

*Season's Greetings*



*The Journal*



## Pioneer Woman Mercantile Opens it's doors Ree Drummond's TV Cook celebrity behind the brand



No. 1 New York Times bestselling author, food writer Ree Drummond

Tulsa, Oklahoma Nov 3<sup>rd</sup> 2016; here at Pahaska near Tulsa, distance was no obstacle for The Pioneer Woman's fans. Many had traveled from as far away as Alaska, Florida, California and Missouri to experience all that The Pioneer Woman Mercantile had to offer on opening day Monday. The deli and restaurant opened at 6 a.m. to give visitors a warm welcome with coffee and breakfast. Then at 9 a.m., the doors to the general store opened for customers making their way to Pawhuska. Between the first two sets of visitors, they traveled more than 1,000 miles combined to be there for Ree Drummond's big day. Drummond, the face behind the Pioneer Woman brand, had been working on the project for about four years while also juggling her other endeavors, including her popular blog and working on a cookbook. Monday morning was a big day for many of her fans because they could finally see the end product of what Drummond had chronicled on her blog over the past few months.

Floyce Wharton traveled with her husband, Gene, from Palmyra, Missouri, to arrive at 3:15 a.m. Monday. They were the first people in line, despite waiting at the wrong entrance for a short while. The couple stayed overnight in Bartlesville and left early to get to Pawhuska.

"I've been a fan of (Drummond) for years," said Floyce Wharton, 73. "She's a fan of The Pioneer Woman, so I came out here with her," said Gene Wharton, also 73, at her side. At 6 a.m., they entered the deli, where they enjoyed a simple breakfast with biscuits and gravy, grits and fruit with yogurt. Floyce

Wharton walked around the general store looking for Christmas presents, and Gene Wharton already had his hands full with a few

cookbooks and some mixing bowls.

“We’re gonna wait and try to get some cookbooks signed,” Floyce Wharton said. “I could spend all day in here. I knew it was going to be nice, but I didn’t imagine how large it was going to be.” “I’m just here to carry the load,” her husband joked.

Floyce Wharton is one of millions of fans who keep close watch on The Pioneer Woman’s social media pages to find out what’s happening next. Like the Whartons, Lori An Hampton and Lisa Parker arrived about 4 a.m. to get in line. They also stayed the night in Bartlesville but made Pawhuska the first stop on a road trip starting from Glasgow, Kentucky. They traveled 710 miles to be the second set of people in line for a seat at the deli and for a chance to do some shopping in the general store. They were also excited about the chance to see Drummond in person.

Photos of Oscartek display cases and counters being prepared for final assembly:



“She’s just so amazing,” said Parker about The Pioneer Woman. “We’re not leaving till we see her.”

After they finished their breakfast and toured the former Osage Mercantile building, they enjoyed the views of Pawhuska’s downtown from the second story as the sun started to burn through the fog. And just as the sun started to light up Main Street, Drummond made her appearance at the Mercantile with warm greetings and high fives. She signed cookbooks, coffee mugs and other merchandise for the small group of visitors who were in the right place at the right time.

“I’m still shaking a little bit,” said 26-year-old Jessie Morris after taking photos and getting autographs. “I told my mom she would have to help me keep it together if we saw (Drummond).”

Morris and her mom traveled from Dunnigan, California, and booked rooms at the Historic Whiting Bed & Breakfast in Pawhuska for two nights. They arrived in town about 3:30 p.m. Sunday after flying into Tulsa International Airport and enjoyed the afternoon admiring Pawhuska’s brick buildings and small-town character.

“It’ll be interesting to see what kind of life this will bring to this tiny country town,” Morris said.

The line outside The Pioneer Woman Mercantile grew and shrank as visitors entered group by group for breakfast in the deli. Small plates of biscuits and gravy seemed to be the dish of choice for many diners.

Floyce and Gene Wharton scored autographs in Drummond’s first cookbook for presents this Christmas season, and Floyce Wharton got a wooden sign that read, “I LOVE YOU LIKE BISCUITS AND GRAVY,” signed by The Pioneer Woman herself.

“It’s Gene’s favorite dish,” she said. “I’m going to take a photo and send it to my friends and tell them, ‘I wish you were here.’ For more info please visit <http://thepioneerwoman.com/the-mercantile/>



Mercantile historical building in 1867

# The Culture of Coffee Drinkers

## A historical review ...

The Culture of Coffee Drinkers  
By Krystal D'Costa

Are You a Morning Person?

The idea of the morning person aside, morning commuters seem to fall into one of two categories: the Caffeinated and the Un-caffeinated—the latter category being those who intend to consume coffee, but haven't quite gotten their morning java yet. And they're easily recognizable as such. The Caffeinated are bright-eyed and engaged with the day's events already—they're reading their morning papers, or checking email, or reading for pleasure. They're sometimes armed with travel mugs or Ventis from their coffee shop of choice. They rattle the ice in the clear plastic beverage cups from mobile vendors on summer days. They walk a little faster in the early hours having long left last night behind. This is not the case for the Un-Caffeinated. This group sleeps through the AM commute both on the commuter trains and the subway. They're bleary eyed. Materials they intended to review lie unattended in their laps while they linger in the previous night. They walk more slowly up the stairs and are more irritable when you hurry them along—or hurry by them. They stroll, they trudge, they linger. The line that runs out the door of the Starbucks across from my job never seems to shrink. Are the ranks of the Caffeinated growing? Will we soon be overrun by manufactured "morning people"? As the would-be Caffeinated stumble toward their favorite dispensaries, they have little sense of how they have been drawn to coffee-drinking. The categories of Caffeinated and Un-caffeinated are introduced in this discussion for ethnographic purposes. Though they exist in my mind, they may seem familiar to you because we're taught to look for these traits in connection with coffee. So though I may have taken some liberties in simplifying them, these identities and associations have been honed by the coffee industry over the last thirty years. The culture of coffee has



been carefully cultivated to ensure maximum reach.



### **Only Grown Ups Drink Coffee**

Anthropologist William Roseberry (1996) reports that coffee drinkers would have been hard pressed to find specialty coffee in the United States in the 1970s—most of the coffee in the groceries came in cans, "the roasts were light and bland," and the decaf versions were terrible (764). There was little exciting about coffee, and in fact, coffee drinking had been on a decline: The second postwar development involved the long-term decline in consumption beginning in the 1960s. Through the 1950s, consumption was essentially flat, with minor fluctuations. From 1962, one can chart a consistent decline. In that year, 74.7 percent of the adult population was calculated to be coffee drinkers; by 1988 only 50 percent drank coffee. Even those who drank coffee were drinking less. In 1962, average

coffee consumption was 3.12 cups per day; by 1980 it had dipped to 2.02 cups and by 1991 had dropped to 1.75 (Roseberry 1996: 765). Waning consumer interest was compounded by frost in Brazil in 1975, which drove the price of the beans higher. Consumer groups called for a boycott—they would not pay more for bland coffee. The market grew even smaller at the onset of the 1980s when coffee growers and retailers realized that the current 20-29 year old generation had little interest in coffee, which they associated with their parents and grandparents. This group preferred "soft drinks". So-called "coffeemen" didn't know what to make of them.

### **The "Me" Generation**

For the coffee industry to survive, it needed a new marketing strategy. Kenneth Roman, Jr., the president of Ogilvy and Mather, one of the PR firms that supported Maxwell House, made a suggestion: emphasize quality, value, and image by creating segmented products to increase appeal (Roseberry 1996: 765). The consumer was changing according to Roman, and coffee-players needed to pay attention:

We are entering the 'me' generation. The crucial questions 'me' oriented customers will ask, of all types of products, are: "What's in it for me? Is the product 'me'? Is it consistent with my lifestyle? Does it fill a need? Do I like how it tastes? What will it cost me? Is it necessary? Can I afford it? Is it convenient to prepare? How will it affect my health?" (1996: 765).

Coffees are a naturally diverse product; their value is derived from where they are grown, size and texture of the bean, and how they are processed and roasted. Once traded, they can be blended with coffees from other places to produce complex aromas and tastes that mark each brand as distinctive. But pricing to the roasters is based primarily on where the coffees are grown. Prior to the re-branding of coffee, this aspect of price was largely invisible to the ordinary consumer. The roasters managed a mix that offset these pricing differentials to produce coffee of the lowest common denominator (Roseberry 1996: 766). Place was not important to the consumer at this time.

To emphasize value, quality, and image as Roman had suggested, the consumer needed to be made more aware about what made coffee worth the price. And so the specialty coffee was born. The vision was a type of coffee to appeal to every person, including



flavored coffees for the "soft drink generation." Coffee for the aficionados, the penny-counters, those on-the-go, and certainly the senior community who were already strong supporters. Coffee was meant to permeate every aspect of life, and thanks to the response of growers and retailers it did. Smaller roasters marketing individual brands found a niche, and consumers complaining about paying \$3/lb for tasteless coffee were more than willing to purchase specialty coffees for the additional dollar or two more in cost.

The movement toward specialty coffees was taken up by small roasters. While bigger brands followed, the size of smaller brands initially helped them establish credibility with the specialty coffee crowd—they weren't seen as mass producers, they were viewed as having a closer relationship to the coffees they were trying to sell, and as such could produce a more flavorful coffee



experience. Individual blends were not free from corruption however: "'Peter's Blend' or 'House Blend' says nothing about where the coffee comes from, allowing the roaster or retailer near flexibility, but so again does the sale of 'Mocha style' or 'Blue Mountain style'" (Roseberry 1996: 769). Many roasters dressed up less impressive and flavorful coffees with fancy names. Still, other small roasters were able to establish a brand through their blend of coffee, and the more aggressive of these entrepreneurs, such as Starbucks were able to expand nationally (Roseberry 1996: 771).

Coffees became more personal, more accessible. The group that the market feared it had lost, the 20 - 29 year olds, had been netted. People began to drink coffee because it meant something to them: a flavor for everyone, a style for every lifestyle—we have methodically been taught to socialize over coffee, to look for a

boost in productivity from this drink.

Chances are you have a coffeemaker in your workplace. It may just produce instant coffee, but it still produces a cup of caffeine when you need it. What about at home? And how far away are the nearest coffee houses—even if they are major chains? We're surrounded by coffee and caffeine. Why? We live in a society that demands productivity during certain hours&38212;and if you live in a large urban center like New York City, there is a demand for productivity at all hours. We have standardized labor production so that we don't necessarily work when it's best for us (unless you're a freelancer, and can work during hours that make sense to you), and coffee not only gets the day started (even if that day is actually a night shift), it gets us through the day.

Our time is managed; it is not our own. Psychologists Ryan, Hatfield, and Hofstetter (2002) report that while 75% of adults over the age of 65 consider themselves morning people, only 10% of those under age 65 feel that they can be categorized in this way. These subjective ratings for peak productivity times also correspond with data from objective measures of cognitive functions, including analytical thought and judgment, memory, and the ability to suppress irrelevant information (e.g., wandering thoughts) (68). That is, individuals over the age of 65 seem to perform better on these types of tests in the afternoon. This may be in part related to shifting sleep patterns over the course of the individual's lifetime and our accommodation of routines, but this phenomenon is not well understood. Ryan et. al. propose:

It is likely that cognitive dysfunction at nonoptimal times of day is related to a general decrease in physiological arousal or alertness, because self-reported time-of-day preferences correspond to cyclical fluctuations in physiological measures, including body

temperature, skin conductance, and heart rate. If time-of-day- effects are simply due to fluctuations in physiological energy, then one might expect that the performance of older adults during the afternoon might be facilitated by substances that increase arousal (2002: 68). [Emphasis mine.]

Enter coffee, stage right. Caffeine is perhaps the most widely used stimulant in our general population. It helps us get through those non-optimal periods for productivity when we are compelled to be productive anyway. Caffeine makes us feel alert and attentive. It is a highly lipid soluble, so it tends to cross from the bloodstream into the brain quickly and we feel its effects relatively quickly. In animals, caffeine has shown that it reaches peak accumulations in the brain within minutes of ingestion (Ryan et. al. 2002: 68). And it hangs around in the brain, stimulating the regions that control sleep, mood, and concentration, slowly dissipating over three to four hours (68)—which is plenty of time for you to get through your morning inbox, survive the staff meeting, return a few calls, and then get ready for lunch. (Though as Peter Lipson correctly reminded me, regular coffee drinkers do not get the same boost from the caffeine in coffee as do those who are not regular imbibers. Lipson recommends this paper, and points out that for regular coffee drinkers, the caffeine mitigates withdrawal symptoms, which we incorrectly associate with a stimulating boost.)

The office coffee machine serves two purposes: it's a convenience for you, the coffee drinker, but it's also a productivity booster for employers who want employees to get down to work when they arrive (instead, perhaps, reading blogs about anthropology and coffee). Rocky Sexton (2001) talks about the ways that alcohol consumption allows Mardi Gras revelers to act out as their masked characters:

Intoxication, or the appearance of intoxication, which may involve minimal alcohol consumption, confers a degree of immunity for the foolish conduct that defines Mardi Gras ... Drunkenness in this context is thus better viewed as a culturally constructed form of ritualized inebriation although there is the potential for actual over-consumption to the point of physical impairment (2001: 28). Alcohol consumption is very much a part of the Mardi Gras experience. Not only does it lower inhibitions, it also serves as a way to bind the community of revelers together. After all, if they're all doing it, then it's normalized for the context and helps revelers behave as they are expected to behave in this setting. Perhaps we can apply his term "ritualized inebriation" to coffee consumption as well. We consume coffee as a means of performing the tasks we need to complete in the setting of the workplace. And if we all do it, then it normalizes the behavior and helps us believe that we are achieving optimal levels of productivity. It also becomes a crutch throughout the day as we reach for our afternoon lattes to plow through the second half of the day—believe me, the line at the Starbucks near my job is equally as long in the afternoon as it is in the morning. We use it to ward off boredom and fatigue. The next time you travel take a look at the number of folks drinking coffee or caffeinated beverages. Perhaps there is a sense that carrying coffee or having it nearby confers the idea of productivity also. So not only are we drinking it to get us through the day's activities, but we have it with us to seem like we're busy and productive during times when we're not actually working—it could almost be classified as a status symbol.

### **Coffee: It's Personal**

Over the years, coffee drinking seems to have moved farther away from the social activity that it initially appears to be. While people still frequent coffee houses for leisure activities, it's far more likely to see a variety of folks working on laptops or reading, or doing some other form of productive work at coffee houses. The number who are there solely for social purposes seems very small. I'm not advocating you give up your morning cup of coffee—as with all my other posts here, my goal is really to make you think about the things that we accept as a part of our daily lives and consider our relationship to them.

We're identified by the brand that we drink, by the coffee houses we frequent, and by the process by which the beans are grown and harvested. We tout words such as "Free-Trade" and organic. Roman was right—it is all about 'me.' But as Roseberry concludes, these connections have been carefully structured by the market:

That is to say, my newfound freedom to choose and the taste and discrimination I cultivate, have been shaped by traders and marketers responding to a long-term decline in sales with a move toward market segmentation along class and generational lines ... This is not, of course, to say we enter the market as mere automatons; clearly, we have and exercise choices, and we (apparently) have more things to choose from than we once did. But we exercise those choices in a world of structured relationships, and part of what those relationships structure (or shape) is both the arena and the process of choice itself (1996: 771).

Coffees offer us a way to look at our relationship to the larger world and see that sometimes our choices are not really our own, to think about how brands and larger market forces can help create what appear to be stable icons in our lives. The 'me' that we have come to emphasize may be less personal than we realize



361 Beach Road, Burlingame, CA 94010

Tel: 855.885.2400 | 650.342.2400 | Fax: 650.342.7400 | [www.oscartek.com](http://www.oscartek.com)