



Transnational LGBT Activism: Working for Sexual Rights Worldwide

Ryan R. Thoreson

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The International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission (IGLHRC) was founded in 1990 as the first NGO devoted to advancing LGBT human rights worldwide. How, this book asks, is that mission translated into practice? What do transnational LGBT human rights advocates do on a day-to-day basis and for whom? Understanding LGBT human rights claims is impossible, Ryan R. Thoreson contends, without knowing the answers to these questions.

In *Transnational LGBT Activism*, Thoreson argues that the idea of LGBT human rights is not predetermined but instead is defined by international activists who establish what and who qualifies for protection. He shows how IGLHRC formed and evolved, who is engaged in this work, how they conceptualize LGBT human rights, and how they have institutionalized their views at the United Nations and elsewhere. After a full year of in-depth research in New York City and Cape Town, South Africa, Thoreson is able to reconstruct IGLHRC's early campaigns and highlight decisive shifts in the organization's work from its founding to the present day.

Using a number of high-profile campaigns for illustration, he offers insight into why activists have framed particular demands in specific ways and how intergovernmental advocacy shapes the claims that activists ultimately make. The result is a uniquely balanced, empirical response to previous impressionistic and reductive critiques of Western human rights activists—and a clarifying perspective on the nature and practice of global human rights advocacy.

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