

The Politics of Perception

*How Beliefs About Women's Inclusion Shape
Democratic Legitimacy in the US*

KATELYN E. STAUFFER

OXFORD
UNIVERSITY PRESS

OXFORD
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Oxford University Press is a department of the University of Oxford.
It furthers the University's objective of excellence in research, scholarship,
and education by publishing worldwide. Oxford is a registered trade mark of
Oxford University Press in the UK and in certain other countries.

Published in the United States of America by Oxford University Press
198 Madison Avenue, New York, NY 10016, United States of America.

© Oxford University Press 2025

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system
transmitted, used for text and data mining, or used for training artificial intelligence, in any form or
by any means, without the prior permission in writing of Oxford University Press, or as expressly
permitted by law, by license or under terms agreed with the appropriate reprographics rights
organization. Inquiries concerning reproduction outside the scope of the above should be sent
to the Rights Department, Oxford University Press, at the address above.

You must not circulate this work in any other form
and you must impose this same condition on any acquirer.

CIP data is on file at the Library of Congress.

ISBN 9780197811030
ISBN 9780197811023 (hbk.)

DOI: 10.1093/oso/9780197811023.001.0001

The manufacturer's authorized representative in the EU for product safety is
Oxford University Press España S.A. of Parque Empresarial San Fernando de Henares,
Avenida de Castilla, 2 - 28830 Madrid (www.oup.es/en or product.safety@oup.com).
OUP España S.A. also acts as importer into Spain of products made by the manufacturer.

Contents

<i>List of Figures</i>	viii
<i>List of Tables</i>	xi
<i>Acknowledgments</i>	xiii
1. The Consequences of Women's Inclusion in Politics	1
2. Women's Descriptive and Symbolic Representation: A New Approach to Old Questions	22
3. What Do Americans Know About Women's Inclusion in Office? And Who Knows It?	46
4. Perceived Inclusion and Feelings of External Efficacy, Trust, and Approval	75
5. How Perceived Inclusion Shapes Evaluations of Institutional Capacity	91
6. Does Partisanship Moderate the Relationship Between Perceived Inclusion and Attitudes Toward Government?	115
7. Making Misperceptions Reality	143
8. The Politics of Perception: Conclusions, New Directions, and Paths Forward	162
<i>Appendices</i>	187
<i>Notes</i>	246
<i>References</i>	259
<i>Index</i>	275