



New York Longshoremen: Class and Power on the Docks (Working in the Americas)

William J. Mello

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“A superb history of labor on the East Coast waterfront that may be the best account we have, not only of the industry, but of any sector of labor relations. Mello combines a thoroughly researched discussion of the behavior of elites—employers, government, and union officials—with a story of the heroic resistance of rank-and-file dockers to the best laid plans of their adversaries.”—Stanley Aronowitz, author of *The Last Good Job in America*

Beginning in 1945 and for almost thirty years thereafter, the Port of New York was the site of intense class conflict. During this era, dockworkers fought an ongoing battle against shipping companies, local police, federal and state political authorities, and their own corrupt union leadership simultaneously. William Mello uncovers this little-known history that depicts the impact of state and local politics and political institutions on the labor movement in postwar America.

This rich historical account illustrates how ordinary workers defied the combined powers of elites and sporadically imposed their will on labor relations. Interviews, meticulous examinations of newspaper accounts, official reports, rank-and-file newsletters, and oral histories establish the contours of Mello’s work as he focuses his attention on the story of longshoremen’s lives and struggles.

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