



Seminar: 215F22

Political Culture & Norms: How Societies Change

Version: January 26, 2022

Section: Political Behavior

Term: Spring term 2022
Time: Wed 14.15 pm – 17.00 pm
Lecture Room: 1330-038
E-mail: bischof@ps.au.dk

Lecturer: Daniel Bischof
Office: Building 1340, Room 234
Office hours: Wed 17.00 pm; immediately after class

Course description:

- MA seminar
- 3 hours per week
- Language: English
- Exercises & exams:
 1. Literature review
 2. Presentation of research idea
 3. Peer review during mini conferences
 4. Term paper (\approx 7000-9000 words; 100 % of your grade)

What is political culture? How can we measure it? How does it affect political preferences? And how does culture change across space and time? In this course, we will try to compile answers to these questions which have been at the heart of political science since its early beginnings. Reading and discussing classic work along with research from economics and social psychology, but also non-academic readings (e.g. Philip Roth, "The Plot Against America"), the diverse reading list tries to provide an encompassing perspective on political culture and norms. We will learn that political culture is a complex concept and deeply connected to how our political environment and we ourselves perceive politics. Political culture is often sticky, but significant changes in political systems – such as new extreme parties emerging – changes our perception of norms in society and eventually political culture. To better understand when political culture changes, we will discuss and analyse historical examples during which norms in society eroded and extremism became the only game in town – e.g. fascist regimes during the 1930s – and will try to link these periods with developments today – e.g. "The Trump election and Presidency". To understand which effects political culture and norms have, a key component of the course will be to better understand methods of causal inference.

Introductory Readings:

- **General readings:** The following readings are helpful to support you in the process of conducting your own research assignments throughout your studies. Specifically the readings on how to write appear to have a crucial impact on the quality of your writing.

Writing:

1. Graff, G. and Birkenstein, C. (2014). *They Say, I Say – The Moves That Matter in Academic Writing*. W.W. Norton Company, New York
2. Zinsser, W. (2001). *On Writing Well*. Quill

Research Design:

3. Cunningham, S. (2021). *Causal Inference: The Mixtape*. Yale University Press, New Haven & London
4. Angrist, J. D. and Pischke, J.-S. (2009). *Mostly Harmless Econometrics: An Empiricist's Companion*. Princeton University Press, Princeton & Oxford
5. Imai, K. (2018). *Quantitative Social Science: An Introduction*. Princeton University Press, Princeton

Theories, concepts, mechanisms:

6. Levitsky, S. R. and Ziblatt, D. (2018). *How Democracies Die*. Crown, New York
7. Putnam, R. D. (1993). *Making Democracy Work*. Princeton University Press, New Haven
8. Bicchieri, C. (2016). *Norms in the wild: How to diagnose, measure, and change social norms*. Oxford University Press, Oxford

- **Non-scientific reading:** Besides the academic readings I can highly recommend reading: **Philip Roth, “The Plot Against America”**. Great novel, timely, and a great piece of counterfactual thinking in contemporary literature.

Expectations:

• Active participation

- Students write a brief **“literature review”** (1 pager; font size 12; 1.5 spacing; justified text) that critically discusses one reading of one seminar session. It is not sufficient to repeat the key arguments of the readings. Instead students need to a) reproduce the key arguments/concepts/mechanisms in the readings, b) discuss potential shortcomings/contradictions in the readings (logic of argumentation; empirical & methodological concerns) and c) present the key contributions/strength of one reading assigned in the course. The key component I’m looking for here is an independent and critical engagement with an academic piece of work.

Monday before the upcoming seminar meeting literature reviews should be uploaded to brightspace.

The literature reviews are a critical component for the seminar: they tell me how you engage with the readings, which troubles you might have with it, and they are a key piece for the in-class discussions.

- The **presentation** (10 minutes) takes place at the end of the term. Content of the presentation should be each student’s individual research idea. Thus, students should not present a literature review, but aim to provide a first insight about the ideas they want to work on in their term papers.

The presentations are key to the success of your paper. Use them to get an understanding if your idea flies; to discuss current issues you might encounter; challenges you haven’t answered yet etc.

- The **term paper** is a written paper to be submitted at the end of the course (\approx journal article length (7000-9000 words including bibliography); font size 12; 1.5 spacing; justified text). More on the formal requirements can be

found here: [Formal requirements for submission of take-home assignments](#) . Please list the number of characters (with blanks) on the frontpage of your paper.*

Term papers should develop an original argument and test this argument empirically. Term papers contain an 1) introduction 2) literature review 3) theoretical argument 4) research design 5) results 6) conclusion section. It is key to re-capture the original arguments/discussion in the academic literature, to develop an own argument on the subject and to test this argument rigorously. Thereby, the paper needs to be based on a student's presentation and might as well be based on the literature review.

Grading:

- How will I evaluate your papers? A brief indicative overview: 1) Motivation of research questions (academically and beyond) 2) structure and logic of argumentation 3) quality of literature review (e.g. debate covered exhaustively; quality of discussion; structure) 4) adequate expansion of readings used in the seminar 5) quality of theoretical argument (e.g. mechanisms clear; logical derivation of hypotheses) 6) quality of research design (e.g. limitations correctly discussed) 7) correct, adequate and embedded discussion of findings 8) meaningful discussion of limitations, scope conditions and frame.

Work load (an example):

- 1 ECTS = 25-30 hours (according to Bologna rules)
- 15 ECTS \times 25 hours = 375 hours
- Weekly = 375 hours / 14 term weeks \approx 26.8 hours per week

Table 1: Work load, a pessimistic approximation:

	week	term
Seminar attendance	2.75	38.5
Readings	6	84
Literature Review		4
Presentation		9
Term paper	4	56
Σ	12.75	191.5

All in all the workload should be way below the actual goals of Bologna.

Prerequisites:

- Knowledge of key concepts in political science, more specifically in Comparative Politics & Political Behavior.
- Knowledge of basic quantitative methods in political science (OLS regression (*needed*); panel data analysis (*preferred*); intro to causal inferences (*at best*))

Key dates!!!:

1. Upload literature review **Monday** before the session for which the reading is assigned in the syllabus
2. Presentation slots **27.04.** or **04.05.** or **11.05.**
3. Handing in of term paper **(tba by AU)**

*I don't care much about these – I will not recount them – but the formal requirement is given in characters (max. 56,000 character which corresponds to 9000 words, 23 pages approximately.)

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Detailed course outline

Each session is based on several readings. Out of these readings usually **two readings** are assigned to be read by each student *before* the session takes place. It is expected that students not only read the texts, but also critically engage with them. You should be able to summarize the key arguments of each assigned reading and come-up with at least three discussion points for each reading.

02.02. Organization

- Logistics
- How to find a research question & how to write a paper

lit Graff, G. and Birkenstein, C. (2014). *They Say, I Say – The Moves That Matter in Academic Writing*. W.W. Norton Company, New York

Introductory lecture

09.02. Lecture: What are culture and norms? How can we approach them scientifically?

- This session aims to motivate the reasons why we should study political culture and norms
- What is political culture?
- What is a norm and how does it relate to culture?
- What are the standard approaches to approximate culture/norms?
- What are the key issues with measuring culture/norms?
- What is social desirability bias and why does it matter in particular when we measure culture/norms?

reading Cialdini, R. B. and Trost, M. R. (1998). Social Influence: Social Norms, Conformity and Compliance. In Daniel, G., Fiske, S. T., and Lindzey, G., editors, *The Handbook of Social Psychology*, page 151. Wiley

reading Henrich, J., Heine, S. J., and Norenzayan, A. (2010). The weirdest people in the world? *Behavioral and Brain Sciences*, 33(2-3):61–83

reading Bicchieri, C. (2016). *Norms in the wild: How to diagnose, measure, and change social norms*. Oxford University Press, Oxford

lit Putnam, R. D. (1993). *Making Democracy Work*. Princeton University Press, New Haven

lit Fehr, E. and Hoff, K. (2011). Introduction: Tastes, Castes and Culture: The Influence of Society on Preferences. *Economic Journal*, 121(556):396–412

lit Schmidt, M. F., Butler, L. P., Heinz, J., and Tomasello, M. (2016). Young Children See a Single Action and Infer a Social Norm: Promiscuous Normativity in 3-Year-Olds. *Psychological Science*, 27(10):1360–1370

lit Herrmann, B., Thöni, C., and Gächter, S. (2007). Antisocial Punishment Across Societies. *Science*, 317(july):4

lit Boyd, R. and Richerson, P. J. (1985). *Culture and the Evolutionary Process*. University of Chicago Press, Chicago

lit Silver, B. D., Anderson, B. A., and Abramson, P. R. (1986). Who Overreports Voting? *American Political Science Review*, 80(2):613–624

podcast [The Ezra Klein show: “How Democracies Die”](#)

16.02. Reading week: Please read as much as you can!

- We will not meet during this week. The goal of this week is to read as much as you can from the course readings of last week: catch up on the key concepts, theories and ideas. Find your way through them and identify what you mostly care about in order to get your ideas for your paper started.

Theory, concepts, big picture

23.02. The origins of political culture and norms

- How can we approach the study of political culture?
- What are the origins of political culture?
- What don't we know about culture?

reading Nunn, N. and Wantchekon, L. (2011). The slave trade and the origins of Mistrust in Africa. *American Economic Review*, 101(7):3221–3252

reading Talhelm, T. and English, A. S. (2020). Historically rice-farming societies have tighter social norms in China and worldwide. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 117(33):19816–19824

lit Alesina, A., Giuliano, P., and Nunn, N. (2013). On the Origins of Gender Roles: Women And The Plough. *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 128(May):469–530

lit Foos, F. and Bischof, D. (2021). Tabloid Media Campaigns and Public Opinion: Quasi-Experimental Evidence on Euroscepticism in England. *American Political Science Review*, page (forthcoming)

02.03. The persistence of political culture and norms

- Does political culture persist?
- Which factors drive persistence of political culture?

reading Acharya, A., Blackwell, M., and Sen, M. (2016). The Political Legacy of American Slavery. *Journal of Politics*, 78(3):621–641

reading Homola, J., Pereira, M. M., and Tavits, M. (2020). Legacies of the Third Reich: Concentration Camps and Out-group Intolerance. *American Political Science Review*, pages 1–18

lit Voigtländer, N. and Voth, H.-j. (2015). Nazi indoctrination and anti-Semitic beliefs in Germany. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 112(26):7931–7936

lit Voigtländer, N. and Voth, H.-j. (2012). Persecution perpetuated: the medieval origins of anti-Semitic violence in Nazi Germany. *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 127(3):1339–1392

lit Fouka, V. and Voth, H.-J. (2021). Collective Remembrance and Private Choice: German-Greek Conflict and Consumer Behavior in Times of Crisis * https://vfouka.people.stanford.edu/sites/g/files/sbiybj4871/f/collective_memory_0.pdf

lit Grosjean, P. (2014). A History of Violence: The Culture of Honor and Homicide in the US South. *Journal of the European Economic Association*, 12(5):1285–1316

lit Dell, M. (2010). The Persistent Effects of Peru's Mining Mita. *Econometrica*, 78(6):1863–1903

lit Ziblatt, D., Hilbig, H., and Bischof, D. (2021). Wealth of Tongues: Why Peripheral Regions Vote for the Radical Right in Germany <https://osf.io/preprints/socarxiv/syr84/>

09.03. When political culture and norms change

- How does change look like?
- Which factors determine change?
- Is there always an identifiable root cause to change?

reading Valentim, V. (2021). Parliamentary Representation and the Normalization of Radical Right Support. *Comparative Political Studies*, page (forthcoming)

reading Bursztyn, L., Egorov, G., and Fiorin, S. (2020). From extreme to mainstream: The erosion of social norms. *American Economic Review*, 110(11):3522–3548

lit Ager, P., Bursztyn, L., Leucht, L., and Voth, H.-J. (2021). Killer Incentives: Rivalry, Performance and Risk-Taking among German Fighter Pilots, 1939-45 Philipp https://home.uchicago.edu/bursztyn/Killer_Incentives_June2021.pdf

lit Bischof, D. and Wagner, M. (2019). Do Voters Polarize When Radical Parties Enter Parliament? *American Journal of Political Science*, 63(4):888–904

blog [Broadstreet “Social change” by Vicky Fouka](#)

How culture and norms matter in politics ...

16.03. Social norms and turnout

- Which role can social norms play for elections?
- Which type of references matter for our electoral choice?

reading Gerber, A. S., Green, D. P., and Larimer, C. W. (2008). Social pressure and voter turnout: Evidence from a large-scale field experiment. *American Political Science Review*, 102(1):33–48

reading Gerber, A. S. and Rogers, T. (2009). Descriptive Social Norms and Motivation to Vote: Everybody's Voting and so Should You. *Journal of Politics*, 71(1):178–191

lit Doherty, D., Dowling, C. M., Gerber, A. S., and Huber, G. A. (2017). Are Voting norms conditional? how electoral context and peer behavior shape the social returns to voting. *Journal of Politics*, 79(3):1095–1100

lit Coppock, A. and Green, D. P. (2016). Is Voting Habit Forming? New Evidence from Experiments and Regression Discontinuities. *American Journal of Political Science*, 60(4):1044–1062

23.03. Norms, discrimination and racism

- What is the link between social norms and hate?
- Which relevance do media play for social norms?
- What can we do to encounter hate?

reading Ang, D. (2020). The Birth of a Nation: Media and Racial Hate <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1s2eBQT7hRghnh/view>

reading Tankard, M. E. and Paluck, E. L. (2017). The Effect of a Supreme Court Decision Regarding Gay Marriage on Social Norms and Personal Attitudes. *Psychological Science*, page 095679761770959

lit Paluck, E. L., Shepherd, H., and Aronow, P. M. (2016). Changing Climates of Conflict: A social Network Experiment in 56 schools. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 113(3):566–571

lit Riaz, S., Bischof, D., and Wagner, M. (2022). Out-group Threat and Xenophobic Hate Crimes - Evidence of Local Intergroup Conflict Dynamics between Immigrants and Natives <https://osf.io/2qusg/>

newspaper [Economist “How a racist film helped the Ku Klux Klan grow for generations”](#)

30.03. Norms, gender inequality and misogyny

- What are reasons and origins for misogyny?
- Why are gender norms extremely sticky?
- What role can institutions play to change these norms?

reading Mackie, G. (1996). Ending Footbinding and Infibulation: A Convention Account. *American Sociological Review*, 61(6):999–1017

reading Maloney, E. (2021). The Gender Wage Gap: A Product of Misogyny and Gender Norms https://www.economics.uci.edu/files/docs/2021/gradjobmarket/maloney_elizabeth.pdf

lit Efferson, C., Vogt, S., Elhadi, A., Ahmed, H. E. F., and Fehr, E. (2015). Female genital cutting is not a social coordination norm. *Science*, 349(6255):1446–1447

lit Skorge, Ø. S. (2021). Mobilizing the Underrepresented: Electoral Systems and Gender Inequality in Political Participation. *American Journal of Political Science*, 00(0):1–15

lit Rivera, L. A. (2017). When Two Bodies Are (Not) a Problem: Gender and Relationship Status Discrimination in Academic Hiring. *American Sociological Review*, 82(6):1111–1138

06.04. The role of protest for change

- We have learned that institutions and key political figures can change the perception of social norms. But which role do the people play? Do social movements matter?
- What are key conditions for social movements to matter?

reading Ayoub, P. M., Page, D., and Whitt, S. (2021). Pride amid Prejudice: The Influence of LGBT+ Rights Activism in a Socially Conservative Society. *American Political Science Review*, 115(2):467–485

reading Wasow, O. (2020). Agenda Seeding: How 1960s Black Protests Moved Elites, Public Opinion and Voting. *American Political Science Review*, 114(3):638 – 659

lit Mazumder, S. (2018). The Persistent Effect of U.S. Civil Rights Protests on Political Attitudes. *American Journal of Political Science*, 62(4):922–935, but see also: Marbach, M. (2021). Causal Effects, Migration and Legacy Studies <https://osf.io/preprints/socarxiv/2rctz/>

13.04. no coursework, you are on culture; it's Easter.

20.04. After autocracy: the rise of young democracies

- Do political regimes matter for citizens' democratic values?
- When authoritarian regimes fall, will citizens adapt to democracy?

- What are the long-running effects of authoritarian regimes?

reading Simpser, A., Slater, D., and Wittenberg, J. (2018). Dead but Not Gone: Contemporary Legacies of Communism, Imperialism, and Authoritarianism. *Annual Review of Political Science*, 21:419–439

reading Alesina, A. and Fuchs-Schündeln, N. (2007). Good-bye Lenin (or not?): The effect of communism on people's preferences. *American Economic Review*, 97(4):1507–1528

lit Dinas, E. and Northmore-Ball, K. (2020). The Ideological Shadow of Authoritarianism. *Comparative Political Studies*, 53(12):1957–1991

lit Dinas, E., Martinez, S., and Valentim, V. (2020). The Normalization of Stigmatized Political Symbols https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3516831

lit Levitsky, S. R. and Ziblatt, D. (2018). *How Democracies Die*. Crown, New York

lit Weingast, B. R. (1997). The Political Foundations of Democracy and the Rule of the Law. *American Political Science Review*, 91(2):245–263

It's conference time: get your slides ready, iron your shirts!

27.04. Mini Conference I

- Presentation & discussion of research ideas

04.05. Mini Conference II

- Presentation & discussion of research ideas

11.05. Mini Conference III

- Presentation & discussion of research ideas

References

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- Dinas, E. and Northmore-Ball, K. (2020). The Ideological Shadow of Authoritarianism. *Comparative Political Studies*, 53(12):1957–1991.
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- Grosjean, P. (2014). A History of Violence: The Culture of Honor and Homicide in the US South. *Journal of the European Economic Association*, 12(5):1285–1316.
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- Levitsky, S. R. and Ziblatt, D. (2018). *How Democracies Die*. Crown, New York.
- Mackie, G. (1996). Ending Footbinding and Infibulation: A Convention Account. *American Sociological Review*, 61(6):999–1017.
- Maloney, E. (2021). The Gender Wage Gap: A Product of Misogyny and Gender Norms.
- Marbach, M. (2021). Causal Effects, Migration and Legacy Studies.
- Mazumder, S. (2018). The Persistent Effect of U.S. Civil Rights Protests on Political Attitudes. *American Journal of Political Science*, 62(4):922–935.
- Nunn, N. and Wantchekon, L. (2011). The slave trade and the origins of Mistrust in Africa. *American Economic Review*, 101(7):3221–3252.
- Paluck, E. L., Shepherd, H., and Aronow, P. M. (2016). Changing Climates of Conflict: A social Network Experiment in 56 schools. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 113(3):566–571.

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- Riaz, S., Bischof, D., and Wagner, M. (2022). Out-group Threat and Xenophobic Hate Crimes - Evidence of Local Intergroup Conflict Dynamics between Immigrants and Natives.
- Rivera, L. A. (2017). When Two Bodies Are (Not) a Problem: Gender and Relationship Status Discrimination in Academic Hiring. *American Sociological Review*, 82(6):1111–1138.
- Schmidt, M. F., Butler, L. P., Heinz, J., and Tomasello, M. (2016). Young Children See a Single Action and Infer a Social Norm: Promiscuous Normativity in 3-Year-Olds. *Psychological Science*, 27(10):1360–1370.
- Silver, B. D., Anderson, B. A., and Abramson, P. R. (1986). Who Overreports Voting? *American Political Science Review*, 80(2):613–624.
- Simpser, A., Slater, D., and Wittenberg, J. (2018). Dead but Not Gone: Contemporary Legacies of Communism, Imperialism, and Authoritarianism. *Annual Review of Political Science*, 21:419–439.
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- Talhelm, T. and English, A. S. (2020). Historically rice-farming societies have tighter social norms in China and worldwide. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 117(33):19816–19824.
- Tankard, M. E. and Paluck, E. L. (2017). The Effect of a Supreme Court Decision Regarding Gay Marriage on Social Norms and Personal Attitudes. *Psychological Science*, page 095679761770959.
- Valentim, V. (2021). Parliamentary Representation and the Normalization of Radical Right Support. *Comparative Political Studies*, page (forthcoming).
- Voigtländer, N. and Voth, H.-j. (2012). Persecution perpetuated: the medieval origins of anti-Semitic violence in Nazi Germany. *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 127(3):1339–1392.
- Voigtländer, N. and Voth, H.-j. (2015). Nazi indoctrination and anti-Semitic beliefs in Germany. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 112(26):7931–7936.
- Wasow, O. (2020). Agenda Seeding: How 1960s Black Protests Moved Elites, Public Opinion and Voting. *American Political Science Review*, 114(3):638 – 659.
- Weingast, B. R. (1997). The Political Foundations of Democracy and the Rule of the Law. *American Political Science Review*, 91(2):245–263.
- Ziblatt, D., Hilbig, H., and Bischof, D. (2021). Wealth of Tongues: Why Peripheral Regions Vote for the Radical Right in Germany.
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