

Resistance, redistribution, and power in the Fair Trade banana initiative

Aimee Shreck

California Faculty Association, Sacramento, California, USA

Accepted in revised form September 23, 2003

Abstract. The Fair Trade movement seeks to alter conventional trade relations through a system of social and environmental standards, certification, and labels designed to help shorten the social distance between consumers in the North and producers in the South. The strategy is based on working both “in and against” the same global capitalist market that it hopes to alter, raising questions about if and how Fair Trade initiatives exhibit counter-hegemonic potential to transform the conventional agro-food system. This paper considers the multiple levels at which Fair Trade alternatives operate to identify the different forms of social action that the movement engages with, and to clarify where the movement’s counter-hegemonic potentials are being realized. I suggest the Fair Trade movement is most successful in encouraging consumers and producers to commit acts of resistance and in supporting redistributive action that shifts resources from North to South. Up to now, however, Fair Trade alternatives appear to hold only a theoretical potential to provoke transformative change in the agro-food system. A reconceptualization of the Fair Trade model and how it is implemented could allow it to manifest more of its implicit, oppositional promise.

Key words: Alternative agriculture, Alternative food systems, Alternative trade, Counter-hegemonic movements, Fair Trade

Aimee Shreck is a sociologist and the Research Specialist for the California Faculty Association. Her previous work as a postdoctoral researcher with the University of California, Berkeley and the Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education Program focused on social justice, sustainable agriculture, and fair trade.

Introduction

The Fair Trade movement critiques the conventional agro-food system by connecting producers in the South with consumers in the North through alternative trade channels that are more equitable than those typical of conventional trade networks (Murray and Reynolds, 2000; Reynolds, 2002; Renard, 2003). Worldwide, sales of Fair Trade labeled products (including commodities like coffee, tea, sugar, honey, and bananas) are increasing. For example, they rose by over twenty percent between 2000 and 2001. The Fairtrade Labeling Organizations International (FLO), the umbrella organization which sets Fairtrade standards and provides oversight to the Fair Trade network, currently works with 315 certified producer groups who represent some 900,000 families of small farmers and workers in the South (FLO, 2003). In recognition of its work, FLO was recently awarded the prestigious International Prize for Development from the King Baudouin Foundation in Belgium. Accomplishments such as these draw attention to the work of Fair Trade organizations and invite

inquiry into whether such work is actually a “good deal” for the farmers it purports to assist.¹

Potential Fair Trade advocates, as well as those with less enthusiasm, want to know if and why they should buy Fair Trade labeled products and wonder how oppositional the Fair Trade movement is. However, satisfactory answers to these questions are not straightforward. As Murray et al. (2003) note, summary conclusions about Fair Trade initiatives may fail to capture the subtleties of the promises and obstacles embedded in the movement:

Both celebratory and less sanguine accounts of Fair Trade abound in popular and scholarly literature. Yet the questions underpinning the assessments of Fair Trade are often more complex and the answers more ambiguous, than many of these accounts recognize (Murray et al., 2003: 1).

This line of inquiry is not only being posed to Fair Trade initiatives. Rather, questions are increasingly being asked about the broader potential of alternatives and counter-movements (e.g., community food security coalitions to community supported agriculture) that have emerged to confront the globalizing tendencies of the

conventional agro-food system.² For example in her analysis of local food systems initiatives in Iowa, Hinrichs (2003) asks, “What is the transformative potential of the current efforts to promote production and consumption of foods earmarked by locality or region?” (p. 33). In doing so, she addresses how localization efforts that grow out of opposition to homogenization, industrialization, and concentration in the global food system can arguably be characterized as liberatory and/or reactionary. Allen et al. (2003) ask related questions in their examination of 37 alternative agrifood initiatives in California, each of which works in its own way to challenge the existing food system and build alternatives. Their research assesses if and how the initiatives are oppositional or alternative. In their words, they are concerned with understanding the degree to which these alternatives “seek to create a new structural configuration...and to what degree...their efforts [are] limited to incremental erosion at the edges of the political-economic structures” (Allen et al., 2003: 61). Johnston’s research, which questions and identifies the counter-hegemonic characteristics of a community food security initiative in Canada, is similarly framed around a concern with the wider implications of local food system initiatives that skeptics might be tempted to write off as examples of “bourgeois piggery” (Johnston, 2003).

This analysis of Fair Trade will also address such questions as well as Murray et al.’s (2003) observation by drawing attention to the multiple levels at which Fair Trade operates. In doing so, I consider ways in which the Fair Trade movement encourages actors to engage in different forms of social action to clarify what the movement’s counter-hegemonic potentials are, where they are being realized, and where they are not. I suggest that the movement is most successful in enabling consumers and producers to commit acts of resistance and in facilitating the redistribution of resources from the North to South. Up to now, though, Fair Trade alternatives appear to hold only a theoretical potential to provoke more transformative change in the agro-food system. The paper concludes with a suggestion that a re-conceptualization of the model upon which Fair Trade initiatives are built and the way in which they are implemented could allow the movement to manifest more of its oppositional promise.

Fair Trade bananas: An “experience in progress”³

The alternative trade organizations (ATOs) promoting and practicing Fair Trade today generally trace their roots to the 1960s when church-based and development organizations, primarily in Europe, set up shops to sell handicrafts and similar items purchased directly from Third World producers. These “fair trade” products

were sold to consumers who supported this form of solidarity with producers and workers from politically marginalized countries. During the next two decades, ATOs organized themselves and formed international networks. Alternative trading started off more slowly in the United States, but the movement has recently begun to take off more forcefully (Conroy, 2001; Zonneveld, 2003). Internationally, the practice of Fair Trade was formalized with the introduction of fair trade labels in 1988 and has become more standardized with the establishment of FLO in 1997 to set and manage Fair Trade standards and coordinate the activities of its seventeen member organizations.⁴ Today, a sophisticated system of standards, certification, and a common Fair Trade label is in place to support the Fair Trade initiatives.

These changes reflect how the movement itself has developed over time, as it has been faced with difficult choices about the Fair Trade strategy and the movement’s objectives. As Renard describes, prior to the introduction of labels, there was concern among some advocates that alternative trade “questioned the mechanisms of the dominant market system and proposed a fairer relationship between producers and consumers, [but] it was far from resolving the problems of selling Third World products” (Renard, 2003: 89–90). To really increase sales opportunities of Fair Trade products, ATOs saw that products would have to be more widely available. But this move implied working within large distribution channels and required a change in the organizations’ message. That is, “to broaden the spectrum of the public interested in buying these products, it was necessary to appeal more to humanitarian sentiments than to political convictions” (Renard, 2003: 90). It is important to recognize that the decision to make this shift and to rely on conventional circuits of distribution came only after months of difficult discussion and strong resistance.

This tension of working simultaneously “in and against” the market (Brown, 1993), formalized with this key step, continues to be highlighted as a sensitive issue in discussions about Fair Trade, both internally (e.g., Gereffi, 2000; Zonneveld, 2003) and externally (e.g., Reynolds, 2002; Renard, 2003). Since the strategy is based on working within the same global capitalist market that it hopes to alter, it raises questions about whether Fair Trade initiatives actually hold any counter-hegemonic potential to transform the conventional agro-food system into something qualitatively different and presumably better.

This history and the broad appeal of a concept like “Fair Trade” permits the term to be used in various ways. My understanding of the term is consistent with the work of Murray and Reynolds (2000) and with the way in which Fair Trade organizations conceptualize themselves and their activities. I view Fair Trade as a contemporary social movement that contests the

conventional agro-food system and rejects the exploitative social and environmental relations of production that characterize it. In comparison with other oppositional agro-food movements (e.g., organic agriculture, GMO labeling campaigns, community food security), the Fair Trade movement is unique in its attempt to go beyond improving production conditions to actually alter conventional trade relations (Raynolds, 2000, 2002). Like these other movements, the Fair Trade movement is comprised of individuals and groups engaged in organized, collective action that challenges the dominant corporate food regime (McMichael, 2000b).

Yet, despite the increasing size and momentum of movements like Fair Trade, the extent to which they are actually disrupting the global political economic system into which they fit is not always clear. As Evans (2000) has noted, the increasing resistance to globalization that we are witnessing is not by definition oppositional. In his words:

[T]he surprising resilience and adaptive ability of ordinary people whose lives have become transnational does not necessarily challenge the dominant global rules, the way these rules are made, or the economic ideology that legitimates them (Evans, 2003: 230).

With this observation in mind, my analysis builds on insights and examples from field research conducted on the banana initiative, with specific attention to the bananas produced in the Dominican Republic and exported to Europe.⁵ The majority of the fieldwork was conducted in ten communities in the Azua Valley of the Dominican Republic with Fair Trade-certified banana farmers during a period of eight months in 2000 (Shreck, 2002a).⁶ This region is home to approximately 800 small-scale banana farmers, with roughly two-thirds belonging to certified Fair Trade associations at the time. These banana producers were among the first to be certified by FLO (in 1997), and represent the largest group of small-scale producers exporting Fair Trade bananas. Importantly, their experiences reflect the relative youth and inexperience of the Fair Trade banana initiative at this time.

Primary data was collected during semi-structured interviews with a random sample ($n = 115$) of small-scale banana producers representing three of the main producer groups in the region. Two of these groups were/are registered with FLO as Fair Trade producer associations. All of the bananas being grown by these producers were also certified and sold as organic. Additional data from qualitative interviews with exporters, Fair Trade organization representatives, and other local experts and key informants, as well as participant and non-participant observations (e.g., at meetings, in communities, during packing days) further informs this analysis.

Since most of the discussions about Fair Trade draw primarily on the Fair Trade coffee initiative, it is important to appreciate that although the basic principles of Fair Trade are the same for each commodity, there are certain characteristics that are unique to each product. While coffee has traditionally been at the center of the Fair Trade movement's activities and is the most widely consumed Fair Trade commodity, bananas are increasingly important for Fair Trade organizations. Since Fair Trade bananas were introduced in 1996, they have captured unprecedented market shares, reaching over 20% in Switzerland (FLO, 2002, 2003). Perhaps the most important distinction about bananas is that they are the first fresh fruit commodity that Fair Trade organizations attempted to certify. Applying the Fair Trade model to a highly perishable, fresh fruit product places Fair Trade squarely in one of the most competitive and globalized sectors of the agro-food system (Friedland, 1994) and presents new logistical challenges for the organizations to manage. Because of this position, Fair Trade banana traders must rely more heavily on conventional methods and intermediaries for shipping and storage than do traders of non-perishable products.

The remainder of this paper proposes a preliminary framework for assessing the oppositional promise of Fair Trade initiatives that takes into account the complexity of a movement operating at multiple levels, across long distances, and with a diverse network of actors. Though the findings should not be generalized to all Fair Trade commodities, this case can provide insights into how to think about and evaluate the potentials and limits of other initiatives.

Fair Trade as counter-hegemonic social action

Contemporary transformations of the agro-food system reflect the same tendencies and processes that are characteristic of the dynamics in the global economy. Accordingly, the globalization of agriculture and food is rooted in capitalism and hence motivated by profit and efficiency, driven by transnational corporate actors, and upheld by the dominant ideology of neoliberalism (Held et al., 1999; McMichael, 2000b). Efforts to liberalize agriculture include reducing farm subsidies and other protections for agricultural sectors, and are being institutionalized through international free trade agreements and the World Trade Organization (WTO). More specifically, the hegemonic forces which uphold the dominant agro-food system are the key elements of what McMichael (2000a) describes as a global corporate food regime that is characterized by tendencies toward increasing centralization, concentration, corporate control, and privatization (Grey, 2000; Heffernan,

2000; Magdoff et al., 2000). Under this regime, world agriculture is being restructured in a way that sharpens divisions between the North and South.

Yet, diverse and widespread opposition to this globalized, capitalist agro-food system signals that the system is found to be unsatisfactory in many ways and is linked to host of social, environmental, and economic problems. Indeed, the industrial model of agriculture that is privileged in this system is kept profitable by exploitative and destructive labor and environmental practices. Moreover, the policies through which it is institutionalized and legitimated are designed to deliver political and material benefits to corporate agribusiness to the disadvantage of small farmers and workers around the world.

The responses to the negative effects of this system are global as well. Not surprisingly, academic attention to the outpouring of resistance and alternatives is lively, multidisciplinary, and continuously growing (e.g., Marsden, 2000; Reynolds, 2000; Allen et al., 2003), as researchers consider how to understand these counter-movements. To clarify the possibilities for Fair Trade initiatives to foster positive change and reshape the agro-food system, I question the extent to which the Fair Trade movement could be considered counter-hegemonic, discussing where it holds (and realizes) counter-hegemonic potential.

My understanding of counter-hegemony draws on Gramsci's (1971) insights about the complexity of political struggle and his argument that a successful strategy for transformative change in society would need to include multiple forms of action. In particular, his emphasis on the strength of a "war of position" strategy, in which multiple forms of action are taken in many sites of struggle to confront a hegemonic system indirectly, is helpful for unpacking the different ways that Fair Trade actors work together to make their initiatives successful.

More recently, Chin and Mittelman (2000) discuss "resistance as counterhegemony" in terms of anti-globalization movements. They remind us that not only are forms of resistance multiple, but also the agents of resistance are diverse, sites of resistance are found at different levels, and forms of struggle are many. Applying Gramsci's understanding of the possibilities emerging out of a "war of position" to the present day struggle against corporate globalization, their analysis shows how the promise of individual movements (e.g., Fair Trade) need not be analyzed in isolation. Likewise, different forms of contemporary social action can be conceived of as unique tactics, each of which plays a role within a broader "war of position."

Finally, my approach follows Evans (2000) who defines similar contemporary social movements as counter-hegemonic because they are posing a challenge

to "business as usual," rather than because they are likely to "overturn the whole apparatus" (Evans, 2000: 231).

Yet, even though social action is manifested in numerous ways, for different purposes, and by a wide range of social actors, it is debatable if should be celebrated as necessarily contributing to positive social change. For instance, the inclusion of powerful corporations (like Starbucks and Safeway) into Fair Trade commodity chains and the "mainstreaming" of Fair Trade (James, 2000) casts doubt about the movement's progressive flair. While seeking to increase sales and find markets for all of the potential Fair Trade producers, Fair Trade organizations are also faced with the task of satisfying "businessmen [sic] who participate in the network and who do so, not from any ideological conviction, but because it is convenient and profitable" (Renard, 2003: 92). This encourages observers to question how well Fair Trade networks are able to balance the competing demands that stem from their activist roots and market realities (see also Reynolds, 2002).

Thus, if not all social action holds the potential to foster positive change, how can we derive meaningful insights about the theoretical and practical potentials of contemporary expressions of agency? Or, as Starr (2000: 35) asks, shouldn't there be a way to tell the difference between "fashion and a fight"? To answer the questions about the counter-hegemonic potentials of the Fair Trade movement posed above, I constructed a typology (see Table 1) of forms of counter-hegemonic social action in which a contemporary movement working towards social justice in the global agro-food system might engage. These ideal types of social action provide a way to compare and contrast the various manifestations of the Fair Trade banana initiative, to see if/how it challenges the conventional agro-food system and to evaluate its broader potential for fostering progressive and transformative social change in the system.

The typology is based on a conceptual definition of counter-hegemonic social action as action undertaken by a social actor(s), either implicitly or explicitly, in contestation of the hegemony of neoliberal globalization and with the intention of bringing about progressive social change in society. Thus, the definition encompasses a broad spectrum of actions, but excludes those that do not provoke critique of the dominant ideology or contest the status quo. In addition, according to this definition, an actor is presumed to believe, minimally, that an alternative vision of society is needed in order to really improve it. Finally, the definition implies that any real alternative (i.e., the counter-hegemony) will involve radical transformation of society.

To further specify what such action looks like, I identify three forms of counter-hegemonic action: acts of resistance; redistributive action; and radical social

Table 1. Three forms of counter-hegemonic social action.

Form of action	Possible implications
• Acts of resistance →	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non-participation or partial refusal to participate in the hegemonic system, determined by the actor to be unacceptable • An explicit expression of non-participation and a challenge to the working of the hegemonic system
• Redistributive action →	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reform of the system to redistribute resources to the benefit of less powerful and/or disadvantaged members of society • Redistribution might be seen as a step towards more transformative change that must be fought for in the future
• Radical social action →	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive, structural transformation of the system resulting in something qualitatively different • The transformed system significantly alters patterns of inequality and injustice in the prevailing system to the advantage of those previously disadvantaged

action. They should not be understood as being mutually exclusive, but can be thought of as being hierarchically ordered, in terms of their capacity for bringing about structural transformation in society. As summarized in Table 1, each type of action is characterized by the implications it has for fostering social change.

Classifying social action according to its transformative potential has a long history. Indeed, a desire to create conditions that will foster social and political change has long captured the attention of social scientists who have, in varying ways, drawn on Marx's anticipation of that moment in which the proletariat transforms itself from a "class of itself" into a "class for itself" (Marx and Engels, 1988). For instance, this insight has guided many theorists who have subsequently sought to distinguish between antagonistic and nonantagonistic contradictions of capital (Mao, 1967), revolutionary reforms and reformist reforms (Gorz, 1973), or passive revolution and wars of position and movement (Gramsci, 1971). More recently, scholars working on community development and organizing (rather than in the Marxist tradition) have raised similar concerns. Kennedy and Tilly (1990) suggest a useful distinction should be made between redistributive and transformative populism, while Starr (2000) offers that it may be helpful to differentiate between resistance and struggle.

The conceptual framework I use integrates insights from a diverse group of authors (especially Gramsci, 1971; Scott, 1990; Kennedy and Tilly, 1990; Escobar, 1995; Freire, 2000; Starr, 2000) who have been concerned, in unique ways, with these kinds of questions. The first type, "acts of resistance," draws largely on Scott's (1990) discussion of "infrapolitics" and resistance and refers to action that contests the social system, or an aspect of the social system, that the actor rejects. This type of action is characterized most broadly as non-participation in some aspect of the dominant system but

does not necessarily involve a rejection of the system entirely. Since hegemony relies on consent, and hence the participation of subordinate and oppressed groups (Gramsci, 1971), non-participation can therefore be understood as counter-hegemonic.

The term "redistributive action" is used to emphasize a primary concern of these actors for making less inequitable the distribution of resources among members of society. In addition to being an expression of resistance, redistributive action also involves a conscious effort to redistribute material resources to those members of a community or society who are disadvantaged by the present pattern of distribution (Kennedy and Tilly, 1990). Actors identify the contested system as the source of inequity and/or injustice that is in need of revision. It is counter-hegemonic since it challenges the dominant ideology that tends to hold disadvantaged individuals responsible for their position in society. Though some individuals engaged in this form of action might possess an alternative vision for redesigning the system more radically, a redistributive strategy focuses on bringing about progressive reform to the system.

Finally, I conceptualized "radical social action" as action that is directed towards transforming society as an end goal, explicit in its rejection of the status quo, and reflective of actors' understanding that the sources of inequity and injustice are structural. Actors engaged in this form of action do not necessarily reject reformist strategies, however, there is recognition that such initiatives are best understood as partial, or short-term solutions. Of these three types of action, this holds the greatest counter-hegemonic potential since, if successful, radical social action will bring about social change that truly transforms the contested system into something qualitatively different. The remainder of the paper incorporates examples and insights about the Fair Trade banana initiatives to demonstrate how Fair Trade

alternatives have the potential to support action that is at once resistance, redistributive, and radical, and the limits of each of these strategies.

Fair Trade as resistance

Fair Trade initiatives provide a way for consumers and producers to continue their consumption and production activities but at least partially avoid participating in the conventional trading system. Steady growth of Fair Trade in terms of sales, number of producers involved, diversity of products, and increasing recognition by the public, demonstrates the success of the Fair Trade movement in resisting the hegemony of the conventional agro-food system. Actors are engaged in acts of resistance in the name of Fair Trade in both the North as well as the South

In the North, socially conscious consumers are, in a sense, voting with their dollars, thereby translating their shopping preferences into a form of resistance (James, 2002). This willingness by consumers to purchase food products like coffee, tea, or bananas because of the social meaning attributed to them suggests that the Fair Trade market represents a challenge to neoliberalism and an alternative to competition based solely on price (Renard, 1999).

Fair Trade consumption is rising steadily in Europe where aggregate Fair Trade sales are growing at an average annual rate of 5% (EFTA, 1998: 25). During the 1990s, there were increases of almost 100% in retail turnover of some Fair Trade products. For bananas in particular, sales have risen by over 25% per year since 1999 (FLO, 2002). This consumer activism compares favorably with “acts of resistance” insofar as each Fair Trade purchase represents non-participation in the conventional market.

Decisions by important political actors to support Fair Trade can also be interpreted as acts of resistance. The recognition of Fair Trade movement activities by the European Union (EU) is particularly notable. For example, within the EU there was a call to incorporate Fair Trade into its aid policies (European Commission, 1999; EFTA, 2001b). One member of the European Commission explains the EU’s position as follows:

Fair Trade plays a very important role in EU development policies by helping to educate people in the North and by assisting marginalized producers and communities in the South to participate in a more equitable way in the world economy (remarks by P. Nielson in FLO, n.d.)

In addition, though perhaps mostly symbolic, several bodies within the EU have committed to serving only Fair Trade certified coffee at their meetings (EFTA, 2001b: 15). This too reflects the success of the work of

Fair Trade organizations and advocacy groups to bring attention to their cause.

Considered together, these examples support assertions that the Fair Trade movement has achieved important successes in the realm of consumer politics (Raynolds, 2000). They also confirm that alternatives to present practices are not only possible, but are also successful (Tiffen, 1999), thereby refuting empirically the inevitability of conventional patterns in the agro-food system and demonstrating, as Whatmore and Thorne (1997) argue, that global networking and reach is not unique to transnational corporations.

In the South, Fair Trade certified producers can also be seen as resisting by their non-participation in conventional export channels. However, banana producers who participate in Fair Trade initiatives appear to do so for different reasons than do consumers (see Lyon, 2003). This study of small-scale banana production in the Dominican Republic revealed that access to export markets was one of the principal benefits of Fair Trade certification, even if it was not always recognized to be the case by producers themselves. For the most part, the producers interviewed for this study share an unambiguous commitment to supplying any export market, making the increased access to markets an important motivation for participating in the Fair Trade initiative (Shreck, 2002b).

Yet, there was a very limited level of understanding about Fair Trade, even among banana producers from certified Fair Trade associations (see Tallontire, 2000). Although slightly more than three-quarters of the producers interviewed were listed as members of Fair Trade-certified associations, only half identified themselves as Fair Trade farmers. When asked more specifically about the Fair Trade initiative (such as about its benefits and how it worked), even these producers demonstrated only an elementary and partial understanding, at best. For example, when asked about Fair Trade, producers with some knowledge often mentioned that they knew there was something called “*comercio justo*” (Fair Trade), but were unable to explain more. One producer’s response captured a sentiment I frequently heard. To paraphrase his explanation: “Max Havelaar [the name of the Fair Trade organization that worked with these farmers originally] is a guy from Europe and he likes us small farmers, and so he buys our bananas.” Others more concisely reported that Fair Trade was “a market” but could not elaborate. Significantly, none of the producers in my sample mentioned or knew about the minimum prices guaranteed by FLO, nor of the long-term commitment Fair Trade partners are expected to make to producers. By sharp contrast, all of the farmers identified themselves, accurately, as organic banana farmers, revealing

a stronger understanding of what organic production was than what “Fair Trade partner” meant.

With this low level of understanding about the initiative and such commitment to the market, is this really resistance? Whether or not producers understand the way the Fair Trade market operates, by selling their fruit through alternative channels they are nonetheless resisting participation in the more exploitative ones. And, like any grower with a harvest to sell, Fair Trade farmers welcome terms of trade that are more favorable and more likely to cover the cost of production. Moreover, as Renard observes, producers who rarely have “the luxury of purist positions...are more preoccupied with the struggle for survival and the possibility of increasing sales volumes” (2003: 92). Thus, insofar as survival under oppressive and exploitative conditions is in and of itself an act of resistance (Reagon, 1982; Scott, 1990), so too is their participation in Fair Trade an act of resistance and should be understood as counter-hegemonic.⁷

The purchasing and producing of Fair Trade commodities should therefore be considered counter-hegemonic acts of resistance. However, the locus of this action is centered around the Fair Trade market, which is a critical but contradictory aspect of the Fair Trade model. Although these acts are successfully moving Fair Trade from a marginal niche to the mainstream market, there are several factors that present limitations to the potential of this strategy for bringing about lasting social change.

First, the structure of international trade (as governed by the WTO and free-trade agreements), within which Fair Trade initiatives operate, is not necessarily favorable to the continuous growth of the Fair Trade market. For instance, differentiation of commodities according to how they are produced is contradictory to the WTOs mission of eliminating barriers to trade. Therefore, explicit commitments to supporting Fair Trade efforts are likely to be found unacceptable by the WTO.⁸ Recent rulings in the decade long “Banana War” threaten to erode future opportunities for Fair Trade banana farmers in regions where such support is critically needed. Another barrier to market-based resistance stems from the very same enthusiasm that contributes to the growth of alternative trade in the first place. Research suggests consumers and retailers are beginning to suffer from “label fatigue” as the multiplication of competing certification schemes becomes overwhelming and the differentiation between labels becomes confusing and even questionable (Watkins 1998; FAO, 2000). A final limitation of this form of resistance for fostering any transformative change is the producer’s weak understanding of producers about the Fair Trade market, the initiative more generally, and their role as Fair Trade “partners.”

Fair Trade as redistributive action

The strength of the Fair Trade movement’s counter-hegemonic activity stems from its success in implementing a system of certification and labels to help connect producers and consumers and redistribute resources more equitably. As discussed in more detail elsewhere (Shreck, 2002b), the Fair Trade banana initiative brings participating producers much needed material benefits, improved access to Northern markets, and resources for the organizational capacity building of producer associations. In this way, Fair Trade networks serve as an excellent tool for redistributing wealth from Northern consumers to Southern producers. After the first three years of its banana program, FLO estimated that an average of \$2 million was being transferred annually to banana producers in eleven registered associations (FLO, n.d.). This money comes in the form of higher export prices (FOB as opposed to farmgate) and a \$1.75 social premium paid per 40-pound box of bananas sold with a Fair Trade label.

In the Azua Valley, bananas are regarded as the best of all competing agricultural alternatives. At the time of this research, there were three main banana producers’ associations, two of which were certified and registered to sell Fair Trade bananas. As I was told numerous times by producers and exporters alike, when bananas are “good,” there is nothing that pays the producers better or as consistently (thanks to the possibility of year-round, bi-weekly harvests). According to the exporters in the region, with increasing national and international competition, the Fair Trade market is the only reason many farmers are able to continue harvesting bananas at all. Data collected on farmers’ exporting patterns support this belief. Fair Trade producers were 21% more likely to be “currently” exporting (i.e., those who had successfully sold their harvest for export at least once within the past month) than were non-Fair Trade producers. Further, over half (52%) of the non-Fair Trade, versus only 1% of the Fair Trade producers, had been unable to export for over a year. Thus, Fair Trade sales must be understood as having a significant impact within this context.

The Fair Trade model also offers an alternative for consumers who want to partake in a “fairer” form of international trade that does a better job of redistributing resources around the globe. Socially and environmentally conscious consumers are willing to pay higher prices for Fair Trade-labeled commodities with an understanding that they will be helping to improve a flawed system of international exchange. This model forms the core of the movement’s strategy of working “in and against” the capitalist market and exemplifies an explicit effort to bring about reform in the agro-food system. This commitment to working within the

contested system is critical for the success achieved thus far, as it permits Fair Trade goods to be traded through already established channels, without relying fully on conventional players. In addition, it facilitates the entrance of these products into mainstream retail outlets (like major supermarket chains) thereby permitting the largest possible number of consumers to encounter them during their usual shopping routines. Thus, in facilitating the transfer of material resources so producers receive a larger share of the final price of their product, Fair Trade initiatives hold and realize important potential for redistributive social action.

Nonetheless, the banana initiative's counter-hegemonic potential is limited by this redistributive strategy in at least three ways. Situating the Fair Trade banana market within the conventional one creates a situation in which the most important, if unofficial, Fair Trade certification criterion is quality. Rejection of fruit for failing to meet "exportable quality" requirements, especially for cosmetic reasons, is so pervasive that it creates an important structural barrier to the redistributive potential of the initiative. During periods of participant observation at packing sheds, I often documented rejection rates of over 50%. The definition of an "exportable quality banana" is defined explicitly in producers' contracts in a list of 25 criteria to which acceptable bananas must conform in order to meet the expectations defined by the more powerful actors at the other end of the banana chain. In effect, these quality standards institutionalize unequal power relationships between different actors within a commodity chain (Tanaka and Busch, 2003), and remind producers that even in the Fair Trade system, they are still the least powerful actors in the chain. In addition, many of the criteria are open to interpretation and directly reflect the demands that come with working within a mainstream market where cosmetic quality is of critical importance. As an FLO Members Bulletin explains (FLO, 2000a):

All farmers know how important quality is. But for banana farmers, shipping across the oceans a highly perishable fresh fruit, it is a weekly headache made worse by the fact that there are no legally binding quality standards (FLO, 2000a: 4).

There exist other challenges to redistributing resources once they have been transferred from North to South. The actual redistribution of material benefits within producer communities is hampered by associations' weak organizational capacity, their limited understanding about premiums and minimum prices, and the limited participation of the larger community in making decisions about Fair Trade resources. Low levels of understanding about the Fair Trade system combined with the relatively young and inexperienced producer associations contributed to a situation in which most

decisions about how to allocate material benefits were made by a small group of leaders in the organizations (Shreck, 2002b).

In addition, there was often a real lack of price transparency between producers and some exporters, creating confusion among producers about how exporters determined the prices they paid. In practice, the Fair Trade minimum prices were received by exporters, who were then expected to pass the benefits on to producers. Yet, poor communication about the arrangement and low farmgate prices permitted some producers to claim that "the company steals from us," or that "there is nothing fair about the price we get." Moreover, fewer than half (i.e., 45%) of the Fair Trade banana producers in the region experienced the security that is expected to accompany an export contract. Each of these challenges pose obstacles to ensuring redistribution practices are conducted fairly and equitably.

Finally, the structure of the banana sector in the Dominican Republic presents additional, though perhaps somewhat unique limitations, contributing to the challenges noted above. Fair Trade bananas are integrated into mainstream distribution channels more so than other Fair Trade commodities like coffee, which is largely differentiated from its conventional counterparts because the fair trading relationships bypass some intermediaries. However, Fair Trade bananas are moved on refrigerated ships which are often controlled by transnational fruit corporations, ripen alongside conventionally traded bananas in special ripening houses, and then marketed and sold in large supermarket chains. In the Dominican Republic, the Fair Trade associations were unable to bypass even the first intermediary in the chain. Instead, producers (through their associations) sold their fruit to a (FLO-certified) exporter, with whom FLO was working directly, and with whom the Fair Trade importers dealt. In other countries, the producer associations themselves are the Fair Trade exporters and receive incentives (like the minimum prices) directly.

Fair Trade as radical social action

What makes Fair Trade unique in the growing sea of certification programs and labeling schemes is that certification is ostensibly awarded based on the existence of an alternative trade relationship (Raynolds, 2000). This is a crucial distinction in comparison to certification initiatives (such as organic agriculture or the Ethical Trading Initiative) that are based almost solely on the production process. Arguably, the most offensive aspects of the conventional global agro-food system are not a result of independent production choices made by small-scale farmers in the South.⁹ More specifically, Fair Trade organizations seek to make trade relations more transparent, thereby "demystifying global trade

and creating more equitable relations of exchange” (Raynolds, 2000: 298).

Because of this promise, I believe the Fair Trade movement holds an implicit potential to demonstrate the kind of radical social action that confronts and rejects the dominant ideology and practices upholding the hegemonic system. Up to now, however, the strategies and tactics adopted by Fair Trade actors do not appear to empirically demonstrate this potential.

Even though all Fair Trade activists might not be satisfied with the more conservative goals of reform and redistribution, this research suggests that because of the way Fair Trade initiatives are presently conceptualized and implemented, the implicitly radical and transformative promises of this movement are unlikely to be delivered. In considering the limitations to this broader potential, this analysis provides insight into how things like power, participation, and paternalism are articulated in Fair Trade initiatives. It also questions whether the concept of “fair” can be meaningfully operationalized into a set of observable criteria by one group for another. Not least of all, it serves as a reminder of the barriers imposed by Fair Trade initiatives’ dependence on powerful actors who pledge allegiance to the capitalist system.

The limitations preventing Fair Trade from conforming to the kind of radical social action defined above can be summarized roughly into three related concerns: the way Fair Trade is being conceptualized by the movement; the top-down implementation of the initiatives; and the concentration of power in the middle of the Fair Trade chain.

The Fair Trade model is conceptualized in such a way that it depends on the capitalist market, which presents a fundamental problem for transformative change that would involve rejecting and replacing this contested system. In addition, as part of its strategy, the Fair Trade movement ultimately seeks to facilitate the inclusion of otherwise marginalized groups into the dominant system, revealing one way it falls short of being truly transformative (Freire, 2000). For instance, in order to keep the producer organizations competitive in the Fair Trade market, Fair Trade banana farmers must constantly be encouraged and educated to learn to be better banana exporters. The effects of this conceptualization reverberate throughout the multiple ways Fair Trade is practiced.

The manner in which Fair Trade initiatives are implemented can be described as top-down. For instance, the groundwork for Fair Trade initiatives was outlined by activists who were overwhelmingly from the North. The definition of “fair” and “Fair Trade” has likewise been worked out by Fair Trade organizations based in Europe (EFTA, 2001a: 5). Actors representing organizations in the North also make decisions

regarding which producer groups to work with and which commodities to certify. Finally, groups in the North offer producer groups in the South the possibility of being certified as well as determine the criteria upon which certification shall be based. This is a central concern for some Fair Trade activists in the South who also question the uni-directional inspection of Southern producer groups by Northern Fair Trade organizations and wonder, who is certifying the North (Gereffi, 2000)?

Interviews with producers suggest these kinds of practices permit Fair Trade producers to feel like recipients of aid, making it difficult to truly empower the growers, as Fair Trade proponents argue their alternative does. Producers’ lack of knowledge about Fair Trade can be partially explained by this as well, since for many, Fair Trade was introduced to them as yet another scheme dreamed up by foreigners with the stated goal of helping small farmers – a routine many had seen in various forms before.

In a related sense, there is a real concern regarding the distribution of power along the Fair Trade commodity chain. In practice, Fair Trade initiatives are not immune to the demands of powerful actors who control conventional commodity chains. Thus, although FLO is certifying an alternative trade relationship, a closer look at the chain shows that only select exchanges are targeted for alteration. FLO, for instance, “makes no claim to include all actors in the chain” (Lamb and Belling, 2000: 43). For banana initiatives, the powerful actors are retailers, ripeners, shippers, and importers. Since most of these conventional players are exempt from complying with the kind of specific Fair Trade criteria that producers are held to, they continue to maintain control in the Fair Trade banana sector. In the end, it seems that the reason Fair Trade organizations must yield to these actors is rooted in how Fair Trade has been conceptualized, relying heavily on the market and its existing distribution channels. This model and strategy reinforce the top-down manner in which the terms of Fair Trade are dictated, largely without the input of producers.

Conclusion

Though sometimes overshadowed by slogans about “equitable partnership,” “fair deals,” and “trade not aid,” the Fair Trade organizations are working for sustainable development in the global South. According to the Fairtrade Labeling Organization’s promotional literature, Fair Trade represents a “better deal” for marginalized producers, one that helps put them on the “road towards sustainable development” (FLO, 2001). Yet, some calls for sustainable development have been

criticized for their implicit acceptance of the necessity of development (L  l  , 1991; Sachs, 1993; Escobar, 1995).¹⁰ As Sachs argues, “but the frame stays the same: ‘sustainable development’ calls for the conservation of development” (1993: 10). In a similar way, Fair Trade projects can be challenged for calling into question the injustices that characterize the system of free trade by problematizing it as a framework in need of reform. In doing so, paternalistic, often neo-colonial relations that support current patterns of trade in tropical agriculture commodities are not really challenged. Instead, Fair Trade attempts to make the present patterns of exchange more equitable. But, colonialism is based on a model of dependency, and even a “fair” version of such relations can threaten to reproduce the same patterns, under a more socially and environmentally friendly guise.¹¹

Meanwhile, dependency stretches its reach far beyond the Third World. In the North, consumers are highly dependent on export agriculture, and particularly on the export dependency of producers in the South. Our lifestyles are intimately connected to the very relations that are critiqued by the Fair Trade movement. It is herein that the contradiction of market dependency expresses itself most sharply. Reliance on the market as the engine of change reinforces the top-down approach to achieving change. Thus, Fair Trade perpetuates the North’s power to dictate the type and volume of production in the South. Furthermore, reliance on the market (and by extension on consumption) to bring about positive change at the level of production legitimates the primacy of “quality” in Fair Trade exchanges. Waridel and Teitelbaum (1999) explain:

Very few people are ready to spend money on a product that doesn’t taste good even if they believe in the cause it represents. Fair Trade products must have the same characteristics as their conventional counterparts especially in terms of taste, and wherever possible, of cost. (Waridel and Teitelbaum, 1999)

This cautionary insight alludes to the limits of the counter-hegemonic potential of Fair Trade initiatives. Conversations with committed Fair Trade activists indicate that there are some in the movement who would like to confront the current agro-food system with a more radical challenge. However, the commitment to use the capitalist market as the main vehicle for delivering Fair Trade products to consumers may preclude more explicitly oppositional tactics.

In the end, without supermarkets agreeing to sell Fair Trade bananas, the market would never be able to prosper as it has, and producers would not receive the level of financial support that they do. At the same time, supermarket participation becomes highly unlikely if

Fair Trade organizations would hold retailers to a set of criteria similar to the one to which producers must comply. In this situation, the compromises made for the overall success of the movement make sense.

There are many winners in the Fair Trade battle of this far larger war of position: consumers who are able to make purchases that satisfy their conscience; supermarkets who draw these consumers by supplying these products; producers who are selling at higher volumes and for better prices; and the Fair Trade movement, which is growing and gaining increased recognition internationally. In the short term, compromising more fundamental change (via radical social action) for immediate results (through such acts of resistance) seems reasonable. In the longer term, however, can Fair Trade initiatives realize more of their counter-hegemonic potential, and in turn alter the conventional trading relations? Even if the Fair Trade initiatives would be implemented according to their ideal, a close look at the model suggests that the practical implications of these projects would remain limited because of how it has been conceptualized. At the same time, without working towards achieving more transformative changes, it seems plausible that the Fair Trade movement will reproduce and perpetuate some of the inequities and hierarchical relationships that currently characterize international trade. That is, even though Fair Trade initiatives seem successful in tilting the balance of power, perhaps making trade less unfair for producers, the movement appears to lack any vision of liberation from the so-called free market, capitalist system.

In conclusion, the positive consequences of the strategic decision to work “in the market” must not be overlooked. The Fair Trade movement clearly has been able to harness some of the advantages of selling in mainstream markets and can redistribute these material rewards back to producers. Still, by committing to work “in the market,” Fair Trade initiatives embrace a political economy of food and agriculture that grew out of colonial relations, which today are only partially masked as free trade and globalization. Without the vision or means for emancipation from the system, might Fair Trade be a postmodern form of opium for the masses?

While I do not attempt to redesign the Fair Trade system, I believe it is possible to identify some of the spaces in the model that could be reconsidered so that the Fair Trade movement might represent a more radical basis for opposition.¹² More specifically, recognizing the complexities described here, I suggest that a re-conceptualization of the Fair Trade model should include a rethinking of at least four tendencies inherent in and limiting to the potential of the Fair Trade banana initiative: the lingering power asymmetry between the North and South; a conservative understanding of

empowerment by the movement; the limited participation of Southern partners; and the unequal distribution of responsibilities along the Fair Trade commodity chain. By addressing these tendencies, the movement could realize more of its counter-hegemonic potential and contribute to longer term and more radical changes in the future.

Notes

1. As a researcher who both studies and is generally supportive of the Fair Trade movement's efforts, I am very frequently confronted with this and similar questions about Fair Trade labeling, products, and practices.
2. McMichael (2000b: 22) describes a "plethora of alternatives – including community supported and sustainable agriculture, community food security coalitions, organic food, principles of bio-diversity, vegetarianism, fair trade movements, eco-feminism...."
3. Renard's (2003: 87) apt description of Fair Trade as an "experience in progress" is particularly fitting for the Fair Trade banana initiative, which is dynamic and has been evolving in response to its stakeholders needs from the start.
4. Currently, members include fourteen national initiatives from Europe, plus initiatives in Canada, the United States, and Japan.
5. Fair Trade bananas are presently only available for sale in Europe.
6. It is important to note that my analysis reflects this time frame. Since that time there have been developments and changes in FLO, the banana initiative particularly, and within the producer organizations.
7. Moreover, since consumers of Fair Trade products are not expected to reject the capitalist trading system that delivers their tropical commodities to them, neither should the producers be held to such an expectation.
8. Thus far, voluntary decisions regarding Fair Trade are not being challenged under the WTO. However, any allowances that could be interpreted as "preferential treatment" would not be permitted. Meanwhile, other decisions of this organization undermine possibilities for building up Fair Trade markets, as the following example demonstrates.
9. For example, writing about ethical trade, Blowfield (1999: 766) cites an example about "independent" decisions. He writes: "But ongoing work with the Ghana pineapple industry shows that part of the reason for the degree of chemical use is to meet consumer demand for a golden fruit, and to ripen fruit at short notice for European wholesalers who seem unable to predict market demand." Many production practices adopted by banana farmers in Azua were similarly guided by "what the company says" to do.
10. I am not arguing against any "development" in the South. However, as critical development scholars have noted, the concept of "development" is frequently used to refer to a path of modernization similar to the one carved out by countries in the North. As history has demonstrated, such "development" was possible in large part because of the North's exploitative relations with the South and with the global environment. This is what makes calls for "development" difficult, since it is neither likely nor desirable that the South should replicate this pattern of development.
11. This is not a rejection of international exchange and a call for localism. On the contrary, I believe it is important for the Fair Trade movement to take seriously the historical dependence of many primary producers in the South on international trade.
12. Although the impact on the organization and the initiatives is not yet clear, it is important to point out that FLO has been engaged in a process of restructuring to increase its credibility as a certification body, improve efficiency within FLO as an institution, and increase transparency towards producers and consumers (FLO, 2000b). Importantly, a new internal structure in place since January 2002 incorporates producer organizations, industry, and other stakeholders into FLO governance (FLO, 2003).

References

- Allen, P., M. FitzSimmons, M. Goodman, and K. Warner (2003). "Shifting plates in the agrifood landscape: The tectonics of alternative agrifood initiatives in California." *Journal of Rural Studies* 19: 61–75.
- Blowfield, M. (1999). "Ethical trade: A review of developments and issues." *Third World Quarterly* 20(4): 753–770.
- Brown, M. B. (1993). *Fair Trade*. London, UK: Zed Books.
- Chin, C. B. N. and J. H. Mittelman (2000). "Conceptualizing resistance to globalization." In B. K. Gills (ed.), *Globalization and the Politics of Resistance* (pp. 29–45). New York: St. Martin's Press.
- Conroy, M. E. (2001). *Can Advocacy-Led Certification Systems Transform Global Corporate Practices? Evidence and Some Theory*. Working Paper No. 21. Amherst, Massachusetts: Political Economy Research Institute.
- EFTA (European Fair Trade Association) (2001a). *Fair Trade in Europe 2001*. Maastricht, The Netherlands: EFTA.
- EFTA (2001b). *Advocacy Newsletter* 1: 3–4.
- EFTA (1998). *Fair Trade Yearbook: towards 2000*. Ghent, Belgium: Druk in de Weer.
- Escobar, A. (1995). *Encountering Development: The Making and Unmaking of the Third World*. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press.
- European Commission (1999). *Communication from the Commission to the Council on Fair Trade*. COM (1999) 619, November 29. Brussels, Belgium: European Commission (http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/en/com/cnc/1999/com1999_0619en01.pdf).
- Evans, P. (2000). "Fighting marginalization with transnational networks: Counter-hegemonic globalization." *Contemporary Sociology* 29: 230–41.
- FAO (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations) (2000). "Banana experts hold landmark meeting at

- FAO." *FAO News & Highlights*. Retrieved from www.fao.org on December 9, 2000.
- FLO (Fairtrade Labelling Organizations International) (2003). "Impact: facts and figures." Retrieved from www.fairtrade.net/sites/impact/facts.htm on July 24, 2003.
- FLO (2002). "Sales in 2001." *FLO Fairtrade Fruits Newsletter* April: 1.
- FLO (2001). "How does FLO work?" Retrieved from www.fairtrade.net/docs/how_does_flo_work.html on June 5, 2001.
- FLO (2000a). "News from the registers." *Information FLO*, April.
- FLO (2000b). "What about restructuring?" *Information FLO*, April.
- FLO (n.d.). *The Impact of Fairtrade Bananas*. Internal Document.
- Freire, P. (2000). *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. New York: Continuum.
- Friedland, W. H. (1994). "The new globalization: The case of fresh produce." In A. Bonanno, L. Busch, W. Friedland, L. Gouveia, and E. Mingione (eds.), *From Columbus to ConAgra: The Globalization of Agriculture and Food* (pp. 210–231). Lawrence, Kansas: University of Kansas Press.
- Gereffi, G. (2000). "What is the long-term vision of a Fair Trade movement?" Report from Fair Trade Workshop, Keystone, Colorado.
- Gorz, A. (1973). *Socialism and Revolution*. New York: Anchor Books.
- Gramsci, A. (1971). *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*. New York: International Publishers.
- Grey, M. A. (2000). "The industrial food stream and its alternatives in the United States: An introduction." *Human Organization* 59(2): 143–150.
- Heffernan, W. D. (2000). "Concentration of ownership and control in agriculture." In F. Magdoff, J. B. Foster, and F. H. Buttel (eds.), *Hungry for Profit: The Agribusiness Threat to Farmers, Food and the Environment* (pp. 61–76). New York: Monthly Review Press.
- Held, D., A. McGrew, D. Goldblatt, and J. Perraton (1999). *Global Transformations: Politics, Economics and Culture*. Stanford, California: Stanford University Press.
- Hinrichs, C. C. (2003). "The practice and politics of food system localization." *Journal of Rural Studies* 19: 33–45.
- James, D. (2000). "Justice and java: Coffee in a fair trade market." *NACLA Report on the Americas* 34(2): 11–14.
- James, D. (2002). "Consumer activism and corporate accountability." *Journal of Research for Consumers* 3 (<http://jrc.bpm.ecu.edu.au/index.asp>).
- Johnston, J. (2003). "Counter-hegemony or bourgeois pigery? Food politics and the case of FoodShare." Paper presented at the RC-40 Mini-Conference on Resistance and Agency in Contemporary Agriculture and Food: Empirical Cases and New Theories, Austin, Texas, June 13–14.
- Kennedy, M. and C. Tilly (1990). "Transformative populism and the development of a community of color." In J. M. Kling and P. S. Posner (eds.), *Dilemmas of Activism: Class, Community, and the Politics of Local Mobilization* (pp. 302–324). Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: Temple University Press.
- Lamb, H. and R. Belling (2000). "Review of the implementation of the Fair Trade certification programme in banana production and trade." In FAO (ed.), *Report: Ad-hoc Expert Meeting on Socially and Environmentally Responsible Banana Production and Trade* (pp. 42–43). Rome, Italy: FAO.
- Lélé, S. M. (1991). "Sustainable development: A critical review." *World Development* 19(6): 607–621.
- Lyon, S. (2003). "Fantasies of social justice and equality: Market relations and the future of Fair Trade." Paper presented at the XXIV International Congress of the Latin American Studies Association, Dallas, Texas, March 28.
- Magdoff, F., J. B. Foster, and F. H. Buttel (eds.) (2000). *Hungry for Profit: The Agribusiness Threat to Farmers, Food, and the Environment*. New York: Monthly Review Press.
- Mao Tse-Tung (1967). "On contradiction." *Selected Works of Mao Tse-Tung, Vol. I* (pp. 311–347). Peking, China: Foreign Languages Press.
- Marsden, T. (2000). "Food matters and the matter of food: Towards a new food governance?" *Sociologia Ruralis* 40(1): 20–29.
- Marx, K. and F. Engels (1988). *The Communist Manifesto*. Buffalo, New York: Prometheus Books.
- McMichael, P. (2000a). "Global food politics." In F. Magdoff, J. B. Foster, and F. H. Buttel (eds.), *Hungry for Profit: The Agribusiness Threat to Farmers, Food, and the Environment* (pp. 125–143). New York: Monthly Review Press.
- McMichael, P. (2000b). "The power of food." *Agriculture and Human Values* 17: 21–33.
- Murray, D. L. and L. T. Reynolds (2000). "Alternative trade in bananas: Obstacles and opportunities for progressive social change in the global economy." *Agriculture and Human Values* 17: 65–74.
- Murray, D., L. T. Reynolds, and P. L. Taylor (2003). *One Cup at a Time: Poverty Alleviation and Fair Trade Coffee in Latin America*. Fort Collins, Colorado: Fair Trade Research Group, Colorado State University.
- Reynolds, L. T. (2000). "Re-embedding global agriculture: The international organic and Fair Trade movements." *Agriculture and Human Values* 17: 297–309.
- Reynolds, L. T. (2002). "Consumer/producer links in Fair Trade coffee networks." *Sociologia Ruralis* 42(4): 404–424.
- Reagon, B. J. (1982). "My black mothers and sisters or on beginning a cultural autobiography." *Feminist Studies* 8(Spring): 81–96.
- Renard, M. C. (1999). "The interstices of globalization: The example of fair coffee." *Sociologia Ruralis* 39(4): 484–500.
- Renard, M. C. (2003). "Fair trade: Quality, market and conventions." *Journal of Rural Studies* 19: 87–96.
- Sachs, W. (1993). "Global ecology in the shadow of 'development'." In W. Sachs (ed.), *Global Ecology: A New Arena of Political Conflict* (pp. 3–21). London, UK: Zed Books.
- Scott, J. C. (1990). *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts*. New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press.
- Shreck, A. (2002a). *Just Bananas? A Fair Trade Alternative for Small-Scale Producers in the Dominican Republic*. PhD dissertation. Department of Sociology, Colorado State University, Ft. Collins, Colorado.
- Shreck, A. (2002b). "Just bananas? Fair trade banana production in the Dominican Republic." *International Journal of Sociology of Agriculture and Food* 10(2): 11–21.

- Starr, A. (2000). *Naming the Enemy: Anti-Corporate Movements Confront Globalization*. London, UK: Zed Books.
- Tallontire, A. (2000). "Partnerships in fair trade: Reflections from a case study of Cafédirect." *Development in Practice* 10(2): 166–177.
- Tanaka, K. and L. Busch (2003). "Standardization as a means for globalizing a commodity: The case of rapeseed." *Rural Sociology* 68(1): 22–45.
- Tiffen, P. (1999). "The way forward: How and when the alternative traders can say that 'the market is wrong.'" Paper Presented at IFAT Conference on The Business of Fair Trade: Livelihoods, Markets and Sustainability, Milan, Italy, May 9–14.
- Waridel, L. and S. Teitelbaum (1999). *Fair Trade: Contributing to Equitable Commerce*. Quebec, Canada: ÉquiTerre. (http://www.equiterr.qc.ca/english/coffee/outils_eng/rapport_europeen/rapport.html).
- Watkins, K. (1998). "Green dream turns turtle." *The Guardian*, September 9, 1998: 4.
- Whatmore, S. and L. Thorne (1997). "Nourishing networks: Alternative geographies of food." In D. Goodman and M. Watts (eds.), *Globalising Food: Agrarian Questions and Global Restructuring* (pp. 287–304). London, UK: Routledge.
- Zonneveld, L. (2003). "2001-2002: The year in review." *FLO News Bulletin* January. Retrieved from www.fairtrade.net/sites/new/bulletin.htm on July 25, 2003.

Address for correspondence: Dr. Aimee Shreck, California Faculty Association, 400 Capitol Mall, #1950, Sacramento, CA 95814, USA
Phone: +1-916-441-4848; Fax: +1-916-441-3513;
E-mail: ashreck@calfac.org