

# Holding Up More Than Half the Sky



## HOLDING UP MORE THAN HALF THE SKY

Chinese Women

Garment Workers

in New York City,

1948–92

Xiaolan Bao

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In 1982, twenty thousand Chinese American garment workers - mostly women - went on strike in New York's Chinatown and forced Chinese garment industry employers in the city to sign a union contract. In this pioneering study, Xiaolan Bao penetrates to the heart of Chinese American society to explain how this militancy and organized protest, seemingly so at odds with traditional Chinese female behavior, came about. Blending poignant and dramatic personal stories culled from over a hundred interviews with a detailed history of the garment industry, Chinese immigrant labor, and the Chinese community in New York, Bao shows how the participation of married women in wage-earning labor outside the home profoundly transformed their image and relationships.

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