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The Local is Global: Voices of Leaders in Coffee Justice

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THE LOCAL IS GLOBAL: A CROSS-DISCIPLINARY INVESTIGATION OF COFFEE AND JUSTICE

Megan Kamper, Dr. Regan Postma-Montaño, Hope College, Holland, MI

An Interdisciplinary Project

We considered the impact of **local coffee choices on global producers** from both a **science and humanities perspective**.

The science side of the project studied how roasting and brewing affect coffee quality and the humanities side looked at issues of coffee and justice.

Coffee Injustice

Historically and presently, we see injustices in the coffee industry:

- The profit of coffee is unequally distributed, leaving many coffee farmers with wages that are not fair, or even livable.
- Groups such as women and migrant workers face an even greater imbalance of burdens and benefits in the coffee industry.
- Unsustainable coffee farming practices damage ecosystems and endanger the health of workers and communities.



From Bean to Cup: So that All Communities Connected by Coffee Can Flourish

Learning Materials

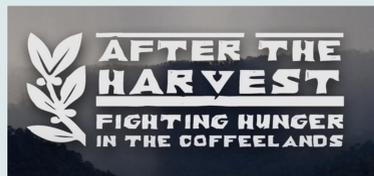
We created a site for students and the public to learn about coffee and justice.

The site includes:

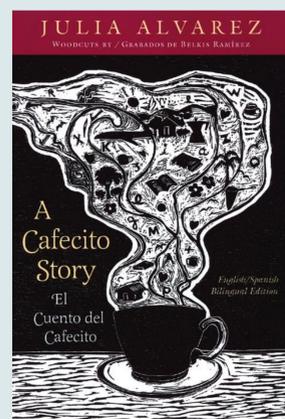
1. A "First Look at Coffee and Justice" introduction activity



2. An activity on the film *After the Harvest: Fighting Hunger in the Coffeelands*.



3. A guided reading of *A Cafecito Story* by Julia Alvarez



4. *The Local is Global* 20 min summary interview video

Local Voices

Watch the interview videos and view our site!



We listened to the perspectives of West Michigan coffee leaders to understand what seeking justice in coffee looks like on a local level.

Leaders share their understanding of coffee justice, methods of just coffee purchasing, challenges, and dreams:



Josh Taves, Head of Business Development
Stovetop Coffee Roasters, Holland and Grand Rapids, MI

"If you just like cats, we have a cat coffee. And if you just want to interact with Norris the Narwhal and learn about his backstory and the type of music that he likes, well here's a coffee for you. But if you want to buy that same coffee, and interact with it on a higher plane, and understand the story of the farmers who produce that coffee, or our story as the roaster, we want to produce a world-class coffee that also does that."



Johnny DeMaagd, Executive Director and Founder
Left Field Coffee Co., Middleville and Hastings, MI

"It's really a seed to cup importance of making sure that along the way no harm is being done.... making sure that everything's staying organic, being just to the earth, being kind. Our biggest goal and philosophy is kindness, and I think kindness and justice go really hand in hand."



Brittany Goode, Manager
Aldea Coffee, Grand Haven and Muskegon, MI

"The benefit of direct trade is really truly knowing where that coffee is coming from, and coffee producers know where the coffee is going.... That piece alone of having that intimacy is so much emotion for me...It's just those types of relationships and building those relationships that is not something most coffee companies, or any company, has the story to tell."

Acknowledgements

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Hope College Libraries

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Aldea Coffee
Left Field Coffee Co.
Stovetop Coffee Roasters