

'I only ask for respect' Tales from behind coffee shop counter

JACY CAGLE
spotlight editor

While visiting the local coffee shop, one would assume that the apron clad person behind the counter has a rather effortless occupation: he or she takes an order then pours the coffee.

Sounds easy, right?

Au contraire, my friends, it is quite the opposite.

That is not to say that this job could possibly measure up to that of one at the local library, because as I have heard that shelving books is a fairly torturous task. However, a job at a coffee shop does contain various responsibilities quite beyond that of pouring coffee.

I have been employed at a local coffee shop for seven months now and cannot even begin to recount the minuscule details nor the daily occurrences that I have experienced at my job.

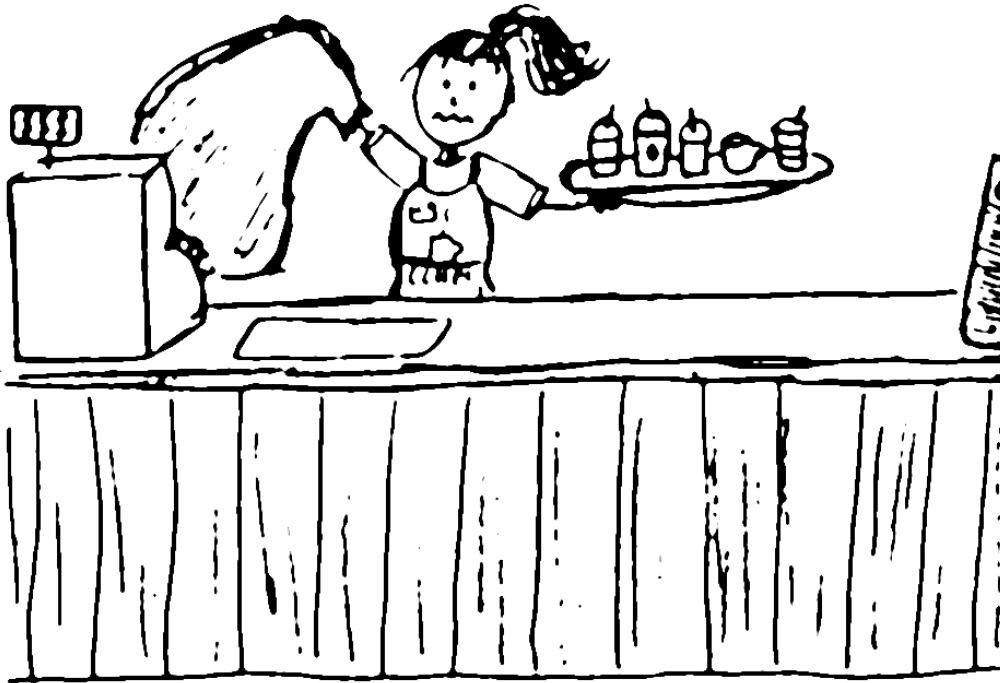
First, let me explain the simple mission of taking the trash out: I empty the trash cans, take the bags to dumpster, then, mission complete. Unless, of course, the giant trash can which carries the bags has wheels and these wheels feel the need to pop off the can on a regular basis.

Many a time have I found myself standing by the dumpster outside, in the freezing cold, attempting to reattach the faulty wheels to the trash can after having lost control of it while unsuccessfully balancing the four full bags sitting inside.

I must not forget to mention the thrill I experience when emptying the trash cans inside of the shop only to find that the bag has not only failed me, leaving leftover coffee at the bottom, but also that the bag feels the need to not remove itself from the can.

Thus, I stand by the trash can, pulling at the garbage bag for approximately 10 minutes, with no resulting victory.

Welcome to the Coffee Shop



MICHELIA TINDERA

Despite taking the treacherous trash out, I do love my job. I work with amazing people, and have a hilarious story to tell after each shift.

For example, there has been many a time during the Monday lull when my fellow coworkers and I have broken out into song or dance, creating a routine which choreographers wish they could produce in their dreams.

Then, there are the customers, my personal favorite being those who love to talk. Do not get me wrong; I am aware that my job entails being a sales person and engaging in conversation with our guests.

However, to me, engaging in conversation is defined as chatting merely about the weather or discussing what would be the best coffee drink on the menu for that specific person to order.

Nevertheless, there are those who take it upon themselves to disclose to me details about their lives that, unfortunately, I do not care to know. I have discussed family cats, sewage problems, and children.

So, next time when visiting the nearest coffee shop, I only ask for respect; because, though it may seem an easy job to pour the coffee, we apron-wearers behind the counter have a much greater responsibility.

Downfall of American men's tennis Lackluster performance stirs doubt of next American 'great'

NADIA KHAN
sports chief

Pete Sampras. Andre Agassi. John McEnroe. Jimmy Connors. The list goes on — but not for long. These are some of the tennis greats who come from America, but the current state of tennis affairs seems to show a dwindling in the American category.

Sure, we have Andy Roddick, the number six player in the world, and James Blake, the number 12 player in the world, but without a grand slam win by an American man since Roddick won the 2003 US Open — well, things just do not look so good.

There was a time, though it did not last long, when Roddick was world number one, but even as the number one player in the world in 2004, he just did not seem to be as good as some other players, mainly Roger Federer.

Albeit, when Roddick first stepped onto the scene with his immature, McEnroe-esque behavior, I expected great things from him. He came out firing the ball with such force as has never been seen before. But being able to hit the ball at such great speed does not make a legend. It is the ability to defeat the best that rewrites history and commands attention.

That ability is something that both Roddick and Blake lack. Roddick is 1-15 against Federer, and in eight tries, Blake has never beaten the man that some call the greatest tennis player to have ever played the game.

Every time that Roddick and Federer play, I think that Roddick might have a chance, that this will be the match, but almost every time (except that once), I am wrong. Now, I might just think optimistically because as a loyal Roddick fan, I am blinded by the obvious truth. But as much as it pains me to say: Federer is a legend.

The one redeeming factor for American men's tennis came when the United States won the Davis Cup in December 2007 for the first time since 1995. But then again, Federer's Switzerland team is not much of a threat considering the next best player is ranked 44th in the world.

So, the American men can work together and defeat other countries' best. But these players definitely have a lot of work to do because if they want to go down in the history books as some of the best, they are going to have to start winning some tournaments on the biggest stages.

As for now, the days of the American greats are over. The days of Federer began the minute he defeated Sampras in the fourth round of Wimbledon in 2001. Until an American man can step up, defeat Federer, and actively contest the top players in the world, that list of American "greats" will have to wait.

Tanning salon ad raises questions Troubling claims prompt investigation

MICHELIA TINDERA
spotlight editor

Are you stuck in those winter doldrums, or perhaps just feeling a bit under the weather, and are unsure of how to get out? Well the answer is here. Just step into a relaxing, warm tanning bed where you can get a fresh summer glow and improve your body's health.

This may sound like some kind of Bizzaro World advertisement where tanning booths benefit one's health, but scarily enough, this is actually very similar to an ad I heard a few weeks ago for Cincinnati Tan, one of the Cincinnati area's largest tanning salon chains. I was completely shocked by this ludicrous statement that I was hearing. Tanning beds, a health benefit? How could this be true?

So of course, after hearing this advertisement I had to investigate. Not to sound old fashioned or anything, but I was brought up in a household that taught me that tanning beds caused age spots, premature wrinkling, and skin cancer, not prevention of osteoporosis, diabetes, obesity, and even some cancers. A tanning bed that prevents cancer? Now this I have to see.

According to the Cincinnati Tan website, they claim, "Exposure to light produces various health benefits, such as the production of the very necessary vitamin D3 in the prevention of bone diseases, such as osteoporosis."

However, they somehow forgot to mention how harmful UV rays are to one's skin. And the fact that one can still get more than an adequate amount of vitamin D from a variety of foods.

Cincinnati Tan also comments, "FDA regulations at the present time prevent the indoor tanning industry from making any medical representations or claims related to indoor tanning exposure." And the reason for this is...?

As reported by the FDA on their government website, "UV radiation from the sun and artificial tanning devices such as tanning beds and tanning lamps are carcinogens, or cancer-causing substances." Bottom line: tanning beds are not healthy for you.

Obviously there is a reason that legislation has been passed in 29 states banning use of a tanning bed by minors without a doctor's note. The Tanning Accountability and Notification (TAN) Act was signed into law in September 2007 to ensure that warning labels effectively communicate the risk of irreversible damage to the eyes and skin.

I am astonished that there would be even a possibility that some person would actually believe these claims and risk their health thinking that they were doing something good for their body.

Prolific villain:

Analyzing legend of Coach Bobby Knight

EVAN ROMANSKY
staff writer

Bobby Knight is someone people love to hate. He is to college basketball what the villain is to horror movies. People cannot get enough of the villain and are left wanting more. Face it: the movie would not be the same without that villain.

If someone says he or she loves Knight, that person most likely lives in the state of Indiana. As coach of the Hoosiers, Knight has 661 victories, including three national championships. He is the crown jewel of Indiana.

Some people love to be hated, and Knight is one of them. He thrives in the spotlight of hatred because he knows one thing: we all respect him. It is hard not to when a man is that successful.

Yet his demeanor on and off the court comes off as harsh, vile, and straight up despicable. He is a chair throwing, player choking, and officer assaulting Hall of Fame coach.

Whenever someone brings up Knight's name in a conversation, everyone has a story. His press conferences are unique — or, I should say, terrifying at best.

You hear about the one reporter with enough guts to question a move Knight made in the previous game. The reporter's voice trembles in direct fear of the agitated response he may get from "The General."

Then Knight's response pours

from his lips as his face tenses up and he says something like, "I don't have to wait until the next morning to regret something I did that was kinda dumb." He then stares down the reporter until the reporter regrets saying anything and quietly sits down.

Knight, in one word, can be described as enigmatic. He is a mysterious and perplexing man who comes off as stringent and terrifying, but also brilliant. Everything Knight has done in his long and strenuous career has been nothing short of resplendent.

Knight had 20 NCAA tournament appearances, five Final Four appearances, three national championships, 902 career wins, one assault charge, a chair throw (good distance I should say), and one incident of playing the most dangerous game while hunting (allegedly shooting at a man's house).

No matter how much I or anyone else may dislike Knight, he is the greatest coach of all time, next to John Wooden, in college basketball. Knight is fierce, tough, and daunting, yet a mastermind of his own profession.

It was the great Knight that once said, "When my time on earth is gone, and my activities here are passed, I want them to bury me upside down, and my critics can kiss my..."