

On Sex & Stigma: Bedding the Far-right?



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Hoy sábado, recuerda que si sales, aunque tengas mala racha no te folles un facha. Consejo que puede salvarte la salud mental.

Stuart J. Turnbull-Dugarte
&
Alberto López Ortega

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- 2 Citizens in liberal democracies want to be norm compliant and avoid social penalties by masking preferences to avoid costs ([Kuran, 1997](#); [Lindskog et al., 2023](#); [Valentim, 2021, 2024](#))

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- ② Citizens in liberal democracies want to be norm compliant and avoid social penalties by masking preferences to avoid costs ([Kuran, 1997](#); [Lindskog et al., 2023](#); [Valentim, 2021, 2024](#))
- **Normatively** stigmatisation of the far-right "good": intolerance of intolerance a desirable requisite to safeguard liberal values

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- Far-right electoral success is widespread & growing role (Akkerman et al., 2016; Mudde, 2019)
- This success has a norm-transforming function:
 - ① diffuses illiberal positions among neighbouring parties (Abou-Chadi, 2016; Abou-Chadi & Krause, 2018; Krause et al., 2023)
 - ② signals that illiberal views are no longer socially unacceptable (Bjånesøy et al., 2023; Bursztyn et al., 2020)
 - ③ legitimises undemocratic behaviour, including violence (Giani & Meón, 2021; Gul, 2023; Romarri, 2020)

No dates for radicals?

Why dating market?

- Apolitical environment – similar to recruitment – that involves engaging in *active* peer-to-peer evaluations & where desirability is incentivised
- Second-order preferences likely to matter strongly
- Environment where individuals rationalise discriminatory preferences

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Competing norms

Both **H1** and **H2** assume a unidirectional social cost (polity-level norm)
 This norm either remains intact (**H1**) or is dismantled (**H2**)

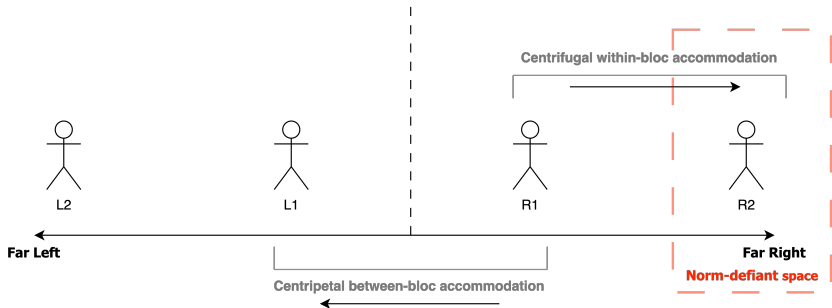
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In polarized polities where individuals operate in "camps" and not parties
 (Bantel, 2023; Hagevi, 2015; Kekkonen & Ylä-Anttila, 2021), centre-right
 individuals can face competing norms:

expectations of my *peers*
 vs.
 expectations of *everyone else*

Within-bloc logic



(Pre-registered) hypotheses

- ① **H1 (stigmatisation thesis):** Dating profiles which indicate support for the radical-right will be significantly less likely to be evaluated positively than profiles that express support for any other party.
- ② **H2 (normalisation thesis):** Dating profiles which indicate support for the radical-right will be *no less likely* to be evaluated positively than profiles that express support for any other party.
- ③ **H3 (bloc logic thesis):** Among supporters of the mainstream right, dating profiles which indicate support for the far-right will be more likely to be evaluated positively than profiles that report support for the centre-left.

Sub-group variation

- 1 Gender gap: Women will be significantly less likely to positively evaluate profiles which indicate support for the far-right than men
- 2 Sexuality gap: LGBTQ+ individuals will be significantly less likely to positively evaluate profiles which indicate support for the far-right than non-LGBTQ+ individuals.

Data

We fielded an original survey among a representative sample from **Britain** and **Spain**.

Cases based on variation in far-right normalisation by political mainstream.

- 1 Observational data: Self-reported indication that individual considers voting for the far-right to be a "red flag" in a sexual partner
- 2 Experimental data: Novel *pre-registered* ▶ (visual) conjoint experiment

Conjoint design (I)

- We fielded an original *pre-registered* ▶ (visual) conjoint experiment in Britain & Spain
- **Treatment:** Exposure to visually manipulated dating profiles
- **Outcome** App-based behaviour: swiping on emoticons visualised below profiles as presented on Tinder

Conjoint design (II)

We randomised a large number of attributes via both the profile image as well as the accompanying profile bio.

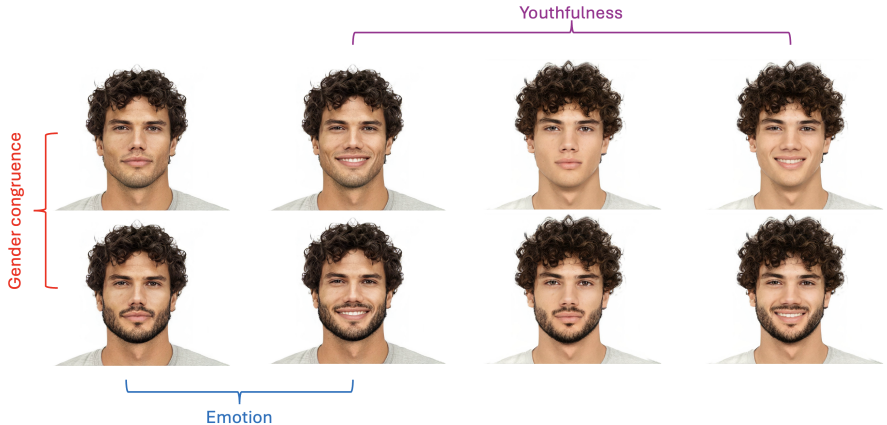
- **Profile image:** Gender, gender congruence, age, ethnicity, emotion
- **Profile bio:** partisanship, education, occupation, distance, dating preferences (e.g., hook up vs partner), diet (Spain only), gender pronouns (UK only), nationalism, hobbies

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- **Additional attributes leveraged in other papers:** (bi)sexuality, transgender

Within-individual facial manipulations





Frederick Clark, 35

🏢 Classroom Assistant

🏠 Westminster Sixth Form College

📍 1-5miles Away



He/Him

Looking For: Open To Exploring

Flowers 🌸

Clubbing 🍸

Running 🏃

#VoteConservative

(a) Example A



Camila Quispe, 21

🏢 HR Assistant

🏠 University Of Exeter

📍 1-5miles Away



Looking For: Open To Exploring

Dogs 🐕

Reading 📖

Beekeeping 🐝

#VoteConservative

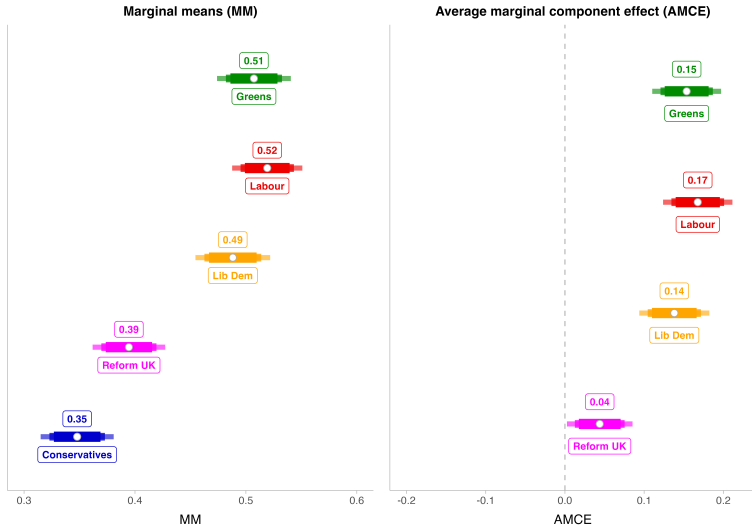
(b) Example B

Observational results

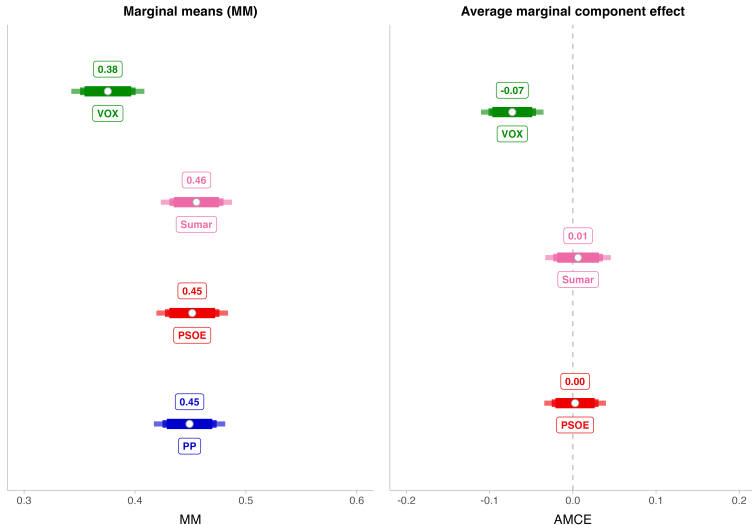
Observational results



Overall stigma (I): UK

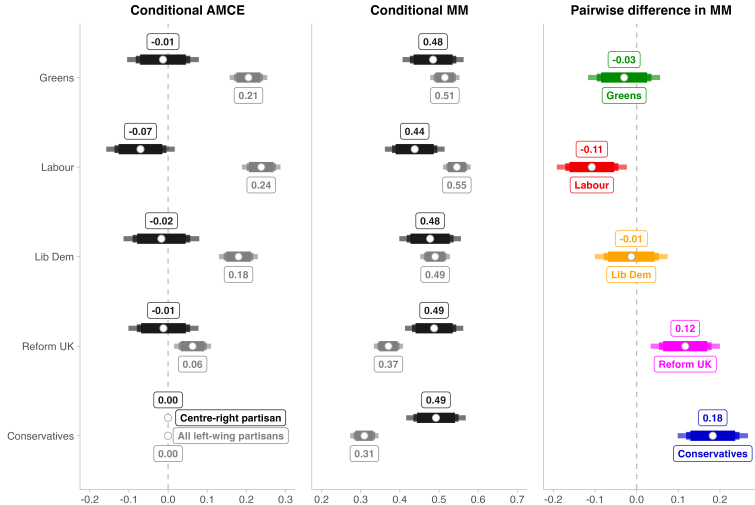


Overall stigma (II): Spain

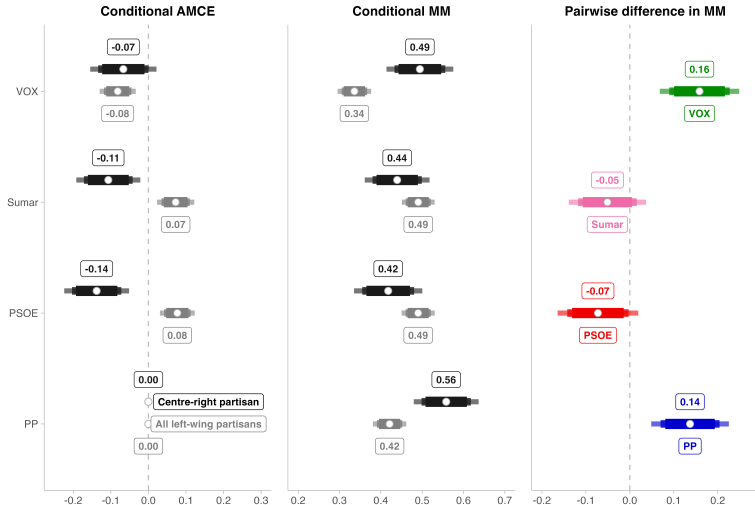


Within-bloc stigma or premium? - UK

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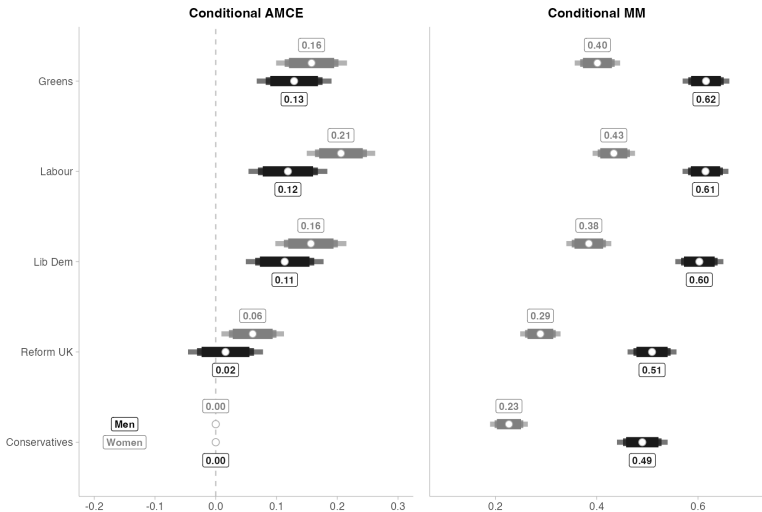


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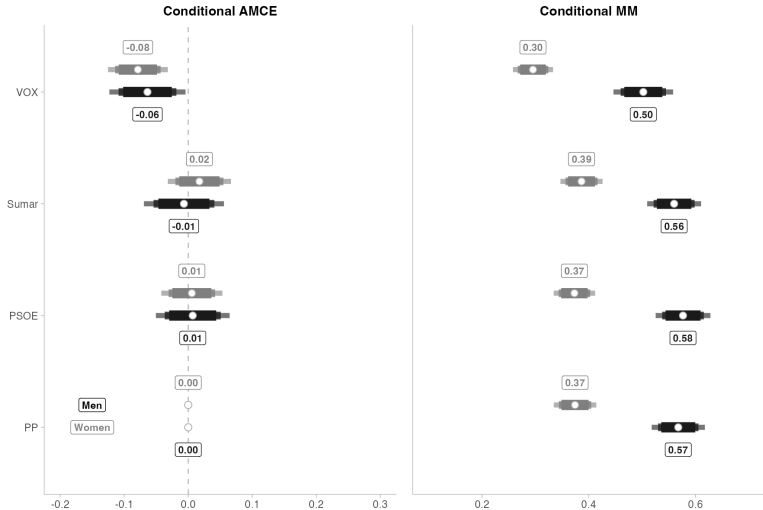


The gender gap

Gender gap - UK



Gender gap - Spain



Why?

Bloc-logic assumptions

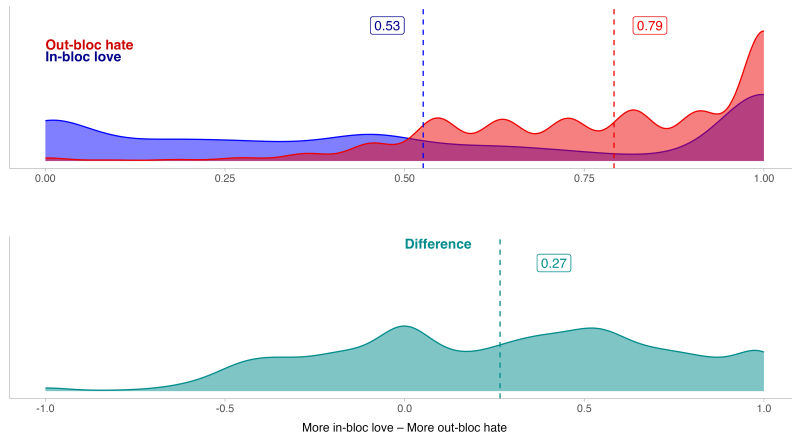
- ① *Negative* affect for out-bloc party > *positive* affect for in-bloc party
(Dislike for PSOE > Like for VOX)
- ② In-group (partisan) peers penalize accommodation of out-bloc *more*
than accommodation of far-right
- We look at BES data, E-DEM panel data, and a second original survey from Spain to answer these questions

Out-bloc hate > in-bloc love

British centre-right voters' in-bloc love & out-bloc hate

Upper panel: Absolute positive affect for in-bloc & negative affect out-bloc partians

Lower panel: Difference negative out-bloc affect & positive in-bloc affect



Source: British Election Study - Wave 25

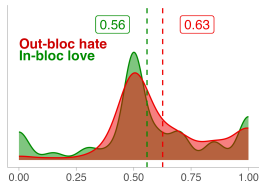
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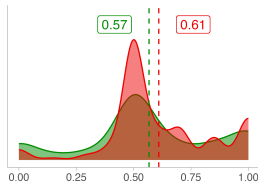
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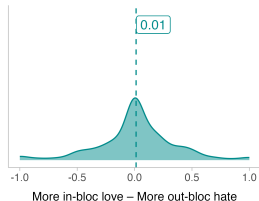
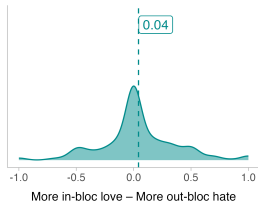
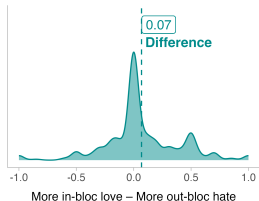
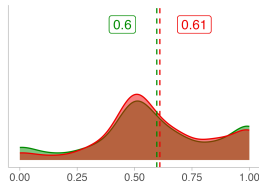
a) Wave 2: (February 2019)



b) Wave 3: (Abril 2019)



c) Wave 4: (May 2019)



Source: E-Dem 2017-2020 Dataset

Expectations of others

Table: Tolerance towards child's romantic partner among all respondents

Value	Britain (N=32,177)			Spain (N=4661)			
	Reform	Conservative	Labour	VOX	SALF	PP	PSOE
Acceptable	0.65	0.75	0.81	0.56	0.62	0.72	0.78
Unacceptable	0.35	0.25	0.19	0.44	0.38	0.28	0.22

Data: Britain (British Election Study) and Spain (new original data)

Expectations of others

Table: Tolerance towards child's romantic partner among centre-right partisans

	Britain (N=11,153)		Spain (N=1265)	
Value	Reform	VOX	SALF	
Centre-left more acceptable	0.08	0.17	0.17	
Equally acceptable	0.53	0.54	0.58	
Far-right more acceptable	0.39	0.29	0.25	

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Conclusions

- Do far-right voters experience a penalty on the dating market?
In Britain: **No** - **not** any more than the centre-right
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- **Implications?**
Out-group affect and *disidentification* among the centre-right drives normalisation of the far-right.

Thank you! :)



Pre-reg.



Full paper



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