

Acknowledgments

The inspiration for this book comes from a paradox: While international organizations are increasingly contested among political elites, who challenge and defend these institutions in the public debate, we know little about how such elite communication affects the way ordinary citizens view global governance. Are antiglobalist populists successful in influencing public perceptions of international organizations? To what extent can advocates of global governance push back and secure public support? And what are the logics and circumstances that shape whether citizens are receptive to such messages from political elites?

This book offers our answers to these questions, with a particular focus on how elites influence the popular legitimacy of international organizations. Legitimacy among citizens is a key resource for any political institution, contributing to effectiveness and democracy. Yet earlier research has overlooked how elites shape popular legitimacy perceptions. In this book, we contribute the first comprehensive analysis on this subject. For this purpose, we develop a novel theory of elite communication in global governance and explore empirically how elite messages affect citizen legitimacy beliefs toward international organizations in a broad comparative context.

Looking back to when we started this book project, its subject has only become more topical with time. We began our work on this book before Boris Johnson convinced the British public of the benefits of leaving the European Union, before Donald Trump rolled out an antiglobalist agenda as a United States president, and before liberal leaders rallied behind the World Health Organization in the fight against COVID-19. As we conclude our work, we resist the temptation to call ourselves prescient but admit that slowness in execution sometimes has its advantages. Looking forward, we see no reason why contestation around global governance would not remain a key feature of contemporary politics.

This book extends research that we have previously published in other outlets. Chapter 4 draws in part on an article in the *British Journal of Political Science*. Chapter 6 builds in part on an article in the *Review of International Studies*, coauthored with Jan Aart Scholte. We are grateful to Jan for allowing us to use part of our joint work for this chapter. For readers who would like to consult additional analyses we have conducted for the book, a supplementary online appendix, replication data sets, and associated code are available at <https://dataverse.harvard.edu/dataverse/legitimacypolitics> and on author homepages.

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