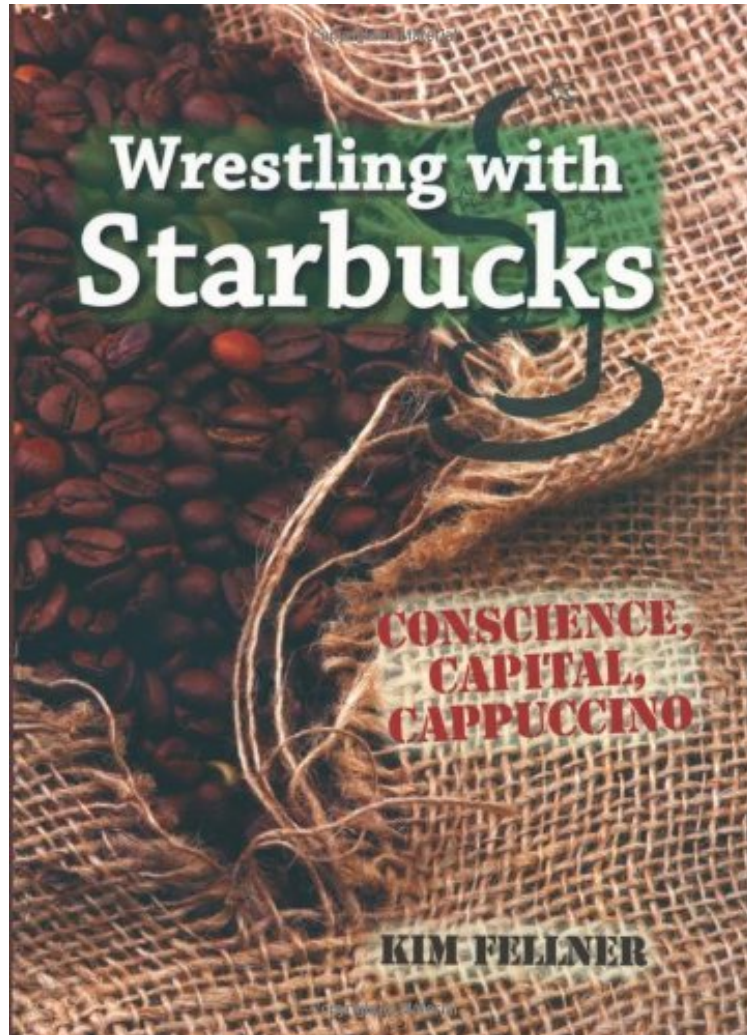


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## Wrestling with Starbucks

*Kim Fellner*

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**Kim Fellner : Wrestling with Starbucks** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Wrestling with Starbucks:

0 of 1 people found the following review helpful. A tasty brewBy J. MarinoFirst of all, let me say that I don't care for Starbucks coffee. I have no particular bone to pick with the company, I just don't enjoy the coffee. I find it too acidic. It always tastes burnt and all the varieties taste the same to me. I love coffee, just not theirs. That said, I am thoroughly enjoying this book. It's well-written in addition to being scrupulously researched. Tagging along with the author as she carries on her quest for the Ultimate Truth About Starbucks and Life is a whole lot of fun. The style is breezy and conversational, yet precise and cogent when it comes to the facts. It's an easy way to learn a lot of technical stuff. You don't have to be a caffeinista to find a visit to a coffee plantation or the commodities trading floor enlightening and enormously entertaining. And you don't have to be a social justice organizer to find the stories of the small coffee

growers and workers in Central America fascinating and compelling. Fellner has managed to take what could be a very polarizing issue and turn it into a rich, textured and satisfying exploration of the complex social and business implications of our morning brew. 0 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Starbucks with a Labor twist! By J. S. Schachter This book is well and absorbingly written by a labor activist and coffee lover who explores Starbucks from the main office to the coffee growers' life and provides a comprehensive and generally supportive view of the effort to change a small brand into a reliable dispenser of high caffeine drinks. 6 of 6 people found the following review helpful. So much more than about Starbucks By Michael J. Brown This is a great book. It is about so much more than Starbucks. It is about work life and the labor movement, globalization, culture, international trade, corporate branding, community activism, social justice, gentrification, and of course coffee. Fellner is a talented writer, with a sense of humor and a way with words that make this read like a novel. Yet the book is packed with information that goes down like a cool cup of coffee on a summer day. She has done her homework, including first-hand on-the-ground research in Costa Rica and Guatemala, and Seattle -- with the people who run Starbucks, the corporation, and Starbucks, the neighborhood coffee shop, and with those who protest against it. There is much food for thought here, about how we treat farmers in the global south and how to organize workers in the global north, and what really matters to workers in the 21st Century. Fellner avoids cliches and this book will likely infuriate those who see the world in black and white, (bad corporations and good workers, good unions and nasty bosses, etc.) But that is what makes this book so important. Anyone concerned about globalization, the labor movement, work-life in America, and environmental protection needs to read this book. Wrestling with Starbucks is an apt title because Fellner wrestles with the reality and complexity of Starbucks -- and how it shows up in the world. This is a must read for organizers, activists and anyone concerned about our world today and where it is headed.

You can find a Starbucks coffeehouse almost anywhere, from Paris, France to Paducah, Kentucky, from the crowded streets of Thailand to shopping malls in Qatar. With nearly 200 of them in New York City alone, this coffee retail giant with humble beginnings has become an actor and icon in the global economy. As we sip our cappuccinos, frappuccinos, and our double half-caf venti low-fat mochaccinos, many of us wonder if Starbucks is a haven of civilization or a cultural predator, a good or bad employer, a fair trader or a global menace. In this entertaining and provocative ramble through Starbucks's ethos and actions, Kim Fellner asks how a coffeehouse chain with a liberal reputation came to symbolize, for some, the ills of globalization. Armed with an open mind and a sense of humor, Fellner takes readers on an expedition into the muscle and soul of the coffee company. She finds a corporation filled with contradictions: between employee-friendly processes and anti-union practices; between an internationalist vision and a longing for global dominance; between community individuality and cultural hegemony. On a daily basis Starbucks walks a fine line. It must be profitable enough to please Wall Street and principled enough to please social justice advocates. Although observers might argue that the company has done well at achieving a balance, Starbucks's leaders run the risk of satisfying neither constituency and must constantly justify themselves to both. Through the voices of Central American coffee farmers, officers at corporate headquarters, independent cafeacutes; owners, unionists, baristas, traders, global justice activists, and consumers, Fellner explores the forces that affect Starbucks's worth and worthiness. Along the way, she subjects her own unabashedly progressive perspective to scrutiny and emerges with a compelling and unexpected look at Starbucks, the global economy, our economic convictions, and the values behind our morning cup of joe.

About the Author Kim Fellner is a longtime progressive organizer and communicator. She earned an M.S. in Communications from the University of Pittsburgh. She lives in Washington D.C.-a short walk from nine coffee joints.