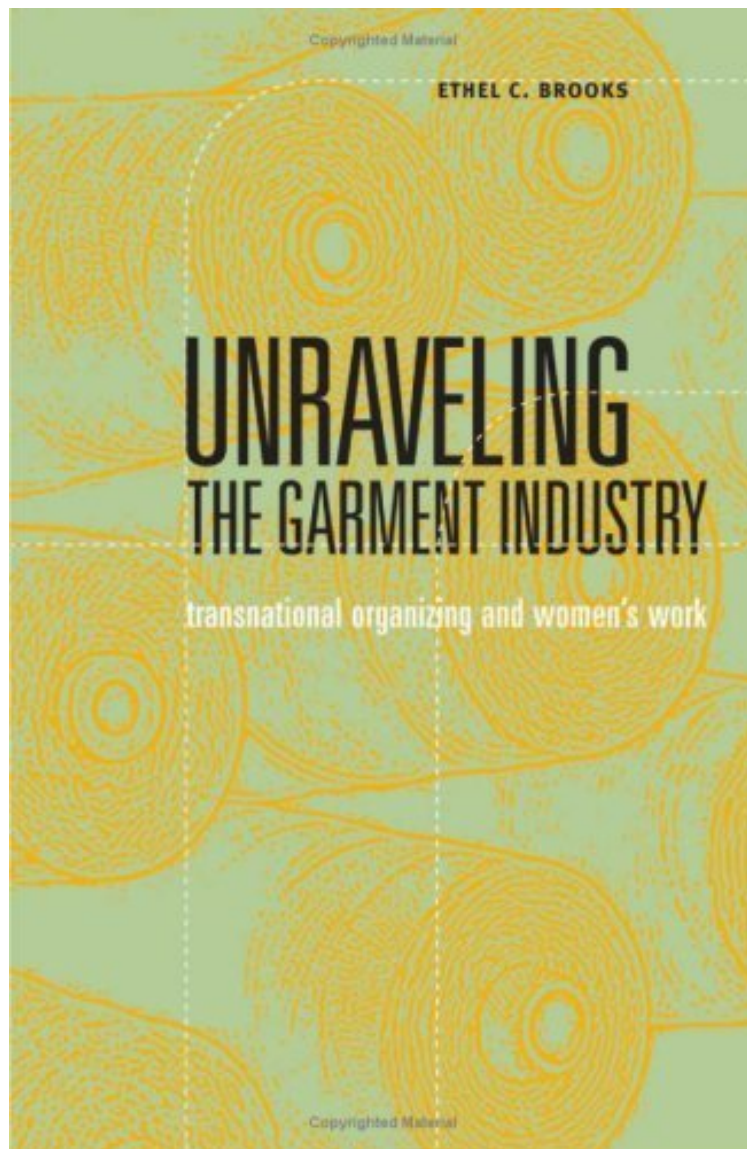


(Download pdf ebook) Unraveling the Garment Industry: Transnational Organizing and Women's Work (Social Movements, Protest and Contention)

Unraveling the Garment Industry: Transnational Organizing and Women's Work (Social Movements, Protest and Contention)

Ethel C. Brooks

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Movements, Protest and Contention):

Unraveling the Garment Industry is an ambitious investigation of the politics of labor and protest within an industry that has come to define the possibilities and abuses of globalization and its feminized labor: the garment industry. Focusing on three labor rights movements—against GAP clothing in El Salvador, child labor in Bangladesh, and sweatshops in New York City—Ethel C. Brooks examines how transnational consumer protest campaigns effect change, sometimes with unplanned penalties for those they intend to protect. Brooks analyzes a two-pronged problem in consumer boycott campaigns against labor abuse in the garment industry. First, how are we to understand the political necessities of local protest such as the right to unionize against the emphasis placed on consumer boycotts? Second, what and whose agency is privileged or obscured within the symbolic economies and the politics of information deployed by these campaigns? Tying both of these questions together is a commitment to seeing globalization as embedded in the everyday realities of the local. Drawing attention to the race, class, and gender assumptions central to powerful consumer boycotts, Brooks reveals how these movements unintentionally reinforce the global economic forces they denounce. Ethel C. Brooks is assistant professor of women's and gender studies and sociology at Rutgers University.