

### Starbucks POV

There are many ways to share information, and words aren't the only way. Sometimes people convey messages through visual images and architecture. I was at a Starbucks store this past Saturday, and when I looked at the design of the room, I started thinking about the purpose of the "author" of this particular coffee shop. The store is located at the intersection of Broadway and 8<sup>th</sup> Street in Oakland, its interior is decorated with two main colors: brown and white. As I spent my time there I assumed that the author was trying to create a quiet and casual environment for people to spend a lovely afternoon while also seeing what was happening outside on Broadway, one of the main streets in Oakland.

The first thing I saw after walking into the store was a long counter on my right. Just like other Starbucks stores, the orders are prepared on one side of the counter, and the consumers place their orders on the other side. I really liked the way the counter was organized because it made things easier for both customers and staff members. On my left, there was an extended table, and if you were sitting there you could see outside through white arched windows, which reminded me of the European architectural style I've seen in movies. However, these windows were not exactly the same as the ones in the movies, instead it felt that they were a mixture of American and European styles since, Starbucks is an American corporation. Unlike the huge European-styled windows, these were much smaller, yet at the same time, people could still see through them. The difference was that instead of seeing a broad view, you could only see a portion of it which was interesting to me because I could focus on the details of one particular view rather than looking at the whole spectacle.

As I kept walking towards the counter, I saw a three-layer medium-sized glass shelf in the middle of the room, and there were coffee beans, mugs, and water bottles arranged on top of it. I drew an inference based on what I observed that the reason for putting the shelf there was so consumers would be more attracted to those products while they waited in line, more so than they would be after they placed their orders. Though creating a casual environment was part of the agenda, at the same time, it's a business, so attracting the consumers' attention is no doubt important. After my drink was served, I found a spot across from the counter where I could see what was happening outside on Broadway from the big white windows, unlike some coffees shops where people can't see outside. The dominant color of most coffee shops that I've been to is brown, and that's why I was so impressed by the white color of this one. I further believe that the purpose of allowing customers to see outside while sitting inside was to give them a casual and relaxed feeling.

Sitting there, and looking at all the dynamics happening on the street, while listening to the lovely music playing inside the store, just made me feel so comfortable, and it made me want to stay longer. The sunlight was shining on me and yet not burning because the window was blocking some of it. Brown furniture, white windows and ceiling, black overhead lights, and the smell of coffee all played a role in creating this relaxed moment. All of these elements reflected the message that the "author" was trying to share, which in my opinion was to relax and engage in the atmosphere, while having indirect interactions with the people who were walking on the street outside.