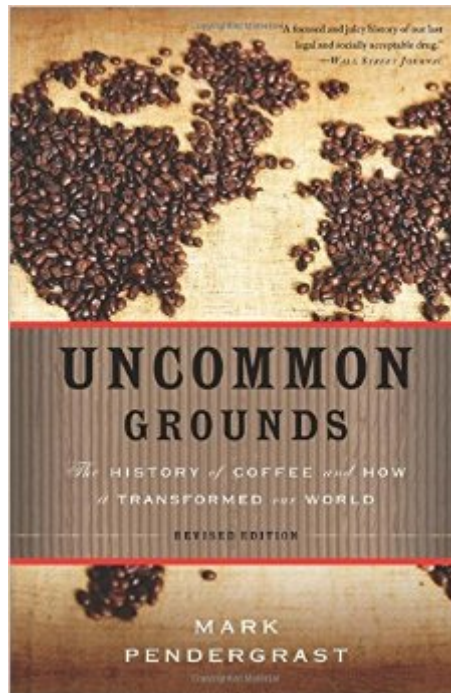


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Uncommon Grounds: The History Of Coffee And How It Transformed Our World



Synopsis

Uncommon Grounds tells the story of coffee from its discovery on a hill in ancient Abyssinia to the advent of Starbucks. In this updated edition of the classic work, Mark Pendergrast reviews the dramatic changes in coffee culture over the past decade, from the disastrous 'Coffee Crisis' that caused global prices to plummet to the rise of the Fair Trade movement and the 'third-wave' of quality-obsessed coffee connoisseurs. As the scope of coffee culture continues to expand, Uncommon Grounds remains more than ever a brilliantly entertaining guide to the currents of one of the world's favorite beverages.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Though this non-fiction account is about coffee, it does give the reader insight to not just the coffee business, but other budding food and beverage industries in the 19th and 20th century. The type of business model and marketing strategies were similar to just about every food and beverage industry of their respective times. A key reason I enjoyed this book is the exhaustive research obviously put into it. Pendergrast not only includes historical accounts but also interesting anecdotes and memos from prominent coffee businesses. I found the late 1800s and early 1900s the most interesting of all. I know others have said this book is bland and monotonous, but I beg to differ. Being a historical account, there is quite a bit of actual historical fact written in. History itself can be a bit mundane (this happened at this time at this place), but the author inserts little witty remarks and snippets from history that are quite entertaining. Very rarely does he pepper the

account with his own quips, but when he does they are welcome and amusing. Though the reader may not find much of the early history interesting due to the non-existence of many of the older brands (Arbuckle anyone?), I actually found that learning about these early coffee industry pioneers was inspiring. I also enjoyed that there were decent folks in the industry (Joel Cheek of Maxwell House and John Arbuckle come to mind) and villains (CW Post and Hermann Sielcken). The evolution of coffee from luxury good to everyday staple is interesting and it is also quite intriguing that the United States had a very large role in shaping the future of the coffee industry (since most - though not all - of the rest of the world was drinking tea).

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