

Brewing Justice



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Fair trade is a fast-growing alternative market intended to bring better prices and greater social justice to small farmers around the world. But is it working? This vivid study of coffee farmers in Mexico offers the first thorough investigation of the social, economic, and environmental benefits of fair trade. Based on extensive research in Zapotec indigenous communities in the state of Oaxaca, "Brewing Justice" follows the members of the cooperative Michiza, whose organic coffee is sold on the international fair trade market. It compares these families to conventional farming families in the same region, who depend on local middlemen and are vulnerable to the fluctuations of the world coffee market. Written in a clear and accessible style, the book carries readers into the lives of these coffee producer households and their communities, offering a nuanced analysis of both the effects of fair trade on everyday life and the limits of its impact. "Brewing Justice" paints a clear picture of the complex dynamics of the fair trade market and its relationship to the global economy. Drawing on interviews with dozens of fair trade leaders, the book also explores the changing politics of this

international movement, including the challenges posed by the entry of transnational corporations into the fair trade system. It concludes by offering recommendations for strengthening and protecting the integrity of fair trade.

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