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Espresso-ing Consumption:
A social geography of Central Auckland’s coffee & café culture.

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for the degree of Master of Arts in Geography

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ABSTRACT

Despite growing numbers of individuals purchasing coffee-oriented goods (beans, plungers, espresso machines, etc.) in an attempt to produce high quality coffee within the comforts of home, coffee consumption essentially remains a socio-spatial activity; we still "go out" for coffee, and coffee bars and cafés are the chosen sites for consumption. The consumption sites and practices associated with coffee have become a significant element in the contemporary Auckland landscape. Offering a variety of espresso-based beverages, cafés and coffee bars provide a sense of community, theatre, and a sensual experience. The thesis examines the construction of the café/coffee bar as a site of consumption and how it is perceived and used by its consumers. Findings are derived from survey work, a focus group, and participant observation. Evidence is presented of cafés operating as 'third places' in relation to work and home, with consumers frequenting establishments on a regular basis and finding a sense of community within.

Key words:
consumption, coffee, third place, sense of place.
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I would like to dedicate this thesis to the memory of my grandmothers, Ella Marie Todd Figart & Anna Olava Evanstad Liberty.
This is for you.
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Chapter 1
INTRODUCTION

It's not just the coffee. ...people want out. Out of their living rooms on a rainy Saturday. Out to a sidewalk table on a sunny Sunday. Out in the world. Out with their friends. Take a look around next time you visit your favorite coffee haunt. ...A guy is perched on a high stool reading a newspaper. ...back in the corner two women are huddled around [a] small table sharing the latest of life's secrets over the coffee-of-the-day.

Where else can you go, sit down and order only a cup of coffee? ...Where did we go when no coffee places were around? What did we do to get out in the world, chat with friends, or escape from our castles? (Holman,1997,4).

Arguing that it's not just the coffee which attracts people to such establishments, American writer Sherri Holman offers a compelling account of a visit to a local café. Cafés have become the place to go and perch oneself in a window to watch the world go by or sit and talk with others.

This thesis focuses on cafés as places of consumption, as places where people ‘escape’ from their homes and work in search of community, and as places which offer a sensual experience. In this study, espresso-ing (an expression of) consumption in the café environment and its associated practices will be explored within Central Auckland. This chapter begins by introducing the urban landscape, proceeds to ‘place’ cafés within the discipline of geography, outline the thesis aims and objectives, and concludes with the thesis organisation.
1.1 Espresso and the urban landscape

As a popular, even ‘trendy’, part of the everyday lives of many, the appearance of cafés in cities and neighbourhoods throughout the Western World has led some to the conclusion that

...coffee and espresso bars have taken over the urban landscape (Morse, 1996, 104).

The urban landscape, an essential component of this thesis, has gone through a number of changes over the past two decades, marked by new patterns of consumption, leisure, disposable incomes, and the introduction of a host of different cultural practices. These practices are becoming increasingly popular, with “...greater and greater numbers of people (men and women) -with however little money- play[ing] the game of using things to signify who they are” (Hall, 1990, 131). Today’s ‘goods’ function as social signs which themselves produce meaning. The built environment for cultural geographers, can be a container of messages in which, according to Short (1996),

If the city is written, it is also read; it is consumed as well as produced. ...Creativity is not restricted to the authors of texts; reading is also a creative act. If reading is creative there will probably be multiple readings. The readings will vary across society. The city is not a shared text with equality in writing and reading (Short, 1996, p.406).

The urban landscape is written and read, consumed and produced, and in the case of espresso and cafés, is speaking the language of lattés. Creation of the inscribed text is composed both by those who produce and those who consume. Those who produce texts include café owners and those who perform (wait staff or other consumers), with those who consume doing so in a creative manner which involves multiple readings.

Urban structure and the social processes within include the daily routines, rituals, and sociospatial movements; “...the ebb and flow of social usage” gives meaning to the city and its elements (Short, 1996, 406). The urban landscape contains a variety of clues and messages about the cities in which we live. In this study, the social
geography of cafés and coffee bars in Central Auckland will be explored with their texts, symbolism and contribution to broader landscapes of consumption considered.

The popularity of coffee has witnessed the rapid emergence of a consumer culture devoted to espresso and the establishments where it is served. In 1994, 52% of Americans were drinking at least one cup a day (approximately 130 million daily cups), with over 5,500 coffeearbars in the U.S. and expected to reach 10,000 by the end of the century (Schapiro, 1994). New Zealand consumer research is congruent with American figures, showing that "...tea [is] losing ground as coffee becomes the likely ‘cuppa’" (New Zealand Herald, 1997a). "...[T]ea is regarded as conservative, whereas coffee is seen as exciting and exotic" (Food Industry Week, 1997).

In Central Auckland the number of café/coffee bar outlets has increased 210% over the last twenty years (186 in 1978; 578 in 1998) (Yellow Pages: Auckland & District, 1978; Telecom Yellow Pages: Auckland, 1998). While these statistics are only representative of two countries, it is purported that coffee is "...the second most actively traded commodity on the planet-right after oil" (Schapiro, 1994, 58).

This brief introduction leads one to question the reasons for the popularity of such establishments. If it's not just the coffee, then what is it? The following chapters will explore a number of possible explanations, employing theories which include community, the body and the notion that we are where we eat (Bell & Valentine, 1997).

1.2 'Placing' cafés: thesis rationale

Consumption has become one of the dominant cultural practices of the 1990s, and its landscapes in New Zealand, such as shopping malls, sports centres, bistros and multiplexes are icons of the decade (LeHeron & Pawson, 1996, 318).

Icons, according to Betsky (1997), are magnets of meaning that "...present the unpresentable" (p.23). In today's society icons are a part of the everyday. According

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1 The New Zealand coffee market, in 1996, was $95 million, compared with $40 million for tea (Food Industry Week, 1997).
Chapter 1: Introduction

to Saunders (1984), the present-day counterparts of Veblen's leisure class are “fashioning a post-industrial city with a consumption landscape rather than a production landscape”, witnessed in the cities of the nineties (in Smith, 1996, 111). The city as ‘spectacle’ is seductive and creative, containing “arenas of symbolisation” and bases for “…new, reflexive forms of consumption and cultural production” (Amin & Graham, 1997, 5). In ‘placing’ cafés within the discipline of geography, it is important to note their role in the production of a city’s culture, much like the examples given above. Postmodern thought, an approach embraced by human geographers since the mid 1980s, is reflective of this new, creatively styled city.

Postmodernity is everywhere, from literature, design and philosophy, to MTV, ice cream and underwear (Dear, 1994, 3).

The above comment makes reference to postmodernity and its multiple interpretations. According to Dear (1994), contemporary postmodern thought is inclusive of three realms: style, method and epoch. The first of the three, style, will be briefly explored here as its description is inclusive of an attitude towards architecture and design of buildings, cities and society. As a crucial component of the fabric of cities, postmodern architecture includes investigation of ‘landscapes and lifestyles’ (Cloke, Philo & Sadler, 1991). A restructuring of the environment, which John Short (1989) heralds as the coming of ‘a new urban order’, is taking place in many cities in conjunction with a social reconstruction made up of yuppies, dinks² and a ‘new middle class’. The contemporary urban condition contains landscapes of both leisure and consumption in which signs of spending are visible. Just as expressions of what is considered ‘postmodern’ include a multiplicity of styles, the design and meanings encoded within the café/coffee bar scene fall into this category. As Cloke et al. suggest, “…the very complexity of the contemporary city ‘as a whole’ -and not just certain architectural elements of the city- [can] be described as ‘postmodern’” (1991, 177).

Postmodern cultural production allows for the introduction of new and unusual commodities for sale in the capitalist workplace (Cloke et al., 1991). Cultural capital is then held by those who

² ‘Dinks’ is an acronym for ‘Double Income No Kids’.
Chapter 1: Introduction

...can 'buy' an exalted place in the capitalist social order by displaying the right sort of cultural attributes (knowledge of the arts; possession of the 'right' educational background) and by acquiring certain marks of personal distinction (the customised car; the individualised home)(Cloke, et al., 1991, 182).

Symbolic economies also exist, where culture "...symbolises 'who belongs' in specific places" (Zukin, 1995, 1). In the vocabulary of contemporary cities, Sharon Zukin (1995) defines culture as "...an abstraction for any economic activity that does not create material products like steel, cars or computers" (p.12). Instead, culture is seen as a system which produces symbols: "culture is intertwined with capital and identity in the city's production systems" (Zukin, 1995, 12). Symbolism creates and recreates senses of both individual and collective identity, with people trying to become the beings they desire to be by consuming (Le Heron & Pawson, 1996). In the case of the young professional, it is

...association with commodities that exhibit cosmopolitanism (from European cars to espresso machines), boast quality (brand names and designer labels) and display privileged knowledge (the 'right' wines and coffees) (Le Heron & Pawson, 1996, p.336 paraphrasing Goss, 1992).

This pursuit of style and the construction of identity allows the consumer to participate in some of the sophisticated 'trappings of international markets'. In New Zealand, restructuring over the past ten years has "...provided access to improved levels of service and wider choice of goods that characterise competitive marketplaces overseas, such as retail malls, multiplexes and Opera in the Park" (Le Heron & Pawson, 1996, 319). Café style consumption is another representation of this diversity of consumption opportunity with culture becoming the business of cities.

A growth in cultural consumption (of art, food, fashion, music, tourism) and the industries which cater to, and create, them has become highly visible in the urban landscape (Zukin, 1995). In the process of restructuring cities and the creation of landscapes of culture, consumption and leisure, social groups who previously occupied these spaces have often been displaced, for the fabric of capitalist cities invariably includes only those holding the right 'capital', and excludes those who do not (Winchester & White, 1988). In the case of the café or coffee bar, it stands to
reason that those who cannot afford the ‘rental’ of table and chair, or $2.50 for an espresso-based beverage, will be excluded. It must therefore be acknowledged at the outset that exploring the geography of café-style consumption sites and practices is to survey an exclusive landscape within the contemporary city.

As an urban consumption space, the café holds many meanings with a particular set of consumers who frequent and use the site for particular reasons. It must also be acknowledged that, while not of focus in this thesis, such sites may hold markedly different meanings for non-consumers (e.g. those excluded due to cost). However, we can generalise at the outset to say that cafés as sites, and coffee consumption as practices, are representative of activities associated with the ‘everyday’ that have made their mark on urban landscapes throughout the Western world. The 1980s and early 1990s was a period when urban cultural geographers focused much attention on consumption using the shopping mall as the exemplary site, often neglecting the role of the consumer her/himself. Recent work has addressed this deficiency and conveyed the viewpoint of the consumer (Jackson & Holbrook, 1995), considered issues of meaning and identification (Jager, 1986; Zukin, 1995), and examined in-place consumption practices (Bell & Valentine, 1997; Crang, 1994). The consumption package, investigated in the recent work of Bell and Valentine (1997), incorporates ideas of a ‘whole experience’; more than food and drink. The act of ‘eating out’ becomes a “…container of many social and cultural practices, norms and codes” (Bell & Valentine, 1997, 125), and part of the presentation of self in everyday life for those who eat and serve as subjects (Goffman, 1956). This thesis focuses on and explores the creation and consumption of the café/coffee bar; that which makes up the ‘total consumption package’ or ‘experience’.

Such a ‘package’ or ‘experience’ constitutes more than visual elements, the conventional preoccupation for the geographer’s ‘gaze’. The senses play critical roles in constituting the meaning of places as well as serving as memory releasers, aiding in the creation of a more complete consumption package. This thesis builds on ideas advanced by Porteous (1985) and Smith (1994) to contribute to a more complete sensory geography of Central Auckland. Beyond the visual and sensual is the creation and consumption of a site which holds communal attributes. Ideas that particular sites of consumption offer community and a sense of place put forward by
Oldenburg (1997) will be explored. Arguing that identity is affirmed through participation in such place-based consumption, later chapters explore and advance Bell and Valentine’s (1997) contention that

...in a world in which self-identity and place-identity are woven through webs of consumption, what we eat (and where, and why) signals ...who we are (p.3).

1.3 Aims & objectives

The aim of this thesis involves developing an understanding of the geography of café culture through extending Bell and Valentine’s (1997) concept of a ‘total consumption package’ to include ideas of community, the body and senses of place.

The specific objectives are:

- **To identify contemporary café and coffee bar consumers in Central Auckland.**
  Consumption theory in geographical circles is beginning to recognise the importance of first-hand information in research. The first objective of this thesis is to give café and coffee bar consumers a voice in articulating their in-place experiences and reasons for frequenting particular establishments.

- **To examine the ‘total consumption package’ in a café and coffee bar context.**
  Through this objective, the goal is to extend Bell and Valentine’s (1997) idea of including the consumption of every aspect of a restaurant/café environment (design, wait staff as well as what is eaten and drunk).

- **To include consideration of the body and the senses as part of the Auckland café ‘experience’.**
  Here, the thesis seeks to extend the view of what is consumed to include the sensual (that which is smelled, heard, and tasted in addition to what is seen).
To explore ideas of community and what Oldenburg (1997) describes as the 'third place' (in relation to home and work), with reference to Central Auckland cafés.

The goal here is to explore the presence of a sense of community focusing on particular cafés and the idea of such establishments catering to the human need to belong.

To outline the historical geography of coffee-drinking establishments, including Auckland's early coffee bars and lounges (circa 1950).

A prerequisite to understanding the contemporary 'scene' will be an explanation of the history of early coffeehouses and their communal attributes, including the examination of Auckland's early coffee culture.

1.4 Thesis organisation

This chapter has briefly given context to geographies of consumption and coffee, and the way they relate to issues of symbolism and identity. The remainder of the thesis is organised as follows.

Chapter 2 reviews theory which serves as the foundation of the thesis. Divided into three primary sections, the chapter explores a number of characteristics of contemporary consumption, community and sense of place, and the role of the body in creating geographical experience. Reference is made to recent consumption literatures that include investigation of place as context (Sack, 1988), the geography of 'eating out' (Bell & Valentine, 1997), postmodernism and the 'new middle class' (Knox, 1993), and the notion of themescapes (Rodaway, 1994). Together these literatures form a base upon which to begin examination of the café/coffee bar, their consumption practices, and design. A second section in the chapter is devoted to the idea of community and belonging. Here, the ideas of Eyles (1985) and Oldenburg (1997) assist in interpreting attributed meaning(s) in place(s). The third and final section of the chapter, which deals with the human body is included as a means of acknowledging a more complete 'consumption package', incorporating the sensual in the consumed experience.

Chapter 3 builds on conceptual ideas in Chapter 2 and introduces the reader to a history of coffee and coffee-drinking establishments. Discussion includes the usage
and design of early coffee stalls, -shops and -houses from the 16th and 17th centuries to present. The latter part of the chapter focuses on the history of these establishments in Auckland’s Central Business District (circa 1950), familiarising the reader with coffee’s past in terms of creation of community and a consumed ‘experience’. While this is not a historical thesis per se, a number of similarities exist between past and present “...centres of civility whose identity is derived from the coffee bean” (Oldenburg, 1997, 184).

Chapter 4 discusses the methods used for the empirical research in this thesis. A combination of both quantitative and qualitative approaches were used to enrich an examination of the total consumption package and the sense of place experienced by both users and producers.

Chapter 5 explores the creation of the café environment, surveying a multitude of elements which make up the consumed ‘experience’. This exploration extends to consider design, naming and logos, the ‘geography of the stage’ (Crang, 1994), as well as the sensual as distinct features which create unique and contrived places. Once the environment itself is described, the chapter then introduces the character of cafés and coffee ‘culture’ in New Zealand.

Chapter 6 narrows the focus to Central Auckland. In this chapter the three central city districts and five cafés at which research took place are introduced and elements of design, naming and ‘the stage’ are described in detail.

Chapter 7 functions as the principal findings chapter. Here, the theories of consumption and identity, the ‘third place’ and belonging, and the sensuous are illustrated with empirical results gained from a number of methods, including survey questionnaires, participant information, in-depth interviews and a focus group meeting.

Finally, Chapter 8 summarises the thesis findings with reference to the aims and objectives of the thesis and assesses progress towards acknowledging a more complete consumption package.
2.1 Introduction

*consumer* n. 1 a person who consumes, especially one who uses a product. 2 a purchaser of goods or services (Thompson, 1995, 287).

Consumption and the consumer have become an important area of study recently in the field of socio-cultural geography (for example, Bell & Valentine, 1997; Jackson & Holbrook, 1995; Jackson & Thrift, 1995; Zukin, 1995). The above definition of the consumer describes this individual as the *purchaser of goods or services*. A critical examination of theory and research in this chapter serves to argue that the *goods or services* which are said to be consumed or consumable have broadened to include a wider range of phenomena.

This chapter begins by discussing recent changes in social and cultural geography and, in particular, a re-evaluation of consumption. A move has occurred from an approach excluding the voice of the consumer to one which is now more inclusive in nature and broadened in scope. Concern over the scope of what is consumable then extends to explore consuming geographies, postmodernism and the ‘new middle class’, followed by the idea of ‘themoscapes’. In a second part of the chapter, community and sense of place are of focus; two senses which are deeply rooted in the feelings and attachments one holds towards place. In part three, the idea of a ‘third place’ is examined. Third places operate as potentially comforting sites outside the realms of the first (home) and second (work) places. A fourth and final part of the chapter explores the human body and the ways in which it aids in the formation of one's own creation/experience of place. Included in part four are three illustrations of how the body can be incorporated into geographical research, as a tool for investigation of the multidimensional and multisensual experience of place.
2.2 Consumption

In the late 1980s and early 1990s, a range of studies were published on shopping and the mall (for example, see Butler, 1991; Chaney, 1990; Fairburn, 1991; Goss, 1993; Hopkins, 1990 & 1991; Jackson & Johnson, 1991; Jones, 1991; Morris, 1988). This work critically examined these 'cathedrals of consumption' as 'consumer utopias'. While the act of consuming was studied, works tended to exclude the shopper, instead focusing primarily on the sites of consumption. Only recently have geographical literatures and academic research included the position of consumers themselves, as well as the views of the academic researcher (for example, Gregson, 1995; Jackson & Holbrook, 1995). In this section, recent consumption theory will be explored, identifying key arguments and/or hypothesis on the act of consuming and the inclusion of ethnographic research methods, which will later be applied to the condition of Central Auckland and its café and coffee bar consumers.

In 1993, Peter Jackson recommended an examination of the cultural politics of consumption, proposing the handling of the concept as "...a process by which artefacts are not simply bought and 'consumed', but given meaning through their active incorporation in people's everyday lives" (p.209). In order for this to be achieved, three suggestions for inclusion were given.

2.2.1 Gendered sites

The first of the three suggestions by Jackson (1993) was taking questions of gender seriously; as fundamental to every stage of analysis. Adopting a feminist critique, Gregson (1995) asked the question And now its all consumption?, hoping to expose some of the characteristics of social geography, with particular reference to 'boys going shopping' and 'masculine encounters with the megamall'. These 'boys', as Gregson prefers to label them, have seemingly broken down the mall as a postmodern consumption site, as 'cathedrals of consumption', 'consumer utopias', and 'the epitome of hyper-reality'; as places where time and space are not only manipulated to simulate a sense of 'elsewhereness', but where simulation substitutes for, and supplants, the 'real' elsewhere (Gregson, 1995). According to Gregson (1995), less visible are the consumers themselves.
Chapter 2: Consumption, Place & the Body

Not only had the visibility of those who frequent the mall remained hidden, but analysis remained confined to the shopping mall. The high street, specialty shopping complexes, discount warehouses, markets and mail order firms had been ignored, with a majority of researchers, instead, choosing to focus a considerable degree of attention on the Canadian West Edmonton Mall (Butler, 1991; Fairburn, 1991; Hopkins, 1990 & 1991; Jackson & Johnson, 1991; Jones, 1991; Shields, 1989). To focus exclusively on the shopping mall, according to Gregson (1995), “…is to disregard alternative sites of consumption”; alternative sites which are more a part of the everyday experience (p.136). Here, yet another call is made to include gender.

According to Lowe and Crewe (1991), it is women who form the majority of shoppers and retail sales workers. Christopherson’s (1989) article on the flexible workforce found that in the 1980s, nearly a quarter of the new jobs were part-time, with 66% of these filled by women. One out of every six jobs in the United States is part-time, with 89% of this work force labouring in the service industry (wholesale or retail trade). In the 1940s, part-time male workers outnumbered the female, due to the work being in primary sectors. The contemporary part-time workforce, on the other hand, is composed mainly of older and younger workers and women: 54% are wives or children in married couple families (Christopherson, 1989).

Besides the lack of focus on ‘the shopper’ and ‘the worker’, Gregson also argues that geographical literature on the mall has simply been “…yet another instance of the masculine gaze, a masculine reading of the phenomenon of the mall”; “…masculinist in nature” (1995, 137). There is an absence of interest in sites such as the high street, which are

...domains where the heavily gendered activity of shopping and the skills of the shopper are still at a premium. When we look at geographers' readings of the megamall what we find are masculine and masculinist representations masquerading as universal and homogenous tendencies in the world of consumption (Gregson, 1995, 137).

Observations made by Gregson on articles analysing consumption, published prior to 1995, have focused mainly in terms of approaches which may be “…labelled as the product of the masculine gaze”; social geography, in her opinion, “...is still
producing such knowledge, as well as failing to acknowledge the ways in which gender constitutes geographical knowledges and imaginations" (1995, 138).

2.2.2 Taking consumers seriously

A second means of inclusion towards a cultural politics of consumption, according to Jackson (1993), was to remove its overwhelming condescension; to cease assuming how consumers read the landscape. Jackson & Holbrook (1995) identified the social use of shopping centres, and the multiple meanings held by consumers themselves, in an attempt to explore the complex links between consumption and identity. Adopting a 'cultural politics' perspective, the authors examine the multiple and contested meanings we invest in the world of contemporary 'consumer culture'. Through this perspective, they highlight "...how our identities are constructed and negotiated in place through complex social relations", aiming to demonstrate how such relations are played out spatially (Jackson & Holbrook, 1995, 1913). Rejecting the notion that consumption is an isolated, monetary act, Jackson and Holbrook (1995) instead favour a view of consumption as a social process whereby people relate to goods and artefacts in complex ways which transforms their meaning as they become used and re-used in successive cycles, in everyday life. The meanings of these goods and artefacts can therefore be identifiably linked to the social relations of production and consumption.

Following this approach with respect to the concept of identity, Jackson and Holbrook argue that "...modern identities are not fixed and singular but dynamic and multiple", asserting a plurality of identities (1995, 1914). We as individuals are not simply of one identity, but rather

...we carry a bewildering range of different, and at times conflicting, identities around with us in our heads at the same time. There is a continual smudging of personas and lifestyles, depending on where we are (at work, on the high street) and the spaces we are moving between (Mort, 1989, 169).

Jackson and Holbrook's (1995) research confirmed that shopping is socially situated in that the same experience may have very different meanings for different people, or for the same person at a different time, as the social context varies. Consumers were
also found to be active agents, "...far from passive in the face of contemporary 'consumer culture’" (Jackson & Holbrook, 1995, 1924). A third issue raised by Jackson and Holbrook (1995) gives further validity to Gregson’s (1995) argument regarding women as shoppers, with a confirmation of shopping as both a highly and complexly gendered activity. They concluded that, in addition to the above findings, shopping significantly moulds people’s identities, and "...the meanings of contemporary consumption are also played out across differences of space and place" (1995, 1928).

2.2.3 Getting qualitative

In a third and final recommendation, Jackson (1993) dealt with methodology. He advocated the use of more ethnographic approaches, such as in-depth interviews and focus groups; approaches which will be employed and described in more detail later (Chapter 4). In providing these three suggestions (gendered interpretations, user perspectives, and qualitative approaches), Jackson contributed "...a provisional map of the way forward" for analysis of contemporary consumption practices (1993, 224). Coffee-drinking, as a contemporary practise, will be examined in this thesis applying ethnographic methods as well as the more traditional approaches such as survey research (Chapter 3).

Geographies of consumption study aspects of the everyday, with most recent focus placed chiefly on the ways in which commodities and their meanings have become intertwined (Johnston, Gregory & Smith, 1994). In other words, "in the most apocalyptic of post-modern pronouncements the chief reason for existence is consuming, signs of the commodity have become more important than the commodity itself, and people have begun to lose their identity in the welter of consumption" (Johnston et al., 1994, 89).

2.3 Consuming geographies in place

We consumers, and the commodities and places we consume, are major forces shaping [the] modern landscape (Sack, 1988, 659).
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Everyday life is lived in many worlds; one of them is the world of consumption. As consumers in a consumer society, the context of place provides an elementary means by which we make sense of our world (Sack, 1988). We as geographers have the task of ‘making sense’ of the factors involved in the construction of place and its effects on the everyday.

As symbols which convey meaning, places are created and defined through the action of purchasing or consuming products. Sack (1988) uses advertising, and the work of Schudson (1984), as a means for explaining “…the contexts that products are supposed to create [providing] idealised pictures of what these places or contexts should be like” (p.643). Convinced that “…advertising is among the best sources at hand to decipher the meaning of consumption” (Sack, 1988, 643), I would argue that another media outlet, television programs in particular, may have the same effect. Television programs based upon and around a particular site of consumption may achieve similar outcomes to advertising (such as Friends, Ellen and Frasier).

Television shows, like advertising, can “…affect a geographical experience through their influence on geographic consciousness and geographic reality” (Sack, 1988, 643). Shaping our consciousness of place through fictional representation, different types of media visually illustrate and sell geographical contexts. Television, like advertising,

...frame[s] idealised worlds that reveal how products are supposed to affect our lives, and these messages become part of people’s attitudes towards the actual products that appear in real places (Sack, 1988, 643).

In the case of this thesis, coffee and cafés are the product and sites consumed, with messages of television from programs like Friends, providing idealised pictures of how such establishments may operate in ones everyday experiences. According to Sack (1988), the meaning of the product or products, whatever they may be, gives us “…a glimpse of how and why individuals create their own geographies of everyday life” (p.643). These are the geographies which speak the language of consumption and, in the case of this thesis, of espresso. Consumption forms the context of places, with the idea of ‘consuming geographies’ suggestive of the notion that we are where we eat.
In their book, *Consuming geographies: We are where we eat*, Bell & Valentine research food and "...the ways in which eating conveys identity and contributes to the construction of space and place" (1997, back cover). A recent growth in eating and drinking places has occurred in the urban landscape, playing a critical role in "...the renaissance of cities as sites of cultural capital" (Bell & Valentine, 1997, 121). It is more than just food or drink that is offered inside these establishments; it is an 'experience' or what Bell and Valentine call a *total consumption package*.

According to Pillsbury (1990), the restaurant has become a significant symbol of contemporary urban life.

Dinks, yuppies, an increased disposable income, moving away from the mother-in-law, car pools, Little League, the long trek to the exurbs, hating to empty the dishwasher, and that continual societal evil, television - have made their contributions to the restaurant revolution... The restaurant... clearly has become a mirror of ourselves, our culture, and our *new geography* (Pillsbury, 1990, 10-11).

Pillsbury (1990) emphasises eating out as 'a cultural barometer'. Whilst acknowledging that there exist important dining-out sites away from the city, the city itself offers, by sheer volume and choice, a superior location for eating in the public sphere; a defining activity of cultural distinction (Bell & Valentine, 1997). Eating out represents "an incredibly important social (and geographical) phenomenon" (Bell & Valentine, 1997, 124).

No one need know what we do in the comforts of our own homes, but when at a café or restaurant, "everything we eat and the ways we eat it are on constant display, under continual surveillance" (Bell & Valentine, 1997, 124). Thus, a carefully created and managed environment must be produced. Beardsworth and Keil (1990) note the following in regards to restaurants:

*The restaurant exists as a feature of the entertainment industry, and is as much concerned with the marketing of emotional moods and desires as with the selling of food... Eating in the public domain becomes a mode of demonstrating one's standing and one's distinction by associating oneself with the ready-made ambience of the restaurant itself* (p.142-3).
The café or restaurant offers what Bell & Valentine (1997) have termed, a ‘total consumption package’. This package includes not only the food and drink, but the whole ‘experience’.

Included as part of the consumption package, besides the edible or drinkable, are those who serve the food or drink. Reflecting an interest in the geographies of encounters with waiting staff, Phil Crang (1994), coined the term ‘sociospatial relations of consumption’, when focusing on those who prepare and serve food. According to Crang (1994), emphasis on “...the performing nature of selecting and recruiting waiting staff on the basis of their personalities”, turns them into “…part of the cultural capital being sold” (p.693). They thus contribute to the ‘symbolic economy’ of the café or restaurant. According to Zukin (1995), they “create the experience of dining out”; “…waiters are actors in the daily drama of urban culture” (p.154). This has, in turn, enabled certain types of restaurants or cafés the ability to play major roles in the symbolic economies of cities (Zukin, 1995).

In a symbolic economy, restaurants and cafés provide a cultural site. “They are sites where new trends are discussed, gossip is exchanged, and deals are made” (Zukin, 1995, 155). Staff of such sites, especially waiters or baristas, who have direct contact with the consumer, “present themselves along with the menu”, shaping a large part of the consumption environment itself (Zukin, 1995, 155).

Waiters not only provide a backdrop for business meetings, they also contribute to the production, circulation, and consumption of symbols. A restaurant’s style is both implicitly and explicitly negotiated by waiters and management. The accents and appearance of waiters affirm distinctions between restaurants as surely as menu, price, and location (Zukin, 1995, 155).

Waiters and/or baristas, are not the only sources providing accumulation of cultural capital for restaurants or cafés. Social class and other distinctions can be obtained by ‘being seen’ in a particular establishment, indicating power or status (Zukin, 1995). Customers, therefore, also play a vital role in the constitution of a restaurant’s status. The recent popularity of restaurants has come at a time when specialisation and

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1 A barista is a person who prepares espresso beverages.
disposable incomes have played a critical role in the construction of a new division of the median-income group of society; the ‘new middle class’.

### 2.4 Post-modernism and the ‘new middle class’

According to Paul Knox, “one of the most important preconditions for the creation of a sufficient audience and market for postmodern objects and settings has been the emergence of new class fractions under advanced capitalism” (1991, 183). Bourdieu (1984) likens this new audience/participant with the ‘new bourgeoisie’ and the ‘new petite bourgeoisie’. Consumption becomes generalised in nature in advanced industrial societies, and for this reason, class differentiation is marked by a refinement of consumption practices to be consumed demonstratively and distinctively. According to Neil Smith (1987), “it is the spending power and patterns of consumption that, in addition to occupational status, are the defining characteristics of the new bourgeoisie/petite bourgeoisie” (cited in Knox, 1991, 184).

Difference and individualism are two expressions with which this social group aims to be identified. “The style of consumption itself becomes crucial to the maintenance of social differentiation” (Jager, 1986, 89). According to Bell (1976), “a consumption economy finds its reality in appearances” (cited in Jager, 1986, 89). Expression of this form of consumption focuses upon aspects such as dress, entertainment, and restaurants, which serve as key components of the new inner urban life-style. There exists a constant ‘jockeying for class position’, played out within the sphere of consumption (Jager, 1986).

According to Raphael Samuel (1982), the new middle class

> ...distinguishes itself more by its spending than its saving. ...Much of its claim to culture rests on its conspicuous display of good taste, whether in the form of kitchenware, ‘continental’ food, or weekend sailing and cottages. ...Food, in particular, a post-war bourgeois passion ...has emerged as a critical marker of class (Samuel,1982,124-5).

Sites of consumption have become spatially patterned in nature, as particular sites are chosen as representative of “…a new stage of postmodern commodification” (Jackson & Thrift, 1995, 207). A symbolic relationship exists between this new
stage of commodification and specific social groups, particularly the ‘new middle class’, which Jackson and Thrift (1995) describe as ‘the cheerleaders’ of new forms of consumerism. “The whole of the landscape is geared towards consumption” (Jackson & Thrift, 1995, 207) and, according to Knox (1991), several processes of economic restructuring are responsible for the construction of new landscapes of consumption. The most important process, identified by Knox, has been the move from a Fordist regime of ‘mass production’ and ‘mass consumption’ to one which is more international and flexible, where production is more in tune to the demands of the consumer. The chief impetus of this change is the rise of Bourdieu’s ‘new bourgeoisie’ acting as “…an R and D lab for commodity aesthetics, the promoters of a new (intensified) consumption ethic, a new model of consumption in which there is a heavy emphasis on taste and aesthetics, and a new (postmodern) sensibility” (Knox, 1991, 184). The result is a consumer landscape “based around the aesthetic values of historic preservation and postmodern architecture, which is gradually ‘overwriting’ the older urban landscapes and, at the edge of cities, is able to forge its own distinctive landscape forms” (Jackson & Thrift, 1995, 207). This new landscape consists of four main types of site (gentrified areas, private suburban and exurban communities, festival settings and high-tech corridors), and these sites are not confined to North America (Zukin, 1991). Rather, “…across much of the Western world, the same elements of a consumption landscape recur- the privileged housing estates, the shopping malls, the retail parks, and so on” (Jackson & Thrift, 1995, 208).

The ‘postmodern world’ of consumption is “…a world of niche markets tailored to suit specific socioeconomic groups, through electronically mediated signs and images, spectacles and simulations” (Best & Kellner, 1991; Chambers, 1990 cited in Glennie & Thrift, 1992, 424). It is the aesthetic of such signs and images, spectacles and simulations, which attract the conspicuous consumer. Postmodern architecture and design are eminently suited to the materialistic and image-conscious locales where this ‘new middle class’ are ‘seen’. “In contrast to the abstract functionalism of modern architecture, postmodern buildings are scenographic, decorative and semiotic” (Knox, 1993, 218). This is most attractive to developers “…with upscale businesses and consumers in mind: they know that although it costs more to build a ‘rich’ building, it will sell or rent more quickly- and often at a premium- because it
can project the appropriate look” (Knox, 1993, 218). The same sort of attitude is held by entrepreneurs and the design of establishments which cater to particular groups. Knox’s (1993) summary of the differences between the modern and the postmodern characteristics in architecture may also be applied to interior design. As Figure 2.1 indicates, postmodern architecture can be “...almost anything you want it to be”; it is, by definition, *wide-ranging* and *eclectic*; “...the style of styles” (Knox, 1993, 219). It is, for these reasons, attractive to those of the ‘new middle class’, therefore a commodity in itself, but also what makes it most difficult to define (Knox, 1993).

**Figure 2.1: Contrasting characteristics of Modern and Postmodern Architecture.**
(Source: Knox, 1993, 220).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Modern</th>
<th>Postmodern</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>'Less is more' (Mies van der Rohe)</td>
<td>'Less is a bore' (Robert Venturi)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International style, or 'no style'</td>
<td>Double-coding of style</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utopian and idealist</td>
<td>Real world and populist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abstract form</td>
<td>Responsive and recognisable form</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deterministic form</td>
<td>Semiotic form</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Functional separation</td>
<td>Functional mixing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Simplicity</td>
<td>Complexity and decoration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purist</td>
<td>Eclectic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pro-technology</td>
<td>Disguised technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No historical or vernacular references</td>
<td>Mixed historical and vernacular palette</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Innovation</td>
<td>Recycling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No ornament</td>
<td>'Meaningful' ornament</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Context ignored</td>
<td>Contextual cues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'Dumb box'</td>
<td>Scenographic</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the same sort of way that differing groups ‘jockey for position’ within the consumption realm, cafés and restaurants, too, try and out-do each other by design and the creation of difference/an identity of their own, making them a ‘hot’ commodity in the eyes of the (conspicuous) consumer. This is at the heart of the concept of postmodernism; a rejection of homogeneity and the McDonaldisation of the consumption landscape (Ritzer, 1996). The contributions of the ‘new middle class’, of postmodern consumption sites, and of aesthetics in a symbolic economy are fundamental: together they form a ‘society of spectacle’, where “…emphasis is on appearance rather than on having” (Knox, 1991, 185). This leads discussion towards
the idea of the themescape, which as a part of the society of spectacle, involves symbolism and/or metaphor.

2.5 Themescapes

According to Paul Rodaway, "the 'actual' environments of leisure and retailing are defined by themes" (1994, 165). These themes, mostly visual in nature, are known as surface textures serving as a form of packaging. Manipulated in the same way as landscaped images in film, a theme designer "...constructs a resemblance, or simulation, of a particular place or, more accurately described, style of place" (Rodaway, 1994, 165). Two different settings exist: the themescape and theme environments. The themescape operates specifically a space or place identified by a single theme or idea. An example might be the Starship Children's Hospital of the South Pacific. Known to New Zealanders as 'the Starship', the children's hospital operates as themescape in its entire design, interior and exterior, based on the chosen science-fiction metaphor (Kearns & Barnett, 1999, in press). The second setting, that of theme environments, operate as a collection of themescapes; Disneyland, for example (Rodaway, 1994). The 'magic kingdom' contains an array of different themed settings such as Adventureland, Frontierland, Fantasyland, and Tomorrowland. The focus in this section turns to themescape in particular, as it will later be applied to the design of the Central Auckland café/coffeebar.

Themescapes, according to Hopkins (1990), can be recognised by their strong references to periods and places elsewhere, as well as their vivid visual character. The themescape does not aim to replicate, but rather to resemble, and is rooted in "...a stereotypical image and adapted to the physical demands of the current environment to be themed" (Rodaway, 1994, 166). The success of a particular theme is due to its reinforcement of widely shared place stereotypes and dreams. With effective market research and its rendering of appropriate design, the themescape becomes economically viable. The theme environment, either in one singular space or within a group of spaces, functions not only as a spectacle but also as narrative (Rodaway, 1994).
The theme is an evocation of place style and a fascination for the eye. The theme is also a story-line for a particular shopping and/or leisure experience (Rodaway, 1994, p.166).

Creation of the themescape or theme environments is commonly known as Disneyfication referring to the ostentatious leisure/retail self-contained environments throughout North America which have now spread into Europe and around the Western world. “The themescape does not pretend to be anything other than escapism” to the consumer (Rodaway, 1994, p.167). Inclusive of the building or spaces which contain the themescape are those persons who work in them, as well as the products and services sold. Within the theme environment or themescape, the image or theme becomes part of the product consumed, along with the edible, drinkable, and those who work inside its space; this is the consumption package.

Having completed a review of theories of consuming geographies, the ‘new middle class’, and themescapes, focus now shifts to the notions of community and sense of place. As a part of the consumption package, that which is consumed is inclusive of the edible and drinkable, the establishment and its employees. The following section explores the idea of place and that which is felt or sensed, where later the notion of such feelings may be considered a very important aspect of the package offered inside Central Auckland’s cafés and coffee bars.

2.6 Community & sense of place

The two concepts of community and sense of place have been brought together here for an important reason: they can act synergistically, binding ones feelings of belonging in place. For the purposes of this thesis, the social aspect is of greatest concern; that which is seen and experienced.

According to Eyles (1985), community often refers to a territorial entity; a concept which

...remains a starting-point ... for the investigation of localised social relationships and institutions and the interpretation of images and meanings which individuals and groups hold about the world and themselves. ...in some unspecified way [it] refers to a place or sense of refuge, where people like ourselves interact or simply peacefully coexist. It has the connotations of home, roots, belonging (p.59).
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Used in a highly generalised manner, ‘community’ alludes to a shared interest among members of a particular group. Definition of the concept proves difficult for many to grapple, and many scholars have provided their own interpretations (for example Sussman, 1959; Maclver & Page, 1961; Dennis, 1968). Some refer to community more geographically, as in a locality group within a limited area, as “...marked by some degree of social coherence” (Maclver & Page, 1961, 9), or with particular emphasis on the social element (Sussman, 1959). It is the latter, along with Eyles’ (1985) interpretation, which will be of particular importance here. This unfixed manner in which community refers to a particular place or haven will later be applied to the café/coffee bar situation.

According to data collected by Riemer and McNamara (1956), most of our interactions take place within and around our place of residence. Their findings concluded that “…the mode length of trips was 1.5 miles from home and the median was about 1.7 miles” (Eyles, 1985, 61). Foley (1950) gave further evidence in writings about Los Angeles to confirm that even in larger cities an “…impressive degree of local community life” exists (cited in Eyles, 1985, 61).

“Minar and Greer (1968) suggest that at the root of human community lies the necessity of social organisation which requires shared perspectives, or a culture” (Eyles, 1985, 61). Community involves a “…set of social identifications as well as interactions”; a sense of loyalty, a sense of attachment (Eyles, 1985, 61). The need to have roots, or to belong, are strong, ensuring a continued relevance. People recognise their ‘communities’ as a source of identity manifested in a sense of belonging (Eyles, 1985). According to Cohen (1982), this sense is established and reaffirmed in the everyday experience. The individual need not be aware of this field of meaning, rather their everyday practices ensures its continued existence.

To be rooted is perhaps the most important and least recognised need of the human soul... A human being has roots by virtue of his real, active and natural participation in the life of the community... this participation is a natural one in the sense that it is automatically brought about by place, conditions of birth, profession and social surroundings (Weil, 1955, 53).

This idea of community includes the notion of place as a critical element. This is where the concept of community may be linked to sense of place. Defined both as
“the character intrinsic to a place itself”, and “…the attachments that people themselves have to a place”, sense of place can be explained through two distinct, yet interlocking perspectives (Johnston et al., 1994, 548). The first sense refers to certain places which are unique and memorable by inherent characteristics or ‘imagability’, or by association to meaningful events (Johnston et al., 1994). In the second sense, individuals and communities form deep attachments to everyday places through experience, memory or intention (Johnston et al., 1994). Cafés and coffee bars may operate as such places, where the everyday act of drinking espresso-based beverages and conversing with wait staff or other patrons becomes a very distinct and memorable part of the day.

In Eyles’ (1985) study of Towcester and what constitutes sense of place, ten senses proved dominant. Two of the ten, a social sense of place and a nostalgic sense of place may be applied to the café and coffee bar experience. A social sense of place, the most dominant sense, involves “...importance attached to social ties and interaction”; “…place has little meaning without reference to these ties and interactions” (Eyles, 1985, 123). A nostalgic sense of place is influenced by feelings towards a particular place, at a time other than the present (Eyles, 1985). This sense involves looking back to the past, to feelings shaped by particular events and involves feelings of nostalgia in either a positive or negative sense.

In the sense of longing for something, or more usually somebody, no longer attainable it is negative because it fills many people with remorse, regret and sadness. ...it is also positive, in that the act of remembering the shared times of the past often results in contentment and a kind of happiness (Eyles, 1985, 124).

Senses of place, no matter which kind, are how people experience and conceptualise place; negatively or positively. Recently, “...conscious creation and promotion of place images has become a distinguishing feature of postmodern architecture and planning in consumption spaces” (Johnston et al., 1994, 549). Conception of a place where individuals can feel a strong attachment proves beneficial financially to creators. This is where ‘community’ and ‘sense of place’ fits into the framework of consumption. When designing a ‘total consumption package’ much is considered, often incorporating themes of the neighborhood, as can be seen in the approach of the American corporate café chain Starbucks soon to open in Auckland (see Chapter 7).
With a Starbucks store opening almost every day, ...new designs are more flexible than ever. They're flexible designs, tailor-made for our customers, offering visual excitement and convenience. Our stores and our partners become part of a neighborhood. Whenever we can, we custom fit each store to reflect the personality of the community (Starbucks Annual Report, 1997, 10).

The ideas of community and sense of place, together, involve and create attachments to a particular venue or locale. The notion of belonging is the most important requirement of the human soul, and both the social and nostalgic senses of place may very well function as a critical aspect of the café/coffee bar circumstance. The example of Starbucks provides evidence of this idea of belonging with its design reflecting local neighbourhoods and communities, which brings the focus of this discussion towards the concept of 'the third place'.

2.7 The third place

...nostalgia for the small town need not be construed as directed towards the town itself: it is rather a 'quest for community' (as Robert Nisbet puts it) - a nostalgia for a compassable and integral living unit (Max Lerner, 1957 cited in Oldenburg, 1997, 3).

This quest for community or even a nostalgic sense of place, according to Ray Oldenburg (1997), is due to life becoming “...more jangled and fragmented” (p.3). With virtually no contact between neighbouring households in the 1990s, a problem of place exists (Oldenburg, 1997). An absence or lack of informal social centres, which make up the third realm “...of satisfaction and social cohesion beyond the portals of home and work”, exists in many cities, leaving many without what Oldenburg refers to as ‘the good life’ (1997, p.9).

According to Oldenburg (1997), this ‘good life’ is inclusive of three realms. A two-stop model comprising home and work is becoming the norm for daily routines of the 1990s. Familiar gathering centers, the local pub/tavern, coffeehouse or drugstore fountain, for example, are disappearing, replaced by new kinds of places which

2 ‘Starbucks was recognized for its sensitivity to neighborhood conservation with the Scenic America’s Stafford Award for excellent design and “sensitive reuse of spaces within cities”’ (Starbucks Annual Report, 1997, 10).
emphasise fast service. With the disappearance of the third realm, "...domestic and work relationships are pressed to supply all that is wanting and much that is missing in the constricted lifestyles of those without community" (Oldenburg, 1997, 9). As a result, strains on work and family become evident. An absence of the informal public life equates to the loss of a basic means of relieving stress. A solution to the quest for community can be found in a possible resurgence of what Oldenburg calls third places.

According to Oldenburg, "...daily life, in order to be relaxed and fulfilling, must find its balance in three realms of experience" (1997, 14). The first is the domestic, the second being productive and profitable, and the third being sociable and offering of community and celebration (Oldenburg, 1997). Each realm is based on appropriate associations and relations, with its own physically distinct and separate places. The problem of place in the nineties is in the failure to recognise the third, sociable realm as detached and separate from the other two. For many individuals, "...a third of life is either deficient or missing altogether", with a sort of balancing act taking place within the bipod of work and home, instead of a tripod inclusive of a setting "...where friends are engaged during the midday and evening aperitif hours, if not earlier and later" (Oldenburg, 1997, 15). The café/coffee bar may very well be the sort of setting where one may engage in conversation with friends or frequent on a solo basis as a means of relaxing and alleviating tension.

The third place itself "...emerges and is sustained in core settings" (Oldenburg, 1997, 15). Areas where the problem of place have been solved contain a generous amount of core settings of informal public life. Towns and cities accommodate an engaging public life by providing what urban sociologists refer to as 'interstitial spaces'. Such spaces include "...streets and sidewalks, parks and squares, parkways and boulevards" used by a range of people sitting, standing and walking (Oldenburg, 1997, 14). The third place thus becomes a generic designation for a multitude of public places which host regular, voluntary, informal gatherings outside the home and work (Oldenburg, 1997). Now that this idea of a third place has been introduced, it is imperative that discussion move to consider its character.

According to Oldenburg (1997), third places the world over share common and essential features. Key characteristics are its differences from other settings of daily
life, its function as a neutral space, and its provision of conversation and ‘regulars’. The third place is a space detached from the first and second places where people gather. Such neutral ground offers individuals an opportunity to engage with others without becoming tangled in one another’s lives. As a leveller, the third place “…by its nature, [is] an inclusive place. It is accessible to the general public and does not set formal criteria of membership and exclusion” (Oldenburg, 1997, 24).

Neutral ground provides the place, and levelling sets the stage for the cardinal and sustaining activity of third places everywhere. That activity is conversation. Nothing more clearly indicates a third place than that the talk is good; that it is lively, scintillating, colorful, and engaging (Oldenburg, 1997, 26).

Popularity of conversation in a culture or society is closely associated to the popularity of a third place. According to the statistical data of economist Tibor Scitovsky (1976), “…the rate of pub visitation in England or café visitation in France is high and corresponds to an obvious fondness for sociable conversation” (cited in Oldenburg, 1997, 26-7). Socialising in places such as cafés, rather than drinking, is the main pursuit, with the regulars, not seating capacity, beverage variety, parking or prices luring fellow customers. Without the ‘right people’ there to make ‘it come alive’ the third place is unappealing.

Accessibility to and accommodation of the third place are two further common characteristics. “Third places must stand ready to serve people’s needs for sociability and relaxation in the intervals before, between, and after their mandatory appearances elsewhere” (Oldenburg, 1997, 32). Timing is loose and unstructured, days are missed, visits may be brief or extended; the third place accommodates this. Closely related to the idea of timing is location. Where such informal gathering places are situated in anything but close proximity to the first and second place, appeal fades. This is for two reasons: inconvenience in getting there and the likelihood of knowing other patrons (Oldenburg, 1997). With the case of Central Auckland and its café/coffee bar consumers, the third place will be considered in respect to its location near both home and work.

A number of factors coalesce to make third places pleasant and rewarding. They are upbeat for many reasons, one being because those who enjoy them tend to ration the amount of time spent there. This is atypical of the third place. Here, the individual
may consume one or two beers or cups of coffee, then depart. "There is no duty to stay in such a place beyond its ability to provide satisfaction" (Oldenburg, 1997, 57).

The French café, the local pub or tavern, the classic coffeehouse... They operate as Great Good Places in people’s everyday experiences. The informal gathering spots in core settings which have become the third place for many, serve a very important purpose in the everyday; they offer community, serving up relaxation and sociability along with a cup of coffee or pint of beer. Recognition of the third place, contemporary consumption, and the senses of place and community are now a part of the full design processes of many institutions such as the coffeehouse.

2.7.1 An inclusive place

Present-day ‘third places’ are inclusive places; embracing men and women alike as well as individuals of all ages. When discussing ‘the sexes’, Oldenburg (1997) is most concerned with their integration, believing that “…the joys of the third place are largely those of same-sex association, …maintain[ing] separate men’s and women’s worlds” (p.230).

While sexual segregation accounts for the origins of the third place, as will be seen in examples such as the first coffeehouses in the East and the early English coffeehouse, the author believes this to be the basis of its appeal and benefits. Examples of the beauty parlour and barber shop, washhouses and cabarets provide evidence of community in a single-sex environment. While I will admit that spending time with a girlfriend or two away from the opposite sex is somewhat healing and stress-free, I do not agree with Oldenburg’s decree that all ‘third places’ need such separations to function as a place of community. The case I submit in the following pages considers the café/coffee bar as a place of community; its function serving both men and women. I also argue that places of community need not be used in groups, but rather can be used alone.

A further aspect of inquiry must address the issue of age and the ‘third place’. In contemporary Western cities many wedges have been driven between adults and youth. Life in the suburbs, the television set, and the increasing amount of time that both Mom’s and Dad’s spend away from the home are part of a number of changes
which have taken place creating a condition which exiles youth from the world of adults. Communities without youth have emerged with child-free marriages and the rise of 'personal community'; networks which are primarily anti-child. These sorts of 'networks' consist mainly of, and are most available to, the young,

...middle-aged adult, the better educated, the affluent, those who own new cars, and those most liberated from family responsibilities (Oldenburg, 1997, 265).

They are not children, the elderly or those who cannot afford a decent car, but rather those described earlier as the 'new middle class'.

Prior to urbanisation and industrialisation, family and community were shared. Recently, the case is different. Neighbourhoods, more often than not, are devoid of places for youth to congregate, where youth-adult contact remains confined to the home (Oldenburg, 1997). For many young people there are perceived to be no places to go and nothing to do (Seymour-East, 1995). In the 1990s, the (re-)emergence of cafés, coffee bars, and coffeehouses has seen new spaces and places appear in urban neighbourhoods and cities. This thesis will explore the character of these establishments, with the aim of revealing a 'third place' where there exists community for men and women of all ages.

A further element which is incorporated in the creation of place is that of the body. The body and 'the sensual' play very crucial roles in the construction of place and the 'total consumption package'.

2.8 Body, sense & place

Recently cultural geographers have developed an interest in the representation and interpretation of landscapes, defined by Gillian Rose as "...the relation between the natural environment and human society" (1993, 86). The idea of a landscape as text places emphasis on "...experience, expression and emotion as a dimension of social life" (Smith, 1994, 232). Acceptance of this view of the cultural landscape, however, has proved limiting as well as liberating; limiting in that its subject matter has been primarily extracted from a period during which there was a heavy reliance on 'the visual'. In short, seeing has been privileged over listening/hearing and
smelling/tasting (Smith, 1994; Porteous, 1985). Offering an enriched awareness of place, a fuller range of senses are an important part of everyday experience.

[They provide] us with both information about the world around us and, through their structure and the way we use them, the senses mediate that experience. The sensuous -the experience of the senses- is the ground base on which a wider geographical understanding can be constructed (Rodaway, 1994, p.4).

A sensuous geography, or geography of the senses, potentially captures all dimensions of an experience inclusive of the visual, as well as that which is smelled or tasted, heard or touched. Senses are relevant to the placing of the self, and there is a role for the sensuous as an integral part of the cultural definition of geographical knowledge. Rodaway explores these knowledges and examines the senses “...both as a relationship to a world and ...as in themselves a kind of structuring of space and defining place” (1994, p.4).

The senses offer unique elements or dimensions to the multisensual geographical experience. Smell and touch are traditionally considered the intimate senses, associated with the body and its reach, while sight and hearing are considered the distant senses, beyond the body’s immediate reach (Figure 2.2) (Rodaway, 1994). The body itself is therefore an irreplaceable part of sensuous experience.

The body is ...a sense organ in itself (including the skin), as the site of all other sense organs and the brain, and our primary tool for movement and exploration of the environment. Geographical experience is fundamentally mediated by the human body, it begins and ends with the body. This is the basic corporeality underlying all sensuous geography (Rodaway, 1994, p.31).
Corporeality, or “bodily, physical, material, especially as distinct from spiritual”, is a relatively current consideration in geographical circles, recently included in discussions of embodiment and femininity (Thompson, 1995, 299; Longhurst, 1997). Of late, an impressive number of geographical works have been written on the body, the sexualised body, and ‘sexuality and space’ (e.g. Stewart, 1995; Bell & Valentine, 1995; Namaste, 1996). The body in these works, according to Robyn Longhurst, ‘remains problematic’ to define; “...it is impossible, and not necessarily very useful, to attempt to offer any kind of absolute or exact definition of the term” (1997, 487).

One specific definition, given by Harré (1991), encompasses what Pile & Thrift (1995) have termed a ‘bewildering variety’ of meaning:

...we use our bodies for grounding personal identity in ourselves and recognising it in others. We use our bodies as points of reference in relating to other material things. We use our bodies for the assignment of all sorts of roles, tasks, duties and strategies. We use our bodies for practical action. We use our bodies for the expression of moral judgements. We use the condition of our
bodies for legitimating a withdrawal from the demands of everyday life. We use our bodies for reproducing the human species. We use our bodies for artwork, as surfaces for new material for sculpture (cited in Pile & Thrift, 1995, 6).

In the case of this thesis, we use our bodies to manoeuvre through physical space on a daily basis; we use our bodies to experience that which is the everyday to us; we use our bodies to frequent particular establishments, to ‘see’ and ‘be seen’, to smell, to hear and to taste. It is these uses which requires the body and the senses; two characteristics held in common between the human sexes. In order to complete the total experience, it is critical to include the bodily experience, “...in order to understand people’s relationships with physical and social environments” (p.486).

But what makes the senses geographical in nature? The answer is that they contribute to one’s orientation in space, providing an awareness of the spatial as well as appreciation of certain qualities of different places, currently experienced and from memory. The combination of apparently non-spatial senses such as smell with vision and tactility, provide an enriched sense of space and character of place (Porteous, 1985). The senses are not merely passive receptors of environmental stimuli, but rather they operate actively in the structuring of information. Often taken-for-granted in the illustration of geographical experience, the senses play a key role in the character of places. The immediate sensuous experience of the everyday, and the role of the senses - touch, smell, hearing, sight and taste - adds richness to the geographical experience. Each sense gives further geographical understanding to place. Since individuals identify with spaces and places, they become components of the landscape, inclusive of soundscapes and smellscapes (and possibly even tastescapes). This thesis uses ‘the sensuous’ to enrich description of the café/coffee bar experience, detailing accounts made by consumers themselves on the importance of place and the role that the senses plays in the everyday experience.

2.8.1 Visualising geography

The visual is a very dominant part of our making sense of the world around us. According to Rodaway, “...geography is a kind of making visible the world, its features and processes, both literally and metaphorically, as a contribution to
understanding our place in the world” (1994, 115). Operating as the most familiar dimension of our experience with the environment, we know relatively little about how seeing equips us with a sense of place, space, people, and things in conjunction with other senses. While much geographical understanding is set in visualising, it is only recently that critical attention has been given to the ‘visualism of the discipline’ (Rodaway, 1994).

Possibly the most important element of fieldwork in geography has been the seeing of places firsthand. “We often forget that this seeing is also touching, smelling and hearing the environment which we explicitly or implicitly compare to our own and previous experience” (Rodaway, 1994, 116). Geographers favour seeing and visual tools over other means of exploration or recording, with a manner of thinking conditioned by visualism. These ‘visual foundations’ of the discipline can be seen clearly in the words of Jean Bruhnes

...the perspective of the geographer is not that of an individual observer located at a particular point on the ground... The landscape of the geographer is very different from the painter, poet or novelist. By means of survey, sampling, or a detailed inventory, he achieves the comprehensive but synthetic perspective of the helicopter pilot or balloonist armed with maps, photographs, and a pair of binoculars (no date given, cited in Mikesell, 1968, 578).

Bruhnes writes metaphorically of the visual; representative of an all-seeing geography; “…an eye linked to synthetic thinking and the geographer employing visual tools” (Rodaway, 1994, 116). As a dominant sense, the visual does not function independently but rather in conjunction with the other four senses, and may or may not be the most important depending on the situation being observed. A visual geography makes sense of the world with the eyes, playing a very fundamental but shared part.

2.8.2 Smellscape

“Up to 90 percent of our perceptual intake is visual”, and yet smell is enormously meaningful to humans (Porteous, 1985, 356). Combined with the sense of taste, it is responsible for the flavour of food. Furthermore, “…smell is an important sense in that it is primarily a very basic, emotional, arousing sense, unlike vision or sound,
which tend to involve cognition” (Porteous, 1985, 357). A smell is commonly related to a particular source, and the direction or distance from its creator, with certain smells representing certain circumstances or feelings, to different people, and therefore are meaningful in nature. Smells can also operate as memory releasers of a past occurrence.

Described as an intimate sense, smell functions in two ways: structurally, in its ability to create an immediate or local geography, and emotionally, in its ability to establish a strong connection between person and environment (Rodaway, 1994). This attachment is created by direct contact between the body and the environment (or features within it) (Rodaway, 1994). A direct chemical contact exists which does not exist amongst the more abstract senses (sight and hearing). Habituation, or familiarity with a particular smell, may also dull one’s sensitivity to a present encounter, but in a different time or place a fresh encounter may arouse a complete recall of the odour “...and its associated experiences specific to our own biography” (Rodaway, 1994, 67).

Olfactory geographies, as well as those of sound and touch, are ordinarily neglected as attention focuses primarily upon geographical knowledge generated by the eyes. The geography of the nose, or olfactory experience, provides a very important dimension of the sensuous experience. It opens up the urban environment to further exploration possibilities. It enables an intimate geography of encounter and spatial orientation through the use of smell and taste, exploring “...the organisation of space and spatial relationships, locatedness and orientation in space, and the characterisation of and relationship to place” (Rodaway, 1994, 62). Recognising that smell and taste are closely linked, this thesis will include an olfactory geography of that which is smelled and tasted within the café, and its role in geographical experience.

Porteous (1985) has popularised the term ‘smellscape’, describing the concept as spatially-ordered or place-related, defining it as “...non-continuous, fragmentary in space and episodic in time”, limited to the height of our noses, “where smells tend to linger” (p.359). In the following section, a number of authors will explain the concept labelled ‘soundscape’ (Porteous & Mastin, 1985; Schafer, 1977; Smith, 1994). Rodaway (1994) deems the terms ‘smellscape’ and ‘soundscape’ as limiting
due to its analogy to ‘landscape’, which brings about “...connotations of artistic creation and aesthetic contemplation” (p.63), while Houston (1982) refers to use of the term ‘-scape’ to suggest a relationship between person and environment. The latter of these two explanations will be used in this thesis in recognition that the character of the café/coffee bar experience involves a sensual connection between the consumer and their surroundings (i.e. via what is smelled, heard and tasted). Because of this, the terms smellscape, soundscape and tastescape will be applied.

2.8.3 Soundscape

Our language continues to be dominated by the visual. As geographical vocabularies begin to widen to include the senses as a means for situating experience, auditory knowledges become a very important fixture. The term soundscape, first introduced by Schafer (1977), describes the sonic environment surrounding the sentient, drawing analogy to ‘landscape’, later embraced by Porteous & Mastin (1985) and Smith (1994). Soundscapes are inclusive of soundfields, which are

...generally characterised by a single sound. Many different soundfields may overlap across a given space. This overlapping of a multiplicity of sounds from different sources, and probably from different locations, produces the soundscape (Rodaway, 1994, 86).

There exists, according to Ohlson (1976) and Grano (1929), an immediate and distant soundscape.

The ‘immediate soundscape’ corresponds to the visual landscape and the close correlation of the two senses in the geographical experience of the near-environment. The ‘distant soundscape’ is more completely auditory and here the identity of the sound source is more ambiguous or hidden by being beyond what can be visually confirmed (cited in Rodaway, 1994, 87).

It is these explanations of soundscapes which will later be applied in the example of cafés. Smith (1994) argues that social geography projects could be ‘enriched’ and ‘enlarged’ by an incorporation of soundscapes. “We generally hear very little about the content and meaning of everyday life” (Smith, 1994, 233). Sound plays a very important role in the construction, meaning, and significance of place. Whilst Smith (1994) offers a critique of sound with regards to music, its main contention is that
sound, in general, both structures and characterises space, making it inseparable from the social landscape. The geographical experience is both multisensual and ecological; "...we can 'hear' with more than our ears and the context, or environment itself, plays a key role in what or how we hear" (Rodaway, 1994, 84).

Commonly described as a distant sense (along with sight and in relation to the intimate senses of smell/taste and touch), sound contains four elements which distinctly contribute to the creation of geographical experience (Figure 2.3). Hearing may be described as passive, whereas listening implies active awareness and the establishment of meaning. The body, too, plays an important role in creation of the soundscape. People emit sounds by using the vocal chords as well as in their physical movements; "...we not only perceive of a world, but have presence in it" (Rodaway, 1994, 90). The world produced by sound not only surrounds us, but we as individuals operate as participants.

Although we 'know' that the visual world is all around us, our actual experience is of an image in front of the eyes and not behind our backs. We feel more detached from a visual world than an auditory one. Auditory phenomena penetrate us from all directions at all times (Rodaway, 1994, 91-2).

Its multidirectional. Sound is more than just a sensation: it gives information as well as playing a major role in the memory of place. In the café and coffee bar experience, conversation, music, and sounds of the espresso machine complement the surroundings as part of a very distinct and consumable 'package'.

Figure 2.3: The auditory matrix.
(Source: Rodaway (1994))
Chapter 2: Consumption, Place & the Body

2.9 Summary

In 1995, Gregson asserted the need for a wider geography of consumption, focusing more on 'the shopper' and 'the worker' instead of on the opinions of the researcher and the condition of the shopping mall. A branching out into other areas and concerns of consumption was missing, a gap which a number of writers have begun to fill (e.g. Jackson & Holbrook, 1995; Jackson & Thrift, 1995; Bell & Valentine, 1997). Since 1995, issues such as cultural politics, advertising, and postmodernism have become more popular issues of concern in cultural geographical circles, with Bell and Valentine’s (1997) *Consuming Geographies* involving a convergence of the three with respect to food.

Bell & Valentine (1997) introduced the idea of a ‘total consumption package’. The intertwining concepts of symbolism and association, of individuals and aspects involved in this ‘package’, are of interest with respect to the leisure activity and experience of ‘eating out’. Creation of the site itself, where an ‘experience’ is expected, is just as important as creation of the menu. A site for conspicuous food and drink consumption, therefore, is often developed by an architect or designer trying to instil a feeling of ‘elsewhereness’ or a ‘sense of place’. Beyond what is physically sold... the caffè latte’s, the foccacia melts and the chocolate cake, lies what is sold symbolically. The waiters and baristas, a place to ‘be seen’ by others, the interior and exterior design, all work together to create and/or symbolise identity and difference; it is, after all, the *whole experience* which is consumed within the ‘consumption package’. Linked to the philosophy of postmodernism is the most recent proliferation of cafés and restaurants, designed in playfully bold and contrasting colours, using location to create moods and atmosphere, and recycling of the old to attract the new. New Zealand’s inner-city landscapes provide a base of old buildings, which when restored and vivaciously designed create spaces and places of playful difference.

Since the urban environment is ‘a multisensory experience’, inclusion of the body and inherent senses in examining the consumption package offered is vital (Porteous, 1985). Visualising a geography embracing the senses of the body one can imagine an all-encompassing package. Whilst Rodaway (1994) chooses to exclude the sense of taste in his evaluation of sensuous geographies, it is argued here that a study which
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examines a package offered within an edible and drinkable environment needs to include the sense of taste and how a possible ‘tastescape’ may operate in the same ways as other senses (i.e. memory, sense of place). While Bell and Valentine (1997) claim to offer analysis of a ‘total consumption package’, this thesis aspires to provide evidence of a more complete consumption package in the café and coffeebar setting; a package which explores the senses inclusive of, and beyond, the visual. For it’s not just the coffee, but rather all aspects involved which create an atmosphere of distinction; the smells, the sounds, the waiters and baristas, the other consumers, the design and the symbolism, which complete the consumption package; all of which makes up the complete café experience.
Chapter 3

THE WORLD DISCOVERS COFFEE:
THE HOT SOCIABLE BEVERAGE

3.1 Introduction

How new is the 'new' coffee culture of the 1990s? Is it really new? Coffee has been traded for a very long time and although its packaging, the way it is sold and consumed have changed, coffee consumption has long taken place outside the home. From as early as the 1600s people have 'gone out' for coffee, identifying it as a sociable beverage, as well as with the 'experience' of the coffeehouse. Included in this experience is the production of a variety of 'consumption packages' which have changed over time, and are associated with the lifestyles of particular groups. While presentation of the coffeehouse package itself has evolved through time, the coffeehouse continues to function as a place offering individuals a space to congregate, to converse, and be sociable. Consequently, some aspects of its form and practices remain constant.

Leisure and consumption trends, identity and social meanings, architecture and interior design are just a few elements which form the character of the present-day (post)modern city. Particular 'packages' played a distinct role in the structuring of 1950s and 1960s cities, with different spaces and places offering a multiplicity of meanings for coffee at various times of day. Contemporary urbanites generally construe their lives in terms of work during daytime hours and recreation during evening hours much as in the past, when places such as the coffeehouse functioned as sites of importance in the construction of everyday life.

There are three purposes to this chapter. First, I examine the role which early and present-day coffeehouses have played, and continue to play, in everyday life. I agree
that the nature of coffeebars, cafés and coffeehouses which feature prominently in today’s urban landscape mirror those of early coffee stalls, coffee shops and coffeehouses. Secondly, I situate Auckland’s historical presence of coffee-drinking and its establishments, working to construct a background for this project’s contemporary analysis. A third and final purpose of this chapter is to introduce the global-local aspects of coffee as a commodity traded within an international chain. Together the three components provide background information on coffee’s history and the events which take place prior to consumption of the hot sociable beverage.

3.2 The early coffeehouse as a place of consumption

The single most striking and significant result of the growing use of coffee in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries ...was its effect on the social life within the city, town, or village, for around the preparation and sale of this commodity was born a hitherto unknown social institution, the coffeehouse (Hattox, 1988, 73).

The role of coffee and the coffeehouse has historically been that of consuming the beverage itself in a public place built especially for this purpose. In fact, “...an essential part of the definition of coffee is that it is served in these places” (Hattox, 1988, 73). Whilst the drink was taken often at home, writings in as early as the 1600s prove evidence of the Turks preferring to frequent the coffee shop (Philippe Sylvestre Dufour, 1685 in Hattox, 1988). Almost from the time that the brewed drink became commonplace, the coffeehouse became the place to consume it. In this section the origins of the institution will be discussed, focusing on the early consumption package within classic coffeehouses and cafés, first defining the characteristics of the early coffee-drinking establishments.

The coffeehouse trade itself has adopted such an “…array of guises as to render any definitive description of its real character over the times impossible” (Heise, 1987, 92). For this reason, a working definition for this project is deemed necessary; one which will evolve as discussion manoeuvres through the history of coffee and the coffeehouse. The early coffee-drinking establishment will therefore be defined as

...a public, mainly catering establishment, which bears this description or a combination thereof, [at which] coffee is among the drinks served (Heise, 1987, 92).
“From all indications the coffeehouse, like coffee, must be considered an institution of Arab origin”, with the first establishment in Mecca in 1511 (Hattox, 1988, 76). The first coffeehouse was a place to gather for socialising and light refreshment. According to early reports, places for gathering and consuming beverages existed long before the opening of the first coffeehouse; it was the tavern (Jaziri in Hattox, 1988). The coffeehouse was likened in character to the tavern, only it served coffee instead of wine, therefore not causing shame to the persons inside. For this reason the establishments’ popularity grew to include all social strata. By the end of the 16th century the Turks embraced both the drink and the institution, which were introduced as “...a complete package to Istanbul by the two Syrians Hakm and Shams around 1555” (Hattox, 1988, 77)(italics added).

The spread of coffee and rise of the coffeehouse took place due to the product’s unfamiliarity. The properties, use, and preparation of the beverage were a mystery to the early consumer, with the idea of selling the already brewed drink to increase its demand. The Hakm and Shams of Istanbul used this technique, with the likelihood “...that most people first tasted coffee in a coffee shop” (Hattox, 1988, 79). Common characteristics of early and present-day coffeehouses include the ‘service bar’ where coffee is prepared in full view of patrons. This area was, and still, functions as the heart of the establishment. A second common feature is conversation.

...the coffeehouse was above all a place for talk: serious or trivial, high-minded or base, that place more than any other seemed to lend itself to the art of conversation (Hattox, 1988, 100).

Early on, partaking of the beverage took place within three distinct outlets: the coffee stall, the coffee shop and the coffeehouse. Most often located in commercial areas, the coffee stalls, were not designed for on-site consumption, but rather catered to those doing business in the markets. Coffee shops and coffeehouses, where coffee was drunk ‘on-site’ were distinguished by size and clientele. The small, neighborhood coffee shop offered refreshment in a similar fashion to the coffee stall, only it offered space to its customers to sit and consume. Such spaces were small, with a high stoop or mastaba, or a few benches inside. In situations where the coffee shop was insufficient in size to cope, “...(particularly on nights when a story-teller was present) patrons spilled out onto the front stoops of the shops adjacent and...
Chapter 3: The world discovers coffee: the hot sociable beverage

opposite the coffeehouse” (Hatton, 1988, 81). The early coffee stalls and coffee shops had an intimate association with the street. The grand-style coffeehouses found in the larger cities of the Near East can be easily distinguished from the stalls and shops. Located in “…the most important places in town” (Dufour, 1685), such luxurious establishments attempted to create garden-like atmospheres: “All the cafés of Damascus are beautiful- lots of fountains, nearby rivers, tree-shaded spots, roses and other flowers; a cool, refreshing and pleasant spot” (Thévenot, 1727 cited in Hatton, 1988, 81). The success of these coffee-drinking establishments, whether the coffee shop or the coffeehouse, was not solely due to the brewed beverage itself, but rather in its provision of a place for one to ‘go out’. According to Hatton, “…one went to the coffeehouse because one wished to go out, to spend the evening in the society of his fellows, to be entertained, to see and be seen” (1988, 91). These establishments catered to an everyday, social need. Without disrupting what was considered proper, the coffeehouse offered something different that fit into daily routines.

This same sort of coffee-boom took place in Europe in the 17th century. Before 1624, when Venice received its first major shipment of coffee, only samples or small sacks of beans were brought into major European cities like London, Amsterdam, Marseilles and Hamburg. Private consumption of coffee was known to have taken place in the latter half of the 17th century, with Vienna’s first public coffee stall opening in 1683 (Heise, 1987). ‘Coffee ambulances’ and ‘flying coffee stalls’, similar in nature to those of the East, began serving markets and fairs throughout the 18th and 19th centuries, but it was not until much later that the extravagance of Eastern coffeehouses was to follow. Many of Europe’s original coffeehouses were formerly known as taverns, and quite different in appearance from their lavish Turkish counterparts. Simply seen as refurnished public houses, it was not until the late 18th and early 19th century that luxury cafés, following the style of the Viennese establishment Silbernes Kaffeehaus (1824), began opening across Europe. Thus, a range of catering establishments bearing the name ‘café’ or ‘coffeehouse’ became common, ranging from the street stall to the luxurious eatery, all co-existing, and each associated with a particular social group (Heise, 1987). “‘Every profession, trade, class, every party has its favourite coffeehouse’, wrote one observer of the coffeehouse culture that had taken over London by the early 1700s” (Morse, 1996).
3.2.1 English coffeehouses & the penny university

Early coffeehouses in the 17th and 18th centuries were historically known to be centres of knowledge and arenas for political debate. Between the years 1650 to 1850 London’s coffeehouses were dubbed ‘Penny Universities’. A penny was the price of admission, twopence for a cup of coffee, a penny for a pipe and the newspapers were free. Heise (1987) describes them as “…places of pronounced academic distinction, where communication rather than being directed towards gaming and light entertainment was specifically oriented towards the continuous acquisition of knowledge” (p.130). Operating as precursor to the daily newspaper and home mail delivery, the early coffeehouse was often a place where Englishmen conducted their business affairs. Indeed, “…many customers kept regular hours in order that friends and clients would find it easy to contact them”, others dropping in frequently during the day to keep abreast of the news (Oldenburg, 1997, 185). The literate would regularly read newspapers, tracts and broadsides aloud, so the illiterate, too, could actively take part.

The seventeenth-century English coffeehouse played a vital role in the acquisition of individual liberty. Here, men from all parties and stations mingled in face-to-face discussion, soon discovering their strength in numbers and “…their mutual stake in individual freedom” (Oldenburg, 1997, 189). This was a common characteristic of early coffeehouses everywhere.

In Colonial America, the Sons of Liberty met regularly in the coffeehouses of New York and Boston, including Brown’s Green Dragon, which Daniel Webster later dubbed the ‘headquarters of the American Revolution’. Across the Atlantic, on July 12, 1789, young journalist Camille Desmoulins urged a crowd to take up arms outside Paris’ Café Foy. Two days later, a mob stormed the Bastille, signaling to the world the start of the French Revolution (Morse,1996,109).

Throughout its reign the English coffeehouse served as a centre of business and cultural life as well as a political arena (Oldenburg, 1997). The coffeehouse headquartered many of the nation’s largest trading companies (Lloyd’s of London, for example), with London’s stockbrokers operating within these establishments for over a hundred years. Members of the Royal Society, such as Isaac Newton, were
also regular guests. This point in time was also an era of English literary achievement, with coffeehouses the site where "...men found their inspiration, themes, and audiences" (Oldenburg, 1997, 189). The inclusiveness of ranks and "...unequivocal acceptance of all men" was a part of its appeal (Oldenburg, 1997, 186). As a leveller, all were welcome, but early English coffeehouses excluded women from the premises.

 Barely two decades after the first exclusively male coffeehouse appeared in England, the institution became the target of The Women's Petition Against Coffee. The petition claimed that the "base, black, thick, nasty bitter stinking, nauseous Puddle water" was causing impotence (Oldenburg, 1997, 187). In addition to these allegations, the female petitioners claimed that coffee turned men into... "...gossips and tattletales, that the pennies spent for coffee took bread out of the mouths of children, that Englishmen had become better talkers than fighters", among other things. The women referred to inns and taverns in a positive manner, alluding to "good old primitive way of ale-drinking" (Oldenburg, 1997, 188). The early English coffeehouse would eventually give rise to the men's club, where they would be able to put themselves out of female reach altogether. Here, Englishmen found an alternative to marriage and family life. As a result, tea, not coffee, became the English family beverage of choice. The early English coffeehouse therefore offered a very social, communal and levelled atmosphere for menfolk to conduct business and discuss politics; third places inclusive of men.

3.2.2 The Viennese coffeehouse

The Viennese coffeehouse has "...changed the least, endured longest, and been the most imitated among all its counterparts in Christendom" (Oldenburg, 1997, 193). Long before the outbreak of World War I, establishments calling themselves Vienna Cafés appeared in one foreign city after another (Oldenburg, 1997). The elegance of such coffeehouses is more than that found in third places of other cultures, and as such the design and experience received inside is worth mentioning.

Serving as major social centres of the everyday, Viennese coffeehouses typically extend into and onto the street. Sidewalk tables and chairs are enclosed by a barrier
of potted plants or an ornate iron fence, giving privacy to patrons. Having more of a physical presence than its English counterparts, the Viennese coffeehouse is "...an integral part of the cityscape", symbolising city life (Oldenburg, 1997, 194). Domestic life promotes the city's cafés, as few people own houses and a majority of residents are apartment dwellers. The reduced space of apartment living leaves a greater demand for public places and informal social centres, with the Viennese doing much of their living in the public.

As a communal place, the Viennese coffeehouse plays an important part of the everyday for Austrian housewives.

At about four o'clock each afternoon, when their English counterparts are taking tea in their flats, the Viennese coffeehouse is invaded by a lively collation of local ladies. It is the time of their Jause, an interlude devoted to gossip and the consumption of rich chocolate or sponge cakes heaped with Schlag (whipped cream) and downed with several cups of dark-roasted coffee (Oldenburg, 1997, 194).

The hour directly following lunch is when men frequent the coffeehouse, so these similar functions are not mixed.

The service given inside the Viennese coffeehouse is another characteristic which needs elaboration. Waiters create the atmosphere of 'personalised accommodation', where "after a few visits [customers'] names are known, as are their preferences in reading material and the way they take their coffee" (Oldenburg, 1997, 195). The head waiter often directs customers to seats, protecting the area of 'regulars'. While the foreign visitor may find the Viennese coffeehouse arrogant or stifling initially, he/she would think otherwise after a few return visits. Personalised service and attention to detail create the 'experience', with "the customer's coffee, reading, and socialising preferences ...remembered and catered to" (Oldenburg, 1997, 196).

Additionally, the Viennese café functions as a 'third place' with its invitation to visit frequently with lengthy stays.

Descriptions of patronage ...over several decades are consistent in reporting that distinctly different crowds use the coffeehouses in different ways and at various times during the day (Oldenburg, 1997, 197).
During its eighteen hours of operation each day, the Viennese café "...is many things to many people" (Oldenburg, 1997, 198). From Vienna, the café institution passed on to France.

3.2.3 The French café

Physical description of the French café includes very modest sized structures, principally serving the needs of the local residents. The outdoor terrasse is the most important area; the outdoor portion of sidewalk upon which tables and chairs are placed. In some areas, the terrasse can extend up to fifty feet from the café entrance. The French prefer to sit outside, rather than inside, as not to be removed from neighbourhood life. French cafés, like the English and Viennese coffeehouse, function as 'third places' in the daily lives of many.

According to Oldenburg (1997), 'third places' have physical features which suggest what they are, calling them 'signal fittings'. Examples are made of the American saloon with its swinging doors and brass spittoons and the English pub with its pump handles and dart boards, stating that the 'signal fittings' of the French café include outdoor wicker chairs, small marble-topped tables and overhead awnings as key visual elements. Such 'fittings' function as identifiers to passers-by, proclaiming the place's identity. The French café or bistro's fixtures are mostly outside items because of its conjunction with the street and city life. The nature of the bistro hides nothing, leaving everything visible; indeed, "...what one sees is what there is" (Oldenburg, 1997, 149). The continued appeal of the French café is linked to its terrasse seating with its unique blending of the public and private as well as a street life preserved for the pedestrian.

The foregoing review of the origins and uses of European coffeehouses and cafés has been undertaken to reflect upon the differing ways that these particular establishments function(ed) in the construction of everyday life. The following section now considers Central Auckland's own coffee history.
3.3 Auckland’s early coffee culture

"New Zealand has had a long love affair with coffee"
(Daley, 1997, 44).

When the first European settlers arrived in the 19th century, both coffee and tea were commonly consumed, with the latter being the preferred beverage. In 1900 the average New Zealander consumed over 6 pounds of tea per year and less than 1lb of coffee, even with coffee readily available in the country since the 1880s (Daley, 1997). By the 1950s coffee was no longer just served at home, but also in the coffee bars which began to appear throughout the country. Encouraged in part by the presence of US servicemen in New Zealand during World War II (see Lealand, 1988), these establishments were also a part of a new post-war trend taking place around the world. London’s urban landscape in the 1950s underwent a similar transformation, “...complete with huge Italian chromium espresso machines, full of levers and knobs” (Daley, 1997, 45).

Auckland and Aucklanders quickly embraced the new coffee culture, if not for the taste of the brewed beverage, then for its inherent sociability. Two kinds of outlets, in particular, served the beverage: the milk/coffee bar and the coffee lounge. Coffee/Milk bars operated mainly during daytime hours, serving percolated or espresso coffee along with a range of milk products, such as ice-cream and thickshakes. Coffee lounges operated during daytime and evening hours, serving espresso and light meals. “...Like daisies in the meadow, coffee lounges are springing up all over the Dominion, ranging from the elaborate and palatial lounge
deluxe to the smoke filled speakeasy of a back street hideaway”, wrote Rob MacGregor of the coffee craze of the late 1950s and early 1960s (1959, 1).

MacGregor’s explanation of the major contributors to the coffee lounge atmosphere, including decor and food, lighting, staff and music, mirrors contemporary interpretations of coffeehouses in terms of the ‘total consumption package’ (Bell & Valentine, 1997).

Atmosphere, “…a word that prior to the coffee lounge trade invading New Zealand was almost entirely associated with the weather” according to MacGregor, was one of the major attractions to such places (1959, 6). During day-time hours, the average coffee-drinking establishment had very little appeal, except to those in their lunch-hour or grabbing a quick cup, but come night-time and the lounges underwent rapid conversion. Lighting in the evenings was low, lending “…a romantic air to the lounge to create an intimate atmosphere” (MacGregor, 1959, 4).

With nearly fifty percent of coffee lounge employees being European immigrants, the 1959 baristas and wait staff introduced “…a Hollywood butler style”, setting a standard that New Zealanders were quick to appreciate (MacGregor, 1959, 5). The coffee lounge staff comprised mostly of female workers “…doing more to create an atmosphere of glamour than anything else”, whilst trying to outdo each other in their appearance (MacGregor, 1959, 5). Male waiters, like their female counterparts, knew “…everybody’s name, the little tidbits of scandal, and of course, the local gossip” which had found itself “…a cosy home in the coffee lounges” (MacGregor, 1959, 6). Associated with the lighting and staff, music was the final touch which played a crucial role in the creation of atmosphere in the coffee lounge.

From lights to complete darkness, from waiter to waitress, and from music to decor, the coffee lounge relies on all to create that little touch of exclusiveness so essential for atmosphere, and novelty (MacGregor, 1959, 7).

The wait staff of coffeebars became a crucial part of the cultural capital being sold, with their performing natures and personalities, playing major roles in the symbolic economy of Central Auckland (Zukin, 1995).

By 1959 there were thirty establishments in Auckland’s central city, serving coffee (Figure 3.1). A majority of these establishments were located on Queen, Customs,
Figure 3.1:
1959 Auckland Central Business District Cafés & Coffee Bars

1. Brazil Coffee Bar
2. Ca-D’Ora Espresso Bar
3. Carousel Coffee Shop
4. Casa Pepe Coffee & Tea Lounge
5. The Coffee Bean
6. The Coffee Cellar
7. Coffee Houses Ltd.
8. Cordo Coffee Bar
9. Curries Milk Bar Ltd.
10. Domino Lounge
11. Empire Cafe
12. Fagels Catering Co. Ltd.
13. Forsyths Tea Rooms Ltd.
14. Knights Coffee Bar
15. Lane Cove Coffee House
16. Lautrec Coffee Lounge
17. Manchester Tea & Coffee Bar
18. Maple Leaf Coffee Lounge
19. Maxims Coffee Shop
20. Michaelmas Coffee House
21. Milne & Choyce Ltd.
22. ‘Palermo’
23. Plaza Milk Bar
24. Revells Coffee House
25. Smiths Coffee Bar Ltd.
26. Snedden’s Coffee House
27. Supreme Coffee House
28. ‘Tokyo’
29. Trieste Coffee Espresso Bar
30. White Swan Coffee House

Source: Universal Business Directory (1959)
Auckland City & Suburban Business Directory
High and Lorne Streets within the central business district; many catering to the businessmen, office girls and shoppers, while others served those more ‘bohemian’ in nature.\(^1\) Coffeebars such as 
Ca d’Oro, Brazil Coffee Shop, Lane Cove Coffee House, Lautrec Coffee Lounge, The Coffee Bean, and the Maple Leaf Coffee Lounge provided light meals as well as a number of coffee beverages in downtown Auckland. According to MacGregor (1959), coffeebars such as Ca d’Oro and the Lautrec Coffee Lounge catered to ‘strange characters’ such as “…artists, bearded students, intellectuals, mariners, tourists, and even odd types …yet to be named” (p.80). The decor of many of these coffeebars stressed elsewhere-ness (see Hopkins, 1990), in adopting foreign motifs such as Venetian or French design, for example.\(^2\) The operating hours for such establishments extended until midnight. Lane Cove Coffee House, The Coffee Bean and the Maple Leaf Coffee Lounge, on the other hand, were establishments known more for their cosiness and modernity, designed “...to create an atmosphere of friendly hospitality”, for the more cosmopolitan, fashion-conscious, or cinema/theatre-going individual (MacGregor, 1959, 82). Coffeebars, coffee lounges and coffeehouses in the late 1950s and 1960s, like the early 16\(^{th}\) and 17\(^{th}\) century establishments, offered an acceptable place to frequent during evening hours. Most of the coffeebars discussed in MacGregor’s Around New Zealand in Eighty Cups, stressed their difference; a difference intended to increase patronage, similar to the intentions of designers of coffeebars and cafés in the 1990s.

In the late 1960s, changes in liquor laws had a significant impact on coffee drinkers. In 1967, the 6 o’clock closing of pubs was abolished, giving young New Zealanders alternative places to go after dark (Daley,1997). Even with the introduction of new gathering places, the 1970s continued to represent a period marked with a strong coffee society (Figure 3.2), with the downtown area containing nearly twice as many coffee bars/lounges as in 1959 (Figure 3.3). Located in the same streets as the earlier establishments, the central business district held nearly half the total number of coffee-places in the Auckland district, but these were not the only changes which had

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\(^1\) Synonymous with “arty, old use beatnik, bizarre, eccentric, hippie, informal, nonconformist, off-beat, unconventional, unorthodox, way-out, weird” (Spooner,1996).

\(^2\) An environment of ‘elsewhere’: “the overt manipulation of time and/or space to simulate or evoke experiences of other places for profit and amusement” (Hopkins,1990,2).
taken place. The coffeehouses and coffee bars of the late 1950s and 1960s became known as ‘coffee lounges’. Java joints such as the Black Tulip Coffee Lounge and the Wyndham Coffee Cellar hint of the character of these establishments; a label of uniqueness which can also be seen in present-day coffee bars and cafés.

![Figure 3.2: Auckland's coffee bars, coffee lounges and cafés (1958-1998).](image)

3.4 The ‘cuppa’ of the Nineties

Variations on the original coffee stalls, coffee shops and coffeehouses have recently emerged with the result being a plenitude of espresso bars and cafés decorating Auckland’s central city landscape. Establishments specialising in coffee have historically appeared and re-appeared, and

> Ever since 1750, the cry has regularly gone up every forty or fifty years that the ‘great age’ of the coffee-house is passed. Such a lament was to be heard in 1750 in London, at regular intervals in France between 1790 and 1871, and from 1914 on repeated occasions throughout Europe (Heise, 1987:91).

This sort of patterning can also be seen in 20th century America, as well as in New Zealand, with the late 1980s and 1990s representing a very definite ‘high’ period. For many countries (i.e. North America & New Zealand), the 1990s have come to represent a second-wave of coffee popularity with corporate institutions like
Figure 3.3:  
1978 Auckland Central Business District Cafés & Coffee Bars

1. Australia Coffee Lounge  
2. Autumn Coffee Lounge  
3. Aztec Coffee Lounge  
4. Becky Thatcher Coffee Kitchen  
5. Black Tulip Coffee Lounge  
6. Boulevard Coffee Lounge  
7. Brass Knocker Coffee Lounge  
8. Brazil Coffee Lounge  
9. Breakspear's Coffee House  
10. Brick Room Coffee Lounge  
11. Bubbles Food Parlour  
12. Ca-D'Ora Coffee Lounge  
13. Caesars Coffee Lounge  
14. Cest Si Bon Coffee Lounge  
15. Chelsea Coffee Shop & Ice Cream Parlour  
16. City Heights Coffee Lounge  
17. Coffee Gallery  
18. Coffee Inn  
19. Coffee Pot  
20. Coffee Time  
21. Court Inn Coffee Lounge  
22. Custom View Coffee Lounge  
23. Cyprus Coffee Lounge  
24. Downtown Coffee Lounge  
25. Empty Tummy Coffee Bar  
26. Faro's Coffee Lounge  
27. Golden Egg Coffee Lounge  
28. Ike's Diner  
29. Inner Circle Coffee Lounge  
30. Jade Room Tea & Coffee Lounge  
31. Lane Cove Coffee Shop  
32. Marie Coffee Lounge  
33. Mayfair Tearooms  
34. Mid-City Coffee Lounge  
35. Mural Coffee Lounge  
36. Nicholas Nickleby Coffee House  
37. Parklands Coffee Lounge  
38. Peddlers Coffee Lounge  
39. Plaza Coffee Lounge  
40. Prudences Coffee Bar  
41. Queen St Food Bar  
42. Rafters Coffee Lounge  
43. Rembrandt Coffee Lounge  
44. Riviera Luncheonette  
45. St. Kevins Arcade Coffee Lounge  
46. Seven Seas Coffee Lounge  
47. 777 Coffee Lounge  
48. Strand Coffee Lounge  
49. The Noshery  
50. The Vulcan Restaurant  
51. Theo's Restaurant  
52. Tiffany's Tea & Coffee House  
53. Town House Restaurant-Coffee Lounge  
54. Valona Coffee Lounge  
55. Wyndham Coffee Cellar  
56. Wynyard Tavern  
57. Zodiac Coffee Lounge

Source: Yellow Pages (1978)  
Auckland & District
Chopter 3: The world discovers coffee: the hot sociable beverage

Starbucks Coffee introducing business approaches deeply rooted in the idea of ‘community’ (Morse, 1996).

Starbucks strikes an emotional chord with people. ...We’ve introduced new words into the American vocabulary and new social rituals for the 1990s. In some communities, Starbucks stores have become a Third Place- a comfortable, sociable gathering spot away from home and work, like an extension of the front porch (Schultz, 1997, 5).

Cafés and coffee bars have proliferated onto the urban landscape, all with one common characteristic: fresh-roasted coffee and a contrived environment in which to consume. The definition and type(s) of the coffee-drinking establishment(s), too, have further altered the landscapes of cities. The 1990s coffee-drinking establishment is therefore defined as “a place serving coffee and other refreshments” (Thompson, 1995, 255).

Four distinct outlets, with coffee being a major focus, serve the beverage in the 1990s: the espresso cart, the coffee/espresso bar, the café and the coffeehouse. Like the Turkish coffee stall of the 16th/17th centuries and the European ‘flying coffee stall’ of the 18th/19th centuries, the 1990s has the espresso cart. Espresso carts have surfaced in the business districts of many cities, “Expresso” in Auckland’s Central Business District for example, offers a daily brew to busy workers and shoppers in a manner similar to the early coffee stall. The second outlet can be called either a coffee bar or espresso bar, and defined as “...a bar or café serving coffee and light refreshments from a counter” (Thompson, 1995, 255). This space is designed to be large enough for only a small number of customers at one time, offering a quick ‘cuppa’ and/or light meal. The café or coffeehouse, a third outlet of the nineties, serves espresso-based beverages in a space designed to sit and read, or chat. Its size allows for more customers than in the coffee bar, which plays a critical role in the creation of atmosphere and community. Espresso carts and bars, cafés and coffeehouses in the 1990s play a similar role in the culture of cities to that of the early establishments which offered a place to sit, drink, and be sociable.
3.5 Global-local connections

Steve Redhead (1995) has argued that a global popular culture industry has developed, incorporating many previously disparate areas of leisure and pleasure - together with the cultural commentaries that accompany them. Food has become very much a part of this industry, woven into the construction of 'lifestyles' (Tomlinson, 1990) and used as a marker of social position (Bourdieu, 1984; Bell & Valentine, 1997).

This global popular culture industry involves much more than just the restaurant industry; it also includes cafés as part of a broadly-based service sector. The café environment of the 1990s has expanded greatly, along with that of the restaurants, to include what might be termed 'the consumable which is neither drinkable or edible'. As culturally globalised, cosmopolitan cities strive to outdistance each other, the language of espresso permeates, influencing the image of cities (Friedmann, 1986; Friedmann, 1995; Sassen, 1991; Sassen, 1994; Short, 1998). The image of cities and the construction of 'urban lifestyles' are strongly tied to the pursuit of cultural capital which "...encourages various forms of cultural consumption" (Zukin, 1998, 825). Industries which are based on the creation and production of goods that cater to such lifestyles play critical roles in the economic growth of cities (Molotch, 1996), giving rise to "...new, highly visible consumption spaces, such as nouvelle cuisine restaurants, boutiques, art galleries and coffee bars" (Zukin, 1998, 825). Coffee-drinking establishments, like Starbucks Coffee, have modified the landscape of cities becoming a part of the cultural globalisation of an industry which Redhead (1995) and Tomlinson (1990) have described as a major ingredient in the creation of lifestyles; an industry which speaks the language of lattés transforming the fabric of the world city (Wolk, 1998).

The café environment, in most cases, exists within the city, which itself has become 'trendy' (Jencks, 1996). As cities have been 'rediscovered', their importance as "...key creative, control and cultural centres within globalising economic, cultural and social dynamics" becomes more apparent (Amin & Graham, 1997, 411). Part of the socio-cultural rediscovery of the city has included creation of districts full of "...new shared spaces, new, improved public realms, new mixed-use urban landscapes, new intercultural interactions and an urban time-space fully animated and
enlivened with a rich array of social and cultural activities" similar to the factors discussed earlier by Oldenburg (1997) in his examination of the settings which accommodate engaging public life (Amin & Graham, 1997, 415).

With local industry moving further away from the central city, culture is rapidly becoming the ‘core’ business of cities. Cultural consumption of art, food, tourism, and fashion, “...fuels the city’s symbolic economy, its visible ability to produce both symbols and space” (Zukin, 1995, 2). The image of the city as a centre of culture is vital and therefore development of new spaces is required; public spaces designed for maximum surveillance. Surveillance, the ability to see and be seen, is a part of the symbolic economy which is sold in private spaces such as cafés. Today’s ‘goods’, in this case gourmet coffee, double up as social signs and produce meaning (Smith,1996). According to Smith (1996)

The ‘café culture’ centred on the coffee bar ...is a quintessentially urban phenomenon. It depends upon, and appropriates, elements of the urban streetscape in order to foster a particular sense of urbanity. It is thus entangled in the somewhat broader but still local milieu of other consumption practices... (p.507-8).

The urban streetscape referred to above, however, is no ordinary streetscape; they are “...the habitual haunts of the so-called new middle class” (Smith,1996,508). Cafés are intrinsically associated and connected to gentrified neighborhoods and districts containing ‘landscapes of leisure’ (Warren, 1993), where...

...people with disposable income, not to mention cultural capital, go to consume, display themselves, and watch others (Smith,1996,508).

According to Zukin (1998), the enthusiasm for various forms of cultural consumption is related to a number of recent structural changes:

...the rise of post-modernism - as an art form, a post-industrial mode of production and a concern with identity markers; the growth of service industries; and the coming to maturity of the 'baby boom' generation, whose demographic weight and generally high expectations of amenities have fostered consumer demand for distinctive, high-quality goods (p.825).

In countries like New Zealand, the ‘baby boom’ generation constitutes a large percentage of consumers, where as much as 30% of the population engage in
consumption and leisure activities (population aged 35 to 59 yrs.)(Statistics New Zealand, 1997). Interacting with the streetscape and street culture referred to by Smith (1996), cafés in the nineties are places to consume, display, see, identify and attach meaning.

Prior to the attachment of meaning and symbolism, the commodity itself run through a maze of vertical and horizontal nodes, over long distances and locally. A majority of studies tend to focus on the commodity at the consumption end, however, this study examines dimensions of the production end with use of a coffee commodity-chain (Figure 3.4). As explained by Elaine Hartwick (1998), commodity chains consist of significant production, distribution, and consumption nodes, and the connecting links between them, together with social, cultural, and natural conditions involved in commodity movements (p.425).

A commodity contains two meanings: one at the level of function, and a second by symbolism (Gottdiener, 1995). According to Hartwick, “each purchase culminates an entire complex of commodity production and representation, linking together several lines of waged workers, un-waged reproducers of waged workers, and natural resources” (1998, 427). The notion of geographic connectedness and meanings invested in a particular commodity also needs to include what Hartwick (1998) terms ‘geographic disguise’. In addition to function and symbol, a disguising or hiding “…through image-making and myth” of the condition of production takes place (Hartwick, 1998, 427). This process occurs most obviously when commodities link producers and consumers from unequal regions. Hartwick writes that “images are usually added to commodities at, or near, organisational centers of global trading systems where the producers of sign value share the cultural norms or consumers” (1998, 427). With reference to the work of Smith (1996), I will now illustrate, briefly, the coffee commodity-chain from production through to the consumption in New Zealand cafés/coffee bars.

3 “Baby boomer” is defined as ‘a person born during a baby boom, esp. after the Second World War’ (1939-1945)(Thompson,1995,91).
Chapter 3: The world discovers coffee: the hot sociable beverage

Figure 3.4: The coffee commodity-chain.
(Source: John Strawbridge interview (owner/roaster, Sierra)).
Chapter 3: The world discovers coffee: the hot sociable beverage

Coffee is the most significant tropical commodity in international agricultural trade, reflecting the dependency of poor, underdeveloped nations in the South with the rich, industrialised North. The former produce 98% of the world’s coffee, with the latter consuming 85-90% of total production (Smith, 1996). In an industry dominated by large trading companies and multinationals, 50% of the retail price of coffee reflects manufacturing and distribution, 25% is profit, leaving 25% to the producing country, with only a small percentage of this going to those who cultivate the crop (Smith, 1996). A labour-intensive production process begins with the growers, waged-labourers and seasonal pickers. Once the green coffee beans are harvested, a broker in the growing country represents the farmer to a bean broker in either New York or London (60% of the world’s coffee is grown in Central and South America). This is where coffee becomes available to the world market. The beans are then purchased by a local importer in the consuming country. Once this transaction is made, the green coffee beans are shipped from the country of origin. It is at this point in the vertical chain where horizontal movement takes place within the consuming country. In New Zealand, green coffee beans are purchased by both wholesale roasters and café owners who roast. The next vertical node involves the roasting process. It is here where both horizontal and vertical movement takes place within the chain. I will examine each of these stages separately.

In the case of the wholesale roaster, the beans are then sold to cafés where a barista grinds the beans and prepare an espresso-based beverage, with the final node in the chain being the physical consumption of the product by the consumer in a café or coffee bar. The second case requires a more in-depth explanation, as its movement within the chain can be either/both vertical or/and horizontal in nature. Once the beans are roasted by the café owner/roaster, the beans may be, a) sold to another café to be prepared at another site, or b) a barista who works for the roasting café may prepare the drink for the buyer to consume on the premises. A third case involves a consumer purchasing the roasted beans who then prepares the beverage at home. In the case of coffee, a system of symbolism begins once the green bean appears on the world market. Entry to the marketplace, according to Jhally (1990), is where production information is erased:
The fetishism of commodities consists in the first place of emptying them of meaning, of hiding the real social relations objectified in them through human labor, to make it possible for the imaginary/symbolic social relations to be injected into the construction of meaning at the secondary level. Production empties. Advertising fills. The real is hidden by the imaginary (p. 51).

In the case of coffee production, the makeshift, cramped housing which lacks electricity and/or running water in which many of its labourers live, low incomes, malnutrition and poor health conditions are forgotten. The consumer sees what is imagined. Coffee is a global commodity consumed daily in ones home and within new landscapes of leisure.

### 3.6 Summary

At the beginning of this chapter a question was posed as to the newness of the contemporary coffeebar and café culture. While the contemporary phenomenon appears ‘new’ to those of us not present in the 1950s and 1960s, the social institution of the coffeehouse has long served up a sense of community with its kahve⁴, java⁵ or decaf grande mocha. So much a part of the 1990s, coffeehouses serve as focal points in the daily life of neighborhoods and communities, even making weekly appearances on primetime situation-comedies such as Friends (‘Central Perk’), Ellen (‘Buy the Book’) and Frasier (‘Café Nervosa’), to name a few. Its not just the coffee, but rather the ‘total consumption package’ made available, which consumers have identified and identify within coffeehouses of the past and present.

The aim of this chapter has been to both examine the historical significance these sites have played in the everyday social lives of individuals as well as coffee’s present-day commodity chain. Coffee and the spaces within which it is consumed, have etched a noticeably palpable mark on the (post)modern urban landscape. Functioning as social arenas in the past, the re-emergence of cafés and coffeehouses as informal gathering places potentially play a considerable role in the everyday lives

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⁴ 16th century, Turkish reference to coffee.
⁵ 1970s reference to coffee.
of contemporary consumers. It is to the examination of this proposition that discussion now turns.
Chapter 4

THEESIS METHODS

4.1 Introduction

This thesis uses both qualitative and quantitative methods to convey and interpret the experiences of Central Auckland’s café and coffee bar consumers. Ranging "...from passive observation and personal reflection, through routine participation to active intervention" qualitative methods have in common core: a concern with shared meaning (Johnston, et al., 1994, 491). Dependent on intense empirical research, qualitative methods assume that "...reality is present in appearance" (Johnston, et al., 1994, 491). Quantitative methods, on the other hand, use statistical techniques to estimate and test the significance of mathematical findings. While the latter approach has a limited place in the thesis, the inclusion of qualitative approaches allow for elaboration of numerative findings, and give the study greater depth and breadth.

Particular qualitative methods used for the collection of primary data in this thesis include participant observation, in-depth interviews, a focus group meeting and photography (using both primary and secondary means). The quantitative method of survey questionnaires was used in addition to these approaches to collect further primary data.

It was decided early in the study period to include three areas in Central Auckland. Detailed descriptions of the character of these areas takes place later in Chapter 6, but, briefly, the following three localities were selected: the Central Business District, Ponsonby and Mt. Eden. Maps were produced for the purpose of illustrating the three areas and representing historical data using secondary data derived from sources such as the Universal Business Directory and Telecom’s Yellow Pages. Other secondary data aided the compilation of a number of additional tables.
This chapter discusses my introduction to café/coffee bar owners, followed by details of the five primary methods used for this thesis. With the use of these methods, an attempt was made to interpret the perspectives and ways of life of café/coffee bar consumers from the ‘inside’, in the milieu of their everyday experience.

4.2 Approaching cafés

Before approaching the owners of cafés/coffee bars studied in this thesis the approval of the University of Auckland Human Subject Ethics Committee was gained. Decisions then had to be made on the areas to study and the sort of establishments to include. As the socio-spatial activity of ‘going out’ for coffee takes place in many different venues, I decided to include both cafés (n=3) and coffee bars (n=2).

As Cook (1997) suggests, access to a study area is often negotiated through various ‘gatekeepers’. I found six of seven café owners/managers I approached were willing to take part; some even enthusiastic about the idea. At the initial meeting I operated in an overt manner, providing a full explanation of my role, setting a time to meet at a later date for an in-depth interview, to display/administer questionnaire surveys, asking permission to observe and, in some instances, take photographs. Interviews were staggered over a three week period beginning in April 1998, with questionnaire surveys collected over a six week period.

4.3 Methods

Five methods were chosen to collect information on the café/coffee bar and their consumers. The following five sections describe the use of questionnaire surveys, in-depth interviews, participant observation, a focus group and photography, as well as their purpose and reasons for choosing such methods.

4.3.1 Questionnaire surveys

In the context of human geography, the questionnaire survey is an indispensable tool when primary data are required about people,
their behaviour, attitudes and opinions and their awareness of specific issues (Parfitt, 1997, 76).

A survey was deemed necessary in light of the thesis objectives, as well as the call throughout the discipline for research which gives voice to the consumer (Gregson, 1995). The key goals of the survey were to keep it short (one page) and to capture three types of data: respondent variables, behavioural indicators and attitudinal information. Information from the first of these three data types was used to classify respondents, their circumstances, and environment (i.e. age, income, residence and gross income) (Parfitt, 1997). The second type of data collected was behavioural, and was derived from questions based around consumers actions (e.g. How often do you frequent this café? Other cafés?). The third type of data comprised respondents' attitudes, opinions and beliefs (e.g. What do you like best about this café/coffee bar?) (see Appendix 1).

A problem with the third sort of data can be insincerity (Parfitt, 1997). Generally-speaking the inclusion of attitudinal questions was successful with a majority of respondents providing in-depth answers/opinions (some even giving me their phone numbers to contact them if I had any further inquiries).

The questionnaire survey was administered over a period of three weeks in the five selected cafés on a self-completion basis. Clear plastic stands, holding the A4 sized surveys, were purchased and used to display questionnaires in the cafés. The small phrase 'While you enjoy your cappuccino...' was placed on the front of the stands to encourage respondents to complete the questionnaire on the premises. The stand was positioned in a noticeable location, and the use of yellow paper made the document as visible as possible. Surveys were coded on the reverse side to keep track of where they were completed (i.e. 'S': Santos, 'SS': Solla Sollew, 'J': Jolt, 'Si': Sierra). As part of this process, I had to frequent the cafés daily to collect and replenish the survey stand. The original aim was to collect 20 surveys from each café, but early on in the collection phase it became clear that higher numbers would be achieved. Four cafés in particular had large numbers of surveys completed over a period of one to two weeks (an average of 53 completed surveys), while one café took nearly three weeks to obtain very few (n=9). Because of the extremely low number of completed surveys received, as well as an inability in gaining an interview with owners (who
claimed that they were busy at the time opening a third store), the decision was made to exclude this establishment from the project. The study thus includes information on a total of five cafés; four having had questionnaire surveys distributed to patrons, and one without the use of this survey method.

A total of 211 usable questionnaire surveys were collected. Data coding, recording, checking and statistical analysis then took place. Numerical data analysis included the use of Microsoft Excel (pivot tables) and SPSS to create frequency distributions, cross-tabulations and test statistical significance.

4.3.2 In-depth interviews

In-depth, semi-structured interviews were used in this thesis as a part of a multi-method study. Described by Eyles (1988) as ‘a conversation with purpose’, the in-depth interview is fluid in form, varying according to the interest and experience of the interviewee (Valentine, 1997). Valentine describes this method as advantageous in that

…it is sensitive and people-oriented, allowing interviewees to construct their own accounts of their experiences by describing and explaining their lives in their own words (1997,111).

Here, the use of in-depth interviews took place between myself and the owners of the participating cafés (plus one with the operations manager of Starbucks New Zealand). As cafés and coffee bars play potentially important roles in the everyday lives of their patrons, interviewees were very passionate about their establishments and relationships with ‘regulars’. Most of the owners interviewed were involved in the everyday workings of the cafés/coffee bars, waiting on patrons, preparing food and espresso-based beverages and knew their ‘regulars’ on first-name basis.

Interviews were conducted inside each particular establishment. Questions and themes of discussion were prepared beforehand, and included the following:

- Asking permission to use their name and that of the participating café/coffee bar.
- Wait staff structure (i.e. male/female, part-time/full-time, other occupations).
Chapter 4: Thesis Methods

- General business questions (hours open, years operating, cups of coffee sold per day, etc.).
- Café design.
- Customer base (locals, regulars, etc.).
- Role in the community.
- Coffee and cafés in New Zealand.

Once all interviews were underway, additional questions were asked as they came to mind throughout the meetings. All interviews were audio-taped and transcribed to ease the analysis process and look for similarities/differences between them.

Conducting the interviews before administration of the questionnaire survey and participant observation proved favourable in that the owners and wait staff then knew who I was, with many of them knowing me by first name and vice versa. Additionally, a number of owners were re-interviewed on a casual basis from time to time to clarify matters that arose as the study progressed.

4.3.3 Participant observation

As its name implies, this method

...involves researchers moving between participating in a community - by deliberately immersing themselves in its everyday rhythms and routines, developing relationships with people who can show and tell them what is 'going on' there, and writing accounts of how these relationships developed and what was learned from them - and observing a community - by sitting back and watching activities which unfold in front of their eyes... (Cook, 1997, 127).

Already a frequent consumer in some of Central Auckland’s cafés, I was a prior participant in one of the five establishments used for this study. I had not, though, observed the sort of activity taking place inside. Looking at the establishments through the eyes of a participating and observing researcher, I deliberately immersed myself in the everyday experience of those who frequent cafés as a part of their daily routine. I began developing relationships within many of the establishments with owners, baristas and wait staff, as well as with a number of consumers, frequenting the five cafés on a number of occasions (at least five to ten different times) at differing times of day (morning, lunch-time and evenings, weekdays and weekends).
Blending in to what is considered ‘the everyday’ sometimes involved sitting at a table with my notebook, pen and latté, at other times it meant sitting at the bar with my notepad hidden under the daily newspaper, drinking my flat white and actively taking part in conversation between owners and ‘regulars’. I ‘lived’ my research experience, participating in particular café communities, rather than simply operating in an ‘observational’ manner. One café, in particular, had functioned as my ‘third place’ (Oldenburg, 1997) prior to this research for a period of two years, so I already had the status of ‘local’ or ‘regular’. Researching the café as a site of consumption involved deconstructing a place I frequented regularly as well as four other establishments, and while I may not have previously looked at the places through the eyes of a human geographer, they were nevertheless familiar.

While conducting participant observation, I functioned in both an overt and covert manner; overt in the case of baristas, wait staff and a few consumers knowing who I was and what I was doing, and covert in the case of observing consumers. The use of this method enabled me to understand the way of life of actual consumers from the ‘inside’, within the context of the everyday, lived experience.

4.3.4 Focus group

A focus group is an amalgamation of

…the focused interview… and a group discussion, in which a relatively heterogeneous, but carefully selected group discuss a series of particular questions raised by a moderator (Goss, 1996, 113).

For the purpose of this study, I decided to conduct a one-time focus group with café/coffee bar consumers. Functioning as part of a multi-method research study, the focus group took place after analysis of the questionnaire survey, participant observation and in-depth interviews, aiding in the interpretation of early findings as well as complementing other methods.

Selection of focus group participants took place through social networks, with an acquaintance inviting four friends to a pre-determined location for the purpose of the meeting and refreshments. Participants were required to fulfil a particular ‘consumer profile’ of someone who frequented cafés or coffee bars on a semi-regular basis.
(once a week). The decision was made to go through a social network to benefit from what Jackson and Holbrook (1995) term 'natural' or pre-existing focus groups. This type of group was chosen due to its allowance of a degree of triangulation or cross-checking of participants differing views (Holbrook & Jackson, 1996). According to Kitzinger (1994), an additional advantage of using such pre-formed groups is their ability to relate to each other's comments on their everyday experiences. This was especially important in that many of the focus group participants frequented cafés regularly and with each other.

The focus group was comprised of five individuals and a moderator (myself), taking place during an evening after working hours at a Central Auckland graphic design business, which offered a suitable setting for discussions. Three male and two female participants took part. They were all European/Pakeha, 21-35 years of age and engaged in similar occupations (from occupational groups 2 and 3 (see Appendix 2)). Participants were clearly informed that the topic of the focus group meeting was cafés/coffee bars. Questions and themes of discussion were prepared beforehand, and were as follows:

- **Description of favourite cafés.**
- **Frequency (i.e. visits, particular cafés, etc.).**
- **The sorts of groups in which one may or may not visit a café (i.e. groups of 2 or more, alone, etc.).**
- **The café as a site to 'see and be seen'.**
- **Patterns/routines in visits (i.e. running into people they know, visiting at similar times of day/particular days of the week).**

Towards the end of the focus group meeting, a graph displaying the 'likes' given by questionnaire survey respondents was introduced to discussion. Focus group participants were then asked to provide their opinions on the preliminary findings which displayed characteristics of cafés/coffee bars that were most appealing. Use of a focus group thus allowed the researcher to discuss early findings and explore areas where further clarification was needed, enabling interpretation of socially constructed meanings.
4.3.5 Photography

Photography is one means of capturing the visual aspects of everyday life. Recognised by Neuman (1997) as a qualitative method, photographic observation used in this study allows the researcher an ability to convey one of the five senses involved in the social behaviour and practice of consuming in a café or coffee bar. Photographs have been included as a method for this thesis, to bring particular scenes to life for the reader, adding visual illustration to an otherwise worded description. The images used originate from a number of sources: books, magazines, the Internet, an architect, and my own camera.

4.4 Summary

Use of complementing, multiple methods can enrich any research study. In this case, they give voice to the consumers and owners of a site of consumption which is currently contributing to re-shaping the urban landscape of Auckland. Later chapters will provide evidence and illustrations of just how much cafés and coffee bars have affected the Central Auckland area. A synergy of qualitative and quantitative approaches aids in the presentation of a more detailed picture of the contemporary café and construction of the consumer experience.
Chapter 5

THE CAFÉ: A ‘TOTAL CONSUMPTION PACKAGE’

5.1 Introduction

What is it about coffee-drinking establishments that lures people inside to partake of a latte and conversation? Or even sit alone and watch the world go by? It is this question that I will attempt to answer in the first part of this chapter. I will discuss the café environment of the nineties as a ‘total consumption package’ expressed in terms of design, as a place in which to be seen and be entertained (by wait staff and others). Location and the importance of names given to represent these establishments will also be considered. I argue that atmosphere has become a key element of the product sold, something just as significant as the edible and/or drinkable. Following this explanation the chapter shifts to examining New Zealand’s coffee culture as a whole. Here, the coffee phenomenon and its impact on what has historically been a tea-drinking nation will be considered. I then introduce the six cafés chosen as sites for research and contrast their similarities and their differences. Finally, the chapter explores the idea of ‘the sensuous’ and how it can be deployed to depict a more complete ‘consumption package’ in the café environment.

Like restaurants, cafés act as spaces of cultural production and consumption (Zukin, 1995). The cultural activities that take place inside these consumption havens serve as third places, lifting us “...out of the mire of our everyday lives and into the sacred spaces of ritual pleasures” (Zukin, 1995, 1). The café or coffeebar operates as a sanctuary of sorts with the operators of such establishments well aware of the fact that the stresses of daily life can prove tedious. They therefore market their spaces as a retreat from whatever is bothersome, be it work or home, if even for just the amount of time it takes to drink a cup of coffee. The ‘ritual pleasure’ which Zukin
(1998) speaks of in this condition is found in the usage (and therefore consumption of) a café or coffeebar and all it visibly and sensually has to offer.

5.2 The café environment

So, what is it about the local java joint that attracts so many of us? In Minna Morse’s 1996 article, Across the country, it’s all happening at the coffeehouse, a number of patrons whom frequent coffeehouses in America admit that they come “…for the atmosphere more than for the coffee” (p.104). While coffeebar chains such as Starbuck’s can be found on almost every street corner in North America, other establishments, namely coffeehouses and cafés, have appeared offering more than just an espresso and a comfortable place to drink it; “places where you can grab a cup of coffee and a paper, and sit for hours” (Morse, 1996, 106).

The café of the nineties is an all-encompassing experience. In this section, theories of consumption and consuming will be applied to the site of the café and coffeebar. Where Bell & Valentine (1997) have argued that we are where we eat, this chapter aims to claim that we are where we drink our cappuccinos. Socially-speaking, cafés and coffeebars have become symbols of sophisticated urban living. Offering a ‘total consumption package’ to the consumer, the café is designed and therefore created as a place to be seen, situated in the optimal location, with a name inviting a particular type of customer, hiring wait staff who portray a desired image (see Crang, 1994).

5.2.1 Design/creation

Café/coffeebar design is very important. The design of an establishment reveals its intention in attracting the first-time customer as well as maintaining the loyalty of regulars. For example, a small, inner-city coffeebar with limited seating and a spacious, suburban café with ample seating designed for different purposes. The first is intended as a place to grab a quick cup of coffee while the second invites the consumer to stay for a while. Besides size, colour also conveys meaning, adding warmth to the local corner café or making a bold statement inside a trendy High Street establishment. Large windows from floor to ceiling as well as observable seating allow one to see and be seen. Open-planned spaces allow customers to see
their food and espressos prepared as part of the experience. According to Phil Tindall, design director of a Christchurch-based firm, in a café it is the atmosphere which has become ‘the product’ being sold (Dungey, 1998). As a part of an entertainment industry which allows designers to be more creative, using bolder colours, cafés are not merely selling coffee. “That’s the price people pay to be in these places, the entry ticket” (Tindall, cited in Dungey, 1998). Created as ‘landscapes of elsewhereness’ (Hopkins, 1990) and used as places to escape the pressures of the day, the café environment itself contains a generic set of similarities which are used to define itself. It is here that the chapter will move towards examining similarities whereas the next chapter will shift to the defining characteristics of five cafés chosen to conduct research for this study.

A set of similarities seem to be part of the ‘rules’ defining the café of the nineties. First and foremost, visibility is a universal trait found amongst all establishments. Unconcealed and obvious, everything is on display and visible from the inside-out; the street, the espresso machine, preparation of food and café lattes, it’s all part of the experience. Catering to this ‘visibility’ a café must have large windows which, in most cases, extend from floor to ceiling, enabling one to see out or see inside. A visual relationship exists between store and streetscape, producing what Smith (1996) terms ‘visual grammar’, with two outcomes: first, a ‘hybridised’ public space is produced where the social aspect of the café becomes venue for “…a private experience of looking” (p.508). Secondly, that particular gaze becomes reversed so that the all-seeing agent too becomes “…an object on display whose gaze is returned from behind the glass” (Smith, 1996, 508). The viewer becomes the viewee with the design of café windows placing those inside and out on display to one another. In addition to windows, a number of ‘signal fittings’ operate as generic necessities in the café environment, which have become universal traits of these particular establishments.

Other items or features which may be deemed to be near universal hallmarks of cafés are blackboard menus, small tables and chairs, seating inside and out (on sidewalks, in courtyards or at the back), sidewalk signage, newspapers and magazines, upbeat music, and refrigerated food cabinets displaying cakes, and sandwiches, glasses and jugs of water (usually containing floating pieces of fruit), postcard stands providing
free postcards to café-goers (found in 600 cafés throughout New Zealand (Café, 1998)) as well as the presentation of food and drink (Figure 5.2). Whilst the above mentioned ‘signal fittings’ identify the place to passers-by, as in the case of the French café, a number of additional attributes work towards creating trendy and imaginative places which appeal through difference; naming and logos, and the hiring of boisterous wait staff.

![Image of latte presentation](source: Sierra calendar, 1998)

**Figure 5.2: Presentation of a latte.**

### 5.2.2 Naming and logos

Place-names are part of the social construction of space and the symbolic construction of meanings about place (Berg & Kearns, 1996, 99).

Place-names are essential to the process of attaching meaning to place (Cohen & Kliot, 1992). An important part of designing a trendy, imaginative place is the naming of the establishment which often includes metaphor. The use of such linguistic symbols involve affixing a word or idea to something (in this case a café or coffee bar) to which it is creatively and imaginatively, but not literally, applicable (Kearns, 1997; Kearns & Barnett, 1999, in press). An example of this naming can be seen in many different coffeehouse establishments, fictional and non-fictional, such as *Starbucks Coffee, Central Perk,* and *Caffè L’affaire.* Logos or icons may also function in a similar manner, creating feelings of attachment and meaning to place. A visual image representative of a place-name encourages thoughts of elsewhere, as
is the case of Starbucks Coffee, with its accompanying mermaid icon, was named after a character in *Moby Dick*. “The name evoked the romance of the high seas and the seafaring tradition of the early coffee traders”, and its logo “...based on an old sixteenth-century Norse woodcut: a two-tailed mermaid, or siren” meant to represent the seductiveness of coffee (Schultz & Yang, 1997). Many other coffee retailers have used this sort of metaphor associated with adventure to sell their beans and hot drinks (ie. Columbus Coffee in Auckland). Coffee-related namings have also become popular amongst cafés. The *Central Perk*, found on the set of the American television show *Friends*, as well as *Caffe L'afare*, Italian for ‘the Coffee Business’, in Wellington, use the symbolism of coffee to identify themselves.

As part of the social construction of place, names of cafés encourage the creation of symbolic meaning, in most cases referring to sites beyond the local. An example of Central Auckland’s café-names can be seen in Table 5.1. The sample includes cafés from the three areas chosen for this project. Café-names most common were placed into eight categories in order to examine the category of place-names; 26 of the names referred elsewhere¹, 20 were in literal reference to their location, 12 named in reference to coffee or tea, 11 were based on metaphor, nine were based around a particular theme, nine related to a personal name or initials, three used indigenous names and two were franchise-based. Of the 92 in the sample, the largest portion alluded to ‘elsewhere’, while only three were based upon a nearby or indigenous place of New Zealand. This could lead one to believe that the idea of elsewhere and difference is what sells; what the consumer wants to buy. The name of cafés are a part of the advertising taking place at the consumption-end of the commodity chain, where the product’s origin is disguised and is hidden by the imaginary and symbolic.

Just as Jackson and Holbrook have argued that modern consumer identities are “…not fixed and singular but dynamic and multiple”, so too are those of the symbol or logo (1995, 1914). They do not stand for one particular thing, but rather represent a plurality of identities. Betsky (1997) uses the example of blue jeans (among others) to explain this.

¹ Those labelled “elsewhere” may refer to place or a particular item from some place else.
### Table 5.1: Café and coffeebar names located within the three research sites (Central Auckland, Mt Eden & Ponsonby)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Classification</th>
<th>Café name</th>
<th>Classification</th>
<th>Café name</th>
<th>Classification</th>
<th>Café name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Coffee/tea-related</td>
<td>Bookuccino</td>
<td>Literal &amp;/or place-</td>
<td>Beresford’s</td>
<td>Elsewhere</td>
<td>Abe’s Real Bagels of Chicago</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Café Aroma</td>
<td>related</td>
<td>Café 23</td>
<td></td>
<td>Alba</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Espresso Love</td>
<td></td>
<td>Café 246</td>
<td></td>
<td>Atlas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mecca Café &amp; Espresso Bar</td>
<td></td>
<td>Café 66</td>
<td></td>
<td>Café Melba</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Miller’s - Serious Espresso Press</td>
<td></td>
<td>CBD Café</td>
<td></td>
<td>Cheers Café &amp; Bar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Santos</td>
<td></td>
<td>City Café</td>
<td></td>
<td>Caffé Santino</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tea Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>City Cake Company</td>
<td></td>
<td>Caluzzi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Coffee Exchange</td>
<td></td>
<td>Customs Coffee House</td>
<td></td>
<td>Cima Café &amp; Bar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Fix</td>
<td></td>
<td>48 High</td>
<td></td>
<td>Dizengo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The House of Coffee</td>
<td></td>
<td>Gaults on Quay</td>
<td></td>
<td>Essence Patisserie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Wraps &amp; Espresso To Go</td>
<td></td>
<td>KXQ</td>
<td></td>
<td>Espresso Bambina</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Café-as-theme-park</td>
<td>Atomic Café</td>
<td>Metaphor</td>
<td>Lord Ponsonby’s</td>
<td></td>
<td>Fez</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Brazil Café</td>
<td></td>
<td>New Café &amp; Bar</td>
<td></td>
<td>Firello ~ Rossi Café</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Café Byzantium</td>
<td></td>
<td>Open Late Café</td>
<td></td>
<td>Habanero</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Café Cezanne</td>
<td></td>
<td>Overhead Espresso Café</td>
<td></td>
<td>Hasson Baba Café</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Circus Circus</td>
<td></td>
<td>Patio Café &amp; Restaurant</td>
<td></td>
<td>Karma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Columbus Coffee Ltd.</td>
<td></td>
<td>The Ponsonby Café</td>
<td></td>
<td>Mezzaluna Café</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Net Central Cybercafe</td>
<td></td>
<td>The Strand Café</td>
<td></td>
<td>Paneton Café &amp; Bakery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Solla Sollew</td>
<td></td>
<td>Thirty-nine</td>
<td></td>
<td>Pasta Villaggio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Court Jester Café</td>
<td></td>
<td>Vulcan Café &amp; Espresso Bar</td>
<td></td>
<td>Sierra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal name/initial-related</td>
<td>DKB Espresso gloria</td>
<td></td>
<td>Allelaya Bar &amp; Café</td>
<td></td>
<td>Soho</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>GPK</td>
<td></td>
<td>Bohemian Café</td>
<td></td>
<td>SPQR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Moniques Café</td>
<td></td>
<td>Café Liaison</td>
<td></td>
<td>Swiss Konditorei Café</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rossini’s</td>
<td></td>
<td>Foodoo</td>
<td></td>
<td>The Bake Haus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Stella</td>
<td></td>
<td>Fusion</td>
<td></td>
<td>The Merchant Mezze Bar &amp; Café</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>VIP Café</td>
<td></td>
<td>Jolt-The Espresso Bar</td>
<td></td>
<td>Turkish Café</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Wofem Bros. Bagelry</td>
<td></td>
<td>Manifesto</td>
<td></td>
<td>Verona</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Franchise-related</td>
<td>BB’s Coffee &amp; Bake</td>
<td></td>
<td>The Black Crow Café</td>
<td>NZ/indigenous</td>
<td>Kamo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Robert Harris</td>
<td></td>
<td>The Couch Café</td>
<td></td>
<td>Rakino’s Café</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>The Lost Angel Café</td>
<td></td>
<td>Tuatara</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A pair of blue jeans might mean work, but it might also mean leisure time. It might mean a basic piece of clothing that you can embellish to make your own, a uniform that will make you fit in, or a high-design statement (p.14).

Like the pair of blue jeans, the cup of coffee or espresso contains a multiplicity of meanings, as does the symbol or logo attached to a particular brand. Going back to earlier mention of Starbucks Coffee and its mermaid logo, one can envisage a variety of interpretations: romance, passion and the high seas. One is encouraged to imagine the early coffee trader and the mystery of the sea in the mermaid which appears in its logo. The Starbucks Coffee logo also represents the everyday to many North Americans, whether it be because they frequent a particular store on a regular basis or use its merchandise at home. Like the pair of blue jeans which conveys and embodies "...a rich variety of readings" so too does the coffee industry and its accompanying symbols and logos.

5.2.3 'The geography of the stage' (Crang, 1994)

EXPERIENCED WAITRESS REQUIRED
To Work 2-3 Lunch Shifts per week
Do you have an outgoing personality?
Enjoy meeting people?
Know how to work hard?
Like working in a great team?
We'd like to meet you!!!
(Window advertisement, Mt Eden café, 1998)

The above advertisement for wait staff clearly states that the café is looking for someone who has an outgoing personality and enjoys meeting people. Line two applies to the theatrics involved in face-to-face interactions required of post-industrial restaurant work which Crang labels ‘performative encounters’, with the third line invoking “…waiting work as a social activity” (1994, 685). These are two characteristics that employers in the café and coffeebar industry look for in the creation of image.

The performative encounters which are very much a part of the job description of individuals working in the service industry take place on a ‘stage’ of sorts which contain two areas identified in the work of Goffman (1956): the “…‘front regions’ on
display to customers and the ‘back regions’ hidden from them” (Crang, 1994, 694). According to Goffman, a region can be defined as “...any place that is bounded to some degree by barriers to perception” (1956, 66). The front region is that which is most visible or in this case performed on-stage, or

...that part of an individual’s performance which regularly functions in a general and fixed fashion to define the situation for those who observe the performance (Goffman, 1959, 22).

In the café situation I will refer to this area as ‘frontstage’. The back region, which I will refer to as ‘backstage’, may be defined as

...a place, relative to a given performance, where the impression fostered by the performance is knowingly contradicted as a matter of course ... [it] is located at one end of the place where the performance is presented (Goffman, 1956, 69-70).

Figure 5.3: An example of frontstage and backstage areas in a café. (Café: Sierra, Mt Eden)

In the backstage area two circumstances remain hidden: the production aspect of the service and the offstage element of the waitstaff. Workplace geographies of display are therefore places defining areas of performative and non-performative natures. However, in the café and coffeebar situation, the frontstage area functions as both a productive and performative manner with the backstage operating as both productive and pre-productive. Frontstage, performing the task of espresso coffee production using various apparatus (i.e. espresso machine, grinder/doser) and in some cases
production of some food items (i.e. panini), while backstage main meals or the pre-
preparation of food items to be cooked ‘on-stage’ takes place (Figure 5.3).

In this thesis I discuss the café as a microgeographical stage; a place where
experience is created by those who ‘perform’, namely wait staff and baristas. This
performance of sorts is just as important to the success of a café as the coffee, food
and decor. While the theatrics of café wait staff is not ‘staged’ in the same routinised
manner as Crang’s (1994) restaurant research, it is still an important aspect in the
creation of atmosphere. It is those who work in restaurants or cafés, which create the
experience; presenting themselves with the menu, wait staff become “...actors in the
daily drama of urban culture” (Figure 5.4)(Zukin, 1995, 154).

![Figure 5.4: Barista at a Central Auckland café.](image)

### 5.2.4 A place for all ages & interests

The café of the nineties is a place for all ages. Step into the local café and you will
see many different groups inside: business colleagues, friends and couples (old and
young), parents with small children. With cafés operating as social meeting places,
many are now beginning to cater to the youngest of consumers: children. Common
practice amongst New Zealand cafés has been the inclusion of toyboxes, children’s
books or sandpits to keep younger consumers occupied while parents enjoy a coffee and catch up with friends or other parents. According to journalist Helen Brown,

*Café owners agree they've created a new breed of Kiwi kid. Sophisticated, with a language that never existed before* (1997,E1).

The fluffy, invented by an Auckland café owner, consisting of foamed milk with a variety of condiments (marshmallows, lollipops, etc.), a sprinkling of cocoa powder and served in tiny espresso cups has enabled these new younger consumers to appear much like their parents. Cafés have become a selective part of children’s consumption culture that is reflective of the experience of adults or parents (Gregory, 1998).

Yet another common trend of late has been the gathering of young mothers in cafés, usually during weekday mornings. Encouraged by café owners, young mothers and their prams are a common sight amongst the early morning and afternoon hours much like the ladies which frequent the coffeehouses of Vienna. Operating as a sort of haven for mothers to congregate at times of the day when it’s least difficult to manoeuvre a pram through the tables and chairs of the café environment, coffee-drinking establishments have begun catering to ‘regulars’ with babies. Cafés operate in an everyday routine which includes the morning, lunch and dinner crowds as well as the ‘in-between’ and ‘late nighters’. Mothers with young children are not the only group for which the café caters to during in-between times. Older consumers as well as youths frequent these establishments regularly too. The café environment serves all who can afford the $2.50 rental of table and chair.

A relatively recent trend in the coffee culture of New Zealand has been the popular introduction of the garden centre café. Situated within a commercial garden centre setting, these particular cafés are becoming more and more popular with consumers who chose to drink their lattés and flat whites amongst the colours and textures of live plants. According to the 1996 Hillary Commission Report on participation in sport and physical activity by New Zealand adults, the number one outdoor activity is gardening. With 63% of women and 44% of men choosing gardening as their outdoor interest, more and more garden centres are adding cafés making the setting

...even more of a place to go for an outing, a reason to stay longer and spend more (Matthews,1997,33).
5.3 A sensual experience

When describing a café, coffeebar or coffeehouse, it’s hard to escape detailing the associated smells, sounds and tastes.

...there is nothing like sitting on a wobbly chair, reading a newspaper, enveloped by the smell of roasting coffee beans and the hiss of a cappuccino machine (Hood,1996,143).

Many of us relish the thought of a warm latté. We imagine the first sip of frothy foam followed up with the rich, roasty infusion of dark coffee and milk. The aromatic lure of espresso permeates the neighborhood and pulls us in the door of our favorite java joint (Holman,1997,4).

No café could be without an espresso machine, an imposing contraption that hisses and fumes like a dragon as it spews vapour down into strainers with spouts through which dark liquid oozes... (Beere,1995,6).

The espresso machine is hard at work, hissing and gurgling; teaspoons clink against cups; and waiters dart amongst tables... At the back of the shop, beans spill into the vast roasting machine, a 60-kilogram Petroncini imported from Italy, which fills the air with the heady aroma of fresh coffee... (Pacific Way,1995,67).

While the above narratives may be merely seen as journalistic flourish, they do point out the sensual aspects of such establishments. Phrases like these, depicting the aromas and flavours of coffee-drinking places, are written because of the cardinal role that the senses play in the café ‘experience’. Along with the paint and decor, that which is seen, smelled, heard and tasted gives us a sense of place. They serve as
memory releasers, structuring space and defining place. Atmosphere is created by its tastes (food and espresso), sounds (music, the espresso machine, others talking), smells (espresso beans grinding, freshly made espresso beverages, food) and visible presence (decor, others, the streetscape). Although often ignored, that which is sensed in addition to the visible, becomes a very important part of the complete package consumed within the café environment. The following section of the chapter introduces New Zealand and the contemporary re-emergence of coffee and café popularity in the country.

5.4 'Land of the long, white latte' (Jalfon, 1995)

Figure 5.5: 'Viva' section of the New Zealand Herald devoted to New Zealand's coffee culture (1997b).
Chapter 5: The Café: a 'total consumption package'

Where once there was a pub on every corner in New Zealand, today there is a sign: Café Opening Soon (Sheehan & Burton, 1994). While the above quote may exaggerate the recent phenomena taking place on High Streets and suburban neighbourhood corners of the country, the coffee spectacle which hit America has also had its impact on the Land of the long, white cloud. Visible signs of this can be seen in the media with numerous articles being written on the topic (New Zealand Herald, 1998 (Figure 5.5)), a book created from a series of photographs of cafés with character (Sheehan & Burton, 1994), a quarterly magazine dedicated to café style (Café), as well as the appearance of coffee artwork on the cover of the 1997/1998 Wellington telephone book “…inspired by the region’s architecture and ambience” (Figure 5.6) (Telecom New Zealand, 1997/1998, 3).

![The Telephone Book Wellington 1997/98](image)

Figure 5.6: Telecom Telephone Book, Wellington (1997/98).

Half a decade ago only a handful of coffee roasters existed throughout the country, whereas in 1998, 28 can be found in Auckland alone (Telecom Yellow Pages, 1998). Importation of coffee in comparison to tea for the years 1992 and 1996 showed an increase of 23% for coffee beans, with a decrease of 14% for instant coffee and 18% for tea (Ninness, 1997). What these statistics represent is a growing interest in high quality coffee as well as equipment needed to prepare the beverage at home. With 80% of New Zealanders owning a coffee plunger or filter, home consumption has
increased as well, but what is of prime concern here is what is taking place in the public sphere (Ninness, 1997).

New Zealand has been quick to adopt overseas trends (e.g. the incorporation of coffee in the literary and computer environments) as well as establishing some of their own (e.g. the creation of garden centre cafés). The combination of books and coffee have become popular in the United States, for example, with Starbucks Coffee joining the Barnes & Noble chain of bookstores. In New Zealand, cafés have appeared in local public libraries (for example, Takapuna & Wellington) as well as within Auckland book and stationary store, Whitcoull’s. Cybercafes are yet another recently adopted trend. As well as giving people a place to learn about the internet or check their email, cybercafes also offer a change of scenery to those who spend a lot of time connected to their modems within a community of fellow ‘cybernauts’:

I’m not holed up in some office or crouched over my laptop at home. I’m actually in a café, with all the attendant social benefits. Cool music. A friendly, talkative ...crowd. And plenty of hot java (Tilsner, 1995, 64).

A third trend soon to be adopted by Kiwi coffee drinkers will be the introduction in late 1998 of the world’s largest coffee chain, Starbucks Coffee, which has over a thousand stores world-wide (Legat, 1998). Café owners and management, however, do not seem worried. When questioned on the introduction of the coffee giant, the owners of five cafés taking part in this research offered a positive assessment. According to one,

"It would be good if Starbucks came here... there's a special market for Starbucks out there just waiting for them. It will be good for the coffeeshops all around Auckland really, because they will make it more popular. If there's more people drinking coffee it will be good for everyone" (Marcello, co-owner of Santos).

While the company is considered a 'multinational', part of a 'global culture' (Figure 5.7), New Zealand and New Zealanders’ coffee consumption habits will most probably support its arrival as 50% of the total adult population “...drink coffee in a café once a month” (Legat, 1998, 51).
5.5 Summary

The re-introduction of cafés and coffee bars, the nineties counterparts of 16th and 17th coffeehouses and coffee lounges of the 1950s, has had a significant impact on the urban landscape. More than just the coffee, café environments have been designed as playgrounds for those with disposable incomes, advertised with names and logos which are symbolic, containing ‘stages’ where performative encounters take place. Chapter 6 introduces the Auckland café scene and the five establishments which took part in this thesis. The environments of each particular café will be described and illustrated, introducing the reader to their design, name and logo, and the ‘stage’ for those included in the study.
6.1 Introduction

Take a stroll along Ponsonby Road and you'll see some of the funkiest modern design around - and we're not talking about the products on the shelves (Next, 1995, 25).

As this thesis has argued, contemporary cafés and coffee bars are designed for consumption practices in an age of disposable incomes, and are themselves a part of the product consumed on a daily basis. Designed using intense colours, metallic walls, and wicker materials these havens of consumption have emerged as growing numbers of individuals take part in the socio-spatial activity of 'going out' for coffee.

This chapter narrows the focus of New Zealand's café scene into that of Central Auckland, fixing attention on five cafés selected from three areas within the city: Auckland's Central Business District and the suburbs of Ponsonby and Mt Eden. The first of the three, the CBD, was chosen partly because of its history of coffee bars and lounges (examined earlier in Chapter 3). The second area, Ponsonby, was chosen
mainly because of its long street of cafés, restaurants and bars which have become popular amongst the ‘new middle class’ consumer and those who reside in the area; many of whom are gentrifiers. The third area, Mt Eden, was chosen because of its village character. All three areas contain well established clusters of cafés. Within each of these three areas, one or two cafés/coffee bars will be examined. A number of features of each café will be discussed: their design/creation, choice of name and logo as well as the geography of each particular ‘stage’ and those who perform.

6.2 The Central Business District

With a resident population of 7,745, “...fresh life is seeping into the CBD” with “...an explosion of inner city apartment development” and the “...revival of inner city living” (Statistics New Zealand, 1996; Millar, 1993, 62). Between the years 1991 and 1996, Auckland’s inner city population has increased over 150%, following overseas trends of development of new living spaces and re-development of older buildings (Auckland City Council, 1998). In a report conducted by Auckland City Council on the city’s apartment dwellers, 24% stated that they liked living in close proximity to cafés and restaurants, with 37% stating they frequented such establishments at least once per week.

The Central Business District contains 69 cafés/coffee bars (Figure 6.1). A majority of which are clustered around the High and Lorne Street areas as well as on Karangahape Rd. Figure 6.1, when compared with earlier maps of the Central Business District area (in Chapter 3), illustrates a similar historical patterning in the location of coffee-drinking establishments both past and present. Nestled within these café/coffee bar areas are a number of squares, parks and reserves; spaces which foster a social vitality in Central Auckland.

Following closely to Oldenburg’s (1997) definition of core settings which contribute to the existence of third places within cities, the Auckland City Council has proposed Public Open Space precincts. Within one of the 13 precincts there are two squares, Khartoum Place and Freyberg Place. These are especially important contributors to the ‘café scene’ due to their locations on Lorne and High Streets. The first of the two, Khartoum Place, is used as thoroughfare between Lorne and Kitchener Streets
Figure 6.1:
1998 Auckland Central Business District Cafés & Coffee Bars

1 Alba
2 Aliellya Bar & Café
3 Apicius Café & Delicatessen
4 BB's Coffee & Bake
5 BB's Coffee & Bake
6 Beresford's
7 Bookuccino
8 Brazil Café
9 Café 23
10 Café 246
11 Café 66
12 Café Aroma
13 Café Karangahape
14 Café Melba
15 Car Park Café
16 CBD Café
17 Cheers Café & Bar
18 Cima Café & Bar
19 City
20 City Heights Coffee Lounge
21 Columbus Coffee Ltd.
22 Columbus Coffee Ltd.
23 Court Jester Café
24 Customs Coffee House
25 Dejeuner Coffee Lounge
26 DKD
27 Essence Patisserie
28 Express Coffee Lounge
29 Firello-Rossetti Café
30 Foodoo
31 Gallery Café
32 gloria
33 Halbanero
34 Jolt! The Espresso Bar
35 Kamo
36 KXQ
37 Mecca Café & Espresso Bar
38 Metro Café
39 Mezzaluna
40 Miller's Serious Espresso
41 Monique's Café
42 Mr Bean's Café
43 Net Central Cybercafe
44 New Café & Bar
45 Overhead Espresso Café
46 Paneton Café & Bakery
47 Paneton Café & Bakery
48 Patio Café & Restaurant
49 Penny Lane Coffee Shop
50 Presso
51 QC's Café
52 Queens Arcade Coffee Lounge
53 Rakino's
54 Red Rose Café
55 Robert Harris Coffee Shop
56 Robert Harris Coffee Shop
57 Rossini's
58 Sierra Espresso Café
59 The Black Crow Café
60 The Coffee Exchange
61 The Fix
62 The Green Crocodile Café
63 The House of Coffee
64 The Lost Angel Café
65 The Merchant Mezze Bar & Café
66 The Strand Café
67 Verona
68 Vulcan Café & Espresso Bar
69 Wofem Bros. Bagelry

Source: Telecom Yellow Pages (1998)
Auckland & District and personal observation
as well as a place in which to sit in a tree sheltered environment (Figure 6.2). A tiled artwork celebrating Women's Suffrage incorporating a water fountain add to the character of the outdoor gathering place. The New City Art Gallery café's balconies extend out into the area bringing added life into the space. According to journalist Carroll du Chateau, “...here the elements people need to relax come together - the sound of running water, soothing green leaves, [and] the smell of good coffee” (1998, G3).

![Figure 6.2: Khartoum Place.](https://example.com/figure6.2)

(Source: The New Zealand Herald, 1998)

The second area, Freyberg Place, named after Lord Freyberg, is located in the centre of a clustering of shops and cafés at the junction of High Street, Freyberg Place and Courthouse Lane. Intended to encourage night-time as well as day-time activity, the area promotes pedestrian activity where car access is considered secondary. The wide-open square, in the centre of the business district, contains a water fountain, built-in seating in the outer edge and fountain areas as well as landscaped gardens. Like Lorne Street, High Street operates as a one-laned, one-way road thus reducing vehicle traffic and giving the area a distinctive character. Both Khartoum and Freyberg Places serve as ‘core settings’ of informal public life (Oldenburg, 1997). While a majority of the Central Business District’s cafés are located in this particular part of town, a very different sort of culture exists elsewhere.
The CBD itself contains two very different café ‘cultures’; one directed towards the affluent consumer, the second towards a more informal and alternative consumer. As the coffee bar chosen for this area is located in the business sector of the city with the former group as its primary consumers, discussion will now focus upon a part of the CBD which caters to the latter sort of consumer. Karangahape Road (K Rd.), functioning as the 1990s counterpart to the 1950s bohemian cafés, contains ten of the 69 establishments serving coffee beverages in the central area (Figure 6.1). While this is only a small percentage of the total for the downtown/central area, its ‘culture’ is what is important to include. A road which contains a number of different shops from retro and kitsch to the seedy and X-rated, also has a number of cafés/coffeebars serving coffee related drinks to the younger and alternative individual.

The generic ‘signal fittings’ which most establishments seem to include is probably the only characteristic held in common between the cafés of Karangahape Road and elsewhere in the Central Auckland area. Verona café, outfitted in kitsch decor with fake flowers, multi-coloured chairs, red walls and lime ceiling, the music of Portishead, the smell of clove cigarettes and a neo-grunge barista fits in well with the character of K Rd. Brazil café, based on a futuristic movie of the same name, is located in an old arcade hallway with three floors and a rounded ceiling, and has two-person bus seating, internet access, pinball machines and live music (‘Caffeine’-twisted funk on Thursday nights). Its consumers are a part of the skateboard youth culture, mainly in their late teens and twenties. A third café, Alleluya, holds alternative poetry nights. The rationale for mentioning these cafés is simple and essential: café society is diverse. Like the identities of the consumer, discussed by Jackson & Holbrook (1995), a sort of plurality of identities exists within café environments adding to their distinctiveness. The culture of K. Rd, for example, is very different to other areas of Central Auckland, resulting in a café scene which reflects the streets plural identities.

Having introduced of Auckland’s Central Business District and its differing café scenes I now describe the coffee bar in this area which is included in the study: Jolt-The Espresso Bar.
6.2.1 Jolt-The Espresso Bar

Jolt is situated within a clustering of cafés, coffee bars and fashion boutiques on High Street. It is a small establishment, and self-styled as ‘Auckland’s most amusing café’. Its design is European, concentrating on a ‘...quick fix, close people contact scenario’ (Figure 6.3) (Holder, 1997, 51). Coffee was pivotal to the design of Jolt, with the espresso machine placed in a highly visible location (just inside its floor-to-ceiling window, next to the entryway), aiming for ‘...those inside to feel a link to the street’ (Holder, 1997, 51). Interior design is contemporary with recycled rimu floors, Italian lime-green chairs, bar seating, and a metal wall which adorns alphabet letter magnets to entertain patrons. This sort of playfulness in a café suggests it aims to be a space in which to relax and take a break.

In naming the establishment, its owner wanted ‘...a name that had zap and pizzazz, and meant speedy and fast’ (interview, April 1998). As the space is quite small, the owner wanted a name which encouraged service which was ‘...in and out, fast, quick’, which also made reference to coffee. The logo itself is colourful and playful, representative of the café’s carefree nature; ‘...nothing serious or refined’ (Figure 6.4). In keeping with this attitude, the owner decided to use different colours for each letter, raising the ‘O’ in an attempt to ‘...break the monotony’ of traditional logos which are singular in colour and uniform.
The entire space is ‘on-stage’ at Jolt; “...everything and everybody had to be on show and part of the action” (Holder, 1997, 51). As can be seen in Figure 6.3, food and espresso preparation is done in full view of patrons, with only a small storage area located at the back of the store. No kitchen was included in its design as its menu is simple: panini’s and sweets to accompany coffee-based beverages, as well as a full range of soft-drinks. ‘Theatrics’ of sorts are performed by a wait staff of four; one full time (the owner), and three part-time (two of which are students). They operate as a distinct component of the production which takes place daily on Jolt’s coffee bar stage.

6.3 Ponsonby

Described as “...one long digestive tract”, Ponsonby Road has become a place full of cafés, restaurants, bars and boutiques (Figure 6.5)(Callan, 1982, 48). New cafés and restaurants have changed the urban streetscape of Ponsonby, where, in 1994, there existed 75 current or pending liquor licenses on Ponsonby and Jervois Roads (Heal, 1994, 82). A relatively recent phenomena, a local real estate agent describes Ponsonby home buyers as those who “...aren’t after a house”, but rather “...a lifestyle” (Heal, 1994, 82). With a resident population of 5,472, Ponsonby has become a gentrified area (Statistics New Zealand, 1996). According to freelance writer and past resident, Louise Callan, “...Ponsonby’s fortunes, like those of inner city areas the world over, have been cyclical” (1982, 46).

The area’s first cycle of new construction took place with a move of residents from Freeman’s Bay after their homes were bought and demolished as part of the urban Renewal and Housing Improvement Act of 1945. As the older residents died or moved away into smaller homes, new residents, primarily Maori and Pacific Island
Figure 6.5:  
1998 Ponsonby Cafés & Coffee Bars

1. Atlas Power Café  
2. Atomic Café  
3. Bambina  
4. Bohemian Café  
5. Byzantium Café  
6. Café Cezanne  
7. Café Liaison  
8. Dizengoff  
9. Espresso Love  
10. Fez  
11. Fusion  
12. GPK  
13. Hassan Baba Café  
14. Karma  
15. Lord Ponsonby's  
16. Open Late Café  
17. Oval  
18. Pasta Villagio  
19. Santos  
20. Sierra  
21. SPQR  
22. The Bake Haus  
23. The Ponsonby Café  
24. Thirty-nine  
25. Tuatara  
26. Turkish Café  
27. VIP Café  
28. Wrapps & Espresso To Go

Source: Telecom Yellow Pages (1998)  
Auckland & District and personal observation  
Map reproduced by permission of Land Information NZ. Crown Copyright Reserved
families moved in, earning Ponsonby the title of Polynesian capital of the South Pacific in the 1960s and 1970s. A majority of the houses were landlord owned (as much as 80%), with properties poorly maintained and decay setting in (Callan, 1982). In the early 1970s, things began to change. With the price of land and costs of building in the new suburbs rising, as well as the prices of petrol, a new kind of home buyer appeared.

They were young, had been overseas where they’d seen first-hand the redevelopment of inner city areas, they had a profession, very little money, but good earning prospects. They had also acquired a sense of history and an appreciation of the old (Callan, 1982, 46).

At this juncture, property developers began buying houses cheaply, selling them for a profit, only this time considerable work was done between the purchase and reselling exchange. With this high renovation period, construction of a new landscape of consumption took place along Ponsonby’s busier streets, providing its newest residents with ‘places to see and be seen’. The gentrification of Ponsonby fits into the broader framework of social, cultural and demographic change, including changes in family structure, the increase of women in the workforce, and expansion of an educated middle-class. Over the past 16 years, Ponsonby has become “…a home for what many of the older residents refer to as ‘white middle-class trendies’, who are young and conspicuously consuming every aspect of the area, from old villas to cappuccinos” (Callan, 1982, 48).

We can now shift discussion of Ponsonby towards the two research sites in this area. Both establishments exist on Ponsonby Road, within three city blocks of each other and have their own distinctive features.
6.3.1 Santos

Located in the centre of a city block with shared use of a courtyard, Santos uses a very small space while creating a visible place to be seen. With two of its four walls lined with the café ‘trade-mark’ floor to ceiling windows (also functioning as doors) and two entrance-ways, a majority of the seating at Santos is outside (sidewalk and courtyard). Decor includes a wickered theme with the material found on chairs, the side of the main counter, backing inside bench seating and as a divider between the food preparation/dishwashing area and the main café area (Figure 6.6). Community notices and current events are posted on an outside wall with fliers at the inside bar seating area. Backgammon and chess are available for patrons to play while visiting the café. The outside courtyard, mentioned earlier, is open as part of the streetscape, incorporating trees and a rock garden, tables and chairs, as well as planter and concrete, built-in seating. Local artwork hangs in the small inside space with the street and other patrons being the major attraction.

Designed using South American overtones, with two of its three owners from Brazil, an *especials* chalkboard highlights the daily specials, advertising itself as *Nueva Zelanda* in coffee magazines. The word ‘santo’ is Spanish for saint, hence the halo which appears above the café name throughout the establishment; on all windows, outside wind screens, on table tops and the mirror which covers the back wall. ‘Santos’, in addition to its dictionary definition, is a popular coffee bean grown in Brazil, and its also the country’s largest port (where coffee is exported).
and gold colours were chosen by the owners because of their classic nature (interview, April 1998). Figure 6.7 shows the Santos logo as it appears on their coffee beans, roasted by two of its three owners, which may be purchased at the café.

![Santos Logo](image)

**Figure 6.7: Santos logo.**

The café functions primarily in a ‘front-stage’ manner with very little ‘back-stage’ space. Espresso and food preparation is visible, as is a two metre high refrigerator with glass doors. The site itself is small, as is the menu, with the ‘back-stage’ area consisting of a dishwashing space semi-hidden by a dividing screen. With nine wait staff, the coffee bar is embedded with performers as, according to one of its barista’s, “half …are actors or models”. In this café, like Jolt-The Espresso Bar, everything is on display, all the time.
6.3.2 Atomic Café

Atomic Café is located in the centre of Ponsonby Road’s gastronomic strip. It serves an array of espresso-based beverages and, when available, an organic menu. It is named after the 1982 art-house movie entitled *The Atomic Café* which includes clips of historical footage and nuclear propaganda. The owner then discovered the existence of an Italian coffee maker from the 1950s of the same name. The design of the café includes “...a collection of the two put together” (interview, April 1998). Logo and menu design focus upon the nuclear and organic themes while a majority of its decor centres on the Atomic coffee makers which sit on a shelf surrounding the interior of the café. The café itself is located in an older building with exposed brick walls. Like the trade-mark ‘signal fittings’ described earlier, the café has floor to ceiling windowed doors which open during warmer times of the year (Figure 6.8). Choosing to design the interior of the café himself instead of bringing in a designer, the owner believes

"There’s something different about setting something up that you want to be at all the time... to be a bit like my livingroom".
In its logo design, the Atomic Café focuses on the scientific. The Atomic Café modifies an atom design in its logo design by incorporating a coffee cup with foam as its nucleus, and coffee beans as its electrons orbiting in an elliptical fashion (Figure 6.9). Metaphorically, this can be tied to the sort of charge or 'fix' one gains from the caffeine of an espresso-based beverage.

The Atomic Café contains a full kitchen, serving breakfast/brunch daily, therefore a moderately large ‘back-stage’ area is available to wait staff. A large ‘front-stage’ exists at Atomic, with inside and outside seating, making it the largest of the five cafés taking part in this research project. There is a wait staff of 20 (both full and part-time) who are also musicians, students or work in other cafés. Atomic was rated Auckland’s favourite café/coffee bar in Metro magazines 1998 readers poll.

6.4 Mount Eden

Mount Eden is located just outside the Central Business District of Auckland with a total population of 9,546, offering locals and others a village atmosphere for eating and shopping (Statistics New Zealand, 1996). The main hub of the village itself spans less than a handful of blocks along the busy Mt Eden Road. Businesses in the community include a butcher, a jeweller, a number of bakeries, real-estate agents and banks, a book store, a post office and a fruit and vegetable shop. A strong communal culture can be found here with its butchery, promoting itself as “Auckland’s longest serving meat store”, and fruit and vegetable shop, serving Mt Eden since 1949 (Scott, 1997). Mt Eden has eight cafés within an area of two city blocks (Figure 6.10).

The popularity of Mt Eden village, for those with a disposable income, changed during 1993. It was then when
Figure 6.10:
1998 Mt Eden Cafés & Coffee Bars

1. Circus Circus
2. City Cake Company
3. Sierra
4. Solla Sollew
5. Swiss Konditorei Café
6. Tea Total
7. The Couch Café
8. Volcanic Café

Sources: Telecom Yellow Pages (1998)
Auckland & District and personal observation
Map reproduced by permission of Land Information NZ: Crown Copyright Reserved
...Cucksey's store, on the corner of Stokes and Mount Eden Road, became home to Solla Sollew café... The newcomers runaway success did not pass without notice. There has been a rush to open new cafés, or spruce up existing outlets. The result has been a lively café scene, lasting till after midnight, seven nights a week (Scott, 1997, 25).

According to Scott, Mt Eden has changed “...from being a suburb for flat-dwellers and students, to one for families” (1997, 17), with 48% of residences as family households, 25% one-person and 12% non-familial households (Statistics New Zealand, 1996).

Two of the eight local cafés were chosen to represent the area in this research project. The first of the two, Solla Sollew, was chosen because of its theme, its role in the community as well as its function as a ‘third place’ to this researcher. A second café, Sierra (established in 1996), was also chosen.

6.4.1 Solla Sollew

Located on a busy corner within the Mt Eden village, this café is based upon a city in the Dr Seuss book I Had Trouble in getting to Solla Sollew (1965). Throughout the book, a yellow character with no name from the Valley of Vung makes his way to the City of Solla Sollew. It is here
On the banks of the beautiful river Wah-Hoo,
Where they never have troubles! At least very few (Seuss, 1965, 12).

Building on this carefree theme, the design of the café is playful and warm. With its high ceiling painted creamy brown and its yellow walls, Solla Sollew is a very inviting place. Long sliding windows line two sides of the café allowing the outside in during summertime as well as consumers the ability to see and be seen (Figure 6.11).

Cheerfully designed to create an experience which is trouble-free, the Solla Sollew themescape uses the image of the yellow character, as well as those found throughout the book, in its decor. Paintings on the wall illustrate different scenes but it is mainly the yellow character, followed in the pages of the book, which operates as logo for the establishment. This image is found everywhere from the menu-board which offers ‘Green Eggs & Ham’ to the outside chalkboard, the pizza order-forms to the cups which serve the espresso and hot chocolates, the ‘Cat in the Hat’ hat on the shelf behind the service counter to the collection of Dr Seuss books for patrons to read, the artwork to the free café postcards (Figure 6.12).

![Figure 6.12: Example of the Solla Sollew character featured in the café.](image)

The naming of the café and its logo design were chosen because this classic children’s storybook was a childhood favourite of one of its owners. As a majority of consumers, as recognised by Zukin (1998), are baby-boomers with a disposable income, the café may represent a playful, comfortable place which also reminds one of childhood, creating a nostalgic sense of place (Eyles, 1985).

At Solla Sollew there is a full kitchen serving breakfast, lunch and dinner, also providing a ‘back-stage’ area for wait staff. There is a cast of 30, both male and
female. Most are students working on a part-time basis with six full-time staff. The café has been in business for six years and serves approximately 150 coffees per day, with a resident cat named ‘Cappuccino’.

6.4.2 Sierra Café

Situated in the Mt Eden village, Sierra Café has been in business for 18 months. As part of a franchise, of sorts, the café interior was created by an architect who designed all the Sierra cafés throughout the Auckland area, giving each a slightly different feel and individuality. According to its owners, Sierra is not a true franchise in that it controls only part of the business; 60% of the menu, some interior design and the serving of Sierra coffee roasted at its Jervois Road location.

Sierra Café in Mt Eden adopts a contemporary style, using a range of colours to accentuate its logo design and theme. The interior café walls are painted in sections of brown, cream, orange and lime green. Cow-hide bar stools line the areas surrounding the espresso machine and the far end of the counter. Floors are hardwood with both large and small tables, with light-coloured coffee cup, circular stains. A bright turquoise refrigerator stands behind the counter with the local, resident cat asleep in the corner most days. Café trade-marks or ‘signal fittings’
include floor to ceiling sliding doors as well as the traditional accessories (Figure 6.13).

The name Sierra, Spanish for ‘mountain range’, was adopted to represent a sense of elsewhereness (Smith, Marcos & Chang-Rodriguez, 1985, 519). According to one of the café’s current owners, the original owner was a well-travelled individual looking for a significant brand name that customers would remember; also confirming the intention that when one “…drink[s] Sierra coffee, you’re visiting someplace else”. The café logo is also intended to make one imagine a far away place. Their blend is half African and half Colombian, drawing on the latter in its logo design. The figure is of a Colombian man picking coffee beans in a distant place. The orange colour represents an ‘image of burnt earth’ and ‘hot climate’, whereas the blue surrounding colour represents the sea (Figure 6.14).

Sierra Café offers minimal ‘back-stage’ area to its wait staff, even though it serves a full menu of breakfast and lunch, with dinner available on Wednesday to Saturday nights. Operating in a primarily ‘front-stage’ area, both inside and outside, the kitchen is visible through a doorway, with the dishwashing and cleaning area brightly painted lime green and noticeable to patrons. There is a staff of 12 (full and part-time), who are predominantly female and students, and these people work in a very visible ‘stage’ which is a distinct part of this café experience.
6.5 Summary

Coffee made by forcing water at around 92°C through fresh grounds, ...is the one thing that all cafés worthy of the name must have in common (Beere, 1995).

The above definition of commonality amongst cafés exists in the case of Central Auckland. The espresso machine, which is manufactured to force water through freshly ground coffee beans, is central and prominently placed in all five cafés included in this thesis project. Other common characteristics or ‘signal fittings’ exist as does a creative interior and logo design to provide distinction. As part of the ‘system of selling’ (Betsky, 1997), café logos are alluring, often reminders of elsewhere (Sierra and Santos), of the past or one’s childhood (Solla Sollew). They contain a multitude of meanings, and as seen in these five cafés, and act as magnets of messages and meaning.

With exterior, visible characteristics of the five cafés now presented, Chapter 7 examines the feelings of those who frequent and/or work in these establishments. Do individuals form attachments to such places, and if so, why? do they feel a sense of place? does it operate as a third place? does the idea of the ‘stage’ include patrons as well as wait staff? These are the questions the next chapter aims to answer.
Chapter 7
FIVE CAFÉS: CONSUMPTION, THIRD PLACES AND THE SENSES

7.1 Introduction

It is the opening scene. In the background, small groups of people are sitting at tall tables on stools enjoying a cup of coffee and conversation. A man named Gunther, with striking blonde hair, stands behind the counter serving lattés and café mochas, cakes and cookies. In the middle of the café sits a large and inviting champagne-pink coloured couch. Just then, six friends walk inside to grab a seat on their favourite sofa at their favourite meeting place: the "Central Perk".

The above scenario, like many other similar occasions, takes place weekly on one's television set when the cast of Friends meet. This particular group, in their late 20s, meet regularly at the local coffeehouse to consume much more than just the coffee. Operating as the ‘third place’ to a fictional set of characters, the ‘Central Perk’ offers a sense of community and belonging, as a place where they meet regularly, sit, socialise, read or listen to live music. They are the regulars of this particular establishment, where, according to Oldenburg (1997),

It is the regulars who give the place its character and who assure that on any given visit some of the gang will be there (p.33-4).

This chapter will discuss the café as a ‘third place’ from the consumers’ perspective. Evidence will be presented to demonstrate that the café and coffeebar environments
operate on a much deeper level to some; as a third place, a place where one feels a
sense of community and belonging. Cafés, however, do not operate as a third place
to all. Cafés and coffeebars function as a place of belonging to a specific set of
individuals and act as meeting and/or gathering sites. They also serve as sites of
consumption, where every aspect of the establishment is consumed. What this
chapter sets out to do is a) identify café consumers and what is consumed, and b)
explore whether Oldenburg’s (1997) ‘third place’ idea applies to the New Zealand
café/coffeebar experience.

7.2 Café consumers & the consumable
Cafés are sites of consumption and places where that which is consumed goes
beyond the edible and the drinkable. In this section of Chapter 7, I will examine who
the consumers are and what it is they are consuming. Analysis will include
demographic data as well as other data gathered by means of questionnaire survey
and participant observation.

A total of 211 questionnaire surveys where collected. The gender of respondents
proved to be a nearly even distribution with 119 females (56% of the total sample)
and 93 males (44% of the total sample) taking part. Respondents ages included a
majority of consumers in the 21-25, 26-35 or 36-45 years age groups (79%), with the
greatest number of women being in the 21-25 year age group (31% of the total
female population) and the highest number of men in the 26-35 year age group (30% of
the total male population)(Figure 7.1). This data concurs with Zukin’s (1998)
claim of the mature ‘baby boom’ generation contributing heavily to the leisure sites of consumption.

Certain cafés/coffee bars in this study appeared to function as establishments which welcome all age groups, but attract certain age groups in particular (Figure 7.2). The inner-city coffee bar, Jolt-The Espresso Bar, appears to attract the 21-25 and 36-45 year age groups, with the Ponsonby Road coffee bar, Santos, appeals most to the 26-35 year age group. The Mt Eden cafés, Solla Sollew and Sierra, reveal patronage from both the 21-25 and 36-45 year age groups.

![Figure 7.2: Age distribution of respondents at four cafés.](image)

Of those who completed the survey, 75% identified themselves as European/Pakeha, 12% as New Zealander, 4% Asian, with the remaining 7% as Maori/European, Maori, Latin, Indian, Samoan/European, or West African. While one cannot assume that an individual identifying themselves as a 'New Zealander' is of the same ethnicity as a European or Pakeha, it can be said that between 75 to 87 percent of the sample was of European descent. This is concurrent to the national and regional populations of New Zealand and Auckland where the European populations are 72% and 63% of the total populace (Statistics New Zealand, 1997).

The occupations of respondents were as follows: 54% from occupational groups 1, 2 & 3, 27% students, 12% from occupational group 5, with the remaining 7% from groups 4, 6, 7, unemployed, homeless or retired. The New Zealand Standard Classification of Occupations 1995 was used as a means for grouping the occupations given by respondents on the questionnaire survey (Appendix 2). Information on the gross salaries of respondents indicated that 37% of total
respondents earned less than $20,000, 20% earned $20,000 to $35,000, 17% earned $36,000 to $50,000 and 26% earning more than $50,000. While the greatest percentage of respondents earned the least income, it is also important to recognise that 43% of the sample earn over $36,000 per year.

Overall, the majority of respondents (50%) spend over $50 per month at cafés or coffee bars with the least proportion of respondents spending under $10 per month (6%). Of those who spend more than $50 per month, 58% were male and 42% female. Of those spending under $50 per month, 32% were male and 68% female. The differences in male and female spending at the 'under $50' level may be reflective of more female students frequenting cafés, therefore spending less (74% of the student sample).

Table 7.1: The variables occupation & spending per month (n=198).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Professional/Managerial</th>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Other</th>
<th>Total responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>number</td>
<td>percent</td>
<td>number</td>
<td>percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under $30</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over $30</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A Chi-square test was performed to assess the relationship between occupation and spending at cafés. Occupations were divided into three categories: 1) professional/managerial (occupational groups 1, 2 & 3), b) students and c) other (occupational groups 4, 5, 6, 7, unemployed, retired and homeless)(Table 7.1). Of the total sample, 74% spend over $30 per month at cafés or coffee bars, with the remaining 26% spending less than $30. It is the 'professional/managerial' and 'other' occupational groups which spend the most, with 51% of 'students' spending the least. What is important to note here is that while this particular group does spend the least, 49% of this group spends over $30 per month. A significant relationship between occupation and café spending was established ($\chi^2=55.001$ (df 18, p=<.000)).

A second Chi-Square test was performed between the variables age and spending, and a significant relationship established (Table 7.2). Of the total sample, those spending the most were 21 years or older (74%), with those spending the least being
20 years or under (26%). Table 7.2 also reveals an increased percentage of respondents spending over $30 for those between the ages of 21 to 45 years ($^2=121.353$ (df 24, p < .000)).

**Table 7.2: The variables age & spending per month (n=210).**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>20 yrs. &amp; under</th>
<th>21 to 25 yrs.</th>
<th>26 to 35 yrs.</th>
<th>36 to 45 yrs.</th>
<th>Over 46 yrs.</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>number</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>number</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>number</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>number</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under $30</td>
<td>15  62%</td>
<td>20  34%</td>
<td>8  15%</td>
<td>7  13%</td>
<td>5  22%</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over $30</td>
<td>9   38%</td>
<td>38  66%</td>
<td>45  85%</td>
<td>45  87%</td>
<td>18  78%</td>
<td>155</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>24  100%</td>
<td>58  100%</td>
<td>53  100%</td>
<td>52  100%</td>
<td>23  100%</td>
<td>210</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To establish the frequency of visits to cafés by consumers the questionnaire survey posed the questions a) ‘how often do you frequent this café?’, and b) ‘how often to you frequent other cafés?’ The findings revealed that a majority of consumers visit the café where contact was made one to five times a month and in addition to this, also frequent other cafés one to five times per month (Figure 7.3).

**Figure 7.3: Frequency of visits to both the contact café and other cafés by questionnaire respondents.**

Having established the basic characteristics of consumers, it is now time to focus on ‘the consumable’; what it is exactly that consumers are consuming in the café environment. To address this matter, a question was presented in the survey asking what it was that they, as consumers, liked best about the café where initial contact
was made. According to Figure 7.4, ‘coffee’ (60% of sample) was what consumers liked best, followed by ‘atmosphere’ (35% of sample). Other characteristics noted by respondents included food, staff, location, design/theme, service, other people and music. Discussion of the ‘coffee’, ‘food’ and ‘music’ will be focused on later in this chapter. At the moment, though, the other six attributes noted by respondents need be addressed.

The atmosphere of a café is one of the primary attractions for individuals frequenting a particular café. Atmosphere can be created through a number of factors, some of which were mentioned in particular by respondents. Staff, location, design/theme, other people and music are a few. As seen in the writings of Bell and Valentine (1997), Crang (1994) and Zukin (1995 & 1998), for example, wait staff and the personal encounters which take place create a part of the ‘consumption package’ (directly recognised by 28% of sample). In Figure 7.5, a number of quotes that are lifted from completed questionnaire surveys refer to wait staff. The first two quotes involve the consumer acknowledging wait staff as part of the café on a first-name basis. In other words, they are part of the ‘experience’. The third quote describes the staff as ‘friends’, constructing a comfortable sort of environment. The final two quotes, address the attitudinal and sexually appealing natures of wait staff. The demeanour as well as gender and sexuality of wait staff are a part of the waiting performance (Crang, 1994). ‘Gazing’ within the café environment takes place in a
number of different ways, like those mentioned by Crang (1994). Comments made about the 'spunky staff' gives evidence of such a 'gaze' which takes place between wait staff and consumers, as well as amongst consumers themselves.

**Figure 7.5: Responses referring to wait staff at café of contact.**

"Glen is the best barista in Auckland"
"Marcello, Glen, Emma, Bex, Kelly, et al...
"It's like home. The people that work here are all friends"
"The cheeky waitress"
"Spunky staff"

Another characteristic noted by respondents was the location of the café (20% of sample). Location is integral to a café's image and function. At Solla Sollew in Mt Eden, for example, its corner location enables one a view of the busy streetscape. Location is also an important factor to regulars. A fifth characteristic observed by café consumers was the design and/or theme of an establishment (15% of sample). As part of the 'package', interior and exterior design tends to allow consumers another means to identify with the café. Some cafés, like those found on Ponsonby Road, infer a sort of style which attracts those who want to 'see' and 'be seen' (Santos, for example). Others use a playful theme to invoke a more light-hearted identity attracting a more relaxed sort of patron (Solla Sollew, for example). Another means of design can be found in the presentation of what is eaten and drank in cafés. According to one questionnaire respondent:

"Cafés are now becoming a kind of art form in the way they are decorated, present their food and drink".

A sixth attribute noted was that of other people (9% of sample). Others do much in the way of creating atmosphere in any social setting as well as play a vital role in the construction of 'third places'. Before moving forward to discuss cafés as 'third places' and the value placed upon such establishments by their consumers, I will briefly explore the idea of 'seeing' and 'being seen'.
7.2.1 Seeing and being seen

Crang’s (1994) deconstruction of a bar-b-que eatery in England, with use Goffman’s theory of the ‘stage’ and presentation of the self, examines the role of wait staff in the creation of an eating ‘experience’. The stages themselves appear different but operate in a similar fashion to the café; where the everyday becomes theatre. Some cafés contain ‘back-stage’ areas, while others have none, leaving everything on display. Operating as places “…to view the world and be observed”, according to a focus group participant, thoughts have begun to surface of a theatre, of sorts, where consumers function as either the performer or audience.

When focus group participants were asked about sitting outside and why they liked to do so, one response was because it offered “…something to look at”. For another respondent, visiting cafés offered something which was

“...in between ‘being seen’ and ‘being able to watch’. You want to sit where you can watch everybody else. ...Going for coffee is not to ‘be seen’, but ‘to watch’

Overall, focus group respondents refused to admit that frequenting cafés was a part of the idea of ‘being seen’, instead agreeing that it was a site to watch others. As a site to people-watch, the theatre of choice offers performers of the everyday. While those taking part in the focus group agreed that they went ‘to see’ rather than to ‘be seen’, and 9% of survey respondents stated that what they liked best about a particular café was those ‘others’ who frequented the establishment, it can be said that they too are being watched, operating as performers of the everyday, ‘seen’ by someone else. It is for this reason that I put forward the idea of the café as an everyday ‘stage’ where those who go to ‘see’ and ‘be seen’ perform. An example of this can be illustrated in the street signage outside Sierra café in Mt Eden (Figure 7.6). The very permanent statement imprinted, rather than a changeable blackboard, states that in this particular place you can ‘...express yourself’ inside. This encourages consumers to use the ‘frontstage’ of the establishment as a means for identification and signification; as a place where performative encounters take place by wait staff, the consumer and other patrons. When interviewing the co-owner of Sierra, I asked her whether she thought people used her café as a place to be seen, and her response:
"Yes, definitely. Without a doubt".

Figure 7.6: Sidewalk signage outside Sierra café.

7.3 The place of the nineties

...The eternal sameness of the third place overshadows the variations in its outward appearance... (Oldenburg, 1997, 20).

It is with the above ideas in mind that this thesis examines the café/coffee bar setting in Central Auckland. The characterisation of third places as havens of escape from the stresses of daily life in the first and second places is suggestive of its difference. It is this ‘difference’ from other settings which makes it so appealing and is its essential feature.

Many commentators have discovered the communal attributes of the coffeehouse, going so far as to state that, “It’s not really about the coffee, it’s about the break” (Sandon in Boss, 1998, 74). According to Bruce Milletto, who educates and consults coffee retailers and quotes Sandon often to clients,

People, as social animals, need places to meet and do business. ...In the ‘80s, the social focus was on happy hours and martinis, ...but drunk driving laws and health consciousness changed all that. Friends replaced Cheers on prime-time television, and ...favorite hangouts became low-fat and gourmet (in Boss, 1998, 74).
Many individuals recognise this change from alcohol to coffee as the beverage creating a social gathering (Figure 7.7). Providing a casual and comfortable setting which feels 'safe', especially to females, cafés present a space for groups or individuals to congregate 'without the pressures of drinking alcohol'. Unlike the bar situation, a café as an inclusive place welcomes 'recovering alcoholics', those who do not drink, and others in a social space without the morning 'hangover'.

Figure 7.7: Responses referring to the non-alcoholic nature of cafés.

"Good social scene without the pressures of drinking alcohol".
"Because I'm a recovering alcoholic this new trend means I can still have social outings plus a new and improved addiction ie. coffee".
"It has created a social place for people like myself [who do not drink alcohol]".
"It's got to be good for the drink driving statistics. I've never heard of anyone being over the limit on caffeine!"
"Coffee is in. Beer is out".
"I'm hooked and no hangovers".

On the television shows Friends and Cheers, the places upon which the lives of the characters focused were third places. In the late 1990s, the popularity of Friends has been based on a coffee-drinking establishment which serves as a third place; a place which individuals watching the show can feel a sort of connection. Characters frequent the Central Perk, at different times of the day, sometimes more than once. They feel an attachment to this particular place; a sense of community, where coffee creates the gathering. For real people in the real world, a similar attachment exists with coffee creating the gathering.

"For us, coffee is now a regular part of life. We start the weekend with an espresso, meet friends over an espresso, finish a night out with an espresso" (survey respondent).

Evidence of cafés as 'third places' can be found by examining the frequency of visits per month by respondents as well as the frequency in terms of months or years visiting a particular establishment. Going back to Figure 7.3, which illustrates the frequency of visits to both the café where initial contact was made and other cafés, 25% of respondents frequent cafés >16 times per month, 16% frequent cafés once a day, and 5% frequent them twice daily. In terms of visits over time, a large number
of respondents had frequented the contact café over a period of months or years, depending on how long the establishment has been open to the public, and could therefore be considered ‘regulars’ (Figure 7.8).

For the purpose of this study, I define a ‘regular’ as someone who has frequented a particular establishment for six or more months. At Santos, which had been open for twenty-six months at the time when surveys were conducted, 85% of respondents had frequented for over six months. Solla Sollew has been open for six years, and 87% of respondents from this café would be considered ‘regulars’, as are 73% of Sierra and 67% of Jolt respondents. Solla Sollew was found to have the largest number of regulars, with Jolt having the least. An explanation for this may be that Jolt is located in Auckland’s CBD and as such only 31% of respondents live locally. The majority are those who work or are educated in the city, and so use the café as a weekly, daytime haven or ‘third place’. Of those respondents frequenting Solla Sollew and Sierra, 48% live in the Mt Eden ward. A second possible explanation for Jolt’s lower percentage of regulars can be found in its hours of business. During weekdays, the café runs busily, whereas on weekends the tempo is much slower. The
cafés in Ponsonby and the Mt Eden village remain active and busy, operating from the early morning well into the night.

**Figure 7.9: Responses referring to the café as a site for conducting business.**

- "I take clients to cafés for lunch".
- "Good place to meet to discuss things either on a social or business basis".
- "Make great second offices".
- "Cafés are good for meetings".

As a part of the questionnaire survey, respondents were asked their opinion on the recent emergence of cafés and coffeebars throughout Auckland. Many responses referred to the café as a site at which to conduct business, and the idea that New Zealand is ‘catching up’ with the rest of the world. Others mentioned the sociability and sense of community. As a place to conduct business, respondents stated that they used cafés as ‘second offices’; a place where they could conduct informal meetings (Figure 7.9).

**Figure 7.10: Responses referring to the addition of cafés to New Zealand society as ‘catching up’ with the rest of the world.**

- "It is a reflection of the continuing urbanisation of New Zealand and as a consequence, the adoption of international trends (Europe in particular). It has certainly advanced the sophistication of our society".
- "The emergence of cafés is simply part of Auckland’s rise to cosmopolitan status".
- "Just following the rest of the world".
- "About time New Zealand caught up with Europe!!"
- "Cafés are part of the maturing of New Zealand society".
- "It shows [that] New Zealanders have become more sophisticated and urbani".
- "New Zealand [is] finally growing a gastronomic and social culture of its own".

As far as ‘catching up with the rest of the world’, cafés seem to represent a zone of elsewhere, of an international trend flourishing within New Zealand (Figure 7.10). This ‘elsewhere’ which most respondents speak of is Europe and of becoming more European, even feeling as if one is there while drinking a morning espresso.

"...a feeling of being in Europe for that short period I sip my latté!" (survey respondent).
Others see the café trend as a part of becoming ‘more sophisticated and urbane’. Many cultures in Europe are well known for their eateries, cafés and espresso bars; places which play very important roles in the lives of those who frequent the establishments.

Figure 7.11: Responses referring to the sociability and sense of community of cafés.

"It allows great social interaction in a relatively neutral environment. You never know who you'll bump in to".

"It's a great trend - a meeting place to catch up with friends, to people watch, somewhere to take time out from a busy working life to enjoy a healthy meal and a great cup of finely roasted coffee".

"...a common, or routine part of the day".

"A morning social service".

"[A] friendly atmosphere makes it appealing as a good meeting place. [It] provides a more useful meeting place in the community for all ages, genders and groups".

"It's a place to go by myself, with children or friends that feels 'safe'; provides a good meeting place and when its local helps create a sense (even if false) of neighborhood".

"It really is our 'local' with the staff waving as I walk by, greeting the kids by name, asking about my day, etc. Our day is not complete without a visit, and I plan my day around where I can get my 'fix' for the day".

The social and communal aspects of Central Auckland’s cafés and coffee bars are elaborated upon further in Figure 7.11. As a space which allows one to ‘feel part of a community’, cafés play very important roles in the informal daily lives of those who visit regularly. Statements like “A morning social service” and a place to “get my ‘fix’ for the day” infer routine; a part of ones daily time geography. Respondents ties to a particular place closely follow the description offered by Oldenburg’s (1997) ‘third place’: “...you never know who you’ll run in to”, “…a useful meeting place …for all ages, genders and groups”, creates “…a sense of neighbourhood”. In the following section, this idea of community is explored further within the café environment, discussing research findings from both owner interviews and participant observation.
7.3.1 Community

People go to cafés and coffeehouses for different reasons than going to restaurants. According to café owner Len Graham,

This isn't a fast-food, take-your-order-and-goodbye sort of experience. Coffee customers want to talk to their barista, they want to know the owner, they want to sit and visit, be known and recognised. In the '90s so many people are shut away with their computers, that providing a place where customers can walk in and hear someone say their name, is a powerful business (in Boss, 1998, 19).

This use of cafés also creates a sense of community amongst patrons. At most of the cafés and coffee bars included in the study, owners and/or baristas knew the names of regulars and vice versa. For those who took part in the focus group, a friendly, relaxed and inviting environment is what is important in a café, giving validity to Boss' (1998) recognition of familiarity between owners and patrons. Central Auckland's café consumers appreciate the places which operate on a personal level...

"...it's somewhere that you go where they know you and they say hello and if you tell them something, they remember it. ...For me, that's important. ...it's definitely someone recognising me and remembering [my usual] and saying 'your long black is on the way" (focus group respondent).

In addition to the knowing of ones name, comfort is very important in the café environment. As a place where people meet or gather, the environment of a café must be a place where one can comfortably sit alone and read the paper or socialise with friends. Most consumers use the space for this purpose. In the following three sections, High Street, Ponsonby Road and the Mt Eden Village will be examined, in detail, with respect to their regulars and the sense of community which may or may not exist.

High Street

Located within a clustering of cafés and coffee bars, Jolt-The Espresso Bar serves espresso-based beverages, and while great coffee is cardinal, its approach is different. Of those frequenting Jolt, 40% of respondents were students, 37% were professional/managerial, with the remaining 23% employed in clerk or service occupations. Sixty-nine percent of respondents lived outside the Central Business
District. With a majority of consumers either employed or educated in the CBD and a greater number living outside the area, it's fair to say that High Street café consumers or 'regulars' use such spaces as a part of their weekday time geography between classes, for business gatherings or as havens to escape day-to-day pressures. It's because of such usage that most cafés in the area operate mainly during daytime hours.

At Jolt the owner is usually the person behind the espresso machine serving hot drinks and socialising with customers. Stating that about 80% of his customers are regulars, he believes one reason they return because of the atmosphere created by himself and other wait staff.

"It's pretty hard to come here and hide from us, at the counter, because you walk in here and you're [immediately] confronted by us. ...You come in here and what's going on behind the counter is what you're struck with. So, people have to enjoy that. People who don't cope with that, quietly/happily go on elsewhere".

![Image of Jolt chalkboard](https://example.com/jolt_chalkboard.jpg)

**Figure 7.12: An example of Jolt-The Espresso Bar's way of encouraging conversation.**

With a sidewalk chalkboard which changes daily and invites discussion, Jolt aims to create that first and foremost characteristic of third places: conversation (Figure 7.12). According to the owner, all the regulars know each other. Admitting that he uses the blackboard to encourage talk, the following illustrates the atmosphere of Jolt:
"...people start talking across the bar and from [the back of the coffeebar, and] the conversation starts to get going. I think probably more [here] than in most places [community exists] because in other places ...you go in and get a cup of coffee and hide at your table. Its all very nice, but here because there's so much action and reaction going on people get drawn into it, and the ones who can cope with it come back, ...are the ones who look for it. And the good regulars are openly encouraged to do it; ...they just butt in on other peoples conversations. There are no rules. I think it gives a very strong sense of community. Any place that's used by a community a lot is going to do that, and there's staunch regulars here who know ...its their place. They know each other, even if its only by sight. People feel able to just butt in on total strangers and talk with them, which is the best part ...I love that".

Figure 7.13 gives further evidence of the word-play which routinely takes place between the owner and regulars. In this coffee bar the owner plays a pivotal role in the creation of atmosphere. It is intended and performative. Likewise, wait staff who work at Jolt have to be able to handle this as well as take part in the theatrics.

Figure 7.13: Early morning participant observation at Jolt-The Espresso Bar (Wednesday, April 29, 1998).

| Note: I decided to grab a seat at the bar instead of sitting in the corner. This way I am mixing in with this particular cafés culture. I placed my newspaper on top of my notebook. |
| 8 to 9am: |
| • customers in groups of 2 or 3. |
| • regulars know owner by name. |
| • the banter goes back and forth over the bar. |
| • bar is full (4 seats: 3 customers + me). All reading the paper and talking to owner. |
| • busiest time: 8am - 8:30am |
| • before work/business crowd |
| • evidence of tastescape: a regular described to owner how awful the coffee was at another coffee establishment, saying he only drank it because he needed the caffeine. |

A part of Jolt’s character is in its advertising which is done in the owner’s spare time. Figure 7.14 is an example of Jolt’s declaration of difference amongst a sea of CBD cafés. When asked why he chooses to advertise in such a way, the owner’s response involves the creation of a memorable experience:
"I like to be one step apart from normal all the time, to lodge in peoples memory. People will remember Jolt because they have that [flier], or the letters on the wall or any of those other little things. They're the things that lodge in peoples minds, so it just makes it that much more memorable".

Figure 7.14: Jolt advertising its difference.

**Ponsonby Road**

Located at the centre of Ponsonby Road, Santos and Atomic Café are two of many cafés which now roast their own coffee beans that are then sold and used in the making of their espresso-based drinks. Of those respondents frequenting the cafés of Ponsonby, 68% are professional/managerial, 20% from service or trade occupations, 10% students, with the remaining 2% being retired. A majority of consumers frequent on a regular basis with 59% living locally (and an additional 23% of respondents living in surrounding areas)(Figure 7.15). According to part-owner Marcello, there is a huge variety of customers who frequent Santos, and he knows all of them.

"From 8 yrs. old to 80 yrs. old. A mix from all sorts. You get a lot of authors, physicians, architects, lawyers, school teachers, [and] definitely a lot of musicians".

With this recognition one could say that Santos operates as a leveller; yet another description fitting a ‘third place’. The owners also recognise a different ‘crowd’ visiting their establishment on weekends, mostly from the North Shore. With weekend brunch being very popular in Auckland, many consumers travel from
Figure 7.15: Ponsonby café questionnaire respondents area of residence (n=52).
April 1998

2% 6% 8% 19% 59%

Source: Atlas of New Zealand Boundaries 1996
further areas to frequent; a phenomena noticed by the owners of Atomic Café, Sierra and Solla Sollew.

**Figure 7.16: Early morning participant observation at Santos (Tuesday, April 28, 1998).**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Observations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6:45am</td>
<td>- 1 customer already there when I arrived/reading newspaper.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- 2 more show up:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- &quot;I'll have the usual&quot; says one customer, who has brought someone new with her. They are waiting for a 3rd person to show up (they know Glen (barista)).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7:20am</td>
<td>- 12 customers (5 or so appear to be here before work. Glen later confirms that all of the customers this morning were here before work.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- 1 customer I recognise from prior participant observations during the daytime (a regular/everyday/same time (according to Glen)).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:30am</td>
<td>- a lot of customers running into others they know/know Glen.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Of all the cafés which have taken part in this research, it is Santos which seems to fit Oldenburg’s (1997) definition of a ‘third place’ the most. It is very communal. Two of the three owners are Brazilian, bringing the flavour of South America to the café. During the 1998 soccer World Cup, they brought in big-screen televisions to watch the event with their ‘regulars’. It is examples like this which confirm the richness of a café in the lives of its locals and regulars. Figure 7.16 is an example of an early morning at Santos. Opening in the morning for those regulars who then go on to work, the barista knows what their ‘usual’ morning beverage is, and the socialising begins early. They know the barista by name and vice versa.

By mid-day this café which seats 50 now has 22 patrons. As can be seen in Figure 7.17, the place is busy with conversation and socialising between groups of friends, business colleagues and others moving between tables to talk to others they know. Many are there for brief visits and some stay for hours. Many of the regulars are musicians, artists and/or actors, who use Santos as a place in which to conduct business, which is common for those in the entertainment industry (McCormick, 1998). In terms of time geography cafés may function as a station in the daily paths of city dwellers, on an individual level, as time-space intersections in the everyday life of its regulars.
Figure 7.17: Mid-day participant observation at Santos (Tuesday, April 21, 1998).

11am: 22 people.
- Six men sitting alone, with the rest of the tables occupied by groups of two or three (men, women or men & women).
- Patrons dressed in black clothes/trendy, w/ cell phones, some business people, reading newspapers and socialising.
- People running into others they know.
- Owner mingling with patrons (knows many by name).

11:40am:
- At least four of the patrons are still here (from the 11am count).
- Glen (barista) chatting with regulars/friends.
- Very relaxed feeling.
- Group of friends.

12 noon:
- People continue to run in to others they know at Santos/join them.
- A lot of people greeting each other (meeting on an unarranged basis, then sitting together).
- Customers at the front (on the sidewalk) have been there for over an hour.
- Some customers moving around between tables, to talk to others they know.

At Atomic the atmosphere created by regulars is similar to that of Santos. According to the owner, everyone is the typical Atomic customer...

"There's suits, there's old people, young people, mothers with babies, fathers with babies, business executives, shift workers, construction workers. I don't think there's actually any [group] that doesn't come in. There's quite a few [regulars]. Probably a dozen people that come twice a day, maybe fifty that come once a day and others that come in every few days. I know most of their names".

Figure 7.18 is an example of a weekday morning at Atomic. Befitting the definition of a ‘third place’ as an inclusive place, Atomic’s customers are older, middle-aged and very young, arty, business-oriented and vogue; a place where everyone feels comfortable.
Like Santos and Jolt, Atomic has a very strong communal nature. Many of the regulars have met each other here and continue to meet. According to the owner “…if they go somewhere else they’re not gonna bump into their friends”. As a ‘third place’, designed to be as comfortable as one’s living room, Atomic

"...is a 2nd home for a lot of people. There’s quite a few that come in twice a day, every single day. It’s a big part of their lives" (Atomic owner).

**Mt Eden Village**

Nestled amongst the shops in the Mt Eden Village, Solla Sollew and Sierra serve both espresso and community. Of those who frequent the cafés in the village, 52% are professional/managerial, 26% are students, with remaining respondents employed in the clerk, service, agriculture or trade industry (18%), retired (1%), self-employed (1%), unemployed (1%) or homeless (1%). The community of Mt Eden is home to a variety of shelters and places designed to help those less fortunate. Solla Sollew is often a haven for a number of these people.
Figure 7.19: Mt Eden café questionnaire respondents area of residence (n=117)

April 1998

Source: Atlas of New Zealand Boundaries 1996
"...a lot of transient sort of people, that are not that bad, just more characters, who come in everyday. Occasionally some of them can be a little bit of a nuisance factor, but mainly they're just people who want to feel as if they belong somewhere" (Solla Sollew co-owner).

As seen elsewhere, a majority of consumers are regulars, with 48% living locally (and an additional 34% from surrounding wards)(Figure 7.19).

Situated prominently in the centre of the village, Solla Sollew with its playful theme is yet another Central Auckland café which opens its doors early for its regulars. The café which seats 42 was full at 7:26am one morning when I went along to undertake participant observation (Figure 7.20). This particular morning, Solla Sollew had a wide range of customers: groups of friends, a group conducting business and a number of individuals alone. A grandfather with his granddaughter sat and enjoyed his morning latte; something he does ‘every morning’. With 87% of its customers being regulars (those who have frequented for six months or more), Solla Sollew contributes to the community in many ways.

Figure 7.20: Early morning participant observation at Solla Sollew (Thursday, April 30, 1998).

7:26am:
- arrived and the café was full!
- all before work/business types
- all tables by the windows are full.
- chatting, eating, drinking coffee, reading the paper.

8am:
- almost everyone is a new customer since I arrived/turnover has taken place (except for the grandfather and schoolgirl). The grandfather starts up a conversation with me and tells me he ‘comes everyday’ to Solla Sollew.
  - ‘I come here every morning’
  - ‘I like the social part of it’
  - likes the coffee here... has ‘...a latte every morning’
  - ‘Cappuccino’ the resident cat comes and sits at my table and goes to sleep.

9:10am:
- 13 customers (4 single (3 of which reading the paper), 1 group of 4 (same identified at 8:40am), 1 group of 3 (business/professional), 1 group of 2 customers).
A community noticeboard in the corner advertises classes, flats to let and upcoming events, and whenever anything is planned to take place in the village, the 'Solla Sollew' sign above its doors is used to advertise to the community. A further sign of its importance to the Mt Eden community was made just recently. A famous mural painted eighteen years ago along the outside wall of the café was recently updated by artist Claudia Pond Eyley. As "...an art-work that people come and look at, which is associated with the café" the artist decided to slightly change its appearance, adding Dr Seuss characters (Solla Sollew co-owner)(Figure 7.21). A conscious effort has been made by the owners of the café to create a space where everyone may feel comfortable. This includes allowing patrons to sit and read the paper if they so desire, without feeling as if they need to move on in a hurry or feel hassled in any way. According to a co-owner, the theme helps give this sort of attitude: "...it feels a bit silly and loose".

Located in the same city-block as Solla Sollew, Sierra too has its regulars (67% of Sierra’s respondents). With a very different design, it also measures up to the definition of Oldenburg’s 'third place' (1997). The owners of Sierra recognised "...there was a real opportunity to have another good café in Mt Eden" and having had a child recently, they noted the need to create a space which welcomes young mothers.

"You get a lot of mothers coming in on their own and [some of them] lead very mundane lives. We try and add a little bit of excitement"
into their lives and try and make them feel special. I think that's why they come here because we do fuss after them and we fuss after the kids as much as our time allows. It's all about making people feel welcome..." (Sierra co-owner).

Like other cafés studied for this thesis project, a large mix of consumers frequent Sierra.

"You've got mothers who are part of the mid-morning crowd, ...and then you've got your Mt Eden/Remuera ladies. Then you have your core group of people, especially at the weekends, ...the trendy-ites who tend to come in. I don't think they're local. [Weekdays are more locals]. You get a lot of the working people coming in for working lunches, local businesses (real estate agents), and the evenings are a much different crowd. They're much older" (Sierra co-owner).

Like Jolt, Santos and Atomic, Sierra owners know their regulars and vice versa. An example of this took place during my interview for this thesis. The owner said goodbye to a regular customer and then proceeded to tell me what he orders: "John's in everyday and has two or three flat whites." A very strong sense of community exists between consumer and owner. Its all a part of the café experience which brings people back; "...at the end of the day we end up going to the places we know and feel comfortable in" (Sierra co-owner). In New Zealand, the café scene is becoming more and more popular; "...engrained into peoples lives" (Sierra co-owner). This can be seen in the weekend brunch scene which has emerged recently.

"Ten years ago families never went out for brunch, but now you get little kids coming in and asking for fluffies. Ten years ago they wouldn't have known what a fluffy was- they didn't exist" (Sierra co-owner).

A new language of lattés and eggs benedict has changed the lifestyles of many New Zealanders, with establishments like Sierra and Solla Sollew, Atomic and Santos creating and transforming its gastronomic culture.

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1 Customer's name was changed for the purpose of this thesis.
Chapter 7: Five cafés: consumption, third places & the senses

Starbucks Coffee

A new sort of coffee experience is set to enter the New Zealand coffee and café ‘scene’ towards the end of 1998. Starbucks Coffee, the American coffee chain discussed briefly in Chapter Four, will be opening its first stores in New Zealand. With a philosophy of creating ‘third places’ where people can gather or relax throughout the day, Starbucks intends to ‘re-invent’ the coffee experience (Figure 7.22).

According to Starbucks Coffee’s operations manager here in New Zealand,

"...A large part of the success of Starbucks in North America has been this ‘third place’ concept, where somebody can come in, they can take a rest from their busy day, they can start their day there".

The Starbucks consumer in North America fits the description of the Auckland café consumer. The large coffee-chain recognises the fact that to everyone it can be, and is a different place whether it be a student who sits for an hour or more with their cup, a ‘stroller mum’ or one going out after older children have gone to school to meet with others, business people with their cellphones, or those who simply sit and read the newspaper. This is the feeling that Starbucks intends to re-create in New Zealand.
Starbucks also recognises the characteristics which make up a third place.

"Everybody contributes to the third place. The customers contribute to it. It's not just the bricks and mortar. ...we build great stores, we serve great coffee, but it's not until people walk in the door and start interacting with each other and start interacting with our people that the place starts to happen. ...It will be up to [them] to create the third place. We'll just serve the coffee" (interview, Starbucks Operations Manager).

As a major player, Starbucks intends on opening 50 company-run stores throughout New Zealand over the next ten years (Guy, 1998). This will, no doubt, change the face of coffee in this country, but as the first store is yet to open at the time of writing this thesis, focus on the coffee giant will remain minimal. Its inclusion here was made for a number of reasons: it will open the coffee market within New Zealand, its presence will change the urban café landscape and it defines itself as the 'third place.

7.4 The sensual place

Cafés and coffee bars where one can go, gather and relax are also very sensual places. In Chapter Two, the role of the senses was examined as was the geographical idea of both a soundscape and smellscape. Here, the idea of such experiences will be examined in the café situation using narratives collected by means of survey questionnaire and participant observation.

The café is a multi-sensory environment. Not merely contained within its four walls, the sensual can be seen, heard and smelled outside its doors and onto the streetscape. The first of the five senses to be illustrated will be the visual. The visual aspect of cafés is one which is highly recognised by consumers. It is through the eyes that one sees all that is going on inside or out; the performative wait staff, other patrons, the design, the street. As this aspect has already been examined earlier in the chapter, this discussion will remain brief, merely recognising that the visual is important. As geography relies heavily on the visual (e.g. Rose, 1993), I decided to allocate a section of this thesis to the illustration of how three of the four 'other' senses, inter-relate and are involved in the creation of place experience.

Hearing, smell and taste contribute to ones familiarity in space, providing awareness of that which is spatial and the qualities of place, past and present (see Rodaway,
Chapter 7: Five cafés: consumption, third places & the senses

1994). In the case of the café, many senses work together to produce an enriched sensuous experience. That which is heard plays an important role in the character of a café. The sound of coffee beans astir when roasting, flicking of the doser/grinder distributing the right amount of beans into the grinder, the coffee grinder, the espresso machine as it forces hot water through the granules and its steam wand which foams the milk, the banging of the bucket (holds the coffee in the espresso machine) in order to empty the used coffee granules, people engaged in conversation and/or laughing, kitchen noise, flatware, cups and saucers in use, the till and the music are all a part of the heard experience. Six percent of respondents recognised music as an essential component of the café. While this number is of those who stated music as what they liked best, a number of respondents also referred to music as a negative feature. The volume and type of music played contributes to the intended mood of a café or coffee bar. In most cases this is positive; in others it is considered a shortcoming:

"Only drawback is lots of cafés overdo it on the loud, incessant music- not always to my taste. Often intrusive" (survey respondent).

"Its sometimes better to have no music, than bad music" (focus group participant).

Smell is fundamental in the creation of ones café experience. The aroma of coffee beans roasting, the grinding of coffee beans, the espresso machine as it espresses the dark beverage of choice, and of food work together to construct meaning. It also releases memory(ies). In the case of smell, one negative circumstance was expressed by respondents: smoke. In New Zealand restaurants are not smoke-free, and for those who do not smoke it can be offensive. Besides this, smell is a very pleasant and all-encompassing part of the café experience. When combined with the sense of taste, smell accounts for the flavour of food and drink. The primary beverage consumed in cafés is espresso. With many cafés roasting their own beans, the experience becomes focused around the coffee. In the next section I will examine the idea that its not just the coffee and question whether or not this statement is true.
7.4.1 'It's not just the coffee', or is it? (Holman, 1997)

When journalist Sheri Holman wrote that 'it's not just the coffee' in the Starbucks reader *Coffee Matters*, she was referring to the defining characteristic which brings consumers back to a particular coffee establishment. According to respondents, 60% of consumers say it is the coffee that they like best. Of all the features and characteristics acknowledged by respondents, 'coffee' was mentioned the most.

Remarks were also made about the consistency of coffee. According to a number of respondents and owners, too many establishments make coffee which is poor in quality which leads many consumers to remain loyal to certain establishments. With a high percentage of consumers rating coffee as one of their favourite characteristics of a certain place, the idea of a 'tastescape' could be conceived.

**Figure 7.23:** Responses by focus group participants in regards to the coffee or food served in cafés.

- "I wouldn't go somewhere that doesn't have good coffee".
- "It definitely has to have good coffee".
- "[A café] has to have good food as well as good coffee".

According to a survey respondent, cafés open "...society up to different taste experiences". For Central Auckland's café consumers, these *taste experiences* are greatly involved in the construction and memory of certain places in particular. If one has a bad taste experience then, chances are, they will not return. If one has a favourable taste experience, they will remember that occurrence and return to repeat the event. In the case of the café, it is the coffee or food taste experience which acts as a reminder or memory releaser, and if either is unpleasant, the patron goes elsewhere (Figure 7.23). In the same way that the smellscape or soundscape describes a particular sense in terms which are spatially-ordered or place-related, the idea of a 'tastescape' goes further to suggest a relationship between a person and environment in the form of the edible and/or drinkable. Just as the idea of that which is smelled and heard offers an enriched and enlarged interpretation of place, that which is tasted also brings meaning in the everyday lives of the café consumer. With the coffee being such an integral part of the café experience, so too is the tastescape which exists.

"[They come back] because the coffee is good" (Santos owner).
7.5 The loss of a 3\textsuperscript{rd} place

During the course of this thesis research, the café called Solla Sollew was sold, with the new owners deciding to change the theme (which 20\% of respondents said they liked best) and completely re-design the establishment. I had personally considered Solla Sollew as my own ‘third place’, a feeling shared by a number of friends. I therefore witnessed and also felt a loss. My place to gather, meet and socialise over the past two years had been re-painted; the little yellow character which could be seen on its walls and coffee-cups, taken down and out of sight; the community noticeboard in the corner, replaced by a large floral arrangement; only a fraction of the original staff remaining, with new faces unfamiliar to regulars. In this section, I will examine the loss of a third place through my own eyes and those of a barista who has worked in the café for six years.

While waiting in line to be served at the establishment which bought Solla Sollew, I overheard a couple discussing the change of ownership and their sense of loss with the barista. The couple had just returned from being away for a month and decided to go to the café for dinner to find it was no longer. In the words of the female customer, she was “...devastated”. The barista asked what they thought of the new place, and the response was that it was “...not as fun”. The playful theme and design was gone, replaced by something very different. I found it difficult to go to the new place. Would it be able to take the place of Solla Sollew? Would I feel the same sense of warmth and community? These were my questions and probably very similar to the ones other regulars had.

I decided to conduct an interview with a barista which has worked for Solla Sollew ever since it opened, is a close personal friend of the old owners, and continues to work at the new establishment. According to him, “the clientele starting changing almost instantly”.

"Some [regulars] have come back. Not necessarily because of the café, ...more or less because of the staff and because they know that they're welcome, and because I know the people on a personal basis. A lot of the clientele which we did have [at Solla Sollew], were on a name to name basis and we were starting getting into each others lives, so to speak".
The café was a third place to its regulars. Initially staff were under the assumption that what was Solla Sollew would not change. They were told that fresh paint and a few new fixtures were to be added, but the café would generally remain the same. After being closed for a week, the new café opened. The old Solla Sollew sign remained above the entrance, leading many to believe it had gone unchanged. According to the barista interviewed, even the wait staff were in for a surprise.

"From that Saturday, I came in and saw the changes in the café and basically my heart stopped".

For those who worked at Solla Sollew, it was more than just a job.

"I was coming to Solla Sollew and just enjoying myself, ...having a bit of fun with people. It wasn't a job to me. It wasn't work. I was getting paid to have fun, basically. I loved it" (barista interview).

The sense of community was felt by and within the wait staff. Many came to Solla Sollew on their days off, on an everyday, regular basis. The café operated as both the second and the third place to employees.

"...I used to be in here almost everyday. You'd come and see your friends... it was always fun because there were always at least two or three staff that weren't working, always here, and you could always just sit down, wait a couple minutes and someone would come by and have a coffee with you. You knew that they were always going to be there. Didn't know who, but someone was always going to be there" (barista interview).

A majority of wait staff left the café after the change of ownership took place, with about six of a staff of 30 remaining and a further four leaving in the first week.

For the patrons, especially those considered regulars, the loss of Solla Sollew has also been difficult.

"A lot of people were very upset. A lot of people were... especially the regulars. Our clientele in the morning basically dropped down to about twenty percent of what we used to have.

...[the new place] isn't as warm and as friendly. ...in that first week, a lot of regulars [came] through asking, demanding to know, what had happened to the café. Why had it changed" (barista interview).

With a lot of regulars deciding not to frequent the new café, old wait staff really felt a difference.
"We had a relationship with them. ...A lot of the regulars have gone, which is really sad because that's what I came to work for; to see those people and the friendly atmosphere which was here" (barista interview).

A number of local businesses situated around the old café used to come in to Solla Sollew regularly for coffee. This too has changed with the new ownership, with some regulars having been displaced to other cafés in the village. A large group of school kids who attend a local alternate high school used to frequent Solla Sollew two or three times a day, everyday.

"We had a good relationship with about eight or nine kids and the teachers. For the first little while, they used to annoy us because they are loud and weren't quite the 'café scene', so to speak, but they grew on us and we grew on them and [two of us] had an excellent relationship with them. A name to name basis. That instantly changed with the change of the café.

...We don't serve filter coffee anymore" (barista interview).

The significance of serving filter coffee meant that those with limited disposable incomes were able to take part in the café experience. For one couple, in particular, who frequented the café regularly and were often the last customers most nights, the changing hands was very upsetting; a feeling shared by a number of regulars.

"They came in, had a look around, caned me (but I knew they were just caning the café and I took it in its stride). It was so hard for me not to agree with people" (barista interview).

The café that was once Solla Sollew offered much to its regulars as well as the wait staff. While attention here to the loss of such a place may seem excessive, the impact of its disappearance has genuinely affected its regulars, wait staff and the community. Functioning as both second and third places, the reaction of those who frequented and worked in the café gives evidence of its importance in the daily lives of many. The benefits of third places, according to Oldenburg (1997), both 'precious and unique' are counted in personal terms.

7.6 Summary

As a site of consuming, café and coffee bar environments play critical roles in the new landscapes of consumption. These trendy places are used and re-used in
successful cycles, everyday, by consumers or 'regulars'. Just as Jackson and Holbrook (1995) found shopping as an activity which actively and significantly moulds people's identities, so too it can be said about the café and coffee bar environments. As a regular in such places, the café/coffee bar becomes a part of the everyday; of one's own time geography. Just as people have been known to identify with what they eat (Bell & Valentine, 1997), they too identify with drinking a latte at a local café. Coffee, like food, has been woven into the construction of lifestyles; a lifestyle which is new to New Zealand and includes the café and brunch scenes.

Eating and drinking espresso-based beverages in the public sphere represents an incredibly important social, communal and geographical experience.

The levelling, primacy of conversation, certainty of meeting friends, looseness of structure, and eternal reign of the imp of fun all combine to set the stage for experiences unlikely to be found elsewhere (Oldenburg, 1997, 43).

Like the Great, Good Places Oldenburg (1997) describes in his book, the café and coffee bar of the 1990s potentially gets you through the day. While these establishments, in particular, may not operate as third places to all, evidence in this chapter has demonstrated its importance in the informal daily lives of many.
Chapter 8

CONCLUSION

At the beginning of this thesis journalist Sherri Holman (1997) was quoted as stating that *it's not just the coffee* which appeals to the café, coffee bar and coffeehouse consumer. In her compelling account of a trip to the local coffeehouse she claimed that people 'want out'; out of their livingrooms to a sidewalk table and chair, or inside to a bar stool to read the newspaper or converse with friends. Prompted by this question, the thesis was structured around a set of objectives aimed to discover what it is about these coffee-drinking establishments which attracts a large number of consumers who have included the café as a part of their geography of everyday life.

The aim of this thesis has been to extend the ideas advanced by Bell and Valentine's (1997) 'total consumption package' within the context of Central Auckland’s emerging coffee and café culture. A geography focusing on distinct aspects of the consumption package has exposed a number of characteristics of the café which involve the everyday routines of individuals. The research has explored and expanded ideas of consumption, community, and ‘the sensual’ to portray the café experience in a holistic manner. The principal contention of this thesis involves the establishment of cafés and coffee bars as ‘third places’.

This chapter summarises six key research findings, offering conclusions and relates the study to the wider geography of Central Auckland and, more generally, changing urban landscapes. The chapter concludes with a brief reflection on the strengths and limitations of the study, and suggests directions for further research.
8.1 Place & the café environment

The major themes of this thesis are a) the café as a consuming experience, b) the café as a communal place, and c) the café as a sensual experience. The following section reflects on these three themes and draws conclusions.

Concepts and research discussed in the body of the thesis leads to the conclusion that the Central Auckland café and coffee bar functions first and foremost as a third place. The geographic idea of place is most fitting to the situation of the café; a site incorporating all three elements of locale, location and sense of place. For many, the café has become a ‘third place’, in relation to home and work (the 1st and 2nd places respectively), providing amenities which include a ‘total consumption package’ and a sensual experience.

The café as a third place involves it being a site of consumption and sensual practices. It may be described as one where anything and everything is absorbed as part of the ‘experience’. Presenting a ‘total consumption package’, the café is designed to ‘seduce’ the consumer in a variety of ways, with atmosphere playing a critical role in the overall ‘seduction’. The creation of atmosphere includes a mixture of elements which are both physically sensed (i.e. seen, heard, smelled, and tasted) as well as sensed in place (i.e. community and belonging). Figure 8.1 illustrates that which is provided and consumed in the café environment, and will be used as a focal point for the remainder of this section in the presentation of key research findings.

The physical senses of seeing, hearing, smelling and tasting all contribute strongly to what is consumed by the café and coffee bar patron, for it is the senses which brings individuals to a particular place. The first of six key findings of this thesis involves the notion of ‘seeing’ and ‘being seen’ as a part of the creation of atmosphere. The presence of ‘others’ plays a role in the creation of a café’s ambience, allowing the consumer to be concurrently audience and performer. This dual role was recognised both by survey respondents and focus group members. In addition to this idea of informal ‘theatre’, cafés hire wait staff who project a certain identifiable image. Presented along with the menu, the performative encounters which take place between wait staff and patron are played out on a ‘stage’. Wait staff and baristas
engage in the everyday theatre of the café or coffee bar, performing ‘centre stage’ while preparing espresso beverages and creating live atmosphere.

**Figure 8.1: Elements provided and consumed in the café/coffee bar as a third place.**

The senses play an important role in the definition of place, offering distinct elements to the geographical experience which are relevant to the ‘placing’ of self. Sensual aspects of the café can be seen, heard and smelled both inside, and outside onto the streetscape. The rich robust smellscapes of freshly ground espresso beans and paninis incorporated with the soundscapes of music, conversation and the espresso machine at work add to the consumed experience. That which is tasted has been found to be just as important to consumers as that which is seen, smelled, and heard, leading to the idea of a tastescape. This issue was identified as influential in the
creation of place; recognised as a favourite characteristic and *raison d'être* of a café or coffee bar by both focus group and survey respondents.

Much like the basic principles of the smellscape and soundscape which are spatially-ordered and place-related, *a proposed 'tastescape' is suggestive of a relationship between the individual and environment in the form of that which is eaten or drunk*. This is a *second* key finding of the thesis. In the case of the café and coffee bar, the espresso beverages prepared and served are a fundamental aspect of the experience, with distinctive tastes attracting consumers to certain establishments. The physical senses of sight, hearing, smelling and taste are catered to and consumed within the café environment, with ‘others’, wait staff, decor, music, coffee, food, and the presence of others creating a third place. In addition to these ingredients, a sense in place of community and belonging is provided and consumed (see Figure 8.1).

The café as a communal place is inclusive of both community and a sense of place/belonging. Within this idea of community rests the *third* and *fourth* key findings of this thesis: sense of community and locality. In the case of the café, *coffee creates the gathering with many patrons frequenting local establishments*. As part of the creation of community, owners and wait staff interact on a first-name basis with regulars, know their usual drink or food of choice, and are often a part of the conversation. According to Eyles (1985, 61), “...locality remains a vital arena for patterned social relationships”, as can be seen in the present context with up to 59% of surveyed café and coffee bar consumers frequenting establishments nearest their home or work. Functioning as social centres in local life, contributing to the human need for community, many cafés are inclusive places, accepting of differing groups and differing ages. Expenditure on beverages and food tend to be the only prerequisites to participation in the café culture. Indeed, it could be argued that difference is welcomed in many establishments. The benefits of ‘third places’ accrue to those who value their sociability and frequent regularly, with rewards which include novelty, perspective, and the generation of friendships (Oldenburg, 1997). This beneficial nature puts people ‘in place’ over time, making third places more important than a cup of coffee itself. *While cafés may not be considered ‘third places’ by everyone, they do, in some cases, represent both 2nd and 3rd places to wait staff (i.e. work and a place to belong)*. This *fifth* key finding recognises the
importance of cafés as third places to employees of some establishments. As a communal place, cafés and coffee bars provide a space where one can relax and converse, serving the human need to feel a part of a community and belong. In the café, it is the atmosphere of the third place as well as coffee which becomes the product sold. For regulars, visitation of the local café or coffee bar functions as a part of their daily or weekly time-geography.

Time-geography is a depiction of one’s biography through pathways in time and space. Café consumers are knowledgeable and skilled agents in their own time-geography, positioning visits to these establishments within their weekday or weekend schedules. The café as a third place functions as a haven from the stresses of home and work. Evidence within this thesis emphasises the value of cafés and coffee bars to the Auckland consumer, stationed in close proximity to first and second places which make frequenting them possible. The flow of ones own time-geography is choreographed through social space, constituting a social reality and meaning to the agent, in this case the Auckland café consumer.

Cafés and coffee-drinking have recently become a distinct part of the culture of many Western cities, much like those of the past (e.g. early English coffeehouses and coffee lounges and bars of the 1950s). Evidence presented in this thesis leads to the assertion of a café and coffee ‘culture’ existing within Central Auckland, with members fitting the description and general characteristics of those of the new middle class. The affirmation that most consumers of café culture are part of the new middle class is the sixth and final key finding of this research.

This thesis has involved an extension of the ‘total consumption package’ concept advanced by Bell and Valentine (1997). Central Auckland cafés and coffee bars are sites of consumption, which regulars identify and consider as ‘third places’, offering the consumer a multisensory experience. The importance of the third place within the daily and weekly lives of regulars is measured most greatly when it is lost, as was the case for this researcher (see section 7.5). Establishments which function as stations within one’s time-geography add social meaning to the everyday. The major and most significant conclusion of this thesis is the identification and recognition of Auckland’s cafés and coffee bars as a neutral, third place to their ‘regulars’. The work of Oldenburg (1997) refers to individuals’ ‘quest for community’ and ‘the
problem of place’ in the 1990s. The exertion of this thesis, in regards to Central Auckland’s café regulars, is that these establishments have solved the dilemma of placelessness for those who have found the social benefits of this Great Good Place.

The symbolism of coffee and cafés is wrapped up in the construction of identity and pursuit of style in a city of text, written and read in the language of consumption. In the following section, the idea of cafés and consumption will be considered within the broader structures of cities.

8.2 Cafés, consumption & the city

A common theme throughout this thesis, as well as geographical literatures, has been the idea of symbolism and new landscapes of consumption. The search for symbolic ornamentation and embellishment by those with spending power are major forces shaping the (post)modern landscape. Occupational restructuring has coincided with a restructuring/redevelopment of the urban landscape. Strategies of urban redevelopment in the city are focused on consumption and visual attractions which encourage people to spend (Zukin, 1998). Tourism plays a vital role in the symbolic culture of cities in which ‘entertainment retailing’ can sell an easily recognised name. In the case of Auckland, redevelopment of the Civic Centre will include the introduction of Planet Hollywood and an Imax theatre as part of an entertainment complex intended to heighten the magnetic appeal of the ‘City of Sails’. Other recent changes in Auckland, such as housing, parallel those of other major Western cities. Auckland’s inner city suburban and downtown population is the third largest in Australasia and growing by 2.6% per year (Austin & Whitehead, 1998). Auckland is maturing as a metropolitan area with a growing number of spaces offering symbolic culture to the ‘lifestyle’ consumer with a disposable income to spend.

The conversion of central city buildings into apartments, and landscapes of production into those of consumption, leisure, and spending, are again reflective of a wider restructuring taking place in cities throughout the world. The microgeography of coffee and cafés discussed in this thesis represents a manifestation of the ways in which the new middle class construct lifestyles and identification around
expenditure. The object of this thesis (cafés and coffee bars) is just one of the many forms of written texts read within a plethora of inscriptions on the urban landscape.

8.3 Research strengths & limitations

This thesis adopted the vantage point of the consumer, aiming to extend the ideas of consumption ‘packages’ developed by human geographers. Thus a survey of consumers, interviews with owners and wait staff, a focus group meeting, and participant observation were employed to investigate the consumption patterns which exist in Central Auckland’s cafés and coffee bars. The study has been useful in identifying the feelings held by consumers, giving voice to their everyday lived experience.

The timing of semi-structured interviews strengthened my relationship with café and coffee bar owners and wait staff taking part in the research (April 1998). These were undertaken first and were followed by participant observation and other methods. Initial contact and a non-threatening approach allowed me to introduce myself, with frequent visitation creating a friendly relationship. The questionnaire survey of consumers provided demographic and behavioural data which enabled the testing of Oldenburg’s ‘third place’ ideas and helped to confirm the existence of a tastescape. The large sample size allowed the opportunity to explore statistical associations. A portion of the questionnaire survey allowed consumers to provide opinions on the cafés they frequent as well as the recent trend. Some of this attitudinal data was then boxed separate from the text and displayed as figures to highlight comparable perceptions and beliefs. These boxed sections allowed for the voice of consumers to “…be heard as narrative within the text” (Clark, 1997, 137). A single focus group meeting also offered strength to the thesis as it was conducted towards the end of the research analysis period (August 1998), allowing the researcher to clarify issues and ask further questions arising after administration of the questionnaire survey. Photographs added to the study by visually reinforcing aspects of the research investigation, analysis and findings.

Two limitations of the study are worth mentioning. The first of these limitations may be considered positive as well as negative in nature and surrounds the issue of scope.
The scope of the thesis was restricted to that of café and coffee bar consumers, opting not to question non-users. I wanted to give voice to the café consumer to identify the primary reasons for café visitation. A second focus group of non-users could have included the examination of reasons why they do not frequent these places. A second limitation may be found in the testing of the sensual, as this was done primarily through participant observation. Questions were posed to the focus group about the coffee, music, ‘seeing’ and ‘being seen’, but direct inquiry of the role of the senses was not asked in the survey, but rather depicted my own vantage point as a participant user of cafés (not just observer).

8.4 Future research

Within the context of consumption, future research should continue to explore arenas other than that of the shopping mall, a site heavily focused upon by human geographers in the early 1990s. The range of consumptive behaviours is vast and must not be restricted to one particular site. There has been very little academic research to date within the context of coffee, cafés, and coffee bars. A future research suggestion would include the examination of the commodification of coffee, uncovering and displaying the conditions of production prior to its reaching the market and becoming disguised. The work of Smith (1996) focuses on consumption, production and the politics of Starbucks Coffee, offering a geography which is concealed by market advertising. The scope of this thesis briefly touched upon this aspect of the coffee commodity chain in discussing global-local configurations, but this theme merits further exploration in the New Zealand context.

A further area of research to pursue may include a comparative study between Central Auckland and other urban centres, either within New Zealand or elsewhere in the Western world. Questions to consider include: Do contemporary cafés function as ‘third places’ in other cities/countries (such as the U.S.)? Do tastescapes exist? Who are the consumers? Is it a place to ‘see’ and ‘be seen’? Is a similar ‘package’ offered? The rapid flourishing of Central Auckland’s cafés and coffee bars as third places to their regulars, suggests the need for such comparative research to understand more thoroughly the links between place, identity and consumption.
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References


Appendices

APPENDIX 1

Questionnaire Survey

Female _______ Male _______

Please tick the age category to which you belong:

- Under 20 yrs.
- 21-25 yrs.
- 26-35 yrs.
- 36-45 yrs.
- 46-55 yrs.
- 56-64 yrs.
- Over 65 yrs.

With which ethnic group(s) do you identify? __________________________

In which suburb of Auckland do you reside? ___________________________

What is your occupation? ___________________________________________

...your gross salary?

- Less than $20,000/year
- $20,000 to $35,000/year
- $36,000 to $50,000/year
- Over $50,000/year

How much would you say you spend at coffeebars/cafes per month?

- Less than $10
- $10-$30
- $30-$50
- Over $50

How often do you come to this coffeebar/caffe? (times per month)

How often do you go to cafés, other than this one? (times per month)

What do you like best about this coffeebar or cafe?

How long have you been frequenting this café?

'Where once there was a pub on every corner in New Zealand, today there is a sign: Café Opening Soon' (Sheehan & Burton, 1995). A recent emergence of cafés and coffeebars has taken place throughout Auckland, as well as throughout New Zealand. It is here where I invite you to add your own feelings about this trend...

Thank you for your participation
Please fold & place in collection envelope
### APPENDIX 2

Seven groupings used for occupational representation
(based upon the *New Zealand Standard Classification of Occupations 1995*)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grouping</th>
<th>N.Z.S.C.O. label</th>
<th>Occupations given on questionnaire</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Group 1</td>
<td>Legislators, Administrators &amp; Managers</td>
<td>Company director, managing director, human resources manager, communications manager, office manager, business manager, manager, health manager, general manager, sales manager, restaurant manager, rest home manager, market research manager.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 2</td>
<td>Professionals</td>
<td>Engineer, doctor, lawyer, tertiary educator, architect, teacher, account manager, health professional, midwife, psychologist, researcher, consultant, accountant, librarian, statistician, psychotherapist, registered nurse, surveyor, developer, finance, banker.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 3</td>
<td>Technicians &amp; Professionals Associate</td>
<td>Film director, film technician, film maker, actor, artist, actress, trainer, airline pilot, writer, musician, real estate, broadcaster, merchandise manager, photographer, production co-ordinator, television production, costume designer, osteopath, graphic designer, sales rep., travel agent, Community Health worker, computer programmer, social worker, designer, telecommunicator, DJ.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 4</td>
<td>Clerks</td>
<td>Postal worker, supervisor, telephone operator, personal assistant, legal secretary, temp. worker.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 5</td>
<td>Service &amp; Sales Workers</td>
<td>Chef, hairdresser, assistant manager, mother, café worker, barista, waitress, retail, fire-fighter, adventure guide, outdoor recreation guide.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 6</td>
<td>Agriculture &amp; Fishery Workers</td>
<td>Gardener, horticulturist, wine trader.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 7</td>
<td>Trades Workers</td>
<td>Builder, mechanic.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX 3

Sample of Participant Information Sheets & Consent Forms.
To

My name is Karena J. Liberty. I am a student at The University of Auckland, conducting research for a Master of Arts degree in the Department of Geography. I am conducting this research for the purpose of my thesis on Central Auckland’s café & coffee bar consumption trends. The principal aims of this project are two-fold: first, to identify the characteristics of café and coffee bar consumers, as well as those who work in such establishments; and second to investigate the design and creation of such places.

You are invited to participate in my research and I would appreciate any assistance you can offer me. As part of my thesis I am examining your work place and its consumers. I would like to interview a number of staff members here, but you are under no obligation, at all, to be interviewed. Interviews would take twenty to thirty minutes and would be during work time. I would prefer to audio tape the interview, but this would only be done with your consent and could be turned off at any time or you can withdraw information. I would also like to photograph a number of staff members, in working situations, but this would only be done with your consent. If you do wish to be interviewed and/or photographed, please let me know by filling in a consent form and sending it to me or phoning me care of the Department of Geography. All information you provide in an interview is confidential and your name will not be used.

Thank you very much for your time and help in making this research possible. If you have any queries or wish to know more, please phone me or write me at:

Department of Geography
The University of Auckland
Private Bag 92019
Auckland. Tel. 373-7599 extn. 8465 (leave message)

My supervisor is: Dr. Robin Kearns
Department of Geography
The University of Auckland
Private Bag 92019
Auckland. Tel. 373-7599 extn. 8442
The Head of Department is: Dr. Peter Hosking
Department of Geography
The University of Auckland
Private Bag 92019
Auckland. Tel. 373-7599 extn.8456

For any queries regarding ethical concerns please contact:
Dr. Dennis Moore
Chair, The University of Auckland Human Subjects Ethics Committee,
The University of Auckland, Finance Registry, Private Bag 92019, Auckland.
Tel. 373-7599 extn.8939

CONSENT TO INTERVIEWED/AUDIO-TAPED AND/OR PHOTOGRAPHED
(Café proprietors, employees and City Council representatives)
THIS CONSENT FORM WILL BE HELD FOR A PERIOD OF SIX YEARS

Title of Project: Espresso-ing the ‘Consumption Package’: A socio-cultural geography of Central Auckland’s coffee & café society.

Researcher: Karena J. Liberty

I have been given and have understood explanation of this research project. I have had an opportunity to ask questions and have them answered. I understand that I may withdraw myself or any information traceable to me at any time up to August 1, 1998 without giving a reason, and that interviews will be audio-taped.

I agree to take part in this research.

Signed:

Name: (please print clearly)

Date:

I additionally agree to be photographed in my workplace.

Signed:

Name: (please print clearly)

Date: