Machines, People, and Social Interaction in "Third-Wave" Coffeehouses

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
	Coffeehouses have a long history as not only spaces of and for consumption, but also as social settings that facilitate and encourage public sociality even in an epoch in which such spaces for sociability are alleged to be fading away. This paper comprises a study of coffeehouses with analytic perspectives and priorities that are very different from past research on this social form. The empirical focus here is on so-called "third wave" coffeehouses, which view coffee as an artisanal product and which deploy, among other resources, high-end equipment in their beverage creation. This equipment is itself an additional empirical focus, and the ways in which traditional face-to-face sociability and, in particular, interaction between customers and employees is facilitated by those machines is considered here. The theoretical perspective used here is ethno methodological and as such a central concern with describing lived experience at these venues is accomplished by considering photographic evidence of machines and people in situ to see how machines, people, spaces and comestibles interact in these cafes.

Introduction: Social Science and the Coffeehouse

Humans interact not only with one another, but also with, and conditioned through, the natural and built environment in which sociality takes place, and the objects that those environments comprise. This paper investigates how machines, specifically the high-end espresso machines found in what coffee enthusiasts refer to as "third wave" coffeehouses, form part of the social form of and enable social interaction, especially that between customers and employees to a degree not seen in cafes that do not have the artisanal focus of those under scrutiny here. As such, this paper adds to research not only on the coffeehouse but also to that on public sociability and the place of nonhuman "actors" in the social life of humans.

The Coffeehouse as "Public Realm"

Coffee and cafes are important. The places where people meet to drink coffee have facilitated the development of what is now typically and stereotypically construed as the public realm. Researchers who attended to the history of the coffeehouse in Europe (Arjomand, 2004; Cowan, 2005; Haine, 1996; Komecoglu, 2005) all see the pre-20th century coffeehouse as an important location for the development of a form of public sociability and even civil society *tout court*. With respect to sociological theorizing, Habermas (1962[1989], Calhoun, 1993) famously argued that early (18th century) European coffeehouses were one of the most important sites for the development of public life and what he termed "the public sphere," which comprised settings in which status difference between persons could be "bracketed" and set aside in order for customers to engage with one another discursively about political matters and other "public" issues.

Habermas' public sphere, and with it presumably the traditional coffeehouses that supported it, is repeatedly claimed to be disappearing in more recent reflections on public space. Its replacements are private and privately-regulated spaces that serve to buttress, not obviate, status distinctions by serving as spaces devoted to the interests of commercial enterprise. With respect to coffeehouses specifically, they are seen as comprising inauthentic social experiences in corporate chains such as the ubiquitous Starbucks which have retail-based demands, especially that entailing the ability for speedy customer turnover, that curtail the ability of conversations (inter- or intra-class-based) to proceed organically (Gaudio, 2003).

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What one might observe at Starbucks reflects changes in traditional public space generally, a critique echoed by social scientists who bemoan the more general loss of what Oldenburg (1991, 2000) calls "third places" and their replacement with privately owned, commodified and generally ersatz social experiences. Shopping malls are the most notable postmodern pseudo-public spaces, and authors such as Gottdiener (2000, 2001) argue that malls commodify "public" space and exist only to promote consumption, a fact that Abaza (2001) charges has further marginalized the poor. Malls are thus depicted as negating those "natural" or "organic" social contexts that once constituted the sites of urban sociality; malls are "non-places" (Auge, 1992) are bereft of any meaning outside of that promoted by the retail occupants (Bauman, 2001; Knorr-Cetina, 2001; Woodward, Emmison, and Smith, 2000). Analysts see malls and other planned, privately-regulated spaces, such as theme parks, a venue deconstructed and lamented for its contribution to "Disneyization" (Bryman, 2004) in a myriad of pseudo-public spaces, as specifically detrimental for forms of social interaction that were facilitated in downtown business districts, town squares, high streets, municipal parks, and other such places. Moreover, this argument claims, even when persons engage in social interaction in the form of conversation on those high streets, too often those conversations are circumscribed and regulated by the demands of retail environments even when those conversations take place in coffeehouses. And so even in what might be construed as a throwback to traditional third place, the postmodern world is decidedly anti-social.

Coffeehouses as Research Sites

Coffeehouses have thus been an important resource for historical investigations that attempt to reconstruct the course of European and North American public social life over the last several centuries. Studies focussing specifically on *modern* coffeehouses and studies that treat those coffeehouses as central topic are relatively rare. Laurier (2008) and Laurier et al's (2001, 2007) work entailing both ethnographic qualitative investigation of "neighbourhood cafés," as well as fine-grained conversation-analytic and ethno methodological analyses are exemplary among works that not only centre on contemporary coffeehouses per se but also deploy an analytic perspective that focuses on lived, observable and empirically evident behaviours in those coffeehouses; it is in fact this perspective that this paper partakes of and as such these works, along with Manzo's (2010) analysis of the home-hobbyist "coffeegeek" demimonde, constitute a growing amount of research into the modern coffee and coffeehouse scenes from ethno methodologically-informed viewpoints.

However, aside from these projects, attention to coffeehouses as research sites has been almost nonexistent. Cafés are indubitably important as customers' meeting and "hang-out" spaces, but aside from acknowledging a gross difference between "chain" and "independent" coffeehouses (cf. Lyons, 2005), these are taken without reflection as un-studied contexts for describing and analysing customers' experiences or, sometimes, issues germane to the larger coffee industry. One other example is Milligan's (1998) analysis of the emotional attachment that employees at a university coffeehouse had to the coffeehouse's physical setting. Milligan (1998) is notable for considering the behaviours and viewpoints of coffeehouse employees and not only its customers as a research focus; in fact, the employees, owners, roasters, and any other workers at coffeehouses are completely ignored in the discussion of coffeehouses of Habermas (1962[1989]); for a scholar who focussed so famously on how some social spaces obscured status differences, the possible status differences between customers and those who served them was completely overlooked by him and by every other historical treatment of coffeehouses.

This investigation adds to strains of previous research and social critique by inspecting social spaces in which authentic, lived and lively social interaction is observable and which proposes a hopeful version of contemporary sociality. It will add to existing research on coffeehouses and the café experience by addressing, and prioritising, the work worlds of shop employees and owners: the baristas, whose demonstrations of expertise with respect to coffees, drinks preparation, familiarity with equipment, and the argot surrounding all of these things are vitally important features of the what is known among coffee aficionados as the "third wave" as a subculture. Little sociological insight, never mind formal research process, has been brought to this phenomenon. This paper comprises one attempt at this research topic, as a study of a new rendition of community and an emerging venue for sociability in the 21st century.

The "Third Wave"

Coffeehouses have, again, a long history as not only spaces of and for consumption but also as social settings that facilitate and encourage public sociality. However, there is no such thing as a "coffeehouse" as a generic retail form, as opposed to, say, a "convenience store" or a "bank." Coffeehouses are arguably as varied as are restaurants of a particular strain, such as "Italian restaurants" or "sandwich shops"; they all serve a grossly

similar product, but the differences between and among them are often vast. With respect to coffeehouses, some place great emphasis on non-coffee menu items and have extensive food, alcohol, or non-alcoholic beverages menus; others eschew anything *but* coffee and some go so far as to only offer espresso-based drinks and to not have any equipment for North-American-style brewed coffee at all. As it happens, there has evolved a distinctly 21st-century variant of coffeehouses and allied businesses (such as coffee roasters and machine manufacturers) known in the "coffee geek" demimonde as the "third wave," and "third wave" coffeehouses are seen, by owners, employees, and customers, as very different from the vast majority of extant coffeehouses.

It is important to qualify "third wave" as a members', and not an analysts', term. This qualification reflects one of the provisos of *ethno methodology* (Garfinkel 1967; Heritage 1984), the substantive and theoretical area of sociology of which this project partakes. That provision is to undertake observational study of a social setting by inquiring first, foremost, and always about what the participants in that site are doing, what knowledge they are demonstrating, what and how they deploy language and related argot and paralinguistic tools (where those are analytically available) to organize, define, and make sense of that setting, and in general what the social world is like and is managed by people who actually partake of it. Thus, while some observers and analysts would likely find the term "third wave" to be imprecise and confused, the point is that "third wave" is used and understood as part of the subculture that is of interest in this paper.

One way to grasp that members' understanding of "third wave" is to be contrast it with "first" and "second" waves. In *LA Weekly*, journalist Jonathon Gold (2008) does this elegantly:

> The first wave of American coffee culture was probably the 19th-century surge that put Folgers on every table, and the second was the proliferation, starting in the 1960s at Peet's and moving smartly through the Starbucks grande decaf latte, of espresso drinks and regionally labeled coffee. We are now in the third wave of coffee connoisseurship, where beans are sourced from farms instead of countries, roasting is about bringing out rather than incinerating the unique characteristics of each bean, and the flavor is clean and hard and pure.
> The new face of coffee is neither Juan Valdez nor a gum-snapping waitress named Madge, or even Starbucks' Howard Schultz, but a postmodern barista like [Eton] Tsuno, spiked hair and a gauzy shirt, stirring a siphon of Sumatran peaberry with the pouty insouciance of Jimmy Page executing a guitar solo, while awestruck customers study every flick of his long fingers. (http://www.laweekly.com/2008-03-13/eat-drink/the-latest-buzz/)

This rendering of the history of coffee might be revisionist, imprecise, North-American-focused, and generally unsatisfactory as a review of actual historical precedents to modern independent artisanal coffeehouses, but it is important to recognize these categorizations to grasp members' understandings of "third wave." The "first wave" refers to how coffee was prepared and consumed in, say, the 1950s until, say, the early 1990s, when coffee was a caffeine delivery system prepared in percolators or massive urns. The "second wave" refers to that period, starting in the early 1990s, when coffeehouse chains (Starbucks, Gloria Jean's, The Coffee Bean and Tea Leaf, Second Cup, etc.) were born and became common features in urban storefronts and suburban malls. The "second wave" purveyors, this history claims, laid the groundwork for the "third wave," which comprises independent and small-chain coffeehouses that are themselves part of a supply chain including a collection of field-to-cup actors: fair- and direct-trade growers, to small-batch "boutique" roasters, to the shops themselves, to well-trained baristas, to connoisseurs who cherish the label of "coffee geeks." Again, this definition of the "third wave" is missing a great deal empirically, including the glaringly obvious fact that coffee and coffeehouses existed for many centuries in many countries before the American 1950s, but the point here is to understand the sense of reference of "third wave."

This paper is an investigation of one important and defining aspect of the "third wave" phenomenon and it concerns social interaction around the high-end equipment that is found in almost all of what are recognized as third-wave cafes. The goal of this inquiry is to ascertain how customers and employees orient to that equipment and how the equipment facilitates and even arguably militates social interaction in third wave shops that is markedly different from what is possible, in social-interactional terms, in others.

Data and Method

In line with the ethnomethodological imperative to "consider, analyze and describe the methods used in the production and recognition" of what is "observably the case in some talk, activity or setting" (Francis and Hester 2004:25-26), this project has entailed a number of sources of qualitative data and techniques for their collection in order to subject those data to analysis in order to uncover constitutive phenomena relevant for the social world of third-wave coffee, and to ascertain how those phenomena are socially and interactionally accomplished. These data include interviews with personnel at "third wave" coffeehouses and the roasters that service them, narratives among internet-based discussion board contributors at several coffee-based websites in which conversations around the vagaries of the third wave abound, and, most relevantly for this paper, ethnographic observation and photographic record-keeping at coffeehouses. The sampling strategy here is a nonprobability approach akin to what Beighey and Unnithan (2006:137) term "ideographic sampling" in which materials are selected because they are "representative or expressive of the topic under investigation." Sites for observation and for photographic evidence were gleaned by inductively inspecting settings that speak to the matter at hand, and all settings were chosen because they exemplified and self-identified as "third wave" coffeehouse environments. Specifically, observation and photography were undertaken at six different coffeehouses; four in Calgary, Canada; one in Toronto, Canada; and one in Berlin, Germany, all between February 2009 and June 2010. Gatekeepers—the managers and/or owners of the coffeehouses—were given the opportunity to permit or deny both the displays of photographs in public fora (including in this manuscript) and to permit or deny identification of the shops considered here. In every case, the gatekeeper expressed a desire to be non-anonymous and consequently the identifying information below is in compliance with guidelines for informed consent approved for this project.

For this study, it was primarily the settings and the behaviours of persons observed in cafes that constitute "data," and I only allude to interviews with café to illustrate a certain point in this paper. I have sought to allow the data, in the form of visual information and observed behaviours, to "present themselves" in their own lively and grounded terms, and as such the theoretical perspective deployed in this piece is, again, that of ethno methodology (Garfinkel, 1967; Heritage, 1984), which is a sociological perspective that engages the actual, as against the idealized, activities of persons to uncover how social order and sociality are accomplished in real time with real actors. My goal is, therefore, not to report only what designers "intended," theoretically or formally, with café architecture or with machine design, but to inspect how real persons behave interact with and in thrall of these settings and the objects within them. I have additionally undertaken the ethnomethodological and phenomenological practice of "bracketing" (Husserl, 1911), or suspending an interest in aspects of the social context under study that would typically be issues for social scientific observers, and have instead focussed on actual behaviours that actors produce regardless of those actors' social structural positions. What this means is that this paper will not focus on the place of traditional sociological concepts such race, gender, age, and so forth, except when and if these become apparent as relevant for and topicalised by actors themselves. As it happens, for the priorities of this piece, those social structural concerns were irrelevant.

Analysis

Part of the third wave "culture," for shops as well as home hobbyists, is equipment. This equipment constitutes not only the built form of the shop's/hobbyist's space but also contributes to the subculture's vernacular and indeed the machines contribute to the aficionado's understanding of the third wave coffee subculture.This importance is evident when one peruses published guides to "independent" or "artisanal" coffeehouses (terms that are often used interchangeably with "third wave," among other specialist euphemisms such as "quality" or "modern" coffeehouses), such as recently produced ones for London (Young and Simpson, 2014), Portland (Hutchens, 2014), and the entire area between San Francisco and Seattle (Neuschwander, 2012), all of which invariably mention the make and model of a shop's espresso equipment in guides. This centrality of the espresso machine as a defining feature of a café—amore important feature than, say, the comfort of the shop furniture, the attractiveness of employees, the music played in the shops, the price of drinks, or other matters that are usually central in reviews of restaurants or bars—is also observable in "trip reports" and reviews in coffee related websites like coffeegeek.com and home-barista.net and in trade magazines like *Barista Magazine* and *Fresh Cup*.

Moreover and to return to the sociological focus for this piece, in the third-wave coffeehouse, machines help facilitate and militate a social form that one does not find in chain "second wave" shops. To clarify this point, it is relevant first to consider what that core piece of machinery, the espresso machine, looks like in third-wave shops as against how it looks in non-third wave shops. To help illustrate this, figures 1-5 below are images drawn from publically available advertising materials from manufacturers or equipment distributors; these are the images used to sell the machines.

The Machines

To be thought of as a third-wave coffeehouse entails everything in the entire chain of coffee production and preparation from the café's relationship with growers and importers all the way to the ways in which specific coffee-based drinks are made, and so "machines" are only one part of the third-wave phenomenon and do not themselves denote an establishment as third wave. That said, machines (including but not limited to *espresso* machines) matter and are, or can be, a visible indicator regarding the seriousness with which a café undertakes its coffee program, and in the North American coffeehouse universe, there are three brands of espresso machines that, because of their high cost and reputation among coffee aficionados, hints at that seriousness. A machine of this category of machine will cost at least $20,000 (US) for one with three brewing groups, which is a typical configuration found at most high-volume cafes; a café will naturally pay more for four brew groups and less for two. By comparison, a used machine from a less highly regarded manufacturer such as Rancilio or Brasilia can be purchased for $5000, and perhaps less, and so amore reputationally respected machine constitutes a very high initial investment for the shop relative to what one might pay for something more run-of-the-mill. The four brands that one sees most routinely in artisanal coffeehouses are, first, the made-in-Seattle Synesso (most commonly the Cyncra model):

Figure 1: The Synesso Cyncra.

Second are various machines from the Italian manufacturer La Marzocco; the picture below is of the 2014 top-of-the-lineStrada:

Figure 2: The La Marzocco Strada

A relatively new brand, The Slayer, which, like Synesso, is manufactured in Seattle, is easy to recognize by its wooden accents:

Figure 3: The Slayer

And finally among the various "steam-punk" influenced machines made by Kees Van Der Westen in Waalre, Netherlands is the Spirit:

Figure 4: The Kees Van Der Westen Spirit

All of these machines have a similar architecture. In addition to their shininess, and prominent steam wands, all have ergonomically forgiving paddles or levers instead of dials or knobs to reduce the sort of stress the contributed to carpal tunnel syndrome, a very real risk for employees who repeat the same actions for hundreds of drink preparations in a day. Another aspect to note in each photo is the general shape of each device. In every case, the machine is what manufacturers call "low profile," meaning relatively wide and relatively flat. To appreciate the importance of this phenomenon (and to understand how "relatively" different these machines' shapes are), consider the sort of machine that has become increasingly used in "second wave" shops as well as at venues that offer, but do not specialize in, espresso-based drinks. Such machines are typical among those a customer will find at Starbucks or at a McDonalds' "McCafe," as well as at non-coffee-focussed restaurants, caterers' coffee stations, office coffee rooms, cybercafés, and, as I observed on a recent trip to Germany, in the breakfast rooms and front desks of many hotels in that country. This machine is *super automatic*. It makes the process of brewing and constructing espresso-based drinks (including espresso per se) as simple as pressing a button. To assemble an espresso requires only that the operator choose "espresso" from the machine's panel, as opposed to the requirement present with more traditional "semi-automatic" machines, including those pictures in figures 1-4 above, that require that the barista grind the beans, dose the grounds into a portafilter, tamp the grounds, place the portafilter into the machine's group head, push the brew button, and observe the extraction. Super automatics simplify—they "dumb down"—the espresso making process. Here is one example, the very popular Franke Evolution, which, like many "super autos," is manufactured in Switzerland:

Figure 5: The Franke Evolution

This is a big machine. The most recent version of the Franke Evolution machines currently used at McDonalds' "McCafe" locations around the world are more than six feet feet high, when positioned on counters, at the tops of their conical grinders which protrude farther out of the top of the machines than in the older model shown here. Its mass is oriented vertically as against the horizontal orientation of the machines depicted in figures 1 through 4. Unfortunately figure 4 does not lend to a clear sense of scale for human operators aside from the presence of what appear to be espresso demitasses which the height of the machine dwarfs, but the ways in which the scale of machines like this relates to people will be clearer presently.

The Machines *in situ*

What I wish to focus on for the remainder of this analysis is how these machines—the "third wave" models and the super automatics—fit into the form, and the social scene, of the coffeehouse, so I will provide some candid photos from third-wave shops where these machines are deployed to inspect this matter.

First, consider this scene from Bonanza Coffee Heroes in the Prenzlauer Berg neighborhood of Berlin, Germany. Bonanza was only the second coffeehouse in Europe to purchase a Synesso Cyncra to make its espresso-based beverages.

Figure 6: Synesso at Bonanza Coffee Heroes, Berlin

This scene encapsulates the social setting of a café like Bonanza well enough to look like an advertising image, with the cheerful, smiling employees engaging a customer who appears to be similarly animated. It is not, however, advertising but is typical of the social interaction that many third-wave coffeehouses comprise, one that it not only pleasurable but also one that, vitally, entails communication between employees and customers, and not only between customers—a phenomenon that has been, as discussed above, a topic on sociality in coffeehouses for centuries. As such, third-wave coffeehouses can instance a different social form in that they comprise these sorts of interactions.

Note the espresso machine in this image. Its low-profile build allows the customer and the employees to engage one another face-to-face. This is an intriguing and consequential aspect of the machines size and placement in the shop. It not only constitutes a beautiful object for the customers' inspection and it is not only the site of the "theatre" of drink preparation but it also and evidently permits and provides a sort of setting itself for the conversation we see here.

A couple more photos from cafes help bear this point out. In both cases, the general "permeability" of the social space surrounding each of the espresso machines pictured in a decontextualized way in figures 1-4 is evident when we see them in live context. To add to the image from Berlin of the Synesso "in situ", consider this scene, a weekday afternoon at Dineen Coffee Co. in downtown Toronto, where the bright yellow La Marzocco Strada looms large in the drinks preparation space but still allows workers and customers to be visible to one another:

Figure 7: Strada, Dineen Coffee Co., Toronto

The Slayer at Analog Coffee in Calgary sits even lower, and, again, visual and verbal social engagement between employees and customers is clearly possible (and is, in fact, recurrent if difficult to see in what this photograph captures):

Figure 8: Slayer, Analog Coffee, Calgary

Finally, the Kees Van Der Westen Spirit bridges the gap between barista and customer clearly in this scene from Phil & Sebastian Coffee Roasters in Calgary:

Figure 9: Spirit, Phil & Sebastian Coffee Roasters, Calgary

In all of figures 6-9, the espresso machines are front and centre. At Analog, a bright yellow Slayer sits to left of the cash register; customers place drink orders with the employee at the register and then wait to the left of the machine to pick it up. In that interim, contact with the barista is facilitated and occurs almost constantly. At Phil & Sebastian, the same pattern is present, with customers receiving their beverages at a station to the left of the Spirit machine. In both cafes, the espresso machine is a prominent object d'art that can be appreciated close-up, even touched, by customers. It is also, vitally, of the built form that does not preclude social interaction between those behind and those in front of the counter.

All of this discussion can be much better understood with a counterexample, a café that does not deploy these sorts of machines, does not subscribe to the cafés' design principles and is not in any way categorizable as "third wave." Consider this scene from a Starbucks, this one a "licenced concept" version run by Host Marriott Services at the Calgary International Airport:

Figure 10: Super automatic machines at Starbucks, Calgary International Airport

The difference between this setting and the ones presented above is dramatic and even humorous. This photo was taken in the late afternoon during a lull in what is Canada's fourth-busiest airport, but even allowing that there are far fewer customers than what is typical at this kiosk, the social consequence of Starbucks' choice of machinery is obvious here. There is, in fact, an employee behind these tall, double-width super automatic espresso machines, but she is invisible behind their bulk. There is a small pseudo-window to the left of them, the space where customers pick up their beverages, but this narrow space affords little opportunity for eye contact, never mind conversing, between the barista and her customers.

This café seems practically purpose-built to negate social contact between employees and customers and the interest in efficiently whisking travelers off to their departure gates is clear. Two points merit mention here, however: One is that this form is typical of most Starbucks, and not only airport "licenced concept" locations, and the physical and symbolic separation of actors on either side of the bar is recurrently evident not only at most Starbucks but at most "second wave," chain coffeehouses as well. Second, to return to this paper's central theme, the place of machines in this separation cannot be underemphasized. They are not only part of the wall; they ARE the wall, and they exemplify the role that artifacts can play in either facilitating or precluding humans' social engagement with one another.

Discussion

It is a well-accepted notion that humans and the spaces they inhabit interact, and that moreover, humans interact with machines; this relationship and in particular the notion that machines might possess "agency" to the same extent that humans do is one of the more provocative claims in the tradition of Actor-Network Theory (cfSuchman, 2003), which focuses on the agentic character of many different nonhuman objects that social interaction comprises. This approach includes not only attention to technologies that have evident behaviours, such as robots (Shaw-Garlock, 2011) but also those that are less obviously understandable as "players" in social interaction but that are objects that are meaningful and consequential for interactants even while they are completely inert without human engagement of them, and example being Prout's (1996) analysis of medical technology such as the metered-dose inhaler for asthmatics. The view of this piece, on the other hand, is in line with the project of Manzo (2005) which found that visitors to shopping mall food courts managed to make claims to "personal" space by comporting their bodies around the tables and by using the food court furniture as a resource to organize those claims. The furniture was not an "actor" on this view and neither is coffeehouse equipment agentive in the view of this current piece. The machines are interaction and cultural resources for persons present in the coffeehouses, and are moreover resources for both employees and customers and inform interaction among and between both groups. The point of this paper have more pointedly been (1) to provide insights into a social setting that challenges very recurrent claims among social scientists to the effect that "third place" spaces like these cafes have disappeared and that sociability has disappeared along with it, replaced by ersatz virtual experience and commodified, pseudopublic spaces , and (2) to provide insights into how these matters—the connections between persons, spaces and machines—are evident and consequential for these under-researched social venues.

Having accomplished these analytic goals, it is important not to overstate one thing that the foregoing analysis might seem to suggest, and this is that "third-wave" coffeehouses share a common design esthetic or a common philosophy around business models and how they choose to include customers socially. In fact the shops that I have visited vary as much as any category of business. Some are so modern that they appear sterile; others are so "homey" that they appear untidy. The largest is over 2500 square feet; the smallest is barely 900. Some have extensive food menus and even well regarded in-house chefs; others serve coffee and only coffee. Some have extremely well delineated and hierarchical organization of personnel; others are much more laissez-faire. Some have rigorous training programs; others are less so. Thus, there are real impediments to generalizing around the social experience in "the third-wave coffeehouse" because there are important differences among them.

That said, one common and consistent defining feature of all of these varied spaces is the equipment—the machines—that they comprise. These machines, and their positions relative to employees and customers, are perhaps the most important common feature of all the third-wave shops and are part of what constitute them as unique and as distinct from the chains as well as from other businesses (such as restaurants) for whom a coffee program is not their foci.

Moreover and in conclusion, this paper has demonstrated that the sort of coffee brewing equipment is a defining feature of the physical form of coffeehouses and is just as much an aspect of "design" as is the shop's floor plan or furniture. The machines' builds in the "third wave" coffeehouses, as low-profile and permeable, facilitate interaction between employees and customer; thus, the "community" aspect of the third-wave coffeehouse, like the third-wave subculture in general, is a result of and an interaction among persons, comestibles, and artifacts.

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