



# Trade Unionists Against Terror: Guatemala City, 1954-1985

*Deborah Levenson-Estrada*

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## **Trade Unionists Against Terror: Guatemala City, 1954-1985** Deborah Levenson-Estrada

Deborah Levenson-Estrada provides the first comprehensive analysis of how urban labor unions took shape in Guatemala under conditions of state terrorism. In *Trade Unionists against Terror*, she explores how workers made sense of their struggle for rights in the face of death squads and other forms of violent opposition from the state. Levenson-Estrada focuses especially on the case of 400 workers at the Coca-Cola bottling plant in Guatemala City, who, in order to protect their union, successfully occupied the factory for over a year beginning in 1984 while the country was under a state of siege. According to Levenson-Estrada, religion provided the language of resistance, and workers who were engaged in what seemed to be a dead-end battle constructed an identity for themselves as powerful agents of change. Based on oral histories as well as documentary sources, *Trade Unionists against Terror* also illuminates complex relationships between urban popular culture, gender, family, and workplace activism in Guatemala.

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