

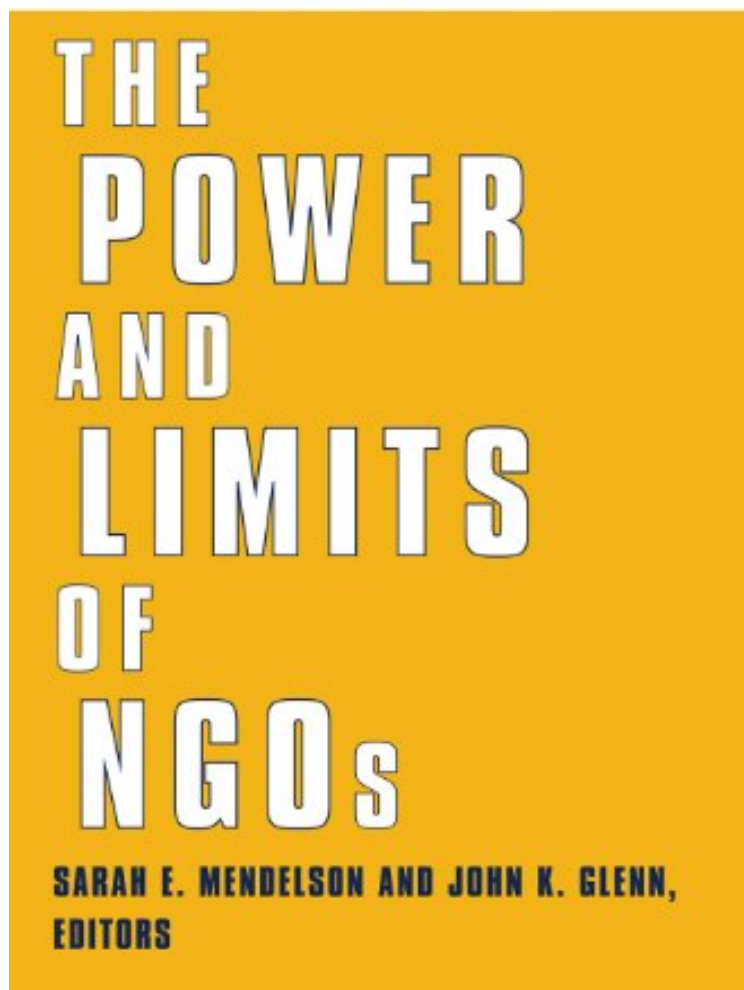
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## The Power and Limits of NGOs: A Critical Look at Building Democracy in Eastern Europe and Eurasia

*From Columbia University Press*

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**A CRITICAL LOOK AT BUILDING DEMOCRACY  
IN EASTERN EUROPE AND EURASIA**



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**From Columbia University Press : The Power and Limits of NGOs: A Critical Look at Building Democracy in Eastern Europe and Eurasia** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Power and Limits of NGOs: A Critical Look at Building Democracy in Eastern Europe and Eurasia:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Non-Governmental Organizations in Eastern Europe, Eurasia and Post Communist CountriesBy Julie Ann RacinoGiven the growth of disability and ethnic-NGOs (non-governmental

organizations), this international insider's examination of related environmental and women's organizations is highly recommended! The network of NGOs operates both as governmental networks and independent of government as part of transnational networks supported by Western government assistance (e.g., USAID), Western NGOs, Foundations (e.g., Soros, Stefan Batory, La Strada, Hungarian Women's Foundation) and interuniversity initiatives and institutes (e.g., Central European's University Program on Gender and Culture) as democratic reform (Patrice C. McMahon, International Actors and Women's NGOs in Poland and Hungary). The book is remarkable in offering an insight into the role of Western efforts to transmit new ideas, and also sheds light on the international nature of issues from biodiversity, to domestic violence and crisis centers, media development, environmental security and resource administration, human rights, democratization at the regional levels, civic education, microcredits to farmers' associations, community development projects, and elections. An example is the International Crisis Group in Bosnia-Herzegovina (and Republika Srpska) involved in dedicated work to strengthen democracy and citizenship in the transition periods (e.g., Bosnian-language publications) and linked to the European Union, United Nations and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (V.P. Gagnon, Jr., International NGOs in Bosnia-Herzegovina: Attempting to Build Civil Society). For insights on a changing, little known world in the US, the book opens the door to Green Cross International (and Green Cross Russia), the US-German Marshall Fund together with the British Know How Fund, International Media Funds (e.g., USAID grantee in Bratislava, Slovakia), Connect US-USSR in Minneapolis (e.g., hot lines of Nizhni Novgorod), Kazakhstan Petroleum Association, Sacred Earth Network and Russian Ekotok, and small seed grant and organizational development programs (e.g., 500 grants from Seeds for Democracy). The authors share the rise and fall of NGOs from the 1990s, and the contributions and roles related to the central governments. The methods of change are widely respected as described in the book (e.g., global-local strategies), but certainly, the "content", the "intent" and "purpose" would need to be better reviewed (e.g., coalitions with government, non-profits and the public to address environmental issues that a single organization cannot address) as well as understood by new parties entering the international arenas. Congratulations to leaders in instilling peaceful and community strategies for democracies; however, as often studied in the 1970s, such efforts often can be usurped, co-opted, and in the 2000s sometimes exited as the breaking of coalition agreements at the national levels. This author would also like to see better clarity on the agendas of the women's organizations in relation to other segments of societies, and records of position statements in relationship to governments (executive, legislative and judicial branches). A gender and disability agenda also aligns with women's organizations and cultural development, and international leaders from Obama's International Disability Advisor, the Honorable Judith E. Heumann, Baylor College of Medicine's Dr. Margaret Nosek, and Europe's Dr. Rannveig Traustadottir of the University of Iceland and Scandinavian Research, are among the 4 decade leaders in gender and disability. Julie Ann Racino  
[about.me/julieannracino](http://about.me/julieannracino)

-- Journal of Peace Research

By pointing to successes and failures of external democratization assistance, the editors have compiled a volume that should become essential reading for those in the scholarly, governmental, and NGO communities... One hopes that this book gains an audience that will influence not only academic discussion but also important policy debates on how to promote democracy in the postcommunist world and beyond. (Paul Kubicek Perspectives on Politics) A well-written and important book... Given the volume's presentation of extensive empirical data and thoughtful analysis grounded in scholarly literature, this book should be enthusiastically welcomed by policy-makers and the members of the NGO community hoping to spread democracy. (Valerie Sperling Governance) The Power and Limits of NGOs presents a serious, rigorous, and balanced analysis of the democracy assistance programs in post-communist Eurasia, and its findings and implications will have broad and long-lasting academic and policy relevance. (Marc Morje Howard Slavic) About the Author Sarah E. Mendelson is a senior fellow with the Center for Strategic International Studies Russia and Eurasia Program. She lives in Washington, DC. John K. Glenn is the executive director of the Council for European Studies at Columbia University.