

In-person session 14

November 29, 2021

PMAP 8521: Program evaluation
Andrew Young School of Policy Studies

Plan for today

Control variables and confounding

Ethics + pre-analysis plans

Sharing your stuff

Simulating data

Control variables and confounding

Why do we teach stats with the idea of throwing in a bunch of control variables if that's really not the best way to evaluate impact?

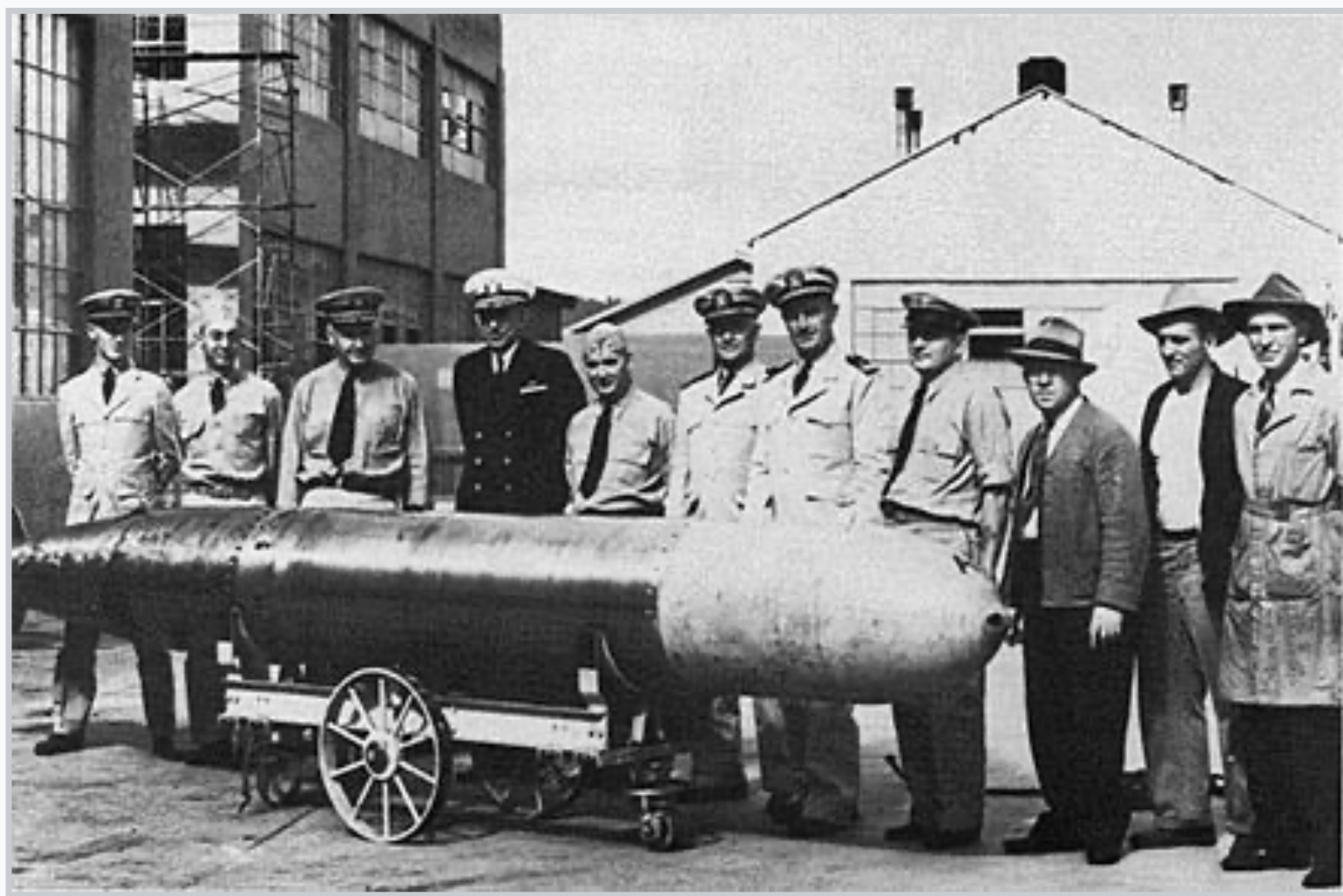
What is the point of using control variables if they aren't going to be interpreted?

When do we or when do we not interpret our controls?

How can you NOT have unobserved confounders unless you're doing a laboratory study where you can control everything?

**Design-based inference seems easier since
there's no unobserved confounding?**

Why don't we just do that all the time?



Ethics + pre-analysis plans

**Do people really provide all their code
and analysis in advance?
What if you realize you made a mistake
or want to explore something later?**

**Does pre-registration kill
creativity and "ah-ha" moments?**

**Example of confirmatory vs.
exploratory preregistration**

Standard operating procedures

Sharing your stuff

**What can we put
on our resumes now?**

**Can I really just post R stuff
on a website or on Twitter?**

**It seems like that's what
the experts do, not me!**

(Public work)

Websites for sharing R stuff

Super easiest (but least flexible): **RPubs**

Easiest (but less flexible): **R Markdown websites**

Example; example

Medium-est: **Distill**

Example

Hardest (but most flexible): **Blogdown**

Example; example

Simulating data

Basic process

1: Create individual columns

2: Connect columns

3: Polish columns

Iterate. Iterate so so much.