In modern, policy-heavy democracies, blame games about policy controversies are commonplace. Despite their ubiquity, blame games are notoriously difficult to study. This book elevates them to the place that they deserve in the study of politics and public policy. Blame games are microcosms of conflictual politics that yield unique insights into democracies under pressure. Based on an original framework and the comparison of fifteen blame games in the UK, Germany, Switzerland, and the USA, it exposes the institutionalized forms of conflict management that democracies have developed to manage policy controversies. Whether failed infrastructure projects, food scandals, security issues, or flawed policy reforms, democracies manage policy controversies in an idiosyncratic manner. This book is addressed not only to researchers and students interested in political conflict in the fields of political science, public policy, public administration, and political communication but to everyone concerned about the functioning of democracy in more conflictual times. This title is also available as Open Access on Cambridge Core.

Markus Hinterleitner is a postdoctoral researcher at Brown University’s Watson Institute and is affiliated with the University of Bern’s KPM Center for Public Management. He received his PhD from the University of Bern, Switzerland in 2018 and was a visiting scholar at the University of California, Berkeley during 2019. He is a leading scholar on political blame avoidance. His articles have been published in journals such as the European Journal of Political Research, European Political Science Review, Policy Studies Journal, Journal of European Public Policy, and the Journal of Public Policy.
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MARKUS HINTERLEITNER
Brown University