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### Title

State-Sponsored activism: bureaucrats and social movements in democratic Brazil

### Permalink

<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/36b3x2qp>

### Journal

Social Movement Studies, 22(5-6)

### ISSN

1474-2837

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### Publication Date

2023-11-02

### DOI

10.1080/14742837.2023.2184793

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Peer reviewed

**State-Sponsored Activism: Bureaucrats and Social Movements in Democratic Brazil.**

Jessica Rich.

Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019. ISBN 978-1-108-45680-7 (paperback), \$29.99. Pp. 240.

**State-Sponsored Activism in Brazil: explaining social movement's endurance**

Since the 1980s, the HIV/AIDS epidemic has fostered serious political and public health challenges, such as the prohibitive cost of antiretrovirals (ARVs) due to highly protectionist intellectual property regimes. Social movements, in this regard, have been vital in overcoming these hardships and have successfully helped to reduce ARVs' prices worldwide, increase access to treatment, and decrease stigmatization and discrimination. Notwithstanding their accomplishments, social movements risk being short-lived, low-funded, with weak institutional access to the government or co-opted by the state. *State-Sponsored Activism: Bureaucrats and Social Movements in Democratic Brazil* provides a new theoretical and empirical account of why Brazil's AIDS movement endured despite these abovementioned perils. In this book, Jessica Rich introduces a new pattern of state-society relations, which she calls civic corporatism: when state actors help civil society organizations to mobilize relatively autonomous political advocacy coalitions.

Relying on a combination of semi-structured interviews with more than two hundred leaders of civic AIDS organizations, bureaucrats, and politicians as well as participant observation, this book offers numerous theoretical and empirical contributions to studying social movements' endurance. First, by studying a deviant case, Rich contrasts traditional theories of social movements that predicted that Brazil's AIDS movement would hibernate, dissolve, or be

co-opted by the government. By doing so, she contends that this movement's expansion and endurance occurred because it was cultivated by national government bureaucrats who depended on activism to help them pursue their policy goals. Second, in contrast to previous scholarly work, an implication of the author's argument is "that the combination of democratization and neoliberal reforms did not destroy but rather *transformed* the incentives and resources that sustained corporatism" (21, Emphasis in the original). Whereas the literature about corporatism in Latin America has indicated that the state under neoliberalism undermined the role played by interests groups and civic society actors (e.g., working classes) in the political process, Rich's argument suggests that democratization created new actors that support civic society mobilization and the neoliberal reforms produced new forms of government service delivery to civic organizations (i.e., outsourcing). As a result, this combination engendered a new form of state-society relations with "enduring civic coalitions that are also autonomous from the state" (28).

Third, the success of the collaboration between AIDS social movements and bureaucrats in devising the implementation of a public health policy in a highly decentralized country occurred through new forms of civic organization and mobilization "between state and society [that exist] side-by-side with more repressive and contentious relationships" (34). Rich finds that it was not politicians but rather bureaucrats who most directly shaped the opportunities and constraints for AIDS civic advocacy because bureaucrats provided institutional opportunities to grassroots AIDS' organizations. Their success can be credited to the combination of institutional and contentious strategies as well as access to resources (for example, political experience, social connections, and financial resources) and political opportunities established during the redemocratization process (for example, open government institutions, allies inside government,

and supportive bureaucrats). Indeed, the author illustrates how the success of AIDS activists in Brazil is related to expanding the movement from below – experienced civic advocacy organizations spread political skills and motivation to new groups – and from above – federal bureaucrats bolstered the mobilization of grassroots organizations and provided them with resources and opportunities to access the state. Based on this intriguing argument, what could have been further explored was whether these subnational activist organizations competed for resources and whether the extent and result of this competition matters in explaining the success and endurance of AIDS social movements in Brazil.

This book is divided into eight concise chapters. The first two chapters introduce the argument and review both theories of civil society and theories of the state and unveil the role of state actors as a critical variable to explain civic organization and mobilization. This theoretical account is crucial to advance the scholarly agenda of social movements in comprehending autonomous and enduring movements that acquire the resources necessary to build lasting coalitions without being subject to co-optation. In the following chapters, Rich sets forth the main strategies, resources, and mechanisms employed by the AIDS movement to achieve success, as well as neoliberal reforms and democratization's effects on activists' techniques and organizations. Here, her handsomely articulated argument could have benefitted from exploring the reciprocal influences of domestic activist organizations, global health governance, and transnational AIDS groups during the 1990s when many social movements mushroomed and became vocal on the global stage to denounce the unaffordable prices of ARVs. In the concluding chapter, Rich sheds light on the hybrid social movement's strategies (for instance, institutional mechanisms and contentious behaviour) employed by AIDS activists in Brazil and

by exploring the theoretical and empirical implications of the multiple roles played by state actors in structuring civil society organizations and mobilization beyond the public health realm.

Throughout these chapters, her empirical strategy of semi-structured interviews, surveys, and participant observation supports her multi-methodological strategy of longitudinal analysis, subnational comparison of social mobilization and state-society relations across six Brazilian states, and a large-N comparison across individual social-movement organizations.

This timely contribution illuminates how social movements play a relevant role in alleviating public health threats. Moreover, the contemporary techno-political landscape of the neoconservative populist agenda (for example, the rise of far-right in the United States and Brazil with conservative-religious policies) offers a future venue for research. For instance, how does the neoconservative-populist agenda disrupt and jeopardize social movements' persistence, reliability, and success at national and subnational levels? Finally, this book is a must-read for those interested in social movements, state-society relations, corporatism, public health, subnational comparative politics, and Brazilian politics.

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