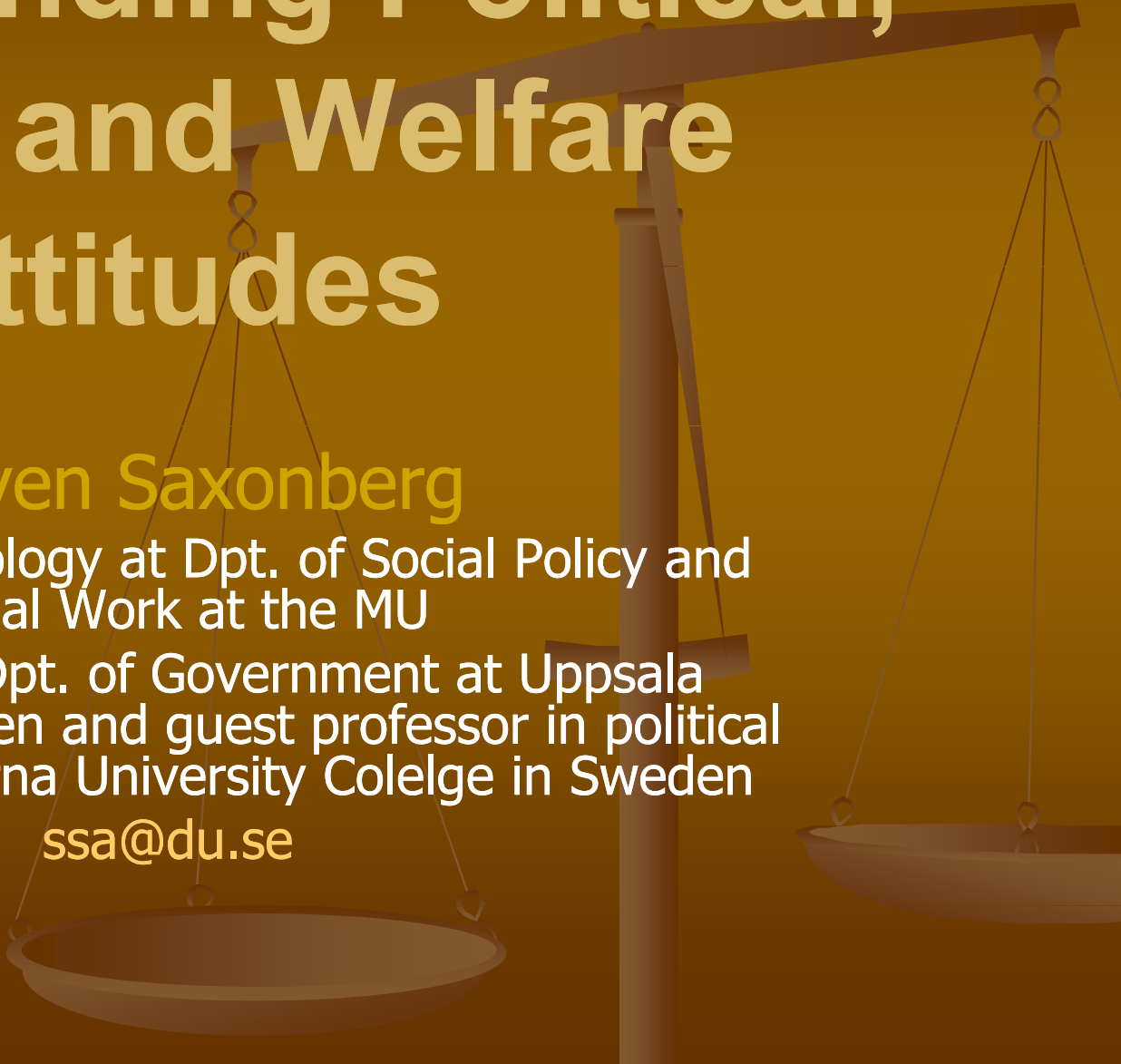


Understanding Political, Social and Welfare Attitudes



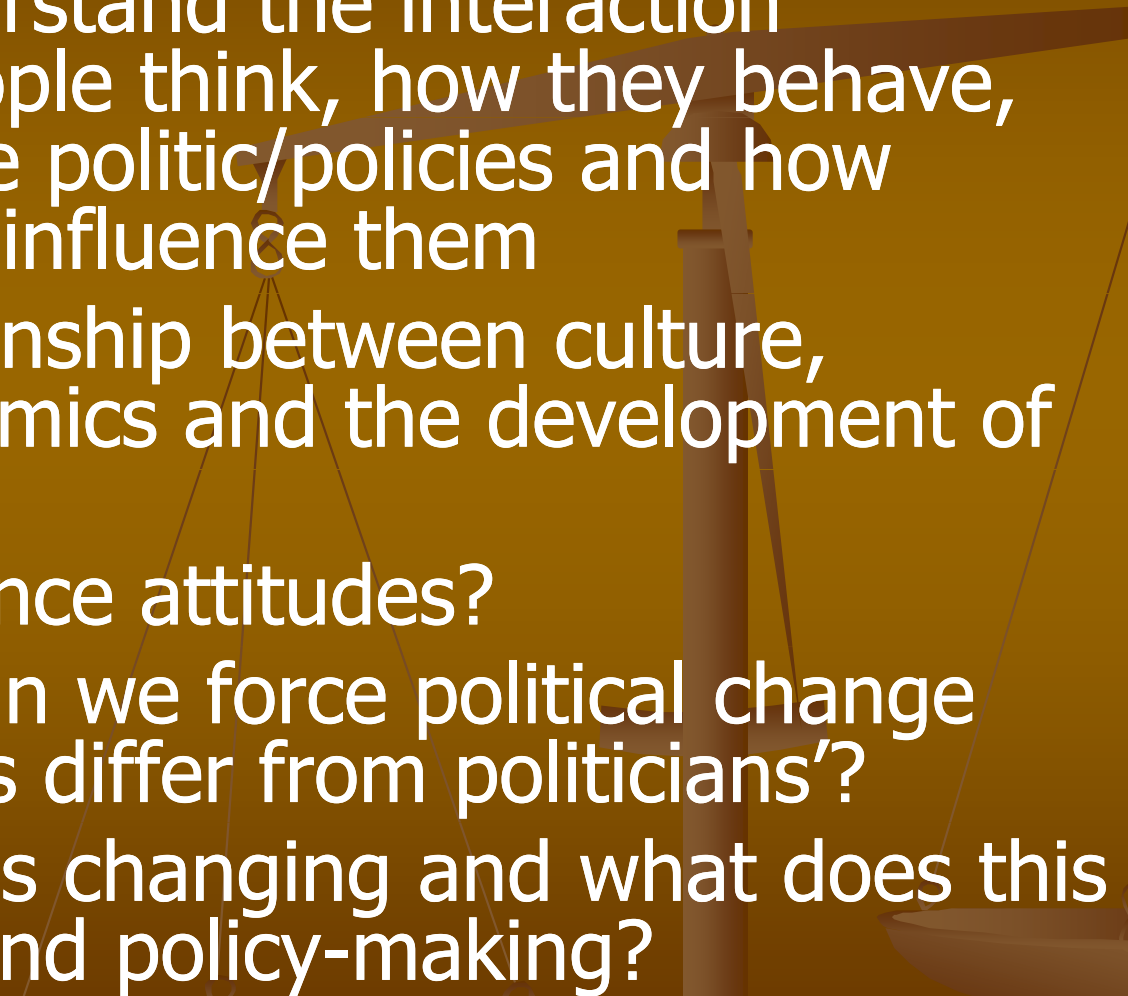
Steven Saxonberg

Professor of Sociology at Dpt. of Social Policy and
Social Work at the MU

Researcher at Dpt. of Government at Uppsala
University in Sweden and guest professor in political
sociology at Dalarna University Colelge in Sweden

ssa@du.se

The Value of Values

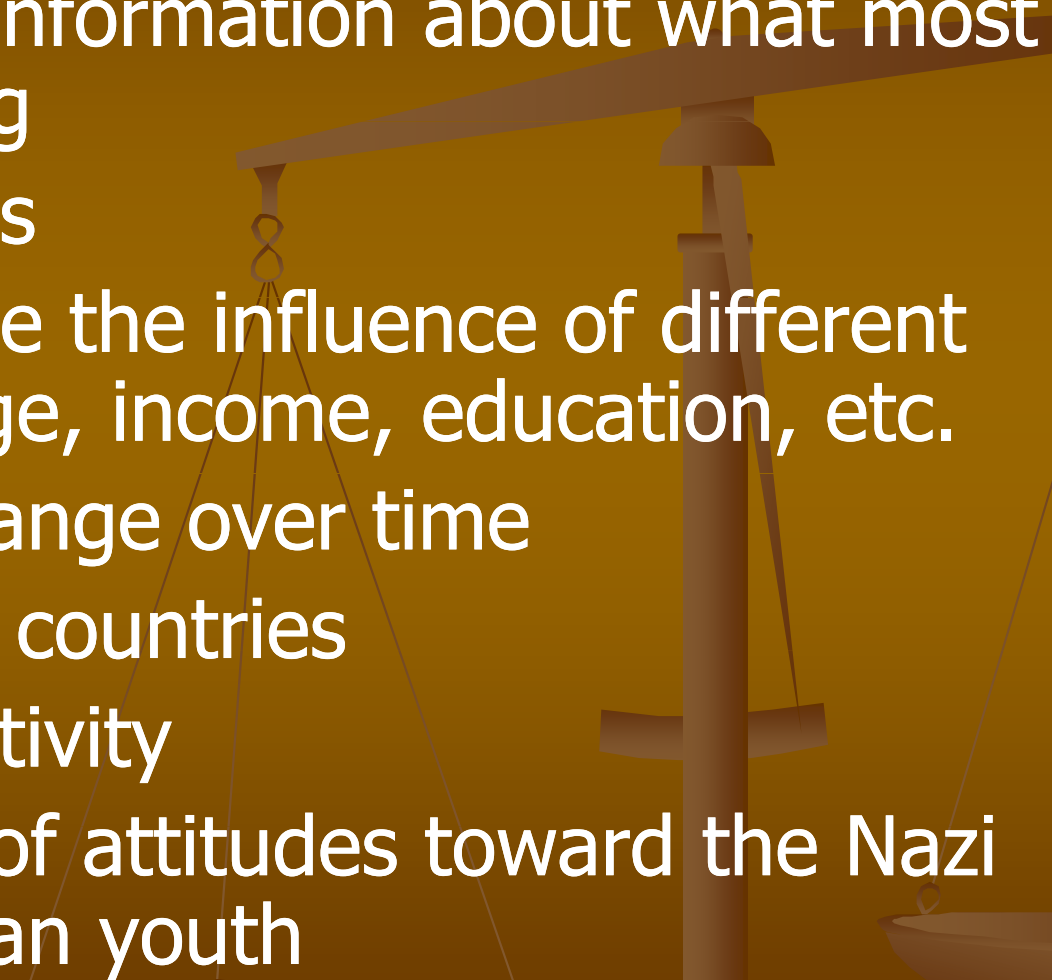
- Important to understand the interaction between what people think, how they behave, how they influence politics/policies and how politics/influences influence them
 - What is the relationship between culture, institutions, economics and the development of society?
 - Can policies influence attitudes?
 - In a democracy can we force political change when our attitudes differ from politicians'?
 - How are our values changing and what does this imply for society and policy-making?
- 

About the schedule

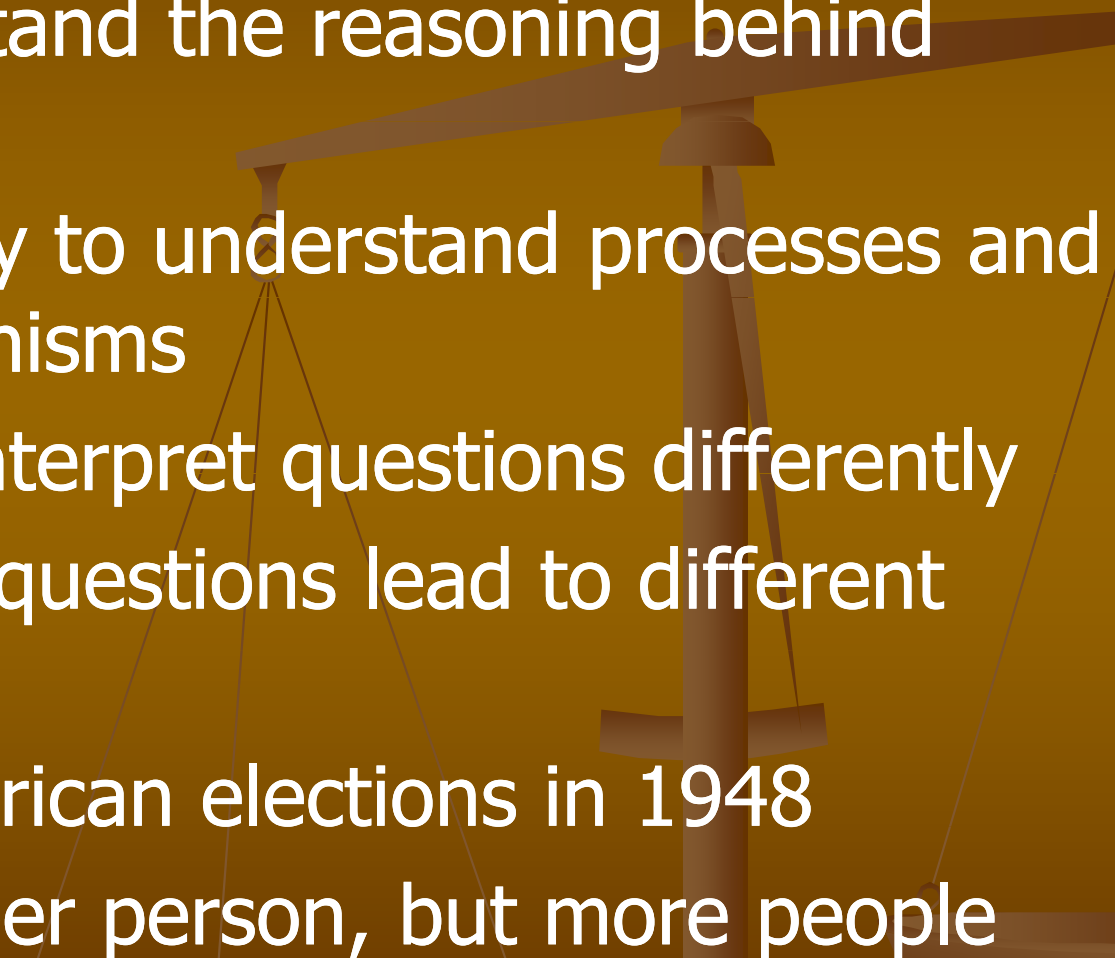
- Wednesday meeting cancelled
- Why had to change the schedule
- Not possible to have seminars



The Importance of Statistics

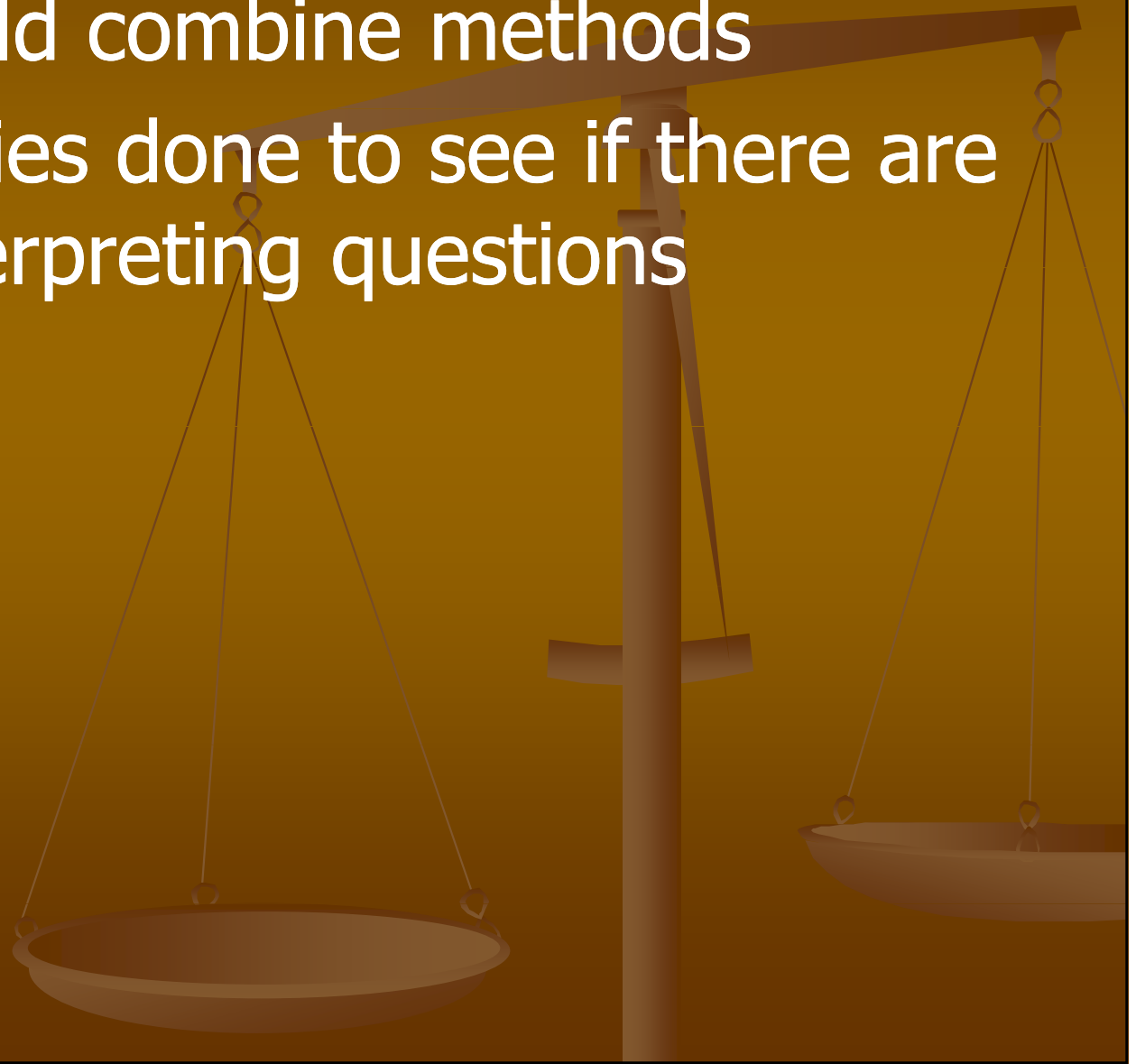
- Ability to find out information about what most people are thinking
 - Representativeness
 - Ability to determine the influence of different factors, such as age, income, education, etc.
 - Ability to study change over time
 - Ability to compare countries
 - Less risk of subjectivity
 - Example: 4 types of attitudes toward the Nazi past among German youth
- 

Disadvantages with Statistics

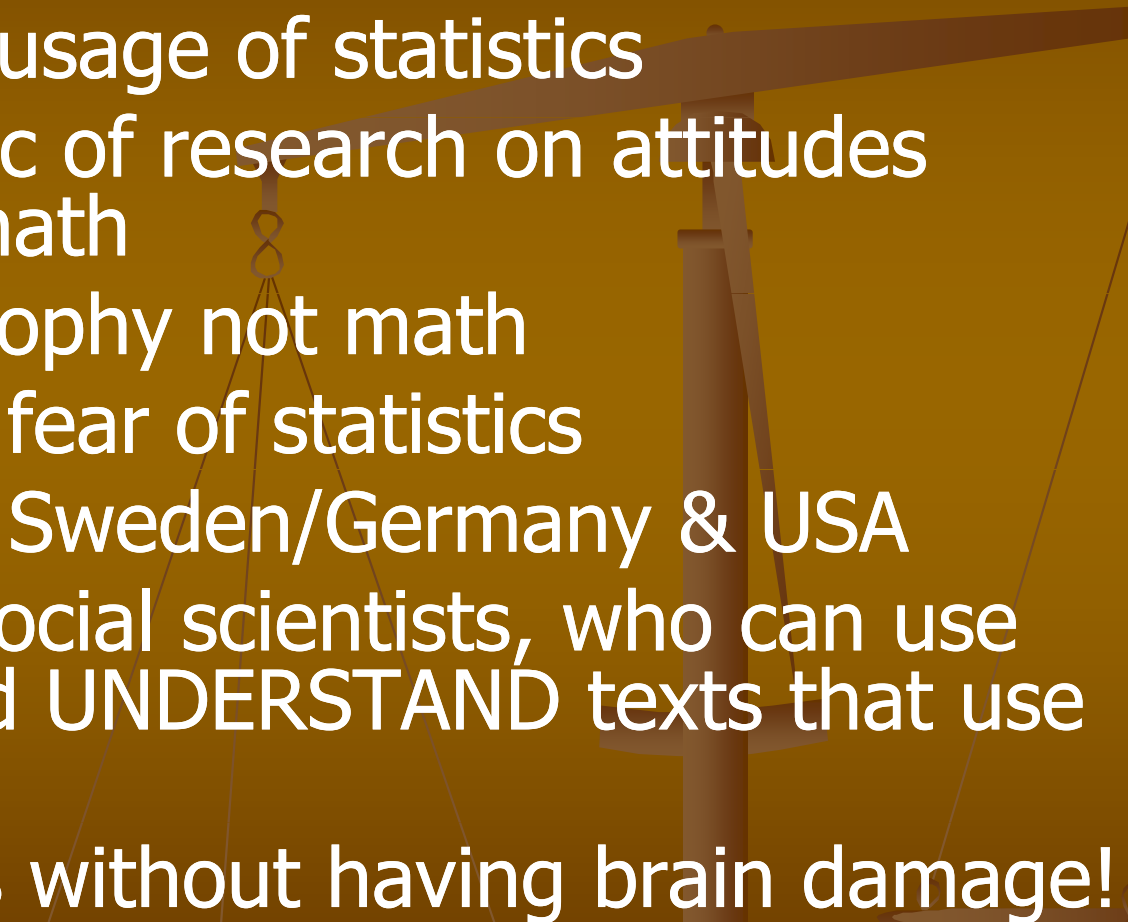
- Difficult to understand the reasoning behind attitudes
 - So not always easy to understand processes and underlying mechanisms
 - Risk that people interpret questions differently
 - Different types of questions lead to different answers
 - Example: the American elections in 1948
 - Less information per person, but more people
- 

Solutions?

- Ideally we should combine methods
- Often pilot studies done to see if there are problems in interpreting questions

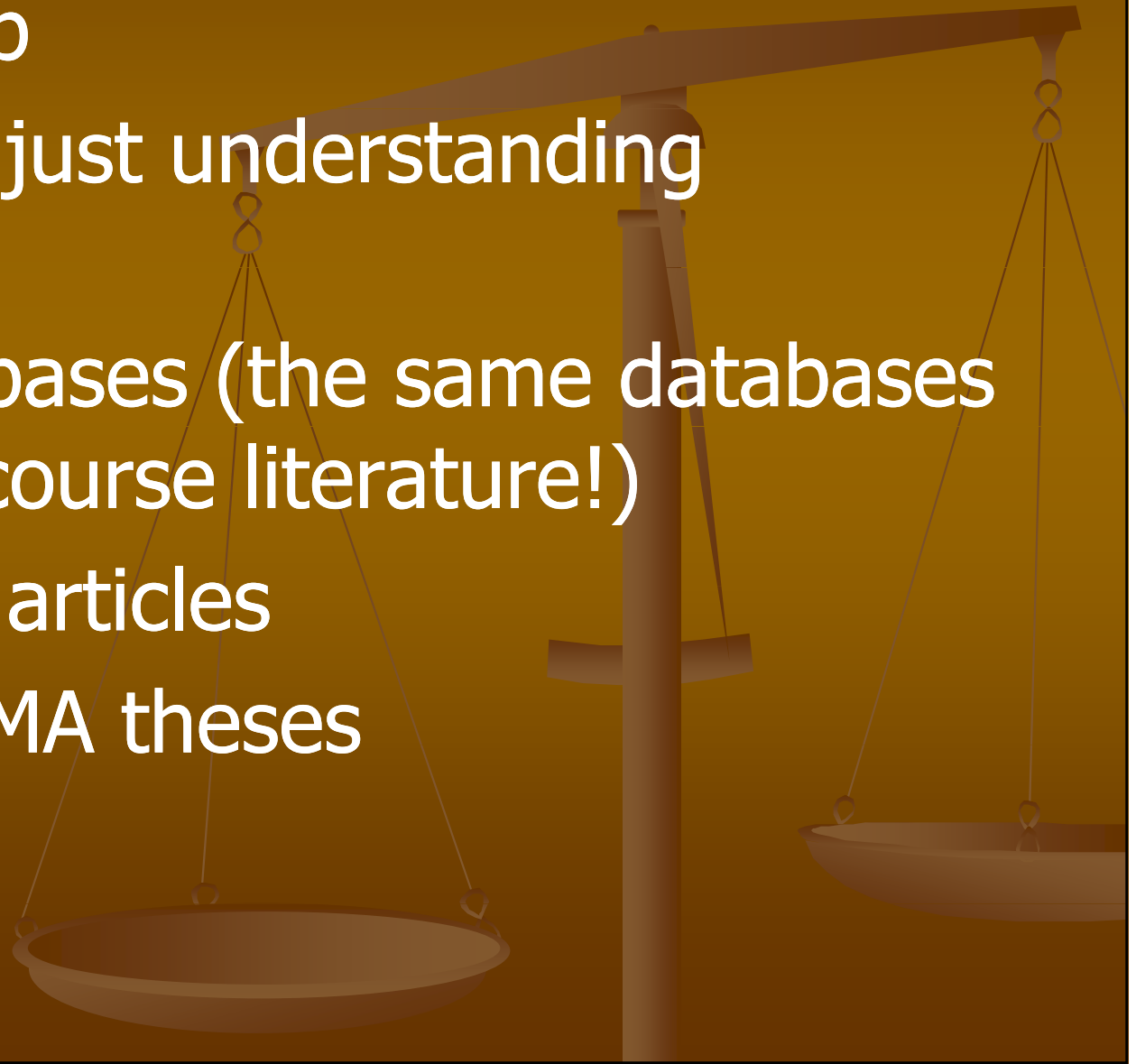


Reasons for having this course

- Building a tradition
 - Showing practical usage of statistics
 - Explaining the logic of research on attitudes without needing math
 - Statistics as philosophy not math
 - Overcoming one's fear of statistics
 - My experiences in Sweden/Germany & USA
 - Becoming better social scientists, who can use more methods and UNDERSTAND texts that use statistics
 - Surviving statistics without having brain damage!
- 

This course plus workshop

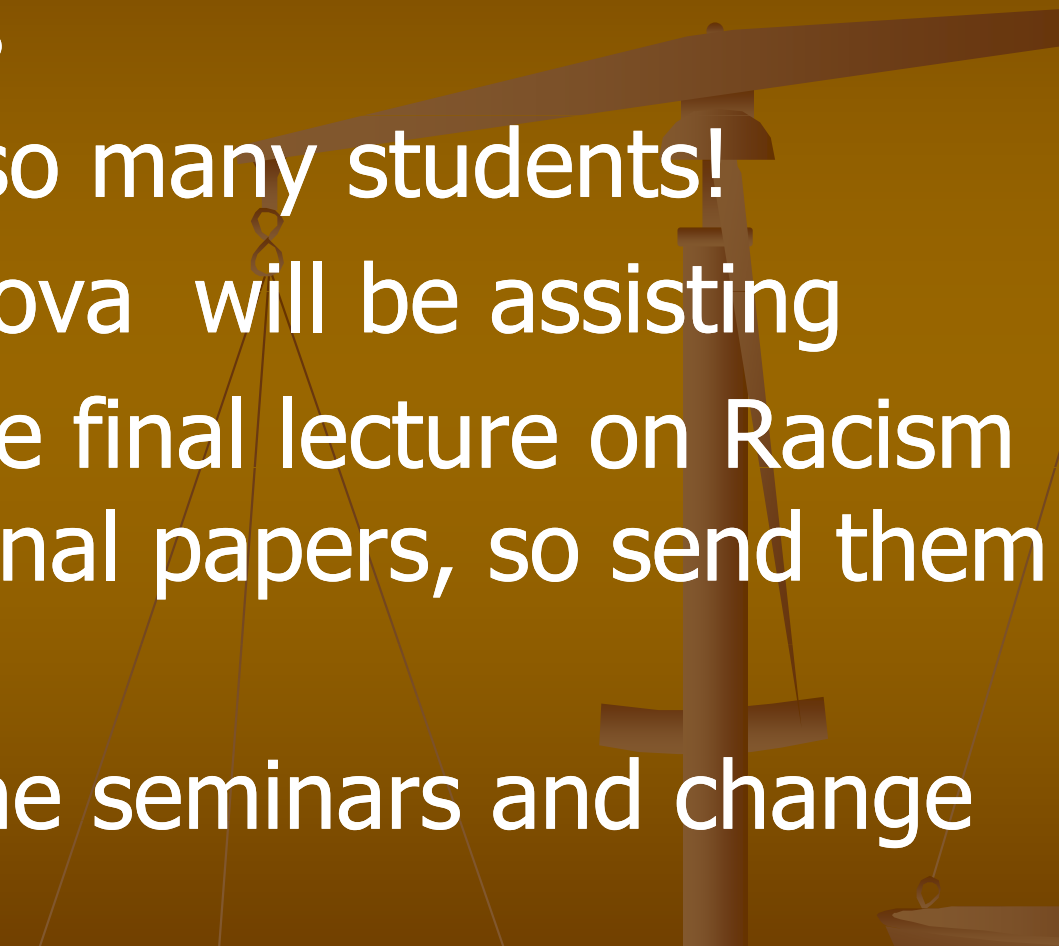
- Spring workshop
- Again no math, just understanding statistics
- Work with databases (the same databases as most of the course literature!)
- Write your own articles
- Help with your MA theses



Social Scientific Theme:

- The role of culture, institutions and economics for shaping society and politics
 - Survey data allows us to understand culture better and investigate cultural trends, cultural differences and factors influencing culture
 - So we can better participate in the discussions about the relative role of cultural in explaining society
- 

Make up of the course

- 12 and 8 credits
 - Did not expect so many students!
 - Katerina Vrablikova will be assisting
 - She will have the final lecture on Racism and grade the final papers, so send them to her!
 - Had to cancel the seminars and change the room
- 

Final Papers

- At the end of the course, students will write a short paper where they **reflect** on the course literature and consider what the information on attitudes implies for policymaking. If they were leaders of a country what policies would they suggest given the attitudes that exist.
- Reflect and suggest, do NOT summarize!
- Do not write more than 4-5 pages!
- Students from SP&SW must write alone
- Other students must write in groups of three.
- Use internationally acceptable references and notes!!!