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978-0-521-85585-3 - The European Court and Civil Society: Litigation, Mobilization and Governance

Rachel A. Cichowski

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The European Court and Civil Society

The European Union today stands on the brink of radical institutional and constitutional change. The most recent enlargement and proposed legal reforms reflect a commitment to democracy: stabilizing political life for citizens governed by new regimes, and constructing a European Union more accountable to civil society. Despite the perceived novelty of these reforms, this book explains (through quantitative data and qualitative case analyses) how the European Court of Justice has developed and sustained a vibrant tradition of democratic constitutionalism since the 1960s. The book documents the dramatic consequences of this institutional change for civil society and public policy reform throughout Europe. Cichowski offers detailed empirical and historical studies of gender equality and environmental protection law across fifteen countries and over thirty years, revealing important linkages between civil society, courts and the construction of governance. The findings bring into question dominant understandings of legal integration.

RACHEL A. CICHOWSKI is Assistant Professor of Comparative Politics and Law in the Department of Political Science and the Law, Societies and Justice (LSJ) Program at the University of Washington. She is co-editor of the book *State of the European Union: Law, Politics and Society* (2003) and her research is published in various journals, including *Comparative Political Studies*, *Law & Society Review* and *Journal of European Public Policy*.

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This book is dedicated to Ed

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