



CHIEF ♦ EXECUTIVE ♦ BOARDS
I N T E R N A T I O N A L

Chief Executive Book Review # 31

A History of the World in Six Glasses

By: Tom Standage © 2005 Walker & Company ISBN 0-8027-1447-1

(See subsequent Chief Executive Book Reviews for the history of other drinks)

The Importance of Water

1. Thirst is deadlier than hunger. Food deprivation usually results in death within a few weeks, but water deprivation will cause death within a few days. Only air is more important than water
2. For tens of thousands of years man had to live near rivers, springs and lakes to ensure an adequate supply of fresh water
3. Using water as the basis for drinks has occurred only in the past 10 thousand years
4. Drinks do not occur naturally, but must be made deliberately
5. Man-made drinks offer safer alternatives to contaminated water
6. Drinks have been used:
 - a. As currencies
 - b. In religious rites
 - c. As political symbols
 - d. To highlight the power and status of the elite
 - e. To subjugate or appease the downtrodden
 - f. To celebrate births
 - g. To commemorate deaths
 - h. To strengthen social bonds
 - i. To seal business deals and treaties
 - j. To sharpen the senses or dull the mind

7. The history of the world can be divided into the dominance of six drinks:

- a. Beer
- b. Wine
- c. Spirits
- d. Coffee
- e. Tea
- f. Cola

❖ Three contain alcohol and three contain caffeine

8. Notes of interest:

- a. After thousands of years of consuming various drinks, it is interesting to observe the popularity of pure water in today's modern world
- b. Future wars may not be fought over energy supplies or other natural resources, but instead water
- c. Ariel Sharon, Israel's prime minister, said the Six Days War of 1967 really started two and a half years earlier when Syria started building a canal to divert two of the main tributaries of the Jordan River away from Israel

9. See subsequent Chief Executive Book Reviews for the history of beer, wine, spirits, coffee, tea and colas