Class 1: The Far Right in Europe and Beyond

Introduction to Course

Dr. Michael C. Zeller

Agenda for the day

- Course Introduction
- Course assessments
- Course practicalities
- Onto our topic: concept formation and conceptualising the far right

Course Introduction

- What is 'far right'?

- Course structure

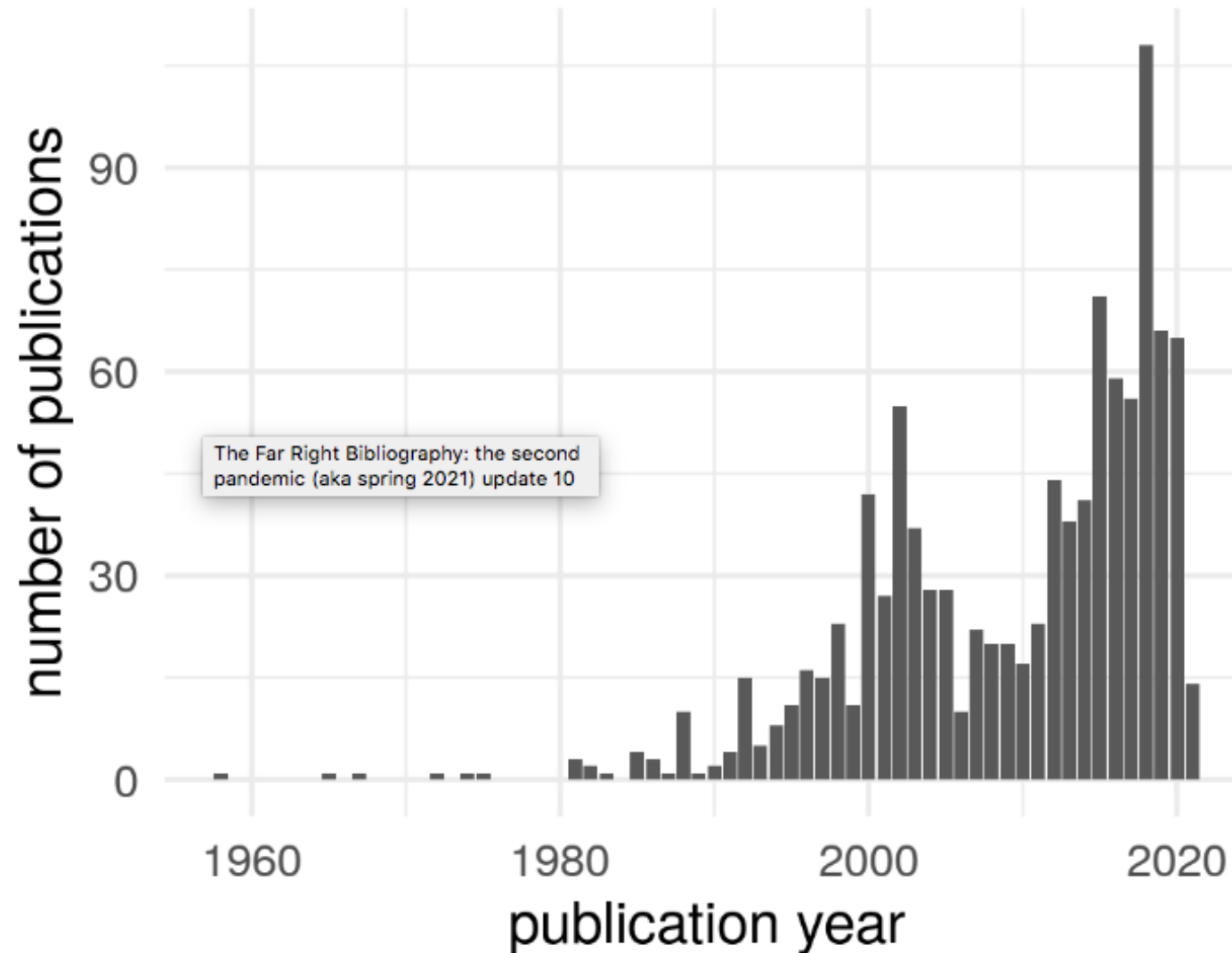- Learning aims

- What the course is not...

First task...

Read the syllabus!

- We have a shiny new (developing) website for the course

  - https://michaelzeller.de/course-fr/

- Before our next meeting, your task is to peruse the website

  - especially the Syllabus, Schedule, and Report example pages.
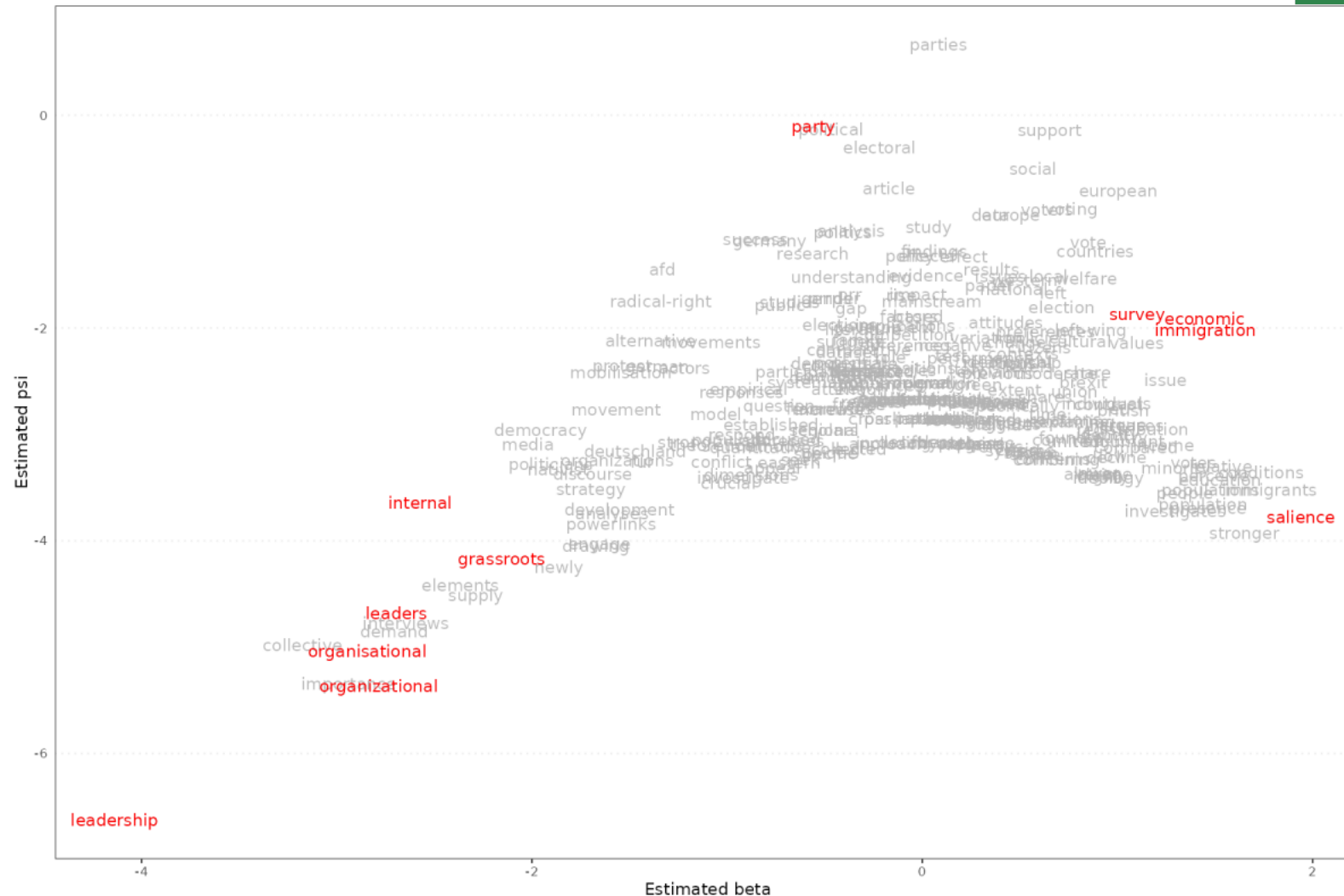
Defining 'far right'

- Broadly: a **noun** or **adjective** referring to phenomena that reject (at least elements of) *liberalism* and/or *democracy*, and is characterised by nationalism, exclusionism, xenophobia, strong state, welfare chauvinism, traditional ethics, authoritarianism, and/or populism

- Radical right (populist and non-populist cases): opposition to fundamental values of liberal democracy (radical) and belief in a natural order with inequalities (right)

- Extreme right: rejection of democracy (Ignazi's 'antisystem'—but that depends on the system)

- **far right** encompasses both these terms

Publications on radical right (from Arzheimer)

From Arzheimer's bibliography: https://www.kai-arzheimer.com/tag/bibliography/

Idea of the research field (Arzheimer, 2022)

Wordfish from Arzheimer's bibliography: Y-axis - how likely the appearance of a word is in research on far right; x-axis - strength of association of a word with underlying dimension

Structure of the course

- PART I - What is 'far right'?

    - Concepts

    - Far-right ideology: from transnational traits to local idiosyncrasies

- PART II - Far-right parties

    - Radical and extreme

    - Representatives

    - Voters

    - Responses and counter-strategies

- PART III - Far-right movements

    - Movement-parties

    - Mobilisation and movements

    - Counter-mobilisation

    - Demobilisation

- PART IV - Individuals in far right

    - Radicalisation

    - Violence

    - Online

- PART V - Studying the far right

    - Methods, ethics, and safety

Holidays

Several holidays overlap with our class meetings:

- 1 May (Class 2)

- 29 May (Class 6)

- 19 June (Class 9)

FOR NOW, no make-up classes are planned...

- requires attentive reading and preparation so we can cover the material in the surrounding classes

- possibly adding short recorded lectures...

Aims

- knowledge about past and contemporary far-right political and social activity

- familiarity with breadth of research literature covering the far right

- Capacity to...

  - assess developments in far-right socio-politics, especially by identifying underlying factors and comparing across contexts

  - critically evaluate research on the far right, especially by evaluating the data and methods used

  - gather, assess, and present data about far-right socio-politics

What the course is not...

- **not for activism against the far right**
  - it's a seminar, like many others, with real-world implications

- **not for airing grievances about far right and caricaturing far-right supporters**
  - good research on the far right takes seriously its ideology, organisations, and supporters—and tries to divorce analysis from normative commitments

Connection to Vorlesung

This seminar is connected to **Prof. Dr. Berthold Rittberger**'s lecture *(Vorlesungsübung: The Political System of the European Union)*

- is everyone enrolled in that?

- we will tie in Prof. Rittberger's content through class discussions

Course assessments

- Participation

- Presentation

- Essay (Data report)

Course assessment

	BA main	BA minor (60)	BA minor (30)	Pedagogy	Exchange
Participation	X	X	X	X	X
Presentation	X	X	X (or Exercise)	X (or Exercise)	X
Essay	X	X			X
Exercise			X (or Presentation)	X (or Presentation)	
Klausur				X	

Participation

- do the readings and discuss in class

- make note of any questions or comments you have as you go through the readings

- most of the readings are research journal articles

  - more in-depth than book chapters—requires greater concentration

  - consider complementing with a general reader (examples listed at of Syllabus)

Presentation (*Referat*)

- short (max. 20 mins.) group presentation on a method

- groups, topics, and preferred date due to me by Week 4 (15 May)

  - but there are advantages to booking early…

Essay (*Hausarbeit*): Data report

- data report on a far-right phenomenon (e.g., voters, a party, protests, violence)

- gather and present data, generate analytical insights

- 2500-3500 words (excluding citations)

- 28 June: short synopsis due. 16 August: full, final report due.

- consider working with data visualisation and analysis software!

Course assessment summary

	BA main	BA minor (60)	BA minor (30)	Pedagogy	Exchange
Participation	X	X	X	X	X
Presentation	X	X	X (or Exercise)	X (or Exercise)	X
Essay	X	X			X
Exercise			X (or Presentation)	X (or Presentation)	
Klausur				X	

For the essay and writing in general...

Crafting Papers for Publication

Table III. A semiotic checklist

1. This is what I am focusing on
2. This is why it is relevant
3. This is what is known/not known (and why it needs attention)
4. This is my burning question
5. This is how I aim to address the question (theoretically/empirically)
6. This is what I did
7. This is what I found
8. This is what it means
9. This is what I add
10. This is why you should care

Patriotta, G. (2017). Crafting papers for publication: Novelty and convention in academic writing. *Journal of Management Studies, 54*(5), 747-759.

Course practicalities

- Typical class meeting

- Office hours and communication

- e-learning site

- resources

- about me

- Q & A

- student introductions

Typical class meeting

- Opening question(s)/discussion point(s)
  - e.g., theoretical dilemma, typology forming, item from the news
- Summarising lecture on theory/findings related to week's topic
  - discussion points
- Discussing the reading(s)
  - highlighting important points (esp. theory and research design)
    - *students who read will find discussion more illuminating*
- Presentation of further research relevant to week's topic
- Summative discussion: takeaways, new ideas, lingering questions

Throughout, we will use *cases* to link *theory* to *real-world events*

Office hours and communication

- best to send an email

    - michael.zeller@gsi.uni-muenchen.de

    - m.zeller@lmu.de

- 11.00 - 12.00 on Wednesdays at GSI (Oettingenstr. 67) - Room H105

- or by appointment

Moodle

- Self-enrol: 15030 The Far Right in Europe and Beyond
  - access key: "FR2024"
- All course readings are available
- The **syllabus** is there – the mystical, magical source of all knowledge about the course

Resources

Kai Arzheimer's website: https://www.kai-arzheimer.com/ and Twitter: @ kai_arzheimer

- Extreme Right Bibliography: https://www.kai-arzheimer.com/extreme-right-western-europe-bibliography/

Cas Mudde's podcast, *Radikaal*: https://www.radikaalpodcast.com/ and his Twitter: @ CasMudde

C-REX: https://www.sv.uio.no/c-rex/english/

- *Knowing what's (far) right: A compendium*: https://www.sv.uio.no/c-rex/english/groups/compendium/c-rex-compendium-print-version.pdf

Resources

ECPR Extremism & Democracy website:
https://standinggroups.ecpr.eu/extremismanddemocracy/

- *e-Extreme* newsletter:
https://standinggroups.ecpr.eu/extremismanddemocracy/newsletter/

- Routledge book series: *Extremism and Democracy* and *Fascism and the Far Right*

Anti-Defamation League: https://www.adl.org/

and much, much more

About me

- tell me if you have problems understanding me

  - there's an accent at work that I tragically cannot shake off

- Ph.D. in political science from Central European University (CEU)

  - specialisation in qualitative methods (incl. QCA, [Bayesian] process tracing), but also quant. text analysis, network analysis

- researcher in funded projects on …

  - violent/banned far-right groups and online content moderation

  - radicalisation, violent extremism, polarisation, and resilience

- current work: militant democracy; far-right activist networks; political violence (in 1970s Northern Ireland; in contemporary Italy); paths to female leadership in Asia; protest and polarisation

About the course

- Q & A

About you! Student introductions

- Information about you, possibly including…

  - Expectations for this course

  - favourite joke

  - Study programme

  - favourite song

  - Country (place) of origin

  - top source for news

  - Background in education/research

  - secret skill

  - Academic/professional aspirations

Onto our topic: concept formation and conceptualising the far right

- fundamentals of social science concepts

- Mudde's approach for the far right

Concept formation

- **concepts** are the building blocks of social science research
  - a term denoting an abstract idea

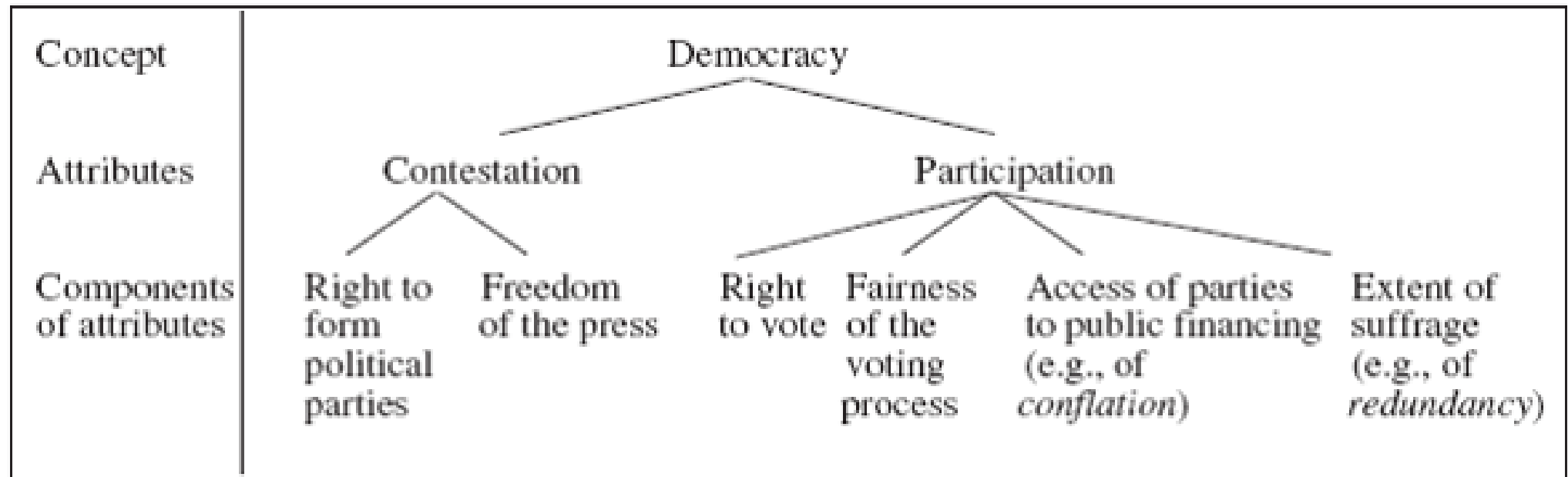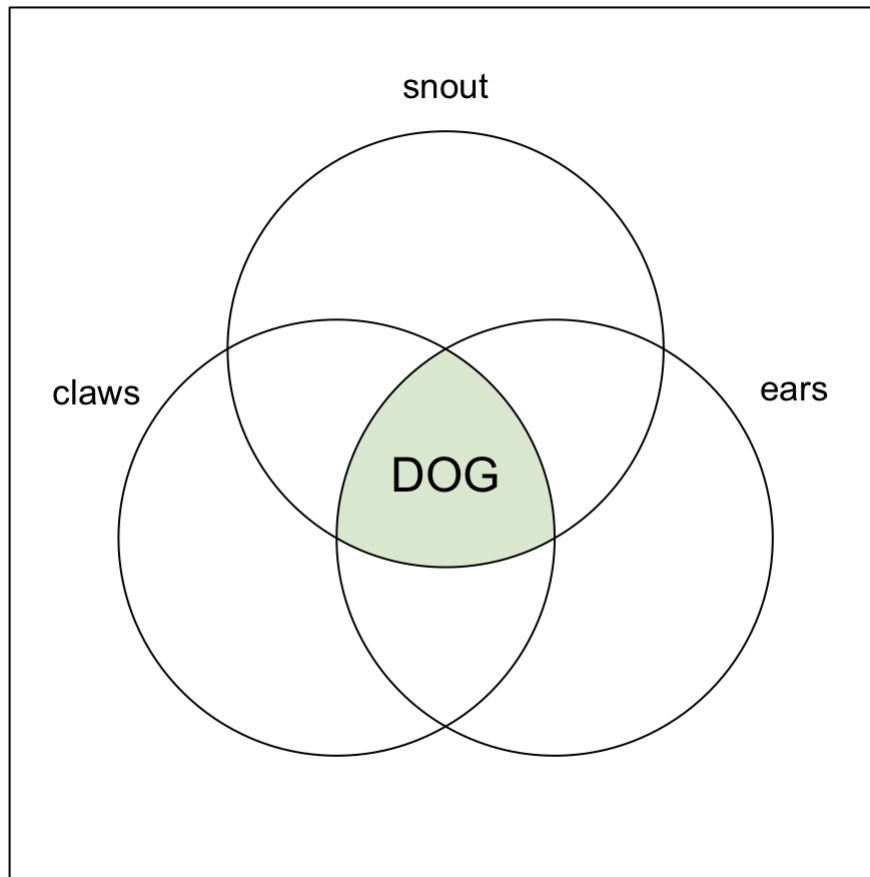| Concept	Democracy					
Attributes	Contestation		Participation			
Components of attributes	Right to form political parties	Freedom of the press	Right to vote	Fairness of the voting process	Access of parties to public financing (e.g., of *conflation*)	Extent of suffrage (e.g., of *redundancy*)

Figure 1. The logical structure of concepts.

Concept formation

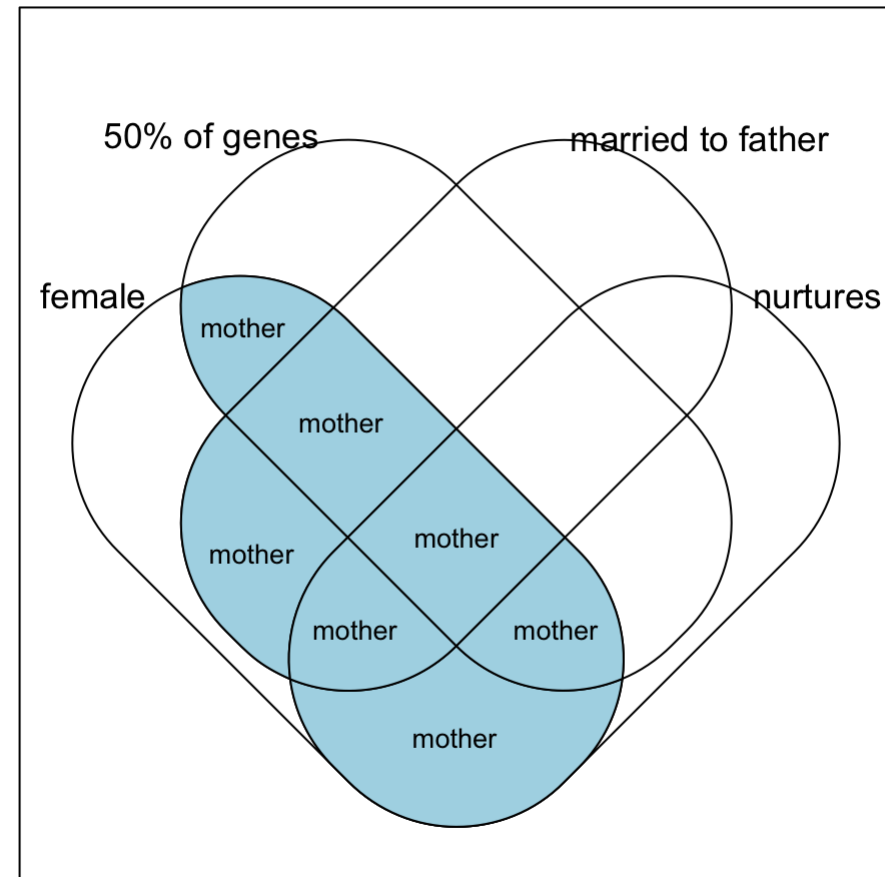- identifying bounds of concepts

  - See Sartori (1970)

- broadly, three types of concepts in social science

1. classical: **all** criteria are shared by **all** cases

2. radial: **some** criteria are shared by **all** cases; others are not

3. family resemblance: **No** criterion is shared by **all** cases

Visualising classical/radial concepts

Classical concept (all criteria)   Radial concept (all share 'female')

and family resemblance: no characteristics shared by all (e.g., games)

Classical vs. radial (Collier and Mahon 1993)

FIGURE 4

Differentiation of Classical and Radial Categories

Classical Category: Dog

	Category	Components					
Primary Category	Dog	A	B	C			
Secondary Categories	Retriever	A	B	C	D		
	Sheepdog	A	B	C		E	
	Spaniel	A	B	C			F

Note: Differentiating characteristics of secondary categories are *in addition to* those of the primary category.

A, B, and C = Hypothetical set of general attributes of dogs
D, E, and F = Hypothetical attributes that differentiate specific types of dogs

Radial Category: Mother

	Category	Components				
Primary Category	Mother	A	B	C	D	E
Secondary Categories	Genetic mother	A	B			
	Birth mother	A		C		
	Nurturing mother	A			D	
	Stepmother	A				E

Note: Differentiating characteristics of secondary categories are *contained within* the primary category.

A = Female
B = Provides 50% of genetic makeup
C = Gives birth to child
D = Provides nurturance
E = Married to father

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Options (according to Mudde)

1. family resemblance

2. Weber's ideal type

3. *Primus inter pares* ('first among equals'): one example that sets the model for all others

4. lowest common denominator: group on the basis of the (few) features that all individual members have in common. This would lead to a so-called "minimum definition" (cf. Eatwell 1996)

5. greatest common denominator: a "maximum definition," maximise possible number of similarities within (part of) the family

Ideological components

- nationalism

- exclusionism

- xenophobia

- strong state

- welfare chauvinism

- traditional ethics

↓

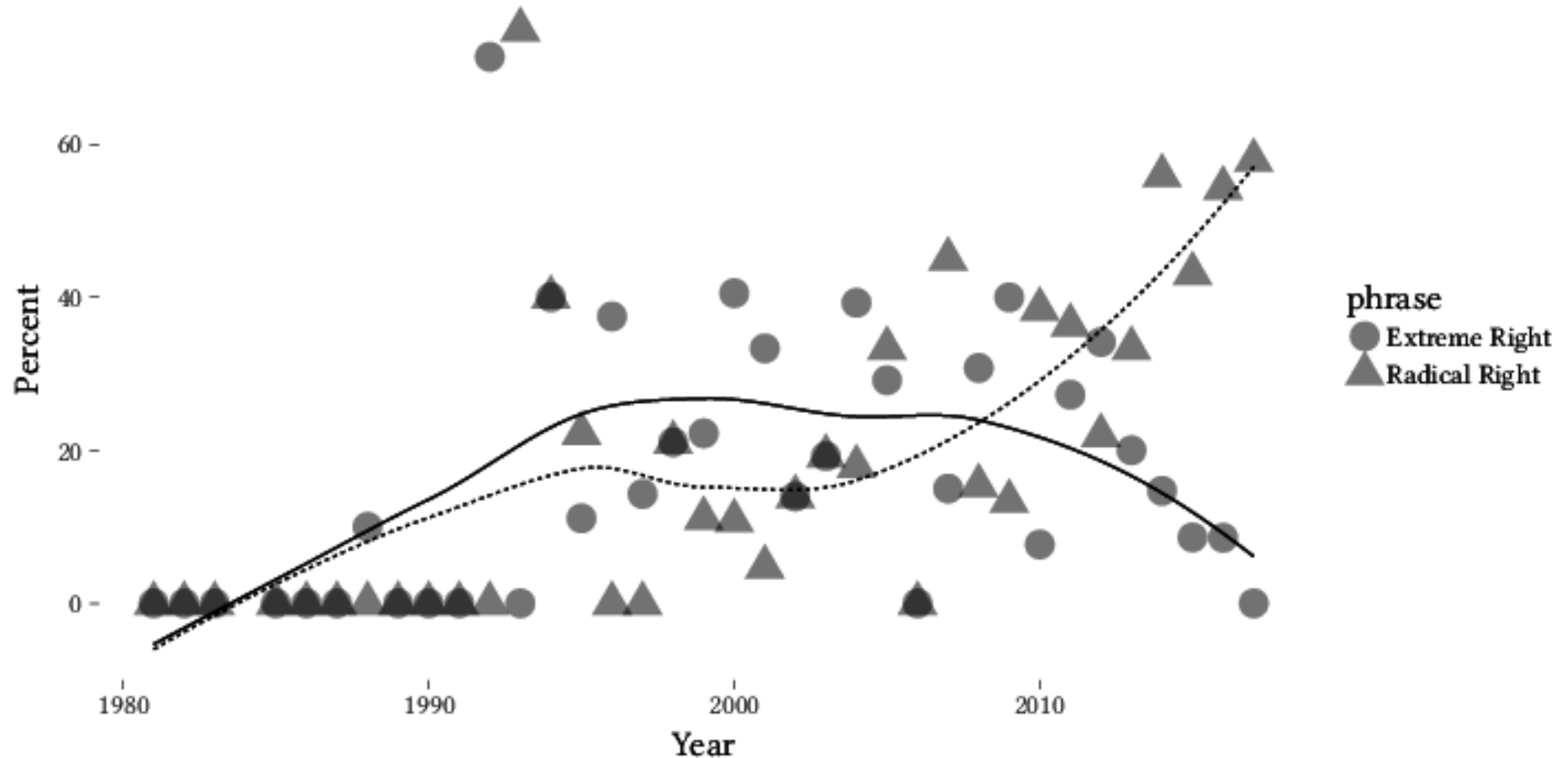- **nativism**

- **authoritarianism**

- **populism**

Radical and extreme

Again…

Radical right (populist and non-populist cases): opposition to fundamental values of liberal democracy (radical) and belief in a natural order with inequalities (right)

Extreme right: rejection of democracy (Ignazi's 'antisystem'—but that depends on the system)

far right encompasses both these terms

Radical and extreme

From: Arzheimer, Kai. "Conceptual Confusion is not Always a Bad Thing: The Curious Case of European Radical Right Studies." Demokratie und Entscheidung. Eds. Marker, Karl, Michael Roseneck, Annette Schmitt, and Jürgen Sirsch. Wiesbaden: Springer, 2018. 23-40.

Examples?

What cases are you familiar with?

How should we categorise them and why?

Examples - talking through (party) cases

Radical	Extreme
AfD	Der Flügel?
FPÖ	NPD
UKIP?	British National Party
RN/Front National	Britain First
PiS/United Right	Casa Pound
Fidesz	Mi Hazánk Mozgalom
FdI, Lega, Forza Italia?	Golden Dawn
Partij voor de Vrijheid	

even trickier with movements?

Points to be aware of?

- concept formation

- measurement

- methods

- descriptive vs. causal inference

- generalisation

References

Collier, David, and James E. Mahon. 1993. "Conceptual 'Stretching' Revisited: Adapting Categories in Comparative Analysis." *American Political Science Review* 87 (4): 845–55. https://doi.org/10.2307/2938818.

Sartori, Giovanni. 1970. "Concept Misformation in Comparative Politics." *The American Political Science Review* 64 (4): 1033–53.