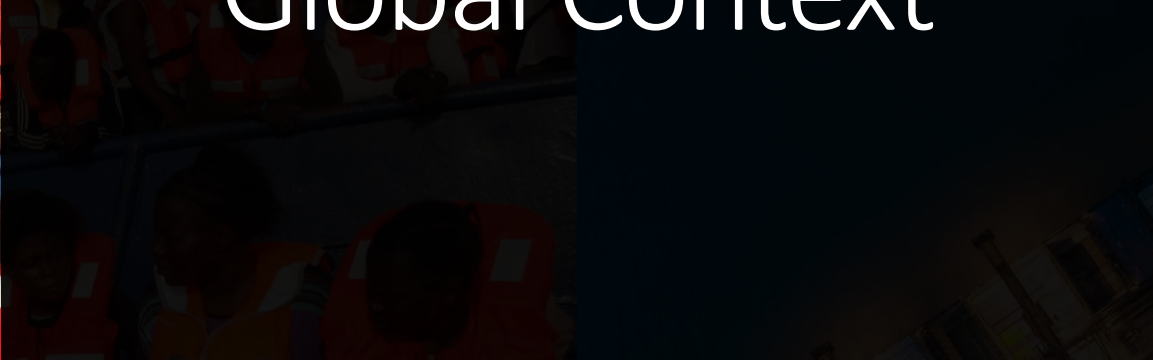
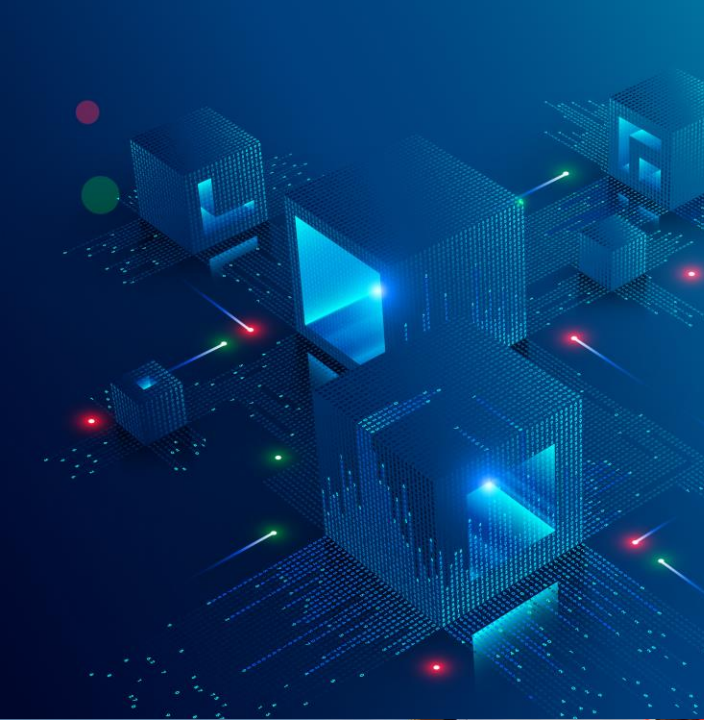




Democratic Representation in the 21st Century: The Significance of Government Structures in Counteracting Cognitive Biases

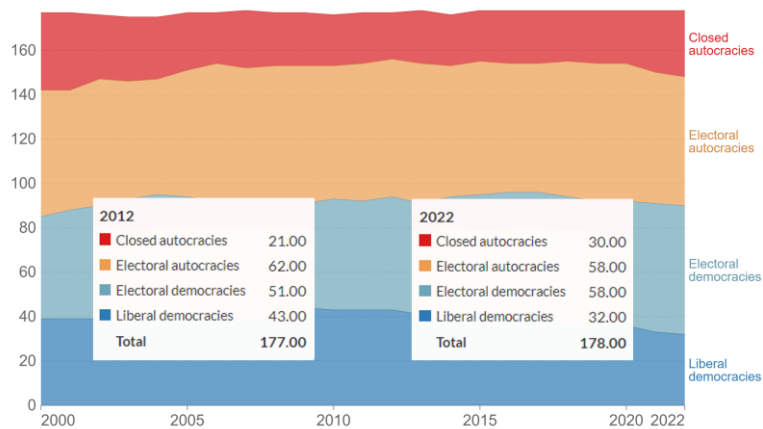
Benjamin Amram & Dr. Keren Ganany-Levy Snider



Global Context

Number of democracies and autocracies, World

Political regimes based on the criteria of the classification by Lüthmann et al. (2018) and the assessment by V-Dem's experts.



Source: OVID based on Lüthmann et al. (2018) and V-Dem (v12)
 Note: The number of closed autocracies increases a lot in 1900 because V-Dem covers many more countries since then, often colonies.

Public trust in government in the United States

Share of people who trust the United States government always or most of the time.



Source: Pew Research Center (2023)

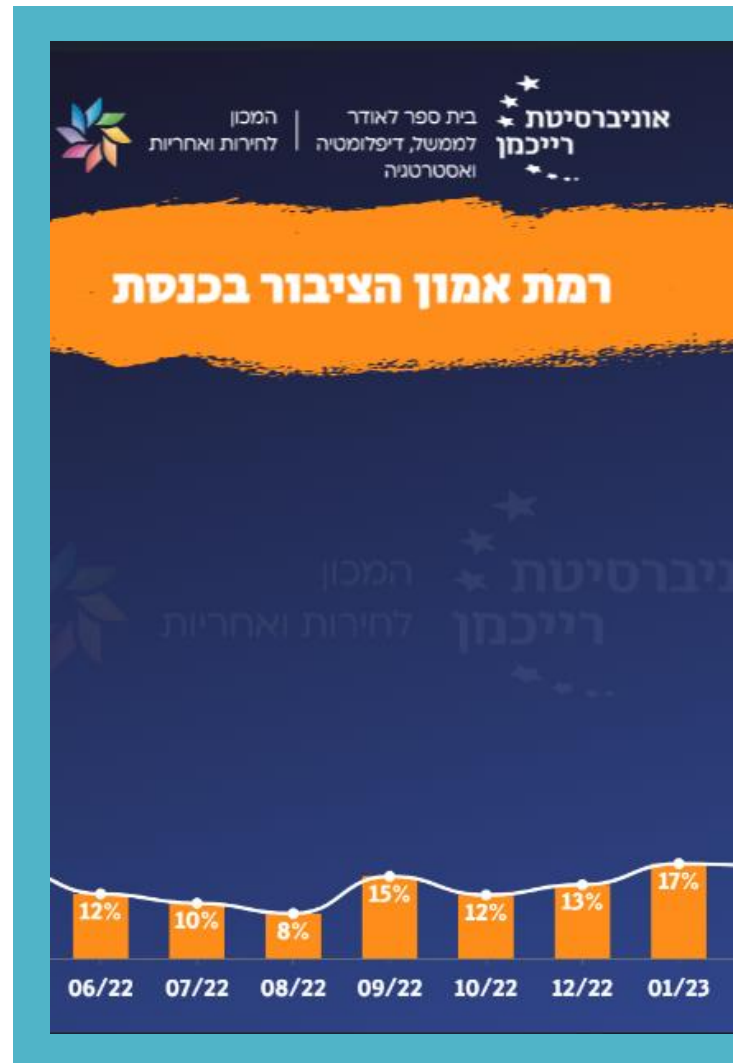
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Cause for Concern?

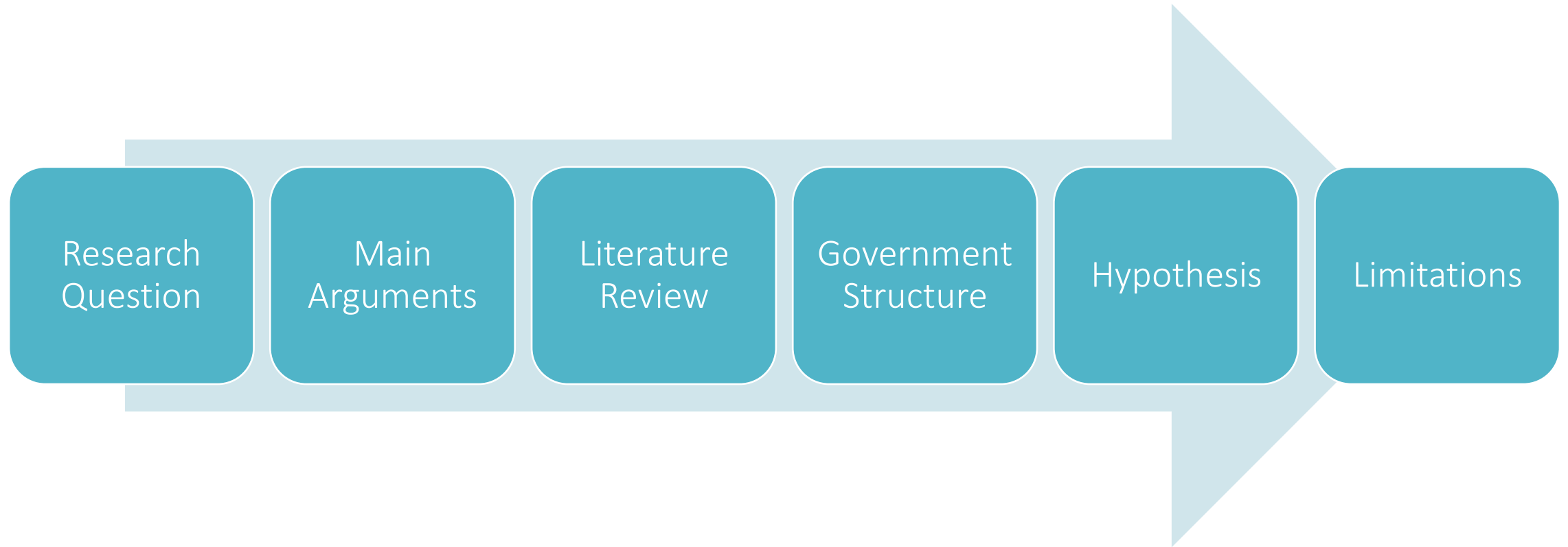
Number of democracies and autocracies. (n.d.). Our World in Data. Retrieved March 6, 2023, from <https://ourworldindata.org/grapher/number-democracies-autocracies-row>

<http://www.runi.ac.il>. (n.d.). Index of Public Trust in State Authorities. The Institute for Liberty and Responsibility Reichman University. Retrieved March 19, 2023, from <https://www.runi.ac.il/research-institutes/government/libres/public-trust-measures/trust-in-governmental-institutes/>

Trust—Our World in Data. (n.d.). Retrieved March 19, 2023, from <https://ourworldindata.org/trust>



Rundown



Research Questions

What is the validity of political representation when political beliefs and behaviors are based on subjective emotions and cognitive biases?



Do political representation theories account for the voter and representative relationship based on psychological biases?



How do government systems mitigate or exacerbate the consequences of psychological biases impacting political representation?



Main Arguments

Psychological biases flaw political representation by influencing both voters and representatives

Consequences from these psychological biases infringe on the validity of political representation since the relationship is based on emotions, biases, and motivations

Coalition government structures provide a checks and balances to the psychological biases hindering political representation through a superordinate goal.

Political Representation Theories

PITKIN

Formalistic Representation
Descriptive Representation
Symbolic Representation
Substantive Representation

CONSTRUCTIVISTS

“identity is ‘shaped through being represented’ (Fossen, 2019, p. 824), and the identity is being constructed while holding value simultaneously”

Phillips, A. (2020). Descriptive Representation Revisited. In R. Rohrschneider & J. Thomassen (Eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Political Representation in Liberal Democracies* (pp. 174–191). Oxford University Press.
<https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780198825081.013.8>

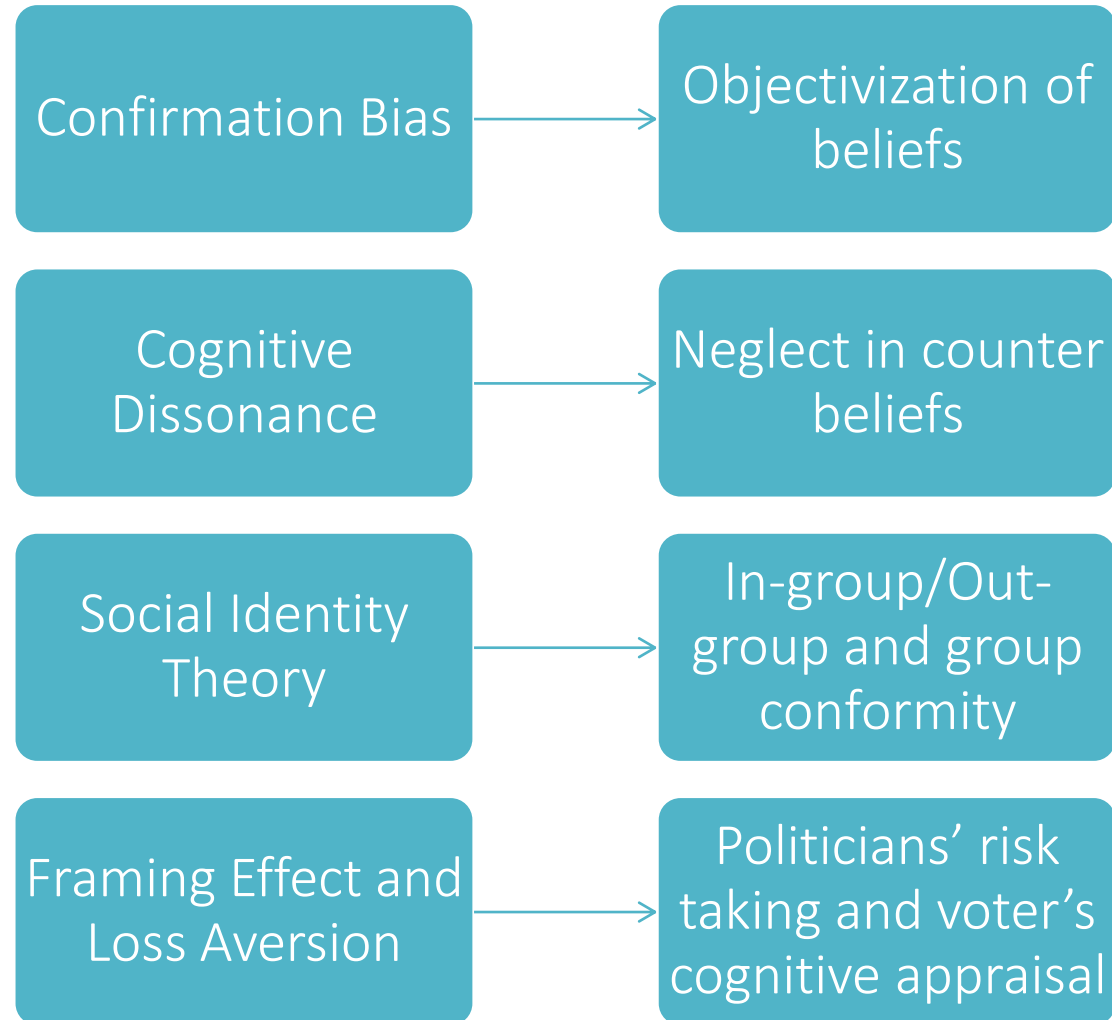


What is the validity of political representation when *what* is being represented is based on biases?

Pre-Election

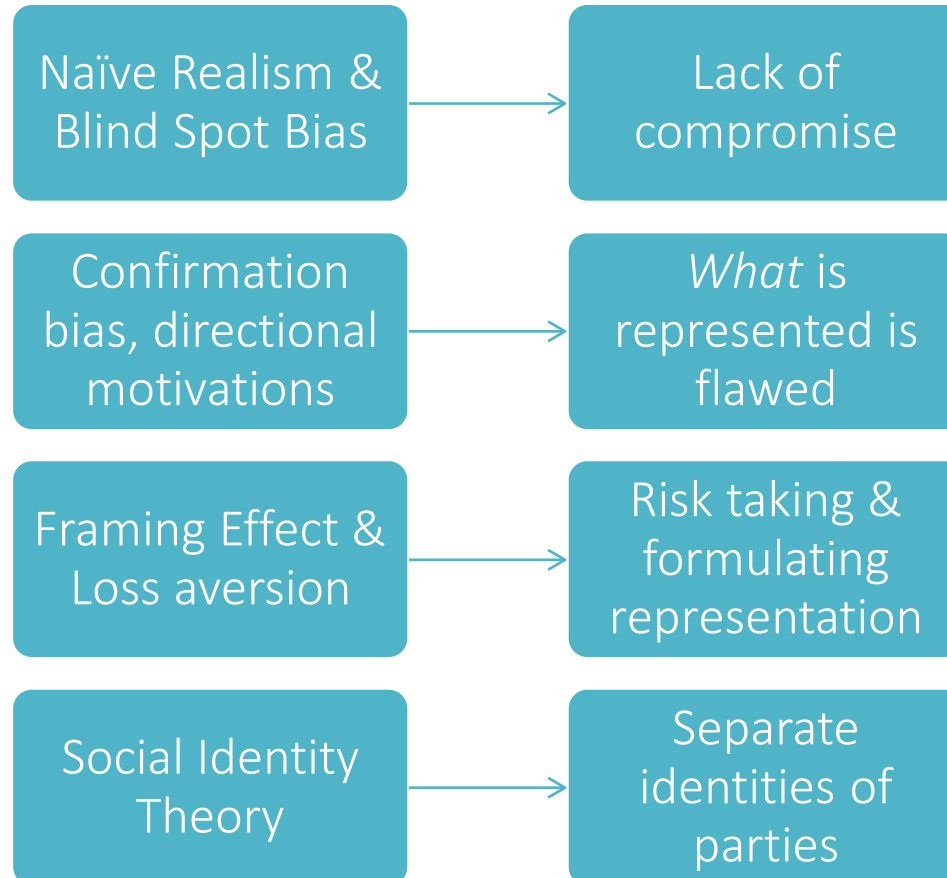
Goals of politicians:

- Maximize votes from constituents by shaping their perspectives on issues in a way that aligns with the representative (De Sio & Weber, 2014)



Psychology influencing functioning government

(Martin & Vanberg, 2020b; Mintz, Valentino, & Wayne, 2022; Nicholson, 2022)



Government Structure Comparison

MAJORITARIAN GOVERNMENT

Win-Lose Paradigm



COALITION GOVERNMENT

Win-Win Paradigm



Hypothesis



Multiparty coalition structures provides a checks and balances to the psychological mechanisms infringing on political representation.

Coalition Process

SUPERORDINATE GOAL

- Unification of political beliefs
- Checks and balances to flawed representation

“Parties in a coalition must govern *jointly*, but they are held to *account separately* at election time” (Martin & Vanberg, 2020b, p. 327)



Party Strategies

- Coalition agreements: *Saliency* (Martin & Vanberg, 2020b)
- Ministerial drift (Whitaker & Martin, 2021)

Opposition Parties Strategies:

- *Divide and Conquer* (Whitaker & Martin, 2021)

Coalition Parties Strategies (Martin & Vanberg, 2020a):

- Maximize votes: Sway ministry policy in individual party's favor
- *Keep tabs*: Hold coalition parties accountable from swaying
- Timing: Controversial bills vs Compromise

Limitations

- Theoretical Assumptions
- Ability to empirically test this?
- Representation is flawed even with coalition government?
- Measuring political representation



Thank You