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caffeine & nicotine

afternoon and evening culture at Good Bye Blue Monday

## I. Abstract

The goal of our research was to capture the culture and essence of Northfield's Goodbye Blue Monday. To do this we spent considerable time in the coffee shop over the course of three and a half months. In addition to sipping at delicious coffee, we observed interactions between customers as well as conducted interviews with customers and employees in an effort to understand Blue Monday as a cultural space. The meaning of the space, in our point of view, changed during the time we were there. At first we believed Blue Monday to be the location of choice for regular customers. While Blue Monday is to some degree a chosen hangout for the Northfield community, largely for high school and college students, it is also one of the only "third place" options available to the community.

## II. The Setting, The Flavor

Goodbye Blue Monday, referred to as Blue Monday, is one of Northfield's main coffee shops, and thus is a major hangout. Nestled between a smoke shop called Tiny's and a Guatemalan restaurant on Division Street, the shop serves a wide variety of people from the Northfield community. The shop opens at 6 a.m. and closes at midnight. In the afternoons and evenings, the shop serves students from middle and high school, college students, and townies young and old. When we began research, in February 2002, smoking was only allowed after 5 p.m. During the course of our research, the policy changed to no smoking all the time. (Customers outside Blue Monday on Division Street)

Below are a few observations we made during the course of our research that can serve as the eyes and ears for someone unfamiliar with Blue Monday's setting.

### A. First Afternoon Visit (Tuesday, 26 February 2002)

Imagine any Division Street in any Midwestern, primarily white suburban

town. Notice the small crowd of middle and high schoolers: they're all smoking in front of the glass shop front window that reads, "Good Bye Blue Monday – Café Au Lait, Espresso, Cappuccino, Coffee." Entering through the veil of smoke, the smell of fresh coffee overwhelms the senses. It's dim. There's no smoking until 5, but the smell of cancer still fills the air. Art on the walls captures people, the types that come to coffee shops, the lovely unsatisfied beat existential "I'm not happy and what about you." People inside sit in groups, eyeing the counter transactions. There's a high school group crowded in the middle of the shop occupying the best couch and lounge chair. They're LOUD. Not one has bought a thing. By the counter at the back of the shop sitting at tables against the wall are adults. Some have, kids some don't. They're calm and quiet sipping at their drinks. In the front of the store, the college student/townie crowd plays cards and chats. They look like they belong here. Some drink coffee while others nibble on sandwiches or fruit from other shops. "Portishead" sings over the speakers and the general mood of the shop is lively. At 5 p.m. the ashtrays are distributed and half the shop lights up.

#### B. First Evening Visit (Thursday, 28 February 2002)

Lazy town, 10 p.m., all the boring people have gone to bed. Most of the tables are empty and it's unusually slow, perhaps a post-weekend Monday-ish haze. Steam from the espresso machine rises and coalesces with the Marlboro cigarette smoke. Two men converse, three tables pretend to study amidst more important and whimsical dialogue, and all the while the woman behind the counter fills the coffee machines as she babbles, babbles, babbles on the black telephone. Another woman's country voice dances with guitar over the shop's cheap speakers and competes with the soft hum of fans and the ugly smokeeater. The "Kill Your Television" discussion group meets here once a week, proclaims a tattered sign above the shop's entrance. The ads for college events are primarily ignored. No one reads them and why would they, since people come here to get away from the impending doom of homework. Students come here to "get off campus," to escape the almost ever-present character of homogeneity. Only, what they find here is the same old contrast of white on white. This Division Street is after all, in the typical, primarily white suburban town.

#### C. First No Smoking Policy Visit (Thursday, 18 April 2002)

Bright red sign posted everywhere: NO SMOKING ALL THE TIME. It's quiet here with more adults. Where did the regulars go? When the new policy

began there were large crowds outside in the afternoons. They were loud and boisterous, smoking and laughing, seemingly saying, “we don’t need your shop.” Apparently Blue Monday management felt the same way – they removed the picnic tables that sat out on the sidewalk. Now the high schoolers go somewhere else. And, the college student/townie regulars do not come as much anymore. Where, oh where, has the regular crowd gone? The coffee is still delicious and the food is still tasty and the music still rocks on, but something is different. Employees say that business increased as a result of the policy. Customers don’t know business increase. They feel atmosphere decrease. The atmosphere more than slightly altered as a result of the new smoking policy, it changed. Why don’t they just turn themselves into Starbucks? The ceiling tiles are still yellow from years of smoke, but the smell started to disappear after a couple weeks. They lost the smoke but they lost something else. Who knows what?

### III. The Problem

The questions we set out to answer were, “Does Blue Monday have its own culture? And, is there something specific about the social space and the people of Blue Monday that gives it its own culture, or could any social space have the feel of Blue Monday?”

Our first impression of Blue Monday was that of a “cool” hangout. The people there were not nerdy, meaning they were not in the library studying or even on campus. It appeared as though these people, as opposed to most college students, had moved on with their lives in some way. The “coolness” we saw was that of people who did not want to conform to the traditional Carleton and St. Olaf student life. In addition, the shop was not your traditional Starbucks or Caribou Coffee Shop. Instead, the tattered and sunken-in couches looked as if they were bought from thrift stores, the lamps were old, abstract and unique, and the paintings on the wall were modern and existential. In other words, the location was one of a kind. Compared to Blue Monday, other places to hangout, such as on St. Olaf or Carleton campus and The Kitchen, seemed boring and unexciting because of their standard setting.

When we first walked in, we felt totally out of place and uncomfortable. Everyone seemed to know each other and had a specific place where they sat socializing or studying. We felt as though everyone watched us as outsiders invading their own social space. Could we, in our three month study there, crack into the regular crowd, learning the in’s and out’s of Blue Monday? Needless to say, the setting on the first day was intimidating. Similarly, a Manitou Mess article relayed that first-time St. Olaf

students visiting Blue Monday often feel intimidated and try to “pretend like [they] fit in” (1994: 9).

After several visits, we became more comfortable but we still saw ourselves as outsiders. The regulars seemed to recognize us but they did not want to converse with us. We avidly watched every interaction, covertly listened to nearby conversations and energetically joined outside smoke circles. The only time that we were able to casually converse with the customers was when we were outside smoking. Outside, people put their shields down. Whereas inside it seemed as though we were judged based on where we were sitting, what we were doing and what we were wearing, outside was a whole new world. No one was with the friends they came with and compulsive studiers were away from their books.

After about two months we felt more at home. We had done several interviews and talked with employees. We began to feel like regulars ourselves and realized that Blue Monday is a prime “third place” location for the Northfield community. In the book *The Great Good Place*, Professor of Sociology Ray Oldenburg explains that people need and use “third places” as alternatives to home and work. “The third place,” states Oldenburg, “is a generic designation for a great variety of public places that host the regular, voluntary, informal, and happily anticipated gatherings of individuals beyond the realms of home and work” (1989: 16).

Blue Monday obviously provides the setting for a perfect “third place.” One reason why Blue Monday is so popular among college students is because they are trying to get away from their first two primary places, namely classrooms and dorms. In a community such as Northfield, there are few other options available for hanging out and relaxing off campus. Blue Monday, with its relatively quiet and relaxed atmosphere perfectly provides a great “third place.” In a Manitou Messenger newspaper article featuring Blue Monday, Corey Wall described the Blue Monday atmosphere felt like close knit community of the popular TV show “Cheers” (1994: 9).

#### IV. Methodology

We conducted research at Blue Monday two to three times per week during the course of three and a half months. Each visit lasted between two and three hours. Observations between 3 and 5 we entitled “afternoon hours” and between 5 and 12 “evening hours.” Each visit we tried to sit in different locations. On some days we sat in the front of Blue Monday, where regulars primarily sit. (See Appendix for map). Other days we occupied the couches and chairs that separate the front of the shop and the counter area. Sometimes

we chose the seats by the counter to see all customer-employee interactions. Last, on warm sunny days we sat outside on picnic benches. Management, however, took these benches away when the new smoking policy was put into effect.

When we began research we primarily did participant observation research. Upon every visit we would buy a cup of coffee, take out our notebooks and write down anything and everything we thought to be meaningful. This included a count of how many customers were in the shop, what their ages and sexes were, what they bought (or did not buy), what they were doing, and how long they stayed. We listened to conversations going on around us and noted whom we had seen there on a regular basis. (Bryan and Nancy conducting research)

After several visits to the shop, we started to conduct interviews with regular customers and employees. Usually we were informal and we did not always record the conversation until after it was completed. Although we were informal, we did follow a pre-written outline. (See Appendix for questions). The questions focus on age, sex, frequency of visits, reasons for coming and what they buy. Once these basic questions were answered we focused our questions on the atmosphere of Blue Monday. Specifically, did regular customers feel that Blue Monday had its own culture? In what ways was Blue Monday special? Last, after we saw changes in the smoking policy, we began asking customers about their reaction to the changes. What did they think were the owner motivations behind a new smoking policy?

We felt that participant observation and personal interviews were the best way to start to capture the atmosphere of Blue Monday. This strategy has several strengths. First, being customers ourselves we were able to sit back and take in the general surroundings of Blue Monday. We listened to the music on the overhead speakers, sampled the delicious coffees and baked goods and conversed among ourselves and with others. Personal interviews, as opposed to surveys, were helpful in getting to know regular customers as well as getting deeper into the cultural questions of Blue Monday. Instead of simple yes and no answers, we could probe into the reasons behind reactions and answers.

The weakness of this research approach was that observations and interviews could only be conducted during our weekly visits. For these reasons, our generalizations are limited. Although we have an idea of how the shop operates on most afternoons and evenings, we were not able to capture the whole atmosphere. With more time and resources, it might have been possible to explore Blue Monday's morning culture or to make sure we were there more often. (For more suggestions for further research see summary and conclusions section).

## V. Findings

### A. Groups

We identified two groups of customers early on in our research: regulars and non-regulars. We separated the customers into groups so that they would be easily identifiable. Our research primarily focused on the regular crowd and their opinions about Blue Monday. The people we labeled as regulars we saw on almost every visit to Blue Monday. Usually visits for regulars lasted several hours. (After the new smoking policy came into effect, time of stay shortened.) During their stay regulars usually studied, played cards or socialized with fellow regulars. The regular crowd was primarily made up of young males between the ages of approximately 14 and 26 in the afternoons and a mix of males and females between the ages of 19 and 26 in the evenings. The reason why adults over 26 are not present in the afternoons and evenings could be because Blue Monday is seen as a young persons' hangout. Also, most adult customers come earlier in the morning before they go to work.

We also noticed that there were a greater number of males in the shop than females during most of the afternoons. One possible reason that there were more males in the shop during the afternoon is because females are involved in more activities. For example, there are three dance studios in Northfield that many females attend. In the evenings the male-female ratio was about equal. The majority of customers were St. Olaf students, although the regular crowd was made up of more Carleton students. Perhaps there are more St. Olaf students in Blue Monday because St. Olaf College has about twice the population of Carleton. Additionally, it is probable that the regular crowd is mostly Carleton students because Carleton College is much closer to Blue Monday than St. Olaf. St. Olaf College also is home to two coffee shops whereas Carleton only has one. We noticed that most of the regulars smoked and did not generally make purchases. This could be because most of the regulars are students or other young adults that do not have much money to spend. Also, not buying anything indicates that the customer did not come to the shop for coffee, but for other reasons such as meeting people and socializing.

The second group that we identified were those we labeled non-regulars. These were people we usually saw only once. When talking to some of these people we found out that they did not often come to Blue Monday. Non-regulars almost always purchased a drink, which seemed to indicate that that was their sole intention of coming into the shop. Also, many people would just come in

and purchase a drink to go, leaving the shop immediately after paying. It was difficult to have any contact with these customers because they were only in the shop for a short time and were usually in a hurry.

During our visits in the afternoons and evenings we realized that the crowd regularly changed by time. Before 3 p.m., the shop was usually quieter. Customers were usually adults and a few college students. The adults were often waiting for their children to get out of school. Starting at about 3.30 p.m., the middle and high school students would start to invade the shop. Blue Monday is an after-school hangout for many teenagers. This crowd was usually boisterous and noisy. We could tell from the expressions on other customers' faces that they disliked the rowdiness and disruption to the small, quiet shop caused by the teenagers. Employees of Blue Monday stated that this crowd did not often buy anything.

In the evenings, the shop was much quieter and filled with students studying. People had laptops and books open, however, quiet conversations usually dominated peoples' time. Infrequently, adults came for meeting and teenagers came on dates. Most often the shop was free of high school students because those in town were usually at the town square or cruising in their souped-up cars.

## B. Employees

During the afternoons and evenings the employees were always people in their 20's. Their duties included serving customers, making food, cleaning tables and even chatting with customers. These activities usually kept them busy their entire shift. Employees also chose the music that plays over the shop's cheap speakers. Music during our visits included oldies such as Jimi Hendrix, jazz, folk and rock such as Radiohead, the Big Wu and Phish. These music selections often times reflected the preferences and selections of the college crowd.

## C. Smoking

During our time studying Blue Monday, the smoking policy changed. At first smoking was only allowed after 5 p.m. At the beginning of our research, some people were already upset with the policy because the shop had previously allowed smoking all the time. The shop was divided into smoking and non-smoking sections, approximately half and half. Although no divider was present, a sign on the wall designated smoking and non-smoking sections. After years of smoking, the shop smelled like smoke almost all the time, even during non-smoking hours. Before 5 p.m., smoking customers went

outside and sat on picnic benches situated on the sidewalk in front of Blue Monday. Often times the younger crowd, who were often times underage and not customers because they did not buy anything, would huddle together outside smoking. At 5 p.m., ashtrays were religiously passed out to each table located in the smoking section of the shop. Simultaneously, smoking customers lit up their cigarettes.

In April, a new smoking policy came into effect that seemed to forever change Blue Monday's atmosphere. The long rumored policy of "no smoking all the time" came into effect. All smoking now had to be done outside of the store around the picnic benches. On some days, just after the new policy came into effect, there were more people outside of the shop than customers inside. After several days of this, the picnic benches were removed to curb loitering outside of the store by non-buying customers, who were primarily labeled as high school students by store ownership.

Changes as a result of the new smoking policy were soon evident. First, previously regular customers who were smokers stopped coming as often. One extreme customer picketed outside of the store with a sign that stated, "I HAVE A HABIT!" Second, the shop started to smell neutral. The ceiling was still stained yellow and brown from years of smoke exposure and the couches still reeked of ash, but the smell was less apparent. The machine that filtered the shop's air, labeled as the smokeeater, was also removed, leaving behind a white square of unexposed ceiling. Third, as noted by a Blue Monday employee, the average amount of time that customers stayed in the shop was shortened. Whereas people had previously hung around the shop for up to five or six hours, customers were now only staying two hours at most. According to regulars, this change had a negative effect on the shop's overall atmosphere. (Bryan and Nancy outside smoking)

The new smoking policy almost always came up in conversations and interviews with customers and employees. Customers, when asked about the cultural atmosphere of Blue Monday, almost always referred to the smoke-free policy and commented that the policy had changed the clientele as well as feel of the shop. Specifically, smoking, or the ability to smoke inside, was directly related to the originality and unique atmosphere of Blue Monday. With the new policy, customers were unsure if the shop would emit the same unique aura.

For college students, leaving campus had previously meant more freedom. Smokers felt as though the management was trying to impose their values on the customers, similar to the stringent rules of St. Olaf. In the past, Blue Monday seemed to welcome individuals who wanted a free environment – there were no rules and no value system imposed. The new policy puts restrictions on what one can do in the shop as well as how comfortable one who

wants freedom can feel. Restrictions seem to stifle the liberal atmosphere. On the other hand, some customers believe that the atmosphere has been enhanced. For many, allowing smoking in a contained area such as the small Blue Monday was a health issue. Even though smoking was limited to certain areas of the shop, one cigarette would make the whole shop smell smoky. It is possible that the physical atmosphere of the shop itself has not really changed much as result of the new policy. Instead, the changes are in the attitudes of the regular customers. Since they feel betrayed, they stop coming as often. When the regulars were not in the shop, the atmosphere did not feel the same way. Basically, we realized that the atmosphere is largely dependent on who is in the shop, not the physical makeup of the shop or new policies.

#### D. Interviews

The following section will detail several of the most important interviews we conducted during our research at Blue Monday. Names of interviewees have been changed to protect their privacy. A list of questions that we asked is listed in the Appendix, however, the basic questions are listed below.

At the start of the interview we noted sex and approximate age and asked whether or not the interviewee believed he/she was a regular customer. From there, questions focus on the general atmosphere and/or culture of Blue Monday. The final questions usually focused on the new smoking policy and its affects on atmosphere and culture.

“Max” – Male, Age 22

Max was in the Blue Monday during most of our first visits. He is a St. Olaf senior and has been a regular customer for two years, coming several times per week. He used to come more often, but the overwhelming number of high school customers lessened his overall experience and the general atmosphere. He thought of Blue Monday as a hangout more than a shop, as he said he often forgot to buy something during his long visits. Sometimes he felt compelled to buy something because in the past he had seen non-buying customers harassed by Blue Monday employees. The reason why he and others come to Blue Monday is because there are not many other places open for the people of Northfield to meet and hang out.

Max said that he felt comfortable in the Blue Monday setting, however, the setting was rapidly changing. He said the new smoking policy had large effects on the clientele as well as the general atmosphere. Although the high school students bothered Max and the ownership, Max believed the owners used the high school students as a scapegoat for the new smoking policy. The owners, whom Max called “pent-up aggressive fascists,” enacted the new smoking

policy to change the clientele of Blue Monday. Although regular customers did not buy much, Max believed that their loyalty was being disrespected.

“Harry” – Male, Age 20

We met Harry one evening sitting outside smoking on Blue Monday’s picnic benches. He was very friendly and welcomed us to sit and talk with him. Harry grew up in Northfield, and after years of being away, he returned and is currently involved in what he terms “the ministry.” Although not actively involved in any church, he finds Blue Monday as an excellent place to meet people and give them “the word of the Lord.” For him, Blue Monday serves as a community center where people can exchange ideas and experiences.

During the hour we talked to Harry, he smoked at least five cigarettes. He believes the smoking policy will be costly to owners because they will lose customers. Additionally, if they wanted the shop to smell less like smoke they would have to replace the ceiling tiles as well as the furniture. The smoking policy was just part of Blue Monday’s new renovations that attempt to bring in new clientele. The policy, he believed, would attract many non-smoking customers.

“Francis” – Female, Age 18

We met Francis at the same time that we met Harry. She sat quietly during our conversation and only added a couple comments. Although her comments did not pertain specifically to Blue Monday, it did reveal some aspects of Blue Monday that we had not previously analyzed. Specifically, she made racist comments about the Mexican-American population of Northfield. She was upset because a few Mexican-Americans that work with her did not know how to speak English. “They could at least learn to speak our language,” she exclaimed. These comments made us realize that almost exclusively the customers of Blue Monday are Caucasian English speakers. However, this is not to say that Blue Monday does not wish to serve Northfield’s minority populations. Rather, the actual community of Northfield is primarily Caucasian. Therefore, it makes sense that the Blue Monday population would also be primarily Caucasian.

“Bernice” – Female, Age 22

Bernice has been an employee of Blue Monday for five years. She grew up in Northfield and currently attends St. Olaf. When she serves the morning customers she says that she feels like a “machine, serving customer after customer without a stop.” According to Bernice, the morning and afternoon/evening crowds and atmospheres are completely different. The

business opens at 6.30 a.m. From that time until about 9 a.m. the shop is filled with runners, Northfield school and college administrators, and business persons. At that time in the morning most customers just order coffee and leave immediately. The main draw for these people is the great coffee that Blue Monday provides. When talking about regular customers, Bernice pointed out a group of male business owners who come in every day at 6.30 and stay till 9. They have been coming every day for years and always sit at the same table, so she knows their usual orders. According to Bernice, a regular customer is one who comes daily for years and always orders the same thing. Our study focused on more than that definition, however, because very few customers come every day for years.

The new smoking policy, confirmed Bernice, is an initiative of the Blue Monday owners to draw a new crowd. The new policy attracts non-smokers and families who are likely to consume more than the current regular customers. Also, she believed that taking away the outside picnic benches was a good idea. Specifically, it was one of the ways to get rid of the annoyingly persistent middle and high school students. “They never buy anything and are always using the phone and making a mess.” Blue Monday has no incentive to cater to these types of non-buying customers.

“Ingrid” – Female, Age 22

Ingrid was one of the few non-smokers that we interviewed. Whereas previously she could not study at Blue Monday because of her dislike for the smoke, Ingrid now loves to spend her evenings in the shop. Since the new smoking policy, according to Ingrid, the atmosphere has been more pleasant. The new policy attracted a new crowd. Additionally, there is nowhere else where students and others can spend time studying and socializing during the evenings in Northfield. In Ingrid’s words, “The Kitchen sucks!” This obviously reminded us of Oldenburg’s “third place” theory.

“Bobby” – Male, Age 24

Bobby has worked at Blue Monday for the last five years. He came to Northfield to attend St. Olaf but dropped out after a semester. Even though Bobby is a smoker and personally dislikes the new policy, he appreciates the new working atmosphere the no smoking policy created. Even though several friends of his that were regular customers felt betrayed by the new smoking policy, Bobby could understand the ownership’s new policy from a business standpoint. Blue Monday, as a result of the policy, was making more money. “The sad truth is, you can easily replace one smoking customer with several nonsmoking customers.” Since the new policy, the shop has seen many

customers who greatly appreciate the nonsmoking atmosphere. Specifically, customers have commented on the improved smell and adolescent-free noise.

## VI. Summary

Our research goal was to discover and explore the culture and essence of Goodbye Blue Monday. Over the course of three and a half months we drank coffee, observed, conversed and learned. We found that the data we collected during the course of our visits was difficult to analyze and compile. We realized that the essence of Blue Monday is largely composed of customer perceptions. Therefore, Blue Monday means different things to different people. Our research largely was to try to understand these perceptions and translate them into collective meanings for essence of Blue Monday.

At the beginning we hypothesized that Blue Monday was different from the average chain coffee shop like Starbucks and Caribou. This assumption was a result of only a couple of visits to Blue Monday during our years studying at St. Olaf. Our initial impressions focused on the unique atmosphere we thought and confirmed Blue Monday possessed. These impressions focused on the physical atmosphere, such as the furniture and artwork. Basically, Blue Monday is unique in its physical setting. In terms of the physical setting alone, customers perceive Blue Monday to be different from large chain coffee shops. Customers identified chain coffee shops as clean, plain and sterile in atmosphere. We noticed that customers often times mentioned the physical atmosphere alone when talking about the essence of Blue Monday. Blue Monday, however, possesses more than just physical uniqueness. After months of research, numerous conversations and several interviews, we concluded that Goodbye Blue Monday's essence is largely due to it being one of the only "third place" locations available for the Northfield population. Since it is one of the only places to hangout, it is a community center for a diverse group of Northfield residents. Although we noticed very little racial diversity, the customer base is composed of middle and high school students, college students, families and business owners. We noticed that the most regular crowd was composed of younger people, namely high school and college students. As a result of providing a place for different groups to converge and utilize a common space, Blue Monday allows for a unique atmosphere to exist. Basically, it is a community center. During our research we often heard rumored that a new coffee shop, one such as Starbucks or Caribou Coffee, would be moving into Northfield in the near future. Another coffee shop would mean the existence of another "third place" location. This could significantly alter Blue Monday's clientele and/or

significance as the primary hangout for both young people and adults. The shop would be forced to compete with other shops.

Changes in smoking policy also had a big effect on customers' perceptions of Blue Monday's atmosphere. At the beginning of our research smoking was allowed after 5 p.m. In April, the policy changed to no smoking all the time. When the no smoking policy was enacted, regular customers reacted negatively. High school students were less often in the shop or even outside the shop and regular smoking customers came infrequently. They felt that since the smoking policy changed Blue Monday was no more unique than chain coffee shops. Overall, most chain coffee shops do not allow smoking. Regulars also claimed that management was trying to push their values on customers and therefore felt that the shop was turning into a chain coffee shop. For regulars the essence or atmosphere of Blue Monday did significantly change along with the smoking policy.

For others, however, the new policy actually enhanced Blue Monday's atmosphere. As a result of the new policy, Blue Monday actually gained a greater percentage of the Northfield's population as customers. Several people commented on the cleaner atmosphere and how much more attractive it was to stay in the shop for longer periods of time. These customers believed that Blue Monday was significantly different from chain coffee shops even though the smoking policy had changed. They cited, for example, Blue Monday is not owned by a major corporation and does not have to adhere to any corporate policies. Additionally, these customers believed that Blue Monday still provides a unique atmosphere of old furniture and distinct artwork.

As a result of time constraints and great amounts of possible data, our research could not possibly cover Blue Monday's entire essence. We believe that Blue Monday definitely merits future research. For example, our research did not focus at all on the morning atmosphere of Blue Monday. While talking to customers and employees, we realized that the morning atmosphere was absolutely different from afternoon and evening atmosphere. Further research could have also been done on the history of the Blue Monday building and shop. The Northfield library and St. Olaf archives could provide data on this type of research. Additionally, since we were unable to get in contact with the owners of Blue Monday, further research could focus on what the owners are trying to provide for customers and why they decided to make changes in smoking policies.

After considering all these details and perceptions, we concluded that Blue Monday is a great coffee shop. Many people, despite changes in smoking policy can appreciate the informal setting and unique artwork. Their selection of coffee, tea and fruit drinks is unmatched anywhere else in Northfield. Some may critique Blue Monday as nothing more than something

similar to a chain coffee shop, but Blue Monday is different. In the end, most customers perceive Blue Monday as a significant community center for the Northfield community. The whole community should collectively say, “Thanks a latte!”

## VII. Appendix

### I. Menu of most commonly ordered beverages and pastries (according to a Blue Monday employee)

#### Coffee

dark roast to stay \$1.10 1.25  
regular roast to go 1.10 1.50  
flavor au lait 1.50 2.25  
latte sm 1.85 lg 2.60

Not coffee \$2.75-3.25

#### Tea

fruit smoothies

Summer drinks \$1.35-3.25

iced tea

cold chai

Baked goods \$1.25-1.70

cookies, muffins and scones

brownies

Rice Krispie bars

### II. Interview Questions

Age:

Sex:

How often do you come to Blue Monday?

What time do you usually come to Blue Monday?

Why do you come? (Meet people? Socialize? Play cards? Study?)

Do you meet new people at Blue Monday?

Do you feel compelled to buy a beverage or food item?

What do you usually buy?

Would you classify or self as a regular or non-regular?

What type of person is a regular?

Do you feel comfortable coming to Blue Monday?

Does Blue Monday have its own culture?

What changes have you seen since you first started coming to Blue Monday?

Do you smoke?

What do you think about the new smoking policy?

Are you going to change your meeting places because of the new policy?

III. Map of Blue Monday

### VIII. Bibliography

Oldenburg, Ray. 1989. *The Great Good Place*. New York: Paragon House.

Wall, Corey. 1994. "Blue Monday's joe perfect for hip cats." *Manitou Messenger*, February 25, 9.

A few years ago while traveling in England, I met a woman who asked me if I'd heard of edible gold. I replied that I had, as I'd seen a TV show about chefs using gold leaves as a decorative but edible garnish on dishes. I assumed that's what she was talking about. Even though I can't claim the slightest expertise in this esoteric field, I thought I'd make an attempt to distill the essence of these claims for your consideration. Let's begin with culinary gold. Our next step is one decidedly outside the realm of scientific certainty. David Hudson, a farmer living in Arizona, was trying to extract gold and silver from the tailings of an abandoned mine in the mid-1970s. Of course, that's not what we think we're doing. We think of ourselves as the heroes of our stories: cutting through misinformation and digging up the real truth on the matter. We think that, just by applying our brainpower and our critical reasoning skills, we can discern whose expert opinions are trustworthy and responsible. We think that we can see through who's a charlatan and a fraud, and we can tell what's safe and effective from what's dangerous and ineffective. Except, for almost all of us, we can't. This is an observation that cannot be made from a single vantage point on our surface, but is supported by a wide variety of scientific measurements and observations. There is consensus that the Earth is round, not flat. NASA / Messenger mission. But only if we listen to it. Ears are pierced from top to bottom, and rings and pins are inserted into lips, chins, noses, eyebrows, navels and even tongues. Small tattoos have become almost normal. During working hours they stay hidden on shoulders, upper arms, hips and ankles, waiting to be shown at a nightclub or a party. Q7. Of course small personal radios had been around for a long time, but the Walkman was different. As Sony says, "it provided listeners a personal soundtrack to their lives". Technology has come a long way since the days of the original cassette Walkman. In 1984 the CD Walkman arrived. In Shakespeare's time only a few million people spoke English. All of them lived in what is now Great Britain. But as a result of various historical events English spread all over the world.