



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

## Chief Executive Book Review # 34

### A History of the World in Six Glasses

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

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

#### The History of Coffee

1. The diffusion of rationalism throughout Europe in the 17<sup>th</sup> century favored coffee as the beverage of choice
2. Coffee and its caffeine became the very antithesis of alcohol. Whereas alcohol dulled the senses, coffee heightened them and enhanced the ability to reason
3. There were many attempts to ban the consumption of coffee, but it came to worldwide prominence as an alternative to alcohol, chiefly favored by intellectuals and businessmen.
4. European coffee houses became the place where people would go to hear the latest news, read the latest pamphlets, hear the latest political gossip and check on commodity prices
5. Eventually, the coffee houses began to specialize in certain kinds of information and became like modern-day Internet chat rooms
6. In France, coffee houses were open to everyone, including women, and many were filled with government spies
7. At the Café de Foy, on July 12, 1789, a young lawyer named Camille DesMoulins set the French Revolution in motion by leaping on a table, brandishing a pistol and shouting "To arms, citizens, to arms"
8. Today, Internet cafes facilitate the caffeine-fueled exchange of information
9. Coffee shop chains are used as ad hoc offices and meeting rooms by mobile workers

10. The current center of coffee culture, the city of Seattle, home of the Starbucks coffeehouse chain, is also where some of the world's largest software and Internet firms are based
11. Coffee has always been associated with invention, reason, and networking along with a dash of revolutionary fervor