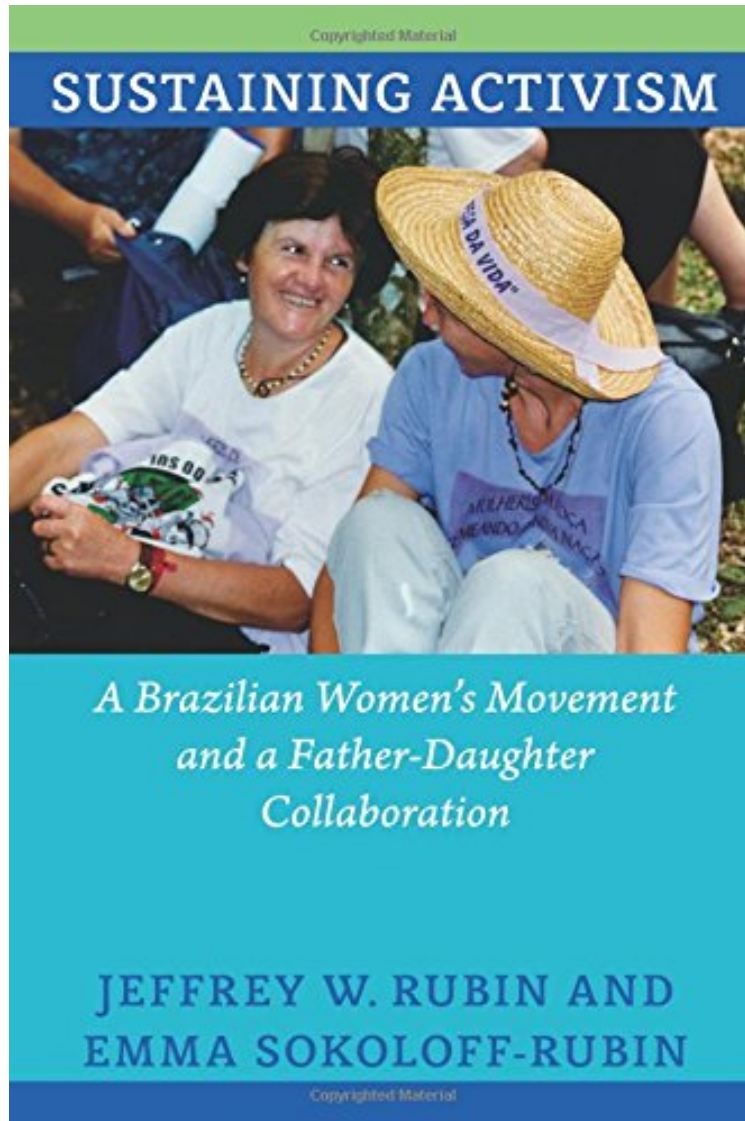


Sustaining Activism: A Brazilian Women's Movement and a Father-Daughter Collaboration

Jeffrey W. Rubin, Emma Sokoloff-Rubin
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Jeffrey W. Rubin, Emma Sokoloff-Rubin : Sustaining Activism: A Brazilian Women's Movement and a Father-Daughter Collaboration before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Sustaining Activism: A Brazilian Women's Movement and a Father-Daughter Collaboration:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A Valuable Contribution to Women's Struggle By K. Kelsey-powell This is a book that treats the development of the women's movement in Brazil quite exhaustively. The authors

had established relationships with the various participants in the movement and therefore had intimate knowledge of the beginning and progress of the work; however, the authors have not treated the specific theme or title of the work: "Sustaining Activism". That information is available only through a reader's deliberate search "between the lines." The book does make a considerable contribution toward understanding the struggle of women in Brazil in particular and vis-a-vis, women's struggle general. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Storytelling and a social movement
By Jacob Levin
If you have any interest in the history of social movements, I highly recommend this book. I loved that Jeffrey and Emma chose to write chapters separately, rather than under a singular identity. That choice made their story-telling infinitely more personal and transparent, and made me feel like an active participant in the conversations and interviews they conducted. 2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. A most engaging book
By Judy Hellman
A most informative and engaging book in which the process of research and collaboration -- carried out, in this case, by a highly unusual pairing of a father and daughter -- offers readers perspectives that would be unlikely to come from a single author. "Jeff's" chapters, as they are referred to, offer us the kinds of insights that a long-time student of social movements (in his case, in Juchitn, Mexico) can bring to the work of moving beyond the slogans and well intentioned idealization of social movement activity to understand the complexities and difficulties that movements like these inevitable face. Emma at first seems more credulous and idealistic than Jeff, as we might expect from someone who first came into contact with the Brazilian women's movement at age 15. But Emma proves herself to be a sharp observer of complex reality and her ability to connect with the women she interviews and their obvious affection for her provide a path of entry into their world that goes beyond the fact that she is a woman or that these Brazilian activists took up their struggle when they, themselves, were 15. This book provides the historical background that enables readers to understand modern Brazil, but also to develop a comparative perspective with the kinds of social movements that have developed in other Latin American countries. What I appreciated most and will be eager to use in my teaching, is the insights it offers into the process of fieldwork and the role that age, gender, and other personal attributes of the researcher play in shaping the fieldwork experience, our relationships with those we study, and, in the end, the findings that we manage to find.

In 1986, a group of young Brazilian women started a movement to secure economic rights for rural women and transform women's roles in their homes and communities. Together with activists across the country, they built a new democracy in the wake of a military dictatorship. In *Sustaining Activism*, Jeffrey W. Rubin and Emma Sokoloff-Rubin tell the behind-the-scenes story of this remarkable movement. As a father-daughter team, they describe the challenges of ethnographic research and the way their collaboration gave them a unique window into a fiery struggle for equality. Starting in 2002, Rubin and Sokoloff-Rubin traveled together to southern Brazil, where they interviewed activists over the course of ten years. Their vivid descriptions of women's lives reveal the hard work of sustaining a social movement in the years after initial victories, when the political way forward was no longer clear and the goal of remaking gender roles proved more difficult than activists had ever imagined. Highlighting the tensions within the movement about how best to effect change, *Sustaining Activism* ultimately shows that democracies need social movements in order to improve people's lives and create a more just society.

"*Sustaining Activism* is a highly unusual book, full of rich insights and fun to read. Authored by a father and daughter, each with a distinct voice, it is a work of engaged ethnographic research that involved extraordinary collaboration both between the two authors and between the authors and a group of women activists in southern Brazil. In contrast with many social-movement scholars and activists, the authors acknowledge that social movements can be messy and contradictory. Their absorbing account is analytically and emotionally very powerful." Marc Edelman, Hunter College and Graduate Center, CUNY