CHAPTER

4   Triangulation in Social Movement Research 🔓

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Abstract

This chapter discusses the use of multiple data sources and collection methods, or *triangulation*, in research design. It addresses both the benefits and concerns related to mixed-methods approaches (focusing on the combination of qualitative and quantitative methods), followed by illustrative examples of how to select and effectively apply the appropriate methods with which to address a given research problem. Drawing on examples from work on transnational LGBT rights activism in Europe and immigrant rights activism in the United States, the chapter demonstrates how the use of multiple methods and data sources can shed light on often-neglected areas of social movement research, such as the diffusion of norms across borders and the relationship between time, space, and protests. It is argued that triangulation allows for the analyst to paint a more holistic picture of the complex phenomena, serving as an approach for sound explanation, enhanced theory-building capacity, and deeper understanding.

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Given the dynamic nature of contentious politics (McAdam et al. 2001; Tilly and Tarrow 2006) and the array of methods that can be used to study it (see Klandermans and Staggenborg 2002), it is not surprising that prominent social movement scholars have promoted the use of multiple data sources and collection methods (Tarrow 2004; della Porta and Keating 2008, 34), or *triangulation*, when conducting research. Alongside the many merits of triangulation, the research design introduces several complexities related to systematically combining and analyzing different types of data in unison. In what follows, we address both the benefits and concerns related to mixed-method approaches, followed by illustrative examples of how to select and effectively apply the appropriate methods with which to address a given research problem. Drawing on examples from our own work on transnational Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) rights activism in Europe and immigrant rights activism in the United States, we demonstrate how the use of multiple methods and data sources can shed light on often neglected areas of social movement research,

such as the diffusion of norms across borders and the relationship between time, space, and protests. We conclude with a discussion of publishing research using mixed-method research designs.

Defining Triangulation

The term "triangulation" has multiple meanings in the social sciences. It can refer to the use of a combination of methods of investigation, data sources, or theoretical frameworks (Jick 1979; Creswell 2014), and it is said to serve as "a process of verification that increases validity by incorporating several viewpoints and methods" (Yeasmin and Rahman 2012, 156). The main idea behind the concept is that by utilizing multiple methods, data sources, theories, and/or observations, scholars can better account for and overcome the limits and biases inherent in studies that employ a single method, theory, data source, ↳ or observer (Yeasmin and Rahman 2012, 157; see also Greene et al. 1989). For our purposes, triangulation refers to the use of multiple research methods and types of data to analyze the same problem. Throughout the chapter, we argue that triangulation allows for the analyst to paint a more holistic picture of the complex phenomena that social movement scholars study. Beyond functioning as a validating strategy, we see it as an approach for sound explanation, enhanced theory-building capacity, and deeper understanding.

As can be inferred from the various approaches discussed in this book, the use of multiple methods and types of data in problem-driven research can take many forms. It can include only qualitative methodology, for example, as illustrated by the many social movement studies that employ a mixture of participant observation, in-depth interviews, and archival research (e.g., Fantasia 1988; Rupp and Taylor 2003). It can also include combinations of large-n and small-n research designs (e.g., Mansbridge 1986; McAdam 1988; Banaszak 1996). In the triangulation examples we describe in this chapter, we focus on the latter combination of qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection and analysis, a combination that has been the most contested in terms of epistemology and execution.

Scholars can mix qualitative and quantitative data at four different stages of their research process: during *design, data collection, analysis, and/or interpretation* (see Creswell and Clark 2011, 66–8). As will be illustrated with the applied examples from our own work presented below, the choice to triangulate can be "fixed," decided on before the research is undertaken, or "emergent," in response to questions or problems that arise during the research or data analysis process (Creswell and Clark 2011, 54). Upon deciding on the need to triangulate, scholars must also select the *type* of mixed-method design that best suits their particular research questions or interests. The three most commonly used mixed-method research designs are *convergent parallel, explanatory sequential*, and *exploratory sequential* (see Creswell and Clark 2011, 68–104).

According to Creswell (2014), in a *convergent* design qualitative and quantitative data are collected and analyzed separately, and then compared to assess whether the findings contradict or confirm each other (219). An example of social movement scholars using this type of design is Ferree et al.'s (2002) seminal comparative examination of abortion discourse in Germany and the United States. In *Shaping Abortion Discourse,* public opinion surveys and quantitative content analysis of newspaper articles are triangulated with in-depth interviews of activists and journalists in both countries. Through their novel use of these quantitative and qualitative data, the authors made important empirical (setting a new standard for research on framing) and theoretical (further developing the concept of "discourse opportunity structures") contributions to social movement research, while demonstrating how the strategies and actions of numerous state, media, and civil society actors ↳ in different institutional and cultural contexts can interact to produce varying results.

Sequential mixed-method research designs can either be exploratory or explanatory. In *exploratory* designs, "the researcher starts by qualitatively exploring a topic before building to a second, quantitative phase"

(Creswell and Clark 2011, 86). The main goal of these types of designs "is to generalize qualitative findings based on … the first phase to a larger sample gathered during the second [quantitative] phase" (86). In a recent example, based on a newly created comprehensive database of Jewish victimization in the Netherlands during the Holocaust, Braun (2013) identified four pairs of Dutch villages that were socially similar but differed significantly in terms of Jewish evasion. For each of these pairs, he consulted administrative records of German security forces and post-war testimonies which led to the hypothesis that Christian minority churches played a crucial role in the emergence of collective rescue networks because their leaders could exploit social isolation to set up clandestine movements. His inductively created hypothesis was then tested by pairing the quantitative database with geo-coded information of Christian church communities throughout the Netherlands. Through this exploratory sequential research design, Braun found that it was the structural position of Protestant or Catholic communities and not something inherent to either religion that produced collective networks of assistance to threatened Jewish neighbors.

Alternatively, in an *explanatory* sequential designs, "the researcher collects quantitative data in the first phase, analyzes the results, and then uses the results to plan (or build on to) the second, qualitative phase" of the research (Creswell 2014, 224). Several classic (Mansbridge 1986; McAdam 1988) and contemporary (Taylor et al. 2009; Hadden forthcoming) social movement studies have employed this type of triangulation. One of its main strengths is that it can help explain the mechanisms—how quantified variables interact—through the use of qualitative data (Creswell 2014, 224). Hadden's (forthcoming) work on the international climate change movement, for example, combined quantitative network analysis with over 90 qualitative interviews. Her design aimed to explain how the tactical choices of social movement organizations are affected by their positions in an inter-organizational network. Hadden utilized qualitative interviews to provide evidence of the causal mechanisms underlying the correlations observed in the quantitative network analysis. Since senior social movement scholars have recently called for more mechanism-driven approaches to studying contentious politics (McAdam et al. 2001; Tilly and Tarrow 2006), the applied examples we describe in detail later also utilize this type of design. However, before we do so, we discuss more of the benefits, as well as some of the concerns and complexities, of mixed-method research. ↪

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Benefits: Why and When to Use Triangulation

There are several benefits to triangulation, not least considering the fact that scholars of social movements have a toolkit of imperfect methods. Due to the complexity of the social world that we study, it is often impossible to achieve the laboratory-like experimental controls that are necessary to satisfy the conditions of the experimental method—championed by many to be the only method capable of eliminating alternative explanations and isolating variables of interest (Lijphart 1971; Jackman 1985; Kinder and Palfrey 1993). Instead, the statistical method is increasingly common in social movement research. With careful theoretical modeling and traveling concepts, this method can be used to quantitatively control for differences across units of analysis within a reasonable margin of error. According to some scholars, the ultimate goal of this method is causal inference, using observable data (the more observations, the better) to generalize about their effect on a particular outcome (King, Keohane, and Verba 1994, 8). While most scholars hold that the experimental and statistical methods bring us the closest to "science" (Jackman 1985), others have critically questioned the endeavor of imitating the hard sciences, given the different nature of what we research (Gaddis 1996).[1]

At the height of the methods debate, the book *Designing Social Inquiry* (DSI) by King, Keohane, and Verba (1994), created uproar in the social sciences (especially in American political science departments) around its neo-positivist understanding of social science methodology. The common critique levied at the book was its somewhat narrow guidelines for qualitative researchers. It was this debate that also influenced prominent social movement scholars to reflect on the use of triangulation in social movements scholarship. In response to DSI, Sidney Tarrow (1995) advocated for triangulation, critiquing DSI's central implication

that qualitative research was valuable so long as it conformed to the main logics of the quantitative trade. Critics were quick to point out that the statistical method contains its own serious shortcomings that distinguish themselves from those of qualitative research. For one, DSI's interpretation of causal inference placed emphasis on correlations and under played the causal pathway that connects the independent variable(s) to the dependent variable: the causal mechanism (Beck 2006). On its own, the quantitative method misses a plethora of relationships inherent in political research that deviate from the x-leads-to-y structure of statistical analysis (Hall 2003, 381).[2] Thus, the importance of deciphering "which mechanisms produce observed associations in the variables," went overlooked by a method that emphasizes placing "variables in equations, and [exploring] how they are related to other variables" (Hedström and Swedberg 1998, 4).

The conceptual complexity of mechanism-driven research inherent in most qualitative methodology usually hones a study in on a specific case or ↳ a smaller set of cases. A small-n approach to research heeds Sidney Verba's (1967, 113) earlier call for staying grounded to the context and ontology of a phenomenon, as opposed to striving for covering laws.[3] Stripping attributes of what an observation is (in order to increase the number of observations required for statistical analysis), moves the research up on the ladder of abstraction, resulting in conceptual stretching (Sartori 1970; Goertz 2006). Yet in their complexity, the findings generated by small-n research designs can rarely make the bold statements that come naturally to quantitative studies. While small-n designs take us a long way towards theory generation, such research cannot rule out the possibility that the findings are unique to a specific context. The negative aspect of DSI was that it applied quantitative criteria as a baseline for evaluating all social science research, instead of exploiting the richness of qualitative logics. Perspectives like DSI make their strongest contribution by emphasizing the importance of systematic rigor, transparency, and communication among practitioners in the social sciences. The methods debate has been productive in this regard, and can improve the quality and reliability of our findings. Where this debate has become about "shared standards" however, it loses traction.

If the now decades-long debate on methodology has taught us anything, it is that establishing a clear hierarchy in the value of the effect-driven versus mechanism-driven research can be difficult. Instead, it has become increasingly clear that different methods make different contributions and come with different limitations. In this sense, triangulation has critical benefits in that the logics of distinct methods are understood to complement each other, as opposed to substituting for one another. In response to the methods debate, the field is applying pressure on researchers to address, if not include, both methodological angles. This means that qualitative researchers are expected to generalize and be systematic in their research (King, Keohane, and Verba 1994) and quantitative researchers are expected to explain how cause leads to effect (Brady and Collier 2004), an expectation that challenges the established division of labor in the social sciences. While a division of labor is effective in producing scholars with sound expertise in one area—opposed to mediocre expertise in many—we argue that a sharp divide can limit the questions one asks. If the goal is to address interesting questions, then it is essential that no single method preclude a thorough study of an important problem.

In that vein, we want to move beyond the polarization advocated by methodological imperialists, by arguing instead that—taken together—quantitative and qualitative methods (like the ones we explicate here) can answer different aspects of a question and lead to a more holistic understanding of the phenomenon under investigation. Social movement scholars need to develop an awareness of the specificity of different methods, being mindful of their trade-offs for answering any particular question. Combining
methodologies of differing persuasions, or *triangulating,* helps researchers get at different ↳ dimensions of the research question, which we think reduces the distance between method and ontology—"the character of the world as it actually is" (Hall 2003, 374).

From an epistemological point of view, this move towards mixed methods is a positive development. The more expansive toolkit that generally comes with triangular research designs is especially fruitful for answering many questions in the field of social movement research. A central difficulty related to social movement research is that the analyst rarely knows the universe of cases from which to sample randomly. Triangulation can thus be particularly "appropriate in cases in which quantitative data are partial and qualitative investigation is obstructed by political conditions" (Tarrow 2004, 178). Furthermore, triangular methodology is well suited for the social movements field, since the field has generally remained skeptical of paradigm warfare and hard theory, thriving instead on the bridging of middle-range theory. As others have said before us, the "triangulation of methods ultimately produces stronger theories than multiple replications and permutations of the same method" (Tarrow, Klandermans, and Staggenborg 2002, 319).

By getting at different aspects of questions, employing triangular research designs also helps the researcher address methodological limitations and increases validity—the data are also crosschecked to increase the robustness of the findings. Endogeneity, for example, is a central problem in many social movement research projects: do open political opportunity structures lead to mobilization, or does mobilization open political opportunity structures? Quantitative analyses combined with qualitative process tracing in representative case studies can shed light on the directions that causal arrows take. Finally, qualitative data can be used to interpret the—at first often puzzling—findings of cross-sectional quantitative research. We now describe the challenges posed by triangulation and then present examples of our own work to illustrate how mixed-method social movement research can be employed to build theory and tackle complex questions.

Concerns and Complexities of Triangulation

Mixed-method research has been critiqued on both epistemic and ontological grounds. Ahmed and Sil (2009; 2012) contend, for instance, that the notion that multiple-method research (MMR) is better than single-method research (SMR) is based on the faulty premise that one type of method can offer external validity for the findings of a different type of method. They argue that because "different methods rest upon incommensurable epistemological foundations," ultimately "MMR holds the same epistemological status as separate projects addressing the same question, and that SMR is no less likely to produce good scholarship" (Ahmed and Sil 2009, 3). For example, when ↳ attempting to use a qualitative case study to confirm the findings of a large-n statistical analysis, "the case study will by its very nature introduce variables not present in the statistical analysis" (Ahmed and Sil 2009, 3). As such, both methods are "effectively examining two different sets of variables" and, thus, data gained from the qualitative case study "cannot be said to either confirm or falsify the findings" of the quantitative analysis (Ahmed and Sil 2009, 3). Consequently, critics argue that "error-reduction and cross-validation are not feasible where methods are not sufficiently similar in their basic ontologies and their conceptions of causality" (Rohlfing 2008, 1511; Ahmed and Sil 2012, 935).

In response, some scholars argue that those who critique mixed-method research on epistemological grounds "overstate how closely tied epistemological perspectives and every day practice are" since many quantitative researchers themselves "disagree over fundamental epistemological issues, such as the superiority of Bayesian or frequentist inference" (Small 2011, 78). In addition, other researchers contend that "by prioritizing the act of discovery over the justifications for knowledge," mixed-method research embodies its own epistemological perspective based on "pragmatism" (Small 2011, 62). Collectively, according to Small, "the pragmatist researcher is first and foremost concerned with an empirical puzzle, solving it through whatever means appear useful in the process" (Small 2011, 63). Our problem-driven definition of triangulation thus stresses that different methods can be triangulated around aspects of a broader question. We also do not think it is common to find equivalent data that gets at a singular question.

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Nor do we propose that triangulation is always more suitable than SMR. Instead, we simply believe it depends on the question.

Scholars have also identified several challenges that arise when attempting to actually carry out multi-method research. The first, and perhaps most obvious, barrier that researchers must overcome is learning the skills needed to employ the qualitative and quantitative methods they seek to utilize (Creswell 2014, 219). Scholars must also gain familiarity with the different ways in which quantitative data can be collected and analyzed, including the logics of question development and hypothesis testing, how to construct measurement instruments, and how to use the statistical software needed for analysis (Creswell and Clark 2011, 13). At additional time and financial cost, social scientists must often supplement the training at their home institutions with specialized workshops, such as those offered by the Institute for Qualitative and Multi-Method Research (IQMR) and the European Consortium for Political Research (ECPR).

Similarly, researchers should be capable of identifying the types of questions in their study that are best answered qualitatively and understand the different ways they can gather and analyze qualitative data, including the various types of coding techniques and data analysis programs that can be ↳ used. Students should also be aware of the numerous data collection concerns related to qualitative methods, such as interview-based research. Important issues to consider include having the language skills needed to interview the population under examination, whether research assistants and/or translators need to be hired during fieldwork, and that the information obtained from interviews is collected in the same manner and using the same questions (King, Keohane, and Verba 1994, 23). Interview questions should also produce valid data, meaning that the interviewees should answer questions that clearly capture the concepts scholars are examining (Adcock and Collier 2001, 529). In addition, while increasing the number of interviews will, on average, produce the least biased answers by weakening any outlier responses, researchers must also be able to identify when their research comes to a point of "saturation," where new data is no longer producing new information and patterns.

While most American political science departments tend to train their students primarily in quantitative methods (Schwartz-Shea 2003), an implication of the basic methodological skillset needed for conducting mixed-method research is that graduate programs that promote triangulation should offer and require coursework in both quantitative *and* qualitative methods. A positive trend in political science that may engender a multi-method approach (and diminish its costs) is the increase in co-authored works (Fisher et al. 1998). Co-authorship is one way to get around limited tools in our social enterprise, if two or more researchers analyze a problem together by approaching it from different angles. Wallace and Zepeda-Millán's collaboration (described later) is an example in this direction.

Researchers should also carefully weigh the various costs and benefits associated with the amount of time and resources needed to conduct and analyze mixed-method research (Jick 1979; Klandermans et al. 2002, 315). For example, Ayoub spent twenty-five months in the field, between 2008 and 2012, conducting the data collection and analysis necessary to execute his research design. Likewise, Wallace, Zepeda-Millán, and Jones-Correa spent two years (2009–11) conducting an analysis of preliminary digital newspaper archival data that Zepeda-Millán collected in 2006 and interviews he conducted in four US cities between 2006 and 2009. The amount of time it takes to conduct mixed-method research is especially important to take note of when a study is carried out by a single scholar who may require additional training, has limited graduate program funding, or is nearing a promotional deadline (Ahmed and Sil 2009, 5). Furthermore, the amount of financial resources needed to pay for a research team, transcriptions, and qualitative and quantitative data analysis software and instruction is a challenge of mixed-method research that needs to be considered seriously in advance (Creswell and Clark 2011; Creswell 2014). ↳

Other concerns that arise from multi-method studies are that they are not only often difficult to replicate (Jick 1979, 609), but when dogmatically held as the "gold standard" for social science research, scholars

run the risk of neglecting the important insights gained from intensive single-method research. In this sense, there is a general fear that researchers may become less specialized in specific data collection and analysis techniques, opting instead for mediocre training in multiple methodological areas (Rohlfing 2008; Ahmed and Sil 2009, 2012). With these important caveats in mind, we turn now to making a case for triangular research designs, concurring with senior contentious politics scholars (Klandermans et al. 2002; Tarrow 2004) who argue that the use of multiple research methods and data sources can be beneficial to social movement research. While triangulation may not be well suited for every research question—nor is it feasible for every scholar or team of researchers—we believe that its benefits for theory building and investigating complex political phenomenon remain unparalleled. In what follows, we elaborate on this view and provide examples of how we circumvented several of the obstacles described here.

Applied Method Examples

In this section, we discuss our own work that exemplifies triangulation to demonstrate how scholars can use mixed methods in social movement research, as well as discuss some of the complexities we faced in the execution of this research. The first example is of Ayoub's work on the European LGBT movement and utilizes a more structured type of triangulation in comparative research called a "nested analysis." In terms of sequence, we use this example to highlight the processes that can inform mixed-method research: search for causal mechanisms in order to build theory, which can then be tested using a large-n research design, and then subsequently explore the causal processes in particular cases to understand what drives their correlations. Ayoub's work is an example of multi-method research planned at the outset, meaning that he recognized the need for triangulation during the *design* and data *collection* phases of his research.

The second example, by Wallace and Zepeda-Millán, employs an explanatory sequential design that was "emergent," meaning that the study was not initially designed to be mixed-method but became so as these authors realized their need to turn to qualitative data to further explain their findings (see Creswell and Clark 2011, 54). Because of the differential effects of the large versus small marches and potential differences in Spanish and English media consumption, they turned to Zepeda-Millán's interview data on the role of the media in the protest wave to *interpret* their quantitative results. ↳

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The European LGBT Movement and Diffusion Dynamics

(Ayoub writing in the first person): Like many students of social movements, my initial interest in the LGBT rights movement was born from personal experience. The project dates back to 2004–06 when I was completing a master's degree in Berlin, at a time when countless Berliners were organizing to participate in marches for LGBT equality in various Polish cities. I came across a flyer concerning a march in Warsaw, sparking a long curiosity with the transnational nature of LGBT politics and the questions it raised. The political behavior that seemed obvious to many of the participants challenged fundamentals of what I had learned of politics in the classroom. What was rational about marching for rights in a foreign context, one in which such rights would not benefit you directly? Why did such activism meet forceful resistance in some cases and not in others? The uneven diffusion of legal rights and societal recognition across states—the goals of the movement—also puzzled me in light of previous scholarship that tracked the development of a European norm concerning LGBT rights, and another body of scholarship that cited human rights as the most uniformly adopted norms in the European Union (EU) accession process. The observations I encountered in these experiences, sparked my desire to understand the "whys" and "hows" of transnational LGBT activism, which eventually led to the triangular research design informing my dissertation (Ayoub 2013b) and book project.

Questions, Conceptualization, and Method

I ultimately narrowed the research design around a tighter set of theoretically informed questions. Why, despite similar international pressures, has the social and legal recognition of minorities changed to such differing degrees and at such different rates across states? Under what domestic preconditions (of the recipient state) do international norms of sexual minority rights successfully spread? Is change due to heightened exposure to individuals and groups in states that have previously adopted the norm? To answer these questions, my dependent variables explored two consequences of norms: (1) compliance at the state level (the introduction of pro-LGBT legislation; and (2) at the level of internationalization (change in societal attitudes towards LGBT people)—there was ample variation on both measures of the dependent variable.

I limited the scope of the project to Europe, which offered a laboratory for testing and refining my theory,
since the region houses both the EU norm of ↳ protecting sexual minorities and the presence of states on both ends of the "gay friendliness" spectrum. Europe is the only world region where sexual minority rights are enshrined in binding international law (e.g., Article 13 of the Amsterdam Treaty), and various EU/European Council court rulings and non-binding resolutions have led some scholars to note the development of an LGBT norm at the international level. What remained unexplained, however, is the vast variation in how states responded to this norm (the dependent variable). Europe is also an ideal location to study the diffusion of norms because of the Cold War division. The 1960s sexual revolution and the 1980s HIV/AIDS epidemic politicized LGBT rights much earlier throughout several states in Western Europe. The issue came on the agenda much later on the Eastern side of the Iron Curtain, which had been relatively isolated from these influences.[4] I thus developed a research design through which I sought to understand diffusion processes by exploring both the transnational actors and transnational channels that carry international LGBT rights norms, and the domestic structures that welcome or reject them.

In order to make certain generalizations while also understanding the mechanisms behind this complicated process, I followed the guidelines for multi-method research using a nested analysis technique, which began with the large-n statistical test of correlation between variables and then, depending on the results, proceeded to either "model-testing" or "model-building" small-n analysis" (Lieberman 2005, 436). While the method is originally explanatory sequential, it can, depending on whether the results converge, go back to an exploratory nature as a middle phase. As outlined by Lieberman (2005, 436), a multi-method nested design can take the following sequences:

Step 1: Preliminary large-n analysis to access the robustness of the model

Step 2: Small-n analysis is used to proceed to

(a) explanatory model testing (if the findings in Step 1 are robust), using cases that fall on the regression line; *or*

(b) exploratory model building (if the findings in Step 1 are not robust), using cases that fall both on and off the line.[5]

The project included large-n analyses that used statistical methods to test correlations between predictors in all EU member states and small-n analyses that used qualitative methods to trace channels of diffusion between carefully selected case studies. My description of the two steps that follow are thus informative of a triangular design in which the preliminary large-n analyses identified a set of ideal cases (on the regression line) for the small-n analysis (described under step two), which I used to test the theory and to understand
the mechanisms by which ideas diffuse.[6] ↳

Step 1: Quantitative Analyses

As is required in a nested-analysis design, I spent the first part of the project constructing the datasets for preliminary quantitative analyses. I needed to supplement existing datasets by adding variables directly related to my questions. Archival research uncovered data for all EU member and applicant states. In combination with existing data collection efforts by colleagues and LGBT organizations in the field,[7] this research allowed me to code LGBT legislation across states and by year (1970−2010). It also allowed me to identify the presence of all LGBT organizations in Europe that had transnational ties. To do this, I used a combination of online and on-site archives at LGBT umbrella organizations during my preliminary fieldwork visits.

My original data collection, coupled with data derived from existing cross-national datasets containing information on levels of porousness to the international environment (KOF Index of Globalization[8]), democracy (Polity IV[9]), GDP measures (Penn World Table[10]), geographic proximity (Nomenclature of Units for Territorial Statistics[11]), and societal attitudes towards homosexuality (European Values Survey), resulted in two new datasets for quantitative analysis: an original Europe-wide dataset of five different categories of pro-LGBT legislation across states and time, and an international survey of attitudes towards LGBT people in European states. Table 4.1 is an example of a condensed version of a table describing some of the core data collected for the legislation dataset.

Table 4.1 LGBT Legislation Dataset (1970–2010), Key Dependent and Independent Variables Summarized

Concept	Hypothesized mechanism	Coding, notes, or examples
Dependent variable		
Combined legislation score		Combination of the following 5 categories:
– Anti-discrimination legislation		Employment, goods and services, constitution
– Criminal law refers to sexual orientation		Hate crimes based on sexual Orientation, an aggravating circumstance, and/or incitement to hatred prohibited
– Partnership recognition for same-sex couples		Cohabitation rights, registered partnership, marriage
– Parenting rights for same-sex couples		Joint adoption, second parent adoption, fertility treatment
– Sexual offenses provisions		Equal age of consent, same-sex sexual activity legal
Select independent variables		
Transnational and international channels		
Transnational LGBT organizations	Brokerage, framing	No. of domestic LGBT orgs with membership in transnational organization, by year
Social channels	Social learning	Information flows: Internet users (per 1,000 people), television (per 1,000 people) and trade in newspapers (percent of GDP)[a]
Political channels	Learning, sanctioning	Embassies in country, membership in international organizations, participation in UN Security Council missions, international treaties.[a]
Economic channels	Competition, sanctioning	Actual trade flows and restrictions (cf. KOF codebook)[a]
EU accession	Learning, sanctioning	Year state joined EU
Diffusion variables	Emulation	Yearly measure of the number of other states that have previously adopted a given policy
Select domestic context variables		
LGBT social spaces		**0**—Nothing going on; **1**—Mention of some activity but not explicitly gay or lesbian; **2**—Activity mentioned in one main city; **3**—Some gay life in more than one city; **4**—Gay social life in multiple cities; **5**—Widespread gay social life[b]

Dominant religion	Protestant, mixed, Catholic, other
Level of democracy	Polity2 measure (cf. Polity IV codebook)[c]
Gross domestic product (log)	Real GDP per capita[d]

Note: Control variables not shown.

Sources:

a   KOF Index of Globalization;

b   Spartacus Travel Guides (Frank, Camp, and Boutcher 2010);

c   Polity IV dataset;

d   Penn GDP dataset.

The second attitudinal dataset used several of these variables, combined with individual-level measures, including a variable measuring the geographic proximity (another transnational channel) of individuals' residences in EU-12 states to the former Iron Curtain.[12]

For the first step of the design, the data analysis compared the strength of the relationships among variables of diffusion across all EU member states (and the subsets of EU-12 and EU-15 states) using various statistical modeling techniques: ordered logistic and event history models for the legislation dataset, and multilevel random intercept iterative generalized least squares (IGLS) regression models for the attitudinal dataset. The statistical method assumes that data are derived from a representative sample (since the results are used to make inference about a broader population), that variables are independent of one another and are linearly related, and that error terms are homoskedastic, normally distributed, and uncorrelated (Maas and Hox 2004, 428).[13] The appropriate modeling technique was selected, depending on each specific question and the structure of the data. In the analysis of attitudinal change, for example, the multilevel structure of the data and theory drove the selection of the IGLS method, which combines data at two analytical levels of respondents (individual-level) and states (group-level). Multilevel models are

useful when the researcher believes that the individuals in his or her dataset ↳ are nested in unique groups that shape or mediate the outcome (Snijders and Bosker 1999, 43). The results of the statistical analyses, though surprising in some aspects, confirmed my intuitions regarding the strength of transnational

channels of visibility on change in attitudes and legislation, leading to Step 2 (model testing). ↳

Step 2: Qualitative Analyses

For the second step of the design, I turned to qualitative methods in order to confirm or question the validity of the correlations I observed in the large-n analysis. This component of the triangular design was used to answer open questions of causal order, measurement, and the heterogeneity of cases. It is important to note that in triangulation "the best use of [small-n analysis] is to leverage its distinct complementarities with [large-n analysis], not to try to implement it with the exact same procedures as one would carry out regression analysis" (Lieberman 2005, 440). In this sense, the small-n analyses also allowed me to observe the mechanisms (in my case, mechanisms of socialization) that connected the independent and dependent variables, aiding my understanding of historical sequence and causal process (McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly 2001).

In a most-different paired comparison (Przeworski and Teune 1970), I chose Poland and Slovenia. Among the aspects of the analyses in Step 1 that stood out was the positioning of these historically Catholic states

on opposite ends of the spectrum in terms of legal standing and societal attitudes towards LGBT people among new EU member states.[14] Both of these cases were well predicted by the large-n models and had variation on the explanatory and dependent variables. I also studied Germany and the EU as "norm entrepreneur" cases, since I identified them as sources of horizontal and vertical diffusion, respectively. These cases served as springboards for activism in Central and Eastern Europe. They illustrated how ideas moved from the EU and Germany to Poland and Slovenia, with activists using resources available to them in one context to mobilize in another (Ayoub 2013a).

As addressed in the section on the challenges of triangulation, selecting cases in this manner required thinking about feasibility and the time required to gather the skills necessary to conduct the analysis.[15] Before starting my PhD coursework, I had BA and MA degrees in European politics that provided familiarity with the region and in-depth knowledge (language and history) on a few specific cases. There were other representative cases that—like Germany—contained activists supporting LGBT activism outside their borders. I chose Germany because of my fluency in German and because of the state's geographic location to the new EU member states, making it a sound choice for study, both in terms of theory and *feasibility*. I also had enough preliminary large-n data results to anticipate the positioning of the Polish case early on, and started studying the Polish language (2008–11) at the beginning of my PhD training. This was enabled in large part through three Foreign Language and Area Studies grants on Polish language and history. I did not, however, have the time or resources to learn Slovenian. Fortunately, the *transnational* LGBT activists I was interested in usually worked in English (and sometimes German). There were, however, occasions where I

p. 81 had to have an ↳ interpreter accompany me to interviews, which generated additional financial burdens.

Alongside some archival research of movement documents, most of the data for the qualitative analysis in Step 2 was derived from two methods:

82 *Semi-structured interviews* with domestic and transnational LGBT advocates, policymakers (EU and domestic), and movement opponents;[16]

Participant observation at strategic activist meetings and conferences, and political demonstrations and marches for and against LGBT Rights.

To conduct this research, I spent a total of 25 months in the field, beginning with two preliminarily research trips in 2008 and 2009, followed by the extensive research stay between the summers of 2010 and 2012.

Most interviews—ranging between 45 minutes and four hours—were with organizers at LGBT rights advocacy groups and policymakers who work on the issue at hand. These interviews investigated several questions falling under the central research problem I was analyzing. For example concerning the transnational ties between actors and the types of local obstacles that they face. Do domestic LGBT organizations focus on instigating change through their national governments, or do they look to Brussels to influence change from above; and what percentage of their initiatives focus on each level? How much do actors rely on external aid and expertise? What are the various state responses to activism? Among which segments of society does resistance to LGBT rights originate? These questions, only roughly presented here, shed light on the conditions that have led to divergent outcomes across the cases. The interviews also helped me to understand the causal processes. To deal with potential endogeneity concerns in the large-n, I asked several questions geared towards understanding the sequencing of external support, in relation to domestic activism and change. I selected and interviewed organizers from the universe of transnational LGBT rights organizations.[17] Then, using snowball-sampling techniques, I was able to identify a sample of opposition groups and individual policymakers who opposed the introduction of LGBT rights norms, whom I approached for further interviews. The purpose of this set of interviews was to observe the strategies and rationales underlying the opposition towards liberalization and to supplement the information I obtained from LGBT rights groups.

Participant observation also helped me understand the strategies and inner workings of the movement. It centered around two types of events. First, I attended LGBT strategic activist meetings and conferences, including the 2010 and 2011 ILGA-Europe Annual Meetings, the 2011 Organization for Cooperation and Security in Europe meeting, the 2010 EuroPride Warsaw conference, a 2013 US State Department international meeting on transgender rights, and several activist workshops. Issues covered at these

meetings ↳ included the tactics behind transnational LGBT activism in Europe, comprising strategic litigation, organizing demonstrations, and creating synergy in transnational cooperation. Participant observation also informed my analysis by allowing me to listen to and interact with various representatives from states where I did not schedule formal interviews, thereby providing additional valuable information to contextualize the findings of the large-n analysis. Second, I invested time in attending numerous political demonstrations, parades, and marches, both by proponents and opponents of LGBT rights. These included events that targeted their own states and those that drew attention to LGBT repression in foreign states.

Finally, in an additional step towards the end of my fieldwork, I conducted an original online expert survey of the 291 transnational LGBT organizations in Europe. This was not originally planned, but the large-n data collection had produced a rich dataset that identified these organizations, as well as the contact information for the organizational leadership. I wanted to further crosscheck my interviews by additionally collecting representative data that I could use to support the claims I was making based on the statistical and interview data. I thus asked a series of 20 questions—related to my interview questions—to get answers, from which I was able to produce descriptive statistics that showed how the responses of activists compared across the region. This provided a unique opportunity to visualize several important issues related to my research problem, such as the perceived long-term success of the anti-LGBT resistance in various national contexts, or the effect of external resources on domestic socio-legal outcomes.

Taken together, the triangular large-n and small-n research design used in this example followed a pragmatic, problem-driven approach to scholarship, in which the pursuit of understanding complex realities drives the selection of methods (Sil and Katzenstein 2010). By explicating multiple methods of comparative research, the data are crosschecked using numerous sources to increase the robustness of the findings. The quantitative analysis illuminated the general trends I observed in the diffusion of LGBT rights. Next, the qualitative analysis helped me test the model and explain the mechanisms of diffusion. Combined, I am confident that the various methods I employed shed new light on the processes behind the diffusion of and resistance to LGBT rights norms in various domestic contexts.

United States Immigrant Rights Activism

(Wallace and Zepeda-Millán writing): Our initial interests in social movements and, more specifically, the

US immigrant rights movement was also ↳ rooted in personal experiences, as we both come from immigrant families and were involved in immigrant rights activism. Our collaboration using triangulation has resulted in several article-length manuscripts, in addition to a larger ongoing book project. However, here we will focus on one primary example that combines survey and spatial data with interview data (Wallace et al. 2014).

Questions, Conceptualization, and Method

The primary research questions in our work ask what are the temporal, spatial, and magnitude effects of protests on Latino political attitudes, representation, and identity. At the outset of the project we had not predetermined which research methods would be utilized or that the study would be mixed-methods. Rather, through the research process, it became apparent that we would need to utilize an emergent sequential design because of issues that arose in the quantitative analysis. As previously explained, "emergent mixed methods designs generally occur when a second approach (quantitative or qualitative) is added after the study is underway because one method is found to be inadequate" (Creswell and Clark 2011, 54). Following Creswell and Clark's (2011) explanatory design procedures, we first conducted the quantitative analysis in phase one, and then identified specific quantitative results that we wanted to explain more specifically in the second phase.

The data for this project was collected over two primary phases: a quantitative phase with survey data and a qualitative phase with interview data that was directly informed by the results of the first phase. Additionally the timing between stages was significant. Before and during the 2006 immigrant protest wave, Zepeda-Millán constructed a list from movement websites of where local immigrant rights demonstrations were being planned. After the protest wave began, he then reviewed newspaper articles online to confirm that these local protests had actually occurred, and to add locations that were reported as having marches but were not on his initial list of planned demonstrations. During the execution of his dissertation research, Zepeda-Millán conducted over 125 interviews with immigrant rights activists in the West Coast, East Coast, and Southern United States. His interview instrument included questions regarding organizing tactics and strategies, coalitions, goals, motivations for participation, and the role of the Spanish- and English-language media in the mobilization process. This qualitative data would prove to be extremely useful in future work with Wallace, as it was later used to help develop the theory and explain our statistical findings in our article on the effects of protests on Latino attitudes towards government (Wallace et al. 2014). ↵

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Zepeda-Millán's original dataset contained a date, estimate of number of participants, and the protest location city and state. Near the completion of our dissertations, we began to expand the number of observations in Zepeda-Millán's initial dataset. In our Wallace et al. 2014 article (co-written with Michael Jones-Correa) using this data, we sought to analyze the impact of spatial, temporal, and magnitude components of the 2006 immigrant rights protest wave on attitudes towards government by combining our newly created *2006 Immigrant Protest-Event Dataset* with the 2006 Latino National Survey (LNS). We combined the quantitative data with qualitative interview data to build the theory and explain interesting quantitative results more fully. This was an appropriate design for our project because our goals were to "assess trends and relationships with quantitative data but also be able to explain the mechanism or reasons behind the resultant trends," as recommended by Creswell and Clark (2011) when choosing an explanatory design (p. 82). The research design exemplifies what Creswell and Clark (2011) identify as one of the main strengths of the explanatory sequential designs: it allowed us to design the second phase "based on what is learned from the initial quantitative phase" (p. 83).

Step 1: Quantitative Analysis

The first phase consisted of survey data that we merged with our protest data set along with newly created temporal and spatial measures. The LNS was conducted in 17 states between November 2005 and August 2006. Interviews were conducted by phone and respondents were given the option to take the survey in Spanish or English. The instrument contained over 160 survey items. The LNS survey instrument contained an exact date of interview in the general data. Critically, this information allowed us to measure respondents' distance to protests in terms of time and space. One distinct advantage of our analysis over other work examining social movements and political attitudes is that the LNS was in the field before, during, and after the protest cycle. This allowed us to assess how the protests impacted political attitudes over the course of the protest wave.

Our *2006 Immigrant Protest–Event Dataset* also built on a previous collection of the 2006 protest events (Bada et al. 2006) by substantially expanding the number of protest observations and the specific information regarding each demonstration. To be confident in the validity of our dataset, we utilized newspaper archives to find at least one article to substantiate the details of each protest observation (both in the Bada et al. dataset and our own original dataset). For each protest event, we also identified the specific geographical street address, city, zip code, and state information, as well as the number of participants and the date of the event. In all, we verified and collected data on a total of 357 immigrant protest events that took place in 2006.[18]

The first protest in our new dataset occurred on February 14, 2006, and the final series of demonstrations culminated on May 1, 2006. The protests were widely dispersed across the country, taking place in both urban and rural places. Figure 4.1 maps the geographic locations of the protests, with the size of the circles reflecting the number of participants. Figure 4.2 depicts the distribution of the protest cycle in terms of both the number of protests and the number of participants.
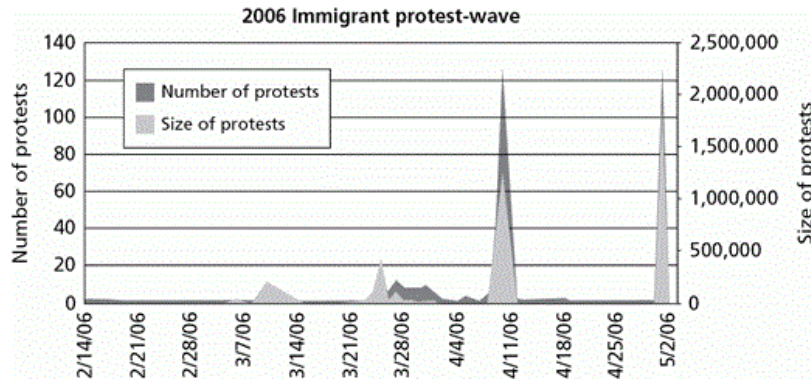
Figure 4.1

Immigrant Rights Marches by Location and Number of Participants During Spring 2006

Source: Wallace, Sophia J. Chris Zepeda-Millán, and Michael Jones-Correa 2014. "Spatial and Temporal Proximity: Examining the Effects of Protests on Political Attitudes," American Journal of Political Science 58(2): 433–48.

Figure 4.2

Number and Size of Protests Over the Immigrant Rights Protest-Wave

Source: Wallace, Sophia J. Chris Zepeda-Millán, and Michael Jones-Correa 2014. "Spatial and Temporal Proximity: Examining the Effects of Protests on Political Attitudes," *American Journal of Political Science* 58(2): 433–48.

To examine the effects of protests on political attitudes, we merged the LNS and the protest dataset to calculate the distance between respondents and the demonstration using GIS. We used the address information of LNS respondents to calculate their exact distance to every protest location. This level of specificity in the space measures was a significant strength of this project because it allowed us to precisely assess the impact of proximity of the protest events on respondents' political attitudes. The raw distance measures for each respondent were then used to create summary measures to capture time, space, and magnitude—that is, the timing of the protest event, its distance from each respondent, and the size of the event. The first measure, *Large Protest*, captures whether a large protest with over 10,000 participants occurred before the date of interview of the respondent and within 100 miles of their address. The second, *Number of Small Protests*, counted the number of protests, which were under 10,000 participants in size, occurring in the 30 days preceding each respondent's interview within a 100-mile radius. Since our theory hinged on the difference between the effects of large versus small protests because of possible differences in messages received, it was necessary to have two protest measures that categorized exposure to protests in this manner. These two measures of respondents' spatial and temporal proximity to protest events captured respondents' relative exposure to protests and were central to our statistical analysis. The results of the statistical models indicated that the number of small protests near respondents had a strong impact on their positive attitudes towards government. Second, and somewhat counter-intuitively, we found that large protests were correlated with *lower* feelings of efficacy.

Step 2: Qualitative Analysis

To make sense of these findings, the second phase of the analysis is the "interface for mixing" of the methods, where the quantitative analysis directly informs the qualitative portion of the project (Creswell and Clark 2011, 83). Because English-language media consumption was significant in most of our models and we found different effects for large versus small protests, we wanted to explore the quantitative results using qualitative data and analysis. To do so, we turned to Zepeda-Millán's interviews, which had

information about the role of the media in the mobilization process throughout the country. The interview

data became essential in explaining the quantitative results. Without it, we would have only been able to guess at possible explanations for our statistical findings. Instead, we were able to flesh out the findings with the interview data to construct a strong theoretical explanation for our results.

The results from our analysis of this qualitative data suggested that a possible reason for the differing impacts of the protest measures may be explained by the contrasting movement frames people were exposed to by small versus large protests. The interview data indicated that via the mass media, Latinos in locations with big protests were likely exposed to not just the patriotic messaging of the mainstream movement, but also to the anti-systemic frames of radical activists. This exposure to a counter-narrative of the marches (intra-movement frame disputes) may have made Latinos more skeptical of government and their ability to achieve change through mainstream politics. In contrast, Latinos exposed to frequent smaller protests were more likely to adopt a more optimistic view of government because a more unified "pro-America" master frame dominated in these locales. Our qualitative data also suggested another possible factor in explaining our results. Interviews with protest organizers indicated that English-language media consumption of Latinos being correlated with more negative views of government could be because English news outlets were often much more critical of the protests (from highlighting divisions in the movement to accusing the marchers of being unpatriotic). Thus, our findings showed that Latinos who had higher levels of English-language media consumption displayed higher levels of political alienation, which was perhaps the result of biased media coverage by English news outlets. ↳

While we found this research design to ultimately prove very beneficial in exploring the relationship between protests and attitudes towards government, the two-phase design implemented here does take considerable time to conduct. In our case, the data was collected over several years, in part due to the nature of the phenomenon being measured (a protest wave that occurred during the spring of 2006), but also due to the number of different types of quantitative and qualitative data necessary to conduct the research project. Yet despite this challenge, we contend that for our specific research questions, the adoption of a mixed-methods research design was critical in fully explaining the phenomenon at hand. The qualitative phase of the project was critical to executing the research project and was necessary to explain the quantitative data, which is a key attribute of exploratory designs (Creswell and Clark 2011, 83).

Because we did not fully explore the media-variable findings in Wallace et al. 2014, we have adopted an emergent and exploratory research design for our subsequent work in this area beyond the example we have discussed at length in this chapter. In response to our initial findings, we decided to pursue future research projects in this area to continue exploring important mechanisms. For example, in conjunction with a team of research assistants, we collected newspaper articles on the protests in both national and local newspapers in areas where a large number of protests had occurred and/or where interviews with activists had taken place. Our intent is to use this collection of media sources to conduct both qualitative and quantitative content analysis of the themes, language, and frequency of coverage and combine this data with the larger quantitative data set.

In addition, during her dissertation, Wallace collected quantitative data on immigration legislation in the US Congress and legislative behavior of representatives across a variety of types of activity that occurred during the congressional session that encompassed the 2006 protest wave. At the time, her intent was to use the data primarily to explain how the race and ethnicity of members of Congress, alongside district racial and ethnic demographics, played a role in legislative behavior, which was the focus of her dissertation. Subsequently, she is using this data in combination with both qualitative interview data from Zepeda-Millán, and the expanded quantitative protest data set constructed by her and Zepeda-Millán, to examine the effect of the 2006 immigrant rights protests in congressional districts on the specific representative's legislative behavior of that district and those in adjoining districts. This is yet another way in which the two researchers have combined their methodological skills and data to create mixed-methods projects. These additional examples are beyond the focus of our primary example; however, they exemplify how mixed-methods approaches can be utilized to continue to build and expand on the original study. ↳

Strategies for Publishing Triangulation Research

After the analysis is complete, another area of difficulty facing researchers employing triangulation concerns publication. First, combining different types of data and utilizing a mixed-methods approach in cohesive manuscripts for publication that conform to journal article length requirements is challenging. Over time, academic peer-reviewed journals in political science have increasingly moved towards shorter and shorter page or word allocations. For example, the *American Journal of Political Science* has a strict word limit of 8,500 words that includes all tables, figures, and footnotes.[19] *The Journal of Politics* has a page limit of 35 pages inclusive of all tables, figures, and references.[20] In contrast, many outlets in sociology are much more lenient on these issues. For example, the *American Journal of Sociology* does not have a formal word limit but discourages papers over 10,000 words, the *American Sociological Review* has a more generous limit of 15,000 words, and *Mobilization* allows submissions of 40 pages, not including tables and figures. Other interdisciplinary journal outlets, such as the *Journal of Racial and Ethnic Studies*, have a word limit of 8,000 words, possibly indicating that movement towards shorter manuscripts may become more common across all disciplines.

The shorter word/page limits pose serious challenges for researchers engaged in triangulation because they must describe and explain all of their sources of data and findings in detail. Unlike those who utilize a single method, mixed-method studies necessitate more prose to fulfill the basic requirements of a sound research manuscript. Nonetheless, both types of studies (single and mixed-method) must conform to the same word/page limits. Qualitative scholars are already familiar with this dilemma, particularly those who use interviews and focus groups due to the incorporation of quotations from participants. Thus, mixed-methods researchers using multiple types of qualitative data or quantitative data face a doubly challenging task of conforming to journal article length limits.

One practical solution to short page allocations, while likely not ideal for authors in terms of how they might envision their work in its most cohesive form, is to create an additional supplementary appendix. While traditionally viewed as a place to document additional statistical tests and tables, an appendix can be used to further explain issues and complexity in the data or to provide additional description of case studies, interviews, or operationalization of concepts and variables. In some of our own works, all of the authors here have had to add appendices that contained a supplemental discussion of measurement issues, along with tables of additional statistical analyses to convince reviewers of the robustness of their research design and findings. ↳ Since reviewers often asked for some of this information anyway, they found this useful as a solution to work around the journal's word/page limit.

This brings us to another serious challenge that mixed-methods researchers face during the publication process, which is bias towards one method and hostility towards others by both reviewers and journals. This is by no means widespread in every journal, since many newer journals such as the *European Political Science Review* and *Politics, Groups, and Identities (PGI),* embrace methodological pluralism as a direct result of discord over methodologies that erupted in the 1990s and early 2000s. Outlets such as the *Journal of Mixed Methods Research* are explicitly aimed at publishing articles focused on the methodology of mixed methods. Additionally, other established journals, such as *Mobilization* or *International Migration Review,* are explicitly interdisciplinary and welcome methodological pluralism as well. However, certain outlets in political science have been slower to change or have become increasingly restrictive to favor quantitative work, and sometimes eschew mixed-methods work. Scholars using triangulation herald the analytical benefits of engaging multiple types of data; however, it is not uncommon for single-method scholars to be hostile to "rival" modes of data collection and analysis. For instance, there may be scholars who are wedded to regression or experiments and, consequently, become skeptical of all research that does not employ these methodological approaches. Encountering at least one reviewer of this type is likely in a set of three or more

reviewers, which can lead to a set of mixed reviews, where some reviewers support the use of mixed methods while others dislike it.

This is problematic for scholars of triangulation because by definition their work employs multiple methods and often crosses the quantitative versus qualitative divide. One reviewer may respond critically by asking authors to remove sections of the paper—or ask for an entire over haul of the research design—to eliminate the method to which they object, while another praises it. Worse yet, a reviewer may reject the work on the basis of the use of multiple methods or employing one that the reviewer views negatively. Similarly, some editors may still demonstrate the same bias, rejecting work for publication that does not seem to fit their journal in terms of methodology, or rejecting work when faced with reviews offering conflicting views. Practically, authors can address these issues in several ways. Since scholars who use triangulation are problem-driven and not methods-driven, like many of the potential negative reviewers and editors, authors must take great care to address methodological concerns, but not alter their research design in an attempt to please these types of reviewers.

First, authors must foresee that some reviewers may be skeptical of multiple methods and in particular the collection of a considerable amount of new data that is "less tested" than known datasets. With this in

p. 91   mind, authors can dedicate space in both the main body of the manuscript and in ↳ a supplementary appendix to provide extensive detail regarding the methods, measurements, concepts, and variables employed and utilized. Second, authors should also take care to demonstrate additional testing and address potential methodological concerns, both in text and in footnotes.

Third, authors can carefully select journals for submission based on the types of work that have been published in them, the current editorial team, and respective methodological philosophies. Some journals may demonstrate a low frequency of publishing mixed-methods research; however, they may be receptive to a paper if the findings are particularly strong, counter-intuitive, address an important and timely topic, or employ at least one methodology or type of data that is acutely attractive to the current editorial team. Authors must reflect on these questions honestly prior to submission due to the reality of publication bias against certain types of methodology and areas of inquiry, especially in light of increasing lag times in publication. Authors can review past journal issues to examine published work in addition to using networks of senior scholars who are aware of the reputations of individuals, editorial teams, and journals, and their respective philosophies on these issues. Similarly, the strategic use of reviewer requests to specifically disallow an individual from reviewing the manuscript can be an important tool in limiting access to a likely substantive reviewer who possesses a methodological bias against mixed-methods work. The challenges outlined here facing scholars employing triangulation are not meant to discourage authors, but rather to provide practical tips in the execution of such research in design, analysis, and ultimately publication.

Conclusion: A Case for Triangulation

Social movements are dynamic affairs in which the most effective activists carefully choose the tools and tactics that fit the strategies they believe will best help them achieve their goals. Movement practitioners plan, act (or react), reflect, and adapt to both expected and unforeseen challenges they encounter as they try to reach their aims. The argument we have attempted to advance in this chapter is that, in many respects, social movement scholars must do the same in our research endeavors. If our objective is to better understand the complex and constantly changing nature of the phenomena we study—contentious politics —then the questions we ask should not be limited by methodological constraints. We must be willing to use and learn multiple ways of collecting the various types of data often required to answer the multifaceted questions we investigate. Our view stems from our own research experiences, which have demonstrated that the answers to the problems we explored would have been incomplete, had we stopped at their respective quantitative or qualitative components. ↳

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Drawing examples from our own work on transnational LGBT rights activism in Europe and immigrant rights activism in the United States, we humbly contend that our research illustrates how the use of triangulation can help us both theoretically and empirically understand dynamic and often-neglected areas of social movement research. Although a division in the kinds of data and methodological strategies used is effective in producing scholars with sound expertise in one area, a sharp divide can also limit the questions one asks. Scholars have multiple tools and models at their disposal (Small 2011, 77). Accordingly, by either solely or jointly attempting to use multiple data sources and collection methods to answer different aspects of vital questions, we students of social movements should push ourselves to be as innovative, flexible, and resourceful as the activists we study.

Notes

1   According to Gaddis (1996, 33), reaching for "science" is a curious goal that reflects nothing more than a bad case of "physics envy."

2   (1) Cases where x (economic development) leads to y (democracy) in some cases but does not have this effect in others, where y is caused by w. (2) Cases where x (social demographic governance) is associated with an increase in y (social spending) at one point in time, but not in another. (3) Increase in x (protest) causes y (government turnover) in some cases but an entirely different outcome (repression) in other cases. (4) Cases where y depends on all v, w, and x (whose values are in turn jointly dependent on each other). (5) Cases with endogenous phenomena, where y leads to x, and x leads to y (Hall 2003, 381).

3   The fundamental aspect of comparison is control: the ability to remove alternative explanations. As one moves up the ladder of abstraction s/he loses control, which narrows the question.

4   Within the EU-27, the large-n analyses thus also included two subgroups as a heuristic device to think of diffusion: the new EU-12 member states (2004 and 2007 waves) and the older EU-15 states.

5   In this example, it was not necessary to revert to this model-building step. Refer to Lieberman (2005) for helpful suggestions if this is necessary.

6   This is a good way to deal with the problem of selection bias. Geddes (1990) discusses the danger of selecting on the dependent variable, which can introduce systematic error (for a response to Geddes that is intended for the qualitative researcher, see Collier and Mahoney 1996).

7   For example, the work of Kees Waaldijk (2009) and ILGA-Europe on the status of LGBT legislation.

8   See <http://globalization.kof.ethz.ch//> for data (accessed March 21, 2014) (Dreher, Gaston, and Martens 2008).

9   See <http://www.systemicpeace.org/inscr/inscr.htm> for data (accessed March 21, 2014) (Marshall, Jaggers, and Gurr 2010).

10   See <http://pwt.econ.upenn.edu/php_site/pwt_index.php> for data (accessed March 21, 2014) (Heston, Summers, and Aten 2011).

11   See Eurostat 2011, <http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/nuts_nomenclature/introduction> (accessed March 21, 2014).

12   To construct this measure, I corresponded the regional variable (x048) associated with each respondent's address in the European Values Survey dataset with the regions with Nomenclature of Units for Territorial Statistics (NUTS) data.

13   Diagnostics tests included correlations between predictors and variance inflation factors (for multicollinearity); residual plots, the Breusch Pagan and the White's Test (for heteroskedasticity); LOESS regression plots, Ramsey's Regression Specification Error Test, and Extreme Bounds Analysis (for model specification); and calculating hat values, internally and externally studentized residuals, and accessing DFITS, DFBETA, and COVRATIO results (for leverage, outliers, and influential data points) (for a basic example on model selection and diagnostics, see Ayoub 2010, 470 footnote 8).

14   Consistent with case selection guidelines, I have variation on the dependent variable (Geddes 1990; Collier and Mahoney 1996). The Polish experience stood in contrast to that of Slovenia, as Slovenian social attitudes have changed at a remarkably accelerated pace. While there have been few legal changes in Poland, Slovenia—along with the Czech Republic—also extends the most far-reaching LGBT rights laws among the EU-12, including protections that surpass those of many older member states.

15   I took eight courses in methodology and language at Cornell (including a course in "Methods for Field Research"). Outside of Cornell, I sought out specialized quantitative and qualitative training by attending the Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research's (ICPSR) and the IQMR. In 2008, I participated in a workshop hosted by the Institute for Human Social Sciences that focused on Polish identity and culture. I also spent summers complementing my language courses with intensive summer immersion programs.

16   While the bulk of the qualitative research focused on my case studies (Germany, Poland, Slovenia, and the European institutions), I also interviewed actors from Belgium, the Czech Republic, Croatia, Estonia, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Malta, Portugal, Slovakia, Spain, and Turkey. The additional interviews were used to yield contextual information. Some were complementary cases, in which I wanted to see that the processes related to those in Poland and Slovenia were occurring; others were outlier cases that were off the regression line and needed further contextualization.

17   I followed a strategy of first e-mailing potential interviewees. If I did not receive a response after a second reminder e-mail, I followed up by telephoning them or visiting their organizations. Often personal interaction was more likely to yield an interview than an e-mail.

18   Our protest data includes 106 more events than the earlier Bada et al. (2006) table of protest events. Similar to Bada et al., our dataset does not include counter-(anti-immigrant) protests which might have taken place at the time.

19   <http://ajps.org/guidelines-for-manuscripts/> (accessed March 21, 2014).

20   <http://www.journalofpolitics.org/instructions-to-authors> (accessed March 21, 2014).

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