Introduction

Going for coffee is more than just consuming the beverage itself, it is a social event part of everyday life. Informal gatherings regularly focus around drinking coffee, for example, the coffee hour, the coffee meeting and the coffee date. For these reasons, I wanted to study and observe the social and cultural life of coffee in our own society and design a coffee set that is reflective of this.
Chapter Breakdown

1. Observation Drawings
2. Ritual and Ceremony Maps
3. Market Research
4. Brew Method Maps
5. Observation Drawings - Part Two
6. Individual Coffee Ritual Designs
7. Colour, Line, Decoration
8. Coffee Ceremony Designs
9. Modern Coffee Ritual Designs
10. Extras: Lids, Dish, Stirrer
11. The Finished Sets, Booklet, Website, Business Cards, Instagram.
Observation Drawings
The aim of observation drawings and photographs is to document how and why people drink coffee and to do it in a very real way. Analysing individual social and non-social circumstances that coffee is drunk will help define what it is that makes the drink so appealing.

This was done in different places and at different times of the day in order to give further insight into the social side of coffee culture.

The above drawings were done in Starbucks between 8-9 AM. I found that most people were drinking coffee alone while looking at their phones. It was also evident that people were waiting for something, for work, for a meeting or for university for example.
Observation photographs
2 Ritual and Ceremony Maps
UK Drinks Market Statistics

**COFFEE**
- £730 mil spent on coffee in UK
- Most popular drink worldwide
- 400 mil cups consumed each year

**TEA**
- 53% 16-24 year olds drink tea regularly
- Long term decline in usage
- Market value = £647 mil

**SOFT**
- UK industry worth £15.7 bil
- 14.8 bil consumed in UK 2014
- 45% sold in 2014 were low calorie

**JUICE**
- Sector fell by 7.1% = £1.7 bil
- Consumption = 4.1 tsp per person per day
- Half of adults reduced their sugar intake

Data Source: Mintel.com
UK Coffee Statistics

Data Source: Mintel.com

**Instant**
- 13% of all coffee drank
- 74% of all UK adults drink instant
- Volume sales increased by 6%
- “Little piece of everyday private magic”
- “Barista Style” more popular

**Ground/ Coffee Pods**
- 48% of all UK adults drink fresh
- 1% in France

**Take-Away**
- 2/3 of consumers buy coffee out of home
- 3/4 in 16-24 year olds
- Take-away coffee is easy.
- British are more fussy about how tea is made, therefore make it at home
- “Latte art” popular

**Tea**
- Volume sales of shop tea down by 6%
- Rise of young “Starbucks boom generation,” prefer coffee to tea
For many people, stopping at a certain point in the day or after a meal to have a cup of coffee or espresso allows them to relax for a moment, and put aside their daily problems. And when sharing coffee with friends and family, the ritual has become not only a basic gesture of hospitality but also a celebration of being together.
Ethiopian Coffee Ceremony

“Ethiopia's coffee ceremony is an integral part of their social and cultural life. An invitation to attend a coffee ceremony is considered a mark of friendship or respect and is an excellent example of Ethiopian hospitality. Performing the ceremony is almost obligatory in the presence of a visitor, whatever the time of day. Don't be in a hurry though - this special ceremony can take a few hours. So sit back and enjoy because it is most definitely not instant.”

-Epicurean.com

Unfortunately I had no means of witnessing this or any other coffee ceremonies myself so I moved on to researching coffee drinking just in this country.
3 Market Research
Coffee in the United Kingdom

Executive Summary

TRENDS

- Compared to most other countries in Europe, the UK remains one of the few to favour instant coffee over better quality fresh ground coffee or fresh coffee beans. In 2014, instant coffee continued to be the most popular category, with retail value sales of £1.1 billion. While consumers continue to stay loyal to their favoured brands, the taste and quality of instant coffee is becoming more important. This can be seen with premium instant coffee, particularly microground (also known as whole bean) varieties, such as Nescafé Azera and Kenco Millicano continuing to boost sales. Premiumisation is driving consumers of instant coffee to trade up for quality of taste. Private label entering premium coffee in 2014 is believed to have had a positive effect on the popularity of microground coffee, with consumers of cheaper alternatives trading up to this better quality instant coffee.

COMPETITIVE LANDSCAPE

- Nestlé UK Ltd continued to lead coffee in 2014 with its retail value share growing to 43% and its retail volume share remaining static at 33%. The company’s strength continued to be in instant coffee, where it accounted for a 51% value share in 2014. This can be attributed partially to the success of its premium microground barista-style coffee range, Nescafé Azera, but is predominantly based on the continued success of Nescafé Original and Nescafé Gold Blend retaining a loyal customer brand base. Older coffee drinkers are still likely to stick with a traditional instant coffee brand they trust and are less likely to be tempted to trade up to barista-style coffee. The second category Nestlé UK Ltd performed extremely well in was in fresh ground coffee pods with an impressive overall value share of 76% in 2014. Its Nescafé Dolce Gusto range of fresh ground coffee pods achieved a 48% value share while its more premium brand Nespresso brand took second place with a 28% value share in 2014.

PROSPECTS

- Retail value sales of coffee will continue to perform positively, increasing at a constant 2014 value CAGR of 6% over the forecast period, driven by the increasing coffee culture within the UK. The UK has one of the largest numbers of specialist coffee shops in Europe, with 4,170 outlets in 2013. At the same time, coffee for on-the-go or sit-down consumption was also reaching saturation level when looking at the amount of outlets where this was available. However, per capita consumption in retail terms was still low by European standards at 1.7kg per capita in 2014, demonstrating its potential for further growth. In addition, an ever increasing number of consumers are expected to continue switching from tea to coffee; this is coupled with younger consumers who grew up during the Starbucks boom generation becoming young adults.
Creating indulgent food at home

“Our food tracker survey indicates that some people are buying indulgent foods and beverages to eat at home more often.”

See Small Kitchen Appliances – UK – December 2013

What we’ve seen

- Mintel’s food tracker shows that a quarter of grocery shoppers say they are buying indulgent food to eat at home more often.
- The same food tracker tells us that 31% of grocery shoppers feel they are eating less often in restaurants these days.
- Eating Out Review - UK - June 2015 finds that fewer people are prioritising eating out in restaurants. The eating out market grew by 3.1% in 2015, to £34.5 billion, helped by more people eating food to go, as well as promotional activity in the mid-market restaurants.
- Popular TV cooking shows have boosted demand for liquidisers, food processors and food mixers as people aim for more successful results when they cook at home.
- The market for premium coffee makers continues to grow as people want to replicate coffee shop quality in their own homes.

25-34s are the most active shopper group

Last time we examined the market for small kitchen appliances in detail was for Small Kitchen Appliances – UK - December 2013. Our research shows that people aged 25-34 are the most active group of shoppers for small kitchen appliances and growth in this age band, together with buoyancy in the economy, has been helping to stimulate the market.

Buoyant market for small kitchen appliances

Small kitchen appliances make people’s lives easier, taking the work out of beating or mixing for example. Using the right appliance can help people achieve professional results and this is important to people wanting to achieve restaurant results when they indulge themselves at home. Plus they want things to be fast and convenient to use and wash.

People like to demonstrate their sense of status and owning nice things is part of this trend. Small kitchen appliances can be a status symbol and give people the pleasure of ownership as well as being a way of demonstrating that they have food and drink knowledge when inviting guests into the house. So demand for stylish, added-value appliances is growing, and there is plenty of evidence of growth at the premium end of the market.
Taste for Proper Coffee

According to Coffee – UK – August 2014 coffee pods doubled their share of the at home coffee market over 2011-13, reaching 7% of total coffee value sales. Rising consumer confidence, along with the falling price of coffee pod machines, resulted in increased pod machine ownership – a quarter reported having a coffee pod machine at home. Usage of coffee pods reached just under a third of the population.

We believe that pods are sometimes reserved for a special treat or when serving a coffee to guests. The relatively high cost of pods is one factor that restricts the amount of pod coffee people drink at home. While 42% of people drink standard instant coffee once a day or more, just 8% of people drink coffee made from pods at least once a day. Some 46% of pod drinkers also drink standard instant coffee at least once a day.

Prices of pod machines have fallen but volumes have risen. Their speed, consistency of results and ease of use continues to draw in customers.

Research for Small Kitchen Appliances – UK – December 2013 shows that people want coffee shop quality at home and this is a key driver for buying coffee machines.

“speed, consistency of results and ease of use continues to draw in customers”
“creating life’s little luxury dishes and beverages to enjoy at home”

Figure 3: FEATURES CONSIDERED IMPORTANT FOR COFFEE MAKERS, SEPTEMBER 2013
Base: Base: 2,000 internet users aged 18+

What it means

- Consumers are willing to pay premium prices for small kitchen appliances that are helping them create the same kind of indulgent food and drinks they have become used to in restaurants and coffee shops.
- This is driving demand for food preparation equipment such as specialist items like juicers and food mixers. Or coffee machines that deliver consistent coffee-shop quality at home.
- Penetration of machines has scope for further growth and this will help to boost volume sales and hence grow the market.
- The challenge for makers of small kitchen appliances is to persuade more people to trade up.
- Key marketing themes will include consistency, reliable results, restaurant quality and creating life’s little luxury dishes and beverages to enjoy at home.

Source: https://reports.mintel.com/?logon&start=display&id=743990
Coffee drinking possesses symbolic value. When we meet for coffee we engage in set rituals and forms of interaction, all of which are of interest to the sociologist.

“Sociology in Perspective.” Mark Kirby
The Cultural, Social and Historical Importance of Coffee

*Uncommon Grounds*, By Mark Pendergrast

“Going for coffee involves more than just consuming the beverage itself, it is a small social event as part of everyday life. Informal gatherings focusing on drinking coffee as common ground for interaction include coffee hours, coffee meetings and the coffee klatch, the latter combining coffee with conversation."

*The Coffee House; A Cultural History*, By Markman Ellis

“In his Dictionary, Samuel Johnson defined a coffee-house as ‘A house of entertainment where coffee is sold, and the guests are supplied with newspapers’. More than a place that sells coffee, Johnson suggests, a coffee-house is also an idea, a way of life, a mode of socialising, a philosophy."

“In the hundred years after the first coffee-house opened in London, they came to be ubiquitous features of the modern urban landscape, indispensable centres for socialising, for news and gossip, and for discussion and debate.”

*The Devil’s Cup*, By Stewart Lee Allen

“The book, *Bon Journal*, was written by social critic and historian Jules Michelet, and in it he essentially attributes the birth of an enlightened Western civilisation to Europe’s transformation into a coffee-drinking society: “For this sparkling outburst of creative thought there is no doubt that the honour should be ascribed in part to the human temperament – the advent of coffee.”
Iconic mid-century coffee pots in Brighton Museum and Art Gallery.

Features designs by Tiffany, New York and Alessi, Milan.

Stainless steel was the height of fashion and considered a new and desirable material during the mid to late 20th century. The sleek curves combined with harsh angles are staples of modern design and inspired my own pot's form.
Simplicity and modernism still appear to be in fashion according to coffee and tea sets seen at London Design Week 2015 and 100 Percent Design trade shows.
4 Brew Method Maps
Choosing a brew method for my own modern coffee ritual.

Method One:

Popular method but market research shows a demand for something simpler but with the same sophisticated feel.
Choosing a brew method. 
Method Two:

Common method in modern/midcentury style coffee pots. This method uses complicated parts which makes the process longer and harder to clean. Research shows a demand for ease of use and a fast cleaning time.
This method was chosen as my *Modern Coffee Ritual* due to it being the simplest and easiest. No complicated parts needed and brew time is 2 to 3 minutes. Market research shows the British coffee drinker wants simplicity, good taste and the feeling of drinking 'proper' coffee.

Testing the pourover method at home. The taste and ease of use was as good as expected.
**Instant coffee** was chosen as the other coffee ‘method’ due to it being the most popular way British people currently make coffee at home and the evident potential to up-market it.

There is also nothing similar currently available on the market.

This is probably because there is no real need to glamorise instant coffee. The concept of luxury instant coffee is quite ironic and funny to people who pride themselves of drinking ‘proper’ coffee. These people would, therefore, be the target market. They would see the funny side of owning an extravagant instant coffee pot.

![Initial instant coffee pot designs;](image)
5 Observation Drawings
Part Two
This selection of drawings were done in the afternoon. Here I saw people being a lot more leisurely. People drinking coffee in the afternoon seem to be having a break from something. There were also a lot more groups of people, friends, colleagues, lovers.
6 Individual Coffee Ritual Designs
Design for a coffee cup that can be held just with the thumb, freeing up other fingers to hold a cigarette. Thinking about ways the design can fit in and not disturb the social act from happening.
Coffee and Cigarettes
Film directed by Jim Jarmusch

A series of vignettes showing different people meeting to drink coffee and smoke cigarettes, a popular and relatable social ritual.
Cup models made from plaster using the lathe

- Inside space of the hand very soft and round
- Cup needs to be soft and round

Cup model one
Cup model two
Cup model three
(later made a forth design the same shape but with a footring)
Instant coffee ritual, the first trial of the cup.
Coffee service that caters to the needs of the modern coffee ritual

- Time to oneself
- Opportunity to engage and share the experience
- Time shared relieves the pressures of modern life
7

Colour, Line, Decoration
Initial glaze tests inspired by Pantone Colour of the Year: Rose Quartz and Serenity.

Decided against using these colours as they both have very pretty connotations that might make the set only appear to females. I want my coffee set to feel modern and sophisticated, but keeping the playful edge.
“a little piece of everyday private magic”
Glaze Tests, Take Two.

These test tiles were made using a range of different stains (all 6%) added to casting slip, painted into a tile mould, with a layer of uncoloured slip poured on top. After bisque a shiny transparent glaze is applied and they are fired to stoneware 1280.

Some tiles have two different colours painted on top of each other to make them more decorative.

These tests were later applied to cups.

Glaze Tests, Take Three.

Same technique but without the layers of different stains. Only one stain is used to fill the tile mould as this gives more of a block or colour. This effect is a lot more consistent and neater but the colours are a bit dull and flat.
Decorative Experiments.

Experimenting with altering the form and surface of the cup. Includes painting slip coloured with stains into the mould, glazing the inside a different colour; carving into the coloured slip to reveal the pattern and altering cup shape so that perfectly fits the hand.

Still didn’t feel like these decorative experiments fitted by plans for ‘modern and sophisticated’. 
Colour Research

Researching popular colours, as well as ceramic and coffee inspiration using social media sites Pinterest and Instagram. It’s important that my coffee sets fit in with what is currently trending in my chosen market.
Drawings Exploring Colour and Line
Glaze Tests, Take Four:

Decided I wanted to achieve a colour palette of bright orange and yellow, simply because they feel fresh and exciting. The idea of a coffee set can feel quite ‘old fashioned’.

The colours above were made using 12% orange and yellow stain in decorating slip that is painted or dipped onto the tile. They are then fired to the lowest stoneware temperature of 1180, to keep them strong but with brighter colour.
Coffee Ceremony Designs
“Going for coffee involves more than just consuming the beverage itself; it is a small social event as part of everyday life. Informal gatherings focusing on drinking coffee as common ground for interaction include coffee hours, coffee meetings and the coffee klatch, the latter combining coffee with conversation.”

-Uncommon Grounds, Mark Pendergrast
“The occasion for smoking a cigar and enjoying a coffee is an event. The accouterments of partaking in these simple acts of life are as a stage set upon to give of their best. My design will sit in the center of a table and furnish all with their desires. An ash tray, bon-bon dish, tea, coffee etc, will all be on hand to facilitate the occasion. The meeting, in memories, will feed the sense of well-being all the longer due to the quiet presence of a beautiful object on the table.”

*Tea and Coffee Towers, Will Alsop*
Early Coffee Pot Form Designs
Playing with the idea that multiple handles/spouts encourage sharing.

Multiple handles
= hard to pour with 2 hands, better with more hands.
= more social and playful
= more of an event/ceremony. In other cultures, the process of making the coffee is equally as important as the coffee itself.

“range of different sizes that can be arranged differently to make each one original.”
TEAPOTS

The teapot is probably the most difficult single article a potter is required to make. A teapot has all of the details, and takes a great deal of discipline, skill, and patience to solve all of the problems of composition, design, and making. On the face of it, it sounds simple - a pot to carry and pour hot liquids without spilling them, without dripping from the spout after pouring, with a lid that doesn’t fall out, and a handle that is not so close that one might burn one’s knuckles, yet, at the same time, not so distant that the pot feels awkward to use, and with both spout and handle invulnerable to breakage from contact with the kitchen plumbing fittings. All this, and to be aesthetically pleasing and affordable too! A teapot is a nightmare of composition, with a heavy and odd-shaped appendages jutting out at various angles and places. Not only is the basic visual composition complex, but to add to that problem, one has technical considerations also - spouts that may twist or droop, strainers that may cling with glaze, handles that may twist, legs that may be too thin to take the combined weight of pot plus contents, or too fat to fit a cane handle on, and lids that need to be held in place while pouring.

In the western hemisphere, tea makers pour boiling water over the tea leaves or tea bag and the resulting beverage is allowed to steep or brew until it has reached a satisfactory strength. There are some conflicting ideals in the making of tea, which possibly affect the optimum position of the teapot spout. In England, tea is generally consumed as a stronger brew than in North America. For this reason, the majority of English teapots have a spout that starts from quite low down. This is where the strongest brew is found, floating just above the leaves or bag. In other parts of the world, tea is drunk more as a weak solution where the leaves or bag can be removed from the brew by means of an infuser of some kind. The base of the teapot spout in these areas is more often placed quite high, at or near the shoulder of the pot.

Whether one likes tea or not, if one calls oneself a potter, someday one is likely to get the urge to make a teapot or at least be commissioned to make one. The production of a good teapot represents, perhaps, the ultimate challenge for the maker of domestic pottery.

COFFEE POTS

Coffee is prepared in a number of ways, many of which do not utilize the standard types of ceramic coffee pot. Many coffee aficionados swear by using glass, while others use high-pressure aluminium containers or stainless steel.

The ceramic coffee pot can be used for making coffee in, or merely as a serving pitcher. Making methods include placing coffee in paper filters in a funnel-shaped holder or just pouring the boiling water over the coffee grounds in the bottom of the jug and waiting for the grounds to settle. The way the coffee is made, coupled with the buyer’s needs, will largely determine the form that is preferred. Unlike most tea leaves, coffee grounds are small enough to go through most strainers made of clay, and metal infusers can affect the taste of good coffee. For this reason, the spouts of coffee pots are placed high up on the form, and the forms themselves are quite tall to allow any grounds to settle to the bottom. There is often a slight helixy low on the pot, just below the spout, to catch the grounds when the pot is tipped to its extreme. With so many other coffee pots currently

- Coffee Pots and Tea Pots for the Collector, by Henry Sandon
Chosen Form + Early Handle Designs
Using InDesign to play with different handle arrangements/designs/colours.
Plaster model for instant coffee jug.

Handles and spout hand carved then attached to main body to see overall appearance. Once seen on the jug I decided that the larger handle looked too traditional so carved the ends into a straight finish to match the smaller handle.
First slip cast jug.

Assembled with miss-match handles and spout. There is a lot of freedom with positioning when attaching pieces from separate moulds. Also makes each finished jug unique and not exactly the same as the last.
First Glazed Jugs

Handles cast with black and pink stain added to casting slip. Liked the the way colour draws attention to the oddness of the handles in a very subtle way. Decided that brighter colours would have a bigger impact and make them feel more fun. Spout Test = too thin/ small in relation to the size of the jug. Also needed to be in line with the rim.
Jug with new spout and new brighter colours.

New spout fits the form a lot better and allows for a much smoother pour.

I decided on a yellow stripe going down the side of the pot as well as the handle as there was too much empty space with only the coloured handle.
Instant Coffee Ceremony Test

Putting the coffee ceremony jug in context and holding a ‘modern ceremony’.
Modern Coffee Ritual Designs
Carafe Form Designs

The modern ritual uses the pourover technique due to it being so easy and producing such good coffee. This method is also very fashionable on the coffee scene. Final form was chosen due to it matching the form of the cup and the jug. The idea of a carafe is to hold a liquid for drinking in often very relaxed social gatherings, making it a good name for this ritual object.
Carafe Handle Designs

Handles →

This handle is traditional of filter coffee pots

This design allows for freedom to change design using changing placement of handles
First Cast of Carafe

The spout is formed by hand using a sponge to make the shape of a lip just after the slip cast is taken out of the mold.

The handles were hand carved from plaster which a mould is then made from. I used the same technique as I did with the instant coffee jug.

The handles can be placed freely and are consistent in design with the handles of the jug.
First Glazed Carafe

Quickly moved on to using the new colour palette of yellow and orange after seeing the effect on the jug.

Was pleased with the results of the second carafe pictured. Decided to make the next series of carafes all slightly different, making them unique/one off pieces that can exist well on their own as well as grouped with the others. Blocks of colour were then used consistently throughout the production of each object that was made.
Carafe Ritual Test

The carafe makes enough filter coffee for three people due to the filter taking up the top half of the pot. Unbleached paper filters are preferred due to them being more environmentally friendly and keeping the taste of the coffee.
Carafe Ritual Test: Take Two

Sharing coffee with friends and testing the pots and cups in context.
10 Extras: lids, dish, stirrer
I decided to make an additional smaller version of the cup instead of a traditional spoon or bowl. This is because I wanted to avoid the sets becoming too generic/similar to a traditional coffee set while still making it usable by the average British coffee lover.

Following the theme of make individual and unique pieces from the same set of moulds, I made a milk jug from the cup moulds. I also made a range of dishes by cutting the tops off the cup moulds.

The last piece of the set that I made were stirrers, to give that ‘coffee shop feel’. These were also slip cast and glazed to match.
The Finished Sets, Booklet, Website, Business Cards, Instagram.
Decided to get a professional photographer (Sarah Ketelaars) to take the final photos due to it being very important they are good quality and have a clean finish. Professional photographs also help to put the work into a professional context and make it look more like a product.
The Instant Coffee Ceremony

I did all the styling and directing on the shoot. I wanted the photos to look quite staged like you see in editorial magazines. The shadows and dark lighting give them a Scandinavian feel and softens the shininess of the objects.
The Modern Coffee Ritual
Booklet made using InDesign to accompany work on display.

The purpose of the booklet put the objects into context and to make the objects feel more like part of a brand, and therefore objects people might be more likely to buy.
THE coffee RITUAL

Rituals have always existed to bring people together, but they have evolved significantly. In this case, the coffee ritual is transformed into a unique experience that combines modern design with traditional elements. The combination of white ceramic and a striking yellow stripe creates a visually appealing piece that adds a touch of elegance to any coffee setting. The soft curves of the teapot and cups are designed for comfort, ensuring a delightful experience for both aesthetic pleasure and functionality.
the MODERN COLLECTION

Porcelain, Stoneware, Ceramic, and Glass
Handcrafted and Designed in the United States

A collaboration with designer
Lizzy Adams
Photography by Kellieburr
Again the ‘branding’ is the same, clean and simple so that the eye is drawn immediately to the yellow and orange of the objects. Website URL: http://bethanyashton.wix.com/ceramics
Designs for business cards
Instagram:

https://www.instagram.com/ashton.design used to blog the progress of my project and in attempt to get some public interest.