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## The Quiet Part Out Loud

Conspiracy theories and the rhetoric among activists in Sweden related to the  
Coronavirus pandemic

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Supervisor: David Wästerfors

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## Abstract

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This thesis deals with a set of organized activist movements during the harshest restrictions of the Covid-19 pandemic in Sweden. These groups protested both online and offline against imposed restrictions and vaccinations, displaying a critical attitude towards recommendations and restrictions such as by gathering in large crowds. The study aims to present and problematize the frameworks used by these social activist movements during their demonstrations, and to explore how initial concerns raised by the activist contained notions of anti-vaccination attitudes and signs of conspiracy theories. By collecting thirty-one images, forty-three texts, and fifteen videos (4 hours and 58 minutes) online through a qualitative netnographical method, I have observed and analyzed how activists present themselves and are presented by others in digital environments. Their alternative understanding and opinion during the pandemic placed them at the fringe of the mainstream views on vaccinations and restrictions. The thesis draws upon the theoretical concept of *stigmatized knowledge* in combination with *framing theory* to deconstruct the framework and rhetorical organization of the covid-19 activist groups, and to show how social groups mobilize and rearrange ideas to fit their cause through a chain of frame alignments. Support for these movements within this fringe of society is found to share commonality with far-right attitudes, especially as they view their western state as the enemy and accept propaganda from actors like Russia (Vaken.se, 2022). The expression “quiet part out loud” refers to “publicly express a sentiment which one is expected to keep to oneself; to reveal an ulterior motive” (Wiktionary.org, 2020).

Keywords: anti-vaccination, Covid-19, digital environments, stigmatized knowledge, democracy, far-right ideology.

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*Felix Adolfsson, July 2022, Malmö.*

## **Popular science summary**

This thesis is about activists who protested the rules of social gatherings during the Coronavirus pandemic in Sweden. Because it was a challenging time for normal life and meeting people, this project was entirely made online with collections of texts, videos, posts, and images in a computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software called NVivo 12. The computer program helps with sorting and categorizing any collected material and then assigning words to them, called qualitative codes, to later find patterns.

I knew from the beginning of the project that conspiracy theories would be a central part of the material and therefore it became a theoretical perspective for me to use. Another theoretical perspective common to studying activists and protesters called frame analysis was used to look at what social groups present as their messages, in what setting they do it, and how it helps them be a social group, sometimes with a group identity.

After analyzing almost five hours of videos, nearly twenty thousand words in texts, and forty images, it became clear that conspiracy theory was a large part of the activist's worldview, but they said everything was about freedom and democracy. It did not end there, for more patterns became clear when seeing whom they socialized with and who supported them in return. Groups who did not at all support democracy were supporting these activist groups, working together at different events during the last two years.

In conclusion, what became apparent from organizing and analyzing the material was a layer of messages that could appear as common-sense arguments at first, but within those messages were conspiracy theories about the world, governments, and the Coronavirus pandemic. Within those conspiracy theories were messages of right-wing extremism, anti-democratic and hateful towards certain groups, but encrypted in their expressions. Those who expressed vaccine hesitancy could accept conspiracy theories, and then more extreme views. In the worst case, this could lead to radicalization and endorsement of violence, and at the least cause divisions and cracks in the foundation of our democratic society.

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## **Introduction**

*The fate of our times is characterized by rationalization and intellectualization and, above all, by the disenchantment of the world. – Max Weber (Livingstone et al., 2004:30).*

On the 6<sup>th</sup> of January 2021 in Washington D.C. a large, violent, and deadly mob stormed and interrupted a democratic process of the confirmation in the presidential election in the United States of America. This extreme act was primarily driven by a perception of a stolen election, and within the crowd were significant signs of conspiracy theories and right-wing extremists. The year before, another right-wing extremist group attempted to storm the Reichstag in Berlin on the 29<sup>th</sup> of August in protest of the Coronavirus restrictions. Both events included a presentation of support for conspiracy theories, in form of the QAnon movement connected to the American far-right. Both acts took place during the global pandemic from the Sars-cov-2 or Covid-19 virus, shaping the context of a rise in conspiracy theories and the collapse of society.

This thesis does not take on the mentioned events, but related factors and concepts from those events with so-called Covid-19 activism in Sweden, and a rise of conspiracy theories and right-wing expressions in digital environments. During the period of restrictions against a gathering of large crowds, multiple demonstrations took place primarily in Stockholm, but also in Gothenburg and Malmö against restrictions, vaccines, and vaccine passports. As of May 2022, the Swedish Public Health Agency has confirmed over 2.5 million confirmed cases of infection and over 18 000 deaths from complications of Covid-19, 85% of the population was vaccinated with two doses and 67% were vaccinated with three doses (Folkhälsomyndigheten, 2022a, 2022b), meaning somewhere below 15% of the population remains unvaccinated (around a million in population). Because of the nature of the virus, social distancing became the primary tool against preventing spread, causing social life to be limited, and gathering in crowded areas could thus lead to infection and risk of death. So, the first question that arose was how could people gather and perform acts so obviously harmful to our current situation in society?

To approach this, this thesis has aimed to identify explanations for the behavior of Covid-19 activists by their ability to attract followers and support for their cause. My purpose is to dissect the layers and interactions of the activists' messages and their organizations, to discover a type of texts and vernacular distinguish them and what justifications they use to conduct protests during a

pandemic, hoping to discover what is at their rhetorical core and if they reflect on a larger problem in Swedish society. How did we arrive at the point where people ignored common sense and government recommendations at the risk of spreading a deadly virus?

First some clarification on defining the *Coronavirus pandemic*. What I will be presenting and discussing is mostly about the social effects of the pandemic, which began with the introduction of restrictions that led to social distancing and many employees performing their job remotely from home. The biological factors are secondary in studying groups that do not believe them to be severe or exist at all, and their social realities have been constructed thereafter. With *Covid-19 activism*, I target social movements that engaged in protests taking place during restrictions against amassment of crowds with the main message directing critique towards those restrictions.

Conspiracy theories and anti-vaccine movements have a history of limited attention, with the consequences of “vaccines cause autism” being one of the better known globally. In Sweden, an anthroposophy community south of Stockholm shunned vaccines and actively spread measles through social events (Sveriges Radio, 2021), yet before the Coronavirus pandemic, any vaccine hesitancy was likely considered a minor issue in developed countries and often associated with New Age and alternative medicine.

Anti-restriction demonstrations were harmful from a perspective of the spread of infection, but within their core is not just “we don’t want restriction attitude” but underlined with conspiracy theory and anti-authoritarian attitudes causing distrust towards institutions, the government, and our democracy. A central term for such attitudes is called *stigmatized knowledge* (Barkun, 2015), which I will come back to in my section on the theoretical framework.

My research question is thus formulated as follows:

- How do Covid-19 activists in Sweden perform framing of stigmatized knowledge in digital environments? How are these frames incorporated and expressed with other movements?

I have delimited the thesis to focus on two primary groups, the Swedish Freedom movement and the party for Human rights and Democracy (MoD), known for organizing demonstrations during the pandemic, and sympathizing groups present at or related to those demonstrations found online. Further, it does not deal with the inter- and intragroup interaction as to how they are perceived by

participants but is rather limited to expressions and social relations presented in digital environments and what can be discovered through such observations.

Initially, the relevant previous research will be presented regarding the subject of conspiracy theories and connections to events during the coronavirus pandemic, followed directly by the section on theory as they are overlapping and have affected the choices in my method. Thereafter I will describe the construction of the method with its considerations on the subject, introducing the nethnographical method and why it has been chosen together with thematic analysis as an approach together with a presentation of using NVivo 12 software.

Finally, the results are presented in sections based on the type of data categorization from the collection, and the themes generated from said categories in three parts followed by a discussion and then a conclusion, returning to a wider perspective after examining the cases of stigmatized knowledge withing the Swedish far-right, conspiracy theorists, and the so-called freedom movements. By analyzing the frames of their worldview and messages present within the demonstrations I aim to display the effect of framing at work. While the movements have individuals conducting communications, they are not regarded as creators, but rather enablers of frames in the movements. Thus, the approach is structural, in the way that language and frames can be structurally racist, and gender-excluding does not imply that the individual is open about it. It displays, at best, obliviousness to the issue, and at worst extremist ideologies.



## Previous research

This section aims to cover previous research, both a more general presentation on studies of conspiracy theory and the Coronavirus pandemic with the inclusion of conspiracy theories, activism, framing, and today's radicalization processes. My aim with the relevant research is to display areas discussed before and during the pandemic and each segment has a presence within the coming analysis. The relevant research presented brings forward populist movements and far-right extremism and provides research on the interaction between these concepts within the data of the thesis.

### Conspiracy and populism

In mapping conspiracy theories and connections to populism, E. Bergmann's (2018) book begins with the example of terrorist Anders Breivik in Norway as an act deeply motivated by conspiracy theories with connections to political far-right populism. Concerning the act of violence that claimed seventy-seven lives in 2011, a manifest was posted online which has later been cited by other acts of terror by mass shootings (e.g., in Christchurch, New Zealand 2019). The book demonstrates the link between the rise of right-wing populism and conspiracy theories, suggesting that they are conjoined in existence to some extent through text analysis. The material studied in the book includes, but is not limited to, manifests from terrorists, political speeches, news reports on populism, and literature on conspiracy theories, which have been processed through critical discourse analysis according to Bergmann (2018:13), however, the book does not have an exhaustive methodology section and is likely targeted for outside of academia.

Bergmann serves as an introduction and overview of different types of conspiracy theories within this field, as they have been presented during the 20<sup>th</sup> century until a radical change in spread with the introduction of information technology and Internet access. One of the main dangers with conspiracy theories that Bergmann (2018:8) draws upon is that "the increased spread of CT's [conspiracy theories] can undermine democracy and social trust". There is a clear emphasis on populist conspiracy theories targeting the evil elite to protect the good people which carries over to extremism (ibid:12).

Without covering every conspiracy theory in detail, the titles capture the gist of them and some of the relevant from the book to this thesis include but are not limited to, New World Order, Protocols of the Elders of Zion, the Bilderberg Group, the Deep State, different types of medical conspiracies about manufactured diseases by governments with HIV/AIDS and the Swine flu are mentioned. The first part of the mentioned groups revolves around a shadow state organization, the evil elite who often are coded examples of believing in a Jewish conspiracy ruling the world. In their structures, conspiracy theories are often seen as reflections of social situations, from dissatisfaction in everyday life and essentially functioning as symptoms (ibid:53).

### The (green) roots of fascism

In a report produced by the Swedish Defence Research Agency [sic, B.E.], Pollack Sarnecki (2021) covers the link between conspiracy theories and extremism during a crisis. The name given to the report also hints at the language and issues used within early and new fascist and national socialist movements regarding the environment and climate.

Through an ethnographic study with observation, text analysis, and fieldwork, Pollack Sarnecki displays empirical links between the early fascist tendencies to modern-day alt-right, far-right, neo-Nazi, and even Coronavirus conspiracy theories. The studied material in the report comes from manifests left behind by terrorists, trial protocols, podcasts made by the nationalist movement in Sweden, and observations at demonstrations against the Covid-19 restrictions. Within the fascist and national socialist movements, there has been a use of so-called green language regarding nature and the environment since its earliest formations, such as the terms “blood and soil” used in the National Socialist German Workers’ Party (NSDAP, the Nazi Party), referring to the (white) right of ownership of land and vilifying “rootless” people. The examples given in the report are directly applied in analyzing the modern Swedish nationalist movements and their relations to affiliated groups. This green framing began with and is returning to the question of overpopulation, thus dealing with who the cause of overpopulation is and who should have the first right of existence, which leads to the fundamental idea of racial hierarchy, eugenics, and white supremacy. This is a display of how the question of overpopulation is not dealt with as a scientific question, it has more to do with the agenda of extremism. The idea of a great replacement of white Europeans by migrants takes root in this question, and who has the right to the land, using rootlessness as a status of unworthiness (Pollack Sarnecki, 2021:36).

Certain principles of fascism are covered such as an expected collapse of society on the horizon and a previous loss of a greater society. That the coronavirus pandemic has been a unifying factor in this is a conclusion seen in the report and will be returned to later in this thesis, as the major contribution from this report to this thesis came in identifying the coded language used within far-right conspiracy movements, such as expressions or concepts about ecology and fascism. Finally, the context of this report being produced within the Swedish Defence Research Agency has a seriousness in dealing with the subject as a potential threat to the and this will be recurring, democracy as they prescribe to it, and as a government agency, it lies within their sphere of interest.

#### The pandemic and creation of meaning

Pleyers (2020) brings up activism at the beginning of the pandemic around the world, with the culmination around the murder of George Floyd on May 26<sup>th</sup>, 2020. Pleyers (2020) cross-studied three kinds of material in four different languages, in the form of local to international media, social movements and their online organization, and social scientist active in this period writing about public health policies and inequalities during the first period of the outbreak. During lockdowns around the world, social gatherings, and organizations of protests in a safe manner without resulting in mass spreader events became unavailable. The first part of this article covers how activists had to find alternative ways to continue their social justice movements beyond physical spaces, but the activists in this thesis disregarded any restrictions in organizing most of their events. Pleyers highlights the struggle over the meaning of the crisis between different actors, displaying global connections in social movements using interpretations of the pandemic to frame their truth.

Progressive movements frame the pandemic as uncovering social issues and work situations with those who still had to commute and work with the risk of infection. These movements then became branded by reactionaries as cultural Marxists trying to reform the world, when e.g., the slogan return to normal was met with “your normality is our problem” from progressive activists (Pleyers 2020:10). The article displays examples of progressive calls for change in the aftermath of the pandemic, which will be shown later in as a cause for reactionary conservative to far-right movements to mobilize against.

### From Covid-19 to 5G to propaganda

Meese et al. (2020) have studied publications along with technical system information on 5G network technology alongside how news reports on concerns about Covid-19 connect to conspiracy theories. The introduction of 5G sees increased numbers of transmitters in urban areas than before, generating a social impact in that a transmitter could be needed on every other city block. The increased step up in frequency range has been one of the main causes for unproved concern with the health risks of 5G, but as with previous wireless technologies these concerns have been raised with every introduction of a new system. The author present that there might be some changes beyond our grasp relevant to how the technology could shape society, yet the attention gained has been driven up by the correlating events of the Coronavirus pandemic. This has, for reasons presented, caused conspiracy theories to frolic, leading up to sabotage and destruction of 5G infrastructure.

Two strains of conspiracy theories have been identified about the virus, one speculating around the notion that the radiation affects the immune system, increasing the risk of the virus, and the other considers that the 5G technology directly causes and spreads the virus. Groups from “New Agers [and] right-wingers [to] QAnon conspiracy theorists” have been engaging in anti-5G expressions. In some spaces there has been existing activism aimed toward the spread of 5G, serving as fertile ground for other agendas of conspiracy theorists to plant their seeds.

Finally, Meese et al. (2020) aim to present a conversation on the relationship between statecraft and infrastructure development, where the spread of conspiracy theories about 5G has been used as leverage in preventing the infrastructure by other countries outside Australia, as 5G is expected to have a significant effect on economic growth and automated wireless systems in urban areas. Such statements have been regarded as fuel for conspiracy theories.

### Becoming red-pilled

Chapelan (2021) ties together the above-mentioned concepts by observing stigmatized knowledge within the Coronavirus pandemic and the connection to the far-right. The article presents examples on both sides of the Atlantic, namely the United States of America and France, where far-right extremism has pushed their positions forward in combination with crisis and conspiracy theories.

This was achieved by studying several personalities and responses to texts about narratives of the elite and oppression, using a framework of critical discourse analysis to arrive at three clusters of topoi. In highlighting specific phrases, their use and origin can be used to illustrate significant narratives with their spread and meaning, such as referring to others as sheeple (sheep people) following the herd, unable of independent thinking.

Describing the coronavirus pandemic as a social and cognitive phenomenon beyond a biological reality, Chapelan (2021) covered discourse in far-right movements mobilizing during the initial period in 2020. Even by comparing two culturally different states the outcome is still similar in the creation of narratives and frames, both embedded in conspiracy theory and adjacent to white supremacist ideologies. Within the topoi, specific language is one of the relevant parts of this study, for example how a reference from the film *The Matrix* (1999) on choosing the red pill has become synonymous with waking up to see what is going on in the world within conspiracy theorists and right-wing groups online. The emphasis is on understanding and identifying the development of vernacular belonging to these types of groups so that framing and creation of meaning can be distinguished and understood.

*Stigmatized knowledge* (Barkun, 2015) is a central term used to describe the discourse of the far-right. In summary, the author states about the groups organizing themselves around conspiracy theories: “they are marginal because, not despite, they are pure, they are right because, and not despite, they are disavowed by canonical authorities“ (Chapelan, 2021:310). The choice to remain on the fringe becomes a part of the identity on the far right, together with the rejection from the mainstream, thus almost looping themselves into isolation. In essence, what is described is how the far-right uses crisis and conspiracy to rally within their fringe and view themselves as correct and justified because they are not accepted by the authorities. They view this as an indication of being closer to the truth, as actions taken against them are viewed as signs of being silenced for spreading the truth, whereas, in reality, they are more likely to be targeted and monitored because of their violent tendencies.

## **Theoretical framework**

I have chosen to deviate from the formula and present the theory section before the method, as together with the previous research, the approached material impact acts on the formation of the method.

Without reading about conspiracy theories before deciding upon the method and its delimitations, it would have been time consuming and difficult to identify the re-coded language used within the movements and its connections to far-right environment the data collection specifically, aided in sorting the selection by being able to react to certain terms as possible expressions for antisemitism or a particular conspiracy theory. If done in the other order, a greater mass of texts would need to be collected and then sieved through for relevant language. I have thus used the theoretical framework when looking for examples of these expressions as they are the primary empirical material. Relevancy of stigmatized knowledge in the data has been based on a display of connection between the two subjects, conspiracy theory and extremism, in this case. When there is a connection, then that connection can be examined for how relevant, reoccurring, and how robust it is.

One of the main tools in preventing spread social distancing (Folkhälsomyndigheten, 2022c), has layers of meaning from limiting the occupying of physical spaces, keeping people at a distance, to reducing social circles and workplaces from physical interaction. A fundamental sociological perspective of social control (Larsson & Engdahl, 2011) can be useful in situations where the subjects of the control are explicitly aware of it and react to it. As a concept of surveillance and disciplinary actions, and self-regulation have been overtly present during the Coronavirus pandemic, exemplified through social distancing but also fines and shaming. Such regulatory consequences, through social or legal judgment, have been disciplined in some way, for example in online spaces against social media posts of public figures ignoring recommendations (Expressen.se, 2020).

### Conspiracy theories as stigmatized knowledge

A central theory on conspiracy theory comes from Barkun (2015) who has expanded and exemplified how social formations are formed and affected by stigmatized knowledge (see

Chapelan 2021, Pollack Sarnecki 2021). As one of the more cited authors on the subject of conspiracy theories, Michael Barkun (2015) has developed concepts for approaching modern conspiracy theories in different environments, particularly in political culture. The first important distinction lies between conspiracy and conspiracy theories, with the first mentioned regards actual schemes while the second is an intellectual construct. The conspiracy theory is rejected by institutions such as governments, mainstream media, universities, and the scientific community and thus considered to be stigmatized. Further, Barkun points out sympathy between conspiracy theorists from different groups, uniting in their skepticism towards the institutions and the idea that they have discovered something that they or the general public should not be aware of. The believers of conspiracy theories are linked through a system of understanding the world through stigmatized knowledge, where the plausibility is related to official denials, often created from campaigns on misinformation to begin with. For example, the rise of Flat Earth Society has required energy from astronomers related to the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) or documentary makers to produce materials engaging with Flat Earth theory rather than focus their time on other projects (e.g., Big Think, 2018. Clark, 2018).

Stigmatized knowledge, conspiracy theories, was previously often kept away from the mainstream by educational institutions and editors not printing books or papers on Atlantis, UFOs, or Bigfoot, thus keeping them in the fringe of society, socially and intellectually. Today, there is plenty of material in society as presented in this thesis. What changed, according to Barkun, was the move to the internet in the 1990s, and into popular culture as an expression of common interest for conspiracy theories. With the increased speed of communication, such ideas started passing through the fringe and eroding the borders of mainstream (Barkun, 2015:116). This process of *mainstreaming the fringe* is when far reaching ideas move from impossible to plausible for some and inevitably be acknowledged within institutional settings such as traditional media, schools, and universities, not confirming, or agreeing with the ideas but granting them platforms and taking energy and resources from the ordinary agenda. The movement into the mainstream does not have to start from the fringe but can be pushed on by fringe groups such as the evangelicals on abortion.

Further, the mainstreaming of the fringe is not automatic, but a political shift becomes a question of time. Consequences have been observed, using the “birther” conspiracy about President Barack

Obamas birth certificate. The conspiracy theories bled into the mainstream from the fringe, making it a republican argument against the president, endorsed by the then would-be President Donald Trump, gaining enough traction that the White House had to address the issue created out of nothing (Barkun, 2015:119). While the example given by Barkun was a milder one, it displayed a transition of mainstreaming the fringe, indicating what could come after. “All of this suggests that as the fringe seeps more and more into the mainstream, with stigmatized knowledge becoming ‘cleansed’ of its stigmas, we may face a more dangerously volatile and polarized politics” (Barkun, 2015:119). A warning and an estimation, Barkun’s claims came true about the dangers within the political culture as presented in the introduction on January 6<sup>th</sup>.

These concepts have been expanded upon by Alexis Chapelan (2021) on how stigmatized knowledge has interacted in the context of extremism and the Coronavirus pandemic. Presenting similarities on movements and actors in the fringe and their connection to political extremism, especially on the far-right/alt-right side with specific vernacular and the culmination in the January 6<sup>th</sup> storming of the Capitol building. In example of right-wing stigmatized knowledge “villains are a) the State, b) the perverse expert and c) the apathetic brainwashed “sheeple”; virtuous players are d) the good doctor, often portrayed under the guise of the brave whistleblower, and e) the far-right “rebel” (Chapelan, 2021: 290). Thus, the evil actors in this setting are those who stigmatize the groups in the fringe, and those who are willing to resist and subscribe to different narratives are first most individuals and the heroes of the right-wing. The dissent towards forms of collectivism is essential in conservative libertarian narratives.

With the use of stigmatized knowledge in conspiracy theory, Pollack Sarnecki’s research report *The green roots of fascism, conspiracy theories, crisis, and collapse* (2021) displays how expressions connect the early forms of fascist movements with their language to modern movements, especially in a vernacular of ecology that connects to ideas of race preservation and natural right to land. The use of stigmatized knowledge in this thesis will focus on expressions of conspiracy theories and especially sympathies between groups for other types of stigmatized knowledge.



### Framing theory

Perhaps the most popular known approach to framing theory comes from Erving Goffman (1986) "to locate, perceive, identify, and label" (1986:21) material in an organized way that is available to the reader while maintaining relevant references to the field of sociology. Chong and Druckman (2007) continue it as "Framing refers to the process by which people develop a particular conceptualization of an issue or reorient their thinking about an issue." and it is the latter theoretical starting point that I use for operationalization, especially regarding application and effects of framing.

The concept of framing has been chosen as an approach to method and theory regarding conspiracy theory and social movements conducting demonstrations, for it is their creation of meaning and the presentation of their message that matters in understanding the sympathy of stigmatized knowledge. What this means in practice is that when regarding conspiracy theories as mental constructs shared within communities, or even gathering communities around them, a positivist understanding of truth and mind-world dualism is nonsensical (Jackson 2016:125), for what they believe shapes their understanding of reality with the risk of resisting information (Chong & Druckman 2007:120). Framing and use of imagery also shape the social movements in the attention they attract, positive or negative depending on the framework of the observer (Chong & Druckman, 2007:114). As a student of sociology, I want to make sense of what I observe through a constructed framework of accepted ideas, approved by the institutions that I have performed under, thus this is one framework and cognitively conspiracy theorists work in the same way, but where we differ is the demand on empirical evidence and my knowledge would surely be stigmatized in such groups.

An extension of framing in combination with social movement organizations is called frame alignment in which frameworks are adjusted to specific issues, attract supporters, or maintain the current members (Snow et al. 1986). These are alignments of frames, not necessarily a shift in actual attitude, but a projected shift to appear attractive within a given context or issue. Four forms of frame alignment are expressed by Snow et al. (1986), being frame bridging, frame amplification, frame extension, and frame transformation. Frame extension is the choice of expanding a primary framework to incorporate new categories of supporters (ibid:472). In contrast, frame

transformations change already existing meaningful activities or events and give them new meaning, exemplified through religious converts (ibid:474). This thesis primarily uses bridging and amplification, the first regards social movements that connect with ideologically similar, but structurally different movements to come together on an issue and the amplification takes subforms based on value or belief. Exemplified, value amplification comes in the form of difficult to disagree with values in the forefront of arguments, Snow et al. studied a movement against a homelessness shelter that value amplified family frames, focusing on the safety of children and women rather than stating out loud that they disliked the presence of the homeless (1986:469). Belief amplification, on the other hand, focuses the need of the social movement for the change to happen, i.e., participation is the primary tool against the issue and failure to do so would be letting awful things happen (ibid:470-471). Finally, Snow et al. consider value amplification to be primarily used by either conservative reactionary movements or those “who are segmentally organized in relation to dominant power structures” (ibid:476).

Lastly, the framework and alignment of frames achieve an effect which is the change of a specific question gives different results. Framing the act of giving more money to welfare versus giving more money to the poor gain different effects (Chong & Druckman, 2007:104). For example, the use of *welfare* in a political campaign or commercial is likely to be associated with government subsidies, increased taxes, and socialism while another way to frame the same goal, but towards a different targeted audience could be *giving to the poor* as it associates with personal values instead of collectiveness through virtuousness, generosity, and Christianity while in essence, the underlying act is the same. In certain contexts, one of these frames could resonate stronger by relying on symbolism rather than addressing the matters at hand without being intellectually or morally superior, and so-called *strong frames* are created for their ability to appeal and stimulate (ibid:111). The devious use of framing effects is warned to result in a lack of informed opinions and rather be surrendered to strong frames as a potential issue itself for participatory democracy (ibid:121-122).

## Method

I have conducted a qualitative ethnographic study in online spaces, using the internet both as a tool and as a research field. This is referred to as network ethnography or nethnography (Berg, 2015). With this method, I have collected texts, in a semiotic sense, from online spaces directly related to or associated with the Covid-19 activist movements in Sweden. The data was collected during the period between the 20th of January 2022 and the 25th of March 2022, and the data covered in this collection spans from March 2020 to April 2022<sup>1</sup>.

The design has been straightforward for a qualitative research project beginning with data familiarization, followed by a review of previous research leading to a choice of theoretical framework. Based on experience method courses from graduate school, the choice was made to collect and import data for coding in the same software, assisting in conducting a thematic analysis.

The data consists of thirty-one images, forty-three texts (18 696 words) which also contain images, and fifteen videos (4 hours and 58 minutes). Most material has been collected using *NCapture for Nvivo*, a web browser add-on in Google Chrome, or cut into documents and imported to the Nvivo 12 software, a computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software (CAQDAS) for structuring and analysis. The data was selected and organized based on relation to the Covid-19 activist movements in Sweden, the Freedom movement (*Frihetsrörelsen*), and the Thousand Man March (*Tusenmannamarschen*), beginning with their official websites, event organization, and posts on Facebook. These groups aggregated during the period and founded a political party, *National Law*. Another primary movement followed suit and formed a political party named MoD, *Mänskliga rättigheter och Demokrati* [Human rights and Democracy, the acronym MoD spells courage in Swedish]. All collected data is written, managed, and coded in Swedish and then translated in the final writing process to maintain the focus of the empirical source as far as possible.

The material collected from the movement's webpage and social media accounts was initially shallow both in content, statements not revealing their attitudes, and their origin. Through browsing their social media, adjacent groups were recommended and observed in their content,

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<sup>1</sup> Starting with the first imposed restrictions in Sweden in March 2020 and thus defining the start of the Coronavirus pandemic in its social form.

such as posted images and co-hosting events, displaying several conspiracy theories and extremist views. Thus, the collection and selection of data followed a digital snowballing principle into adjacent groups and certain media reports on the movement.

The choice to conduct a strictly digital approach was partly influenced by the global effects of the Covid-19 pandemic, as it has been an imminent context for the entirety of my master's program, and restrictions were still in place at the start of the project. Further, because of the nature of the subject implicated health risks, i.e., the studied group's population consists of unvaccinated individuals, which made a traditional ethnographic study inadvisable. Lastly, the method has been defined by some research barriers of ethical principles and reflections on the role of the researcher.

### On Nethnography

The main entrance to this thesis comes from reading Berg's (2015) book on nethnography. Conducting ethnography online, both in using the Internet as a tool and an object of research, began with clearer distinctions between offline and online aspects of the Internet, but since the end of the millennium, these lines have blurred in social life (Berg 2015:10-11). Nethnography leaves a geographical arena for a global and instant arena of information, lowering the distance to the data as it can be collected from any given place, yet it requires ethnographical skills in navigating the Internet and finding relevant sources, a method that has become necessary to grasp during the Coronavirus pandemic. Nethnography still follows the principles of qualitative research with a high demand on reflexivity during the process, as the area of operating can be intertwined with personal life use of the internet, search history, and how this can affect what material presents itself through algorithms (ibid:67). For example, the accounts I used to browse for the material became targeted with suggestions and recommendations as is the purpose of websites like YouTube and Facebook to create constant feeds of content. In a private use of such websites, it can be seen as desirable for constant stimulation, but when entering the same space in the role of a researcher, the same mechanisms could become misleading or build on previous digitally generated biases, i.e., those who frequently watches video X also enjoy Y and Z. Outside of work-assigned time, similar videos continued to be presented causing the distinction between work and play to disintegrate. Further, the importance of understanding platforms' functions and how the interaction with information, e.g., on Facebook where every feed is a unique stream of information based on the actions of each

user. In a traditional type of online forum, the same information feed is available to everyone, and not determined by who one friend/follows/subscribes to.

I collected material online to understand phenomena happening offline (protests, demonstrations, knowledge formation), by studying communities online, rather than online communities (exclusively existing online) (ibid:68), and a focus on relations between online and offline spheres and social connections between groups, and not inside the groups. The Internet in this case is to be viewed as a social room where the subjects of the study organize to conduct their offline activities. In netnography, communications are categorized by synchronous and asynchronous forms. The latter consists of online texts that are more shaped by afterthought (posts, e-mails, webpage content), and more relevant to discovering and constructing imagery in framing processes, rather than synchronous material like group chats that are conducted in real-time (Berg 2015: 92). While the synchronous form could display the presence of frames in group communications, the asynchronous forms of communication have served as a selection tool in the sorting process. Further, interactions with online material such as likes, shares, and comments have not been included as this would display reactions to the posted material. How many reactions or far reach a certain post has could be a synchronous form of communication on how successful the message was, yet not what went into the creation and influences behind it.

### Presentation of the data

The central aspect of the data is that it was exclusively collected online. The thesis has aimed to study how frames within Covid-19 activism have been presented online, as during the Covid-19 pandemic online forums have become a primary flow for information. Social media were present and large before the pandemic, but because of it, social media platforms have become more necessary for a social life during lockdowns and social distancing. The aim is to compare content as it has been produced and not how it has been perceived by other populations online.

The initial phase began open-ended with me familiarizing myself with the data and getting a lay of the land in which areas the activists made themselves visible (by their choice) and in which areas they became visible (reported on). As the data was collected, it was also organized in primary, secondary, and third-party sources. Primary sources consist of activist and political party webpages and their social media accounts (limited to Facebook as this seemed to be the most active

site at the time and used for the creation and organization of events). This material was thus self-produced by the activists and the political parties.

The secondary sources come from groups in proximity to the activists, seen participating in images of demonstrations or marketed by the primary organizers. In collaborations at events, conducting interviews, and participating at book conventions, the primary sources can be seen and opinionated, yet the distinction here was that another party posted the material online with their assumed given consent.

The third-party sources consist of mainstream media reportage about the activist movements and their collaborations and other source material cited to have inspired the movements but without any direct evidence of a social connection offline. The point of using mainstream media coverage was not for an accurate description of the movements and organizers but to add nuance to present a contrasting framework. The movements made statements where the mainstream media was presented as the enemies of their messages. Therefore, the state media Sweden's Television Stock Company, and a specialized news agency with a focus on far-right phenomena in Sweden, Expo.se, constituted most of the third-party sources.

The material cover statements, attitudes, and indications of world views, and in selecting the material, considerations were made over its relevance towards either objecting to current forms of laws, demonstrations, expressions on or by government, or externalizations of underlying attitudes. In this, prior knowledge from previous research on conspiracy theories (Chapelan, 2021), and (green) fascism (Pollack Sarnecki, 2021) aided in identifying language and expression that could imply connections to different movements, as the modern alt-right uses coded language to describe categories of enemies and others, as covered in the previous research.

The texts vary from information on the movements, description of events, petitions, political party programs, comments about news, official government statements, and Facebook posts. By extracting data from the web pages and social media accounts, the material also displayed social connections to events and other movements that were listed as co-hosts and speakers.

Images come from Facebook posts and websites from the demonstrations that took place during the period, where carried written signs are the main point of analysis in the imagery, although a

few have other symbols in their contexts such as armbands and pins. Other images came from web shops of merchandise or part of news articles.

The collected data include almost five hours of video material, varying from updates about the movement's agenda to interviews with people related to the anti-vaccination campaigns, a documentary on the financial elite, and media interviews. The CAQDAS software allows for audiovisual material to be analyzed and incorporated into the codebook directly, instead of transcribing the spoken text and then coding it. This allows for contemplation on visuals and other subtle qualities that would be lost in transcribing the interviews, allowing me as the researcher to analyze the transmission and perception of the content. How the interviews are set up, and what imagery has been used in the documentary are part of the framing.

### Research role and ethics

A factor behind the delimitation of the method had to do with the role of the researcher and ethical approaches to the groups and individuals involved. In netnography certain distinctive aspects come into play, while the distance to the objects of the study can be far physically the research enters private domains and can be conducted from private and unidentifiable settings (Berg, 2015). A traditional ethnographical study often uses a physical presence and direct observation of the subjects and can thus have other ethical considerations. Therefore, this section elaborates on the method as well as research role and ethics.

In the beginning, access was decided to be kept at a non-interactive role, which in this case means not entering closed groups, joining email lists like weekly letters or petitions, no communication through messaging or commenting, and no request for materials from the object groups of the study. This allowed me to maintain a distance from the subject and not find myself thrown into new directions during the data collection. The intention of this observation is through the lens of an internet user as an observer, thus I have not engaged in how the imagery has been expressed and recreated in internal interactions, but the imagery that has been used externally towards the public and to attract followers. This includes the marketing material of secondary groups present within each other's publicized materials, such as signs at demonstrations or participation in YouTube videos.

The handling of texts and data comes from open sources to avoid using sensitive material like private conversations or chat logs and has been stored on private hard drives and in NVivo without any cloud sharing activated. To further limit harm, in the results, as an action to limit unnecessary exposure towards individuals, the activist groups, organizations, and political parties are mentioned by name, but none of the individual activists are presented by name. By not including them in the text, the thesis will not be associated with them through online searches. It will however be associated with the name of the movements. The applied principle is to limit the research to having individual messaging and keep the focus to answer the analysis of the movement's frames. Even when discussing groups that in themselves are harmful to society, the role of a researcher can never be vindictive, and harm reduction in this case comes in the form of not challenging individuals with connections in the movements. It is the language use that is the foremost object of study and its implications.

The gain I am seeking with the thesis is to shed light on harmful groups and their social connections, their spread of malicious information, willingness to accept false information (conspiracy theories), and in a larger context lift what this could imply for the democratic and free society of Sweden when it comes to foreign powers psychological operations. The groups are also harmful in their attitudes toward vaccinations and the spread of infection, which risks those who are unable to become vaccinated as they become statistically aggregated in the unvaccinated categories.

On a final note, regarding the role of the researcher, watching hours of conspiracy theorist material was at times mentally taxing, and spending time going through similar and recommended videos kept enforcing the notion of how a person can start to intellectually exist in that reality, accepting more material bit by bit. To maintain distance to the field, I regularly had venting conversations with friends, other students, and teachers about the social construction of reality understood through the lens of conspiracy theory, radicalization, and concepts of the fringe.

### Method of analysis

A thematic analysis was used to identify patterns of meaning within the text material and to study connections to other groups by common themes. The approach was chosen for the discovery of imagery across groups to then be comparable, within a framework analysis (Goldsmith, 2021).



The coding was conducted in Swedish as the material consisted of text in Swedish, avoiding codes to be lost in translation during the process.

NVivo 12 has been used at the beginning of the collection phase of the data, which then allowed me to categorize and organize the data directly within the software, and thereafter analyze it through two rounds of coding to generate themes on the subject. Following Saldaña and Miles's (2012) coding manual and Neuendorf's (2019) recommendations on qualitative research, the direction and the process of coding were organized by qualitative standards. The first round of coding applied apt codes to the texts, the second round aggregated said codes into similar clusters that then were made into categories, and finally themes, which concluded a framework. NVivo 12 constantly tracks and traces the number of codes and references when aggregating and working with the material, making a constant overview accessible to reflect on how the analysis is developing. Furthermore, while coding a separate document of memos was kept for my reflections on the data and thus also the memos were used during the phase of categorization of the code book as data themselves (Saldaña & Miles, 2012:65). Another perk of using NVivo software for analysis is the ability to overview the work that has been done and find data points with different search functions, which allows the material to be present during the entire writing process.

Three forms of codes were used within the material based on literature recommendations, the application, and projected direction. First out were descriptive codes which are single-worded codes summarizing a sentence or paragraph, e.g., *Politics* (Saldaña & Miles, 2012:112). Secondly, under the descriptive codes comes subcodes when distinctions are relevant to present who or what is implied, e.g., *Politics*>*Political party* (Saldaña & Miles, 2012:101) Thirdly, In Vivo coding has been used, where the specific language or expressions themselves become codes when they display something significant and recurring e.g. *The (Financial) Elite* (ibid 2012:117). The combination of these codes was selected with the previous research in mind, where specific language carried a value of expression and attitudes that would require identification at multiple points in the data to map patterns of connection. Further, knowledge about the right-wing and conspiracy theory movements in the previous research indicated that certain expressions already were codes to avoid overt fringe language e.g., how “globalists” or “the banks” often are used as replacement words when talking about Jews or Marxists. The descriptive-, In Vivo- and sub-codes are forthright types of coding, useful for approaching a material that is already using hidden meaning to cover its

intentions, and thus attempting to bring themes to light. This is the result of my qualitative approach, and more material and other themes are available to be discovered under other circumstances and delimitations.

A total of 101 codes were generated from the first cycle of coding, primarily with descriptive coding and In Vivo coding, both with subcodes. The aim of the descriptive coding and the first round was to create a useful matrix for analysis in the second round of coding where the codes aggregated into common categories (ibid:230) e.g., *Vaccinations* and *the pharmaceutical industry* were coded under *science* which then was grouped under *Covid-19*. The software was used to reorganize and aggregate codes into seven categories: *social ties*, *Covid-19*, *law*, *democracy*, *power*, *extremism*, and *conspiracy theory* (Appendix A).

Within these categories, relations between the codes have also been observed and analyzed for in which context expressions are most frequent or how wide an expression is being used. Through analyzing the context of the language, the process aims to reveal something beyond the obvious and further what these codes could imply and why it is relevant to illuminate. Finally with the categories congregated into distinct themes their intent and attitudes are displayed as frames, upon which the movement operates and shapes its message. In this approach for a theme to become distinct, it needed to be present within each level of data source and thus connect the themes within a built framework, as displays of sympathy for other types of stigmatized knowledge. Each theme has received its presentation based on its interconnection and expression of source, intending to display how the themes support each other. The three themes building a framework are the *democracy frame*, *conspiracy theory frame*, and *extremist ideology frame*.

#### Personal reflection on digital method

The qualitative coding of the material is still personal in its creation, and the same material could have generated different codes through the lens of another researcher. The method of conducting digital ethnography is characterized by everyday online tools instead of physically observing the studied object, in that no change of environment is necessary and what becomes observed more relies on the researchers' abilities to search for data, rather than have the data present itself live. To achieve balance and strength, by focusing on a collection of semiotic texts, the use of software and exhaustive coding allows for a transparent process, which would require more experience to

achieve the same level of structure from using field notes. Every piece of material can be processed as it was created and presented and not how it was remembered in memory and notes. NVivo also allows the use of different queries to help continuously check for reliability of the analysis, for example with text searches on all files for any segment that might be missed in a first reading or to sort code in quantifiable values.

## **Analysis**

From the collected data about the Covid-19 activism in Sweden, I have developed a thematic analysis based on my approach to the subject. It contains connections between the group's perception of the pandemic, imposed restrictions, and those in power. The latter is not necessarily framed as the elected politicians and assigned directors-general of agencies, but a view on globalist shadow governance conspiring to radically change society through fear and control, thus those who walk in the activist's movement view themselves as freedom fighters. In their texts, codes for violence are present and it contains codes of far-right extremism and alignment with neo-fascist and neo-Nazi movements. The indication within the material displays a growing far-right movement, correlating with the report from the Swedish Security Service and the National Center for Terrorist Treat Assessments (NCT, 2022), raising further questions on resilience in society. The Freedom Movement and Covid-19 activism have provided a low threshold towards conspiracy theories framed in well-thought-out language to make the arguments difficult to disagree with directly, such as freedom and democracy.

Three themes have been generated from 101 codes, compressed into seven (7) categories across 84 different files with 1293 references throughout the material. The themes and categories are based on codes but grounded in specific language that ties aspects together. The themes are presented below in the order of *Democracy*, *Conspiracy theory*, and *Extremist ideology*, and within each theme specific empirical excerpts will specify concepts to which the theme operates and the connection between the themes. Finally, this is followed by a discussion where these themes operate as frameworks within the Covid-19 activist movement, containing a supporting structure with different forms of stigmatized knowledge found in conspiracy theory and how these frames work together.

Within each frame, the presentation is focused on three levels of data, referring first to the activist movements and political parties as the direct frame, the second to organizers and common ground projects as alignment frames, and the third to expressions from the mainstream on the shared subject.

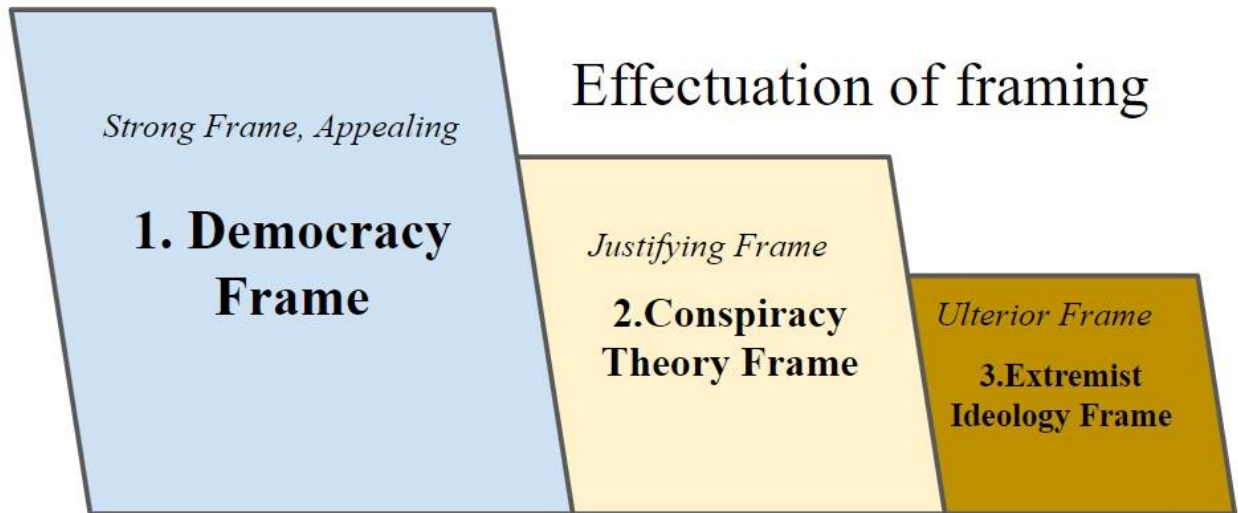


Figure 1 My model of the identified themes proportionally displayed from the empirical material and their mode of operation within the social activist movements. Being a strong frame does not automatically make the Democracy frame the most significant in explaining the movements.

## The Democracy Frame

The first frame of democracy consists of sub-categories regarding processes and language connected to an understanding of the democratic system, such as demonstrations, politics, freedom, and legal rights.

### i. Activists' expressions of democracy.

The imposed restrictions and recommendations by the Public Health Agency and the Government Office in Sweden are seen as an assault on the freedom of the people to gather and a lack of proportionality in connection to the damage from the pandemic by the activists. The primary language used and coded in and about the Freedom movement and their sympathizers in similar movements revolves around democracy and democracy adjacent framing, with freedom and human rights and expressions of violations against this. The excerpt below comes from the political party National Law [My translation: *Rikslagen*] whose founding members are from the Freedom movement.

We are people who believe in justice in society and everyone's equality before the law. We do not compromise our rights. We are a transparent colorless party, and we do not differentiate on people after medicinal status, ethnicity, background, profession, age, or gender. We care about the people's freedom by protecting the Swedish constitution.

Taken directly from the party's website to exemplify the openness in their use of language, there is no real issue to be had. There are however a few points worth examining, beginning with compromising our rights. It shows a steadfast attitude against change but does not specify here or later which rights they don't wish to compromise with, and political theory since Hobbes' Leviathan on the social contract deals with the surrender of freedom and rights to obtain security in society, as the natural state in Hobbes is total anarchy where nothing can be considered a crime (Calhoun, et al., 2012:35-37). The reason for bringing up this argument will be elaborated later for it has connections to one of the founders' perspectives on *Natural Law* which has connections to new age-like conspiracy theories and far-right Sovereign citizen movements (Pollack Sarnecki, 2021:55-56). Continuing with the transparency and unassociated political position of the party, as they are in essence a one-question party pushing for auditing the management of the coronavirus pandemic in Sweden, from the point of view that unnecessarily harsh measures have been taken which stands in conflict with the constitutional laws. The narrative of protecting laws instead of reforming the laws for the sake of progression is a conservative frame alignment while the critical expressions towards the government indicated a libertarian position. The same type of frame on constitutional law is found within the American far-right, and almost directly translated (Chapelan, 2021:294). The act illustrates how they construct their framework as they want to be perceived by using existing reactionary right-wing speech while calling themselves politically unaligned. Lastly, the inclusion of medicinal status in their statement specifically signifies Covid-vaccinations, as not to appear anti-vaccination, yet not pro-vaccination either, or focuses on the removal of the vaccination passports, claiming that they are discriminating. They actively chose imagery and narrative that is misaligned with mainstream expressions on the pandemic and vaccinations, thus directly placing them within the boundaries of stigmatized knowledge when it comes to the coronavirus pandemic, attracting followers of that same knowledge.

Another activist movement that began its campaign against vaccinations and vaccination passports used its following to organize a political party for human rights and democracy (MoD) whose acronym in Swedish is read as bravery. On their party website, the following is stated:

We are united behind that the demands on human rights, democracy, and freedom of expression will be respected, and will work together until those demands are reached.

The language is similar to that of National Law with a candidness on democratic principles, yet the statement holds a perception that the respect of these principles has been harmed and that there is work to be done. Democracy is a process and not a fixed structure, yet again there is vagueness in the definitions of what the party finds problematic within each field and instead continues with a stronger opposition towards the Covid-19 vaccinations as the recurring talking point of their agenda. They use the Nürnberg trials as examples of how they want to proceed with those who have implemented and promoted the vaccinations, and this compares the contemporary situation to the medical experiments conducted in concentration camps during the Holocaust in Nazi Germany.

ii. Understanding democracy within the fringe of society

The two excerpts from the data below are taken from the organizer of the Swedish Book and Media fair<sup>2</sup> and are meant to display how the activist movements and parties are framed where they are not controlling the transmission of the message. They participate actively through marketing and panel discussions at the Swedish Book and Media fair and while their words and text are their own, the setting and context add a new dimension to the framing. The first excerpt displays a connection of language to the data presented seen previously above, now expressed by the organizers of the fair.

In the wake of the pandemic, we have seen fundamental human rights being overridden in countries that proclaim themselves as democratic. Arbitrary arrests, deprivation of liberty without trial and law, devastating fines, and revocations of the freedom of assembly have become everyday life. A

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<sup>2</sup>Previously referred to as the Alternative Book Fair, organized as a reaction to the Gothenburg Book Fair banning participation from far-right news media.

totalitarian offensive is in progress around the world and the goal seems to be the establishment of a system where the financial elite can dictate what kind of society, we shall live in.

In supportive collaboration, a shift in the frame becomes apparent when bringing forward the critique without specifying cases for the argument, and thus the frame starts to shift to who is responsible for the attacks on human rights, freedom, and democracy. From the start, they question the democratic label of countries without specifying and loosen the thread of trust towards institutions. In the data, the critique is not aimed at the hybrid or pseudo-democracies like the likes of Russia or the Democratic Republic of Korea but implies western democracies. There is sympathy between the anti-restriction movements and the organizers of the Swedish Book and Media fair that will continue to be expressed within the coming sections, but first I want to exhibit the continuation of using a welcoming democratic-centered language were critiquing the ruling parties and head of governments are viewed as fundamental conditions in a healthy democracy.

The party National Law goes to election on auditing those in power for their management of the pandemic with the UN Convention on our human rights as a starting point, and with support of Swedish law.

Using the language of freedom, human rights, truth, and justice all make for approachable frames, as they are initially problematic to bring up arguments against. Upon examination of the material further, the Freedom Movement and their political party of National Law cling to the constitutional law of Sweden, mentioning the Freedom of the Press Act, and the Fundamental Law on Freedom of Expression as existing within the concept of Natural Law, yet no detailed presentation on why specifically the constitutional law needs protecting. Culturally, this could be another concept borrowed from movements in the United States of America, where constitutional rights are more specified in amendments and used in dog-whistle rhetoric, where language is coded with meaning towards a specific group without raising attention. The notion of this has to do with the formation of the rest of the Swedish constitutional law, namely the Act of Succession which only regulates the succession and rules within the monarchy, and the Instrument of Government which states “1§ All public power in Sweden proceeds from the people [...] 4§ the Riksdag is the foremost representative of the people (Riksdagen.se, 2018)” and continuing with the organization of the

state. The point here is that the political slogan of National Law is “audit those in power” [my translation; granska makten] and “protect the constitutional law”.

The law is explicitly used in singular and not plural as the mentioned constitutional laws are four in number. The main interest of the party thus regards the Fundamental Law on Freedom of Expression but chooses to use the wording of constitutional *law* instead of the Swedish word *yttrandefrihet* (the freedom of speech), which is a more commonly established term for the law.

iii. Activists using mainstream arguments for the legitimacy

An opinion piece displays how the frame alignment can be extracted from a more legitimate source and mirrored within the own movement. Written by lawyers under the headline “the proposition about vaccination passports goes against the constitutional law” (*Dagens Juridik* 2021), the main point brought up regards the lack of proportionality in the investigation between a vaccine passport and consequences on the public, and that this might stand in conflict with the fundamental law in the Instrument of Government (Regeringsformen). The piece presents an argument that places legality first, regardless of the situation of the pandemic, as exemplified here.

Vaccine passports that indirectly force people who do not want to or need to vaccinate themselves against covid-19 can never be a proportional measure.

There is a shift from vaccine passports that primarily would allow the participation at events with larger crowds and businesses that decided to implement the passports to forced vaccinations with an absolute statement about proportionality. Because of mutations of the virus, vaccinations lost effectiveness against infection but decreased serious illness and death when the largest wave hit in Sweden during the winter of 2021/2022 (Folkhälsomyndigheten, 2022a). Raising the question of proportionality centered around the individuals’ freedoms and downplaying the seriousness of the loss of life contributes to a framework of democracy where the individual and not the collective is the highest valued currency. This has been replicated and spread throughout the activist movements and their related political parties as displayed above, gaining legitimacy from a



professional group outside their circles. This is especially seen above with the constitutional law and the need to protect freedom being carried over as the central frame in the formation of the political parties. The expertise used in one area does not automatically transfer to another, even regarding high-skilled or educated professions, yet is consistently used to strengthen frames authenticity. The article goes on to suggest an analysis of proportionality written by a group of medical personnel who would later participate in the Freedom movement's demonstration in Malmö in 2022, together with other right-wing and conspiracy theory groups, which raises questions about the lawyer's agenda as well in writing their opinion piece.

Spokespersons from one of the political parties claim to have support from parliamentary politicians from six of the major parties regarding vaccinations and corona policies, and while the frame presented so far does not contain anything particularly alarming, the titles for the other themes have already foreshadowed what is to come and why this is of significance. In more theoretical terms, the act of conducting demonstrations and the act of forming political parties have different goals in levels of desired influence and thus exemplify a case of mainstreaming their opinion. When described in other online media, including from the mainstream the following can be read about the other mentioned political party.

[The spokespersons for the Freedom Movement] are board members for the newly formed party Swedish National Law. A party that disapproves of the corona policy and wants to see those responsible be held accountable. [...] The party is a fusion of right-wing extremist representatives, including from the so-called Network and SwebbTV, and the corona-critical, conspiracy theoretical environment.

What these different stances and expressions displays are the processes of finding the outline of the frameworks. Perspective on who is producing the messages also gives interpretations of what is being said in what context, as claims of being politically unaffiliated to traditional colors, yet using a reactionary conservative and libertarian vernacular and are portrayed as right-wing extremist and conspiracy theorists by others. The latter again exemplifies the position within the political fringe and their attempts to become legitimate parties are steps toward mainstreaming that same fringe. Finally, the varied description of the party opens the inquiry towards further

investigation on what descriptions seem to be aligned with different groups' interests, i.e., who are they openly collaborating with and why does it matter?

iv. From expressions of democracy toward conspiracy theory

Vaccinations are inseparable from issues of democracy and society, as they are vital to public health and the functioning of the nation and state. Resistance to vaccinations is stigmatized and the movements presented believes that this stigmatization justifies their cause of protecting their freedom of expression. The problematization that will be presented is that the resistance is deeply entrenched in conspiracy theories.

The initial openness of the activist movements and the political parties with imagery of democracy and freedom is followed by messages that take different directions and reveals other intentions. Within their agendas, items of discussion are mainly against vaccinations and vaccine passports, and protection of the constitutional laws with the freedom of expression. When asked about these issues from sympathetic organizations and alternative media, the answers contain more hints on the foundations of their beliefs. In a news coverage by a self-described conservative online paper on the demonstrations, such sympathy is expressed throughout an article on the then-planned demonstrations during the early spring of 2022 when restrictions had been withdrawn.

[the organizer of the demonstration] thinks that the establishment has temporarily removed the vaccine passports to avoid it becoming an election issue. The establishment would not want block politics to take a backseat [...]

The use of the establishment is again showing vagueness in not pointing out specifics, thus allowing the reader to form who they think the establishment in question is. Within conservative readings, it does not necessarily adhere to the ruling political party or prime minister, but their ideological opponents of the elite and the left. Further, the speculation on why the restrictions and rules on vaccine passports have been removed are not connected to the situation of the coronavirus pandemic and the spread of infection but rather framed as a political agenda to hide true intentions. These are signs of stigmatized knowledge within the movement that gains sympathy from the alternative conservative news media, the concept of knowing something forbidden, secret, and

rejected shapes the outlook on issues. Once the threshold of accepting a conspiracy theory has been passed it becomes a universal approach for an explanation.

Within the movement and the political parties, a wide narrative about skepticism towards the effect of the vaccines, the real reason for the pandemic, and the actions taken during a said pandemic are frequent. In multiple interviews, two of the organizers behind the Freedom movement use the expression of the alleged pandemic, leaning towards a *plandemic* narrative that the events are either false, overestimated, or artificially created. This, together with the vaccine and vaccination passport/ID resentment unfolds a path towards previous existing conspiracy theories about state control and Big Pharma profiteering on medicine.

## The Conspiracy Theory Frame

The second frame is the bridging factor between speech on freedom and extremism, present within the movement and allows for new social realities to be constructed and have borders shifted. Inside the movements exists a structure of skepticism towards the authorities, expressed in dissent more than critique and continued in distrust towards any establishment and globalists, the scientific community, the virus, vaccinations, vaccine-passports, and PCR-testing. Thereafter it gets gloomier as the conspiracy theories conjuncture with far-right ideas.

### i. Primary expressions on conspiracy theory

The anti-vaccination (anti-vaxxer) movement have existed as a phenomenon earlier than the outbreak of the pandemic, notably with the spread of the lie and misinformation that MMR vaccines caused autism, and forms of vaccine hesitancies are still around since the creation of the first vaccines, unlike smallpox. In a pre-pandemic society, there already existed a vessel to be occupied and to politicize the issue of vaccination, more noticeable with the development in the United States of America (ABC News, 2022).

Within this first section of excerpts from the primary sources I want to show the expressions of conspiracy theory present within the core of the movements and how they sympathize to include such messages at their demonstrations. Once the process of identifying conspiracy theory material, the data was overflowing with it and just a few excerpts can be presented in this space. In the event

description on the Freedom movements demonstration in Malmö after the ease of restrictions, the following stood out.

There is an active investigation about change in the constitutional law to be able to enact sanctions and supervision against individuals for future “pandemics”. DO NOT TOUCH THE CONSTITUTIONAL LAW! The political agenda is clear and promotes a strong global control system that gives [sic] restrictions in peoples freedom.

This excerpt shows a connection to the previously mentioned theme, continuing the argumentation around the constitutional law and in the same sentence expresses “pandemics” in quotations, as is frequent in the data alleged pandemic or plandemic (planned pandemic), suggesting that it has been more socially and politically created than biologically existing. The spectrum on which actors take their position about the pandemic ranges from it being a hoax, to have been created artificially in laboratories and then released, or that the situation has been exploited by the globalist. The latter is implied with the notion of global control systems, exemplified with Covid-19 passports as a measurement. The notion of European Union certification on the passport has been seen as evidence of conspiracy on the global level. The lack of definition and vagueness in the excerpt also indicates a belief in conspiracy, not wanting to state whose political agenda is in play. From a perspective of social control, it is an objectively increase in digital surveillance where information is surrendered to access travel or other services where plenty of personal data already needs to have consented for sharing. In the context of travel, an airport already contains high levels of social control, with a medical passport, is intended to reduce the risk of spread of infection. Access to information and how it is shared certainly have its problematizations, yet this is not what is specified or expressed. Their argumentation does not come in form of a theoretically grounded basis, instead, the expression on democracy issues is used as a framework to carry other meanings. In images posted on their social media accounts, signs with conspiratorial messages can be seen in the crowd about “stop Agenda 2030 / the state and media propaganda is the real virus / fuck NWO”. Agenda 2030 is related to the World Economic Forum who are the targets of a film on the financial elite that will be covered further below (which is also shared directly on the webpage of National Law), here is just an exemplification of its presence in the Freedom Movement and their willingness to share it. NWO stands for New World Order, which can be described as an entire category of conspiracy theories about hidden global governments and tyrannical dictatorships, customizable to whatever framing the one subscribing to the idea wants (Bergmann, 2018). The

movement openly posts and boasts about the numbers they gathered at the demonstrations and including the images with these signs and thus accepting them in their crowd and showing sympathy towards conspiracy theories.

I have here displayed an empirical connection between the self-proclaimed freedom and democracy movements (plural) and their hosting of conspiracy theory amongst their following, used as a framework to reach those susceptible to their influence. What they mean by the protection of the constitutional law still lacks definitions, likely leaving it open-ended so it can remain a central concept in their framing and in extension it allows to sympathize with areas of stigmatized knowledge.

ii. Conspiracy theory as a marketing platform

Returning to the source where the primary subjects of the study have congregated, the Swedish Book and Media fair promoted an agenda of misinformation based on conspiracy theory. Both the mentioned political parties and the actors from the Freedom movement participated in the material leading up to the event and the founders were listed as speakers on panels. The Swedish Book and Media fair was promoted online by an organization called *Education4Future*, which shared interviews and material from the fair on their YouTube platform. The event is returning in the spring of 2022, on the website of the Swedish Book and Media fair presented thirteen subject headliners with a shorter description. I have chosen to include the entire list to bring out the full context of their chosen topics before narrowing in on those that are more relevant to the previous and coming parts of the thesis [my translations].

- The Financial elite. The threat against our freedoms?
- Mainstream media. News coverage or propaganda?
- Climate question. Smokescreen or real threat?
- Big Pharma. Public health or a billion industry?
- Social media. Excluding or including?
- Mass vaccinations. Control or care?
- Mass migration. Capitalism or humanism?
- Cryptocurrency. Fraud or opportunity?

- EU & NATO. Self-determining or supranationalism?
- More genders. Instrument of power or love?
- 5G. Health risk or communication?
- Energy crisis. Ignorance or greed?
- The Freedom of Expression. The greatest question for the future?

The first and last question encapsulates the framing of the event as the main talking points within most panels and agendas, and both stands out in that they are essentially followed by a statement with a question mark. Throughout the material, the financial elite is presented as the greatest threat and an enemy to combat, which is in line with descriptions of New World Order conspiracy theories like the Bilderberg group or other global organizations for leaders (Bergmann, 2018:22-25). Freedom of expression does not have a specific conspiracy theory connected to it, but it occurs within the democracy frame and here it is discussed in the sense of censorship, exclusion from social media, and lies of mass media. For the other subjects, they are a gathering of conspiracy theory-based beliefs, such as denial of climate change, vaccination, 5G, and energy crisis where the scientific community is challenged. The other headlines deal with less obvious conspiracy theories and more societal issues. The question in the headline has one option that fits within a stigmatized knowledge frame, e.g., the approach of considering climate change a smokescreen or mass migration to be a capitalist project.

The sub-questions from the headlines were used as talking points by the interviewer from the book fair in videos with upcoming guests. In an interview with one of the founders of the Freedom Movement and Covid-19 activism in Sweden, uploaded to the book fair's YouTube channel, they were asked the sub-questions above. Every answer that was given was sympathetic to the conspiracy theory option, talking about how everything is not being told about how things are, some things are kept in the dark, or opinions that go against the mainstream are suppressed. Within this trusted environment, they openly discussed their attitudes as they received the sympathy of their stigmatized knowledge, thus the interaction between different sectors of stigmatized knowledge can be seen as frame alignment, accepting other ideas to fit in with the fringe.

This can be contrasted with a street interview where the setting appeared to be more of an arisen situation rather than a planned film where they could influence the editing process. The interview on the street expresses some indications of the same conspiracy theory knowledge, presented with a more hostile attitude towards the political leadership and government agencies. The context of the street interview revolved around an ongoing party that the Freedom movement has organized with several people overriding the recommended limit for public health during the pandemic. Another example of the conjuncture of conspiracy theories can be observed in pictures posted by the Freedom Movements on social media. Among the written signs, similar merchandise in form of shirts and hats sticks out, showing heterogeneity in the demonstrations. One such movement displays the fusion of conspiracy and attitudes, going by the name *Cash is King Sweden* which is a web shop opposing the move towards a cashless society and arguing that it would be perilous for Sweden. They sell a variety of products, which ironically cannot be paid in cash, most of them with the message Cash is King. Some of the products carry messages of anti-vaccination and use imagery connected to conspiracy theories.

The next excerpt comes in the form of a product from this web-shop (figure 2). Worn merchandise is a different form of semiotic text, in the way that it is identifying the wearer by projecting its symbolism towards others and unifying likeminded if it is a t-shirt with a music band or political messages that allows others to identify the wearers as belonging to a group. The point is that the wearer is actively choosing to support their message and project it outwards. The excerpt is not meant to display those who choose to wear the t-shirt, but what has gone into the design of it and the framing present.

The shirt reads, translated from Swedish, “dare to say no - to the greatest global conspiracy in world history.” The twelve symbols all have some possible connection to a conspiracy theory, most significantly to Covid-19 which is the implied conspiracy in the message. This product reveals the creator, or the targeted buyer, as a conspiracy theorist even though they rarely presented or identify them as a conspiracy theorist, but rather as truthers or being awake (imagery from the movie *The Matrix*, see Chapelan,



Figure 2. One of the shirts sold online from Cash is King, displaying symbols of conspiracy theories.

2021:286, Bergmann, 2018:50). The symbols have been interpreted as the following: a virus body, microchip, surveillance camera, 5G, a banknote, bat, a doctor, a globe, microscope, syringes (vaccine), one unidentifiable animal (best guess is a lemur, who in groups are called a conspiracy), and the all-seeing eye in a triangle (Illuminati), and all of them relate to conspiracy theories about the coronavirus pandemic and the surveillance aspect of it. Their connectivity is displayed through them being organized in a circle and the central text of dare to say no. As an empirical and material piece, the shirt among others openly displays sympathy across distinct types of stigmatized knowledge areas, and several of them were expressed in the section above on the book fair. There is of course also the possibility of the people behind it seeing a market and creating a product to make a profit, but the person related to the movement has openly expressed sympathy towards the Freedom movement on social media.

In summary, the Freedom movement displays presence and sympathy towards other organizations who explicitly engage in questioning the mainstream and status quo through the lens of conspiracy theories and find it within their ranks with material expressions of sympathy for stigmatized knowledge.

### iii. From vagueness on freedoms to concrete examples of conspiracy theory

The activist movements and political parties that run on a platform of democracy and freedom while simultaneously hosting a myriad of conspiracy theory sympathies have not gone unnoticed. When reported on by third-party media it is primarily the latter that is brought to focus, and this section will highlight how together with the previously shown data the frame starts to narrow from vagueness on freedoms to concrete examples of beliefs in conspiracy theory. The third-party media have also been a tool to identify and research the spread of conspiracy theories as with most online communities, they grow and move faster than the speed of coverage by academic research. While individual radicalization takes time, the spread of new ideas online travel with the speed of light in optical cables, faster than the time it takes to conduct a thesis and get it published.

Outside observations by Swedish Television of anti-restriction demonstrations on the 6th of March 2021 bring a description of a mixed messaged crowd gathering, resulting in six injured police



officers, one of them brought to the hospital, and the organizer suspected of violations against the Public Order Act (SVT Nyheter, 2021). With similarity to what has been covered above, the expressions and text come largely from the placards and banners carried.

Among the placard in the crowd, it read among other things, that the demonstration is an action for freedom and truth. Other signs are critical to immigration and to Louis Pasteur, a French researcher who worked with developing vaccines among other things in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. (SVT Nyheter, 2021)

The outside view of the movement highlights the apparent discrepancy among opinions, which seems to be a collection of dissatisfaction with society, rather than a solid organization for a concrete cause. In a sense, as Barkun (2015:117) describes popular culture productions about conspiracies like the Da Vinci Code as some form of desire in contemporary culture, the act of demonstrating against regulations affecting everyday life could be seen as an expression of a need to react to the contemporary situation of the pandemic, reacting to a sense of powerlessness. It did however attract and merge fringe opinions in a physically unsafe manner as regardless of vaccine distribution, the crowd would likely remain to be unvaccinated.

In an article covering the involvement of QAnon supporters in the attempted storming of the German parliament in august 2020 and the storming of the Capitol building in Washington D.C. in January 2021, the author writes about the Freedom movement in Sweden and if they can pose a similar potential threat (Poohl, 2021). The extract from that article brings up a citation made by one of the mentioned founders and front figures of the Freedom movement and gives insight into internal views on conspiracy theory and worldview.

But at the core of the protests lies a conspiracy theoretical power analysis. Or as one of the front figures for the so-called, Freedom movement writes on Facebook: “For me it becomes clear that it is not I that am conspiratorial and conducts a conspiracy. It is the power elite that has created a conspiracy against the universe, the earth, nature, and humanity.

Most noticeable is how the front figure is framed in third-party media to view conspiracy as reality and not theory. Usefully, the person does operate by academic definitions, as conspiracies are secret plots and conspiracy theories are intellectual constructs (Barkun, 2015:114) and misdirects

from their held beliefs toward the undefined elite. Performing alleged conspiracies does not make one a conspiracy theorist and vice versa, but the upholding of stigmatized knowledge. The second part brings out a language related to the universe and nature, again hinting at a form of New Age adjacent world view, and the article continues with the damages of alternative medicine and vaccine hesitancy. The movement that began its messages with the framing of freedom and democracy is riddled with conspiracy theories and viewed as something potentially dangerous.

iv. Conspiracy theories leading to extremist environments

Through the previous research and other online spaces, I needed to maintain awareness when reading material that could be within the arena of conspiracy theory of phrases and symbols that could reveal intentions. This has been even more relevant for identifying the transitional step between the conspiracy theories and expressions of extremism. For example, appropriation of symbols and language can be misinterpreted and difficult to frame without prior knowledge.

In another article by Expo.se (Vergara, 2022) on the Freedom movement and its connections to right-wing extremism in Sweden, several motives and social connections are presented in combining conspiracy theory and antisemitism. Phrases are used in these environments to avoid specifically saying Jew(s) and instead use banks, cultural Marxists (a description derived from the Frankfurt School), and globalists as thinly veiled code (Pollack Sarnecki, 2021:39).



Figure 3. No vax, No Jab in pearl plates worn at a protest, combining symbols of the Holocaust and anti-vaccination attitudes. (Expo.se, Vergara, 2022)

“In the rhetoric, reoccurring appropriations of the Holocaust and comparisons with the Nazi Germany regime by using yellow stars of David, as a symbol, they seek to compare today’s pandemic deniers with the persecution of Jews during the Holocaust.” (Vergara, 2022)

These types of conspiracies gain sympathy from movements that already hold antisemitic attitudes, especially on the far-right. Previous mentions of the elite also allude to Jews in the world government, the New World Order (Bergmann, 2018:22).

“The power brokers you never elected [sic] (Makthavarna du aldrig valde)” is a film by Palestra Media (2022) that was released at the Swedish Book & Media fair and presents itself as a documentary about the pandemic and the financial elite, and it has served as a crucial set of data for where it was presented, its content, and distribution. It is referred to as one of two important video materials for the political party National Law’s webpage as source material for their campaign to audit those in power. The social ties between the organizations of National Law and Palestra Media are therefore openly presented online and indicate from where they construct their understanding of the social world. The film has three major themes, beginning with global ownership being traced to two listed companies, Blackrock, and Vanguard, having a majority of ownership within the largest global companies from tech companies like Google and Amazon to medical industries like the vaccine producer Pfizer. The filmmaker implies that these companies, Blackrock and Vanguard, influence other owned company directors globally, with diversity policies as attempts to shape social agendas and push multiculturalism and eradicate national identities. Thus, the first position of the filmmaker is revealed not to be anti-capitalist, they do not oppose that the influence is happening, but rather the type of influence that is being applied. This nationalistic agenda is enhanced by cutting to a commercial from Scandinavian Arline Service that claimed there is nothing that is specifically Scandinavian in the culture. The parts not shown in the film goes into exemplifications of how cultures have evolved and how what we today identify as Swedish, or Danish could have different origins. The film regards this as a globalist agenda, specifically stating it as an example of anti-nationalistic material. The film ends with a final warning from George Orwell before his death in 1950, where the allegory presented is a boot on a face, totalitarian suppressive violence from the state is the real fear in Nineteen Eighty-four (Orwell, 1992). While Orwell (or Eric Arthur Blair) was a socialist, his literary work on mass

surveillance has become frequently brought up within right-wing channels as the dystrophic future when infringement on personal freedoms.

## The Extremist Ideology Frame

This third type of frame seems to represent the final link between the frames with excerpts of extremist attitudes, found in overt and covert language. While the forefront of the activist movements tends to edit and control their language with positive imagery, those whom they socialize and organize together with reveal other aspects. In the case of extremism, the connection within the data primarily shows a political right-wing form of extremism that synergizes and sympathizes with similar conspiracy theories.

### i. A slide into extremist ideologies within the social movements

So far in my analysis, the data presented on the primary groups mainly regards framing freedom as a central concept for the movements working as allurements towards conspiracy theories. Together with the mentioned film *The power brokers you never elected* and the headliners from the Swedish Book and Media fair, a clearer image of what type of freedom they propose presents itself, namely freedom from the control of the global power elite. The far-right expression made by the Freedom movement, other Covid19-activists, and the political parties is not always direct but requires decoding of the conspiracy theories that they subscribe to. Their positive attitude to participate in events with outspoken alternative conspiracy theory groups and identified far right-wing organizations have been presented actively in digital spaces, making the connection significantly different from hosting closed-door events. Both political parties that have been presented throughout the thesis arose from social movements against restrictions and imposed measurements during the coronavirus pandemic, with one of the examples expressed below.

“A precursor to MoD was the appeal No to apartheid.”

Taken from the party MoD’s program *No to apartheid* refers to a previous campaign leading to the foundation of the party. The use of apartheid has both a definition in its meaning and a connotation in its expression. Here the party compares those who choose not to take the Covid-vaccine to the system of state institutionalized race segregation in South Africa. This rhetoric and framing are merely a variation of the holocaust version, by placing themselves in a position of extreme oppression to fuel their victimization. Issues of other injustices are appropriated to serve

as an argument and justify their protests and actions. As with the use of symbols, devaluating the origin of apartheid is not a right-wing extremist rule, but it is a tactic in an attempt to create logical fallacies. In comparing situations, experience and trauma are diminished from the history regarding the event, the margin starts to dissolve opening for other arguments such as Holocaust deniers or diminishers. Using apartheid in this manner falls within a racist framing, as the symbols and language are commandeered from the origins of minority groups of different ethnicity from their oppressors. Other banners at demonstrations have included “no to medicinal apartheid” as a slight differentiation, yet the use of apartheid is a more political loaded term, especially in Sweden where outspoken opposition was strong during the latter of the 19th century in mainstream politics with prime minister Olof Palme, exemplified in a speech on the 21st of February 1986 (Olofpalme.org, 2022). The use of apartheid can be seen as an example of trying to reach supporters from different alignments, but it remains that there is a social choice with the vaccinations. And further, such segregation from public spaces for a limited time because of a deadly virus spreading compared to a permanent state enforces racial diversion. The imagery is not specifically far-right but pressing the extremist values by placing themselves as extremely oppressed and thus gaining support from the far-right.

The language and scripted expression give little direct connection to far-right alignment, as this has primarily been deducted from the social ties to other organizations and individuals and what they accepted at their events. In the description of an event on Facebook for a demonstration the following instruction is written:

[My translation] “Messages via signs and banners that can be perceived as xenophobic are to be avoided”

While this message holds no remarkable feature, it suggests that such previous occurrences have taken place. By looking at posted pictures from previous events, suggestions of this become evident.



Figure 4. Signs with three yellow runic symbols next to a sign with a heart and the text ‘freedom’, displaying multiple frames operating at the same event. From the Freedom Movement social media.

While the sign is likely to belong to a random unaffiliated protester, the image with the sign with three yellow runes (STB) and the message “jag är laglös för jag demonstrator” [translation: I am lawless for I demonstrate]. I have not been able to deduce the meaning of the combination of the runes themselves, but rather what I want to highlight in this is the editorial role of the movement's organizers who manage their social media accounts to either be unaware or allow the message in posting the picture. Runic symbols are often appropriated by neo-Nazi movements, as they were a common iconography within Nazi Germany, especially in the political units of the Schutzstaffel (S.S.). This is another example of framing, where the runic symbols could have any intended meaning, but within a specific set of a demonstration with crowds and signs, the most available imagery is that of fascist symbols and associations.

Another way to approach this through framing analysis is what happens if a piece within the picture were to be removed and how then the framing of it would change, instead of adding pieces to change the framing. If a sign with hearts and the text freedom were to be removed, the overall frame remains in the imagery, yet if the sign with runic symbols was to be removed, the image

would change in a different direction. The presence at the demonstration indicates sympathies from the far-right to the Freedom movement, and the uploading of the image at best indicates carelessness. At worst it discreetly signals sympathy from the freedom movement.

Finally, rhetoric that reoccurs in the material from the primary groups is that of bringing the responsible to justice or making them face trial. It is however never expressed in any form of actualization, but rather expressed as a form of demand from the political parties of MoD and National Law. This is another type of language that has seen popularity within the Swedish far right, fantasizing about their form of retribution outside of the current legal system (Poohl, 2018). While this is not a hard empirical link, it is another piece of data that adds definition to the frame.

ii. Sympathy of stigmatized knowledge as extremist ideology

Continuing with the website for the Swedish Book and Media Fair and their introduction to the theme of the event that took place on the 5th of March 2022, *a strategy to win against the financial elite* is presented in eight-point agenda. Amongst being skeptical towards mass media and prioritizing local trade, one point, in particular, stands out and becomes an example of attitudes expressed openly, namely the fifth. With the presentation together with the other items on the agenda, their context shifts and repeats earlier presented frames.

- [My translation] Eight points to change Sweden – the winning strategy:
  1. Increase the public's source critical attitude towards the mass medias.
  2. Be aware of your citizen rights.
  3. Learn about concrete solutions through motions, initiatives, and reforms.
  4. Shop from local small businesses – create bartering trade, crowdfunding.
  5. Dare to question what “extreme” and “normal” opinions are.
  6. Engage in social issues through action groups, associations, and political parties.
  7. Network and create contacts with other likeminded.
  8. Have fun and celebrate your successes.

With the fifth strategy point, what they are endorsing with this is a gateway to open the minds of potential new followers to not accept the frame of normality and extremism, and this point on the agenda changes the frame of the other seven. Without it, source critique, social engagements, and

community support appear harmless, but with the fifth item, the lists become steps towards radicalization, even in celebrating successes. The endorsement to re-evaluate what is extreme is a further exemplification of how sympathy for stigmatized knowledge becomes activated in this material, for when one extreme opinion is accepted, the threshold for another to be accepted is lowered and this lies within the agenda of the organizers. The organizers are thus enabling frame bridging and extension to take place amongst their coming visitors, aligning not just the frames, but parts of the entire fringe to come together. The next example is not far away, just under the panel descriptions at the event will show why it is conservatism and right-wing ideologies that is the imagery presented, but first a notion on the use of language using nature symbolism.

A historical recurring categorization by right-wing and fascist-aligned groups of unwanted ethnicities and people is rootlessness and according to Pollack Sarnecki (2021), the expression was used by early fascist movements about the diasporic Jews (before the formation of Israel) and Romani as the destructive opposites of ethnonational states. The use of a natural language, of being rooted, suggests belonging to a certain place in the world and enforcing the idea of having a firsthand right to land and ownership. In the 21st century the term continues to see used, but with a shift of the context towards migrants as non-belonging using a natural language. The following excerpt is taken from the panel description at the book fair on mass migration and the use of rootlessness.

The chaos that Europe has seen in the last years has disunited people, created rootless people, and insecure societies, do we want it like this? What are the driving forces behind mass migration? What has the debate on migration looked like? If mass migration is a capitalist profit machine, then who is making the money?

The expression of rootless people is used openly, directly linking to a fascist framework of understanding, and placed within the imagery of disruption and instability in society, suggesting that migration is part of the problem. The creators behind this framing presume mass migration to be an organized project for profits yet leaves a hinting question on who makes those profits. In line with the main theme of the fair, it can be assumed to be directed towards the so-called financial elite. Other previous research mentions other overtly neo-Nazi and fascist groups believes it to be a Jewish and globalist conspiracy to dissolve the nation states through enforced multi-culturalism



with mass migration. This basis is also expressed within the “Eurabia” conspiracy theory and the Great Replacement (see Bergmann 2018, Capelan 2021). Thus, the excerpt presented is one of the most direct empirical links between the extremist framing and conspiracy theory within the case of the Swedish anti-authoritarian Covid-19 movements.

iii. How freedom in democracy became conspiracy theory in extreme environments

When reading third-party reporting on all mentioned actors, it is overwhelmingly clear that mass media frames these movements as right-wing extremists. The mainstream media companies are already perceived as the enemy of the movements, leading to further strengthening their belief in their knowledge to be correct, because it is stigmatized and shunned by the mainstream, in “a circular, self-reinforcing narrative” (Chapelan 2021:310). The final excerpts are meant to show speeches from primary actors within the movements and as third-party actors have reported on them, for they are not available in print at the primary source’s channels.

My first example comes from reportage on a demonstration during the fall of 2020, nine months after the first imposed restrictions.

In his speech in the Royal Garden, when he described himself as a leader of a new slave rebellion, he made a big deal of this: For me to work as a doctor was like being placed in a concentration camp. I must admit I detest being a doctor. In Sweden, you must constantly choose between sacrificing your patient’s health and being politically correct or risking your own health and your economy and your reputation and doing the right thing. (Dalsbro, 2021)

An initiator of the Freedom movement uses concentration camps when compared to the perceived inability to express opinions without suffering reprimands in Sweden. Beyond the already brought up examples of diminishing trauma, a self-martyrization is being sold about the climate of expression in Sweden within a framework of health regarding other humans. The distaste for being a doctor and the political correctness also suggest that the initiator has been made aware of his fringe position amongst medical colleges and the move towards conspiracy theory fields against authorities followed. Continuing with a second speech made by another initiator at the book fair which again is described by Expo.se as a right-wing extremist event with presence from splinter

groups from the Swedish Democrats, fascist movements, and alternative right-wing medias (Vergara, 2021). In this congregation, the following is quoted from that speech.

We all have a common enemy. The people in power hold the baton and orchestrate what we see in our world right now. You can call them globalists, you can call them the richest in the world, and you can call them pure evil in many ways.

With this final excerpt, the initiator and front figure of the Freedom movement call for unity with combative, conspiratorial, and antisemitic language. The threat from the rich globalist who dictates the world is evil, is as close to fascist language about Jewish conspiracies as one can come without specifically using the word Jew (see Pollack Sarnecki, 2021:39). Within the presentative framing of freedom activism, there are direct links to expressions extremist attitudes. How these individuals came down this path would be to speculate outside of the empirical material, why this radicalization happens and why antisemitism persists are larger questions than this thesis, however, the results show a clear display of how the quiet part comes out loud.

## Discussion

In this thesis, I have presented empirical examples of stigmatized knowledge as they have been expressed by different actors, but also within different themes and connections between them. The Covid-19 activist movements have made steps towards seeking legitimacy through formalizing themselves as political parties, yet in doing so they have entrenched themselves further within the fringe by seeking collaboration from right-wing extremists and incorporating conspiracy theories. The first frame of democracy thus serves as an example of value amplification within their framework, as the material and presentation of results display their interest are not particularly aligned with an open and democratic society but generating a strong frame within public discourse to gain appeal and followers (Chong & Druckman, 2007:116). Secondly, as examples of *frame bridging*, the Freedom movement seems to have no issues with incorporating expressions of conspiracy theories within their presentation online of their demonstrations (Snow et al., 1986:467-468). Within the data of the movement, there is no problematization of who they convene with, only on who they seem to think the enemy is.

In observing the objects of study strictly through a digital lens in a digital environment the findings presented do only represent how they are perceived online, and little about their offline behavior. Thus, other methods would present other themes within more personal interviews and explanation to why they hold the specific views aligned to those conspiracy theories. Understanding online spaces from a qualitative perspective have required days if not weeks to get a grasp on the mode of operation, norms, and expressions of a certain platform, and everything learned here is in a way close to the experience or perception of online radicalization. An outside observer during restriction could understandably go down this rabbit hole because of bitterness and dissatisfaction either through manipulation or reinforcement of held beliefs (Chong & Druckman, 2007:121).

When observing the different frames, not much is overtly expressed or directly addressed. This lets the function of the activist movement as open areas of contact, beginning with easily agreeable statements of our democracy could use some improvement, as the strong and appealing frame (Chong & Druckman, 2007:116), instead of a harder digestible discourse of the global Jewish power elite controlling the world. The imagery from their social media shows how the movement starts to expand on what they and their followers are interested in expressing. When looking at the activist movements through online interactions with other organizations where they are in the same position of editing and controlling the text, more apparent attitudes come to the surface. This seems to be a result of performing *frame bridging* in the desired context of other fringe movements (Snow et al., 1986:468). It is not that they are trying to hide their message in the primary sources, but rather keeping their primary sources as an open gateway towards the other areas of cooperation by marketing towards them in the events.

The real issue arises from the sympathy of other stigmatized knowledge groups who share their narrative on the dangers of infringement of freedom and rights together with a vast spectrum of anti-authoritarian attitudes from anti-vaccination to anti-migration and far-right extremists. Thus, the Freedom movement serves as a pathway for fringe groups in seeking political influence as they attempt to mainstream the fringe. Some social movements and organizations, as Chapelan (2021) expresses, are on the fringe because they want to be rejected by the mainstream, while others do not move closer to the mainstream but push the observable narrative and spectrum further and make previous far-leaning ideas as less far-reaching and more mainstream. Belonging within the fringe creates social meaning in connecting to others. By becoming rejected by mainstream media

and institutions, they receive affirmation that they are on to something and any attempt to discredit them is instead seen as a confirmation of their truth (ibid:300, 310). Thus, the group's social reality becomes isolated.

A significant expression of sympathy for stigmatized knowledge, both conspiracy theories, and right-wing extremism, come from the social act of mutual interaction between the fringe groups. When mainstream politicians socialize in public with politicians from other parties, they display sympathy for ideas and reversely those who refuse to be associated with others outside of formal events display the opposite. The same is true for the integrity of social movements, an anti-racist social movement that takes no issue with hosting members of the Ku Klux Klan is not open-minded, but a distorted one with questionable intentions (I do not know of a real-world example, my implication is rather comparable to the Freedom movement and their hosting of anti-democratic organizations). Acceptance of such stigmatized knowledge leads to a change in group dynamics, either mainstreaming the fringe idea or becoming more fringe in rejecting the mainstream, yet the results are not settled (Barkun, 2015:119). The assumption of the mainstream being the objective of every movement is an analytical trap, as mentioned earlier some groups find the justification in their existence from being rejected by the mainstream. In several interviews made between the alternative book fair and the different front figures of the freedom movement, the interviewer from the book fair openly expresses their previous social connection, even friendship in some cases, along with his participation in the demonstrations under the freedom movement and socializing outside of their events. The interviewer also can be identified in images posted by the Freedom movement from one of their demonstrations, carrying the main banner of the event. Whom the organizer chooses to associate with is not a simple private matter, as all this data is publicly obtained online in their marketing through social media. It is revealing how extensions of frames and sympathy of stigmatized knowledge interplay not on an abstract level, but through social face-to-face interactions in everyday life.

Using Barkun (2015:117) to understand how mainstreaming of the fringe moves conspiracy theory ideas to become de-stigmatized, with the transitional step from the mainstream and the fringe being difficult to observe, can also reveal intentions in framing processes. Some ideas however have a more tough time in leaving the fringe, but as Pollack Sarnecki (2021) shows with the expressions from the national socialist movement, which once became mainstream, have remained at the edge

of the mainstream with the help of conspiracy theories that make the messages decrypted and a more plausible pitch in times of crisis. In my case, however, I consider the expressions made within the framework of the Freedom movement and their associates to specifically go against the mainstream, to create an own alternative that is not considered fringe by them. By using a democracy framework, they create a foundation for their own perceived social reality to gather around. Rather than choosing to become mainstream, the frames are aligned through value amplification and frame transformation to incorporate other actors in this fringe (Snow et al., 1986:473-474). The selected population of vaccine hesitancy appears to be a group larger than ever before, already distrusting the medical industry and government institutions, which allows for frames to align with the fringe far right-wing, using conspiracy theories as the common middle field. The extremist views are aligned with conspiracy theories support those theories and seek to incorporate, while from the activist movements, frame and value amplification on freedoms and democracy creates a thin veil over their attitudes on conspiracy theories.

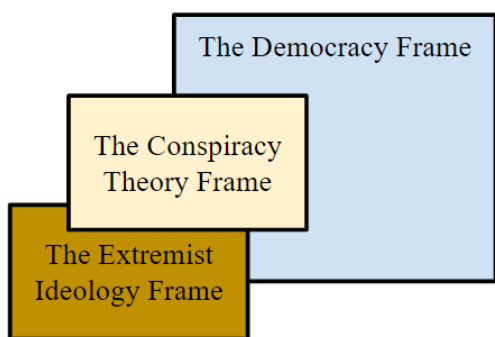


Figure 5. Frames operating with support of each other. As hate speech exists within a free speech frame, here antisemitic views operate in a democracy frame, bridged by conspiracy theories.

I have created a visualization (Figure 5) where the Conspiracy Theory Frame exists partly between the Democracy frame and the Extremist Ideology Frame, which in turn operates at the fringe of the Democracy Frame. Not all supporting the Covid-19 activist movements are conspiracy theorists, and not all conspiracy theorists are supporters of extremist ideologies. This also matches the quantitative presence of codes aggregated under the frames, democracy being the most frequent and extremism being the third

most frequently coded in the material. The transitioning across frames is supported by the sympathy of stigmatized knowledge, as those who come from outside the framework sympathize with ideas of freedom against restrictions, becoming impressionable of the presence of the explanatory models in conspiracy theories. The success of this relies on the performance of the alignment of the strong frame of democratic rhetoric, underlined with the extremist ideology frame, as with the cases of hate speech operating under free speech, included in the Democracy

frame (Chong & Druckman, 2007:105-106). Instead of formatting the messages overtly aggressive towards the government, about resignation or threats against individuals, they align with words fundamentally associated with the democratic system through freedoms, human rights, and constitutive laws, as seen within other right-wing movements across the globe (Chapelan, 2021). Therefore, the democracy and conspiracy theory frame also exist overlapping within the extremist ideology frame, with the language used adapted to contemporary time and ideas. For example, dictatorship is not subscribed to for its negative connotations, while democracy is appealing, yet the quiet part said out loud regards who that democratic system should be for and who should be excluded. A democracy only including those of one mind is an autocracy.

Framing of stigmatized knowledge has been layered in differently aligned frames to appear less of a fringe movement when exposed in their own digital spaces, yet when appearing on other platforms their expression of stigmatized knowledge changes to appeal to those on the fringe. This can be seen as competition of framing within the same group (Chong & Druckman, 2007:112-113), to reach traction in different inconsistent directions. In digital environments with groups subscribing to other types of stigmatized knowledge, the same message gets extended: we need to protect our freedom against the financial power elite who seeks to remake a new world order after the created pandemic. Within every frame, the financial elite has been repeatedly presented as the enemy of the movement, for how they are controlling and influencing the world through multi-corporate ownership. A critique could have been made from a critical theory approach, such as Marxist analysis about the ownership of the means of production, and the capitalist companies' infringement on social policies and agendas without dipping into conspiracy theory, but this frame is deliberately not used. Marxism, or cultural Marxism, is rather perceived as the opponent, expression of the left and the elite being in a conspiracy. That diversity programs are smokescreen operations and virtue signaling, creating a presentation of goodwill while companies continue to exploit and invest globally. It is only the global aspect that is critiqued within data, and profit gains from the alleged conspiracies, for example, mass migration at the book fair is framed with the subheading "capitalism or humanism?" and they use capitalism as a synonym for greedy profit interest, questioning who is making the profits and not why there would be profits. This is connected to the Great Replacement theory, where the capitalists are the Jewish cabals who orchestrate the mass migrations toward western countries to replace the white race (Pollack Sarnecki, 2021:34-36). The frames of the Covid-19 activist movements from earlier align with

frames of radical right-wing extremism frames using conspiracy theory. With the frames presented online by the Covid-19 activists and the connections to extremist ideology, supported by social approval from the movement's main actors, belonging to the mainstream appears unattractive when the fringe gives support and sympathy. The Swedish Book and Media Fair not only display a collection of stigmatized knowledge and examples belonging to the fringe, but they also align the entire fringe movement together with selected topics of value amplification and allow frame bridging between social movements and individuals (Snow et al., 1986:467-469). The digital environment presents this possibility of sympathy and alignment to be discovered by a wider audience, either through the empirical examples of the Freedom movement or the right-wing book fair. The film (Palestra Media, 2022) shown at the event and shared through political party websites skews this image of supporting freedom and democracy with the main threat being the rich owners in society. In receiving support from groups within the fringe, the Freedom movement, and the parties of MoD and National Law, find justification for their causes as others align their frames to live in a shared truth, where they can justify defying the institutions which they deem illegitimate and controlled by the financial elite. One individual is all that requires radicalization for violence to start.

#### Contemporary events

In finalizing this project, I have identified two potential problems associated with these categories of movements, in that they may present similar issues of social trust or destabilization. The first potential outcome from this framework is the level of acceptance when it comes to misinformation when it reaches the point where everything the authorities proclaim becomes considered a false narrative and anyone offering alternative narratives holds more truth. Other foreign powers or non-government groups could exploit these groups and produce misinformation, which has been exemplified by other anti-vaccine groups spreading propaganda about the Russian aggression in Ukraine since the 24th of February 2022. Alternative media and sites close to the Freedom Movement and participants in the previous demonstration have been sharing conspiracy theories about Covid-19 bio-labs in Ukraine funded by the United States of America government as a justification for the war (Vaken.se, 2022). These articles are exemplifying the analysis of vulnerability and stigmatized knowledge sympathy, and how other conspiracy theories become accepted or somewhat agreed upon, contributing to my indication of issues arising in a post-pandemic society. The anti-vaccination fringe of society becomes a gateway for outside

deceptions. It further captures the mind-frame of conspiracy theorists that whatever mainstream media is saying, especially if they are using the same narrative, is orchestrated and that you are being lied to. The confirmation in online spaces of “you are onto something” is a factor that displays the social aspects of conspiracy theories, and ideologies for that sake, with belonging and validation. What is real is expressed as less relevant than the insight that “we don’t trust Them”. This other potential outcome and danger are described in the previous research with individual acts of terrorism, where manifests have been released and drawn inspiration from previous attacks. They become viewed as lone-wolf terrorists, when as the concept of stochastic terrorism shifts the focus to the agitators who produce text on hateful targeting of groups, the articles (Amman & Reid Meloy, 2021) suggest Donald Trump be a stochastic terrorist concerning the event of January 6th mentioned in the introduction. The at the time sitting president is also cited as a potential inspiration for the El Paso shooting in August 2019, where the shooter targeted Hispanic and Latino Americans, again with a manifest posted online including the Great Replacement conspiracy theory. The targets were thus also randomly selected based on their ethnicity and demography, as the shooter in El Paso, 2019, and in Buffalo, NY on the 14th of May 2022 (the Guardian 2022). The Buffalo shooting is framed in the same manner, of releasing a manifest, based on the Great Replacement, and branding himself as an eco-fascist.

What I am emphasizing with presenting these cases of violence concerning what began as an activist movement in Sweden is the potentially volatile effect of sympathy for stigmatized knowledge, given the awareness of the vernacular used in describing the state, people, and power structures. The National Center for terror threat assessments in Sweden reports on potential violent acts from an active right-wing extremist population in 2022 (NCT, 2022). Ideals of protecting society from threats realized through conspiracy theories have harbored and continue to harbor extremist roots. The narrative frames change with the context of the contemporary crisis, yet the foundation remains the same.



## Conclusion

Finally, returning to the conclusion of the research question, what has been learned, and what could be potential recommendations from the project, regarding framing stigmatized knowledge.

*How do Covid-19 activists in Sweden perform framing of stigmatized knowledge in digital environments? How are these frames incorporated and expressed with other movements?*

Through the qualitative thematic analysis, the way that framing has been performed by the Covid-19 activists in Sweden has been displayed in three layers as seen in digital spaces, through democracy, conspiracy theory, and extremist ideology. These frames are actively interlinked through the sympathy of stigmatized knowledge, with the willingness to accept other fringe ideas found within other groups sharing a basis of extremist ideology or conspiracy theory world views. These themes and frameworks are displayed with an agency from the organizers and not accidentally present in the digital environment. In the collected data where the organizers control the conveyed images and messages, operating with specific codes of language to appeal to their followers. The framework of conspiracy theory is what allows regular dissatisfied activists to meet antisemitic extremists if the wording is modified to fit the context, in this case referring to the financial elite. What this has allowed is an expansion of the fringe through frame alignments of previous unexpected groups in Sweden, yet according to studies on fascism the sequence of events and language is not revolutionary, but evolutionary (Pollack Sarnecki, 2021:15).

Regarding the spread of frames and messages across groups using professional or legitimate fronts to conceal fringe attitudes within their manifests and social connections displayed in digital environments, it carries relevancy because the same messages are displayed towards a broad audience as it is not extracted data through research progress, to gain reach is the very purpose of online material in contrast to offline events and gatherings. The adherence to conspiracy theories becoming widespread and present in frames indicates a creation of meaning on the shared cultural trauma by expressing dissent and distrust toward the institutions that were supposed to keep our society safe. At the forefront of that formation of meaning, specific actors affiliated with previous conspiracy theories movements took initiatives to gather people by any frame necessary. Theory and previous research regarding framing and stigmatized knowledge comment on the relationship to the democratic process, for example, Chong and Druckman express that “Openness to contrary

evidence is an essential quality that should be fostered in a democracy” (2007:121) or others describe conspiracy theories as threats to democracy (Bergmann, 2018:7; Pollack Sarnecki, 2021). Previously, conspiracy theories either existed so far into a fringe or presented so little harm that impacted society in any meaningful way. The vaccine hesitancy and conspiracy theories on migrants cause material problems diminishing social trust. It is, however, the link between conspiracy theory, crisis, and far right-wing, that has been displayed to be active through the material potentially causing serious harm to social trust, democracy, and human lives.

In concluding this online voyage of alternative truths and conspiracy theories during a global crisis, a more solid foothold on the subject has been achieved. Through the process of qualitative analysis, what originally appeared to be a dissatisfied population using demonstrations as a hazardous outlet during the Coronavirus pandemic, became apparent to operate frameworks within their movement that displayed far stranger situations. As they appeared online through different forms of sites and social media, strong symbolic language on democracy and freedom under threat kept disregarding the public health situation, both in denying considerable parts of it and in the gathering of larger crowds during periods of infectious spread in society. The connection of stigmatized knowledge frames of conspiracy theory and extremism has been displayed in literature and within the empirical material, in how it is performed online, by posting, selling merchandise, and participating in vlogs and interviews online to market offline events. I expected that the display of extremist attitudes would be very narrowly displayed online, reserved for closed gatherings, yet all that was required was an outside organization like the Swedish Book and Media fair or alternative new media to show sympathy for their cause to incorporate and express new ideas of conspiratorial nature in an exchange of stigmatized knowledge and frame bridging. Thus, other movements bought out the quiet parts and delivered them even louder in the alignment of fringe groups. Repeated by Chapelan, “Conspiracist theories take rejection by authoritative institutions as a sign that a belief must be true” (2021:300). When you believe you know how to prevent the collapse of society, the activism becomes meaningful for them in the sense that they become engaged in the activity of organizing, and internally meaningful if they believe this is their way to salvation. In believing they are fighting evil controlling powers in the world, justifications of lawbreaking and going against a consensus on social control (in the form of social distancing) are supported by radical views on common law concepts (Pollack Sarnecki, 2021:56) where laws are

perceived as unnatural and that they are free humans to do and defend themselves as they please. My main contribution to the subject is this empirical connection to, and alignment of, the frames and their presence within multiple groups in the fringe of stigmatized knowledge and how such an investigative study can be conducted. Further, the theories on stigmatized knowledge and their link to far-right populism in Sweden have received strength within this empirical case of crisis. The continuation of this research would benefit from following how framing keeps aligning as Swedish society has opened and declared the pandemic over, adapting with new global crises and the upcoming Swedish general election of 2022. Will the movements fade away, transform within the fringe, or move to the mainstream? Which actors will continue to adopt the rhetoric?

Narratives on conspiracy theories, crisis, and imminent disaster have opened the fringe to a new target audience, as the shared crisis of the pandemic has been global and affected humans in everyday life. As a macro scale event with direct micro scale consequences, it has been lived and experienced. The door that has been opened is the questioning of trust towards democratic institutions, yet also our entire collective society. What began as, the virus is not as bad as they say could transition into, this country is no longer worth preserving (Chapelan, 2021:297). As already experienced, the conspiracy theory-driven groups are being targeted with misinformation from foreign powers with an interest in destabilizing the trust in western institutions. It could quickly become an issue of security policy if these groups are allowed to radicalize and incorporate sympathy towards other violent extremist groups. It is worth repeating, for the next victim following the pandemic and war in Europe could be our democracies, not through collapse but by dissolution of the fringe into the mainstream.

Fascism plants its roots in our democracy, promising better solutions. By understanding its shape can the roots be identified, ripped out, and allow the soil to heal. While they are not likely to reach their own goals, ulterior agendas to destabilize western democracies through internal struggles between the fringe and the mainstream becomes available to those who seek to do so. If or when they reach their goals, the quiet part of the dog whistle will be heard out loud. The fate of our time is still depending on rationalization and intellectualization to prevent false narratives from re-enchanted the world with the promise of fascism.

## Appendix

### A: Ma thesis material

Name	Description	Files	References
Temakoder	Koder som markerar uttryck för tema i text, inte texternas innebörder.	84	1293
Demokrati		67	607
Demonstration		26	47
Protest		3	5
Folket		4	6
Frihet		38	94
bestämna själv över sin kropp		3	3
Frihetsrörelsen		33	74
Inramning		1	1
insamling		1	1
Intern konflikt		5	10
Organisation		1	5
Historia		3	3
Humanism		1	1
Politik		34	164
Etablissemang		2	3
Global		16	68
Globalism		6	9

Name	Description	Files	References
Kapitalism		10	49
Banker		3	3
Kryptovaluta		3	4
Vinstintressen		6	16
Ägande		4	16
Ericsson (IT)		2	2
Krigsindusti		3	3
Kön		7	16
HBTQ+		3	3
Migration		5	8
Rotlösa människor		1	1
Myndigheter		3	3
otrygga samhällen		1	1
Partier		14	24
Politiker		7	9
Stat		2	3
Svenska arbetarklassen		1	1
Utanförskap		7	11
Psykologiskt försvar		1	4
Rättvisa		7	9
Terror		3	8
vår tids avgörande frågor		1	1

Name	Description	Files	References
Extremism		33	116
Anti-Auktoritär		2	4
Education4Future		16	44
Svenska Bok & Mediemässan		15	34
Ekofascism		2	5
Etnomasochism		1	1
Vit makt		7	17
Runskrift		2	3
Konspirationsteori		62	355
5G		3	5
Covid-19		53	189
Aktivism		25	32
Cash is King		14	14
Religion		1	2
Pandemi		3	4
Vetenskap		39	143
Alternativmedicin		13	18
Ekologi	Naturorienterat språk	6	20
Ekosystem		0	0
Energi		3	3
bränslepriser.		1	1
Fortplantning		1	1

Name	Description	Files	References
klimatehotet		4	12
Alarmism		2	2
Miljö		2	2
Gas		1	1
Vindkraft		1	1
Läkemedelindustri		6	9
Smittspridning		7	13
Vaccin		25	57
Sprutcircusen		1	1
Eliten		11	35
Massmedia		23	55
Alternativmedia		3	4
Media ljuger		6	7
Sanningen		3	3
Propaganda		8	11
Sociala Medier		8	11
New World Order		4	12
Världsbild		1	1
Lag		32	130
Grundlag		9	21
Rättigheter		29	69
Yttrandefrihet		18	31

Name	Description	Files	References
Censur		8	11
Suveränitet		7	28
Natural Law		2	3
Lagförd		4	8
Proportionalitet		4	10
Restriktioner		25	67
Vaccinpass		23	47
Makt		29	73
Kamp		11	16
Motstånd		3	3
Motståndskraft		0	0
Kontroll		18	42
Förtryck		1	2
Medicinskt tvång		6	14
Övervakning		9	12
Maktmissbruk		6	8
Sociala band		9	12



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