



# Trust

*Russell Hardin*

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## **Trust** Russell Hardin

Can we trust our elected representatives or is public life so corrupted that we can no longer rely on governments to protect our interests or even our civil liberties? Is the current mood of public distrust justified or do we need to re-evaluate our understanding of trust in the global age?

In this wide-ranging book, Russell Hardin sets out to dispel the myths surrounding the concept of trust in contemporary society and politics. He examines the growing literature on trust to analyze public concerns about declining levels of trust, both in our fellow citizens and in our governments and their officials.

Hardin explores the various manifestations of trust and distrust in public life – from terrorism to the internet, social capital to representative democracy. He shows that while today's politicians may well be experiencing a decline in public confidence, this is nothing new; distrust in government characterized the work of leading liberal thinkers such as David Hume and James Madison. Their views, he contends, are as relevant today as they were in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and we should not, therefore, be distressed at the apparent distrust of twenty-first century government. On a personal level, Hardin contends that the world in which we live is much more diverse and interconnected than that of our forebears and this will logically result in higher levels of personal trust and distrust between individuals.

Written by one of the world's leading authorities on trust, this book will be a valuable resource for students of government and politics, sociology and philosophy.

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