Neoliberal Ecopolitics and Indigenous Peoples: The Kayapo, The "Rainforest Harvest," and The Body Shop

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ABSTRACT
Even though the "Trade Not Aid" program undertaken by The Body Shop in Kayapo communities has been touted as the realization of the "Rainforest Harvest" approach to conservation, it is in fact a wage labor relationship whereby the Kayapo are not compensated for the real product they provide The Body Shop: their photographic image. Furthermore, this program is but one part of a portfolio of income sources available to the Kayapo, and does not prevent them from engaging in environmentally exploitative contracts with loggers and miners, and so should not be seen as an exclusive alternative to environmentally damaging land use practices.

The Kayapo, an Indigenous nation inhabiting the southern fringes of the Amazon forest in central Brazil, have gained global renown for their aggressive, politically astute, and amazingly successful defense of their traditional homeland from invading settlers, land speculators, miners, and government developers. Over the past two decades they have made themselves a successful test case of the ability of an Indigenous Amazonian society to defend its territory, operate effectively in the national and international political arena, and selectively adopt modern technologies such as video and telemedia without sacrificing its essential cultural autonomy. Recently, the Kayapo have become a test case for another major issue for contemporary ecological and Indigenous advocates: the effectiveness of the commercial marketing of forest products as a strategy for saving the forest and its native inhabitants from destruction and dispossession by development.

This approach, a synthesis of free-market liberalism with activism in defense of the environment and the survival of Indigenous cultures and forest peoples, has been baptized the "Rainforest Harvest" by its main theoretician and most prominent practitioner, Jason Clay, until recently the director of Cultural Survival Enterprises. The basic idea of the "Harvest" approach is that demonstrating that rainforest ecosystems can be economically productive, by getting Indigenous communities and other forest dwellers involved in sustainable kinds of production of marketable forest products, is the only realistic way of saving them from economically motivated destruction by settlers, ranchers, loggers and miners. Making the ecosystem yield a profit, proponents of this approach argue, is in the long run a more effective and reliable way of saving it than conventional approaches relying on aid and political protection from gov-

ernments and private organizations. Commercial production of ecologically non-destructive types, so the argument runs, is also superior to dependence on aid as a basis for the coexistence of Indigenous communities with the outside world. At the same time, it provides them with a more reliable and less environmentally destructive source of funds to meet basic needs such as medical, educational and other services than either government aid or destructive forms of extractive enterprise such as gold mining or logging.

The approach clearly fits in with the currently fashionable neoliberal idea that the free market is the best solution to social and economic problems, and that for-profit capitalist companies are the most effective agents of social policy.

The British-based cosmetics firm, The Body Shop, has adopted this ideologically congenial approach as the basis of its marketing appeal, and has launched several projects for the ecologically sustainable production of components of its cosmetic products in Indigenous communities in various parts of the world, the most prominently featured of which are located among the Kayapo. It is important to be clear that The Body Shop's "Trade Not Aid" projects, as it calls them, despite their superficial appearance as instances of the "Rainforest Harvest" model, are not really a fair example of Clay's approach, which assumes genuine profit-regulated production and aims at volumes sufficient to permit competition in local and world commodity markets. The Body Shop's Kayapo projects, by contrast, do not constitute market-regulated production in this sense; they are really just for show, or as the Brazilians say, *para Ingles ver* ("for the English to see," an expression left over from the days of the slave trade, when the Brazilian navy made a show of enforcing the British Navy's ban on the importation of slaves).

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Both the "Rainforest Harvest" approach and The Body Shop's "Trade Not Aid" program have come in for a good deal of cogent criticism, which in spite of the real differences between them applies in some measure to both. The most trenchant of the critics, Stephen Corry of Survival International, has distinguished between straightforward "fair trade" projects designed to help local communities produce for local markets, on terms that guarantee them a fair return for their products (which he supports), and Rain Forest Harvest schemes like The Body Shop's Kayapo projects in the following terms:

> [Rain Forest] Harvest projects [such as The Body Shop's] relate explicitly to trade with a foreign company ... there is no local market whatsoever. The company is able to set the price unilaterally, and to dictate how much or how little it will buy.

> This is dependence, not empowerment ... It is simply another example of a powerful company selecting and controlling a powerless labour force, in a way not dissimilar to the structures maintained by colonialism—in other words, it is business as usual. (Corry 1994, 37)

Corry rejects Rainforest Harvest arguments that the only (or at any rate, the best) way to save the forest and its peoples is to make it profitable on the grounds that they play directly into the hands of development-oriented governments and international financial institutions that dismiss subsistence producers as of no social value, and justify the invasion and take over of their lands in the name of economic productivity. He insists that the rights of forest peoples to their lands and ways of life should be recognized on grounds of historic rights of prior occupancy rather than making them dependent on economic productivity. He points out that the more economically productive the natives make their traditional areas, the greater will be the incentive for others to take them over, as the long history of Indigenous societies in the Americas attests.

The proportions of total product actually sourced from forest peoples in commodities marketed by Rain Forest Harvest schemes ... have in some instances been minuscule ... The implicit or explicit claims of such schemes to constitute economically significant incentives to save the rainforest, in other words, are mere hype.

I would add that the fact that Indians or rural rubber-tappers are managing to make a profit from forest production is unlikely to appear a significant argument to private urban corporations, government development agencies, or impoverished settlers from other regions who have no way of sharing in such profits or participating in the productive activities in question. These, however, are the groups that hold political, economic and demographic power, and that have invariably been the sources of the invasion and destruction of forested areas.

Corry further argues that income from the sustainable production of forest products can never approach the far greater (if non-sustainable) profits to be had from logging and mining, and therefore is not a realistic alternative to them as a source of income for most communities of forest people. Ecologically sustainable production will therefore tend to be regarded as a supplement rather than a substitute to ecologically destructive forms of extraction, and thus cannot be regarded as an incentive for conserving the ecosystem.

Reinforcing this point is the fact that the proportions of total product actually sourced from forest peoples in commodities marketed by Rain Forest Harvest schemes, such as those of Cultural Survival, Ben and Jerry's, and The Body Shop, have in some instances been minuscule, the great bulk being made up of conventionally sourced items produced in the usual socially and environmentally exploitative ways. The implicit or explicit claims of

such schemes to constitute economically significant incentives to save the rainforest, in other words, are mere hype:

> There is no evidence that it helps conserve rainforests, it does not empower rainforest peoples, and, worse, it subverts the case for tribal peoples' land rights. It arises from the marketing ploys of profit-making companies, not from the real needs of rainforest communities or an intelligent consideration of their rights or environmental concerns. (Corry 1994, 37)

Clay answers that, in the case of the projects initiated by Cultural Survival, it was sometimes necessary to draw on conventional sources to enter the market in sufficient volume to gain the necessary foothold, but that the aim remains to convert, in the long run, to supply by "forest peoples." Be this as it may, the partial adaptation of the "Rainforest Harvest" approach by private corporations, as exemplified by The Body Shop, substantiates Corry's criticisms (and those of several others as well).

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THE BODY SHOP PROJECTS AMONG THE KAYAPO: THE "RAINFOREST HARVEST" "*PARA INGLES VER*"

In 1989, Anita Roddick, the director of The Body Shop, attended the well publicized Kayapo-led rally of Indigenous Amazonian nations at Altamira to protest a massive hydroelectric dam scheme on the Xingú river that the Brazilian government was planning to build with financing from the World Bank. Eager to identify her company with the prestige of the now world-famous Kayapo and their charismatic leader, Payakan, she offered him an airplane and a project for pressing Brazil nut oil in his community, A'ukre. Payakan accepted, and the press for extracting the oil, to be used in the company's hair conditioner, was duly installed in 1990. Today The Body Shop has added a second Brazil nut oil press in another community, Pukanu, and started a second project for the manufacture of bead jewelry by Kayapo women in four villages. The Body Shop sells the items in their outlets. The Kayapo thus became the first Indians in Amazonia to participate in the new wave of "green capitalist" enterprises based on environmentally sustainable production.

The Body Shop pays a good wage by regional standards for the Kayapo Indian labor employed in producing Brazil nut oil and bead jewelry. By far the most important value the Kayapo contribute to The Body Shop, however, is not the oil and bead bracelets they produce, but their photographic images, and reportage about the projects in the media, which serve as free advertising for the com-

pany and for which it pays not a penny to the Kayapo. The Body Shop boasts that it does not pay for advertising; it relies solely on such images and accounts of its projects in its shops and coverage in the media to build the "politically correct" image that is the basis of its consumer appeal. But is this not a covert form of "aid not trade" by the Kayapo to The Body Shop? To call this "fair trade," as The Body Shop does, is to make a mockery of the term.

The Body Shop is the sole buyer of the Kayapo products, and thus is able to set both the price and the amount of product it will buy. The Kayapo have pressed it to allow them to expand production and install oil presses in other villages, but The Body Shop has refused, saying that it cannot use any more of the product (even though Kayapo-extracted Brazil nut oil comprises less than one per cent of the volume of its "Brazil Nut Hair Conditioner"). The Body Shop's interest in the projects is clearly their value as advertising, and it has no interest in expanding them beyond the token levels of production required for this purpose. It is not interested in allowing the Kayapo to engage in "trade" in the ordinary economic sense of free and competitive access to markets, and runs the projects in such a way as to prevent them from doing so. The projects thus take on the character of piecework wage labor rather than "trade" of products on the market; they are strictly regulated operations based on total control of production volume and demand by one partner. All of this, of course, is inconsistent with the slogan of "Trade Not Aid," of which The Body Shop holds up their Kayapo projects as a prime example. It is also inconsistent with what they have led the Kayapo to believe, namely that the projects are normal economic production operations aimed at making a profit through the marketing of the product.

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The "Trade Not Aid" slogan is deceptive in yet another sense in so far as it suggests that "trade" projects like The Body Shop's represent a viable alternative to aid for the Indians from governmental and non-governmental sources. This is patently not so. The real implications of the "Trade Not Aid" slogan in this respect have been made brutally clear by the Brazilian government, which has cut off its appropriations for aid to Indigenous peoples. Faced with the suspension of medical, educational and other services, Indigenous peoples like the Kayapo have been driven to rely on the only forms of "trade" available that can provide anywhere close to the amounts they need to pay for the services they so desperately need: mining and logging, the most destructive forms of extractive production. The small Body Shop projects, maintained essentially for their value as advertising rather than as serious productive enterprises, do not begin to meet the need for communal income in the absence of

government and private aid, and cannot become viable alternatives to the much larger sums easily available from the loggers and miners. The two Kayapo communities with the Brazil nut oil projects have both granted concessions to loggers, and Pukanu has granted one to gold miners as well.

So "Aid" turns out to be essential if the "Trade Not Aid" projects of firms like The Body Shop are not to become mere smoke screens concealing the economic desperation that drives such communities to open themselves to the most environmentally, physically and culturally damaging forms of "Trade." It is thus not only deceptive of The Body Shop to tell its customers that buying Brazil Nut Hair Conditioner "give[s the Kayapo] an income to help protect the Amazon rainforest," but also politically retrograde for it to imply that its "trade" renders redundant non-commercial forms of "Aid" such as government support for basic services and political and legal struggles for land and human rights.

It is thus not only deceptive of The Body Shop to tell its customers that buying Brazil Nut Hair Conditioner "give[s the Kayapo] an income to help protect the Amazon rainforest," but also politically retrograde for it to imply that its "trade" renders redundant non-commercial forms of "Aid."

The Body Shop projects have certainly not led the Kayapo to give up their dealings with loggers and miners (Pukanu did expel its miners, for reasons unrelated to The Body Shop projects, last year, but A'ukre opened negotiations with a group of miners during the past year, inviting them to explore in a corner of their territory — fortunately they did not find any gold). The Body Shop's refusal to expand the volume of production in its existing projects or to initiate any further projects in other Kayapo communities means that for the Kayapo as a whole, and even for those communities with projects, the amount of income the projects provide is far short of meeting what the Kayapo now feel to be their needs. Furthermore, The Body Shop's maintenance of tight administrative control, and its continuing role as sole supplier of capital equipment and sole customer, able to fix unilaterally the levels of production and demand, means that there has been little "empowerment" of the Kayapo as "equal trading partners" as Body Shop publicity has claimed. Fortunately, the Kayapo have already obtained government recognition of their control of their land, so they are not a case to which Corry's criticism applies. In this case, the Rainforest Harvest approach has not lead to a substitution of market production as the object of Indigenous support activism in place of the struggle for legal land rights, but only because that objective had been realized earlier.

THE KAYAPO PERSPECTIVE

Such, at any rate, are the criticisms that can be made of The Body Shop's operations among the Kayapo from the standpoint of an anthropological observer. But what of the views of the Kayapo themselves? Here we immediately find that, in apparent contradiction to the critical views advanced on their behalf, the Kayapo are enthusiastically supportive of The Body Shop. Kayapo of the communities with Body Shop projects want them to continue, and there is no shortage of willing workers for both Brazil nut oil and beadwork production. Other Kayapo communities would like The Body Shop to install similar projects, and have been disappointed with Gordon Roddick's announcement that The Body Shop will not expand the number of its Brazil nut oil and beadwork projects. Kayapo opinion, in short, seems fairly unanimous that The Body Shop projects are good for them.

The question must be asked, however, whether Kayapo enthusiasm and willingness to work implies fully informed consent to, and agreement with, the terms of The Body Shop's own definition and representation of its operations. The answer to this question is clearly "No." The Kayapo start from a recognition of their fundamental dependency on the Western economic system — Brazilian, British, or Transnational — for a whole series of commodities they have come to need but cannot make themselves. They know the only way to get these commodities is either to persuade the state or other parties to give them as "presents," in the style of the old Indian Protection Service or visiting film crews, or to somehow get the money to buy them, either from timber and mineral concessions or, as a last resort, by working for wages. All of these, they are aware, are varieties of political-economic dependency; they do not expect them to be "empowering" (they have done quite well empowering themselves through organized political action and diplomacy, notably in obtaining official demarcation of their reserves, but that is another story). They chafe at the unaccustomed degree of subservience and regimentation exacted by the firm and efficient management of The Body Shop Brazilian project manager, but they are willing to put up with it for the sake of the income the work brings in.

The Kayapo do not look upon The Body Shop projects as straightforward "trade" relations in which they act as "equal trading partners." They see them rather as aid mixed with trade. That The Body Shop has gone to the apparent inconvenience of coming to them from half-way around the world, bringing them elaborate oil pressing machines and great stocks of beads to be made into bracelets, all to allow them the opportunity to earn money through individual work, appears to them as the gesture of a benevolent patron.

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They know that it is not being done simply for pecuniary gain from the trade in the commodities they produce. Precisely *why* the benevolent patron has gone to such lengths to aid them, however, remains obscure. Not a single Kayapo, I believe, has yet fathomed this ultimate mystery, and The Body Shop has not thought fit to explain.

Meanwhile, they prize the degree of individual empowerment the income from the work makes possible. Women, especially, have benefited from the chance to make money of their own, independently of their men, through the manufacture of the bead bracelets. Few of them would otherwise have this chance. For ordinary men (not chiefs or leaders) the Brazil nut oil work brings in more than they could acquire without going off to work in a mine or for a logging crew. For Kayapo men and women alike, The Body Shop therefore represents a valued option they want to keep open.

This, however, is not to say that they have any idea of closing off any of their other options for monetary income, political concessions, territorial expansion, medical or other basic services, or other forms of aid, simply because The Body Shop option is available. They have learned to say the right words to The Body Shop, thanking them for making available an alternative to reliance on logging concessions (which might well come in handy at some future time when the timber is exhausted), while continuing to sign logging contracts with the Redenção sawmills. Payakan, the A'ukre leader who for some time served as The Body Shop's chief Kayapo symbol, was particularly adroit at keeping all the balls in the air in this way, producing noble ecological rhetoric for The Body Shop and other eco-patrons while secretly negotiating mahogany concessions and having other Kayapo sign the papers. The same policy is pursued by Pukatire, the leader of Pukanu, the other village where The Body Shop maintains a Brazil nut oil press.

It would be missing the point to see these canny leaders as traitors to the supposed ecological principles of their own cultures or "corrupt" sellouts of their people; the Kayapo, despite the large amounts of nonsense to this effect produced by romantic journalists and some anthropologists, were never ecologists in the contemporary Western sense, and they never saw their title to their own land or their relations with organizations like The Body Shop as restricting their freedom to use their resources for their own economic purposes. Leaders like Payakan and Pukatire are simply following the policy that most Kayapo see as their best option, namely that of exploiting all opportunities for strengthening themselves economically, politically, and territorially through all available forms of trade, aid and political action.

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The Kayapo, in sum, are pragmatic eclectics, who are no more concerned with the ideological rhetoric of Western ecoliberals than were their 16th century ancestors with the mystery of the Holy Trinity. Their acceptance of The Body Shop projects does not imply their agreement with the policy of Trade Not Aid, or with The Body Shop's representations of the linkage between its trade projects and the preservation of the ecosystem, or with The Body Shop's representations of their own empowerment or equality in the relations of production and trade. Nor does it imply that the Kayapo understand The Body Shop projects for what they really are, namely symbolic operations undertaken primarily for public relations purposes, whose value as "trade" to The Body Shop is virtually incidental. This means that the Kayapo do not understand how they are exploited by these projects, through the unpaid extraction and use of their representations in Body Shop publicity. Although The Body Shop, in an attempt to forestall criticism on this fundamental point, has obtained the consent of Kayapo leaders to the use of their words and images, the Kayapo have no conception of the value of this publicity to The Body Shop. They cannot be said to have agreed to what they do not understand.

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Meanwhile, the pragmatic Kayapo approach to The Body Shop, which essentially comes down to making the best of a not very good deal for the lack of anything better, may serve as a model for a practical resolution of the debate between proponents of the "Rain Forest Harvest" and their critics. If peasant or Indigenous communities like the Kayapo want projects such as The Body Shop's for the limited benefits they bring, provided they do not entail the closing off of other options either for trade or aid, and ideally would comprise only an auxiliary part of such a mixed portfolio, then critics of these projects should also support their continuation in the communities in question, while continuing to call for the correction of their exploitative and dependency-inducing aspects and criticizing their self-serving misrepresentations. This essentially means transforming The Body Shop projects and other "Rain Forest Harvest" efforts into genuine "fair trade" projects such as those that have been developed, with far less fanfare, by organizations like Oxfam. These are projects run by local communities aimed wholly at generating a return to the producers from their work, without the ulterior purpose of promoting the interests of an external profit-making corporation. Opened up to competition from alternative customers, including local markets where practicable, stripped of their pretensions as substitutes, rather than supplements, for governmental aid, legal rights and political struggle, and given the chance to expand their production to economically significant levels rather than merely functioning as

tokens to lend credibility to non-Indigenous businesses or philanthropic organizations, such projects can play a constructive role, and to that extent should be encouraged. In the specific case of The Body Shop, however, the essentially symbolic function of the so-called "trade" projects as unpaid advertising holds out little hope for such development.

QUESTION & ANSWER SESSION

Q: Although some of Stephen Corry's criticisms of the Rainforest Harvest approach certainly apply to The Body Shop case, I think he exaggerates when he charges that this approach supplants the need to defend Indigenous land rights. Rather, Jason Clay and others argue that simple defense of land rights is not enough, that economic forces are also needed.

TT: Well, I certainly agree, but I am not sure that Rainforest Harvest activities are the kinds best calculated to serve that political function. My point is not to reject the usefulness of Rainforest Harvest projects, or even The Body Shop project, though I am pretty skeptical about it. I think that we should listen to the Indigenous people and realize that in the current situation in Amazonia, Indigenous and forest dwelling people need all the help that they can get, and a little pragmatism is perhaps appropriate.

Q: What would your reaction be if The Body Shop were to start participating in biological prospecting — trying to bring Kayapo cultural knowledge into the commercial sector?

TT: Well, it's not an academic question, because The Body Shop is already doing this. They've initiated a project, hired a chemist, and they have their Brazil nut oil project foreman working half-time going out into the forest with the Kayapo and collecting promising medicinals. I think that The Body Shop is up to a scam, much like similar scams elsewhere.

As you all know, there is a global rush on the part of major pharmaceutical companies (Ciba-Geigy, Parke-Davis, Wellcome, etc) to identify marketable natural molecules. It takes vast resources to test and develop such products. The Body Shop does not have these resources, but what it does have — or thinks it has — is a certain amount of access to Indigenous environmental knowledge. It hopes, I think, to identify potentially marketable substances that it can submit to preliminary testing to the point where there is some basis for a claim, and then go to big companies and interest them in taking up this project — it can be a middleman. It has already told the Kayapo that it has a really hot project for them

whereby The Body Shop will help them to enter into contracts for other product. What products? Well, they've been very cagey thus far, but I think they are positioning themselves to be able to cream off some sort of middleman position in this rush for molecular resources. The danger is that the Kayapo and other Indigenous people who become involved in this process are going to get a dismissive payoff and not be able to control the terms of their agreements with the ultimate developers and marketers.

Q: Are you taking part in the debate with Darrell Posey and Hall about the nature of Indigenous knowledge and how it is used?

TT: Well, having worked for thirty years among the Kayapo, I will start by saying that Darrell Posey is a fraud; that he has *made up* the data that he claims to have about this fantastic system of forest management that somehow all other anthropologists in the Amazon *missed*. They missed it because it doesn't exist — Darrell Posey has made it up. His exercises in ethnobotanical and ethnoentomological science are science fiction.

REFERENCE

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Terence Turner

Dr. Turner is Professor of Anthropology at the University of Chicago. He received his PhD from Harvard in 1966, for a thesis based on research among the Kayapo of Central Brazil. He has continued to work with the Kayapo, producing numerous writings on their social, cultural, and political reality. For the last five years he has been directing the Kayapo Video Project, in which the Kayapo have been shooting and editing their own videos about their own culture and relations with the Brazilians.

Dr. Turner served as head of the Special Commission of the American Anthropological Association (AAA) to Investigate the Situation of the Brazilian Yanomami in 1991, and has remained involved in Yanomami affairs in an advocacy capacity. He has been a member of the AAA commission for Human Rights since its establishment in 1992. He has collaborated extensively with several Indigenous advocacy organizations such as the Instituto Socioambiental, the Centro de Trabalho Indigenista of Brazil, and Survival International of the UK.

Terence Turner Working Group

There has been a lot of hype concerning rainforest product marketing strategies, such as those set up by Ben and Jerry's and The Body Shop, whose products have been sold under the guise of saving the rainforest. Under the current system, this strategy is economically unsound as these products appear to bring in a very small amount of money as compared to timber harvesting.

Further sociological and cultural difficulties are encountered in attempting to create a capitalist system for Indigenous people who are used to communal living. This has proven to be a major limitation not foreseen by First World firms engaged in Rainforest Harvest-type activities.

Dr. Turner suggests that a working solution will be reached only by trial and error, with a great deal of input necessary from the Indigenous groups. He stressed the importance of letting the groups decide for themselves, and identified the need to give them the authority to do so.

There are so many other social and economic problems that are immediately engendered in these communities [by green capitalism projects] that the social and economic overhead gets to be much larger than expected and can really interfere with the production process.

Ted Macdonald: The legacy of the hype is that it produces, in short, no economic returns in the sense that the total profits were not paying for the project. A second problem was the lack of information that was available at the time. A number of firms got on this bandwagon and signed agreements promising very high returns from the environmental premium, and simply never paid the minimal amounts that were due. A lot of us, and I fault myself as well, just didn't know what was going on — that it was not the panacea that it had appeared to be.

Terence Turner: Well, I'd like to note that on the Cultural Survival Enterprises side, the effects of the Rainforest Harvest strategy were counterproductive due to a lack of communication between the First World headquarters of the operation and what was actually going on at the local level. The difficulty in articulating these green capitalist projects at the local level is almost unimaginable. It is not only a question, as Sharon Flynn was suggesting, of getting a capitalist project going at the local level. There are so many other social and economic problems that are immediately engendered in these communities that the social and economic overhead gets to be much larger than expected and can really interfere with the production process. In this case, it seems that people really didn't know what they were doing. There was a lot of rhetoric, but in reality, it was not a capitalist business — it was hype.

TM: The simplistic Rainforest Harvest strategy played into the senti-

ments of "environmental" people. It promotes the idea that, for example, eating Rainforest Crunch helps save the rainforest, when in reality it may actually hurt the rainforest. This kind of marketing ignores local social and economic complexities, and fantasy and reality become blurred.

George Appell: No one ever thought about the social implications and problems potentially associated with the Rainforest Harvest strategy, with bringing a capitalist project into a non-capitalist community. Given all of the sociologists involved, I find this particularly surprising.

TT: Yes, that's a key point, one that I wasn't able to get to in my talk. I have a much longer manuscript, entitled *The Invasion of the Body Shop*, to be published soon. It includes an ethnographic record of the sorts of problems George mentioned as they developed in A'ukre and Pukanu, these two Kayapo communities with the oil nut projects.

I have a number of reservations about green capitalism projects that stem mostly from my failure to believe in capitalism. I suppose this disqualifies me by Ms. Flynn's criteria. One reason is precisely the point George raised. When you install a capitalist project in a non-capitalist community, you are attempting a total social and cultural revolution. If you try to install an isolated or encapsulated project which does not disturb the community, you will find this is impossible because you need to find local entrepreneurs, of which there are many, to quote Ms. Flynn. Certainly you can find people who will take money to be the go-between between the benevolent gringos and the producers. This results in social differentiations which cause community tensions as some members join the capitalist project and change roles. This is exactly what happened in the Kayapo communities — the community actually split up temporarily, and a deep schism remains. A lot of this is dreadfully dangerous, so to really get involved, you need to consider more than just how to balance books and how to trade on favorable terms.

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Mac Chapin: Part of the problem is the communal nature of the community. Among the Kuna of Panama, for example, they are used to doing things as a group, in some predetermined order, with a structure. When you bring in capitalism, it promotes the individual and the work of the individual. As far as I know, no one has figured out an effective way to work with collectives in a capitalist system.

TT: Yes, there are not very many good models of collective capitalism — capitalism is uncollective. It's not just a question of individuals versus collectivism. Commodification is itself another

fundamental distortion, as shown by The Body Shop's rhetoric. They claim they are trying to commodify Indigenous knowledge without changing the native culture. Well, commodifying the native culture *is* a fundamental change of the culture because one of the things that commodities imply is private property. If you suddenly make a commodity of cultural knowledge, a supremely shared thing, you attempt to identify it as the product of some person or community. Whatever identification you make will be a fundamental distortion which will introduce serious social and cultural distortions, proportionate to the remuneration for the commodity in question.

Stephen Gallagher, Southern Connecticut State University: Given these views, do you believe that the only way Indigenous cultures will survive is by remaining isolated? Since interactions with the capitalist sector have always had the effect of eliminating common property and collective institutions, and since these groups function in a resource base they control inadequately, can they survive only by withdrawing into the jungle and being self sufficient?

TT: Nobody in the world can do that anymore. However, it is possible for Indigenous groups, communities, or leagues of Indigenous people to gain control over land and resources and thereby join the world community while maintaining their own culture relatively intact. National laws vary, but in Brazil, Indigenous resources are constitutionally and legally protected, although this does not mean they are in fact protected. In December, the leaders of the 15 Kayapo communities met with the federal prosecutor and the chief of the federal police, and gave unanimous Kayapo support for an operation by federal police to expel all miners and loggers in all Kayapo areas — an area about the size of Scotland. This had been blocked by the Kayapo earlier, because they had had agreements with the loggers and miners, but, in the meantime, there was something of a social revolution due to health impacts of mercury and malaria brought in by the operations. They are using their legal rights and enlisting the federal government in their defense. So it is possible for a politically together group to assert control over their resources. Now they're in the initial stages of trying to begin sustainable forestry in the area.

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Jim Murphy, Tufts University: Is this the beginning of the end of their cultural independence as they begin to integrate with mainstream Brazilian society?

TT: No. There is increasing integration, but it is important to distinguish between isolation and culture. They have achieved a lot, including, in a space of 30 years, going from first contact to

being prominent members of regional society on their own terms — something that no other group has been able to do. Politically, they are still acting as autonomous communities within their own land, and though they have many interactions with Brazilian society, they are not contiguous with it. They still act through their own communal institutions, and Indigenous positions of leadership remain. They are not losing culture, they are changing it in a way that affords them a viable expression of what's worth living for in their society. It's a cultural change, but it's still a viable, independent culture.

MC: I think the Kuna in Panama are very similar — they're good at engaging the outside culture while remaining distinct. Given all of this, what role can rainforest products play in the end?

TT: I think they can now play a more important role in the future. I think of The Body Shop project as a pilot project which shows you can get Indigenous communities to produce non-timber forest products in an organized and viable way. There exists a potential to generate income from expansion to other products and greater volumes. It may be possible that forest product exploitation could generate enough basic income for the Kayapo to free them from dependence on government and NGO aid for medicine and other basics. Despite everything I have said today, I still think that this can be a way to go for Indigenous communities, within limits. If you can avoid the mistakes and the hype of outfits like The Body Shop and can work with relatively disinterested NGOs like CI, perhaps these self-led harvesting projects can be a supplement to the community.

Despite everything I have said today, I still think that this can be a way to go for Indigenous communities, within limits.

Wendy Gerlitz, Yale F&ES: What is the role of an organization that initiates a project like this when the culture begins to change in a way that is no longer conducive to the conservation goal of the organization? For example, when the local people seize control of the land, kick out the loggers, and then turn around and use the land themselves for the same unsustainable logging.

TT: No organization ought to consider itself as the exclusive alternative to these economic activities. NGOs are coming in with sustainable production projects, but these projects have never amounted to more than a small percentage of the total productivity of the community. The project leaders, whether they be NGOs or The Body Shop, or whoever, are not in a position to say "You are doing our project therefore you no longer need the other projects." They can only offer an alternative. This will be a pluralist process with different kinds of approaches attempted, no one will get ascendancy, but it leaves lots of room for an approach which emphasizes demonstration projects.