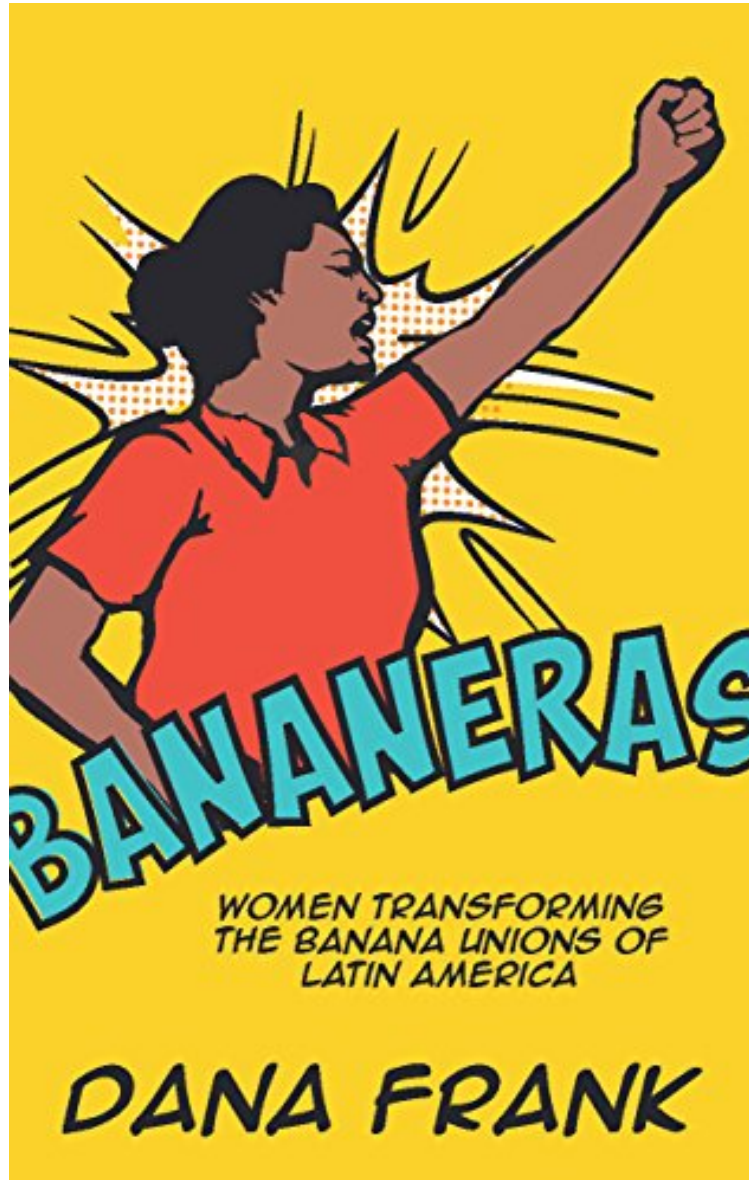


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Bananeras: Women Transforming the Banana Unions of Latin America

Dana Frank

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Dana Frank : Bananeras: Women Transforming the Banana Unions of Latin America before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Bananeras: Women Transforming the Banana Unions of Latin America:

0 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Five StarsBy CustomerAwesome book. Open your eyes to the many women in the world0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. organizationBy Bartok KinskiI've travelled

throughout the world, as a witness at the attempt at organization where people are so poor and downtrodden. Latin America is highly "anti-union". Merely any attempt brings down murder, intimidation and blacklisting upon workers. This book helps add clarity to why people, especial, women, organize. 7 of 9 people found the following review helpful. Electrical BANANERAS By Kevin Killian At first I found myself a little bored reading BANANERAS, Dana Frank's total reimagination of the labor union as the engine of women's liberation in first Honduras then elsewhere south of the border, but then the sweep of her narrative began to carry me away. Not liking bananas myself, I had somehow merely lived my whole life without ever inquiring about the women who picked and packed them. Who were these women? How have they eked out meaningful existences despite isolation and backbreaking labor? How do they change history with solidarity and an unspoken feminism? For, as Dr. Frank reveals wryly, the Latin American bananeras recoil from the word "feminism" itself, treating it as though it had no meaning nor place in the vocabulary of the modern radical worker. In a way, Frank's book is the story about how a word lives even when it is judged irrelevant and in consequence unspoken. Richly researched, the new BANANERAS makes manifest in rich ways the geometrical growth of the new labor unions powered by women's work (though some of the locals employ Latins of several genders). Frank was there when the women met and organized; she attended some of the fruit packers' conferences and showed how uneducated women managed to cope with, then translate for the benefit of others, both absent and present, hazy technical and political concepts such as transnational trade agreements. She showed what happens when one woman's isolation slowly begins to transform, like the shards of a broken flower pot, into a multifaceted, yet striking new mosaic of terra cotta. She brings her characters to life with simple pen strokes, like Colette. Here she is, for example, introducing us to Selfa Sandoval, a Guatemalan fruit worker: "Selfa is a laughing, energetic, tough cookie, who remains powerful in her union because she works hard and fellow rank-and-file members know it." Not only do we see Sandoval herself, but we see her in context of a group of shadowy, but respectful, union members in the general population. Friends who have studied with Dr. Frank, in the seaside town of Santa Cruz perhaps two hours south of here, have talked about her work in history as a three-pronged trident, like Neptune, ready to strike at a single second. One fork shows us that, there are no Americans, there are only "Americans." Another looks for the hope of successful social movements. And a third, and the sharpest of all, is her brain.

"[Bananeras] is a vital accounting of the struggles still being waged." —Margaret Randall, author of *When I Look Into the Mirror and See You: Women, Terror, and Resistance* Women banana workers have organized themselves and gained increasing control over their unions, their workplaces, and their lives. Highly accessible and narrative in style, *Bananeras* recounts the history and growth of this vital movement and shows how Latin American woman workers are shaping and broadly reimagining the possibilities of international labor solidarity. Dana Frank is a professor of history at the University of California, Santa Cruz, and the author of the award-winning *Buy American: The Untold Story of Economic Nationalism*.

About the Author A professor of American Studies at UCSC, Dana Frank focuses on US and international labor issues. Also published in the *Washington Post*, *The Nation*, and other publications, she is the author of *Buy American* and, with Howard Zinn and Robin D. G. Kelley, *Three Strikes*.