**Mass Media and the Domestic Politics of Globalization**

Although the relationship between economic globalization and the modern welfare state has been one of the most studied issues in political economy over the past three decades

(e.g., Gourevitch 1978; Garrett 1995; Rodrik 1998; Adserà and Boix 2002; Oatley 2011, 316), recent research on public opinion and political behavior in open economies raises questions about the assumptions of this tradition (Hellwig 2007, 155). A fundamental assumption in globalization-welfare research, which dates back to Karl Polanyi’s *The Great Transformation*, is that policymakers who wish to liberalize economic markets are held accountable by those groups who would suffer the adjustment costs (Polanyi [1944] 2001, 79, 385). Scholars have shown that to sustain political coalitions in favor of opening national economies, national policymakers have to compensate protectionist domestic groups with side payments in the form of social welfare programs (Katzenstein 1985; Rodrik 1998; Adserà and Boix 2002, 1028-29).

However, research in comparative political behavior shows that as domestic economies become increasingly integrated, citizens perceive that governments have less “room to maneu- ver” and accordingly shift their blame away from domestic policymakers to the unaccountable pressures of the global economy (Alcañiz and Hellwig 2010; Hellwig 2012). Citizens in coun- tries highly exposed to the global economy are less likely to punish incumbents for a poorly performing economy (Hellwig and Samuels 2007) and more likely to base their vote on non- economic issues (Hellwig 2008). If domestic groups do not punish politicians for economic losses made possible by the political decisions to maintain open national economies, then

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an essential causal link in current accounts of the globalization-welfare nexus may not hold under certain conditions. Furthermore, this current of research has yet to take seriously that economic globalization does not inherently constrain policymakers’ “room to maneuver” but rather has been socially constructed as such by elites and typically through the mass media (Hay and Rosamond 2011; Hay and Smith 2005; Hay 2002).

At the same time, previous research has shown that mass media have direct effects on perceptions relevant to how citizens are likely to understand the politics of globalization. Specifically, mass media have direct effects on perceptions of responsibility (Iyengar 1987; Iyengar 1991), the politicization of economic hardship (Mutz 1992; Mutz 1994), and civic engagement more broadly (Putnam 1995; Norris 2000). I argue that by amplifying the dominant construction of globalization as an external imperative constraining policymakers, mass media exposure should shift citizen blame attributions away from governments and toward international forces.

These expectations are tested with data from France between 1992 and 1993, measuring perceptions of national problems, responsibility attributions, and media exposure. The data provide a unique opportunity to test the argument that mass media has independent effects on individuals’ perceptions, blame attributions, and political behavior around issues of economic openness. A battery of statistical analyses show that mass media exposure is positively associated with individuals’ perceptions of economic openness as a problem and then, controlling for whether economic openness is perceived as a prob-

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lem, the attribution of blame to international forces. In turn, blame attributions predictably shape evaluations of the incumbent government, as individuals more likely to blame international forces are more favorable toward the incumbent government. These findings alter the prevailing wisdom in at least two ways. First, the article contributes to research on individual-level determinants of public opinion in the context of globalization. The findings provide additional evidence for the literature that suggests economic openness makes citizens less likely to blame, and less likely to punish, incumbent governments for poor economic performance, but they also provide novel evidence that mass media exposure is an independent and additional causal path to the same effect, controlling for perceptions of economic openness. Second, the findings have implications for research in comparative politics as they contribute to the call for a more political accounting of the domestic effects of globalization (Kayser 2007, 341) and for a more rigorous examination of the micro-foundations of work in this area (Hays, Ehrlich, and Peinhardt 2005; Walter 2010).

The article proceeds as follows. In the first section, previous literature is reviewed to reveal a gap between comparative and international political economists on the one hand

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and scholars of public opinion and political behavior on the other, to suggest how mass media research speaks to this gap. A second section develops specific hypotheses regarding how mass media is likely to affect individual perceptions, blame attributions, and evaluations of government. A third section discusses the data and modeling strategy, the penultimate section discusses the core findings, and a final section concludes.

1 Mass Media Between Globalization and Domestic Politics

One of the most robust findings in international and comparative political economy is the positive state-level correlation between international trade and size of the public sector (Cameron 1978; Rodrik 1998; Garrett 1995; Adserà and Boix 2002). Most political scientists theorize this regularity as "embedded liberalism,” exemplified in the postwar proliferation of Keynesian social pacts that promoted open national markets with state-sponsored social protections (Ruggie 1982). Although social scientists widely agree that the expansion of in- ternational trade is welfare-improving in the long run, they also agree that the construction or expansion of markets often induces political backlash from domestic groups in the short run. This backlash requires policymakers in favor of increasing openness to compensate such groups through side payments, typically in the form of redistributive social spending, lest the necessary political support for increasing openness breaks down.

Yet some research questions the degree to which economic liberalization enters into voters’ perceptions, or whether institutions moderate public perceptions and the electoral consequences of liberalization. For instance, Guisinger (2009) finds that trade policy may not be sufficiently salient, even to the most affected groups, to justify voter-driven models of trade policy. Baker (2003; 2005; 2009) argues that, especially in the developing world, public support for trade openness remains high because it is associated with relatively high-quality goods at relatively low prices, despite sometimes dramatic negative macro-economic consequences. Such findings highlight pathways through which certain negative effects of trade liberalization can have different effects on individuals, depending on how they are perceived. Baker’s finding of high support for free trade even in national contexts of dramatic negative macro-economic consequences, only adds scholarly interest to the puzzle of precisely how and why individuals come to find consumption effects more salient than other effects of trade liberalization.

Other research also suggests causal pathways through which citizens harmed by the adjustment costs of liberalization would not hold policymakers accountable for the political

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decision of liberalization. First, research mostly from advanced democratic countries finds that as the sources of economic growth shift, citizens accordingly adjust their expectations of government policymaking and their attributions of blame for national problems.1 Using

time-series data from France between 1985 and 2002, Hellwig shows that as exposure to trade and capital flows increase, citizens becomes less confident in the ability of national policymakers to solve national problems and the public demand for economic policy solutions decreases (Hellwig 2007). Voters also adjust their judgment of governments in predictable ways as other components of the institutional context change. For instance, when the Bank of England gained political independence, British voters were less likely to base their evaluation of the government on monetary policy and more likely to base it on fiscal policy (Sattler, Brandt, and Freeman 2010).

Secondly, perceptions and blame attributions affect political outcomes by altering what policymakers can be credibly held accountable for. Analyzing all 560 democratic elections between 1975 and 2002, Hellwig and Samuels (2007) show that as trade and capital flows increase as a share of gross domestic product, domestic economic growth rates have a smaller effect on incumbent vote share. Cross-sectional analyses of French and British survey data from 1997 and 2001, respectively, show similar effects of globalization on the determinants of vote choice, decreasing the effect of voter’s economic performance evaluations and party positions on economic issues (Hellwig 2008). Perceptual shifts in the ability of governments to affect economic policy also affect voter turnout. Analysis from the United States has found that individuals who suffer economic adversity but do not blame the government are less likely to vote than comparable individuals who do blame the government (Arce- neaux 2003). In terms of policymaking, elite messaging in the mass media (Hellwig and

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Coffey 2011) and interviews with party elites in Europe (Hellwig 2012, 206) confirm that politicians consciously stress globalization constraints on their own behavior. Additionally, changes in the institutional setting are found to have predictable moderating effects on the responsivness of policy to public opinion. For instance, Sattler, Brandt, and Freeman (2010) show that before central bank independence, British fiscal and monetary policies were re- sponsive to aggregate voting intentions and government approval ratings but, after central bank indepedence, monetary policy was no longer responsive. Interestingly, however, Sattler, Brandt, and Freeman (2008) find mutual responsiveness between public opinion and policy outputs, despite a lack of responsiveness in policy outcomes such as inflation and economic growth. That this responsiveness is observed outside real economic outcomes is accredited to the difficulty of identifying the effects of policies in open economies.

Given that public perceptions of the institutional context have been shown to affect po- litical consequences of the economy, it is puzzling that scholarship on the domestic politics of economic globalization has largely neglected a serious inquiry into political communication and the mass media in particular. Scholars of American politics have shown that national policymakers actively engage in strategies of “blame avoidance” through the mass media (Weaver 1986; Jacobson and Kernell 1983), diffusing blame horizontally toward other equals or vertically upward in the chain of authority (McGraw 1990, 1991).2 Variation in blame attributions, in turn, has predictable effects on how individuals judge both policies and policymakers (McGraw, Best, and Timpone 1995). Other work has shown that under cer- tain conditions mass media can diffuse blame through issue framing (Iyengar 1987; Iyengar 1991), depoliticize personal experience in favor of sociotropic perceptions (Mutz 1992), and exacerbate inequalities in political participation (Norris 2000).

2Hood (2002, 20) suggests that by lowering the potential costs of communicating malign policy effects to harmed groups, mass media may increase the incentives for politicians to avoid blame.

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In light of these currents of research, it is a surprising omission in previous research on the domestic politics of globalization that testimony by party elites in research interviews (Hellwig 2012, 206-07) and via the mass media (Hellwig and Coffey 2011, 420-21) is more often cited as evidence of room-to-maneuver constraints than questioned as possible strategic communication or media bias. Especially because evidence for opinion-policy responsiveness in open economies can be observed apart from and despite the objective economic effects of policy (Sattler, Freeman, and Brandt, 2008), a necessary next step in studying the domestic politics of globalization is to theorize more specifically how political communication—in particular, the mass media—may directly and indirectly affect the relationship between objective patterns of economic openness and domestic political outcomes.

2 Theory and Hypotheses

Previous research has shown that economic liberalization or openness usually is socially constructed by elite opinion-leaders as an external and objective process that constrains policymakers’ room-to-maneuver (Hay 2002; Hay and Smith 2005; Hay and Rosamond 2011). The central, novel theoretical claim of this article is that the mass media diffuse responsibility for policies of economic liberalization over and above whatever diffusion of responsibility is created by the objective realities of economic openness. The warrant for this claim is straightforward: the mass media amplify and extend the reach of elite-sponsored social constructions beyond the reach they would have in the absence of mass media. This section develops the reasoning behind this central claim and then deduces a series of hypotheses regarding how mass media should be expected to affect individuals’ perceptions of economic openness and blame attributions for national problems.

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Previous research already reviewed demonstrates that the dominant social construction of economic globalization—the one consistently endorsed in interviews with elites and in mass media messaging (Hellwig 2012, 206-07; Hellwig and Coffey 2011, 420-421)—is that of an external, objective pressure on policymaking (Hay 2002; Hay and Smith 2005; Hay and Rosamond 2011).3 Given this general elite consensus, standard theories of media coverage lead to the expectation that the media will tend to amplify this particular social construction. The “indexing” theory of news coverage suggests that the distribution of news coverage on a particular political issue will tend to follow the distribution of elite opinion on that issue (Bennett 1990; Zaller and Chiu 1996; Bennett, Lawrence, and Livingston 2006). The indexing theory of news coverage would suggest that mass media is more likely to represent economic globalization as an external constraint on policymaker autonomy rather than alternative critical narratives attributing responsibility to governments for negative consequences of globalization. Adding to the indexing theory the general responsibility-diffusing tendencies inherent to mass media discussed above, such as its episodic nature and the prevalence of elite blame avoidance, the overall expectation is that mass media should amplify the dominant construction of economic globalization as an external pressure which imposes itself on domestic policymakers, rather than an outcome of policymaking for which policymakers might be held responsible.

This simple theory leads to two different versions of a first hypothesis, one implying an indirect effect and the other implying a direct effect. Mass media may have an indirect effect on how individuals attribute blame for national problems, by informing individuals of objective problems pertaining to economic openness (merely transmitting information about objectively constraining realities pertaining to economic openness). The stronger version of this argument is that mass media may have a direct effect on how individuals attribute blame for national problems, uniquely diffusing responsibility in their perception of national

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problems above and beyond its effect of making individuals more aware of the problems of economic openness.4

Hypothesis 1: Individuals more exposed to mass media are more likely to blame interna- tional forces for national problems than individuals less exposed to mass media. This effect is expected directly (by diffusing political responsibility in general, controlling for perceptions of openness as a problem) and indirectly (by increasing awareness of openness as politically problematic).

A second hypothesis captures implications of previous research suggesting that perceptions of a policymaker’s “room to maneuver” affect how individuals evaluate government performance. If the effect of economic perceptions on vote choice weakens because increasing economic openness shifts blame attributions toward the global economy and away from governments, then blame attributions should be associated with evaluations of government economic performance. Thus, I hypothesize that individuals who blame international forces for national economic problems should be more favorable toward incumbent governments than those who blame the government.

Hypothesis 2: Individuals who blame international forces for national problems evalu-

4It stands to reason that various individual-level factors might condition this general expectation. Po- litical partisanship, political interest and/or knowledge, economic anxiety, and various other factors might deserve to be included not only as control variables (as they are here, data permitting) but as interaction terms capturing the heterogeneity of effects. While a great number of additional complicating factors are plausible, no general argument linking media to the globalization-welfare nexus has yet been established in the literature. Therefore I only seek to theorize and test one set of general causal links, in order that future research may then investigate various plausible forms of causal complexity within the general arguments and evidence presented here.

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ate incumbent governments more favorably than individuals who blame the government for national problems.

3 Data and Method

To test the theory, I use unique, individual-level data from a Legidoscope survey of public opinion in France between 1992 and 1993 (Chrique 1997). The survey asks respondents several questions tapping blame attribution, media exposure, and political mobilization.6

5Full summary statistics for both datasets can be found in Supplementary Information. 6See Supplementary Information for the text of the survey questions.

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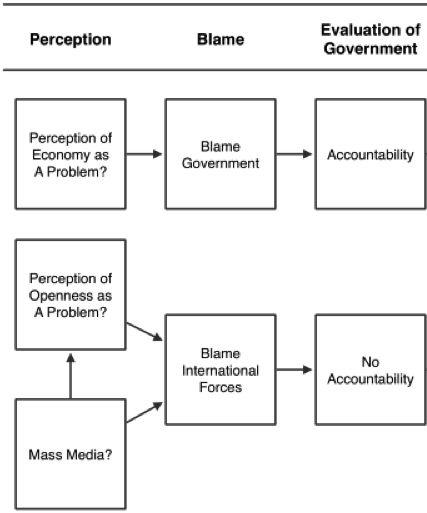


Figure 1: Summary of the Hypothesized Effects of Mass Media and Perception in the Domestic Politics of Economic Liberalization

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Respondents are asked to identify their main source of information from among the following: friends, family, opinion leaders, and mass media. Respondents are also asked to identify the top two problems facing France, and whether individuals, social institutions, the government, or international forces beyond government control are to blame for the problem.7 Finally, respondents are asked about their satisfaction with President Mitterrand, how well they think the government is handling the problem identified by the respondent as a top problem, and their intention to turnout for the March 1993 elections.

These data from France in the early 1990s provide a uniquely useful opportunity for testing hypotheses about the role of media in generating perceptions of room-to-maneuver constraints. First, while other surveys gauge perceptions of responsibility on many issues, and many other surveys gauge media exposure, this is the only survey known to the author that effectively gauges both perceptions of responsibility for issues of economic openness and media exposure. Second, France in this time period is a hard or least-likely case for testing the hypotheses, so evidence for the hypotheses would suggest such a process is likely to occur in other countries as well. One reason France in the early 1990s is a hard case is because the Maastricht Treaty was highly salient in France at this time; the causes of economic openness were more clearly linked to high-visibility policy decisions than usual. If, in such a context, media were found to be an independent cause of voters’ perceptions of globalization as an external constraint, we could be confident the same would hold true in more common contexts where the policy-caused aspects of economic liberalization are less salient. Additionally, relative to many countries France has high rates of political engagement, and a statist, egalitarian political culture in which elite opinion claims more control over globalization than in countries such as Italy or the United Kingdom (Hay and Rosamond 2011, 159). Thus again, evidence that media shifts blame attributions from government to international forces, observed in France in the early 1990s, should generalize to many other national situations in which baseline perceptions of government control over globalization are typically lower.

7Respondents were asked to identify national problems in an open-ended fashion; their answers were then coded by the interviewer and into the general problem types listed here. To create the binary vari- able which measures whether the respondent sees some aspect of international economic openness as a top problem, I coded respondents as 1 if they identified one of the following issues as one of the “second most important problems”: “Intl economic competition,” “EC-92, economic integration,” “Foreign trade,” “Rati- fication of Maastricht,” and “Maastricht Treaty.” All other respondents were coded as 0 for the variable Openness Problem.

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To test the direct and indirect effects of mass media on blame (Hypothesis 1), I estimate two logistic regression models. The first estimates the probability a respondent will blame international forces as a function of mass media exposure and a vector of control variables including controls for the nature of the problem. The equation is

Blamei = α + β1ProblemAreai + β2OpennessProblemi + β3Mediai + β4Controlsi + ei (1)

where Blame is a binary variable taking a value of 1 for respondents who blame international forces and 0 for respondents who blame the government for whichever national problem they have identified.8 ProblemArea is a categorical variable with four levels indicating whether the problem deals with social, economic, political, or foreign issues;9 Openness Problem is a binary variable I constructed to take a value of 1 for respondents who identified a problem specifically related to economic openness and 0 otherwise. If the mass media have an independent effect on diffusing blame away from government policymakers and toward international forces, then we would expect β3 to be positive and significant.

Then, to assess the indirect effect of mass media on blame as its channeled through perceptions of economic openness, I estimate a logistic regression modeling the probability

8Because of space constraints and for ease of interpretation in light of the hypotheses under consideration, I consider here only the difference between blaming the government and blaming international forces, omitting respondents who placed the blame on “society” or “people like you and me.” However, the results obtained here are robust to alternative specifications in which the dependent variable takes a value of 1 for respondents who blame international forces and 0 for respondents who select any of the other possible targets of blame. See Supplementary Information for full results.

9In the first wave of the survey, so many respondents identified unemployment as the top problem facing France that a question was added to measure what respondents identified as the “second most important problem facing France today.” All the analyses here, including the variables measuring blame attributions and evaluations of government handling, refer to this second most important problem.

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of perceiving openness as a top problem as a function of mass media exposure and a vector of control variables:

Openness Problemi = α + β1ProblemAreai + β2Mediai + β3Controlsi + ei (2)

where the main variables of interest are the same as in Equation 1 except that here the dependent variable is the binary variable capturing whether openness is perceived as a top problem. If mass media affect blame attributions indirectly by making individuals more aware of international economic forces, which in turn would shift their blame toward international forces, then β2 should be positive and significant.

To test Hypothesis 2 regarding the effect of blame attributions on evaluations of the gov- ernment, I estimate a linear regression modeling how individuals evaluate the government’s handling of the problem they identified as one of the most important facing the country. I model evaluations of government handling as a function of respondents’ blame attributions and a vector of control variables. The equation is

GovHandlingi = α+β1ProblemAreai +β2OpennessProblemi +β3Blamei +β4Controlsi +ei

(3) where GovHandlingi measures, on a scale from 1 to 4, how the i th respondent evaluates the government’s handling of the top problem they identified. The theory predicts that for a particular problem such as the domestic costs of economic openness, blaming international forces rather than the government will make individuals less likely to hold governments ac- countable for that problem. If this is the case, then individuals who think a problem is caused by forces outside of the government’s purview should be less critical of the govern- ment’s handling of that problem. In this case, then, the theoretical expectation is that β3 will be positive and significant, reflecting that blaming international forces for a problem

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leads individuals to view the government’s handling of that problem more favorably than if they blamed the government for the problem.

4 Findings and Discussion

Before analysis, all numerical independent variables were de-meaned and divided by two standard deviations so that coefficients reflect the expected effect of a two standard deviation increase in the variable and are therefore roughly comparable to the coefficients for any categorical independent variables. The coefficient plots in Figures 2 and 3 show mixed statistical support for Hypothesis 1 regarding the expectation that mass media diffuse blame for national problems away from governments and toward international forces (directly and indirectly).11 Respondents who rely on the mass media as their most important source of information are significantly more likely to blame international forces for what they identify as one of the nation’s top problems (a logit estimate of .35 and standard error of .12), even controlling for perceptions of economic openness as a problem and the more general issue area in which a respondent locates that problem. To get a better sense of the effect size, consider probabilities. Based on 1000 simulations, the probability of blaming international forces for a typical individual who does not rely primarily on the mass media for information is .33. Relying primarily on mass media increases this probability to .41 (a mean change of .08 with a standard deviation of .03).12 Also as we would expect from previous research

11Numerical model results are included in Supplementary Information. All models were estimated with the Zelig package in R (Imai, King, and Lau 2009).

12“Typical” refers to mean values on the numerical independent variables and the reference levels for categorical variables, i.e., in this case, a non-urban, non-university-educated, non-white-collar, non-left-

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on public opinion and voting in open economies, the perception of economic openness as a problem also increases the probability a respondent will blame international forces for that problem.13 Indeed, of all the variables considered here, the perception of economic openness as one of the nation’s top problems is the strongest determinant of whether a respondent will blame international forces for that problem (a logit estimate of 1.1 and standard error of .14). In this case, for a typical individual who identifies a top problem other than one of openness the probability of blaming international forces is .41 but for the same individual who identifies a top problem related to openness, that probability increases to .68 (a mean increase of .26 and standard deviation .03). I also estimated additional models where the binary dependent variable opposes each of these targets of blame to anyone who blames any other target. The results are consistent with those presented here.14

Model 2 considers the indirect effect of mass media on blame attributions through their effect on perceptions of openness as a problem. Reliance on mass media has a positive marginal effect on the perception of openness as a problem (a logit estimate of .33 and standard error of .17; p=.06). For a typical individual who does not rely primarily on mass media, the probability of perceiving an issue of openness to be a top problem is .08; relying on mass media increases this probability by a mean of .03 (standard deviation = .01) to .11. Thus, the indirect effect of mass media on blaming international forces, through its slight marginal effect on the perception of openness as a problem, is merely .01 (.26\*.03). The small size of this effect and its statistical significance near the conventional cutoff of 95%

party male at the mean age and with mean levels of political interest, who identifies the second top problem as “Economic” and not related to economic openness.

13It could be the case that individuals with cosmopolitan outlooks are more interested in mass media because of their greater interest in global issues, in which case mass media exposure could be endogenous to knowledge of issues surrounding economic globalization. Although the survey data used in this paper provide no measure of overall interest in international affairs, the analyses below control for the best predictors of cosmpolitanism: education, class, and general interest in politics. Because these are the best predictors of cosmpolitanism, it seems unlikely that observing an independent effect of mass media exposure would be spurious due to this particular risk of endogeneity.

14See Supplementary Information.

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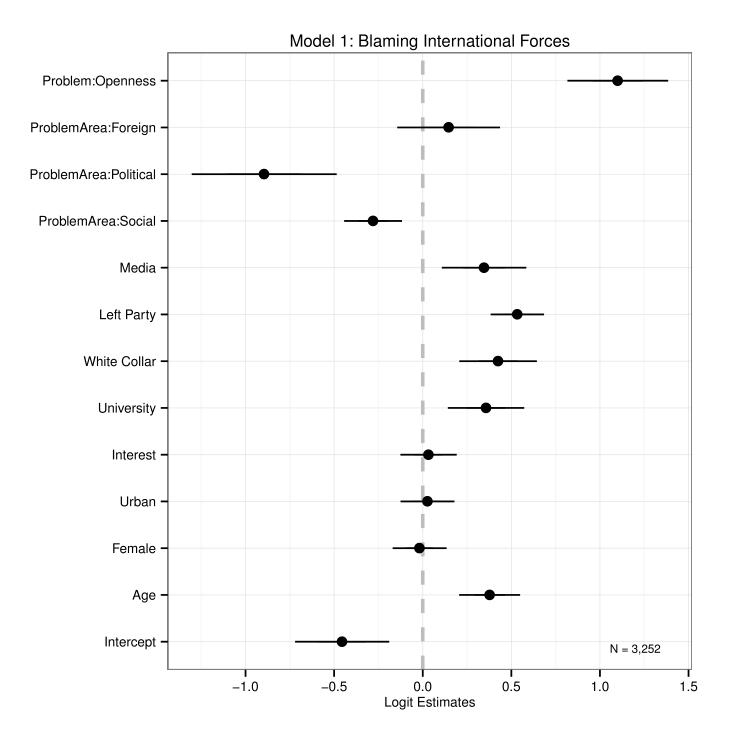


Figure 2: Determinants of Blaming International Forces

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confidence suggest only weak evidence that mass media exerts much indirect effect on blame attributions by increasing awareness of openness as a problem.

The coefficient plot for Model 3, testing Hypothesis 2, reveals statistical evidence for the expectation that blaming international forces, in turn, has a positive effect on evaluations of the government (logit estimate = .38, standard error = .03).15 Simulating quantities

of interest suggests that blaming international forces for a top problem increases a typical individual’s evaluation of government handling by .38 (standard devation = .03), from 1.6 to 2.0 on the four-point scale of the dependent variable. These results also hold when the dependent variable refers to satisfaction with the President rather than government handling of a top problem. They are also robust to an expanded operationalization of the blame variable considering the government, international forces, and other possible targets.16

Thus the results provide evidence consistent with each essential step of the causal chain at the individual level, though the estimated indirect effect of mass media on diffusing blame (through increasing perceptions of openness as a problem) is very weak. Nonetheless, the evidence suggests that mass media directly diffuse blame away from governments toward international forces (increasing the probability of blaming international forces by about 8%) even controlling for the general issue area in which the respondent locates a top problem and whether it is related to openness.

15There is reason to suppose that blame attributions could be endogenous to evaluations of how the government is handling a problem, in the sense that perceptions of poor or satisfactory government handling could increase or decrease the government’s perceived culpability. First, however, it should be recalled that survey question I am using to measure blame attributions refers specifically to the cause of the problem. Thus, strictly speaking, evaluations of how the government handles the problem should not affect who or what individuals identify as the cause or source of the problem. Second, it is much harder to believe that evaluations of government handling could drive individuals’ blame of international forces or blame of the two alternative targets from which respondents were able to choose (individuals “like you and I” or social institutions) simply because it is hard to imagine how government handling of the problem could make any of these other targets more or less culpable. Thus, I estimate an additional model which has separate binary independent variables for blaming government, international forces, or “other” as the baseline (see Supplementary Information). The coefficient for blaming government is larger than that for blaming international forces but both remain signed as expected and significant. This alternative specification mitigates the possibility that blaming international forces merely reflects respondents who are less likely to blame the government.

16See Supplementary Information.

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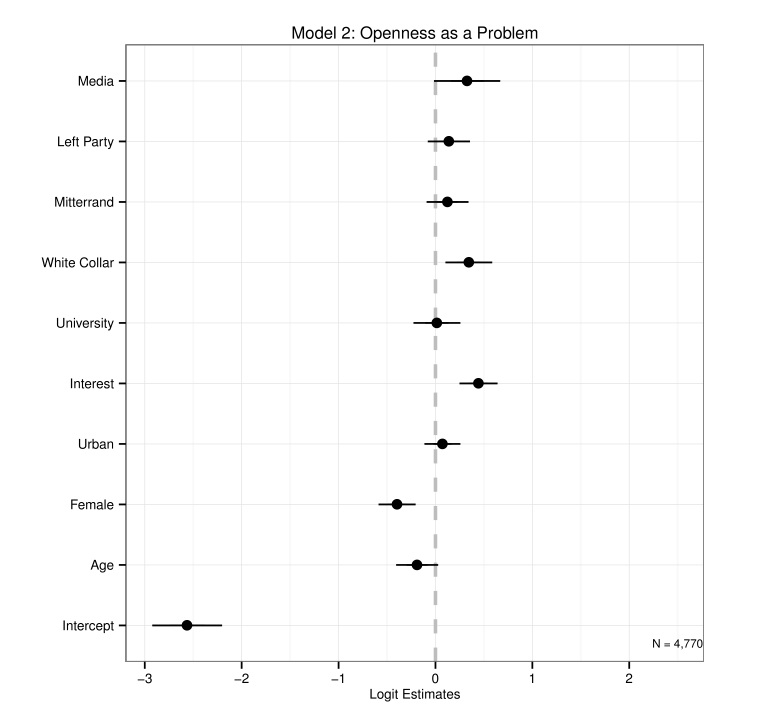


Figure 3: Determinants of Perceiving Openness as a Top Problem

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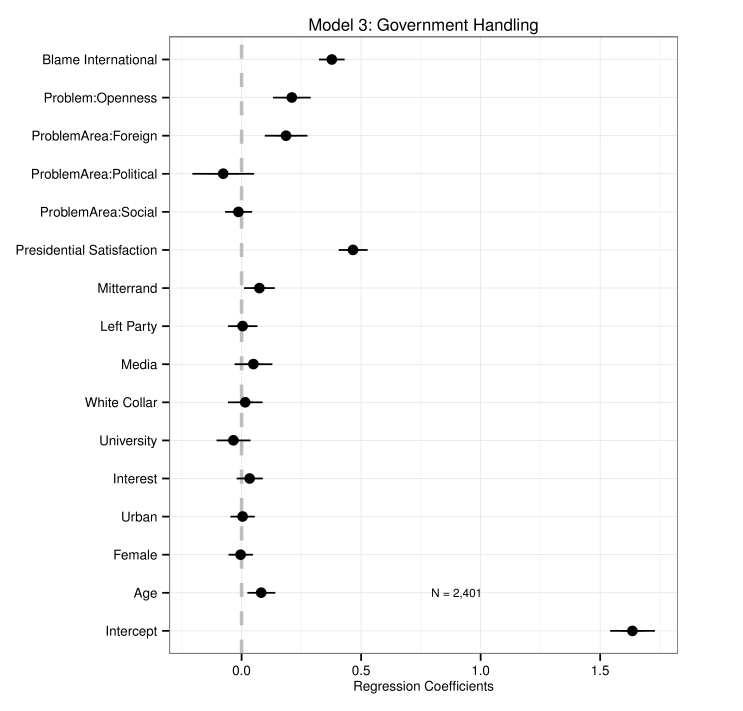


Figure 4: Determinants of Government Evaluations

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5 Conclusion

This study has presented evidence that mass media conditions the domestic politics of economic globalization. Survey evidence from France shows that individuals most reliant on mass media are less likely to blame top national problems on incumbent governments, and more likely to blame international forces, for indirect and direct reasons. Mass media indirectly deflects blame away from incumbent governments and toward international forces by making individuals more aware of economic openness as a political issue, but it also directly decreases individuals’ propensities to blame incumbents relative to international forces (controlling for the awareness effect), most likely due to the responsbility-diffusing framing effects previously found in mass media studies. In turn, individuals who blame international forces rather than the government evaluate the government more favorably. The results suggest that mass media may diffuse the domestic political pressure against liberalization that has historically elicited welfare-state compensation for aggrieved domestic groups.

The limitations of this study also point to avenues for future research. While I considered many dominant rival hypotheses through the use of statistical control vari- ables, this article could not engage with all possible factors that may plausibly condition the relationships posited by the hypotheses presented. For instance, it seems likely that political partisanship may condition the relationship between media exposure and blame attributions, and/or the relationship between blame attributions and evaluations of government. Thus, rather than simply controlling for partisanship as above, future

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research might investigate whether these relationships are dampened or amplified under different conditions of citizen and government partisanship.

The findings have implications for the study of international and comparative politics and for the prospects of democracy in a globalized world. First, the results provide some of the first evidence that mass media can be understood as a political institution that conditions the domestic politics of the global economy. This article therefore contributes to current research agendas seeking more finely-tuned political accounts of the domestic effects of globalization (Kayser 2007, 341) and a better understanding of public opinion and voting behavior in the context of economic openness (Hellwig 2008; Freeman 2008).

The findings should also be of particular interest to scholars seeking more rigorous micro-foundations for the relationship between economic openness and welfare states (Hays, Ehrlich, and Peinhardt 2005; Walter 2010).

This article suggests that from the standpoint of democratic values, mass media may have subtle but perverse effects on the distributive politics of open economies, disempowering domestic groups from holding national policymakers accountable for the unevenly distributed costs of globalization.

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