

# Benjamin Studebaker

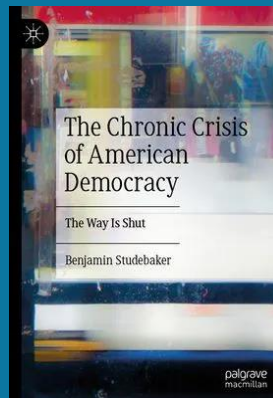
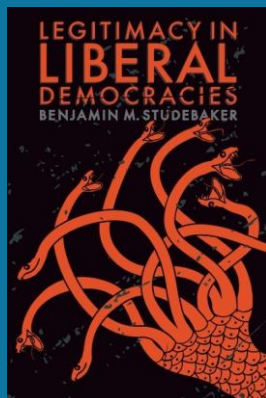
## Living Illegitimately: Democracy in the 21st Century

IGN Research Seminar

**Tuesday, 28 January 2025, 16:00 – 18:00**  
**TC-Hall, Teaching Center**  
**WU Wien**

Democracies are regularly heavily criticized from many different directions, but they're still with us. Competitive multiparty elections persist even amidst enormous amounts of disagreement and resentment. In this talk, Benjamin Studebaker will argue that when democracies last a long time, they become embedded, making it increasingly difficult for their citizens to believe they can achieve anything through revolutionary activity. Without the threat of revolution, civil conflict can be put off indefinitely. But this has a cost - disagreements and resentments are never resolved. Instead, they become endemic features of democratic life, making it increasingly impossible to govern by consensus. How then, do democracies continue to function? By living in sin - by making unpopular decisions and using elections to flush frustration away.

**Benjamin Studebaker** received his PhD in Politics and International Studies from the University of Cambridge. He recently published two books *Legitimacy in Liberal Democracies* (Edinburgh University Press) and *The Chronic Crisis of American Democracy: The Way is Shut* (Palgrave). He runs the podcast *Political Theory 101* and is a frequent contributor to *Theory Underground*.



Free admission. Please register at: [IGN@wu.ac.at](mailto:IGN@wu.ac.at)