Class 2: Social Movement Theories

Collective behaviour, resource mobilisation, political processes

Dr. Michael C. Zeller

Agenda for the day

- Opening notes
- Reviewing prominent social movement theories
- Political Opportunity Structures studies
- Social movements in/around Germany
- Any questions, concerns, feedback for this class?

Opening notes
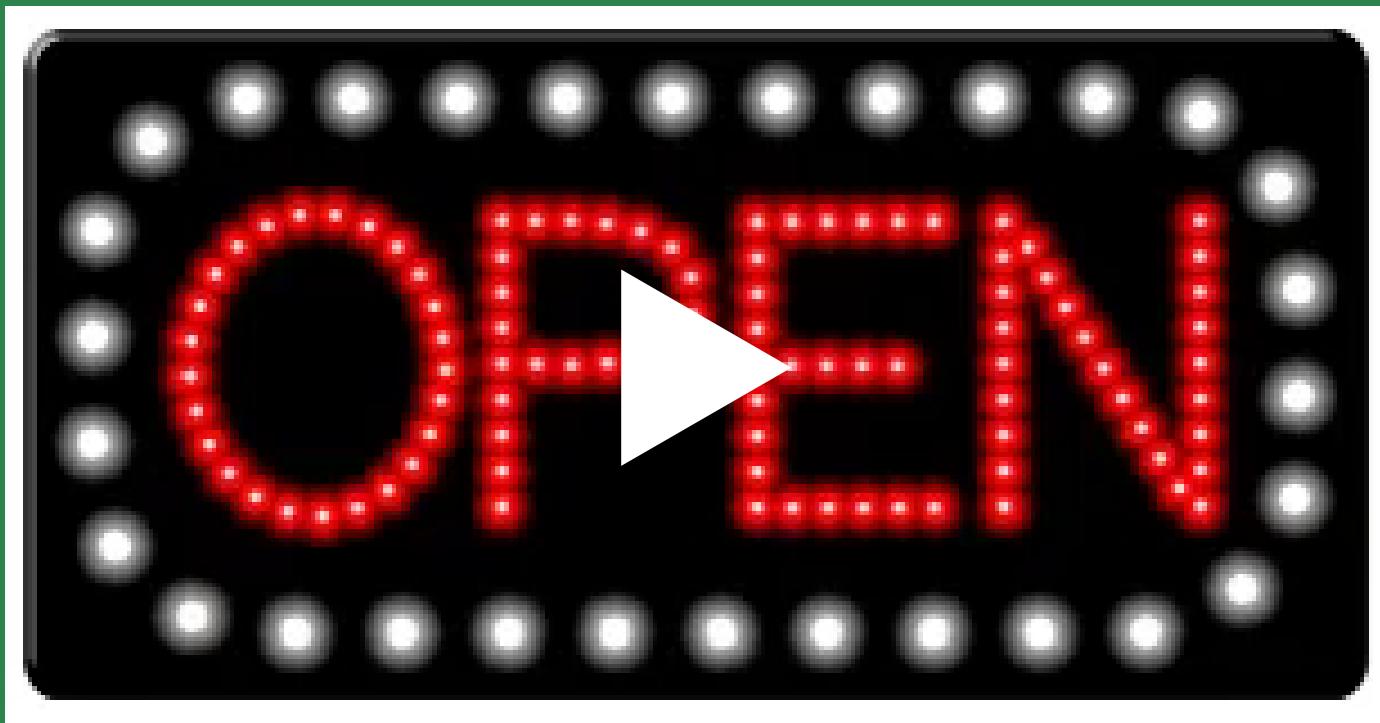
Students' favourite cities

Presentation groups

Remember: topic to me at least by Week 4

December	January

Presentations line-up

Date	Presenters	Method
4 Dec:		TBD
11 Dec:		TBD
18 Dec:		TBD

Reviewing prominent social movement theories

- Collective behaviour theory

- Resource mobilisation theory

- Political process theory

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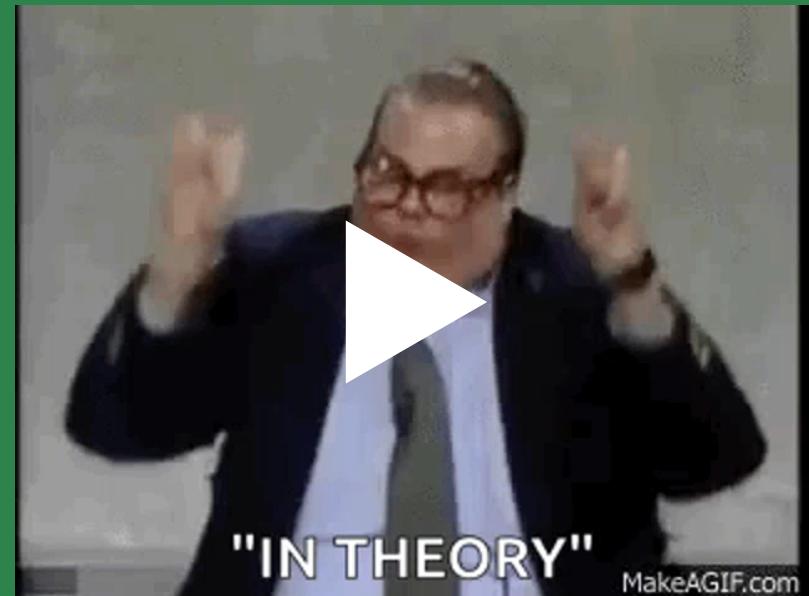
Collective behaviour theory (CBT)

fundamental question: why is this *thing* happening?

- reckoning with legacy of interwar era:

  - why was their the national socialist movement?

  - why was their the Bolshevik revolution?

  - why did people join such movements instead of participating in 'institutional politics'?

Collective behaviour theory (CBT)

fundamental question: why is this *thing* happening?

- a mix of sociological and psychological approach—influenced by Durkheim and Marx

- movements as consequences and manifestations of strain, deprivation, and grievance

    - movements are 'abnormal' (contrary to idea of 'movement society')

- movements as part of 'emergent phenomena,' ranging from trends and gossip, to collective action, up to and including insurrection and revolution

Collective behaviour theory (CBT)

fundamental question: why is this *thing* happening?

- CBT struggles to predict (Piazza 2017): not everyone is *aggrieved* engages in collective action

    - BUT several core concepts—grievance, (relative) deprivation—endure (e.g., van Stekelenburg and Klandermans 2013 on the social psychology of protest)

        - Because... even if they are neither necessary nor solely sufficient, CBT concepts refer to *important motivations for many movement participants*

Resource mobilisation theory (RMT)

fundamental question: *how* **is this** *thing* **happening?**

- focus on organisations: how they **mobilise** and **campaign** in **strategic** pursuit of goals

Types of resources:

- material (finances, property, supplies),

- human (quantity and expert quality of members/activists),

- organisational (capacity to disseminate and enact strategy),

- moral (solidarity support, legitimacy and sympathetic support)

Resource mobilisation theory (RMT)

fundamental question: how is this *thing* happening?

- RMT rejects the CBT idea that movements are abnormal

- Still, focus on organisations omits/obscures *contextual* factors

- But organisation, strategy, leadership, resources remain important —but better understood with context (e.g., Guzman-Concha 2015; Kern, Marien, and Hooghe 2015; Williamson, Trump, and Einstein 2018)

Political process theory (PPT)

fundamental question: what **makes/shapes this *thing* that is happening?**

- situates RMT organisational focus within wider socio-political context

- movements are products of the political environment in which they emerge, responding to socio-political changes (**opportunity**/**threat**) and being met with (broadly) facilitation or repression (Tarrow 2011) (or disregard)

Political process theory (PPT) - POS concept

fundamental question: **what makes/shapes this *thing* that is happening?**

- key concept: **political opportunity structure**

> "are comprised of specific configurations of resources, institutional arrangements and historical precedents for social mobilisation, which facilitate the development of protest movements in some instances and constrain them in others" (Kitschelt 1986, 58)

Political process theory (PPT) - DOS concept

fundamental question: what makes/shapes this *thing* that is happening?

- related to POS: discursive opportunity structure (Koopmans and Olzak 2004, 202–5): *aspects of the public discourse that determine a message's chances of diffusion in the public sphere*

Political process theory (PPT) - DOS concept

discursive opportunity structure (Koopmans and Olzak 2004, 202–5): *aspects of the public discourse that determine a message's chances of diffusion in the public sphere*

Discursive opportunity	Description
Visibility	in public sphere, messages > available space (thus, competition)
	claim makers aim to get messages into public discourse
	gatekeepers select, shape, amplify, or diminish messages
	Is the message visible? - a necessary condition to influence discourse
Resonance	Does the message provoke reactions from others in public sphere?
	Is the message supported? (consonance) --- Is the message opposed? (dissonance) (either can help replicate the message)
Legitimacy	to what degree is the message supported (vs. opposed) in the public sphere?
	highly legitimate messages may have no resonance at all because they are uncontroversial, while highly illegitimate messages may have strong resonance

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More on social movement theories next week

- we will cover framing and civil society

- other theories/approaches that we will *not* cover: constructivist approaches; 'new social movements'; political mediation model; field theory; relational/network approaches

  - though we may encounter these in some of the readings

Political Opportunity Structures studies

Kitschelt (1986) - research justification

POS: *Astra inclinant, sed non obligant.* ('The stars incline us, they do not bind us.')

- translation (from Kitschelt 1986):

> While they do not determine the course of social movements completely, careful comparisons among them can explain a good deal about the variations among social movements with similar demands in different settings, if other determinants are held constant.

In a nutshell, this is what Kitschelt sets out to test

What does Kitschelt mean here?

A particularly useful outgrowth of this research is the identification of a curvilinear relationship between openness and movement mobilization, which shows that very closed regimes repress social movements, that very open and responsive ones assimilate them, and that moderately repressive ones allow for their broad articulation but do not accede readily to their demands.

Kitschelt (1986) - case selection

- anti-nuclear movements in France, Sweden, US, W. Germany. Why?

- all share similar objective

- similar organisational origins (local, 1970s)

- similar contextual origins (same 'threat' of nuclear power in each)

- similar mobilisation sources ('middle-class radicalism')

Comparative case selection

x = causal variable; y = phenomenon to be explained

MDSD (most different systems design)

Case 1	Case 2	
a	d	overall
b	e	differences
c	f	
x	x	crucial
y	y	similarity

MSSD (most similar systems design)

Case 1	Case 2	
a	a	overall
b	b	similiarities
c	c	
x	not x	crucial
y	not y	difference

Further on case selection strategies, see Gerring (2007, e.g., pp. 89-90)

Kitschelt (1986) - 3 POS effect on movements

1. What resources ('coercive, normative, remunerative and informational') can an emergent movement draw upon?

    • note the improvement on RMT, resources depend on context

2. How can movements access the public sphere and political decision-making? (what laws regulate such access)

3. Are there other movements that model (and ease) mobilisation and movement emergence?

Kitschelt (1986) - POS components

Kitschelt highlights to components of POS relevant to the movements he studies: (1) political input structures and (2) policy implementation capacity

This is part of *concept formation*

Concept formation - Adcock and Collier (2001, 531)

FIGURE 1. Conceptualization and Measurement: Levels and Tasks

Level 1. Background Concept
The broad constellation of meanings and understandings associated with a given concept.

Task: Conceptualization
Formulating a systematized concept through reasoning about the background concept, in light of the goals of research.

Task: Revisiting Background Concept. Exploring broader issues concerning the background concept in light of insights about scores, indicators, and the systematized concept.

Level 2. Systematized Concept
A specific formulation of a concept used by a given scholar or group of scholars; commonly involves an explicit definition.

Task: Operationalization
Developing, on the basis of a systematized concept, one or more indicators for scoring/classifying cases.

Task: Modifying Systematized Concept. Fine-tuning the systematized concept, or possibly extensively revising it, in light of insights about scores and indicators.

Level 3. Indicators
Also referred to as "measures" and "operationalizations." In qualitative research, these are the operational definitions employed in classifying cases.

Task: Scoring Cases
Applying these indicators to produce scores for the cases being analyzed.

Task: Refining Indicators
Modifying indicators, or potentially creating new indicators, in light of observed scores.

Level 4. Scores for Cases
The scores for cases generated by a particular indicator. These include both numerical scores and the results of qualitative classification

Measurement

Kitschelt (1986) – POS components

1. political input structures

    1. number of parties/electoral influences (more = more open)

    2. legislative policy control (more = more open)

    3. accessibility of executive to interest groups (more = more open)

    4. mechanisms to aggregate demands and build policy coalitions (more = more open)

2. policy implementation capacity

    1. state apparatus centralisation (more = stronger effective implementation)

    2. government control over market (more = stronger effective implementation)

    3. independence of the judiciary (more = weaker effective implementation)

Kitschelt (1986) - case differences

		Political input structures	
		Open and responsive	Closed and unresponsive
Policy implementation capacity	Weak	United States	West Germany
	Strong	Sweden	France

Kitschelt (1986) - hypotheses

		Political input structures	
		Open and responsive	Closed and unresponsive
Policy implementation capacity	Weak	(1) assimilative movement strategies dominant, (2) significant procedural impacts, (3) substantive impacts: tendancy towards policy stalemate; medium low innovation, (4) few structural pressures (United States)	(1) confrontational and assimilative movement strategies, (2) few procedural impacts, (3) few substantive impacts, tendency towards policy stalemate, very low innovation, (4) strong structural pressures (West Germany)
	Strong	(1) assimilative movement strategies dominant, (2) significant procedural gains, (3) high substantive policy innovation, (4) few structural pressures (Sweden)	(1) confrontational movement strategies dominant, (2) few procedural impacts, (3) limited substantive elite reform; low-medium innovation, (4) strong structural pressures (France)

Kitschelt (1986) - anti-nuclear strategies

	Assimilative strategies aimed at political inputs		Assimilative strategies aimed at political outputs		Confrontational strategies against process
	Lobbying/ petitioning	Elections/ referendums	Interventions in licencsing	Litigation in courts	Demonstration, disobedience
United States	high	high	high	high	low
Sweden	high	high	low	low	medium
West Germany	low	low (later: high)	high	high	high
France	low	low (later: high)	low	low	high

Kitschelt (1986) - procedural and substantive impact

- what procedural impacts did anti-nuclear movements have? what (other) procedural impacts could policy-oriented movements have?

- what substantive impacts did anti-nuclear movements have (that Kitschelt examined)?

Kitschelt (1986) - findings

- hypotheses generally confirmed

    - Sweden and (to lesser extent) U.S. search for new policies

    - France and (to lesser extent) W. Germany stayed on policy course

    - U.S. and W. Germany movements had chance to disrupt implementation

    - Sweden and France movements had no chance to disrupt implementation

Theories are fruitful only if they can be applied to cases beyond the ones they were first designed to explain. (p. 84)

Kitschelt (1986) - key takeaways

- what did you learn from this article?

- POS shapes movements and some movements can shape POS

- concept formation of POS should be specific to a given movement

- even in high stakes policy arenas (e.g., energy politics) movements can have impact

Boudreau (1996) - set-up

- social science theories (including PPT for social movements) are often developed in the 'North'

    - theory requires adjustment

- structural (cross-national) (Kitschelt 1986) or time-series (McAdam 1982; Tarrow 2011)

- a dense proposal of how to study any type of movement, anywhere

Boudreau (1996) - historical development (Tilly)

- state expansion (including improved communication networks, rising middle class, etc.) helps to create an *audience*
    - incentivises demonstrations as collective action repertoire

> seeks to accumulate influence within a political structure, to communicate a demand, convey resolve, and (where the polity is unresponsive) raise the costs of disregarding the movement. ... They play to the polity (and to allies) whose subsequent action resolves movement grievances. ... *Demonstrations inconvenience or embarrass authorities and establish the movement's social support but never themselves attain the collective goal.* (p. 181)

Boudreau (1996) – historical development (Tilly)

- state expansion (including improved communication networks, rising middle class, etc.) helps to create an *audience*

    - direct action repertoires

> seize resources to satisfy their demands or take unilateral action to resolve a grievance. ... *Direct action seeks itself to achieve collective goals.* (p. 181)

- in line with Kitschelt (1986), POS shapes mobilisation: 'closed' and 'centralised' more inviting for direct action; 'open' and 'decentralised' more inviting for demonstration

Boudreau (1996, 178)

SMOs attract mass support by offering more promising avenues (massed demonstration, armed battle, land occupation) to achieve popular goals than existing modes of action

Boudreau (1996, 177) - sequence for research

- identification of collective repertoires and their relationships to the new cases' structural environments
  - Political opportunity structure is specific—not general
- how does short-term structural variation encourage mobilisation
- how do differences between differently structured states influence the frequency or intensity of mobilisation

> McAdam's caution: "[I]t is critical that we be explicit about which dependent variable we are seeking to explain, and which dimensions of political opportunity are germane to that explanation."

- Two principles (p. 186)
  1. Social/political structures limit possible forms of collective action, thus limiting opportunities
  2. Opportunities influence activity by altering the prospects of different forms of struggle

Boudreau (1996) - select observations

- Poverty and levels of oppression are fundamental *structural variables* underlying all POS (p. 179) [cf. Piven and Cloward (1979); Scott (1985)]

- Campaigns must win/provide *benefits* or else face increasing demobilising pressure (p. 183) (cf. Gamson 1990; Davenport 2015; Demirel-Pegg 2017; Zeller 2022)

- SM organisations have to weigh trade-offs between demonstration strategies and direct action strategies (p. 184) (cf. Ganz 2010)

- Property of *inertia*: initial conditions surrounding mobilisation powerfully influence on subsequent movement trajectories (p. 185) (cf. Polletta and Jasper 2001)

Social movements in/around Germany

- roster of movement organisations

- discussion of causes
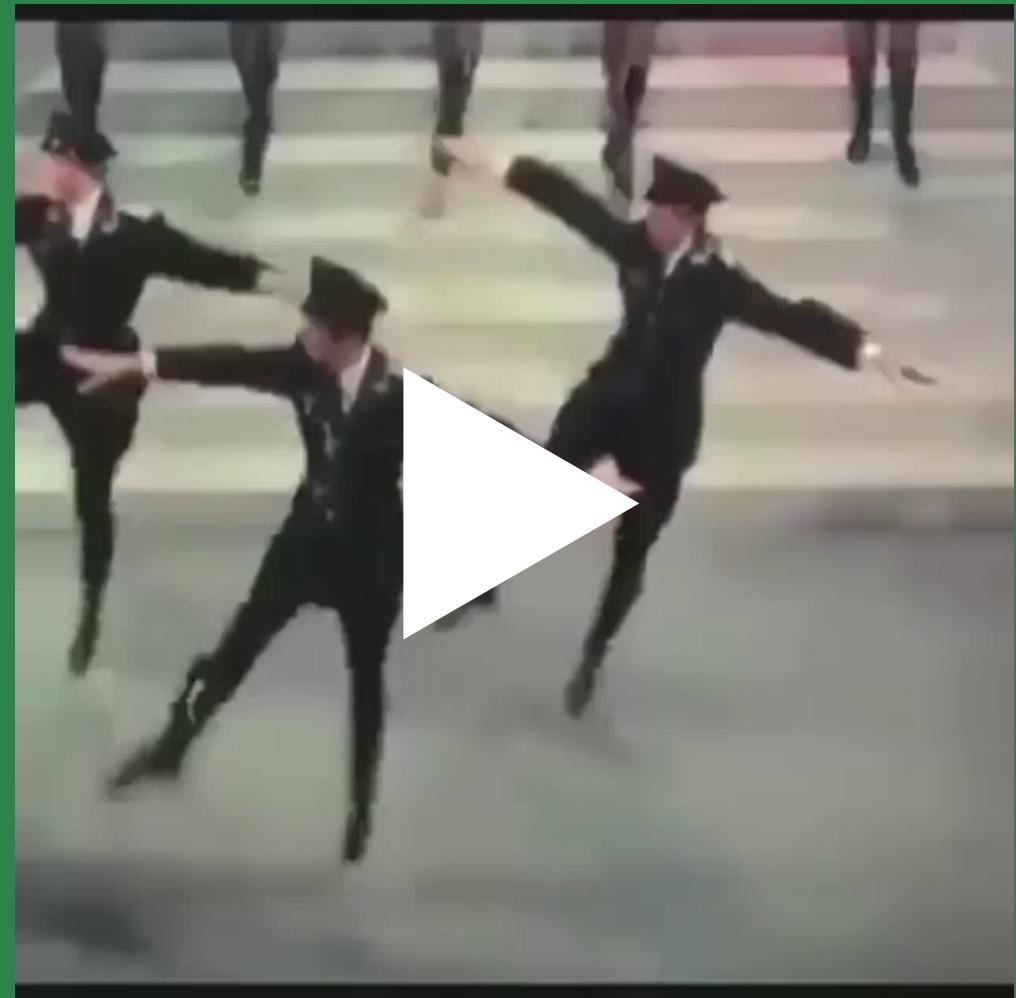
Social movements in/around Germany

> "Those who only know one country, know no country" - Seymour Martin Lipset (inspired by Alexis de Tocqueville)

- well-known and covered in media and research literature

- diverse strategies, objectives, and ideological characteristics

- active in Germany and/or EU

Social movements in/around Germany

Animal Rights Watch (ARIWA),

Anti-Nuclear (Anti-Atomkraft),

Autonome (leftist),

Demos für Alle (anti-gender),

Extinction Rebellion (XR, climate),

Federation of Antifascists (VVN-BdA),

Fridays for Future (FFF, climate),

Identitarian (ethno-pluralism),

Letzte Generation (LG, climate),

'Ohne mich' Bewegung (peace movement),

PEGIDA (ethno-pluralism),

Reichsbürgerbewegung (sovereigntist),

Querdenken 711 (anti-vaccination/lockdown),

Sozialistischer Deutscher Studentenbund (leftist, 68ers),

Squatters movement (leftist, housing),
Vier Pfoten (animal rights)

Animal Rights Watch (ARIWA)

- Issue: animal rights

- Active: 2004-present

- Membership: small, but professionalised

- Repertoire of actions: demonstrations, lobbying, awareness-raising

Anti-Atomkraft

- Issue: nuclear energy

- Active: 1950s-2000s

- Membership: large

- Repertoire of actions: demonstrations, lobbying, party-building and electioneering

ATOMKRAFT? NEIN DANKE

Autonome Bewegung

- Issue: anarchism

- Active: 1970s-present

- Membership: large

- Repertoire of actions: demonstrations ('black bloc'), squats

Demos für alle

- Issue: anti-'gender ideology'

- Active: 2010s

- Membership: moderate

- Repertoire of actions: demonstrations, lobbying, transnational advocacy

- Issue: climate change

- Active: 2010s-present

- Membership: large

- Repertoire of actions: demonstrations, disruptive actions, symbolic protest
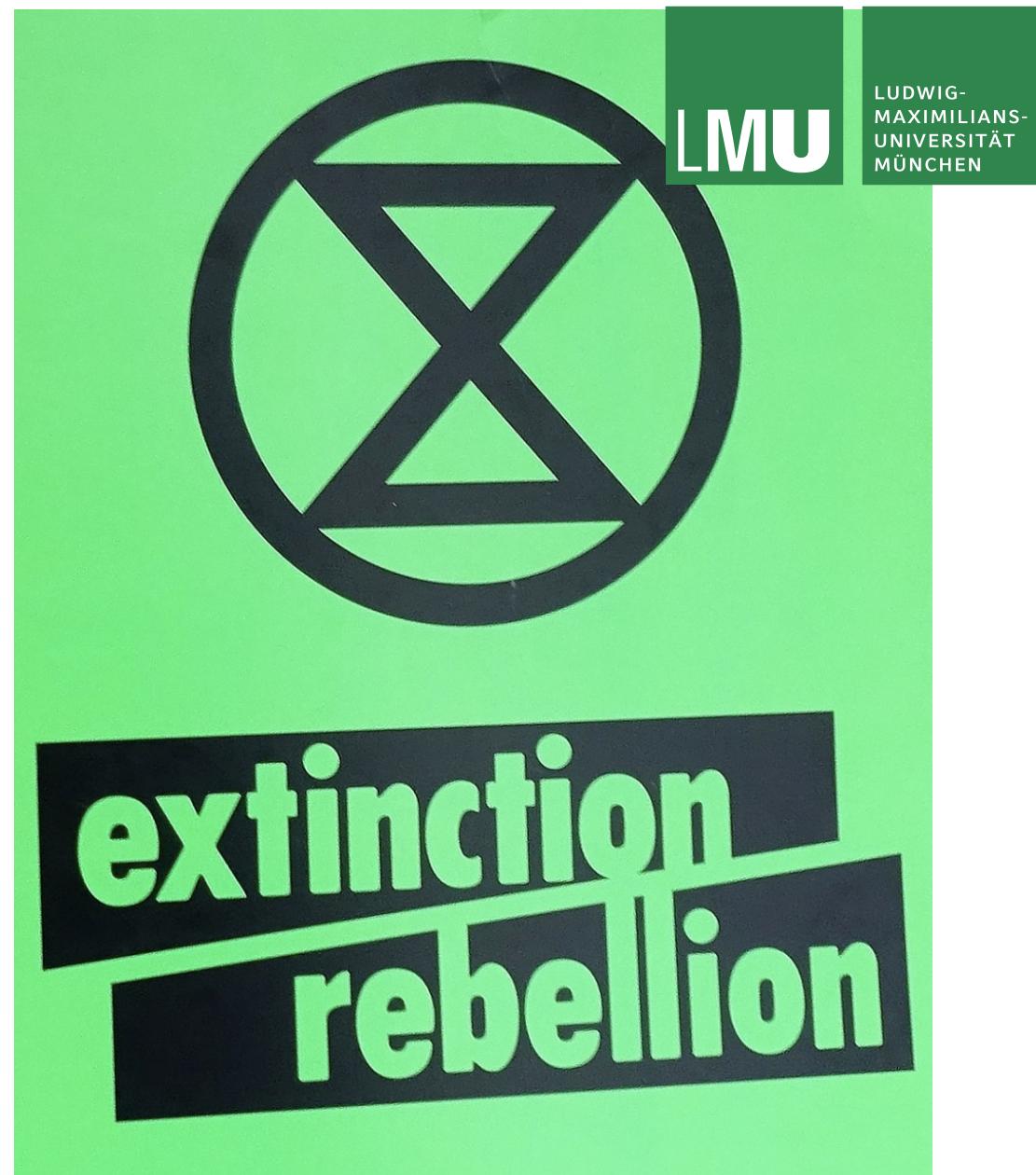
Federation of Antifascists (VVN-BdA)

'*Vereinigung der Verfolgten des Naziregimes – Bund der Antifaschistinnen und Antifaschisten*'

- Issue: anti-fascism

- Active: 1947-present

- Membership: large

- Repertoire of actions: politics of memory work, transitional justice advocacy, demonstrations

Fridays for Future

- Issue: climate change

- Active: 2010s-present

- Membership: large

- Repertoire of actions: demonstrations/'strikes', disruptive actions, policy processes

Hausbesetzung (Squatters) movement

- Issue: housing/property usage

- Active: 1970s-present

- Membership: small

- Repertoire of actions: occupations
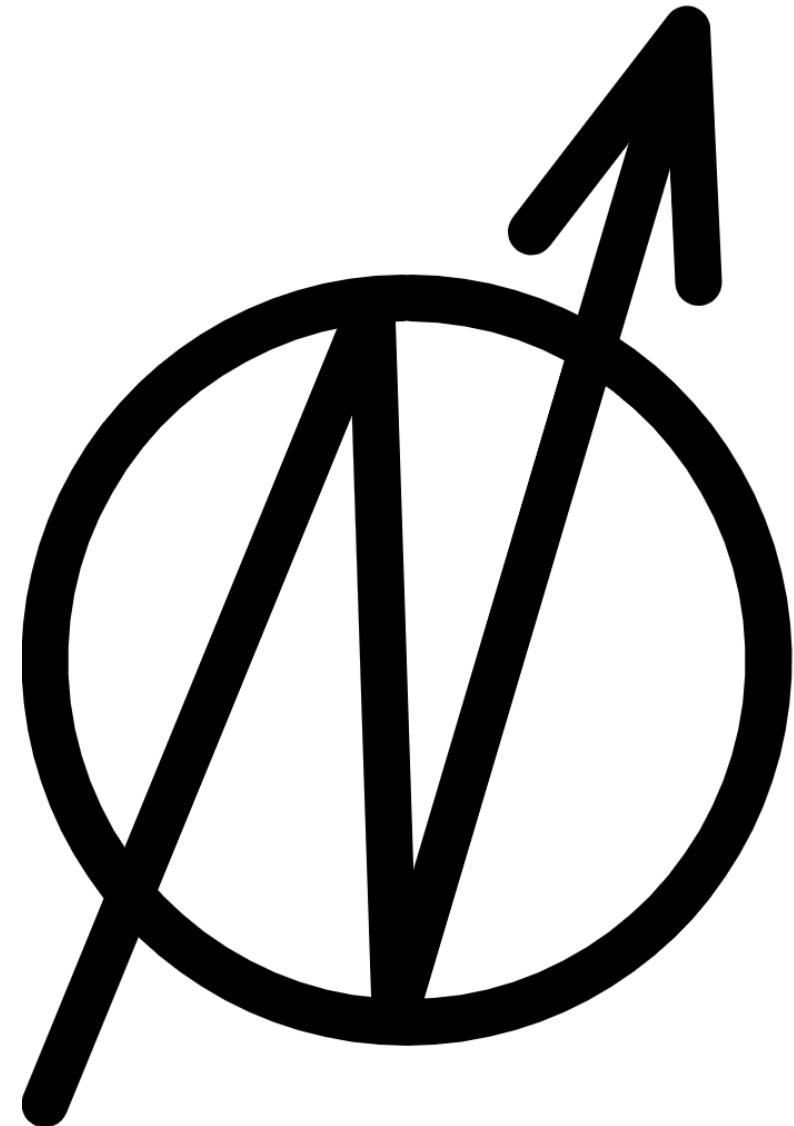
Identitarians

- Issue: European ethno-cultural identity

- Active: 2000s-present

- Membership: moderate

- Repertoire of actions: symbolic (social media) protest, demonstrations, transnational

Letzte Generation

- Issue: climate change

- Active: 2021-present

- Membership: moderate, quite professionalised

- Repertoire of actions: disruptive actions/blockades, symbolic protest, demonstrations

'Ohne mich'/Peace movement

- Issue: peace, stopping armed conflict

- Active: 1950s-present

- Membership: moderate (many eras)

- Repertoire of actions: demonstrations, awareness-raising, electioneering

PEGIDA

- Issue: German ethno-cultural identity

- Active: 2014-2024

- Membership: moderate

- Repertoire of actions: demonstrations

Reichsbürgerbewegung

- Issue: state legitimacy, sovereignty

- Active: (significantly since) 2010s-present

- Membership: large

- Repertoire of actions: civil disobedience, political violence

Querdenken 711

- Issue: COVID-19 policy

- Active: 2020-2022

- Membership: moderate

- Repertoire of actions: civil disobedience, demonstrations, symbolic protest

QUERDENKEN

711
Stuttgart

QUERDENKEN

Sozialistischer Deutscher Studentenbund

- Issue: promote anti-authoritarian socialism

- Active: 1946-1970

- Membership: large

- Repertoire of actions: demonstrations, disruptive actions, electioneering, subversion

Foto: picture-alliance / dpa, picture-alliance / dpa -

Vier Pfoten

- Issue: animal rights

- Active: 1988-present

- Membership: small, professionalised

- Repertoire of actions: animal rescue, awareness-raising

Any questions, concerns, feedback for this class?

Anonymous feedback here: https://forms.gle/AjHt6fcnwZxkSg4X8

Alternatively, please send me an email: m.zeller@lmu.de

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