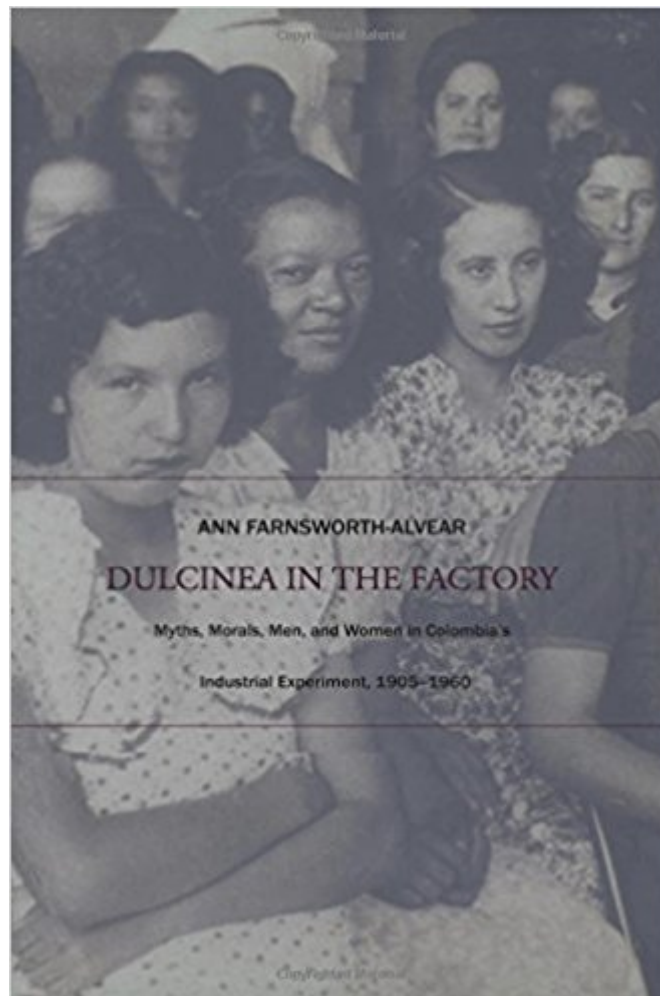




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# **Dulcinea In The Factory: Myths, Morals, Men, And Women In Colombia's Industrial Experiment, 1905-1960 (Comparative And International Working-Class History)**





## Synopsis

Before it became the center of Latin American drug trafficking, the Colombian city of Medellín was famous as a success story of industrialization, a place where protectionist tariffs had created a “capitalist paradise.” By the 1960s, the city’s textile industrialists were presenting themselves as the architects of a social stability that rested on Catholic piety and strict sexual norms. *Dulcinea in the Factory* explores the boundaries of this paternalistic order by investigating workers’ strategies of conformity and resistance and by tracing the disciplinary practices of managers during the period from the turn of the century to a massive reorganization of the mills in the late 1950s. Ann Farnsworth-Alvear’s analyses of archived personnel records, internal factory correspondence, printed regulations, and company magazines are combined with illuminating interviews with retired workers to allow a detailed reconstruction of the world behind the mill gate. In a place where the distinction between virgins and nonvirgins organized the labor market for women, the distance between chaste and unchaste behavior underlay a moral code that shaped working women’s self-perceptions. Farnsworth-Alvear challenges the reader to understand gender not as an opposition between female and male but rather as a normative field, marked by “proper” and “improper” ways of being female or male. Disputing the idea that the shift in the mills’ workforce over several decades from mainly women to almost exclusively men was based solely on economic factors, the author shows how gender and class, as social practices, converged to shape industrial development itself. Innovative in its creative employment of subtle and complex material, *Dulcinea in the Factory* addresses long-standing debates within labor history about proletarianization and work culture. This book’s focus on Colombia will make it valuable to Latin Americanists, but it will also appeal to a wide readership beyond Latin American and labor studies, including historians and sociologists, as well as students of women’s studies, social movements, and anthropology.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"In her analysis of the development of the different stages of industrial capitalism in Medellín, the author skillfully unravels the social negotiations between capitalist and worker, and in the process she does something that many engendered studies fail to accomplish: she demonstrates rather than merely asserts that gender really does matter in social relations and can have an important effect on economic processes and political outcomes. . . . Although well-grounded in feminist theory and the cultural studies literature, in its eclectic use of sources and broad vision, this book conveys a sense of the totality of the past, a sense that is the essence of the historical enterprise itself." - James P. Brennan, *American Historical Review*

"An elegant, theoretically sophisticated analysis of the industrialization process in Medellín's textile mills during the first half of the twentieth century. . . . Dulcinea in the Factory deserves to be widely read. . . . The writing and analysis is also happily lucid and engrossing, making it ideal for adoption in both undergraduate and graduate courses." - Mary Roldán, *Hispanic American Historical Review*

"Ann Farnsworth-Alvear's well-written and carefully-argued study of Medellín's textile industry makes crucial interventions in gender and labor history. . . . Farnsworth-Alvear has produced an important book that adds to the vibrant literature on gender and labor in Latin America. Her insights on the complexity of worker consciousness will doubtless spur healthy debates on how best to apprehend workers' lives." - Karin Alejandra Rosemblatt, *The Americas*

"Dulcinea in the Factory is a magnificent achievement, a remarkably accomplished piece of historical writing." - William C. Roseberry, *New York University*

"A major contribution to Colombian history, both substantive and methodological. Dulcinea in the Factory takes the reader inside the culturally specific and evolving conceptualizations of femininity, paternalism, morality, honor, and modernity in the industrializing city of Medellín." - Catherine LeGrand, *McGill University*

"This book not only revises Latin American labor and gender

history but sets a new standard for social history. Taking advantage of all contemporary debates about accommodation and resistance and bringing them to a new level of sophistication, Ann Farnsworth-Alvear combines deep theoretical insights with rich ethnographic material.”—Temma Kaplan, State University of New York, Stony Brook

“This compelling study represents a major advance, indeed the maturation of the ‘new social history of national capitalism.’ Farnsworth-Alvear provides a deft accounting of complex exchanges, dialogues, and social negotiations in a changing crucible of class and gender relations.”—Michael F. Jimenez, University of Pittsburgh

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Bought this book and not only arrived soon, but was also in great quality. In terms of the content, I consider it a fundamental reading for contemporary Latin American History. The material is very well presented and provides insights about valuable sources.

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