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FROM TRADITIONALISM AND MORALITY TO DEFENDERS AND ANTAGONISTS OF GENDER EQUALITY

The Framing of Gender over time by the Sweden Democrats

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Abstract

This research study explores the framing of gender by Sweden's right-wing populist party, the Sweden Democrats over time. It uses qualitative text analysis and frame theory with the aim to analyze how the party has constructed diagnostic (problems) and prognostic (solutions) frames in regards to gender in their official party literature over the last 29 years, between 1989 to 2018 – with a focus on how this may have changed over time. I argue that the problems the Swedish Democrats identify and the solutions that they propose have changed significantly over this period. While two decades ago the party stressed a return to traditional gender roles and values, today it makes two kinds of appeals that are in tension with one another. The problems of today emphasize gender equality as being under threat from a religious and cultural "other" and, at the same time, is going too far.

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Introduction

The resurgence of right-wing populist parties continues to be a significant political phenomena in contemporary European democracies. Today, almost every European country has their own right-wing populist party, and whereas only one in hundred Europeans voted for these parties in the early 1980s, the average electoral support in Europe has increased to 15.4 % in 2018 (Timbro, 2019:19) marking a transformation from the political fringe to become well-established parties in the political system.

The unifying factor among right-wing populist parties is their anti-immigration stances, rooting in ethno-nationalism and nativism (Pelinka, 2013; Wodak, 2019; Rydberg, 2017). These parties are also often characterized as having a traditional and conservative stance on gender, morality, and family values. However, in the last 15 years, this characterization has become contested. Some of these parties, especially in Western Europe, seems to have softened their positions on traditionalism and converged to more mainstream positions on women's rights (Lancaster, 2019; Akkerman, 2015).

This trend is also evident in Sweden, where the right-wing populist party the Sweden Democrats (Sverigedemokraterna) has transformed from a extreme right-wing environment with traditional family values to currently stressing the importance of gender equality. The aim of this study is to understand how their framing of gender has developed over time. Therefore, the question to be answered is the following:

- *How and in which ways are gender framed by the right-wing populist party the Sweden Democrats, and how has it changed over time?*

I will be arguing, that the Sweden Democrats has considerably shifted their framing of gender. By identifying the construction of frames regarding gender, this study shows the party shifting from emphasizing traditionalism and morality in its first ten years, but from the 2010s moving towards the framing of stressing frames connected to gender equality as something that needs to be protected from the threat of the cultural "other" but also as having "gone too far."

This study contributes to understanding the transformation the Sweden Democrats over a significant period when the party has moved from the fringe into the Swedish parliament with a focus on gender has had from a gendered perspective. Gender as a concept for this study is expanded later on but generally refers to "the behavioral, social, and psychological characteristics of men and women as well as the socially constructed roles, behaviors,

activities, and attributes within a cultural and social context" (Nihel, 2017:47). Previous studies have examined the Sweden Democrats' framing of ethnic nationalism over time (Elgenius & Rydgren 2018) and also the party's gender ideology and rhetoric (Towns, Karlsson & Eyre, 2014; Mulinari, 2016; Norocel, 2013), but there is to date no study recording of the transformation over time. I will also contextualize these findings and identify a shift that is part of a broader trend among West European right-wing populist parties, where the previous emphasis on traditionalism has softened.

I use qualitative text analysis to examine the Sweden Democrats' official party literature from 1989 until 2018, with frame theory as an analytical framework. Frame theory provides the analytical tool to examine the construction of diagnostic and prognostic framing, problems and solutions, in regards to gender. Official party literature includes here party programs and election manifestos over the period 1989 -2018, making all material directly representative of the ideology of the Sweden Democrats. By analyzing official party literature from the establishment of the party until the last parliamentary election in 2018, this study will examine and compare the changes in framing over time.

Outline

The rest of this study is divided into the following sections. In the background, I explore the rise of the Sweden Democrats, from its roots in Nazism to its current more moderate form. I also sketch and contextualize how gender-related issues have been treated by Sweden's society and government since the 1960s. In previous research, I survey research on right-wing populism especially in Western Europe and explore the positions and appeals of right-wing populist parties with particular reference to previous studies of the Sweden Democrats on gender. The theoretical framework of frame theory is presented subsequently. I then move to research design in the methodology section and present the data I have analyzed for this study. Thereafter follows the presentation of findings and analysis thereof. In the last section, I present my conclusions that the Sweden Democrats framing of problems and solutions regarding gender has changed over time, and suggests areas for future research.

Background

In this section, two key aspects of relevance for this study is presented. Firstly, the historical background of right-wing populism in Sweden and the Sweden Democrats rise to power, and secondly a brief outline of how Sweden historically has treated gender-related issues.

The Rise of the Swedish Democrats

Sweden has had several parties labeled extremists, dating back at least 90 years. Most of them were described as disruptive, and/or openly Nazi parties and movements (Widfeldt, 2008). However, these parties and movements never saw real electoral success and were always pretty insignificant to Swedish politics as a whole (Rydgren, 2002:33). Anders Widfeldt (2008:266-267) identifies the resurgence of racist and neo-Nazi parties in the 1980s, arguing that these groups were more aggressive and, in some ways, more efficient than their predecessors. Two well-known examples of these parties and movements were Bevara Sverige Svenskt (Keep Sweden Swedish) and Vitt Ariskt Motstånd (White Aryan Resistance). These groups were not around for an extended amount of time but became well-known in a time where extreme-right views and racist activity increased in Sweden. While these extremist groups were making an indent, right-wing populist parties were still on the sideline of Swedish politics. Another party active during this time was Framstegspartiet (Progress Party), starting as a party with ambitions to unify the right parties, but quickly became a populist 'discontent' party that never broke through onto the national political stage.

In 1986, the Keep Sweden Swedish (BSS) and the Progress Party merged into Sverigepartiet (Sweden Party). Initially highly active, internal conflicts made the party split in 1987. In 1988, the more organized BSS fraction took control of the party and renamed it the Sweden Democrats (Rydgren, 2002:33). Individuals from the extreme right joined the party, many of whom were either convicted felons and/or Nazi-sympathizers. This serious image problem kept the Sweden Democrats on the sideline of Swedish politics for years, only winning a few local seats (Widfeldt, 2008; Erlingsson, Vernby & Öhrvall, 2014). However, the Sweden Democrats were able to consolidate its party organization and made strides to clean up their political image. In 1995, they elected a new party leader without a criminal record, and the party's share of criminals and Nazis started to decline. The elections of 1998 and 2002 showed slow but consistent progress. In 2002, the Sweden Democrats increased the number of local seats six-fold and got 1.6 % of the vote in the national election, and increased to 2.6 % in the following election of 2006. In 2005, Jimmie Åkesson, active in the

organization since 1997, took over the position as the party leader and has remained in that role ever since (Widfeldt, 2008:267-270). The Sweden Democrats of today have modernized and repackaged the rhetoric to widen its electoral base. The nostalgia for the 1930s is gone (Elgenius & Rydgren, 2019:589), and they have removed controversial policy proposals such as the death penalty, ban of foreign adoptions, and ideas of racial purity. Instead, messages of the Sweden Democrats' commitment to universal human rights and gender equality are now presented (Towns et al., 2014:237). Despite its extremist origin, the party today have converged ideologically with its sister parties in both Denmark and Finland, by adopting similar party names indicating a nationalist position and an authoritarian stance in sociocultural policy combined with a relative centrist position on socioeconomic policies (Jungar & Jupskås, 2014:216).

The electoral breakthrough came in the national election of 2010 when the Sweden Democrats received 5.7 % of the vote and won seats in parliament. In the national election of 2014, the party doubled its electoral support and received 12.9 % of the vote (Elgenius & Rydgren, 2019:589). In 2018, the Sweden Democrats electoral support increased again to 17.53 % of the vote (Valmyndigheten, 2020). Since 2014, the Sweden Democrats have been the third biggest party in Sweden. In recent polls made in both 2019 and 2020, the Sweden Democrats were predicted to be the biggest party in Sweden with estimates around 24 % of the electoral vote (Svt, 2020; Aftonbladet, 2019), even though these estimates have decreased in recent months to around 19.9 % in the wake of the current pandemic (Omni, 2020). Therefore, it is evident that the Sweden Democrats have gone from a party on the fringe to well-established within the Swedish political system. The Sweden Democrats have had low female electoral support, but this gap seems to be decreasing. While men still constitute the majority of their electoral base, more and more women are voting for them: and the gap has decreased from 74.2 % of men and 25.8 % of women in 2010 (Valmyndigheten, 2010) to 69.9 % of the men and 30.1 % women in 2018 (Valmyndigheten 2018).

The Swedish Context

To be able to examine the Sweden Democrats through their construction of problems and solutions, I offer a brief outline of the Swedish context regarding gender-related issues. Sweden is part of the Nordic welfare regime, which has been conceptualized as a "women-friendly" welfare state. Since the late 1960s, Swedish policies have aimed at increasing gender equality in both public and private life, and most Swedes hold egalitarian gender role

attitudes (Oláh & Gähler, 2014:578). Currently, Sweden is ranking among the most gender-equal countries around the globe, with almost equal political representation as well as participation in the labor market. Since 1995, Sweden has also designated days set for each parent, so-called "daddy days," to provide incentives for men to take out more parental leave (Förädrapenning Info, 2012). However, Sweden still has a gender-segregated labor market. Women still take on the majority of the paternal leave and work in the home, work more part-time than men, and consequently are on average paid less than men. These inequalities continue into retirement, with women's pensions on average lower than men's (Towns et al., 2014:242). This is the Swedish context in which the Sweden Democrats respond to gender differences and gender inequalities. The following section presents the previous research regarding right-wing populism in Western Europe and previous findings regarding the Sweden Democrats gender ideology and rhetoric.

Previous Research

In this section, I outline the key defining features of right-wing populism and the previous literature regarding right-wing populist parties in Europe to understand recent changes in the rhetoric used by right-wing populist parties relevant to this study. I then continue to present the literature regarding the Sweden Democrats and gender to locate earlier findings within the field.

Right-wing Populist Parties

The definition of the phenomenon of right-wing populist parties is a contested issue, and many different names for these parties exist (far-right, extreme right, nationalist, radical right populist). Jens Rydberg (2017:1-2) states that he refers to these parties as radical right, where the uniting factor is ethnic nationalism. The main objective is to secure the majority culture of their state and keep it as culturally and ethnically homogenous as possible. This ethnic nationalism often takes the form of the exclusion of immigrants, and in some cases, also other minorities within the state. The foundation of ethnic nationalism makes the restriction of immigration, especially Muslim immigration, the center of the rhetoric for these parties. According to Rydberg (2017:2), it is misleading to refer to these parties as solely "populist," when it is the ethnic nationalism that is the dominant feature that, in turn, influences the radical right parties' populist rhetoric.

Anton Pelinka (2013:5) provides a similar understanding using the term of right-wing populist parties. He states that right-wing populism in particular always has the component of being directed against an ethnically, nationally, or religiously defined "other," being ethnonationalistic in its core (Pelinka, 2013:5). A common factor in the ideology of right-wing populist parties is nativism, referring to the notion that only those of the native group should inhabit the nation. In contrast, the non-native individuals, as well as non-native ideas, are a threat to the homogenous nation (Spierings, Zaslove, Mügge, & De Lange, 2015:8).

Pelinka also emphasize populism as a unifying factor among these parties. He defines populism as "a general protest against the checks and balances introduced to prevent 'the peoples' direct rule." (Pelinka, 2013:3). Mudde and Kaltwasser (2017:9) emphasizes populism as a defining feature of this party group and present a similar definition in three key assumptions; "the opposition between 'the people' and the 'corrupt elite'; second, a grounding in the volonté générale (general will) of the people; third, its character as a thin ideology, because it does not constitute a coherent structure of beliefs but assembles contradictory ideologies in an eclectic fashion." Modern populism understands democracy as government by the people – even though there is no clear distinction of which groups constitute "the people." Instead, the notion of "the people" is often ambiguous and proclaimed as self-evident by populists. Right-wing populist parties, in particular, tend to present some ethnic/religious/linguistic/political minority as a scapegoat for current issues and create a narrative where this minority is a threat to "the people." (Wodak, 2013:25).

While I agree with Rydgren (2017) that these parties cannot be defined as solely "populist," I argue that excluding its populistic traits distinct for this party family minimizes the way these parties are using a populist rhetoric to achieve their ethnic nationalistic aims. I refer to these parties as right-wing populist parties. As Pelinka (2013) argues, these parties unify in ethnic nationalism, nativism, and pursue these objectives with a right-wing populist rhetoric. Therefore, this study refers to these parties as right-wing populist parties, unified in their populist messaging based on ethnic nationalism and nativism.

The Rise of Right-Wing Populism in Europe and their Relationship to Gender

Since the "Third-Wave" of right-wing populism slowly emerged almost four decades ago, these parties have become well-established in Europe and are electorally the most successful new European party family since the Second World War (Mudde, 2012:4). The causes for

this rise are well debated, but it is mostly allocated as a reaction against the broader structural changes in Europe during the late twentieth century. With mainstream parties converging into an integration consensus (Mudde, 2019), and socio-political changes mainstreaming issues such as women's liberation, multiculturalism, and sexual liberation (Lancaster, 2019), right-wing populist parties was established to stifle these political changes. Furthermore, the economic uncertainty in the wakes of the Eurozone crisis and the increased immigration to Europe from Northern Africa and the Middle East during the so-called migration crisis (Lynch, 2019:2), is identified as further triggering this rise, with support for right-wing populist parties rising in the aftermath of these turbulent events. While a more detail account of the causes of the rise of right-wing populism is outside the scope of this study, it provides context of how these parties have resurfaced in contemporary Europe.

The impact of these parties differs across Europe. In Eastern Europe, there are examples of right-wing populist parties steering countries into authoritarianism. For example, the right-wing populist parties in Hungary and Poland have diminished checks and balances within the democratic system ever since they came into government (Wodak, 2019:196). In Western Europe, the impact and development have been different. The democratic systems have remained intact, with attempts to undermine the counterbalance between political institutions unsuccessful (Halikiopoulou, 2018:64). However, they all unite in the core political issue of pursuing policies of anti-immigration, especially towards Muslim immigration (Wodak, 2013:58).

In regards to these parties' positions on gender and gender-related issues, however, their stances and rhetoric differ across Europe. Eleonore Kofman even argued over two decades ago that "there is not a single and consistent attitude to the family and its social relations among Far Right movements" (1998:91). Cas Mudde (2007:96) explains this relatively diverse stance regarding gender-related issues on the fact that gender is a secondary issue for right-wing populist parties instrumentalized mainly for their overall nativist objectives. However, more recent studies shows that even though the positions differ across Europe, where are still common characteristics and trends of importance.

In many post-communist countries, these parties have constructed an enemy in the concept of "gender ideology" which encompasses an overall liberal agenda with issues such as reproductive rights, gender studies, and LGBTQ-rights (Kovats, 2018:529). These right-wing populist parties remain conservative and mobilized against "foreign" values of gender equality, instead stressing the importance of traditional family values and Christianity (Grzebalska & Pető, 2018:165). While any further investigation regarding the development in

Central- and Eastern Europe is outside the aim of this study, it shows the diversity in how right-wing populist parties have positioned themselves in their gender rhetoric.

In Western Europe, the right-wing populist parties that have gained the most electoral success have adopted less extreme rhetoric and stressed the importance of "liberal values." These parties justify exclusionary policies on the ideological basis of national belonging, such as culture and values, instead of a racial basis of national belonging. This refinement have made these parties appear more legitimate, democratic, and align with basic national values (Halikiopoulou, Mock & Vasilopoulou, 2013:111).

Other scholar's explain this transformation in terms of "civilizationalism." Roger Brubaker (2017) argues that right-wing populism in Western Europe form a distinct cluster by pitting "the people" against the "other" in broader civilizational terms. This cluster, striking in Scandinavia, France, the Netherlands, Belgium, Austria, and Switzerland, centers around the perceived "civilizational threat" of Islam. These parties have repositioned themselves in the last 15 years, stressing how Islam threatens national values they did not previously address, such as gender equality, gay rights, secularism, and freedom of speech. These parties are still nationalists, but the notion of "the nation" is reshaped in civilizational terms to create "the people" and the dangerous "other." (Brubaker 2017:1198). Furthermore, Caroline Lancaster (2019:13-14) argues that conservative values regarding gender, sexuality, and morality, has lost its salience in the last 15 years among many right-wing populist parties in Western Europe. Instead, they are converging to mainstream values of women's and LGBTQ-rights, while maintaining anti-immigration as the core political issue.

In brief, whereas right-wing populism remain united in their stances regarding anti-immigration, they diverge in regards to gender-related issues. However, not so diverse that some current pattern cannot be detected. While Eastern European parties, in many cases, have rejected women's rights and other liberal values as "foreign" intrusion, Western Europe seem to have embraced them and created a new dichotomy between national liberal values and the threat from the cultural "other." These findings in Western Europe, in particular, provide a better understanding of the shift in gender rhetoric of the Sweden Democrats, as a part of the larger party family.

The Sweden Democrats and their relationship to Gender

The purpose of this section is to investigate previous studies examining the Sweden Democrats gender rhetoric. In the case of the Sweden Democrats, previous studies on their

relationship with gender-related issues have yielded varied results and ambiguity. Diana Mulinari (2016) examination of official party documents between 2008-2014 identifies that gender and gender equality are not given a significant amount of space in the material. Her findings show that the Sweden Democrats emphasize the biological differences between men and women, the preference to traditional family values, and the control of women's reproductive rights for the survival of the nation. Cristian Norocel (2013:17) identify a similar narrative in speeches made by the party leader of the Sweden Democrats, were heteronormative couplings and limitations to abortions are important to ensure "*Swedish* offspring." Furthermore, the party is seen as strongly anti-feminist and have a great difficulty addressing the issue of gender equality (Mulinari, 2016).

These findings are in line with broader characteristics identified within the party family as a whole. Mudde (2007:92-95) identifies a few common features in right-wing populist parties gender ideology; the presentation of women's politics as family politics, the defense of the "natural differences between the sexes," anti-feminist notions condemning "extremists" wanting to diminish these "natural differences, and the notion that women as the only sex that can give birth need protection for the survival of the nation in their role as "housewives and mothers."

However, other studies identify a more complex picture of the party. Ann Towns, Erika Karlsson, and Joshua Eyre (2014:245) exemplify in their study of the Sweden Democrats gender ideology between 2010-2012 that the party is struggling with two competing nationalistic gender views. The first view presents gender equality as a Swedish national value in need of protection from the misogynic other, while the second view stresses the "natural" differences between the sexes and traditional gender roles with women as nurturing mothers and men as "warriors." This competing gender narratives makes their gender rhetoric contradictory, fiercely criticizing gender equality while emphasizing its importance regarding immigration and multiculturalism. They show how immigration is presented as a primary threat to women, with sexual harassment and violence as a primary example, and argues that immigrant women are oppressed victims of their misogynic heritage with examples such as honor culture, female mutilation, and the full-covered veil. The party also argues that this heritage from the "other" is allowed to continue instead of enforcing assimilation to Swedish gender-equality culture (Towns et al., 2014:244).

This instrumentalization of gender equality regarding immigration is evident in other right-wing populist parties. Tjitske Akkerman and Anniken Hagelund (2007:197) registered a shift in rhetoric early on regarding gender and gender equality among right-wing populist

parties' in Western democracies. They identified that some right-wing populist parties presented gender equality as a part of the liberal, humanitarian, and enlightened tradition of European society, that ultimately needs protection from its cultural antagonist, the backward-thinking, patriarchal, Muslim societies. In this way, gender equality was instrumentalized as a fundamental value in these European societies as something in need of protection from the "pre-modern Other" through stricter immigration policies and more focus on assimilation (Akkerman & Hagelund, 2007:212-213). Wodak (2015:174) also emphasizes that these parties, in Western Europe and Scandinavia in particular, have positioned the discourse regarding gender and gender equality as a conflict of values between civilized defenders of gender equality and the "barbaric" other that is oppressing women. The veiled woman, especially the burqa-wearing woman, has become the "other" representing the perceived dangers of Islam on "European civilization."

Sweden seems to fit into a broader trend in Western Europe, where gender equality in recent years have been instrumentalized to present the dangers of immigration and the "other," exemplified as threatening national liberal values, native women, and oppressive of immigrant women. However, Benjamin Moffitt argues that these parties treat gender equality more so as a goal they have already achieved, which allows these parties to claim to be for gender equality, but at the same time criticize further measures aimed at combat gender inequality. If gender equality is presented as already achieved, then any additional measures are instead "the elite," forcing women and men to be the same, which is perceived as a form of discrimination by many of these parties (Moffitt, 2017:115). Comparatively, however, Sweden still seem to stand out. An expert survey on 15 right-wing populist parties identified the Sweden Democrats among the two most "liberal" gender ideologies in Western Europe (Campbell and Erzeel, 2018), expressing progressive views on gender and LGBTQ-rights.

This section has shown that the gender ideology of the Sweden Democrats is somewhat ambiguous, including rhetoric both in line with a more traditional view of gender-related issues as well as stressing the importance of gender equality. The next section introduces frame theory and the motivation behind using this framework.

Theoretical Framing

Below, I outline frame theory and sketch out its previous usage among the literature on social movements and of right-wing populism. I then continue to motivate why frame theory is appropriate for the aim of this study.

Frame Theory

A frame is an interpretative schemata that help to make sense of the "world out there" (Snow & Bedford 1992:137). The framing of an issue is basically to "select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communication text" (Entman, 1993:52). Frame theory aim to conceptualize the way social movements "assign meaning to and interpret, relevant events and conditions that are intended to mobilize potential adherents and constituents, to garner bystander support, and to demobilize antagonists." (Snow & Bedford, 1988:198). According to this framework, frames are produced by social movements and political parties, providing a foundation for individuals to locate their rationale and actions. Frames function both as a way of attribution and articulation (Elgenius & Rydgren, 2019:586).

In diagnostic framing, they identify individuals, groups, or structures as the cause of a perceived issue, and can attribute the blame of the problem unto this particular group. In motivational framing, they present justification and reasons for voters and activists to support their political cause. By proposing a solution or a course of action to deal with the perceived problem, political parties provide prognostic framing (Elgenius & Rydgren, 2019:586). As any collective actor, right-wing populist parties need to motivate individuals to action and provide rationales for followers and potential followers to support their party. In doing so, framing processes allows political parties to define the self and its opponents, constructing an "us" and "them." (Caiani & Della Porta, 2011:182).

Previously, right-wing populist parties have constructed several anti-immigration frames, such as the frame of immigrants as a significant cause of criminality or other kinds of social insecurity, or the frame of Muslim immigrants as a threat against their countries' liberal values (Elgenius & Rydgren, 2019:584). Regarding the framing of gender, frame analysis among the Austrian right-wing populist parties show emphasis on "traditional family values" such as women's right to stay at home but also arguing against immigration of the basis of gender equality due to Muslims misogynic "culture" (Mayer, Ajanovic & Sauer, 2014:250).

This study uses frame theory as an analytical tool to examine the right-wing populist party the Sweden Democrats. As Gabriella Elgenius and Jens Rydgren (2018:584) argues, while the concept of ideology is perceived as a more coherent all-encompassing structure of political beliefs, frames are more specific and more strategically used by different types of political actors. Frames are neither inherently stable or always used in a coherent way, which

allows this study to examine possible inconsistencies and changes of problems and solutions over time. Furthermore, frame theory provides a framework to understand how political parties strategically construct the representation and image of their party. Since this study aims to understand better how the Sweden Democrats have constructed their rhetoric regarding gender over time, frame theory is a well-suited analytical tool. This study focuses on the diagnostic and prognostic framing, examining closer the representation of problems related to gender, as well as the construction of solutions. In the following section, I outline the design and methodology of this study, as well as the chosen empirical material for the analysis.

Method

In this section, I present the research design and chosen method of this study. I also outline the material chosen and the motivation behind the selection. I then continue to sketch out how the concept of gender is operationalized in this study to achieve appropriate validity and reliability will also be discussed.

Research Design and Case selection

This is a comparative case study that aims at analyzing the Sweden Democrats framing of problems and solutions regarding gender over time, that is, over almost 30 years since the establishment of the party. A qualitative method is preferable since the focus of the study is to examine the phenomenon in depth to detect nuances and shifts in framing over time. In terms of the method for data collection, qualitative text analysis is well suited for this study, since it provides the opportunity to examine the official framing of the party over time.

The Swedish right-wing populist party, the Sweden Democrats, is of interest in view that Sweden until the late 2000s seemed immune to a successful right-wing populist party (Widfeldt, 2008:265). Nevertheless, the Sweden Democrats developed from being viewed by the vast majority of voters as politically and morally illegitimate (Elgenius & Rydgren, 2019:589) to become a well-established political party. The Sweden Democrats is a party that has risen from the political fringe at the end of the 1980s to being the third biggest party in parliament. The Sweden Democrats have adapted and modified their rhetoric and to attract more voters. This strategy seems to have worked since the party has continued to increase its electoral support since 2005. As previous literature has shown, the refinement of party

rhetoric has included modification on gender as well (Town et al., 2014). However, previous studies also show how this gender rhetoric is both ambiguous and at times contradictory. Earlier contributions of the Sweden Democrats gender ideology has focused on a specific set of years (Towns et al., 2014; Norocel, 2012; Mulinari, 2016), which cannot fully account for the development of the party in their rhetoric regarding gender. This is, to the author's knowledge, the first contribution examining the Sweden Democrats' framing of gender from the creation of the party until now. By comparing the party over time, this study contributes to a better understand how the rhetoric regarding gender has developed in the case of the Sweden Democrats, but also if the Sweden Democrats fit into this recent trend in Western Europe where right-wing populist parties are becoming more mainstream in regards to women's rights (Lancaster, 2019). To understand the framing and the potential re-framing of gender is key since the Sweden Democrats have increasingly gained electoral support, and are at the same time decreasing its electoral gender gap with a higher percentage of women voting for them than before.

Qualitative text analysis and framing

This research study examines both the construction of problems (explicit and implicit), the attribution of blame for the perceived problem, and the framing of solutions from a gendered perspective. The analytical tool of frame analysis is appropriate since the assumption is that different societal issues can be framed strategically by political actors. The strategic construction of the frames for specific political issues is at the center, not the motives or thought-process of the actors constructing them. As in frame theory, the questions in frame analysis centers around the framing of the problem, the cause of the perceived problem, and the framing of possible solutions to the problem (Elgenius & Rydgren, 2019:586; Esaiasson et al., 2017:218-219). Following the theoretical framework of frame theory, the following analytical questions for coding the material is:

Diagnostic frames:

What are the problem/problems perceived to be?

Who or what is represented as the cause of the perceived problems?

Prognostic frames:

What are the solutions to the defined problems?

How are the solutions or course of action to the perceived problems framed?

Operationalization

It becomes paramount to specify how gender is operationalized, especially since gender is a broad theoretical concept, encompassing a broad set of issues. Therefore, it is essential to operationalize this concept in accordance with the theoretical definition and relevant operational indicators to measure what is intended to achieve validity of this study (Esaiasson et al., 2017:58). Reliability refers to the absence of random- or systematic errors (Esaiasson, 2017:64). To obtain reliability in this study, it is important to be consistent and thorough while analyzing the chosen material. To achieve reliability in this study, I will make the study available for replication by other scholars by being transparent of how the material is analyzed. To provide further transparency, quotations from the material are included.

This study aims to analyze how the Sweden Democrats have framed gender over time. Gender is related to biological sex but focuses on the socially constructed processes, presentations, roles, and actions that are not inherently based on the biological sex. Therefore, the biological sex constructs gender, femininity, and masculinity that "shapes the accepted, expected, and rewarded behavior and preferences based on social constructs, norms, and institutions." It is also important to have an approach that identifies the diversity among men and women with reference to class, race, ethnicity, and sexuality while still acknowledging the social constructs that generally affect women differently to men. An inclusive approach also provides the opportunity to examine the construction of homosexuality, a theme identified as an increasingly important among some right-wing populist parties in recent years (Spierings, Zaslove, Mügge & L. de Lange, 2015:10-11).

Furthermore, in line with previous research, this study's operational indicators for gender focuses on the problems and solution constructed in regards to the "nature" of gender and gender roles, family politics, gender equality, and the threat from the religious and culturally "other." Since gender and gender-related issues seldom have their own section in party programs of right-wing populist parties (Mudde, 2015), the material will be read in its entirety and not narrowed down to specific sections.

Material

The material chosen for this study is the party programs and election manifestos since the establishment of the Sweden Democrats in 1989 and up to the most recent parliamentary election of 2018. This study will be able to examine the ways in which problems and

solutions regarding gender has been framed over time. The empirical data analyzed in this study are the party programs of 1989, 1994, 1996, and 1999 as well as the position paper of 2003, 2005, and 2011. There have not been any position papers published since 2011, and therefore, the election manifestos of 2010, 2014 and 2018 will also be included in the analysis. These programs and election manifestos have been retrieved from either the website of the Swedish National Data Service (SND) or the official website of the Sweden Democrats.

While I acknowledge the usefulness of examining other types of material, such as parliamentary bills, speeches, and statements from individual party members, it does not allow for an even comparison over time. This material selection provides for an examination of the most polished version of the Sweden Democrats with the most consensus within the party, which cannot be dismissed as opinions from the fringe of the party. All empirical material analyzed is in Swedish, and all translations are done by the author.

Findings and Analysis

My analysis of the Sweden Democrats framing of problems and solutions regarding gender shows that there has been a shift in the diagnostic and prognostic frames used over time. In the first decade of the party, the diagnostic frames highlighted problems of women being forced into the labor market, moral decay in society, and the glorification of the "unhealthy homosexual lifestyle," whereas the solutions presented emphasized a return to traditional values. From 2010 and onwards, these constructed problems were replaced by frames of gender equality "going too far" and Swedish gender equality under threat from the religious and cultural "other" with solutions focusing on removing "extremist" gender equality measures and restrict the misogynic practices of the "other."

Diagnostic Framing

Diagnostic frames identify perceived problems and can attribute blame towards individuals, groups, or structures as the cause for the perceived problem. In the case of the Sweden Democrats, problems regarding gender-related issues are identified. The findings also show how the framing of problems regarding gender has been changed and modified over time and new diagnostic frames have emerged.

From women being forced onto the Labor Market to Parents' Right to Choose

In the party program of 1989, one diagnostic frame presents the problem of women being forced into the labor market by the Social Democrats. The program of 1989 states that: "The anti-family politics of the Social Democrats have contributed to many of society's problems of today. Through tax policies, women have been forced into the labor market, which in turn has negatively impacted the children. Many children and youths have lost their way by not having the safety and the traditional norms parents and families for generations have provided their kids." (SD, 1989:2). The problem identified is that women have entered the labor market against their free will, which consequently made children suffer. Female labor force participation is constructed as destructive and not in the best interest of the family and contrasted to the safety of traditional norms where women stay in the home and the man is the breadwinner. The cause of this problem is tax policies implemented by the Social Democrats. This statement assumes women's primary roles are that of mothers and housewives, which research has identified as a common theme among right-wing populist parties (Mudde, 2007). However, the argument that women are being "forced" into the labor market is removed from the following official party literature after 1989. The three following party programs of 1994, 1996, and 1999 include the same statement of children suffering from the lack of traditional norms in the family as it did in 1989, but instead of presenting women as housewives pushed out into the workforce, the statement is reframed as "families freedom to choose to raise their kids in the home."

The family's freedom to choose is stressed in throughout the party literature, especially with regard to paternity leave. From 1994 until 2018, paternity leave is presented as "restricting the parents right to parenthood" (SD 1994:8; SD 1996:9; SD 1999:9), "forced restrictions" (SD, 2010; 2014), and "quota-based parental leave" (SD, 2018:14) and consistently framed as restricting family's freedom to choose without state intervention. Therefore, the Sweden Democrats have modified its diagnostic framing regarding gender roles in family constellations from 1989 where women's labor participation was constructed as "forced" and harmful for children's upbringing, to a frame that does not explicitly present women's role as housewives. Instead, the Sweden Democrats frame paternal leave as intervention undermining parent's freedom to choose. This frame is identified from 1994 until 2018, making it both consistent and part of the party's current framing.

The moral dissolution of Swedish Society

Another diagnostic frame identified in the party programs between 1989 until 1999 presents Swedish society in a state of moral dissolution caused by the traditional parties. The party state in the party programs of 1989, 1994, 1996 and 1999 that: "Since the end of the 60s, the responsibility of our nation has been in the hands of politicians that have not seen to the best and the needs of the Swedish people. Those who have ruled Sweden have, through their politics, contributed to the dissolution of guiding ethical and moral principles. The result is evident in different ways, such as high criminality, divorces, broken homes, abortions, and low Swedish birthrates." (SD 1989:2; SD 1994:3; SD 1996:3; SD 1999:1).

This perceived problem of "moral dissolution" is explicitly tied to family-related issues, women's reproductive rights, and the fertility of Swedish women. Research has shown that right-wing populist parties, in many cases, tend to view issues such as divorces negatively and wanting to prohibit abortions (Mudde, 2007). This pattern is evident in the first ten years of the party, where these issues, along with low Swedish birthrates, are explicitly framed as problems due to a moral decay in Swedish society. The blame of this perceived problem of moral dissolution, resulting in abortions, divorces, and low Swedish birthrates, is allocated to the ruling politicians since the 1960s. The ideologies of these politicians are presented as infiltrated by "internationalism" causing: "honorable concepts such as the nation, the family, and the individual to be dragged through the mud." (SD, 1989;1994:3;1996:3;1999:1).

The problem of abortions and low Swedish birthrates is further emphasized in the first four party programs of 1989, 1994, 1996, and 1999. The Sweden Democrats present abortion in general as a problem, but also highlight the perceived problem that the majority of women having abortions are Swedish. The party program of 1994 states that the numbers of abortions are "...Scandalously high, almost at the same level as the mass immigration, and it is mainly Swedish women that are having abortions." (SD, 1994:11). The diagnostic framing of the problem here is twofold: abortion itself, and also that native women are primarily having them. This statement ties into the most central issue among right-wing populist parties of anti-immigration, by comparing the number of abortions with the level of "mass immigration."

The importance of "Swedish" fertility is further emphasized in the party program of 1996, stating that: "The fact that friends of the motherlands primarily are having a family

with other Swedish partners, or secondly with partners from a western culture, is not racist."
(SD, 1996:12). This statement shows that these constructed problems regarding lacking
traditional family values and gender roles are connected to ethnic homogeneity, where family
creation ought to be between Swedes or other people from western cultures. As previous
research shown (Norocel, 2013), the Sweden Democrats emphasize the role of Swedish
women in generating "Swedish offspring." The emphasis on "Swedish family creation" and
the problem of "Swedish women having abortions" evident in the party programs of the first
decade ties into the construction of native women as instrumental to the "survival of the
nation" in which women's primary role is to be a mother and facilitate their reproductive
capabilities to ensure the continued existence of the nation (Mudde, 2007).

  Since 2003, the frame of moral dissolution caused by politicians since the 1960s is
removed from the official party literature. Neither is divorces, broken homes, and low
Swedish birthrates presented as problems or tied to ethnic homogeneity. However, there are
still implicit anti-abortion sentiments. The construction of the problem is altered, and abortion
as a concept is not used anymore, instead stating that: "In our Sweden, there are no unwanted
children" (SD, 2010) or stating that traditional ideologies view on the human essence, such as
liberalism and socialism, leads to the wrongful conclusion that: "A human fetus, based on the
assumed lack of unique characteristics, is totally worthless." (SD, 2011:7-8). Even though
abortion is less salient over the last 17 years, and no longer connected to Swedish women's
role as mothers and the "survival of the nation," abortion itself is still framed as a problem
which is allowed to go on due to liberalism and socialism's wrongful assumptions about
human life.

  As previous research outlined, right-wing populist parties tend to emphasize
traditional gender roles and connect women's issues to issues of the family (Mudde, 2007;
Akkerman, 2015). This emphasis is prevalent in the earlier party programs from 1989 until
1999. These presented problems in the first four party programs of moral dissolution in
Swedish society, women being "forced" into the labor market, divorces, abortions, and low
Swedish birthrates shows a nostalgia to return to traditional values, common among right-
wing populist parties (Elgenius & Rydgren, 2019). During the 1990s, the perceived problem
of abortions and low Swedish birthrates are also tied to the Sweden Democrat's core political
issue of anti-immigration, comparing the number of abortions to "mass immigration" and
stressing ethnic homogeneous family creation to ensure "Swedish offspring." From 2003, the
diagnostic frame of moral dissolution is removed, and issues such as divorces, broken homes,
Swedish birthrates are onwards not constructed as problems. However, abortion is still

framed as a problem. In 2011, abortion is still constructed as a problem, where liberalism and socialism are blamed for perceiving a fetus as "worthless."

The glorification of the "unhealthy homosexual lifestyle"

Furthermore, the findings show that homosexuality is diagnostically framed as sexual deviant and glorified by the mass media in the late 1990s. Homosexuality is first mentioned in the programs of 1996 and 1999 and referred to as "sexually deviant." While stating that "No person chooses their sexual orientation. Harassment towards sexual deviants are criminal acts and ought to be punished." (SD, 1996:9; SD, 1999:9) it is followed by "outlet of sexual deviants can take place as long as no one suffers. The glorification of the homosexual lifestyle among the mass media creates unhealthy frames of reference for young people building their adult identity." Being gay is presented as deviant, but tolerated if not "glorified." Here, the mass media is blamed for "glorifying" gays with concern of how it will possibly corrupt the minds of the youth.

This frame of the unhealthy homosexual lifestyle found in the party programs of 1996 and 1999 has been removed when the issue reappears in the party program of 2011. Homosexuality is no longer diagnostically framed as "sexually deviant," and the mass media are no longer blamed for the "glorification" of the "unhealthy homosexual lifestyle." Instead, they state: "In the same way most people inherit gender, we also regard sexual orientation as something most people are born with. We oppose doctrines claiming that sexual orientation is only a social construction." (SD, 2011:25). Here, sexuality is presented as something "most people" are born with, leaving room for other factors. However, they also reject the "doctrines" that only view sexuality as socially constructed. These doctrines and which actors who are promoting this view are, however, not explained further to identify any allocation of blame.

Previous research (Moffitt, 2017) identified the trend among some right-wing populist parties in Northern Europe to present gay rights as a national value that needs protection from the culturally "other." The Sweden Democrats, however, do not frame gay rights as a national value threatened by the immigrated "Pre-modern other." They have merely removed the frame identified in the programs of the late 1990s where homosexuality is sexually deviant and not something the mass media should "glorify" to the impressionable youth to a more neutral wording in 2011.

Gender Equality gone too far

Another diagnostic frame identified constructs the problem of individual's freedom undermined by gender equality gone too far. Gender equality as a concept was non-existent in the party programs of the Sweden Democrats until 2003. In the programs of 2003 and 2005, they state that: "It is central for the Sweden Democrats that all people, regardless of gender, have the same rights and possibilities." (SD, 2003:5; SD, 2005:8). However, there is no framing of problems or solutions related to this statement. Gender equality as a term is non-existent until the election manifesto of 2010, where the concept is dedicated its own section in the manifesto. The party state that: "In our Sweden, it is self-evident that men and women have the same worth and rights." (SD, 2010:6). However, their conception of gender equality is also contrasted with other actors in Sweden, which are framed as problematic since they want to remove any differences between men and women. In the election manifesto of 2018, they state that: "In the public debate regarding gender equality, the emphasis is often put on the unequal distribution between men and women. Other parties want to micromanage how families should divide the paternal leave, how many men and women work in certain fields or control businesses. For the Sweden Democrats, gender equality is about solving the problems that are unequal, rather than distribute them equally between gender." (SD, 2018:18).

This frame that other parties are removing the right to self-determination in the name of gender equality is also evident in the election manifesto of 2014. In the election manifesto of 2014, they state that in the section named "gender equality for the real people" that the Sweden Democrats are working towards: "A Sweden where the government is not trying to control men's and women's gender identity and life choices, but instead support the citizens in the choices they have made and in the situation they are." (SD, 2014:17). Therefore, in the last eight years, a new diagnostic frame has emerged, where the people's right to determine their lives are presented as undermined by other parties and governments due to their misconceptions of "real" gender equality. As Moffitt (2017) argues, the rhetoric used by many right-wing populist parties present other parties' course of action to achieve gender equality as a form of discrimination and as forcing men and women to be the same.

This frame of "gender equality gone too far" can be explained by the Sweden Democrats' assumptions of the biological differences between men and women. In the position papers of 2003 and 2005, these biological differences between men and women are distinguished. The party states that: "Men and women are not created the same and can,

therefore, approach different situations in different ways and do different things in different ways. Men and women complement each other, and therefore, it is an essential right for all children to have one mother and one father." (SD, 2003:5; SD, 2005:8). The party continues to stress these "natural" differences in the position paper of 2011, stating that: "These inherited qualities that link a certain group of people, but not all of humanity, in addition to the socially constructed differences we acknowledge, are the biological differences between most women and most men above what can be observed by the naked eye. In a society where people can shape their lives freely, these differences will most likely result in differences in preferences, behavior, and life choices." (SD, 2011:8). The wording has been modified from 2003 and 2005 to also acknowledge the social construction of gender. However, the construction of the differences between the sexes is still emphasizing that men and women are created differently, having certain "inherited qualities," which will lead to "natural" differences in their actions and goals. As Mulinari (2016) argued, the Sweden Democrats still seem to have a difficult relationship with gender equality, stemming from their assumptions of the natural differences between the sexes. However, these findings show that even though the Sweden Democrats might be contradictory in their gender ideology, their usage of gender equality rhetoric shows a rather consistent way of constructing a problem of "gender equality going too far."

The cultural and religious other threatening Swedish Gender Equality

Another key diagnostic frame identified is the construction of Islam as misogynic. The diagnostic framing of Islam as a threat to women is first expressed in the party program of 1999, regarding prohibiting mosques and minarets in Sweden. The party state: "Islam is not only a religious movement, but also have social and political ambitions that we deem not desirable in Sweden. For example, we find Islam's views on women and animals unacceptable." (SD, 1999:5). This statement is the first framing of Islam as a problem in regards to its misogynic views. As identified by previous research (Brubaker, 2017; Wodak, 2013; Moffitt, 2017), this connection between gender and the perceived threat from other "misogynic cultures" such as Islam has been increasing over the last 15 years. The time frame of this trend helps explain why it is identified only once in the party program of 1999 but increase in salience in the 2010s.

The frame of the perceived misogynic "other" reappears in the election manifesto of 2010. In the section named "Gender Equality and increased safety for the country's women," they state that: "In our Sweden, it is self-evident that men and women have the same worth

and rights. There is no space for misogynist religions and ideologies in our Sweden. In our Sweden, both men and women should feel safe, respected, and fairly treated." (SD, 2010:6). The party presents the "gender-equal Sweden" where it is self-evident that men and women have the same value and rights, whereas the "misogynist ideologies and religions" are the identified problem since they do not share these Swedish values. This statement does not identify any specific ideology or religion as in 1999 when Islam was explicitly framed as misogynic. However, taken together with other statements from the manifesto, Islam is still implicitly framed as the scapegoat. In their solutions regarding immigration policy, they present the proposals of: "An increased support to women that live in religious and honor-related oppression in Sweden," "Stopping the Islamization of Swedish society." and "Prohibit full-covered veils in public places." (SD, 2010:4).

Since Islam, or rather "Islamization," is the only religion presented as a problem in the manifesto, it is implied to be the "misogynic religions" Sweden does not have room for. Furthermore, the solution of increased support to women living in religious and honor-based oppression is presented as explicitly linked to immigration, where a foreign religion is oppressing immigrant women. Therefore, immigrant women are framed as needing "liberation" from the oppressive practices of foreign religions. This framing is further emphasized with the proposal of banning the full veil in public places. As a whole, Islam is framed as oppressive towards immigrant women and not compatible with "gender-equal Sweden," in line with previous research (Moffitt, 2017; Wodak, 2013; Towns et al., 2014).

This framing of the "misogynic other" is also evident and expanded upon in the manifestos of 2014 and 2018 and the position paper of 2011. While Sweden is presented as "one of the most gender-equal countries in the world." (SD, 2018:18), the problems presented in regards to other cultures and religions are more salient in the material. The presented problem of honor-based violence and oppression is expanded upon to identify several connected issues, such as the full covered veil, female mutilation (SD, 2011; SD, 2014; SD, 2018), and forced marriages (SD, 2014; SD, 2018). These problems are connected to other cultures. For example, regarding female mutilation: "The expanded practice of female mutilation in some countries is an example of such a destructive aspect. We hope that the countries practicing this barbaric custom chose to abolish it and that they settle the score with the misogynic attitudes the custom is based on." (SD, 2011:20). These issues are distinguished between "we" as champions for women's rights and "them" with their "barbaric" customs and misogynic views. The cause of these presented problems is the misogynic views held by the culturally other. In 2014, it is also implied that the ruling

government is economically supporting violent and misogynic religious groups. The Sweden Democrats proposing that: "Pull all state-subsidies towards all political and religious organizations that are advocating or legitimizing violence or any discrimination of individuals on the basis of their gender." (SD, 2014:17).

A noteworthy aspect is how the framing of the misogynic "other" has developed over time from simply stating that Islam is misogynic in 1999, to a reframing during the last ten years. Islam is still a scapegoat for misogyny, but in the last ten years, this perceived misogyny is explicitly presented as threatening Swedish gender equality. The presented problems have expanded since 2010 to a specific set of issues, such as honor-based violence, female mutilation, and forced marriages. One way for right-wing populist parties to gain more electoral support is to present themselves as "legitimate" and supporting national values (Halikiopoulou, Mock & Vasilopoulou, 2013). This strategy can help explain both the increased emphasis of "gender-equal Sweden" that was non-existent in the first decade of the party. Most Swedes (82 %) are in favor of increasing gender equality (Pew, 2019a) and a majority (68 %) is positive to Muslims in Sweden (Pew, 2019b), which might help explain why the Sweden Democrats have made gender equality salient in their party literature in the last decade while the most blatant framing of Islam as misogynic was reframed in more implicit terms. Instead, the reframing of the cultural other has problematized specific issues in line with general national values, such as a ban of the full-covered veil in public, which 64 % of Swedes are in favor of (Politologerna, 2018).

These findings are in line with previous studies of the Sweden Democrats (Towns et al., 2014) showing that the party has framed the culturally and religious "other" as misogynic. My findings, however, show that this frame was not evident until the end of the 1990s, which fits with the broader trend in Western Europe identifying this rhetoric as prevalent in the last 15 years (Brubaker, 2017), and increasing in salience among right-wing populist parties (Moffitt, 2017; Akkerman & Haglund 2007). In the case of the Sweden Democrats, the frame identified in 1999 construct Islam as misogynic, but this frame is not salient in other party literature from the 1990s and 2000s. From 2010 and onwards, however, the framing of the perceived misogynic practices and values from other cultures are more salient. The culturally "other" is put in contrast to Swedish values of gender equality, which needs protection from barbaric practices from other cultures. Instead of blaming the whole religion of Islam, they have reframed the problem into specific practices, which are explained as based on "others" misogynic attitudes, without circling out Islam or Muslim immigrants explicitly. However, it is implied, by proposing a halt to the "Islamization" of Swedish society right in between the

proposals of banning the full-covered veil and the problematization of honor-related oppression of immigrant women. The blame is also allocated at the Swedish government, presented as facilitating these misogynic "others" with state-subsidies.

Since 2010, gender equality as a concept became salient in the official party literature of the Sweden Democrats. While stressing the importance of gender equality regarding immigration but critic it in other areas are ideologically contradictory (Towns et al., 2014), frame analysis instead allows to show two consistent diagnostic frames where gender equality is instrumentalized to construct distinct problems caused by other parties and the mere presence of the cultural "other."

Prognostic Framing

Prognostic frames present solutions or a course of action to deal with the problems constructed through the diagnostic frames.

The right to stay at home with children

The solution to the problem of women being forced into the labor market is presented later in the party program of 1989. The party states that: "The Sweden Democrats believe that the mother (or another legal guardian) should have the right to stay at home with full-pay during the child's first three years. Thereafter, the home-staying parent shall receive a benefit until the child starts school." (SD, 1989:8). As research has shown, mothers are often portrayed as the primary stay-at-home parent (Mudde, 2007) in their role as "nurturing mothers" (Towns et al., 2014). To facilitate the possibility for mothers to stay at home, the proposal provides economic solutions. Even though the argument that women are being forced into the labor market is removed after 1989, the following programs of 1994, 1996 and 1999 continue to stress the importance to return to traditional stay-at-home work, stating that: "Tax policies must be formulated to encourage family formation also for citizens with low incomes" (SD, 1989:7; SD, 1994:7; SD, 1996:8, SD, 1999:8) and "Work in the home must be given a higher status in order to give our children the best possible upbringing." (SD, 1989:7; SD, 1994:7). Furthermore, the party programs of 1994 and 1996 propose a "parental allowance" to "give parents the possibility to raise their children in the home" (SD, 1994:8; SD, 1996:9). These solutions emphasize a transformation in tax policies and increased economic incentives for stay-at-home work. Even though women are not explicitly presented as housewives after

1989, the solutions remain focused on facilitating stay-at-home work on the basis of parents' right to choose.

To facilitate parents' right to choose, The Sweden Democrats oppose paternal leave because it "...is to intrude on parent's rights to parenthood" (SD, 1994:8; SD, 1996:9; SD, 1999:9). This prognostic frame is later modified to oppose restrictions on parental leave in general instead of opposing paternal leave specifically. They propose: "A free parental insurance without forced restrictions" (SD, 2010:5), "An increased and deregulated parental benefit...Our conviction is that the country's parents are more equipped than politicians to decide what is best for their children." (SD, 2014:14), and "Simplify the life puzzle for families by having a parental insurance system without quotas" (SD, 2018:14). This modification from 2010 and onwards emphasize parental leave without restrictions, instead of solely opposing earmarked days for fathers.

"Moral armament" of Social Policies

Regarding the diagnostic frame of moral dissolution identified in the party programs between 1989 and 1999, the solutions presented focuses on increased restrictions on abortions and promoting increased fertility. The party program of 1989 and 1994 both propose the need for a "moral armament" and propose prohibition of abortions with exceptions for rape and medical reasons. Furthermore, they stress the solutions of information and new family policies (SD, 1989:9; SD, 1994:11). These family policies are not specified in that statement; However, as shown above, most of their proposals revolve around economic incentives for family building. In the party program of 1989, there is also a specific solution in regards to increased fertility. The party states that: "The Sweden Democrats want to give tax relief to families with children according to a scale where the tax decreases for each child." (SD, 1989:8).

Later programs continue to provide solutions for the perceived problem of abortions. In the party program of 1996, the party propose a referendum on the issue of abortion and state that they would impose "healthier social policies" (SD, 1996:12). In the party program of 1999, the solutions regarding abortions have changed again to the proposal to prohibit abortions after week twelve of pregnancy, with the exception for medical reasons (SD, 1999:15). Even though abortion is framed as a problem later on in the position paper of 2011, there are no solutions presented to solve the perceived problem. The solutions to this perceived problem have been altered over time, from an almost total ban of abortions in the first two programs to not presenting any solutions in 2011. As Norocel (2013) argues, the

Sweden Democrats emphasize family policies and restrictions on abortions. However, these findings also show that this prognostic frame is evident in the programs of 1989 and 1994 in particular, and is later removed from the official party literature. Abortion is still constructed as a problem, but the lack of solutions point to a decreased salience of this issue over time, indicating that the Sweden Democrats have softened their traditionalist views, at least in the official party literature.

Promote the nuclear and heterosexual family

In regards to the Sweden Democrats prognostic framing of the "unhealthy homosexual lifestyle," the solutions centers around the restrictions for non-heterosexual partnerships to have families and marry. In the party programs of 1996 and 1999, where gay people are presented as "sexual deviant," they propose that: "Registered partnership for homosexuals shall not be allowed. The rules of inheritance should only apply to the families based on heterosexual monogamy, not other forms of cohabitation such as homosexual couples, polygamy, etc. Homosexual couples and polygamous families should not be allowed to adopt" (SD, 1996:9 ;SD, 1999:10). Here, it becomes evident that the Sweden Democrat's concept of the family, with the possibilities to adopt, inherit from their spouse and legally marry, is exclusive to the nuclear family. Other forms of relationships and partnerships, such as same-sex couples, does not fit into this construction of the family and should, therefore, not have the same possibilities as heterosexual couples.

The frame of mass media's glorification of the "unhealthy homosexual lifestyle" has been removed in the 2000s and 2010s. However, the policy solutions regarding the family are still based on the heterosexual norm. The solutions presented in 2011 still contain limitations on other forms of cohabitation. For example, they argue that single people, same-sex couples, and polygamous groups should not be able to adopt except for when they are closely related to the child. Neither should insemination be allowed for same-sex couples or polygamous groups. Same-sex couples should no longer be prohibited from marrying, but it is still presented as a decision for the religious congregation in question, not as a universal right (SD, 2011). Even though some moderation has been made regarding the Sweden Democrats policy solutions, it is evident that heteronormativity, as Norocel (2013) argues, still is the basis for the party's construction of the family unit while other types of partnership and cohabitation remain excluded.

Real improvements instead of "extreme" gender equality

Regarding the diagnostic frame identified from 2010 and onwards, where other parties are presented as undermining people's freedom by taking gender equality too far, the solutions emphasize the abolishment of unnecessary measures and the need to focus on "real problems." In the election manifesto of 2010, the Sweden Democrats propose the abolishment of state substitutes for gender pedagogy. In the election manifesto of 2014, they propose that: "Remove state subsidies for the type of gender pedagogy that aims to change all children's and youth's behavior and gender identity rather than increase the understanding for those individuals that want and need to break out from traditional gender norms." (SD, 2014:17). In this statement, the government is presented as funding programs aimed at "changing" children's gender identity and behavior and undermining people's right to self-determination. This construction of gender equality "going too far" fits with previous findings (Mulinari, 2016; Towns et al., 2014) showing that the Sweden Democrats are, except regarding immigration issues, opponents of certain measures aiming at further gender equality in Sweden.

In the election manifesto of 2018, they contrast the focus on gender theories with what they portray as "real solutions." They state that: "Instead of gender theories and quotas, implement real improvements in the working conditions in the fields of work dominated by women…" (SD, 2018:18). Therefore, other parties' policies, such as gender pedagogy in schools, gender theories, and quotas, are not only presented as invalid measures but also framed as wrongfully controlling the individual. The prognostic frame of "real improvements" regarding gender equality invalidates measures presented as "taking gender equality too far" such as gender pedagogy and gender theories and validates their proposal of better working conditions in women-dominated work fields. As previous studies have shown, the Sweden Democrats still tend to oppose measures they perceive as making men and women the same and instrumentalize gender equality in their rhetoric to criticize other gender equality measures they deem too "extreme" (Mulinari, 2016).

Gender, Islam and religious oppression

The solutions identified regarding the threat from the cultural "other" has expanded since it was first identified in the party program of 1999. In 1999, the perceived misogyny of Islam called for the prohibition of mosqués and minarets (SD, 1999). The problem of the culturally "other" being a threat to women and the solutions to this perceived problem was

not mentioned again before 2010. In the election manifesto of 2010 regarding immigration, the party propose: "An increased support to women that live in religious and honor-related oppression in Sweden," "Stopping the Islamization of Swedish society," and "Prohibit full-covered veils in public places." (SD, 2010:4). The position paper of 2011 does not propose the same specific solutions as in the election manifestos. However, the party propose assimilation combined with limited immigration as a solution in regards to immigrants coming from countries where the "culture and basic values strongly differ from the Swedish." (SD, 2011:15). A few pages later in the position paper, the party provides an example of such a culture, with the problematization of misogynic attitudes resulting in the practice of female mutilation (SD, 2011:19-20). As Akkerman and Haglund (2007) argues, right-wing populist parties contrast their own culture and values from the "pre-modern other," in which solutions of assimilation and stricter immigration policies are presented as necessary protection from patriarchal foreign cultures.

The election manifestos of 2014 and 2018 mostly call for more restrictions such as: "Prohibit full-covered veils in public places.", "Create a specific classification for honor-related crime to counteract honor-based oppression, establish an age limit of 24 for marriage with foreign citizens…", "Legislation to prohibit child marriage and polygamy without exceptions." (SD, 2018:18), and "Tougher punishments and increased efforts against female mutilations, forced marriage, as well as sexual and honor-related violence." (SD, 2014:17). However, a few solutions also are presented in terms of supporting those suffering from these problems, such as "Increased support to women helplines, establishing specific hotlines for honor-based violence..." (SD, 2014:17) and "....strengthen the health care of genital mutilation, and prohibit non-medical circumcision of minors." (SD, 2018:18). As Wodak (2013) argues, the burqa-wearing woman is presented as a representation of the perceived danger of Islam. These proposals also highlight the construction of liberating immigrant women suffering under their oppressive cultures and religions (Moffitt, 2017).

Reflection

The results show several diagnostic and prognostic frames regarding gender in the official party literature of the Sweden Democrats. The findings also show change over time, as certain frames are altered, modified, and new ones emerge. For an overview, see table 1 below.

Table 1. Overview of frames by years.

Year	Diagnostic	Prognostic
1989	Women forced into labor market Moral dissolution	Economic incentives to be housewives. Restrict abortions, new family policies.
1994	Moral dissolution Parents' right to choose	Restrict abortions, new family policies. Oppose paternal leave.
1996	Homosexuality glorified Moral dissolution Parents' right to choose	Protect the heteronormative family. Restrict abortions. Oppose paternal leave.
1999	Homosexuality glorified Moral dissolution Parents' right to choose Threat of misogynic Islam	Protect the heteronormative family. Restrict abortions. Oppose paternal leave. Prohibit mosques/minarets.
2003	-	-
2005	-	-
2010	Gender equality gone too far Gender equality under threat from other cultures Parent's right to choose	Abolish state subventions for gender pedagogy. Prohibit full-covered veil. Stop "Islamization." Increased support for oppressed women. Parental leave without restrictions.
2011	Gender equality under threat from other cultures - Anti-abortion sentiments.	Assimilation and restrict immigration. from distant cultures. Protect the heteronormative family. -
2014	Gender equality gone too far Gender equality under threat from other cultures Parents' right to choose	Remove state subsidies for gender pedagogy. Prohibit full-covered veil. Increased support to oppressed women. Tougher laws/restrictions on female mutilation, forced marriages, and honor violence Parental leave without restrictions.
2018	Gender equality gone too far Gender equality under threat from other cultures Parent's right to choose	Real improvements, not gender theory. Prohibit full-covered veil. Tougher laws/restrictions on honor-related crime and child marriage, age limit for marry a foreigner. Strengthen health care. Parental leave without restrictions.

In the first decade of the party, the diagnostic frames identified present the problems of other politicians as causing moral dissolution in Swedish society, forcing women into the labor market, and the glorification of the "homosexual lifestyle" by the mass media. Even though the frame of women being forced into the labor market was removed after 1989 and replaced by parent's right to choose without state intervention, the emphasis was on the return to traditional values of the past, with stay-at-home work, increased fertility, and restrictions on abortions. Abortion and low Swedish birthrates were also tied to ethnic homogeneity and the "survival of the nation", in which family building ought to be between Swedes or within the western culture. These problems were removed from the following material. In the case of the Sweden Democrats, the party seems to have, along with other Western European right-wing populist parties (Lancaster, 2019), softened its traditionalist positions on gender, morality and sexuality. The position papers of 2003 and 2005 were short and did not contain either diagnostic or prognostic frames identified in earlier or later programs.

From 2010 and onwards, new diagnostic frames emerged in the party literature of the Sweden Democrats. Notably, the new diagnostic frames identified in the last eight years of the party involves the concept of gender equality, which was not mentioned in the party literature before. The notion of "Swedish gender equality" is constructed and contrasted from the cultural "other," which holds misogynic views not welcome in Swedish society. At the same time, gender equality is also constructed as "gone too far", diminishing the natural differences between men and women and subsequently undermining individual freedoms.

Previous studies (Towns et al., 2014; Mulinari, 2016; Norocel, 2013) on the Sweden Democrats shows a party with ambiguous gender ideology that criticize gender equality, stress the "natural" differences between the sexes, purpose restrictions on women's reproductive rights, while also emphasize gender equality when discussing immigration. However, using frame analysis and examine the party over time contributes to a clearer picture. These findings show how the Sweden Democrats has altered or removed traditionalist frames stressing "the good old days" that was consistent throughout the first ten years of the party, and started constructing new frames focusing on gender equality from 2010 onwards. Even though the frames presented might be contradictory to each other, they show a pattern in the problems and solutions regarding gender constructed by the party over time, where it becomes evident that a shift has taken place from the inception of the party until now.

Conclusion

The resurgence of right-wing populism in Europe has gained much scholarly attention. For a long time, these parties have been characterized by a traditional view on gender and family values. However, recent studies have shown that right-wing populist parties in Western Europe are softening their traditionalism and instead converge to mainstream values on women's rights (Lancaster, 2019). This study aimed to contribute to this area of research by examining how and in which ways the Sweden Democrats frame gender, and how the framing has changed over time.

My frame analysis identified, as shown by previous studies of the Swedish Democrats (Towns et al., 2014; Norocel, 2013; Mulinari, 2016), that the party's construction of problems and solutions regarding gender entails the emphasis on the natural differences between the sexes, favoring the nuclear family, anti-abortion sentiments, and criticizing certain gender equality measures while instrumentalizing gender equality as something "Swedish" that needs protection from the religious and culturally "other."

I break new ground, however, in showing how the Sweden Democrats construction of problems and solutions regarding gender has changed from its inception until 2018. The frames of moral dissolution, women being forced into the labor force, and mass media's glorification of sexual deviancy was removed by 2003. These findings fit into the broader trend within Western Europe, where right-wing populist parties have decreased the importance of conservative values on gender, morality, and sexuality (Lancaster, 2019). From 2010 until the most recent election manifesto of 2018, frames regarding gender equality became salient, highlighting how measures taken towards gender equality was, on the one hand, going too far and diminishing natural differences between men and women, and on the other hand, is under threat from misogynic practices from the "culturally other." This shows a shift in the Sweden Democrat's framing of gender, from emphasizing the need to return to traditional gender roles and family values towards highlighting gender equality. As shown by Halikiopoulou, Mock, and Vasilopoulou (2013), some right-wing populist parties are adopting "liberal" values to gain legitimacy and votes. This has been the case in this study of the Sweden Democrats, by removing their most traditional frames to separate from their past, and adopting new ones to seem more legitimate.

However, this shift from traditional frames of morality, gender roles, and sexuality towards frames of gender equality does not indicate that the Sweden Democrats have become progressive in gender-related issues. The findings instead shows that the Sweden Democrats

of today have adapted their rhetoric and instrumentalized frames of gender equality for their anti-immigration message, while constructing the perceived problem that gender equality has "gone too far."

Since this study has focused on one right-wing populist party over time, more research needs to be done to examine the evolution of gender and right-wing populism to draw generalized conclusions. Therefore, future research could benefit from conducting comparative studies of this evolution of gender and gender-specific issues among right-wing populist parties across countries to better understand the resurgence of right-wing populism from a gendered perspective. This perspective adds an important dimension to our understanding of how right-wing populist parties are evolving in their rhetoric to not fall back into the political fringe.

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Appendix 1

Coding Scheme

1. Get familiar with the material. Read the texts one time without making any notes or coding.
2. Read the texts thoroughly several times, using the analytical questions designed in the method section, looking at both explicit and implicit meanings.
3. Code the material using frame theory. Coding D for diagnostic frames. Code P for prognostic framing, where the material present solutions or course of action of the framed problem.