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Published

2023

Journal Title

Globalizations

Version

Version of Record (VoR)

DOI

[10.1080/14747731.2023.2190706](https://doi.org/10.1080/14747731.2023.2190706)

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To cite this article: Luis Cabrera (2023): Advancing global citizenship and cosmopolitanism in an age of Globoskepticism: insights from the World Order Models Project, *Globalizations*, DOI: [10.1080/14747731.2023.2190706](https://doi.org/10.1080/14747731.2023.2190706)

To link to this article: <https://doi.org/10.1080/14747731.2023.2190706>



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Published online: 27 Mar 2023.



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Advancing global citizenship and cosmopolitanism in an age of Globoskepticism: insights from the World Order Models Project

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ABSTRACT

This article explores insights to be taken from the World Order Models Project (WOMP) for theorists seeking to advance the uptake of global citizenship and cosmopolitan principles. WOMP, lasting from 1968 to the 1990s, aimed to generate more inclusive academic dialogue on world order reforms and develop a programme of global education to build support for them. Insights from the project include ones for structuring a dialogue on global normative concerns that is diverse but not too diffuse. It also offers a model for promoting globally normative counter-narratives in 'globoskeptical' times – the Cold War then and the current era of right-wing populism. And, it directs attention to the possible importance of focusing on global-scale institutional reform alongside individual motivation to assume moral duties across national borders. Finally, it offers negative lessons on setting feasible aims and timelines, and on a need to move beyond academic work in promoting change.

ARTICLE HISTORY

Received 27 September 2022
Accepted 8 March 2023

KEYWORDS

Cosmopolitan motivation;
global citizenship; World
Order Models Project;
populism; global justice

Introduction

Theorists of global citizenship and moral cosmopolitanism have posited relatively demanding individual duties that transcend state boundaries. These have included duties to transfer resources to address global poverty, to support climate change mitigation efforts, aid asylum seekers, and to support the development of democratic institutions beyond the state, among others (Pogge, 1992; Nussbaum, 1996; Beitz, 1999; Caney, 2005; Brock, 2009; Brown & Held, 2010; Cabrera, 2020). They also have included more general global citizen duties to adopt an ethic of solidarity with all in a global human community, and to strive to act consistently with it (Carter, 2001; Dower, 2003; Falk, 2002; Sant et al., 2018; Schattle, 2008).

Such accounts have faced some persistent feasibility, or 'ought implies can' critiques. That is, if theorists hold that all persons ought to assume relatively demanding cross-border duties, then it must be shown that people actually can be motivated to do so (Lenard, 2010; Meyer, 2000; Wiens, 2013). Or, it must be shown that asking persons to assume such duties to perceived outsiders would not be objectionable, given ostensible facts about the primacy of local attachments in human moral psychology (Erez, 2015; see Yack, 2012, Ch. 11; Miller, 2013, Ch. 1). Alternately, if the objective is not direct motivation but other means of realizing progress toward

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cosmopolitan/global citizenship aims, then those means of realization must be justified (Caney, 2015; see Blunt, 2019; see also Goodin, 1992, Ch. 7).

Cosmopolitan and global citizenship theorists have identified a number of possible strategies to advance the acceptance of their principles and corresponding duties. Some have focused on the promotion of perspective-taking and empathy across state boundaries (Jeffery, 2014; Lichtenberg, 2014; Nussbaum, 1997; Woods, 2012; see also Ackerly, 2018), including in ‘education for global citizenship’ efforts (Barrow, 2017; Pashby et al., 2020; Sant et al., 2018). Others have focused on ways of promoting universal cosmopolitan values within domestic political processes (Eckersley, 2007; Singh, 2018; Ypi, 2011). And, some theorists advocate the development of political institutions beyond the state which could more routinely promote cosmopolitan/global citizenship aims, while exploring possible means of motivating support for their development (Cabrera, 2010, Ch. 9; Archibugi & Held, 2011; Koenig-Archibugi, 2011; Ulas, 2016; see Valentini, 2014).

Such accounts have offered a number of important normative and practical insights. They also have, however, remained largely disconnected from past academic and civil society initiatives which similarly sought to advance of global normative values. Those would include, for example, ones launched in the 1940s ‘heyday’ for world government, when scientists such as Albert Einstein, world leaders such as Jawaharlal Nehru, and a range of other researchers, government and civil society figures advocated global political unification. While most touted world government as a means of ending major war and/or controlling nuclear weapons, some actors such as Mohandas Gandhi (see Bhagavan, 2012, pp. 16–17), and some prominent initiatives also framed it as a means to advancing global justice. Notable among the latter was The Committee to Frame a World Constitution. It was comprised of leading US academics and chaired by Robert M. Hutchins, then president of the University of Chicago. Its final document called for all persons to be ‘released from the bondage of poverty’, and for the ‘protection of individuals and groups against subjugation and tyrannical rule’ (The Committee to Frame a World Constitution, 1948, p. 330; see Baratta, 2004, Ch. 15).

Some two decades later, another initiative similarly seeking to advance global normative values through global institutional transformation emerged in the form of the World Order Models Project (WOMP). Launched in 1968, it involved a core of around a dozen prominent scholars in North America, Europe, India, Africa, Japan, China and elsewhere (see Falk, 2021, pp. 375–380; McKeil, 2022). Each committed to promoting some fundamental global principles – peace, social justice, economic well-being, and ecological rehabilitation/preservation – which were broadly consistent with those advocated by current cosmopolitan and global citizenship theorists. In fact, as WOMP Director Saul Mendlovitz stated: ‘To think, feel, and act as a global citizen is the essence of world order inquiry’ (Mendlovitz, 1981, p. 367; see McKeil, 2022, p. 4).¹ The project, which ran into the 1990s, staged academic conferences in locations around the world and produced numerous publications under the WOMP imprint, including monographs in a series titled ‘Preferred Worlds for the 1990s’.

The focus here is on WOMP, as the more recent initiative and the one more clearly centred on academic endeavour. It also is the one whose members had to contend with a peak Cold War climate which posed challenges to ambitious normative universalism comparable to the ‘globoskepticism’² of the current era. That is, where WOMP authors faced critiques that their proposals were hopelessly utopian in an era of superpower nuclear standoff, current theorists face a global climate marked by a resurgence of nationalism and extreme right-wing populism (Gudavarthy, 2019; Hunter & Power, 2019; McDonnell & Werner, 2019), and by a corresponding global recession in democratic and civil rights indicators (Freedom House, 2022; V-Dem, 2022). They are thus swimming against the global tide in some ways comparable to the WOMP participants.

The World Order Models Project has recently gained renewed attention, via reflections on its successes, failures and legacy in a memoir by its North American Director Richard Falk (2021), and in a retrospective analysis by Aaron McKeil (2022). The aim here is to more narrowly highlight some insights to be taken from the project for current efforts by academics to advance cosmopolitanism and ethics of global citizenship. I will work to identify valuable features of the WOMP effort that could be adopted or modified, and also to highlight negative lessons to be learned from some problematic features of WOMP that ultimately led it, in Falk's estimation, to represent 'a worthwhile failure' (2022, p. 376).

The article is structured as follows. First, some definitional details are offered on cosmopolitanism and closely related conceptions of global citizenship, and some approaches to cosmopolitan/global citizenship motivation are presented. Background details are offered on The World Order Models Project, and some possible lessons are highlighted from its design and execution. These include insights on the importance of scholarly dialogue that is genuinely globally inclusive but not so diffuse that it becomes effectively a survey of attitudes. The project also yields key insights on the potential importance of providing a globally oriented counter-narrative in globoskeptical times, and on adopting a methodological globalism that extends to a focus on global institutions. In terms of negative lessons, it provides cautionaries on intended practical interventions by academics which remain largely academic; and on being pragmatic about what might be achieved within a relatively short timeline, and what might be possible only in the much longer term.

Cosmopolitanism and global citizenship

This section offers some contextual details on cosmopolitanism and global citizenship, and a general rationale for treating the two together in the context of motivation and realization. To reinforce, the distinction between motivation and realization is intended to take into account circumstances where persons may not be clearly motivated to assume some duty, but where an aim related to the duty might still be justifiably realized. Robert Goodin, for example (1992, Ch.7), cites racial integration policy in Britain. He sees government as having been justified in quietly nudging social changes rather than more overtly seeking to motivate their acceptance. Relatedly, theorists such as Simon Caney (2015) and Gwilym David Blunt (2019) have explored realization questions by focusing on some permissible means of resistance by those facing global injustice (see also Ip, 2022).³ WOMP, it will be shown, offers insights salient to both cosmopolitan/global citizenship motivation and realization efforts.

Cosmopolitanism is typically understood, especially in its liberal variants, as an approach to moral theorizing which is individualist, grants no fundamental moral significance to state membership, and ascribes equal importance to the interests of all persons (Brock, 2009; Caney, 2005; Pogge, 1992; see Kleingeld & Brown, 2019). It thus may posit some relatively demanding trans-state duties – though ones that will vary in demandingness according to the specific principles presumed of global distributive justice, individual rights, etc. They also could vary according to the moral significance ascribed by theorists to state or national membership, community or family ties.

Global citizenship is a similarly global moral ethic, but one typically constructed around some vision of global human community and its connective ties (Dower, 2003; Dower & Williams, 2002; see Carter, 2001; Oxley & Morris, 2013; Pashby et al., 2020; Schattle, 2008). Numerous theorists have treated an ethic of global citizenship and a moral cosmopolitan approach as effectively interchangeable, with some adopting the term 'cosmopolitan citizenship' (Brock, 2009, pp. 8–9; Hutchings, 1999; Linklater, 1998; cf. Vernon, 2010). Others have treated them as complementary or

interlocking in some specific ways (Cabrera, 2010, Ch.1). In each case, both cosmopolitanism and global citizenship accounts are framed as seeking to expand moral horizons to the global, and to posit relatively demanding duties spanning national boundaries. Thus, both will confront similar challenges to actually advancing their favoured principles.

Finally, institutional cosmopolitanism (Caney, 2005, Ch. 4; 2006; Cabrera, ed., 2018; Pogge, 2008, Ch. 7) and institutional global citizenship (Cabrera, 2020; Van Den Anker, 2002) advocate the development of global political institutions capable of backing cosmopolitan moral aims or enabling formalized practices of global citizenship. A variant of institutional cosmopolitanism, cosmopolitan democracy, seeks to shift democratic participation to the regional and global levels to recapture democratic control seen to have been surrendered to processes of globalization (Archibugi, 2008; Held, 1995). It thus also entails the development of regional and global citizenship practices and formalized citizen rights.

Approaches to cosmopolitan and global citizenship motivation

Each approach faces the challenges noted to motivating or realizing its normative aims. This section presents some proposed solutions. It includes accounts by those self-describing as cosmopolitan or global citizenship theorists, and by some others who offer consonant arguments but do not claim the labels. We can begin with theorists offering accounts of moral cosmopolitan and ethical global citizenship, and duties they have identified to aid especially those facing poverty globally. When such theorists have turned to questions around how such individual duties could be motivated, they often have focused on sentiment, or the promotion of empathy, perspective taking and globally pro-social attitudes among the relatively affluent (Nussbaum, 1997; Jeffery, 2014; Lichtenberg, 2014; cf. Beck, 2013, pp. 8–9; see Singer, 2009; Singh, 2018; Hobbs, 2020; see also Faulkner, 2018; Hudson et al., 2019).⁴

A number of global citizenship advocates have undertaken broadly similar efforts toward inculcating a global ethic of greater solidarity in which perspective-taking – striving to see through the eyes of the worst-off globally – is often a core feature (Küng, 1997; Midgley, 1999). Numerous accounts of global citizenship education similarly emphasize the promotion of universal values and concern for those in other parts of the world (Pashby et al., 2020, pp. 151–152; Sant et al., 2018).

Relatedly, some ‘statist cosmopolitans’ have sought to identify ways in which certain types of civic and political dialogue in the domestic sphere can encourage the development of more-cosmopolitan attitudes toward outsiders (Ypi, 2011, Ch.6; see Erskine, 2008, pp. 251–255; Brown & Jarvis, 2019). Other theorists have linked their motivation accounts to empirical presumptions about state interdependence and processes of globalization. Some, for example, have argued for an emphasis on harms to the global poor in which potential duty bearers can be shown to be complicit, as a means of motivating them to discharge cosmopolitan duties (Pogge, 2008, pp. 203–204; Dobson, 2006; Linklater, 2007; see Faulkner, 2017; Cameron, 2018). Lior Erez (2020) emphasizes the self-interest domestic citizens have in preventing their state from perpetrating harms abroad, for fear that would increase the chances it would do the same at home (see also Shapcott, 2008). Alternately, Daniel Weinstock has argued that an emphasis on harms related to global poverty, including border-crossing diseases and international terrorism, give the global affluent self-interested reasons to give more attention to the interests of the less-affluent (2009, pp. 96–100). Others have similarly explored types of self-interested motivations (Brown & Hobbs, 2022; Ulas, 2016, p. 111).

In terms of institutional approaches, cosmopolitan democrats again have argued that in an era of intensive globalization and an increasing extension of global decision making beyond the state, democratic input also should be progressively extended (Archibugi, 2008, pp. 57–59; Held, 1995,

pp. 190–201; Koenig-Archibugi, 2011). Their hopes for realizing such an extension rest partly on assumptions that domestic populations will increasingly demand it (see Archibugi & Held, 2011). Other institutionalists have emphasized how some processes of economic globalization (Cabrera, 2004, Ch. 7), concerns around harm interdependence (Pogge, 2008), the continuing development of international law (Trachtman, 2013), or forms of self-interest (Ulas, 2016), could open opportunities for developing higher-capacity, more-cosmopolitan political institutions beyond the state. The next section gives background on the World Order Models Project, laying the groundwork for insights current cosmopolitan and global citizenship theorists might take from it.

The World Order Models Project: aims and activities

The World Order Models Project was conceived by its global director, Rutgers Professor of International Law Mendlovitz, as an extension of dialogue on world government. Mendlovitz was inspired by *World Peace Through World Law* (Clark & Sohn, 1958), a widely read blueprint for transforming the United Nations into a powers-limited and security-focused world government. That book formed the centrepiece of an educational initiative launched by Mendlovitz and others in the early 1960s. It included a discussion guide and collection of readings titled *Legal and Political Problems of World Order* (Mendlovitz, ed., 1962). Mendlovitz notes that some 10,000 copies were adopted for 350 courses and seminars in the United States (2000, p. 315). He and Falk went on to edit a four-volume compilation of readings titled *The Strategy of World Order*. Its preface lauds Clark and Sohn's book as 'a model of the kind of world order that is needed if the prospect of major warfare is to be eliminated from international life' (1966, Vol. II, p. ix).

Mendlovitz himself promoted such integrative world order thinking in workshops around the United States and internationally. The idea for WOMP emerged from one of the workshops, held in Tanzania in 1966. Mendlovitz noted that reactions by participants there from eight East African countries ranged from 'skepticism to hostility' to the materials and ideas presented. Overall, he said, the workshop was received 'as another insinuation of Western ideology on the African continent' (Mendlovitz, 2000, p. 315). That prompted him to pursue the development of a more globally inclusive world order dialogue and educational initiative. He began raising funds and enlisting leading scholars globally.

The World Order Models Project formally launched at a 1968 conference in New Delhi with scholar members from West Germany, India, Africa, Japan, North America and Latin America. Mendlovitz notes that while the intended project emphasis had been the elimination of war, members from developing countries proved much more interested in questions of economic justice and development (Mendlovitz, 1975, p. xix). Thus, the WOMP remit expanded to encompass the set of core values noted above, including peace, social justice, economic well-being and ecological rehabilitation/preservation (see Kothari, 1974, pp. 10–12; Falk, 1975, Ch. 1). The project expanded over the next several years to include scholars from other European countries, China, the USSR and elsewhere. Several more international meetings were held, leading to the first major WOMP outputs in the 1970s, the 'Preferred Worlds for the 1990s' book series.

Falk, WOMP's North American director, was the project's most prominent US academic. He taught international law at Princeton for 40 years and has career outputs spanning more than 50 monographs and edited volumes, along with hundreds of articles and chapters. He also was a highly visible public intellectual, through his critique of the US war in Vietnam and later as UN special rapporteur on the Palestinian territories (Falk, 2021, Ch. 11; see Mendlovitz, 2000; Carey & Mitchell, 2021). Falk and others in the WOMP core explicitly rejected Mendlovitz's

favoured Clark and Sohn model of world government (see Falk, 2021, p. 377). At the same time, however, they advocated some highly ambitious and extensive world order reforms. For example, Falk's entry in the 'Preferred Worlds' series, *A Study of Future Worlds*, prescribes a world parliamentary assembly with some binding legislative powers, a world executive and court (Falk 1975, pp. 228-275). Rajni Kothari, founding director of the Centre for the Study of Developing Societies in New Delhi, contributed the monograph *Footsteps Into the Future*. It calls for a multi-level global democratic system that would provide some global security and facilitate transfers of resources and technologies to developing countries (Kothari, 1974, Ch.1). Ali Mazrui, a prominent scholar of African Studies, authored *A World Federation of Cultures: An African Perspective*. Within his scheme, every child would learn their communal or national language, a regional one and a world language (Mazrui, 1976, p. 476). World languages, including Arabic, Russian, Mandarin Chinese, French and English, would feature in global political representation.

Numerous other monographs, working papers, reports and edited volumes were published under WOMP auspices, all intended for curricular use and to influence public dialogue globally. In 1975, WOMP launched an academic journal under Kothari's editorship, *Alternatives*, which sought to open global spaces for different perspectives on world order.⁵ Overall, WOMP staged some 30 meetings through the 1990s. The project generated a sizeable secondary and critical literature (Bull, 1977, p. 302; Ian Clark, 1979; Michalak, 1980; see Dulby, 1999; Wapner and Ruiz, eds., 2000), and it offered a significant counter-narrative to Cold War realist international relations scholarship (see Falk et al., 1993, pp. 5–8).

McKeil, in his retrospective, explores whether the time is right for a revival of WOMP, or some broadly similar and improved initiative (2022, pp. 6–8). Falk himself speculates in a remembrance of Mazrui, who died in 2014, that the project may have been the right idea at the wrong time. He expresses hope that some version of it could be revived by current scholars (Falk, 2014; 2021, p. 379). The remainder of this article explores not a straightforward revival of WOMP, but ways in which the project's development, operationalization and legacy can inform current efforts by theorists of cosmopolitanism and global citizenship to contribute to the practical advancement of the principles they espouse.

Insights from WOMP for cosmopolitan and global citizenship theorists

WOMP can first serve as a model of more inclusive academic dialogue oriented to promoting practical change. Members from various global regions helped to shape the project's aims and priorities, and they presented their own views and written contributions under its imprint. As Mendlovitz notes, such a structure helped to both ensure fairer representation of scholarly voices, and to significantly enrich world order dialogue: 'Even the most sympathetic and globally-minded scholar can only perceive the world from a particular angle and perspective ... the same global problem or phenomenon is frequently interpreted in different ways by observers from different cultures' (1975, p. xviii).

It should be noted that WOMP's inclusivity did not initially extend to bridging gender divides. None of the authors or editors of the five books in the 'Preferred Worlds for the 1990s', series, for example, is female, though women authors were increasingly included in other WOMP publications. McKeil further questions WOMP's representativeness, given its relatively small numbers – though Falk notes that the model was for WOMP country directors to coordinate with other researchers domestically and meet internationally twice a year to discuss progress (1972, p. 280). Overall, WOMP included a culturally and geographically more diverse range of voices than is the norm even in much recent academic dialogue, including on cosmopolitanism and global citizenship.⁶

To date, there has been no similarly large-scale, structured project among theorists working specifically on questions of cosmopolitan/global citizenship motivation, though there have been various international academic dialogues on advancing aspects of global justice or democracy. For example, the Global Justice Network (2022), comprised primarily of scholars in the UK/Europe, North America and Australia,⁷ has sought to promote dialogue through nine workshops since 2006 in Europe, the UK and Australia, and through a peer-reviewed, open-access electronic journal, *Global Justice: Theory Practice Rhetoric*. Building Global Democracy and a predecessor project, headed by Jan Aart Scholte, have involved hundreds of academics and civil society actors in wide-ranging global dialogues. Those are discussed below. We can also note some relevant civil society-led efforts involving some academics, including the Campaign for a United Nations Parliamentary Assembly (2022) and the Great Transition Initiative (2022).

Global citizenship has seen comparatively more collective efforts, though perhaps more as a sort of umbrella term encompassing varied initiatives than a WOMP-style project promoting specific content. It has been the focus, for example, of major global citizenship education projects by UNESCO (2022) and Oxfam (2022). It has generated a large academic literature on the same, emphasizing curricular changes to promote global awareness, views or values (see Sant et al., 2018). Global citizenship also has been adopted by numerous universities as a descriptor for the values they seek to instil in students, and for experiential certificate or degree programmes (Aktas et al., 2017). As Pashby et al. (2020) document in a detailed review article, the global citizenship education literature is widely divergent in its approaches and guiding principles.

By contrast, WOMP indicates a more structured and focused model of dialogue emphasizing some shared central values. I will suggest that WOMP can direct us to a model that is diverse but not diffuse: a model of more inclusive dialogue that has the potential to lead to some agreement on, or at least fruitful collective refinement of, principles and proposed actions relevant to advancing cosmopolitanism and global citizenship. To see how this may be so, it will be useful to compare WOMP to the more recent initiatives headed by Scholte.

The first was the Civil Society and Democracy in the Global Economy Project, funded by the Ford Foundation. It adopted a structure with some similarities to WOMP's, in that it had coordinators in 10 countries. Scholte drew them from universities and also non-governmental organizations. In meetings, coordinators in seven countries took input on accountability in global economic governance from more than 350 civil society practitioners from 251 organizations. Findings are presented in the report *Democratizing the Global Economy: The Role of Civil Society* (Scholte, 2004), and they inform subsequent publications (Scholte, 2008).

Scholte also led the Ford Foundation-funded Building Global Democracy initiative from 2008 to 2014. It aimed to globally democratize *dialogue* on global democracy. The initiative's 10 primary coordinators led five workshop-based projects focused on discrete aspects of global democracy, including conceptual, cultural, institutional and economic ones (see Scholte, ed., 2015). Each project involved different sets of participants from diverse global regions – 160 in total, with about half drawn from academia and others from civil society, governance bodies, media, business (Scholte, 2020, pp. 75–76). As with WOMP, the initiative's workshops took place at diverse locations, including Delhi, Cairo, Rio de Janeiro and Pretoria/Tshwane. Scholte notes such diversity of input as a chief strength of the initiative (Scholte, 2020, p. 77).

No substantive agreement on principles or practices was claimed as an outcome of either project. Rather, Scholte himself has sought to synthesize the findings and deploy them in a critique of liberal approaches to global democracy and the development of a 'post-liberal' form of shared rule. Yet, the insights and innovations he draws from the projects remain at quite a high level of abstraction.

He identifies, for example, a ‘reimagining’ of the democratic people in global politics that could draw on varied sources of political solidarity (2020, p. 81). How such demoi are to be formed or operationalized is not broached, except by reference to further dialogue. This is to take place ‘on a level playing field: with full mutual respect, listening, learning and change – also and in particular on the part of liberals’ (Scholte, 2020, p. 82). Little guidance is given on how such a principle-bounded dialogue would represent an appropriate advance on liberalism rather than represent some liberal dialogic ideal. Overall, the diffuse dialogue of the projects appears primarily to have resulted primarily in a call for further dialogue.

We can note that both the WOMP dialogue and that of Building Global Democracy are useful for indicating some potentially significant problematizations of ‘motivating’ cosmopolitanism or global citizenship. A *motivating* frame seems to imply that there is some consensus on a single set of principles, and the problem to be solved is strictly mechanical – finding the right levers to press to persuade, skilfully nudge or otherwise identify some justifiable means of realizing the discharge of global duties.⁸ The WOMP experience in particular highlights challenges to such a view, given that all participants were agreed on the four broad WOMP values but all ultimately offered varying interpretations of them and varying institutional models to embody and back them (see Falk, 1978, pp. 537–539). Similarly, global citizenship, cosmopolitan and related dialogues have expanded in recent years to include a range of critical accounts (see Schiller & Irving, 2014).

Do such challenges then simply leave us at an impasse? Can cosmopolitan and global citizenship theorists demonstrate that their principles plausibly could be implemented if there is disagreement on what those principles are? Here it seems the WOMP model could be most useful for current efforts. That is, it should benefit all theorists to engage in the kind of dialogue represented in the WOMP meetings, because it was narrowly enough focused on the four shared values to produce some specific proposals, but diverse enough in viewpoints that it could challenge assumptions in the way both Mendlovitz and Scholte advocate.

Such a dialogue would not be so broad that it risks falling into effectively a survey of diffuse viewpoints related to global governance. At the same time, it should give important insights about how cosmopolitan or global citizenship principles ‘travel’ across different political and cultural terrain, and how they may be challenged from different moral and political traditions prominent in different parts of the world. As Falk notes in his memoir: ‘I learned by being exposed to these self-confident public intellectuals from foreign countries, especially those from the Global South’. He adds that ‘the Western and Soviet preoccupations with war/peace issues connected with the dangers that the Cold War would produce a catastrophic third world war were not nearly as widely shared as I had previously assumed’ (Falk, 2021, p. 379). Arguably, such diverse but not diffuse dialogue, and the information it can provide, would be essential to any current efforts to try to promote the broader global uptake of globally oriented normative principles. Even if theorists are more narrowly focused on motivating cosmopolitanism/global citizenship in their home countries, the insights such dialogue could provide would be crucial for identifying appropriate duties to those elsewhere, e.g. duties of solidarity to support the struggles of those facing poverty and injustice (see Deveaux, 2021).

Overall, a WOMP-style structured dialogue – a collective ‘project’ with at least some overarching cosmopolitan/global citizenship principles in common – could pay numerous dividends to participants (see Qian, 2018).⁹ It also could be viewed as an early stage of a multi-stage process, in which scholars focused on shared problems first seek to refine their own views and achieve agreement where it is possible, then seek to engage broader audiences with their own views, on which more below.¹⁰

Providing a counter-narrative in Globoskeptic Times

The World Order Models Project emerged in the depths of the Cold War, at the beginning of the détente era, but still a time in which the antagonistic superpowers had tens of thousands of nuclear weapons aimed at each other, and when versions of realism were predominant in international relations scholarship. WOMP was thus notable for its forceful rejection of realist theorizing and political realpolitik. For example, in his 1984 monograph, *The Quest for a Just World Order*, WOMP scholar Samuel Kim asserts the following:

In effect, mainstream realism is not so much an empirical/scientific description of “objective reality” ... as it is an ideology designed to discredit those who challenge the existing social order and prescribe change. The repeated charge of utopianism against any system-transforming approach to world order performs a system-maintaining function. (Kim, 1984, p. 9; see Falk et al., 1993, p. 5)

WOMP authors analysed regional and global problems from an explicitly normative lens (Falk, 1978, p. 541), and they sought to identify ambitious but practical paths to reform.

The project faced stringent critique from various scholarly quarters (Farer, 1977; Michalak, 1980; see Bull, 1977, pp. 309–311). Critics typically focused on the same sorts of ‘ought implies can’ objections faced by current cosmopolitan and global citizenship theorists. Yet, WOMP authors consistently sought to present an alternative global public imaginary – a way of conceiving possibilities for reform and transformation not strictly bound by presumptions of ceaseless geopolitical struggle between superpowers.

This in fact paid some unexpected practical dividends. As Mendlovitz relates, WOMP was approached in 1986 by Georgi Shakhnazarov, the longtime president of the Soviet Association of Political Sciences and a reform-minded special assistant to Mikhail Gorbachev. Shakhnazarov said he and a group of colleagues had studied the WOMP approach and found aspects of it compelling (Mendlovitz, 2000, p. 318). Ensuing dialogue led to the launch of the five-year, multinational WOMP-sponsored initiative, the Coming Global Civilization Project, on whose steering committee Shakhnazarov served (Shakhnazarov, 1989). It involved numerous meetings and several publications on reform possibilities. While there is no claim here that WOMP played a direct role in late-Soviet reforms, the episode does highlight the potential significance of providing a normatively oriented alternative to realism/realpolitik in globoskeptical times.

What more specific lessons might be taken then for the *globoskepticism* of the current era? We can note first that most recent wave of cosmopolitan/global citizenship theorizing emerged not under Cold War tensions but amid the exuberance of the immediate post-Cold War period. The tenor of that time was typified in the opening lines of Thomas Pogge’s influential article, ‘Cosmopolitanism and Sovereignty’ where he declared, ‘The human future suddenly seems open. This is an inspiration; we can step back and think more freely’ (1992, p. 48). More recently, however, prevailing global narratives have been concerned with a global recession of democracy. For example, the Varieties of Democracy project Democracy Report finds scores on democratic indicators at their lowest level since 1989 (V-Dem, 2022), and Freedom House reports that civil liberties and political rights declined globally for 16 consecutive years since 2005 (Freedom House, 2022).

As democracy scores have declined, so have right-wing populist leaders and parties assumed power or gained greater influence in electoral democracies from the United States to Brazil, India, Turkey, the Philippines, Hungary, Poland and numerous others (Bayerlein, 2021). Right-wing populism is understood here as a thin narrative ideology framing politics as a struggle between a ‘true people’, a set of elites antagonistic to their interests, and against immigrants or

other ‘outsiders’ dangerous to the people (Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2017; McDonnell & Werner, 2019, pp. 19–24). Such a narrative may have reached its rhetorical peak in relation to global citizenship and cosmopolitanism in 2019, when then-US President Donald Trump told the United Nations General Assembly, ‘The future does not belong to globalists. The future belongs to patriots’ (Trump, 2019).

While such an era is distinct from the 1960s to the 1980s Cold War, it bears important similarities to the peak WOMP era in that the prevailing climate is one of globoskepticism about reform, rather than the kind of optimism seen in the early 1990s. In the WOMP era, normative International Relations and other globally oriented scholars faced charges of utopianism. Mendlovitz and the other WOMP principals responded by joining in a collective endeavour that, even if it never produced a single message about *the* shape of world order reform, offered a series of powerful counter-narratives. As Falk said in response to a WOMP critic, the project was notable in sending a message that ‘the perils of the world situation are so severe that we need to gather our energies for constructive efforts’ (Falk, 1978, p. 531).

A further lesson from WOMP then could be that cosmopolitans and global citizenship theorists should consider a similar gathering of energies, a structured dialogue offering a more concerted response to the current globoskepticism. Such a move could be recommended by considerations of possible vulnerability and also effectiveness. In terms of vulnerability, a WOMP-style project platform could offer some support and solidarity for academics espousing potentially unpopular global views. We can note that in the early Cold War period, dialogue on world government dialogue was all but extinguished by association with presumed Soviet plans for one-world domination (see for example Kamp, 1950). In the current era, particularly in the US context, some prominent actors on the right explicitly frame ‘globalists’ as enemies of the true people (Roberts 2022).¹¹ More generally, rising nationalism and populism are found to be putting pressure on academic freedom in a range of countries (Douglass, 2021).

It might be argued that a WOMP-style affiliation would increase the likelihood of individual theorists being targeted for their globally oriented views, especially in the current age of social media.¹² That may be so to some extent, yet it is the very ubiquity of social media and the broader ease of targeting ‘globalist’ authors online that could make solidarity and support among scholars more crucial. That sort of solidaristic logic is embodied in efforts by organizations such as the American Association of University Professors (2023) to collectively promote academic freedom and support individual academics targeted for their views.

Second, a structured dialogue broadly on the WOMP model would likely be more effective for the practical advancement of cosmopolitan and global citizenship principles than individual scholarly efforts. Per the discussion above, it should provide opportunities for the challenge and refinement of presumptions about motivation and realization across global contexts. Further, it could bring normative and empirical researchers – in particular from social psychology – into greater actual dialogue, given how much of the recent motivation literature engages with such research (see Cameron, 2018). And, a project model could be useful for highlighting the basic cosmopolitan/global citizenship counter-narrative to especially right-wing populist rhetoric. It could amplify scholarly voices and offer the kind of focal point and platform for alternatives that WOMP sought to provide.

Negative insights: WOMP as a ‘Worthwhile failure’

WOMP overall could be understood as an educational initiative designed to help spur mass social movements. In Mendlovitz’s words, ‘We set out to create the basic instructional materials needed

for a worldwide educational movement whose ultimate thrust would be global reform' (1975 xxi; see Falk, 1972, p. 280). Thus, the 'Preferred Worlds' books, early *Alternatives* articles and numerous other outputs were intended to change the minds of especially university and younger students about global possibilities. For example, in 1982 Falk and Kim published a WOMP working paper offering an approach to world order studies meant to supplant more traditional IR approaches. Its abstract touts it as part of WOMP's effort to 'to stimulate research, education, dialogue, and political action aimed at contributing to a movement for a just world order' (Falk & Kim, 1982).

WOMP's initiatives did provide alternative academic narratives, enrich curricular dialogue and capture the attention of some political figures. Yet, for Falk, the project falls among the 'worthwhile failures' experienced in his career. They were worthwhile, he says, because 'We must be willing to keep failing if we are to hold onto hopes of something succeeding' (Falk, 2021, p. 376). I will suggest that two key cautionaries or negative lessons can be taken from the WOMP experience and Falk's assessment of it for current efforts.

The first cautionary concerns expectations and ambitions. Just as with the world government movements of the 1940s (Baratta, 2004), Mendlovitz and some other WOMP principals aimed at and expected to realize dramatic global changes in an extremely short time frame. Indeed, WOMP sought to spur a global social movement that would result in world order transformation within a generation. We can note again that the essential WOMP outputs beginning in the 1970s were offered in a book series titled 'Preferred World for the 1990s', just two decades away. Setting such a high bar for success on such a relatively short timeline certainly would risk setting up an initiative for failure. Thus, WOMP provides cautionaries on the expectations and aims adopted for initiatives.

Indeed, one of the most important lessons from WOMP, and from the world government movements and efforts of the 1940s and other periods, is that ambitions to advance large scale attitudinal and structural changes should be placed on much longer timelines, and advances viewed as cumulative. In terms of the latter, we might keep in mind the metaphor offered by H.G. Wells, in the 'auto-obituary' he penned toward the end of his lifelong quest to promote world government. Wells described himself there as 'a reef-building coral polyp', the reef being a common stock of ideas and visions on which others will draw (quoted in Partington, 2008, p. 571). For his part, Falk notes that today, 'even a friendly critic is tempted to describe WOMP's *Preferred Worlds* project as 'Irrelevant Utopias for the 1990s'. He adds of alternative visions, however, that, 'if well conceived, are they ever really irrelevant if the imagined future manifests a compassionate and creative political consciousness?' (Falk, 2021, p. 378). I will suggest that, insofar as WOMP is to be counted as a failure, its chief failure was in aiming to achieve too much with the project in too short a time. That should provide some important lessons about expectations and ambitions, and ideally the structuring of current efforts.

Second, and further in terms of structuring, WOMP offers lessons about projects by academics possibly remaining too academic. While each WOMP author was encouraged to outline both Transmission and Transformation processes that plausibly could lead to the institutional changes sought (see Hollins, 1975, pp. 9–10), the project overall remained centrally focused on academic and curricular publishing. Today's scholars have many more avenues of dissemination available to them, including social media platforms, online video outlets, myriad general-circulation publications online, among others (see Klar et al., 2020). They also can make use of virtual networks to engage one another, to conduct workshops and more public-facing events, and to participate more readily in policy dialogues staged by relevant think tanks and organizations. Attention to the

WOMP case and its ultimate outcomes should provide strong incentives to pursue such direct engagement with more general audiences.

Methodological globalism and an institutional focus

Finally, WOMP may offer positive lessons on the importance of adopting a genuinely global methodology in efforts to advance global normative principles – one that calls attention to the global scope of problems and gives reasons to focus on global institutional solutions. WOMP initiatives consistently emphasized the importance of developing global-scale empirical understandings. Thus, in the mid-1970s, WOMP issued *State of the Globe* annual reports (see Reardon, 1975), featuring a range of global indicators salient to the WOMP values.

Broadly similar reports now abound. Researchers can find detailed information on global poverty, health and development in the UN World Development Report (2022) and the UN Sustainable Development Goals initiative (United Nations, 2022), among many other reports and indices. Theorists of cosmopolitanism and global citizenship have used available global poverty statistics to ground claims about the urgency of individuals assuming cross-border distributive and related duties. Often these are offered in conjunction with findings from social psychology about ways in which individuals may be motivated to assume cosmopolitan or global citizenship duties (Jeffery, 2014, Ch. 1; Lichtenberg, 2014, Ch. 1; see also Cabrera, 2010, Ch. 9; Gould, 2020).

Yet, the many global indices and reports help to highlight some limitations of an individual *motivation* approach to advancing cosmopolitanism and global citizenship. WOMP was noteworthy not only for its attempt to provide global indicators, but for its focus on regional and global institutions that could meet modern problems at their own scale. As noted, the project's participants were mostly united in opposition to a Clark and Sohn-style world government capable of maintaining a global peace, but they were united in agreement that significant and comprehensive world order reforms were required to make adequate progress toward advancing the WOMP values. A genuinely global methodological view can help to highlight ways in which global problems require global coordination through institutions, and to focus attention on reforms that may be needed to existing institutions. It should give theorists additional reason to move beyond a narrow focus on seeking to motivate individual charitable transfers (see Deveaux, 2021, Ch. 2), to a focus on generating support for institutional transformation and development.

Conclusion

This article has highlighted insights that can be taken from the World Order Models Project for motivation and/or realization of cosmopolitan and global citizenship principles. It began by defining cosmopolitanism and global citizenship and highlighting how both represent normative approaches focused on border-spanning duties corresponding to universal principles, and thus could be treated together. Some prominent approaches to motivation and realization were then discussed, including ones focusing on the promotion of moral sentiment and perspective-taking across national boundaries, on interests most persons have in avoiding harm to others, and on ways in which the uptake of global duties could be promoted within domestic political processes.

Background was then offered on the World Order Models Project, launched in 1968 as an academic dialogue and educational initiative intended to promote substantive global institutional reforms. Possible insights were highlighted from the WOMP experience for current theorists. First, it was shown, WOMP could serve as a model of structured normative dialogue that is globally

diverse without becoming too diffuse to generate practical insights for reform. WOMP also was shown to provide a potentially significant counter-narrative of global reform in a ‘globoskeptical’ era, and some similarities were highlighted between the Cold War and the current era of democratic recession and right-wing populism. WOMP was then discussed as a model of structured dialogue that cosmopolitan and global citizenship theorists may want to adopt, as a collective bulwark against attacks on reform-oriented scholarship by right-wing populists, and a means of refining and more effectively advancing their principles.

Some negative lessons from WOMP were highlighted, including on setting realistic ambitions and timelines for such projects, and on moving beyond academic outputs, to more direct engagement with audiences, in part using the many online/social media outlets now available. Finally, WOMP highlights the possible importance of a focus on institutional reform, rather than a sole focus on motivating individuals, given the need for global coordination to address many global problems. Overall, it was argued, a focus on the WOMP model and its operationalization could provide a range of useful insights for the motivation and realization turns within global citizenship and cosmopolitan approaches.

Notes

1. WOMP North America Director Richard Falk has written extensively on global citizenship, primarily in the post-WOMP era. He offers the ideal of the ‘citizen pilgrim’ as one possessing ‘the spirit of a sojourner, committed to transformation ... premised on the wholeness and equality of the human family’ (Falk, 2002, p. 27; 2021).
2. An adaptation of ‘Euroskepticism,’ as resistance by elites or voters to extending the governance reach and capacities of European Union bodies. Globoskepticism encompasses a more general wariness of global governance and global normative claims to some extent (see Cabrera 2015).
3. Ip does not focus on resistance to global injustice per se, but he engages those who do and his Confucian perspective on resistance could have implications for those accounts.
4. Faulkner is a social psychologist empirically testing assumptions about empathy and perspective-taking in relation to cosmopolitanism. He has tested related assumptions about motivations to avoid harming others (2017; see also Cameron, 2018).
5. *Alternatives: Global, Local, Political*, later shifted to a primary emphasis on critical International Relations theory, and away from more encompassing world order inquiries. This to some extent reflected the academic sensibilities of R.B.J. Walker, a WOMP-affiliated author at the University of Victoria, British Columbia who edited the journal for two decades.
6. Though with notable and increasing exceptions. See, for example, the chapters by Jiwei Ci, Arthur Chin, Pablo Gilabert, Krushil Watene in *The Oxford Handbook of Global Justice* (Brooks, 2020).
7. The network also lists as a member Uchenna Okeja, professor of philosophy at Rhodes University in Eastern Cape, South Africa.
8. I thank Luke Ulas for helping to shape my thinking on this point.
9. Qian offers a thoughtful intervention on the importance of and possibilities for a genuinely cross-culture, *cosmopolitan* dialogue among scholars, while highlighting its importance amid right-wing populist dismissals of such efforts.
10. Mendlovitz, described by Falk as ‘an excellent entrepreneur of ideas with a fundraising talent’ (2021, p. 377), was able to secure relatively large private donations to underwrite the WOMP dialogues. An anonymous reviewer asks whether the current climate would be so supportive. In response, we can note the Ford Foundation grants won by Scholte that funded meetings of similar or larger size and number, as well as numerous other dialogue grants in cognate areas, i.e., global climate justice. If a dialogue proposal focused on cosmopolitanism and global citizenship would face greater funding challenges now, it is the case that video meeting technology is increasingly used by academics and others globally, and video meetings could provide at least some of the key benefits noted here, at minimal cost.

11. Kevin Roberts is president of the prominent conservative think tank the Heritage Foundation in Washington, D.C. Responding to September 2022 electoral gains by right-wing populist parties in Sweden and Italy, he tweeted to his 14,500 followers: ‘This can be a trend: conservatives everywhere need to define the choice as what it is – US vs THEM, everyday people vs globalist elites, who’ve shown they hate us.’
12. I thank an anonymous reviewer for pressing me on this point.

Acknowledgements

I thank Chandrachur Singh, Richard Shapcott, Josh Hobbs, Garrett Wallace Brown and Richard Falk for helpful dialogue on this article.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

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