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Achieving Workers' Rights in the Global Economy

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From ILR Press : **Achieving Workers' Rights in the Global Economy** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised **Achieving Workers' Rights in the Global Economy**:

The world was shocked in April 2013 when more than 1,100 garment workers lost their lives in the collapse of the Rana Plaza factory complex in Dhaka. It was the worst industrial tragedy in the two-hundred-year history of mass apparel manufacture. This so-called accident was, in fact, just waiting to happen, and not merely because of the

corruption and exploitation of workers so common in the garment industry. In *Achieving Workers' Rights in the Global Economy*, Richard P. Appelbaum and Nelson Lichtenstein argue that such tragic events, as well as the low wages, poor working conditions, and voicelessness endemic to the vast majority of workers who labor in the export industries of the global South arise from the very nature of world trade and production. Given their enormous power to squeeze prices and wages, northern brands and retailers today occupy the commanding heights of global capitalism. Retail-dominated supply chains—such as those with Walmart, Apple, and Nike at their heads—generate at least half of all world trade and include hundreds of millions of workers at thousands of contract manufacturers from Shenzhen and Shanghai to Sao Paulo and San Pedro Sula. This book offers an incisive analysis of this pernicious system along with essays that outline a set of practical guides to its radical reform. Contributors: Mark Anner, Penn State University; Richard P. Appelbaum, University of California, Santa Barbara; Jennifer Bair, University of Colorado Boulder; Renato Bignami, labor inspector, Brazil; Jeremy Blasi, UNITE HERE Local 11, Los Angeles, and Penn State; Anita Chan, Australian National University; Jenny Chan, University of Oxford; Jill Esbenschade, San Diego State University; Gary Gereffi, Duke University; Jeff Hermanson, International Union League for Brand Responsibility; Jason Kibbey, Sustainable Apparel Coalition; Nelson Lichtenstein, University of California, Santa Barbara; Xubei Luo, World Bank; Anne Caroline Posthuma, International Labour Organization; Scott Nova, Worker Rights Consortium; Ngai Pun, Hong Kong Polytechnic University; Katie Quan, University of California, Berkeley; Brishen Rogers, Temple University; Robert J. S. Ross, Clark University; Mark Selden, Cornell University and New York University; Chris Wegemer, Santa Barbara, California

"Reflecting the impact of Bangladesh's 2013 Rana Plaza disaster, this volume may be the most significant contribution to transnational labor studies in a decade. The authors, widely respected as researchers and activists, offer critical perspectives on contemporary efforts to protect the world's workers, in the context of an integrated global economy and stark inequalities. Drawing on the authors' profound engagement in recent campaigns, the essays summarize current debates, problematize old assumptions, and propose new strategies. *Achieving Workers' Rights in the Global Economy* is a must-read for labor advocates and policymakers: its insights and arguments will be central to activist debates and policy initiatives for the next decade and beyond." —Gay Seidman, University of Wisconsin—Madison

"This clear-headed analysis of efforts to achieve workers' rights is based on solid research and is particularly welcome because it offers a reasonable way forward. The multiple perspectives yield a rich analysis and realistic suggestions for solutions. Workers in the global supply chains that feed prosperous economies suffer unforgivably precarious working conditions, and I applaud the editors of this fine volume for moving quickly after the Rana Plaza tragedy to mobilize and make a difference." —Edna M. Bonacich, University of California, Riverside

About the Author: Richard P. Appelbaum is Research Professor and MacArthur Foundation Chair in the Departments of Sociology and Global International Studies at the University of California, Santa Barbara. The author or editor of many books, he is coeditor most recently of *Can Emerging Technologies Make a Difference in Development?* Nelson Lichtenstein is MacArthur Foundation Chair in History at the University of California, Santa Barbara, where he directs the Center for the Study of Work, Labor, and Democracy. He is the author or editor of many books, including most recently *State of the Union: A Century of American Labor*.