



# Activists Beyond Borders: Advocacy Networks in International Politics

By Margaret E. Keck, Kathryn Sikkink

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In *Activists beyond Borders*, Margaret E. Keck and Kathryn Sikkink examine a type of pressure group that has been largely ignored by political analysts: networks of activists that coalesce and operate across national frontiers. Their targets may be international organizations or the policies of particular states. Historical examples of such transborder alliances include anti-slavery and woman suffrage campaigns. In the past two decades, transnational activism has had a significant impact in human rights, especially in Latin America, and advocacy networks have strongly influenced environmental politics as well. The authors also examine the emergence of an international campaign around violence against women.

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## Editorial Review

### Review

"Margaret Keck and Kathryn Sikkink's *Activists beyond Borders* has been extremely influential in studies of transnational collective action. Building on firsthand experiences, fieldwork, and a vast secondary literature on social movement activity, they highlight the rising prevalence and influence of transnational actors in domestic political exchange and international relations. To demonstrate this phenomenon they introduce a database, constructed by Jackie Smith, on international nongovernmental social change organizations. They also present three qualitative case studies of networks working for human rights, the environment, and women's freedom from violence. The case studies are particularly noteworthy insofar as 'approximately half of all international nongovernmental social change organizations work on these three issues.' Their conceptual innovations, grounded theory, and illustrative case studies have broken new ground and have become a touchstone for studies on transnational collective action."?Comparative Politics

"*Activists beyond Borders* is one of the finest books on global social activism to come out in recent years. It breaks new ground by offering a theory of grassroots international activism. . . . The book is chalked full of lessons for labor and other social activists. . . . The book is inspiring."?Dollars and Sense

"*Activists beyond Borders* makes a compelling case for the conditions under which international collaboration among activists across nations can achieve change that would have been impossible otherwise. The authors take care to develop a clear model of the factors necessary for such change, they are restrained in their willingness to generalize beyond the cases they have examined, and they supplement the contemporary campaigns analyzed in the book with historical examples."?Signs

"For Keck and Sikkink, the webs of connections human rights groups have formed constitute the heart of their story. In showing why these networks succeed, they have advanced theoretical analysis. . . . An essential addition to the libraries of all interested in human rights."?Human Rights Quarterly

"Keck and Sikkink are masters at blurring disciplinary boundaries, melding theory on international relations with a broad range of theories on the formation of domestic social movements. They also do an impressive job of tracing the origins of these networks historically, including case studies of the mid-nineteenth-century antislavery movement and the movement for female suffrage."?Latin American Research Review

"Offers valuable descriptive accounts of the role played by nonstate actors in the global issues arena, mostly in areas relating to human rights and the environment."?The American Journal of International Law

"Valuable reading for anyone concerned with contemporary dynamics of social change."?International Affairs

"An important new contribution. . . . The challenge the authors set for themselves is a valuable one, and this book helps navigate these largely uncharted practical and theoretical waters."?Canadian Journal of Political Science

*"Activists beyond Borders* is a searching exploration of advocacy networks, providing compelling accounts in areas such as human rights and environmental protection and an intriguing glimpse into the transnational politics of the twenty-first century."?Robert O. Keohane, Duke University

"A masterful combination of emerging theory and empirical comparison of one of the most intriguing areas of transnational politics. Keck and Sikkink access a broad range of theory from social movements, international relations, and comparative politics research to glean from a wealth of their own research findings solid and thought-provoking conclusions about the most interesting and least well-understood area of contentious politics in the world today."?Sidney Tarrow, Cornell University

#### About the Author

Margaret E. Keck is Professor of Political Science at the Johns Hopkins University. She is the author of *The Workers' Party and Democratization in Brazil* and the coauthor of *Greening Brazil: Environmental Activism in State and Society*.

Kathryn Sikkink is McKnight Presidential Chair in Political Science and Regents Professor of Political Science at the University of Minnesota, and is an affiliated faculty member at the University of Minnesota Law School. Her other books include, as coeditor, *Restructuring World Politics: Transnational Social Movements, Networks, and Norms*.

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