, but reinvested in building even more glory to God

Historical Context

1630 - Massachusetts Bay Trading Co sails for "New England"

1620 was the Pilgrims in Plymouth

Part of a major religious movement that shook all of Europe and England

The Protestant reformation of the Roman Catholic Church, and the "Puritans"

Theirs was the position of the Separatist: they believed that the reforms of the Anglican church had not gone far enough, that, although the break with Catholicism in 1535 had moved some way toward the Puritan belief in an idea of religious authority grounded solely in Scripture, by substituting king for pope as the head of the church, England was only recapitulating an unnecessary, corrupt, and even idolatrous order (Gill, 19-21). In one basic respect, the Pilgrims are a logical outcome of the Reformation. In its increasing dissemination of the Bible, the increasing emphasis on it as the basis of spiritual meaning, the subsequently increasing importance of literacy as a mode of religious authority and awareness, a growing individualism was implicit.

The Puritans who, in the 1560s, first began to be (contemptuously) referred to as such, were ardent reformers, **seeking to bring the Church to a state of *purity* that would match Christianity as it had been in the time of Christ.** This reform was to involve, depending upon which Puritan one asked, varying degrees of stripping away practices seen as residual "popery"--vestments, ceremony, and the like.

They came to New England to build a living monument to the word of God

"Total reformation for the glory of god"

sort of like the Taliban in Afghanistan

These were "Congregationalists" (since 1957, the United Church of Christ)

- church limited to visible saints
- each church independent
- but individuals were completely governed by the church

All law was to come from the bible (p47)

interpretation was forbidden

Operated in opposition in England,
but in America, it had to become the established authority.

Established under the rubric of a “trading company”

- The bible as spiritual parentage
- England as civil heritage
- Trading Company as basis of governance

Problem of identity: who are we?

surfaced in many ways – visible in recorded conflicts

can see transition from corporate to individual identity

1. Antinomian controversy (1636, focused on Ann Hutchinson):

If the church (society) is limited to the visible saints...

- a. who had the authority to identify the “visible saints”?
- b. is salvation from God’s grace or by works in this world?

This one they won

2. Quakers (1656-1665) and the issue of tolerance

New England Puritans different from their English bretheren

NEP were *not tolerant*

outlawed Quakers and the Quaker church, severe public punishment
restricted the franchise to members of the Congregationalist Church

This one they lost, with the King of England reversing their laws
By embracing toleration, England removed the NEP potential to define
themselves in opposition to common enemies

- corporate identity was weakened (no they, then no we)
- and individual behavior could not be compelled/enforced to conform

If your laws and collective norms have been de-legitimized

the commitment to faith becomes individualistic

how do you know if you are saved?

- anxiety: the internal search for landmarks of salvation
- but the emphasis on Inner Reliance implicitly creates its
opposite:

inner possession

parallels to today:

no more Communism (a corporate enemy)

now, “terrorists”

individuals
invisible
threat to your life (everlasting)

we are fearful that they might live among us, unnoticed.

LECTURE 3 *Archival Research*

For next time: pp. 80-132

C. Evidence and Evaluation

Synopsis: Evidence of community conflicts (Ch. 2-4).

1. Events had broader social roots: Chapter 2
 - a. Pace
 - b. Status
 - c. Geography
2. Conflict and lack of conflict resolution mechanisms: Chapter 3

1. Evidence that events had broader social roots: aggregate patterns and trends

a. Pace of events:

	# Accusations
February	3
March	3
April	22
May	39
June	1 st execution
July through Sep	accurate records are no longer kept

- Shows that the event developed slowly
not like a self-contained phenomenon
more like a vehicle for larger issues

b. Status

1 st three:	Deviants	Tituba Sarah Good Sarah Osborne	voodoo hag scandal
March:	5 yr old Wives of prosperous freeholders		
April:	Village Minister (Burroughs) Town shipowner		
May:	Salem Town Selectmen		
Eventually:	Wife of Governor		

- Shows that we can not interpret this outbreak of witchcraft as persecution of deviants

here non-deviants became targets

- Begins to reveal the lines of cleavage
political, social, and economic

c. Geography:

1st 12: Salem villagers
the rest: only 14 (p35) or 15 (p 34) from Salem (!?)

- Again, this shows that events were not a self contained phenomenon and
- reveals another line of cleavage: Village vs. Rest of the world (especially Town).

In sum: Even the broadest patterns of evidence illustrate the influence of systematic social conflict.

But Boyer and Nissenbaum argue this is not a sufficient explanation
quote pg 51 (note also p 107)

All towns had conflict

Salem was unique in having no socially legitimate conflict resolution mechanisms

2. Evidence for conflict and lack of conflict resolution mechanisms (Ch 3)

a. Independence: galling b.c Beverly, Marblehead and Wenham obtained independence, so why not Salem Village? (not till 1752!)

b. Continuing tax struggles with Salem town (church taxes & other)

c. Boundary disputes (also about taxes)

d. Bayley dispute 1673-1679

about Bayley? No, about his appointment p 48

e. No church in the village

1666 ask to build a meeting house

1672 granted

1689 full-fledged church

*note only church members allowed to vote until 1662 (Erikson p 135)

f. Continuing disputes over ministers (Burroughs 1680-2 , Lawson 1684-6)

Some of this gets resolved, in a way with the establishment of a village church

Put these events in a broader context

1630	Mass Bay Sails for America	
1649	Execution of Charles I	
1649-60	Commonwealth under Cromwell (11 years)	Puritan
1660	Restoration, Charles II	Anti-Puritan
1660-1685	James II <i>1662 extend franchise to non-church members pg 135 Erikson</i> <i>1666 first request for a minister pg 141</i> <i>1672 given permission to build a meeting house</i>	
1686	Mass Bay Charter revoked Royal governor sent from England	(Anglican-anti-Puritan)
1689	Bloodless revolution in England William and Mary ascend to throne Royal governor removed <i>Parris hired</i> <i>Church covenant signed pg 60-62</i> <i>4 non-Putnams resign from Salem town board pg 131</i>	
1691	Village committee changes from pro-Parris to anti-Parris	
1692	Church sues committee and wins new election, but newly elected are also anti-Parris	
1694	Elders of Boston notify Parris that an outside arbitration is required (but it is not called for 1.5 years) <i>March new village committee, Pro-Parris</i> <i>November Parris gives sermon: Mediations for peace</i>	
1695	<i>April Ecclesiastical council recommend Parris' removal</i> <i>March Petition for Parris circulated</i>	

Archival Research Lecture 4

For next time: pp. 133-178

Dynamics of factional conflict between the Town and Village

1. Petition evidence
 - church
 - wealth
 - geography
2. Non-Petition evidence
 - Commerce vs. Agriculture
 - Village Factions

1. Petition evidence for factions (objective evidence)

Pro/Anti lines up with several social boundaries

What type of evidence? objective

First thing to check: what pop'n does the petition represent?
all of Salem village?

1695 petition	189 names in 1695 (105 pro, 84 anti)
1692 B&N find ~	215 persons 21+ yrs old (p 80)
missing	26/215 ~ 12% (lower bound)

Factional divisions revealed by petition:

- i. Village Church members are pro Parris
 - source: church membership list
 - probably accurate (incentives for both church and members)
 - but a small fraction of the petition signers: 50/189
 - 12/62 church members did not sign
 - a lot? about 20%, 1 in 5. compare to what?
 - add to the 8 that signed against: 20/62= 30%

- ii. Wealthy are anti Parris
 - source: tax records
 - incomplete and skewed towards wealthy
 - table p 82, only 51+35 = 86/189 45%, missing 55%
 - table p100, only 48/105 in table 45%, missing 55%

- iii. Geography – anti-Parris closer to town
 - source: map
 - Note how the sections are selected, what is the basis for determining boundaries? compare p34 and p84

But the big problem with the petition evidence is that the petition happened 3 years after (1695) the events (1692). So it is impossible to know whether this evidence reflects the results of the trials, or the underlying causes of them.

2. Non-petition evidence:

a. Commerce vs. Agriculture

i. Increase in wealth concentration

used to show: growing inequality that leads to resentment

10% own 62% of wealth. p87

3 x more than it controlled in the previous generation

Source: probated wills

- incomplete
- other interpretations?

Conditions would be expected to change

A generation earlier Mass Bay Company just arrived

Much more wealth accumulated now

Not all wealth transmitted through wills

Wealth may be more widely distributed

ii. Farm wealth decreased in relative importance

used to show: ascendance of mercantile culture

1650 40% of total in Essex county p 88

1680 9%

- source: probated wills (incomplete)
- other interpretations?
 - land less likely to pass through probate now

Hypothetical example:

	1650		1980	
Type of wealth	probated	not probated	probated	not probated
Farm	33	33	5	61
Other	50	50	50	50
Farm % of probated	33/50=40%		5/50=10%	
Farm % of wealth	66/166 = 40%		66/166 = 40%	

Idea- land can be disbursed to kids before death in order to avoid taxes, more than \$

iii. Transitory population

used to show: instability in community, raises anxiety

1681-1690 (p 89)

41 tax payers gone

46 new names

- source: tax rolls
 - incomplete
 - incentive to shelter income
- other interpretations?
 - 10 years, simple death rate may account

life expectancy ~ 60, so death rate is ~ 1/60

$215(1/60) \sim 4$ people per year, for 10 years, is 40 people

Overall problem: none of this is direct evidence of social cleavage – it is all indirect. Existence of wealth disparities alone does not generate cohesive social groups, or conflicts between them.

b. Village conflicts -- direct evidence for social groups and conflict

- i. Bayley dispute lines -- supporters nearer town p 92 (*no data shown*)
- ii. Lawson dispute lines -- supporters nearer village p 93 (*no data shown*)
- iii. Better land and transport near town -- (*no data shown*)
- iv. Ipswich road: taverns and transport linked to town economy – also to village
- v. Village Church wealth stats: p 100, only 48 persons shown, note use of controls (pro-Parris), but there are 105 pro-Parris signers.

Summary – not much data shown to support this crucial claim.

Archival Research Lecture 5

Individual conflicts and subjective evidence

Readings 179-222

1. Sources of Material
2. What evidence for Porter vs. Putnam?
 - a. Church Membership
 - b. Evidence of political cleavages
 - c. Joseph Putnam
 - d. Network data
 - e. Trial data

1. What are the sources for the material here?

- a. Perley's history of Salem and other secondary sources for history of Porter and Putnam genealogy, land
- b. tax lists, wills
- c. "church records" and sermons kept by Parris
- d. Village records
kept by whoever had control of the Village Committee
- e. other writings/pamphlets (literate persons bias)

Context: 1686 MBTC lose charter attempt church
 1689 Boston/England coup church formed

2. What evidence for Porter vs. Putnam?

a. Wealth difference, where they lived

these factors do not guarantee conflict, many others also different on these dimensions

b. Parris petition, Church membership -- more suggestive

why? b/c they represent social bases of collective action & solidarity

but problems are timing (petition) and residence (Porters lived in Salem town)

c. Role in events

(p 115, 116)

Putnams? clearly at the center of events

Porters?

“Crucial but shadowy role”

d. Competition for Salem Town Board

good, because shows political action

intentional action here a better indicator of cohesion

1689	2 Putnams elected (4 Porter and Porter related resign) why? Pg 131 don't know There were lots of other things happening in 1689. B&N argue that Porter refused to serve with Putnam.
1690 1691 1692	all 3 Porter allies reelected Phillip English (Porter political ally)
March 1692	Witchcraft warrants for Daniel Andrew (Porter brother in law) and English
July 1692	Special election – Porters voted out, 5 new men in, 4 are 1 st timers Putnam is moderator of the election

There does seem to be evidence of a Putnam grab for power
(with the town dissidents p 131 so not agriculture vs. mercantile)

and good reason to think he had the motive as we will see,

but what evidence for a concerted, cohesive opposition?

Boyer and Nissenbaum argue anti-Parris factions worked “behind the scenes”-other explanation is they didn't exist

e. Joseph Putnam-the traitor in the Putnam clan

1666-Thomas Putnam marries Mary Veren

1669-Joseph Putnam born (Thomas Putnam Jr. 16 yrs old)

1686-Thomas Putnam dies leaving “everything” to Mary and Joseph

17 years has passed between 1669 and 1686-what happened?

1 elder children have been taken care of

2 some other bad blood

Note: Much ado re: death and will of Mary Veren Putnam
what’s the problem?

Happened post-1692 (1695)

Again, cause or consequence of the w/c events

Again – evidence that the Putnams were motivated to fight,
but not much evidence for Porters.

John Putnam died in 1682 800 acres

-Thomas was born 1615, he married Mary Veren in 1666 and

Joseph was born in 1669

-Nathaniel was born in 1619

-John was born in 1627

John Porter died in 1676 2000 acres

-Joseph was born in 1638

-Ben was born in 1639

-Israel was born in 1644

Modified primogeniture (p136)

3. Parris- What was his role? Cause, instigator, or vehicle?

Cause-clearly paranoid, bitter, needy, conflicted, obsessed, neurotic

**Q: other words?...,

but the cause? No.

Isn't the cause because his existence in Salem has to be explained.

Conditions of the village responsible for recruitment

Bayley	1678-1679	v.c. vote to dismiss	Left in 1680
Burroughs	1680-1683	not paid salary	Left in 1684
Lawson	1684-1686	dispute over ordination	Left in 1688

Who would have gone to Salem Village after that?

- in a healthy parish he would have been ignored or fired.

**Q: Did he play a crucial role?

We assume so? Largely because he has left records for us to read

**Q: Are these records complete?

The records are broken at the critical point (p174)

Was he was simply used by Thomas Putnam as part of a multi-pronged strategy to take over the instruments of government?

This is hard to say. Thomas Putnam left little behind in comparison

and he lost: read p143

4. The Network data

**Q: Israel Porter's network-or is it?

Note how drawn: this is a sample, not a census of data

We have to assume in a town of ~215 (105 HH) most everyone has a tie to everyone else.

**Q: So where do these ID'd members of IP's network come from?

Lots of places. pg 184

**Q: But how were they sampled?

on the D.V. maybe?

**Q: Can you think of anyone important who is missing? (not touched by w/c accusation)

actually, they tell you on page 187

Joseph Hutchinson (employee)

Joseph Porter (brother)

Joseph Putnam (son-in law)

3. Finally, the trial data (no timing problem) (p185)

Source of evidence: trial transcripts

support = testify against accused

Their version:

	Support	Oppose	Total
Pro Parris	21 (95%)	1	22
Anti Parris	6	19 (76%)	25
Total	27	20	47

47= (about 25% of villagers)

The full version:

	Support	Oppose	Missing	Total
Pro Parris	21	1	83	105
Anti Parris	6	19	59	84
Did not sign			26	26
Totals	27	20	168	215

70% missing

D. Overall Evaluation

Archival Research Lecture 6

1. What is their argument?
2. What evidence for factions?
 - a. Disconfirming Evidence
 - b. Other explanations:
 - i. One faction
 - ii. Can Political Institutions Solve Conflict?

1. What is their argument?

Motivation: The children's behavior is only the trigger (proximate determinant) of the outbreak. The subsequent events are the result of adult interpretation and response.

So the question we need to answer is: Why did the adults respond this way?

- a. Economic/Political/Religion conditions were ripe for conflict
 - i. transition from an agricultural to a mercantile economy
 - ii. transition from a monarchy to commonwealth
 - iii. Protestant reformation
- b. These forces played out through the local conflicts of the time
 - i. Social/Economic fault lines (systematic evidence)
 - ii. Porter vs. Putnam (case study)
 - iii. Parris vs. himself. The ultimate expression of the contradictory social imperatives of the day -- the puppet extraordinaire
- c. Conflict exploded in Salem village because the conflict resolution mechanisms were weak, or non-existent
 - i. no church
 - ii. village committee had no authority
 - iii. disruption of governance in the colonies as a whole

The courts were it - conflict resolution of last resort.

But they were *Ad hoc* bodies, not strong enough to carry the load

NB: Classic historical mode of argument: Conjuncture theory

What parts of this argument are well supported?

a. Economic/Political/Religion conditions were ripe for conflict

Macro level argument

Not much data, cite other reputable sources

b. These forces played out through the local conflicts of the time

i. Social/Economic fault lines (systematic evidence)

Data	Show	Evaluation
accusation pattern	size of outbreak pace of events geographic reach	good
probated wills tax records	wealth inequality transitory pop'n	incomplete data other interpretations does not guarantee cohesion
geographic residence	accusers/defenders petition signers conflicts	arbitrary and changing boundaries timing no real data shown
church membership	wealth differences petition signers	incomplete timing
church membership	wealth differences petition signers	incomplete timing

Summary: Systematic inequality certainly existed, but not clear that it formed the fault line for political conflict.

ii. Porter vs. Putnam (case study)

Data	Show	Evaluation
Wills	wealth trajectories family conflicts	good incomplete info, interpretation
Network data	accusations surrounded Porter	incomplete, looks biased
Town Board and Village Committee	political conflict btwn families	interpretation

Disconfirming evidence?

1. No Porter's as witches p145-146,148

Resort to Hansel and Gretel: kill the witch, the stepmother will die

Accuse Rebecca Nurse, to get to Mary Veren Putnam

2. 90% accused witches were outside of Salem village, and 80% outside of the village environments

resort to Madame Bubble p 213

Summary: Putnams were clearly central players, but not so clear that this was a family feud with the Porters, or that the Porters were as central

- iii. Parris vs. himself. The ultimate expression of the contradictory social imperatives of the day -- the puppet extraordinaire

Parris is a frightening man. And he left remarkable writings that we can look through now to get a remarkably deep and personal picture.

He is a central figure, and a tragic one. But the conditions of the village are largely responsible for his presence there.

Do the actual players matter?

Or is the story really about the positions they were in, and the failure of the institutions to protect them.

- c. Conflict exploded in Salem village because the conflict resolution mechanisms were weak, or non-existent
 - iv. no church
 - v. village committee had no authority
 - vi. disruption of governance in the colonies as a whole

The courts were it - conflict resolution of last resort.

But...

Can political institutions resolve conflict and prevent baseless persecution?

Any evidence since 1692?

McCarthy era
Nazi Germany

Both the United States and Germany have extensive and sophisticated institutions for the regulation and exercise of power, and the resolution of conflicts.

Why did these institutions fail?

So what can we learn here that would help us to prevent a repeat?

Were these normal courts?

No – they were specially convened *Ad hoc* bodies
not strong enough to carry the load

Demonization and judgement outside normal mechanisms