

SOCIAL DATA SCIENCE

DATA VISUALIZATION

Sebastian Barfort

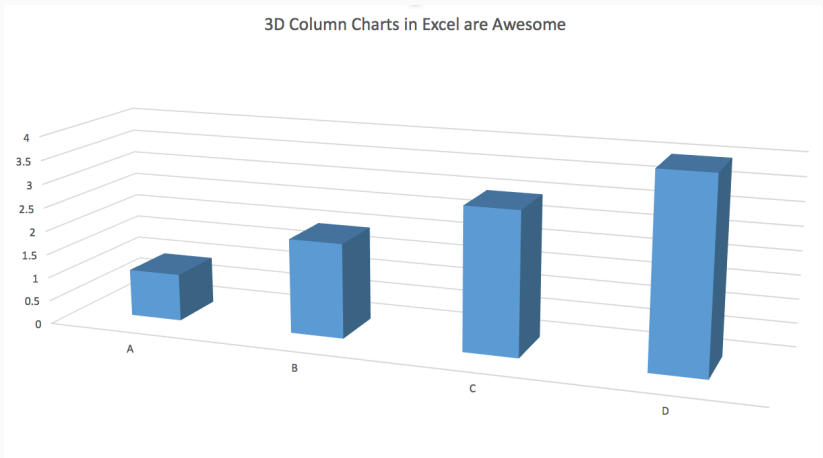
August 04, 2016

University of Copenhagen
Department of Economics

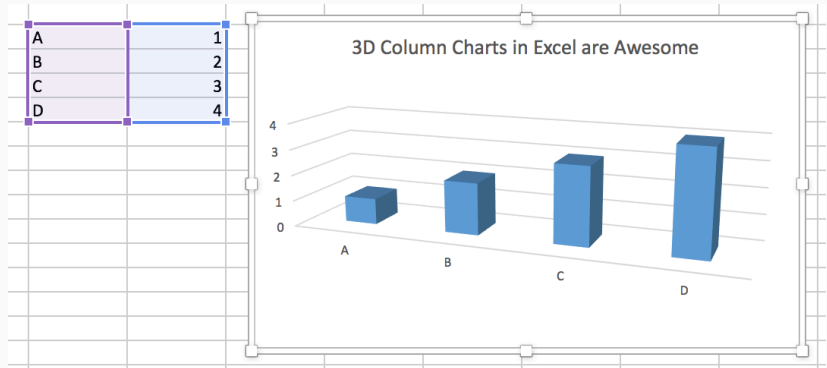
Who's ahead in the polls?



What values are displayed in this chart?



The answer may surprise you



What are you trying to accomplish?

1. Who's the audience?
 - Exploratory (use defaults) vs. explanatory (customize)
 - Raw data vs. model results
2. Graphs should be self explanatory
3. A graph is a narrative - should convey key point(s)

Schwabish (2014)

1. Show the data (many graphs show too much)
2. Reduce the clutter
3. Integrate text and graph

Discuss in groups

1. Look at the eight transformed graphs in Schwabish (2014). What do you think about the transformations?
2. Are there other objectives of data visualization not mentioned by Schwabish?
3. If you were to improve on one of the eight transformed graphs, which one would you choose and how would you change it?

Color palette

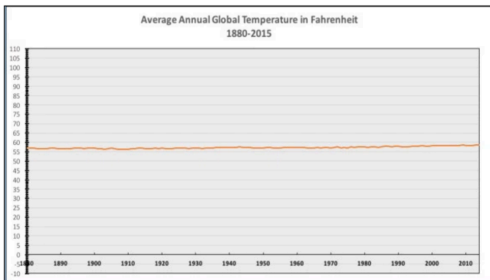
Is your data numeric, binary, categorical, text?

Should you truncate your y axis?

Remember

Visualizing data is not just a matter of good taste

Basic perceptual processes play a very strong role



NR National Review ✓
@NRO

Follow

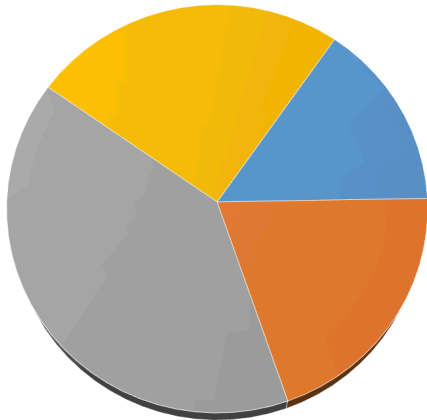
The only #climatechange chart you need to see. natl.re/wPKpro

(h/t @powerlineUS)

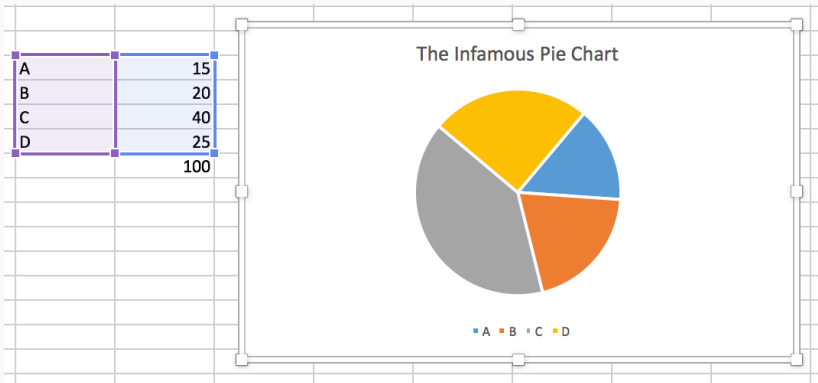
3:36 PM - 14 Dec 2015

↩ 413 ❤ 318

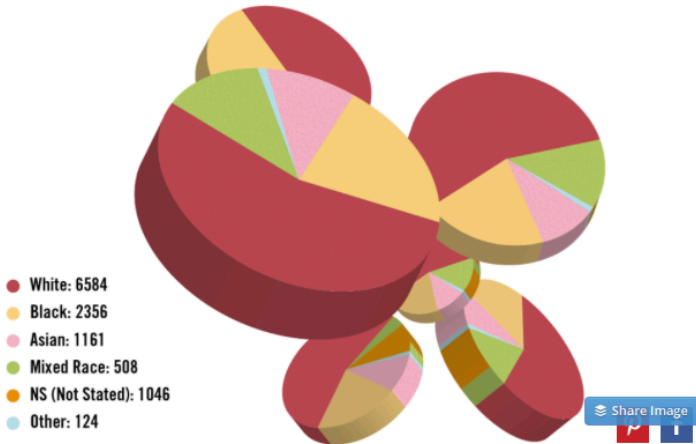
The Infamous Pie Chart



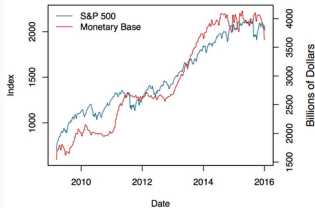
■ A ■ B ■ C ■ D



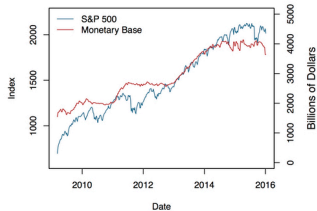
Convictions in England and Wales for class A drug supply.



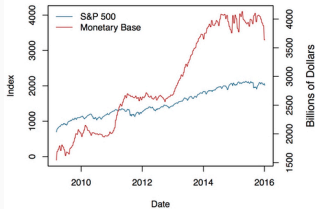
Original



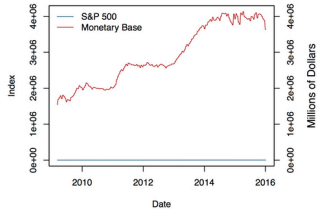
Start y2 at zero



Start y1 at zero, max both at max y2



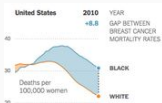
Both on the same scale



Small multiples

Tufte

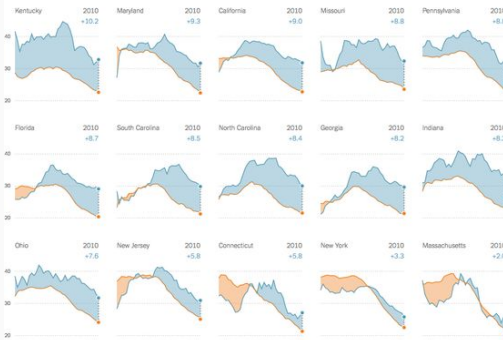
“Illustrations of postage-stamp size are indexed by category or a label, sequenced over time like the frames of a movie, or ordered by a quantitative variable not used in the single image itself.”



Note: Rates calculated as a five year moving average. States shown have at least 16 breast cancer deaths for both races in each year.

A Stark Gap in Breast Cancer Deaths

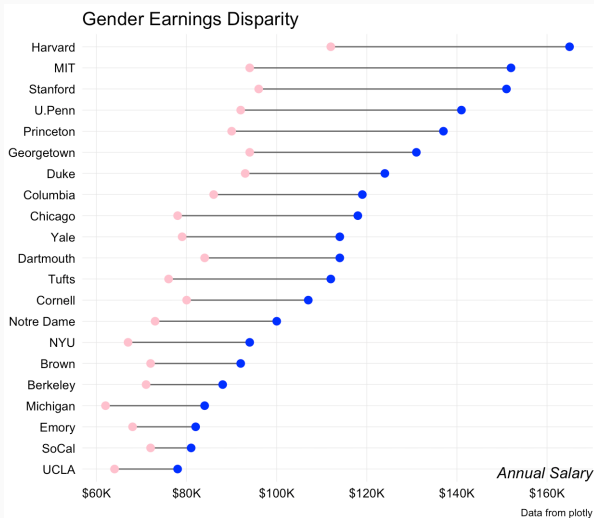
The difference in mortality rates between black women and white women with breast cancer has widened since 1975, in part because black women have not benefited as much from improvements in screening and treatment. Among the states with available data, Tennessee has the largest gap. Massachusetts, where the rates have converged, has the smallest.



Source: National Cancer Institute

By ALASTAIR DANT, HANNAH FAIRFIELD AND KAREN YOURISH

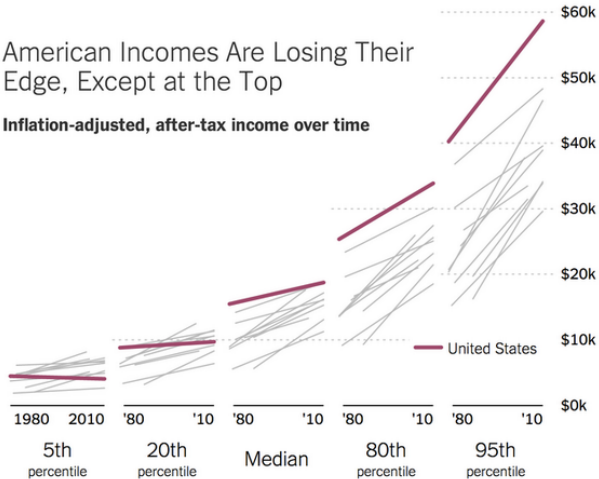
“LOLLIPOPS” AND “DUMBBELLS”



SLOPEGRAPHS

American Incomes Are Losing Their Edge, Except at the Top

Inflation-adjusted, after-tax income over time



Static

1. Base R
2. `lattice`
3. `ggplot2`

Interactive

1. D3 (javascript)
2. `htmlwidgets` (R)
3. Tableau (commercial)

ggplot2

Positives

- Great defaults
- Intuitive
- Extremely well documented

Negatives

- Slow
- Limited functionality

`ggplot2` is based on the grammar of graphics, the idea that you can build every graph from the same few components: a dataset, a set of geoms—visual marks that represent data points, and a coordinate system

You start with your data, and then you assign a geometry to elements of that data, such as circle size to population, then you draw those geometries based upon some scaling of your data. When you think about visualization this way it helps you develop a better understanding of the data itself and think of proper ways to visualize it.

The Pew Research Center did an **interesting visualization** of political polarization in the U.S.

Polarization

The new survey finds that as ideological consistency has become more common, it has become increasingly aligned with partisanship. Looking at 10 political values questions tracked since 1994, more Democrats now give uniformly liberal responses, and more Republicans give uniformly conservative responses than at any point in the last 20 years

Bob Rudis **recreated their plot** in **ggplot2**. Let's see how.

Political Polarization, 1994-2014

The interactive below illustrates the shift since 1994, using data from five Pew Research Center surveys. In addition to viewing results both for the total population and by party, they can be filtered on just the share of Americans (about one-third of the public) who are most politically active.

See results for:

GENERAL POPULATION

POLITICALLY ACTIVE

OVERALL

BY PARTY

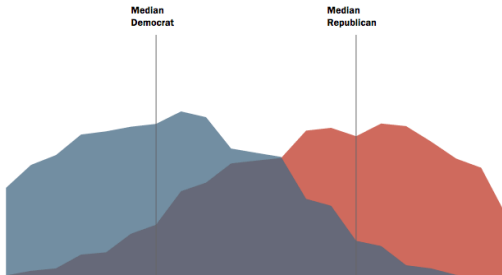
Animate data from 1994-2014

Year shown:

2014

View an individual year:

2014



ggplot works by building your plot piece by piece

First we need to load some data into R ([link here](#))

```
library("readr")  
df = read_csv("https://raw.githubusercontent.com/sebasti  
names(df)
```

```
## [1] "x"      "year"   "party"  "pct"
```



```
names(df)
```

```
## [1] "x"      "year"   "party"  "pct"
```

```
knitr::kable(head(df))
```

x	year	party	pct
-10	1994	Dem	0.57
-9	1994	Dem	1.60
-8	1994	Dem	1.89
-7	1994	Dem	3.49
-6	1994	Dem	3.96
-5	1994	Dem	6.56

`ggplot` works by building your plot piece by piece

Then we tell `ggplot` what pieces of the data frame we are interested in

We create an object called `p` containing this information

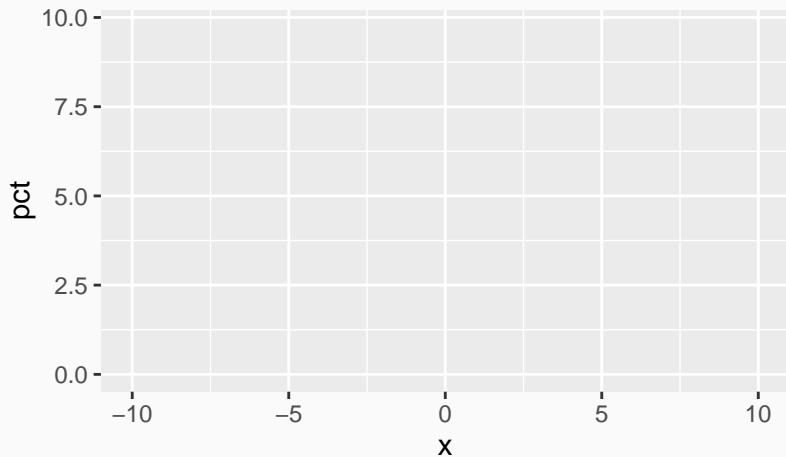
Here, `x = x` and `y = pct` say what will go on the x and the y axes

These are **aesthetic** mappings that connect pieces of the data to things we can actually see on a plot.

```
library("ggplot2")  
p = ggplot(data = df, aes(x = x, y = pct))
```

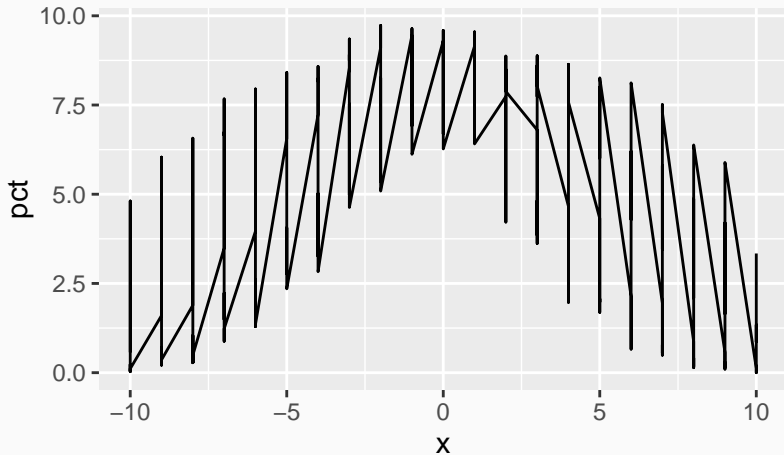
AESTHETICS, BUT NO GEOMS

The plot is so far just a frame with no actual information



LET'S ADD A LINE

```
p + geom_line()
```

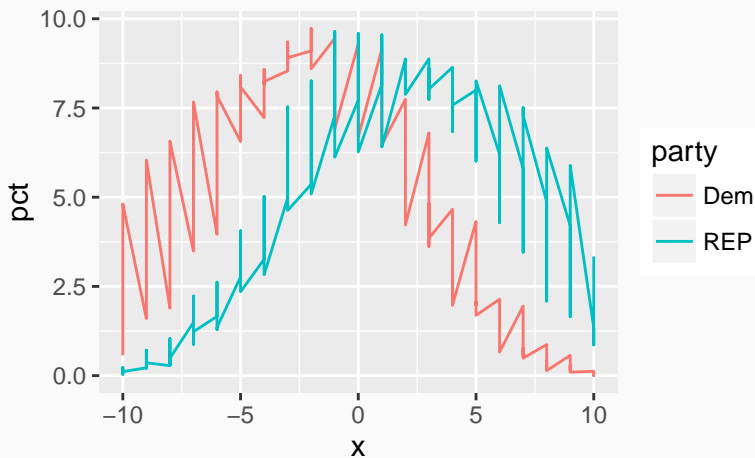


We need to inform `ggplot` that Democrats and Republicans are two separate groups.

This can be done using `fill`, `groups`, `shape`, `size` or `color`.

```
p = ggplot(data = df,  
           aes(x = x, y = pct,  
               fill = party, color = party))
```

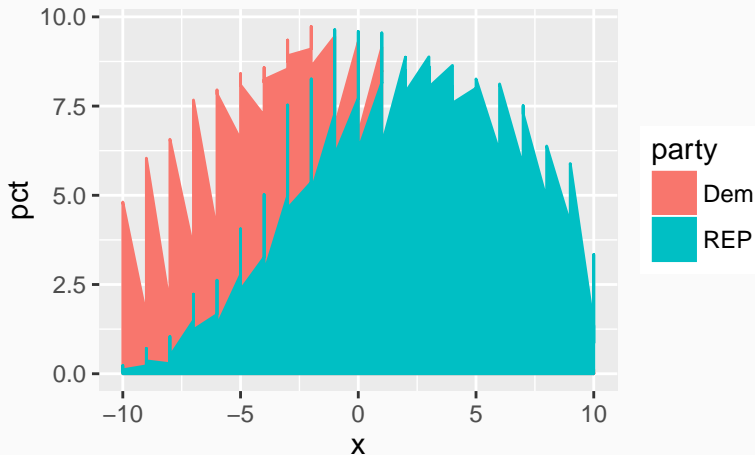
```
p + geom_line()
```



1. Shading below the line
2. Filling should be transparent
3. Custom filling
4. Axes should be modified
5. Subset by year
6. Axis title
7. Background
8. Legend

1. SHADING BELOW THE LINE

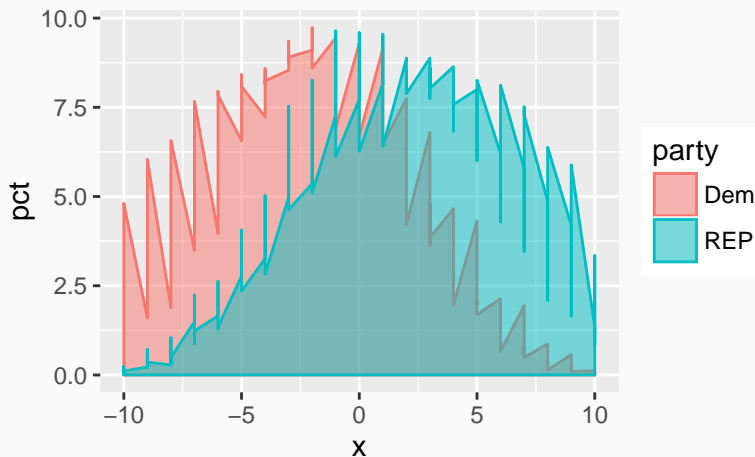
```
p + geom_ribbon(aes(ymin = 0, ymax = pct))
```



2. FILLING SHOULD BE TRANSPARENT

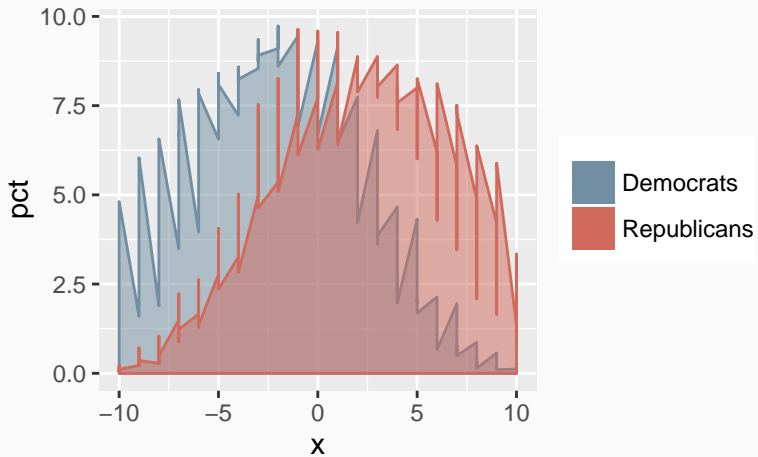
```
p = p + geom_ribbon(aes(ymin = 0, ymax = pct),  
                    alpha = .5)
```

p



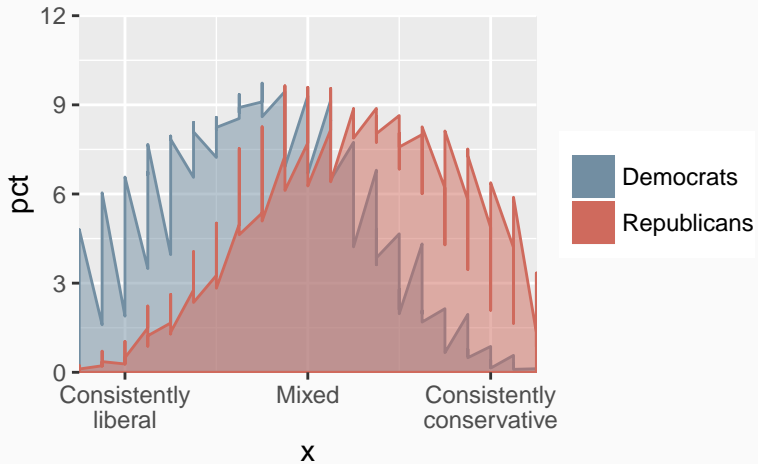
3. CUSTOM FILLING

```
p = p + scale_color_manual(  
  name=NULL,  
  values=c(Dem="#728ea2", REP="#cf6a5d"),  
  labels=c(Dem="Democrats", REP="Republicans")) +  
  scale_fill_manual(  
    name=NULL,  
    values=c(Dem="#728ea2", REP="#cf6a5d"),  
    labels=c(Dem="Democrats", REP="Republicans")) +  
  guides(color="none",  
          fill=guide_legend(override.aes=list(alpha=1)))
```



4. AXES SHOULD BE MODIFIED

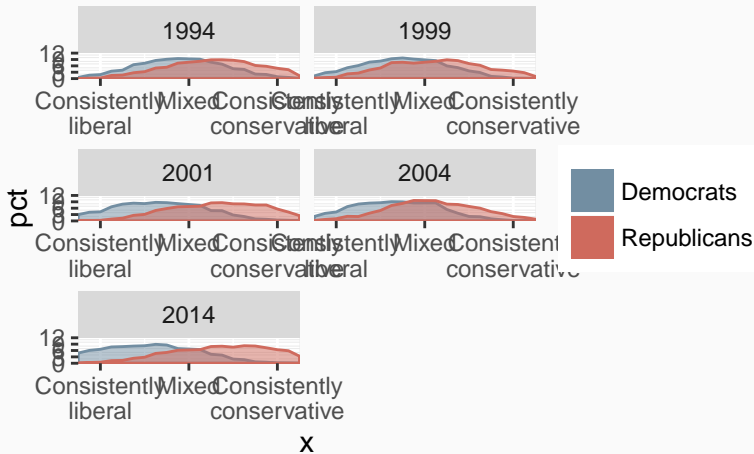
```
p = p +  
  scale_x_continuous(  
    expand = c(0,0), breaks = c(-8, 0, 8),  
    labels= c("Consistently\nliberal", "Mixed",  
              "Consistently\nconservative")) +  
  scale_y_continuous(  
    expand = c(0,0), limits = c(0, 12))
```



5. SUBSET BY YEAR

```
p = p + facet_wrap(~ year, ncol = 2, scales = "free_x")
```

p



6. AXIS TITLE

```
p = p + labs(  
  x=NULL, y=NULL,  
  title =  
  "Political Polarization, 1994-2014 (General Population)"
```

7. BACKGROUND

```
p = p + theme_minimal()
```

8. LEGEND

```
p = p + theme(legend.position=c(0.75, 0.1)) +  
  theme(legend.direction="horizontal") +  
  theme(axis.text.y=element_blank())
```

The output can be seen [here](#).

How do you visualize polls?

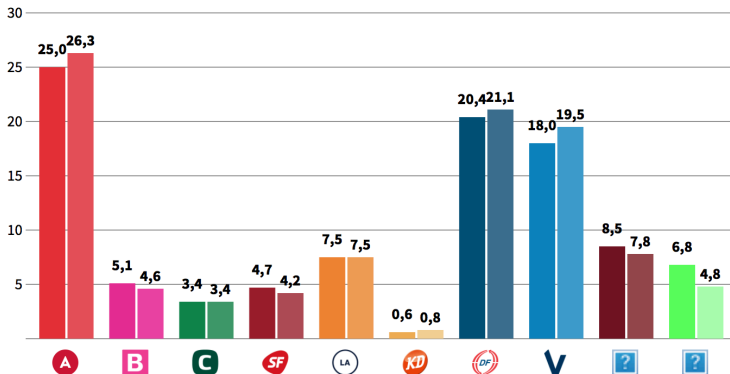
New polls generate a lot of news stories

But much of it is probably noise

How to deal with this visually?

VÆLG MÅLING

VÆGTET GNS. 7. jul. 2016SAMMENLIGNET MED VALGET 18. jun. 2015



A poll is not really a number

It's a **distribution**

Usually, that distribution is normal

So let's draw the distribution

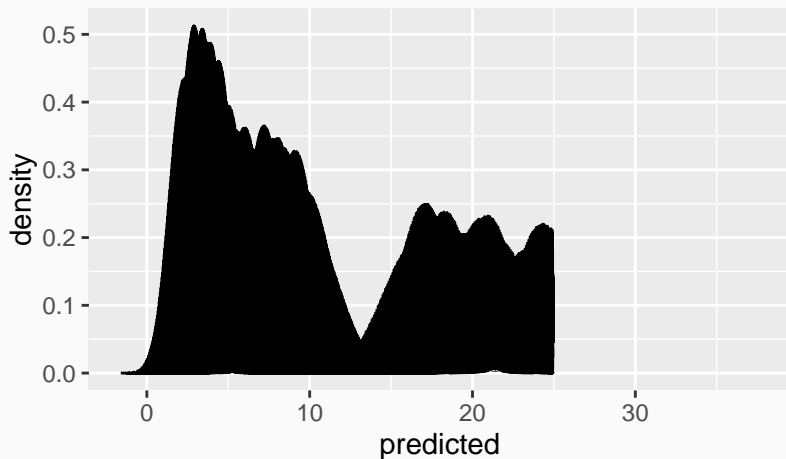
```
library("readr")  
df = read_csv("https://raw.githubusercontent.com/sebasti  
names(df)
```

```
## [1] "predicted"    "density"      "estimate"     "ci"  
## [6] "date"         "pollingfirm"  "alpha"        "group"
```

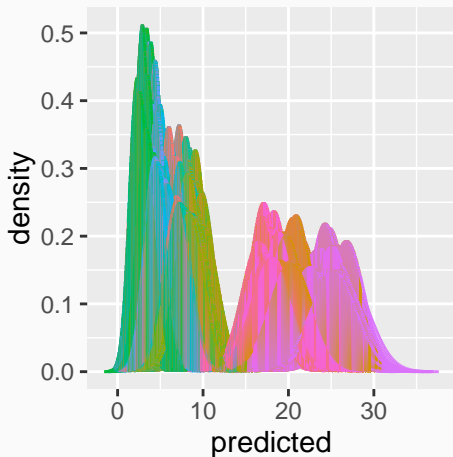

Inspect the dataset

What do you think the variables `predicted` and `density` mean?

```
p = ggplot(df, aes(x = predicted, y = density))  
p + geom_line()
```

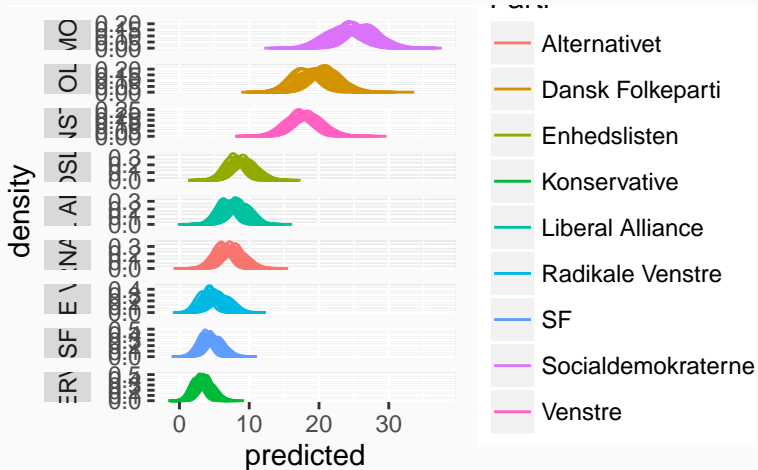


```
p = ggplot(df, aes(x = predicted, y = density, group = g  
p + geom_line()
```

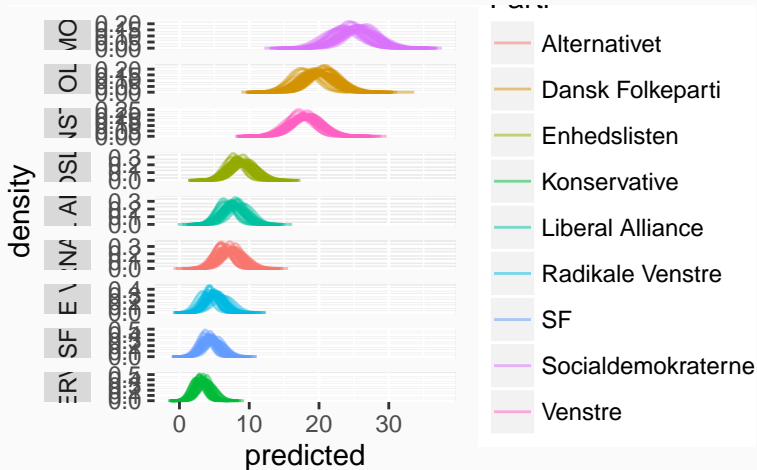


- Alternativet
- Dansk Folkeparti
- Enhedslisten
- Konservative
- Liberal Alliance
- Radikale Venstre
- SF
- Socialdemokraterne
- Venstre

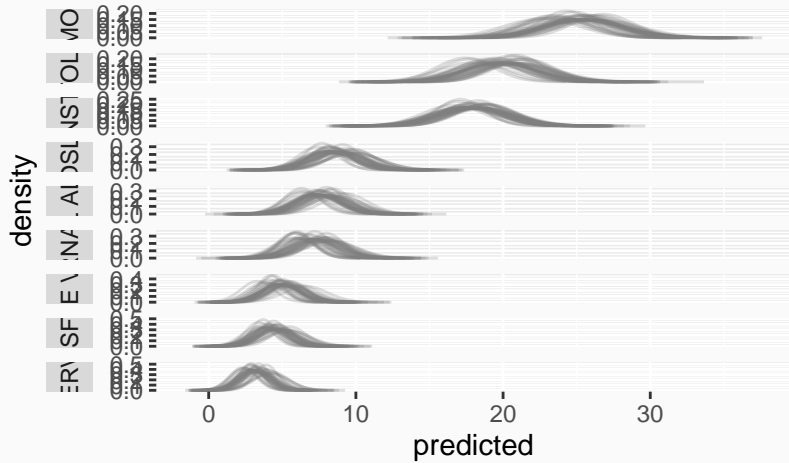
```
p = ggplot(df, aes(x = predicted, y = density, group = party))
p + geom_line() + facet_grid(party.ord ~ ., scales = "free")
```



```
p = ggplot(df, aes(x = predicted, y = density, group = g
p + geom_line(alpha = .5) + facet_grid(party.ord ~ ., sc
```

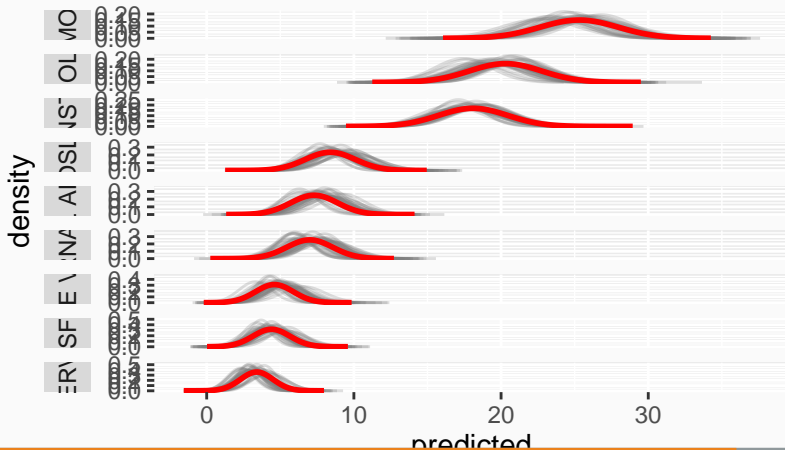


```
df.1 = subset(df, date != max(date))
df.2 = subset(df, date == max(date))
p = ggplot()
p = p + geom_line(data = df.1,
                  aes(x = predicted, y = density,
                      group = group),
                  color = "grey50", alpha = .25) +
  facet_grid(party.ord ~ ., scales = "free_y", switch =
```



ADD LATEST POLL

```
p = p + geom_line(data = df.2,  
                  aes(x = predicted, y = density,  
                      group = group),  
                  colour = "red", size = 1)
```




```
p = p + scale_x_continuous(breaks = scales::pretty_breaks) +  
  theme_minimal() +  
  theme(strip.text.y = element_text(angle = 180,  
                                     face = "bold",  
                                     vjust = 0.75,  
                                     hjust = 1),  
        axis.text.y = element_blank()) +  
  labs(y = NULL, x = NULL)
```

The output can be seen [here](#).

Stephen Curry's 3-Point Record in Context: Off the Charts

Look at this visualization from [Bob Rudis](#).

Data [here](#)

```
library("readr")
df = read_csv("https://raw.githubusercontent.com/sebasti
names(df)
```

```
## [1] "url"          "post_id"      "title"        "li
## [5] "price"        "location"     "city"         "st
## [9] "description"  "registered"   "category"     "ma
## [13] "caliber"     "action"       "firearm_type" "pa
## [17] "img"
```

```
p = ggplot(data = df, aes(x = price))
```

Discuss in groups

1. What is interesting about these data?
2. How would you visualize the distribution of the **price** variables
3. Search the **ggplot2** documentation [here](#) and create a visualization
4. Discuss how you would improve your visualization
5. Look at Bob Rudis' **plots**. Would you change anything? Do you think they work?

Maps

There are many ways to make maps in R

1. **easy**: use an existing package
2. **hard**: learn how to work with shapefiles (we don't have time for this today, but I strongly recommend reading [these notes](#) on the topic)

There are many useful packages for making maps in R

- **maps**: all kinds of maps
- **ggcounty**: generate United States county maps
- **ggmap**: extends **ggplot2** for maps
- **mapDK**: maps of Denmark