

**The Sustainable Coffee Movements in the United States and Denmark:  
A Comparative Analysis**

David Iozzi

Copyright protected under David Iozzi. Permission to cite should be directed to the author.

Recent advances in communication and transportation technologies, in addition to allowing people, news, and information to move about the globe at unprecedented speeds, have facilitated an expeditious international exchange of ideas. Each idea able to find a constituency during its global diffusion has taken up a position at the center of a transnational community built around it. At times, the members of one such transnational community may engage in simultaneous political action to promote their shared idea, thereby creating a transnational advocacy network. “A transnational advocacy network includes those relevant actors working internationally on an issue, who are bound together by shared values, a common discourse, and dense exchanges of information and services” (Keck and Sikkink, 2). A relatively new entrant onto the political scene, these networks often focus on specific, highly personalized issues and involve the mobilization of a loosely connected group of actors from multiple political systems.

While these networks exist globally, their core ideas often produce different results in each of the many political systems in which they touch down. Similarly, people sometimes reach up to and interact with these ideas differently depending on the domestic political culture in which they reside. The subsequent pages will compare the form taken by a specific transnational advocacy network—the sustainable coffee movement—in two dissimilar political cultures—the United States and Denmark. First, after providing basic background information about the sustainable coffee movement and its underlying issues, this paper will present the key differences between the two-sub-movements in question. Then, examples of these differences, as well as discussions of their causes and effects, will follow.

## Background

The multitude of issues included in the sustainable coffee movement fall into two broad categories. The first concerns the human rights and working conditions of coffee farmers and plantation workers. Actors within the movement see large coffee plantations as ‘sweatshops in the field,’ paying landless workers too little and subjecting them to overly harsh working conditions. They also see these large plantations as contributing to oversupply and falling coffee prices, driving small farmers from their land, and trapping both coffee farmers and plantation workers in an endless cycle of poverty and debt (see <http://www.globalexchange.org>).

In response to these problems, the movement has established Fair Trade certification. Fair Trade labeling organizations in seventeen countries, all organized under a single umbrella organization—Fairtrade Labeling Organizations International (FLO; <http://www.fairtrade.net>)—are in charge of certifying Fair Trade importers, roasters, and retailers. At the other end of the coffee trail, the labeling organizations maintain relationships with Fair Trade producers, consisting of democratically managed cooperatives, and guarantee them a minimum price for their product, thereby ensuring that they earn a ‘livable wage’ (see appendix A). As a result, spreading awareness of sustainable coffee issues in an effort to increase consumer demand for Fair Trade coffee is the object of much of the movement’s energy.

The movement, in addition to its human rights concerns, also includes a whole host of environmental issues. In its natural state, coffee grows under a canopy of trees. However, most large plantations grow newer varieties of sun-tolerant coffee using increased amounts of agrochemicals. The movement’s resulting concerns are of two sorts. First, advocates of ‘shade-coffee’ worry about canopied farms giving way to vast plantations and the consequential deforestation. This subset of network actors includes many North American bird enthusiasts

concerned with the disappearance of migratory birds' wintering grounds, comprised partially of tree-covered coffee farms (see <http://www.seattleadubon.org/Coffee/home>). Second, proponents of organic coffee worry about the use of agro-chemicals and advocate organic certification (see <http://www.organicconsumers.org>). Together, these environmental and human rights issues supply most of the movement's motivation and provide for its continuity.

### **The Major Differences**

Although the picture of the movement's general form presented above holds true, many aspects of the movement depend largely upon the domestic political culture in which it is operating. A comparison of the sustainable coffee movements in both the United States and Denmark illustrates this point. The main differences between the American and Danish sustainable coffee movements are as follows:

- First, while the American movement operates largely outside of traditional political structures, the Danish movement is highly integrated into the Danish government.
- Second, while the American movement incorporates a number of issues, its Danish counterpart focuses on only one.
- Third, the issue-linkage characteristic of the American movement is not a part of the Danish movement.
- Fourth, the American movement involves scores of actors while its Danish counterpart includes only a few.
- Fifth, while actors in the American movement have 'activist' images, their Danish counterparts do not to the same extent.

- Sixth, the anti-corporate campaigns common in the American movement are absent from the Danish movement.
- Seventh, while the American movement is horizontally organized, the Danish movement is vertically ordered.
- Eighth, while the American movement is noticeably fluid, the Danish movement is rigidly structured.
- Finally, the Danish movement has enjoyed considerably more success than its American counterpart.

### **Two Sub-Movements Compared**

The Danish government's inclusion of the sustainable coffee movement contrasts sharply with an American movement, which operating almost entirely outside of traditional political structures. To begin with, Max Havelaar Denmark (<http://www.maxhavelaar.dk>), the Danish Fair Trade labeling organization and the country's principle sustainable coffee player, receives substantial amounts of funding from the Danish state. Last year, for example, the organization received a two year, six million Danish Crowns (approx. \$800,000) grant from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (see <http://www.um.dk>). On the other side of the spectrum, sustainable coffee advocacy organizations in the United States receive no federal funding and instead depend largely on private foundation grants and citizen contributions.

In addition to receiving government funds, Max Havelaar Denmark enjoys explicit support in multiple government publications. For example, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs uses the labeling organization as an example in its published informational flyers explaining the ways in which domestic Danish groups can receive government foreign aid funds to further their goals.

Additionally, the current administration released an agenda report in July, which mentioned Max Havelaar as fitting into its strategy and contributing to its foreign aid program (interview, 10/10/02). Actors in the American movement, in contrast, do not receive this sort of explicit support from their government.

These divergent degrees of government support result largely from the dissimilar political cultures of the United States and Denmark. Denmark is a democratic corporatist state, a political culture characterized by “an ideology of social partnership expressed at the national level, a relatively centralized and concentrated system of interest groups, and voluntary and informal coordination of conflicting objectives through continuous political bargaining” (Katzenstein, 32). The resulting “culture of compromise,” coupled with Denmark’s multi-party parliamentary system, partially provides for the Danish government’s inclusion of the sustainable coffee movement.

No Danish party, in recent times, has single-handedly commanded a majority in Parliament. Therefore, several parties must form a coalition in order to create a majority. In return for pledging their support to coalitions, minor coalition members reap rewards in the form of directly included ideas or ministerial posts that suit their interests and allow them to influence the bureaucracy. Over time, various coalition members have incorporated a broad spectrum of ideas into Danish governmental ministries, many of them compatible with those of the sustainable coffee movement. Furthermore, these ideas often remain even after their creating coalitions leave power. This is partly because constituents’ expectations developed around these ideas once in place and because of the culture of compromise and general “inclusion principle...reflected in the Danish government” (Borish, 291).

The United States, on the other hand, is a liberal pluralist democracy, a political culture in which “public interests have no formal institutionalized role and interest groups compete for influence.” Thus, “the system is competitive rather than cooperative” (Gallagher et al., 407-8). This, as well as the two-party system, results in the exclusion of many interests, a culture of conflict rather than compromise, and the disappearance of many previously inserted ideas upon a change of power. Furthermore, it is nearly impossible for a new party to enter into the American political system successfully. It is difficult in Denmark, but feasible as evidenced by several contemporary political parties less than a few decades old (see <http://www.folketinget.dk>). Upon inclusion, many new parties introduced new ideas and, in turn, expectations, into the Danish political system.

The effects of the Danish movement’s integration into the Danish government are many. First, the Danish government’s support of Max Havelaar Denmark adds an air of legitimacy to the movement’s efforts and an aspect of authority to its claims. Conversely, in the United States, the movement’s messages face head-to-head competition from the public relations broadcasts of major coffee companies. For example, Nestlé’s Senior Vice President for Purchasing and Exports recently stated, “Fair Trade isn’t a viable solution” (Bendheim, New York Times, 11/3/02). In the United States, the movement can only counter such statements with network-generated information. In Denmark, on the other hand, Fair Trade advocates can back up network-generated information with government issued reports thereby converting skeptics with greater ease.

Second, the Danish government’s inclusion of the movement results in the movement’s single-issue nature. The sustainable coffee movement in Denmark involves only Fair Trade concerns and does not include either organic or shade coffee issues, both of which are important

elements of the American movement. Consequently, the issue-linkage characteristic of the American movement is not a part of its Danish counterpart. It is true that organic coffee is widely available in Denmark, more widely available than in the United States, but the issue is not cast as one belonging to the sustainable coffee movement. Danish organic product advocates do not form links with proponents of Fair Trade coffee and consumers seem to view each issue separately even though they may identify with both.

The separation of organic and Fair Trade issues is partly an unintended consequence of the Danish government's inclusion of both movements. The government, in offering support and inclusion, makes it unnecessary for movement actors to link up with, and seek support from, advocates of other issues. Additionally, the fact that both the organic and Fair Trade movements have enjoyed relative success in Denmark lessens their need to seek support through issue-linkage. This is especially the case with the organic issue, which benefits from government certification and advertising campaigns (see <http://www.okologik.dk>) as well as widespread public support (interview, 10/10/02). However, as actors become used to this issue-separation, patterns of behavior develop and reinforce themselves. This results in the narrowly conceived issues noticeable in the Danish movement and a tradition of not resorting to issues-linkage even in cases where it would be beneficial.

The case is much the same with the absence of shade coffee issues. Shade coffee is entirely unheard of in Denmark. When asked about the issue the director of Max Havelaar Denmark replied, "I don't really know anything about it, I don't see any need for another category" (interview, 10/10/02). As with the organic issue, the relative success of Fair Trade advocates diminishes their need to include the shade issue. Reciprocally, the fact that environmental advocates also find extensive inclusion and generous support within the Danish

government diminishes their incentives to collaborate with Fair Trade supporters. Lumber products originating in tropical rainforests, for example, receive a special label in Denmark setting them apart from other wood products (interview, 10/10/02). This and other institutionalizations of both the environmental and the Fair Trade movements keep them from needing to reach out for support.

There is, however, an obvious additional point as to the absence of shade coffee issues from the Danish context. Most of the advocates of shade coffee are North American bird enthusiasts concerned with decreasing populations of migratory birds. Since, migratory birds wintering in Latin America's coffee growing regions spend their summers in North America rather than Europe, concern over their decreasing numbers is logically less of an issue in Denmark. However, Danish Fair Trade organizations might have found a need to link up with this issue if wide support did not already exist in both the public and the government. As a result, many environmentalists in Denmark may remain unaware of the migratory bird issue taken up by their North American equivalents.

The Danish movement, because of its single-issue nature, attracts a smaller audience than it would if it included multiple issues. Danish citizens, while potential advocates of sustainable coffee, may remain detached from the movement simply because the objects of their concern do not link up with Fair Trade. On the other hand, the Danish movement seems less "ideologically thin" (Bennett) than its American counterpart. For advocates of a movement to successfully "campaign on an issue it must be converted into a causal story that establishes who bears the responsibility or guilt. But the causal chain needs to be sufficiently short and clear to make the case convincing" (Keck and Sikkink, 27). The narrow, single-issue character of the Danish sustainable coffee movement provides a short, clear causal story and thus makes it easier for

audiences to connect with its message. However, the narrow nature of the Danish movement, while offering a clearer story, also provides it with a smaller audience. The multi-issued American movement may have a longer and less clear causal story, but its potential audience is proportionately larger. Its many issues allow it to reach out to multiple constituencies of concern and draw them in.

An additional effect of the Danish movement's single-issue nature, and a product of the movement's incorporation into the Danish government, is the small number of organizations within the movement. It includes only two Fair Trade advocacy organizations and no organizations promoting other issues (see appendix C). The first of these two is the Copenhagen-based Max Havelaar Denmark, the country's Fair Trade labeling organization. The second is an Odense-based organization called Fair Trade Net that imports Fair Trade handcrafts and supports a chain of Fair Trade retail stores (interview, 10/10/02). However, while Fair Trade Net's stores sell Max Havelaar certified products, collaboration between the two organizations, in accordance with the Danish movement's pattern of not forming links, is limited. Both organizations seem to find more effectiveness in lobbying their government than forming links and formulating combined strategies. Therefore, because the Danish government is the most linked-to participant in the Danish sustainable coffee movement, and because it supports the movement's message, it qualifies as a movement actor as well, bringing the total to three.

The American movement, in contrast, involves scores of actors interlinked to varying degrees (see appendix B). As previously mentioned, the American movement's greater numbers is due, in part, to the fact that it includes numerous issues attracting various constituencies of concern along with their accompanying organizations. This pattern of expansion continually reinforces itself: as a tradition of link forming develops, groups constantly seek new links. The

institutionalization of the Danish movement, on the other hand, preserves a single, narrowly cast issue and perpetuates a tradition of lobbying politicians rather than other advocacy organizations.

In addition to simply being fewer in number, actors in the Danish movement also have a different image than their American counterparts do. While actors in the American movement have an ‘activist’ or ‘fringe movement’ image, those in the Danish movement do not to nearly the same extent. The success of Max Havelaar Denmark and Fair Trade Net, and a receptive public, allows them to project a ‘mainstream’ image and fulfill their goals without the help of supporting activists. These actors operate as companies simply trying to sell a product to an audience already aware of the issues. The director of Max Havelaar Denmark, for example, noted, “43 percent of the Danish population knows Max Havelaar and understands our goals, but unfortunately only 45 percent of those 43 percent have purchased Max Havelaar products. Our mission is to get all those aware of Max Havelaar to purchase more.” The organization seeks to do this by putting more of their products on store shelves thereby increasing availability; raising issue-awareness remains a secondary concern (interview, 10/10/02).

In the United States, on the other hand, where many citizens remain unaware of sustainable coffee issues, Fair Trade labelers and retailers need the assistance of activist organizations to educate the public. This necessitates an activist strategy through the involvement of multiple activist organizations such as Global Exchange (<http://www.gloablexchange.org>) and Oxfam USA (<http://www.oxfam.org>). These activist organizations work through the recruitment and mobilization of an activist base, which in turn helps them to spread the movement’s message. This different strategy pursued by the American movement partially explains its activist image. It also touches on an important difference in the

nature of American and Danish political consumerism as it relates to the sustainable coffee movement.

As noted above, actors in the Danish movement enjoy wide public awareness and, therefore, have less of a need to cultivate an activist base. As a result, Danish citizens who connect with the movement's message engage in politically driven purchasing decisions but nothing more. There is no activist organization in Denmark working to spread the movement's message through a mobilized activist base. Conversely, in the United States, citizens alarmed by a lack of public awareness may easily act in conjunction with an activist organization in an effort to spread the movement's message. Tapping into such an organization is relatively easy. These organizations post informational materials, local contacts' information, and dates-of-action online (see <http://globalexchange.org>, <http://www.organicconsumers.org>). Consequently, some American sustainable coffee advocates cease to simply be political consumers and instead engage in a sort of *evangelical political consumerism* in an effort to convince others to imitate their politically driven purchasing decisions. Together, this evangelical breed of political consumer, the multitude of activist organizations participating in the American movement, and the movement's position on the fringes of American politics all contribute to the movement's activist image.

Several inferences derive from this point. First, Danish citizens, despite their widespread support of the movement's ideas, are less politically engaged with respect to sustainable coffee issues than their American counterparts. This has both a positive and a negative cause. On the positive side, there is not as much of a need for engagement since the government already supports the issue and nearly half of the Danish population knows the Max Havelaar name. Furthermore, this disengagement indicates that most Danish Fair Trade supporters are satisfied,

approve of their government's handling of the issue, and trust that their government will continue to deal with the issue appropriately. On the negative side, there are few options readily available for still unsatisfied citizens who would like to take up the issue and further its success. Max Havelaar Denmark does utilize volunteers in its office, and it does sponsor an Aarhus-based subsidiary charged with carrying out the labeler's work in central and northern Jutland, but these are citizens' only options. Additionally, since local groups in coffee exporting countries "depend on international contacts to get their information out" (Keck and Sikkink, 22), the multiple sustainable coffee activist organizations in the United States provide a more receptive audience for coffee farmers' immediate concerns than the more business-like Danish groups do. This is so despite the fact that the Danish public as a whole would most likely respond to these concerns with greater sympathy.

The activist nature of the American movement, in addition to prompting increased citizen participation, both promotes and receives reinforcement from anti-corporate campaigns. In this context, "campaigns are sets of strategically linked activities in which members of a diffuse principled network develop explicit, visible, and mutually recognized ties in pursuit of a common goal" against a common target (Keck and Sikkink, 6). An anti-corporate campaign possesses the additional trait of having a corporation as its target. At present, there are two major sustainable coffee-related anti-corporate campaigns underway in the United States—one against Starbucks, the other against Folgers. The larger of the two campaigns targets Starbucks—even though it is the smaller of the two companies—by playing into the coffee giant's socially and environmentally responsible brand image. The campaign holds that Starbucks is neither socially nor environmentally conscious, and in fact harms both the environment and the population of coffee producing regions. This claim does not sit well with Starbucks' customers, many of whom

also like to view themselves as socially and environmentally responsible—at least to a greater extent than the average Folgers customer does. By adopting such a strategy, activists are able to reach audiences who are likely to identify with the movement’s message once they become aware of it. Thus, “the brand image, the source of so much corporate wealth, is also, it turns out, the corporate Achilles’ heel” (Klein, 343). Through targeting and attempting to discredit this brand image, the American movement has enjoyed moderate success with regards to specific campaign goals. However, these campaigns, and the American movement’s activist, image discourage many would be sustainable coffee advocates from becoming involved simply because they do not want to be associated with activism.

In contrast, these campaigns, which are a cornerstone of the American movement, are absent from the Danish movement. This, of course, is partly because there are no major coffee outlet chains to campaign against in Denmark and thus no corporate Achilles’ heels to aim for. However, the perception among many Danes that their government is able to deal with the issue effectively also plays a role. The non-involvement of the American government in the sustainable coffee movement, combined with a perception among American activists that “corporations have grown so big they have superceded government” (Klein, xxi), propels American activists to target coffee companies directly instead of lobbying their government. In Denmark, it is likely that if protest were to occur on this issue, the government would be a target because Danish citizens still appear to believe that their government is able effectively deal with sustainable coffee issues. Although, the non-activist temperament of the Danish movement begs one to question whether such a campaign would develop at all if a potential target did enter the Danish market.

When asked for his opinion on this topic, the director of Max Havelaar Denmark replied that the need for such a campaign would most likely never arise (interview, 10/10/02). He was relatively certain that Starbucks, a target of American activism, would come to Denmark eventually, but was rather confident that they would adopt Fair Trade principles in their Danish outlets upon arrival. In his opinion, this was a prerequisite for survival in the Danish market. His position, while a potential object of skepticism, finds support in the fact that the American convenience store chain, Seven-Eleven, sells only Fair Trade coffee in its Danish outlets. Furthermore, it chooses to do so voluntarily and not because of any previously applied pressure (interview, 10/10/02). The position of Max Havelaar Denmark's director stems, in part, from the fact that the sustainable coffee movement was well received in Denmark from the start and never had to actively campaign to spread its message (interview, 10/10/02). Thus, a tradition of activism never developed. There is certainly activism, in the traditional sense of the word, with regard to other issues, but not in the realm of sustainable coffee.

The absence of a tradition of activism on this issue provides an additional explanation as to why there are far more sustainable coffee advocacy organizations in the United States than in Denmark. The need to actively target companies and continuously spread awareness simply necessitates more actors. Anti-corporate campaigns, in addition to requiring more actors to begin with, also draw in new organizations once under way. This happens when actors with the same target but different campaigns become aware of each other and combine their campaigns. For example, the Organic Consumers Association (OCA; <http://www.organicconsumer.org>) and Global Exchange are currently spearheading a joint campaign against Starbucks. This originally began as two separate campaigns, an OCA-sponsored anti-recumbent bovine growth hormone (rBGH) campaign and a Global Exchange sponsored Fair Trade campaign. By linking together, a

new actor, the OCA, entered into the sustainable coffee movement. Since these sorts of campaigns are not a part of the Danish movement, the number of Danish actors remains static and small. However, because it does not involve issues as dissimilar as rBGH dairy products and Fair Trade coffee, the Danish movement retains a far more coherent message than its American equivalent does.

This small number of actors, combined with a single coherent message, causes the Danish movement to retain a more vertically organized structure than its horizontally ordered American counterpart. The flow of information through the Danish movement begins at either the top or the bottom and travels along a single path (see Appendix C). From the top, information travels from FLO—the Fair Trade labeling umbrella organization—down through Max Havelaar Denmark and on to government agencies, Fair Trade retailers, and coffee consumers. FLO is the Danish movement's only major contact outside of Denmark. Therefore, the Danish movement takes the form of a spur coming down from a transnational network. From the bottom, citizens' engagement with the network follows a path through one of three contact points—Fair Trade retailers, Max Havelaar Denmark, or government officials—and travels back up through the network.

The American movement, on the other hand, includes multiple channels of information flows and numerous contact points (see Appendix B). While information does still travel into TransFair USA from FLO, the domestic movement's various actors maintain multiple other international contacts and include several international NGOs acting domestically (e.g. Oxfam, Conservation International, the Consumer's Choice Council), each potentially drawing on their own sources of information. Consequently, Americans concerned with sustainable coffee issues have more options for engagement than Danes with similar concerns do. However, the American

network propagates a far more ambiguous message as a result. In the United States for example, citizens engaged in the movement can choose to either support or oppose Starbucks depending on whose campaign they join. They can sign on to the OCA and Global Exchange campaign against the corporate giant, or they can back Conservation International in its efforts to work with the coffee retailer (see <http://www.starbucks.com/ongoodgrounds>). Thus, because of its many points of contact coupled with multiple channels of information flows, the American movement takes the form of a web rather than a spur.

An additional and resulting difference between the two movements involves the noticeably fluid nature of the American movement when compared to its rigidly structured Danish counterpart. The Danish movement's form and number of actors has changed little since its inception in 1994 (interview, 10/10/02). The American movement, in contrast, undergoes constant change. Campaigns continuously begin, evolve, and end, and actors and links come and go. For example, in 2001 TransFair USA and the Seattle-based Songbird Foundation (<http://www.songbird.org>) began a joint educational campaign called the Seattle Sustainable Coffee Coalition, to convince Seattle-area coffee companies to increase their commitment to sustainable coffee (interview, 5/3/02). However, while these two organizations still maintain close contact, that specific campaign has ended. Additionally, links between actors continually form as demonstrated by OCA and Global Exchange's joint campaign and the Songbird Foundation's relatively recent contact with the Smithsonian Migratory Bird Center and the Rainforest Alliance (interview, 5/3/02).

The increased fluidness of the American movement results, in part, from its multi-issue character, its multiple channels of information flows, and the need for its actors to form alliances in an effort to spread awareness. The Danish movement retains its rigid structure because of an

absence of these traits and because of its integration into the Danish government. Its institutionalization provides the Danish movement with a clear, constant, and satisfactory strategy. This enables the Danish movement, as already noted, to retain a narrow, practical, and effective message, but limits its adaptability and options. However, since the Danish movement already enjoys widespread awareness, its limitations seem to be of little consequence to those involved in the movement.

Nearly half of the Danish population is aware of Max Havelaar Denmark and knows what the name stands for, and more than a fifth of the population has purchased Max Havelaar certified products. Furthermore, Max Havelaar Denmark labels coffee, tea, bananas, chocolate, and sugar, and is working on certification for apple juice, honey, and various varieties of fresh fruit (interview, 10/10/02; <http://www.MaxHavelaar.dk> ). TransFair USA, in contrast, only labels tea and coffee, and is in the process of developing certification for chocolate (interview, 4/16/02; <http://www.transfairusa.org>). By defining movement success as the level of awareness and acceptance it enjoys, the Danish movement stands out as considerably more successful than the American movement. This raises the difficult question of why. There is of course no single catchall answer, but partial explanations do exist.

The single most important factor in the Danish movement's relative success seems to derive not from any specific characteristic of the movement itself, but rather from a factor pre-dating the Danish movement's inception. Since "new ideas are more likely to be influential if they fit well with existing ideas and ideologies" (Keck and Sikkink, 2004), it appears likely that a ready and receptive Danish population provided for much of the movement's success. As the director of Max Havelaar Denmark noted, "Many Danes were aware of Fair Trade products before Max Havelaar was founded." He also felt that since Danes had "always had a tradition of

helping other countries,” the movement fit well with pre-existing principles (interview, 10/10/02). Katzenstein, along this same line, explains that small European states “emphasize that all members of society are in the same boat, that the waves are high, and that everyone must pull the oars” (Katzenstein, 35). This feeling, projected globally, and combined with Borish’s observation that “it is the perceived mistreatment of the downtrodden that most angers Danes” (Borish, 296), supplied the movement with an amenable audience requiring only minimal amounts of persuasion. An agreeable audience, combined with a receptive democratic corporatist government, provided the Danish movement with its current form. Thus, the relative success, and shape, of the movement owes primarily to factors largely beyond its control rather than to any specific strategy.

The lesser success of the American movement then, it would seem, stems in part from a less receptive public. As a result, the American movement must create new issue framings through issue linkage in an effort to reach potentially receptive audiences. Thus, the American movement also owes its shape largely of the nature of its public. Its web of multiple issues, actors, and information flows developed because of a need to reach out to prospective constituencies of concern and build an audience. This need, in turn, necessitates the high level of citizen engagement present in the American movement.

The importance of citizen engagement to the American movement, when compared to a Danish movement distanced from its public, produces inferences as to the democratic functioning of each context. It seems as though Danes concerned with sustainable coffee issues are currently satisfied with their government’s handling of the matter. Their relative disengagement with respect to this issue, then, is of little concern. More importantly though, is

the question of what would have happened had the Danish government not incorporated the issue.

Critics of the corporatist model point to the fact that issues not incorporated often disappear because citizens' expectations develop around government action. This perpetuates a habit of not working outside of a governmental framework even when the need presents itself. However, a differing perspective follows from the Danish political identity of the 'Everyday Maker.' Citizens fitting this political identity actively direct their efforts "towards concrete problem solving in everyday life" (Bang and Sorensen, 327). Additionally, they often act locally and as a supplement to government rather than an opposing force. According to this model, if Everyday Makers perceived a lack of government inclusion of the sustainable coffee movement to be a problem, they would take action and attempt to correct the situation. However, due to the relative success of the movement, such action is unnecessary and Everyday Makers remain nothing more than a force in reserve. Then again, retuning to the side of the critics, the narrow casting of the Danish movement may cause Everyday Makers to remain unaware of certain problems.

The American movement, in contrast, habitually involves citizens to a higher degree and includes multiple contact points enabling citizens to become engaged in a variety of ways. However, this seemingly positive trait finds a negative corollary in the perception among American sustainable coffee advocates that their government is unable to deal with at least some of the issues they view as important. In fact, this perceived government shortcoming is the primary recruiter of many movement participants. In sum, most American sustainable coffee proponents are actively engaged, but feel a strong dissatisfaction with their government's ability to solve many everyday problems—a pro resulting *from* a con. Conversely, while Danes are

satisfied, they remain disengaged—a pro resulting *in* a con. Thus, each context includes both positive and negative aspects with respect to its democratic functioning, whether one is more positive than the other remains unclear and well beyond the scope of this paper.

### **Conclusion**

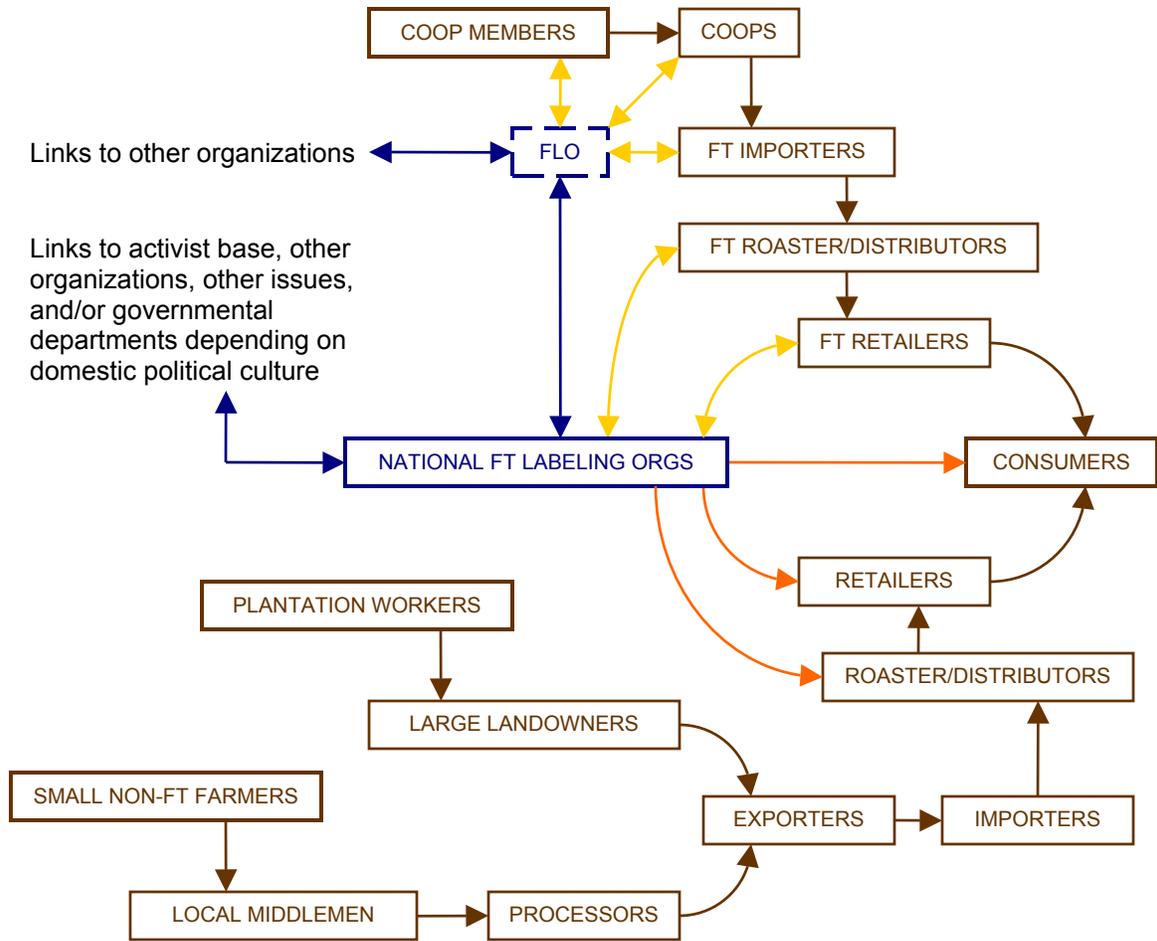
To review, the Danish movement enjoys government support while the American movement does not. This is due, in part, to Denmark's democratic corporatist political culture and its multi-partied parliamentary system. Consequently, the Danish movement benefits from added legitimacy and feels no need to include multiple issues. The Danish movement encompasses only Fair Trade themes while the American movement includes both organic and shade coffee issues. As a result, the American movement is more ideologically thin than its Danish counterpart but it does reach out to a wider audience. The American movement's inclusion of multiple issues and its utilization of issue-linkage partially explains the large number of actors it involves in comparison to its Danish counterpart. Its larger number of actors also stems from the fact that the movement has experienced less success in the United States than in Denmark. This requires that actors in the American movement actively work to spread awareness and leads to their activist, and fringe movement image. Conversely, the relative success of the Danish movement presents Danish Fair Trade advocates with a mainstream, business-like image. Moreover, the American movement's image receives further reinforcement from its pursuance of anti-corporate campaigns as an awareness-spreading tool. These campaigns, in contrast, are absent from the Danish movement.

Additionally, and because of the smaller number of actors and the single channel of information flow it involves, the Danish movement has a vertical order while the American

movement is horizontally organized. Furthermore, because of its integration into government, its vertical organization, and its small number of actors, the Danish movement retains a rigid, static structure. The American movement, because its campaigns continuously begin, evolve, and end, and its actors and links come and go, possesses a noticeably fluid character. Finally, the Danish movement has benefited from more success than the American movement has. Its success, instead of resulting from a specific trait or strategy, derives from a more receptive Danish population. In contrast, the movement's message seems not to resonate as well with existing American ideas and ideologies and thus requires the American movement to attempt to build an audience through issue-linkage and new idea framings. This entails not only the inclusion of new issues, but also the active engagement of a large number of citizens collaborating to varying degrees in an effort to spread the movement's message. However, increased engagement is a partial result of American sustainable coffee proponents' dissatisfaction with their government's ability to take on the topic. Conversely, Danes remain disengaged but are far more satisfied with their government's overall handling of the sustainable coffee issue.

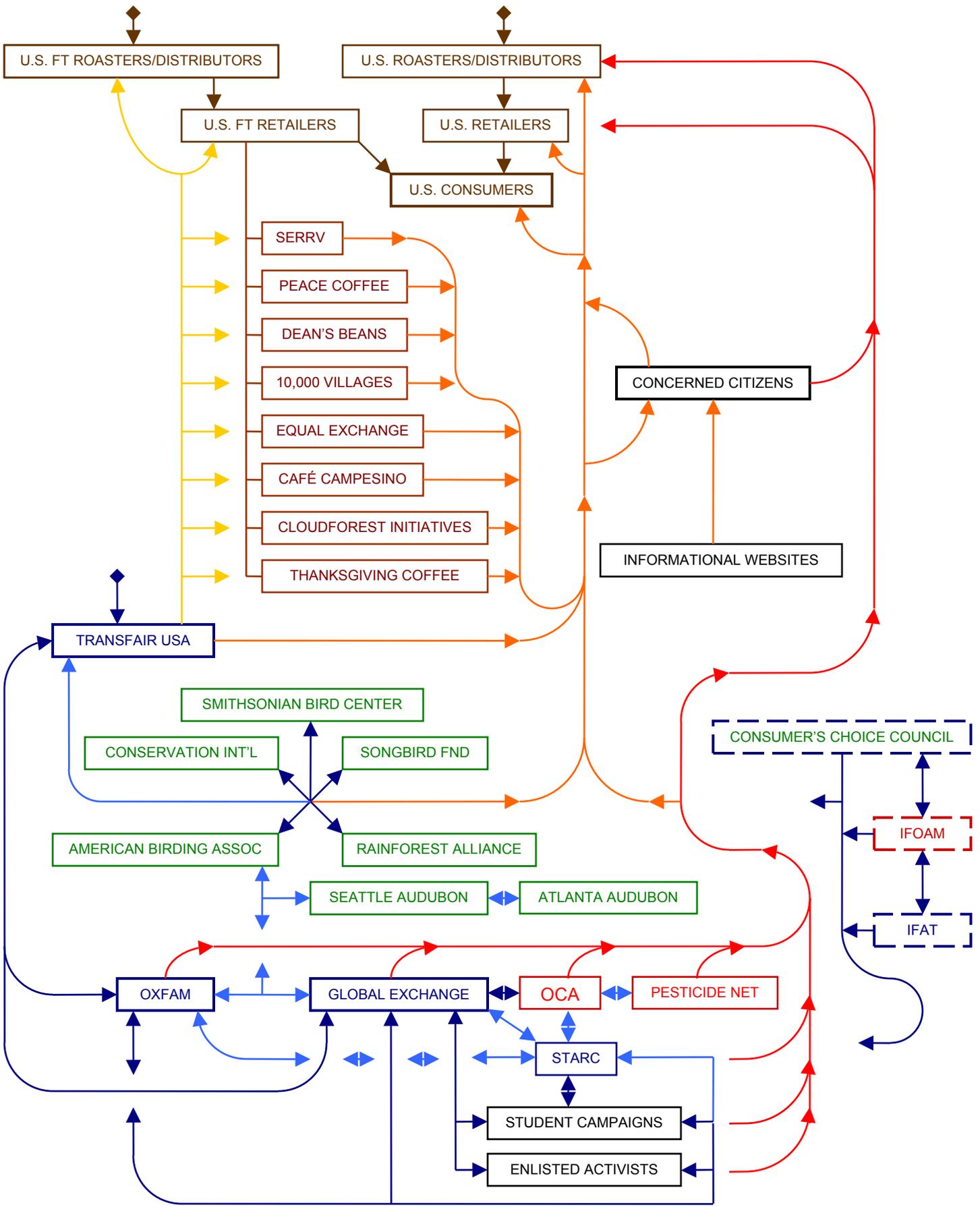
As the preceding analysis of the Danish and American sustainable coffee movements shows, a transnational advocacy network may assume contrasting forms in dissimilar political cultures. A state's domestic political environment, along with its institutional norms, may shape a movement and designate a place for it within that state's political culture. Similarly, citizen expectations in a given political context often determine the way in which movement members within that context will act to further a movement's message. Therefore, while a movement's central ideas and ideologies often retain transnational uniformity, the specifics of its various domestic forms do not.

## **Appendix A: The Structure of the Fair Trade Labeling Process**



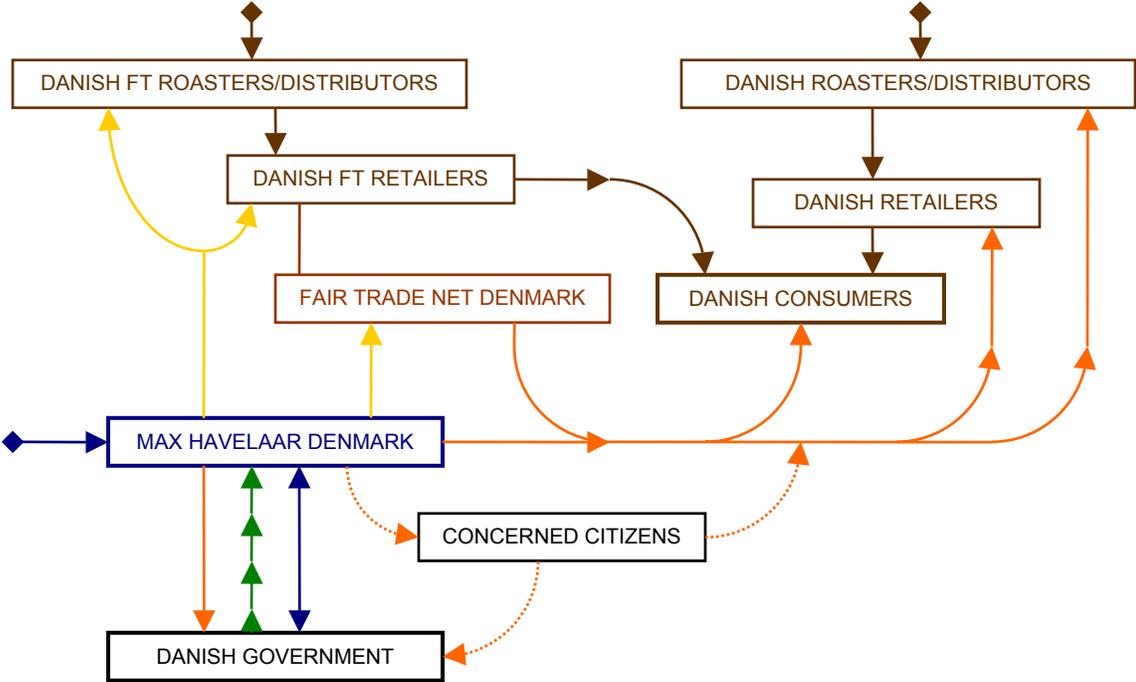
Key located in Appendix D

## **Appendix B: American Sustainable Coffee Movement Map**



Key located in appendix D

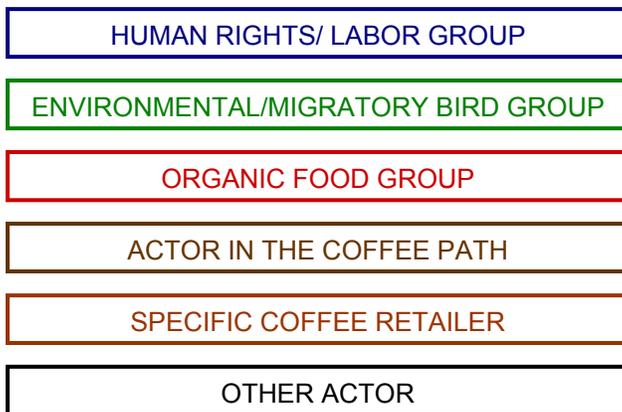
**Appendix C: Danish Sustainable Coffee Movement Map**



Key located in Appendix D

## **Appendix D: Key**

- ← STRONG LINKS
- ← LINKS
- ← CONTRACTS
- ← EDUCATIONAL CAMPAIGN
- ← ANTI-CORPORATE/OTHER HOSTILE CAMPAIGN
- ← PATH OF COFFEE
- ←← FLOW OF FUNDING



- A bolded box indicates that the actor named in the box is of special importance to that specific diagram.



- A dashed boarder around a box indicates that the group named in the box is an umbrella organization.



- A dotted arrow indicates that the connection shown exists mostly in theory rather than practice.
- A linking line without arrows implies that the connected actors are either one and the same, or that one is a subdivision or member of the other.
- Both green and blue indicate the Consumer's Choice Council. This is because the CCC is both a human rights organization and an environmental organization.
- For descriptions of and web addresses for each actor depicted in appendixes A, B, and C, see <http://www.engagedcitizen.org> or <http://students.washington.edu/diozzi/catalog>

### **Works Cited**

- Bang, Henrik P. and Eva Sorensen (1999) "The Everyday Maker: A New Challenge to Democratic Governance," *Administrative Theory and Praxis*, 21, 325-340.
- Bendheim, Kim, "Global Issues Flow into America's Coffee," *New York Times*, 11/3/02.
- Bennett, W. Lance (forthcoming) "Communicating Global Activism: Strengths and Vulnerabilities in Networked Politics," in Wim van de Donk, Brian D. Loader, Paul G. Nixon, and Dieter Rucht, eds. *Cyberprotest: New Media, Citizens, and Social Movements*, London: Routledge.
- Borish, Steven M. (1991) *The Land of the Living: The Danish Folk High School and Denmark's Non-Violent Path to Modernization*, Nevada City, CA: Blue Dolphin.
- Gallagher, Michael, Michael Laver, and Peter Mair (2001) *Representative Government in Modern Europe: Institutions, Parties, and Governments*, third edition, New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Katzenstein, Peter J. (1985) *Small States in World Markets: Industrial Policy in Europe*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
- Keck, Margaret E. and Kathryn Sikkink (1998) *Activists Beyond Borders: Advocacy Networks in International Politics*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Klein, Naomi (1999) *No Logo: Taking Aim at the Brand Bullies*, New York: Picador.

### **Interviews**

Interview with Jens Erik Dalgaard Nelsen, Director of Max Havelaar Denmark,  
Copenhagen, Denmark 10/10/02.

Interview with Ashley Parkinson, Northwest Shade Coffee Campaign Coordinator for the  
Seattle Audubon Society, Seattle, Washington 5/3/02.

Telephone interview with Melissa Schweisguth, Fair Trade Coordinator for Global  
Exchange, 4/16/02.