Preface and acknowledgements

When I set out to investigate conflicts between transnational corporations and transnational advocacy groups in the 1990s I soon realized that I would have to draw on various disciplines to deal with the topic. The role of transnational corporations in the world polity was debated by International Relations scholars, while transnational social movements attracted the attention of political sociologists and political scientists. The changing relationship between large business and society however was largely the domain of management scholars. Although the disciplines still have different approaches and interests, the interest in and amount of interdisciplinary work has grown. I am glad to have been able to participate in numerous discussions with colleagues from various backgrounds, and over the years many of them have read and commented on earlier versions of this book and its individual parts. My thanks for helpful hints and constructive criticism go to Ulrich Beck, Mark Boden, Magnus Boström, Frank de Bakker, Frank den Hond, Tim Forsyth, Maarten Hajer, André Kieserling, Mikael Klintman, John W. Meyer, Michele Micheletti, Harvey Molotch, Joan O'Mahony, Jim Ottaway and – last but not at all least – Leslie Sklair, without whose guidance the research that has ultimately led to this book would never have taken place. I would also like to thank the interviewees, on both the corporate and the activist side, who provided valuable insights and information. Funding for the initial research phase by the German Academic Exchange Fund (DAAD) is gratefully acknowledged. As usual none of the persons or institutions mentioned should be held responsible for the final result.

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Writing a book regularly incurs side-effects that other people have to bear, particularly those who happen to share their place of living with the author. I have been lucky enough to have exceedingly tolerant and supportive company throughout writing this book. During the initial phase of drafting the manuscript in London, I enjoyed the hospitality and good humour of Cesa and Karl in Brookfield; later in Lucerne, Lek provided support and, occasionally, some welcome distraction while I was revising the final draft.

I regret that my late father Horst Holzer could only witness the early steps of this project. To him, who had always been a source of inspiration and motivation, I dedicate this book, *in memoriam*.

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