

# Coffee break essay



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

By: Sam Dodge

E-mail: emailprotected

Coffee Break “ I think I just saw Jesus in my cup of Taster’s Choice” -Zippy the Pinhead I sit on the bench outside “ Caf Kilim” a popular coffee shop in downtown Portsmouth. Friends and buddies walk in and I ask how’s it going. They nod and come back out two minutes later with a cup of coffee in their hand. More people show up and go in and out each with a cup of joe in their hand. What is this drive to bring us here? Why has the coffee house become a social headquarters? What is this Coffee Culture and what breeds it? Down the street are three other coffee shops that are no more than 20 yards away from each other. The coffee shops for the most part are an attraction to the crowd that gathers on the streets during the day and night. Feeding the people their beloved drug almost anytime of the day. The coffee adapts to all seasons. In the summer the most popular being coffee being, iced. In the colder months people switch back to the hot coffee and the varying ways it can be concocted. I would never think that the coffee I was drinking had potency. A while ago I was reading one of those bathroom-reading books that had all the random facts and quotes. It said that if a person consumed 80 to 100 cups of coffee in a day you could go into convulsions and die. I have had bad days in which I have had like maybe 10 cups, but never have I got close to 80. I began to realize that what I was drinking all along was a drug. What a queer drug it is. Caffeine is related to other drugs such as tobacco, and marijuana, in that it grows readily in nature and uses its affect as protection from predators. To animals munching on its leaves it is poison. To us they are just great. This is most likely why many plants have adapted

<https://assignbuster.com/coffee-break-essay/>

to produce caffeine. More than a hundred plants have been recorded that produce caffeine molecules in their seeds, leaves, or bark (Braun 107). Coffee and Tea are the ones that we are familiar with. Contrary to popular myth coffee has more caffeine than tea, it is near half the amount. Although, more tea is consumed every day by the world's people than any other single beverage (Braun 109). The discovery of the power of caffeine is one that will be praised for centuries. Throughout time civilizations have come to find uses and rituals for caffeine. Stories go back to ancient China. The emperor, Shen Nung, while making a campfire, leaves from a shrub, got in his pot of boiling water. The emperor tasted the aromatic concoction and was pleased with the affects that it had. This was, according to legend, the initial discovery of caffeine, which is dated around 2737 B. C. Later tea and the idea of caffeine made its way to Japan by Buddhist monks. The affects of caffeine were ideal for the monk's meditation. The caffeine kept the monks from dozing off while in deep meditation. The discovery of caffeine in Japanese culture is accredited to the Buddhist monk Bodhidharma. He apparently fell asleep while in deep meditation and was so distressed with his weakness; he ripped off his eyelids and threw them to the ground where tea plants sprouted (Braun 112). What about that jittery feeling that you get after your 2nd cup of coffee? What affects does caffeine have on you? One would be surprised that for the most part, it is not totally the caffeine that causes you the feeling of perkiness. When the caffeine reaches you stomach, it begins to be broken down by enzymes. In order for caffeine to be broken down, it has to go through several steps as with any other substance you consume. After the first step there could be two chemicals that remain, either theophylline or paraxanthine. Theophylline is a molecule that is

<https://assignbuster.com/coffee-break-essay/>

approximately the same strength of caffeine. Paraxanthine on the other hand is somewhat stronger. Hence this is what gives you the jitters. Per cup about 70% is converted to paraxanthine. This process is similar to other drugs such as alcohol. Coffee though has a very slow rate of breaking down, compared to alcohol. A cup of coffee can affect you for 5 to 6 hours (Smart Basics Intelliscope 1). In order to understand how exactly caffeine affects the brain and the body, one would have to be a Chemist. I read the books; the whole process is very complicated. It will be better explained if I use symbols. In our brains there is a molecule that controls the speed are brain works. Picture a bunch of gas and brake pedals in a brain, a set for each task the brain performs. Caffeine gets into the brain and causes a bit of trouble. The molecule fits nicely into the brake pedal. Instead of pushing the brake pedal, it doesn't allow it to be depressed (no pun intended). The brain can be accelerated but not slowed down. Thus the power of caffeine. Caffeine is classified as a drug. All the java freaks and coffee hounds are nothing more than drug addicts. The price is cheap so one can indulge. We don't recognize that caffeine is a drug, but we support that nicotine is bad along with alcohol. There are no commercials depicting people with talking about their addiction to coffee. Given that the effects are not as traumatic as losing a lung. A certain few in Seattle, of all cities, have started a "Caffeine Anonymous". A place to go to talk about your need for caffeine. Most people seem to agree that caffeine is not addictive. Yet a selective survey concluded that out of 99 people that claimed to be caffeine dependent six were clinically determined dependent on caffeine. The greatest thing about caffeine is how readily it is available. Practically everywhere you go there is a way to get caffeine. All over the place coffee shops popping up. With the amount of coffee drinkers

increasing so does the availability. You can't go anywhere without seeing a Dunkin Donuts, or a Coffee Shop. The most interesting place they sell caffeine is at the gas stations. It brings on an odd similarity. You need gas to run your car; do you need coffee, or tea to keep you going? I haven't seen a gas station yet that doesn't sell No-Doz. I think that it is safe to say that society has come to view that caffeine is a necessary staple. Not only is caffeine a staple but also it has grown into a fad and a new social scene. It has spawned a whole culture of freaks that like to enjoy caffeine in as many means possible. We have espresso, cappuccino, teas of every color, flavors of all kinds, Arabic, Robusta, and then all the specialty drinks topped with whip cream. The best part is that there is no age requirement; you don't have to be over 18 or 21. That is how much it has become a part of society. I felt fully immersed within the coffee culture, going there before school, or during the summer to get an iced coffee to cool down. I made a point of traveling from Exeter to Portsmouth everyday, simply to get coffee. How did I become a part of this culture? By simply going there everyday did I become a member of this odd tribe of people, slave to caffeine. Which got me thinking about caffeine, and what a strange drug it is. Having affects that are similar to other legal drugs, such as tobacco and alcohol. But where are the commercials warning us of the effects. In a world where efficiency is key, and sleep is worshipped, there is a drug that is taken by more people than all the other drugs in the world, Caffeine. Not forgetting another large source of caffeine for the masses. Everywhere you look there are soda machines. Most of them containing caffeine. Kids love it, so do the older generations, but they have moved on to stronger drink. An average caffeinated soda contains about half the amount of a cup a coffee. The young ones of our society are

learning early to appreciate the wonders and powers of caffeine. So when they get older they can, use the affects of caffeine to get through their day. What do we have to look forward to as far as caffeine? Will it soon be available intravenously? As for now caffeine is posing no major threat to the majority of the people who revel in its beauty. It is viewed as a way to make your day easier. It is a delightful drink. It soothes and relaxes, and keeps you going when you need to get that paper done. The only thing needed to know is that for a drug, it is very much a part of common everyday life, just as waking up every morning, which wouldn't be possible some days without caffeine. Caffeine definitely has a power over a few, and the rest are just in a trance of love with the wonder drink. Caffeine is embedded in society as of now, and will not go away.

Word Count: 1560