

Canadian Patriotism and the Timbit:
A Rhetorical Analysis of Tim Horton's Inc.'s Canadian Connection through the Application of
Semiotics

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Dedication

*To my amazing family,
who are my legs when I cannot stand,*

&

*my awesome Lord and Savior,
who is my life's hope and purpose.*

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Abstract

This study examines the content of Tim Horton's television advertisements from 1980 to 2014 from a communication perspective. Using Peirce's semiotic theory, this study examines the significations of Canadian culture as they appear within each advertisement for the purpose of establishing the time and extent to which Canadian culture was used over the course of Tim Horton's advertising history.

This study finds that Tim Horton's advertisements did not purposefully use Canadian significations during the 1980s to create a connection between their brand and Canadian patriotism. However, after discovering Canadians' natural affinity to the Tim Horton's brand through focus group research in 1996, the Tim Horton's marketing team changed the focus of their advertising to reflect the attitudes of their research subjects. Starting with the "True Stories" campaign, Tim Horton's began to focus on the Canadian citizens who found community and national identity through purchasing their products. In the 2000s and 2010s, the Canadian significations grew stronger, including a much greater focus on hockey, using a national hockey icon, Sidney Crosby, as the country's voice.

Although Tim Horton's continues to produce a small percentage of their advertisements that focus on specific Tim Horton's products, the majority of Tim Horton's advertisements have maintained a consistent message through their use of Canadian significations, stating that Canada is snow, hockey, community, nature and a good cup of Tim Horton's coffee.

Key words/topics located in thesis: Tim Horton's, timbits, Canadian, advertisement, coffee, patriotism, hockey, Sidney Crosby, True Stories campaign, Semiotics, signs, symbols, C.S. Peirce

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Introduction

What is a Timbit? If you are a Canadian, this may be a rhetorical question. To many Canadians, a Timbit is the perfect pairing to a hot cup of java, or the go-to snack to bring to a party or gathering. A Timbit may also be a son or daughter, playing for a Tim Horton's¹ sponsored hockey team. For all Canadians, however, the Timbit is a symbol for a greater concept. These powdered or glazed bite-sized treats have become an iconic image for the Tim Horton's brand, which has taken Canada by storm.

Whether it is their "always fresh" coffee, their sweet selection of donuts or their "Timbits" logo which is proudly worn by little boys and girls as they take to the hockey rink for the first time, the Tim Horton's brand is everywhere in Canada. It can be found in every small town, and off every major highway. This coffee shop, which began in Hamilton, Ontario, in 1964, has now become a fixture in Canadian society. In fact, in a 2013 survey conducted by the Reputation Institute that polled 5,000 Canadians about 100 multinational brands, Tim Horton's scored highest "among all brands in the areas of performance and citizenship" ("Tim Hortons," 2013). This Timbit love has now even extended beyond the nation's border, where Tim Horton's has opened shops in areas of Michigan, Pennsylvania, New York and Virginia. Even with their expansion across the US-Canada border, many Canadians would argue that Tim Horton's is more than a popular bakeshop. To many Canadians, Tim Horton's is also a symbol of Canada – one that brings about a feeling of pride among Canadian patriots.

This café and bakeshop, which bears the name of the NHL hockey player who founded it, has integrated elements of Canadian culture into its commercials to effectively link its product

¹ Tim Horton's changed its spelling, losing the apostrophe, in the 1990s to when they entered the Quebec market for the purpose of easy translation to French, according to an article in the *Globe and Mail* (Strauss, 2005). However, for the purpose of consistency, Tim Horton's will be spelled with an apostrophe throughout the study, unless directly quoted from another source.

with patriotism – a feat yet to be duplicated by any other national brand within North America. According to C. Wilson, distinguished professor emeritus of history at the University of South Carolina and author of *The Imaginative Conservative*, “Patriotism is the wholesome, constructive love of one’s land and people” (n.d.). Wilson emphasizes the difference between patriotism and nationalism, noting the difference in each one’s intent and societal impact. While “Nationalism is the unhealthy love of one’s government, accompanied by the aggressive desire to put others down... Patriotism is an appropriate, indeed necessary, sentiment for people who wish to preserve their freedom” (n.d.). Patriotism can be seen throughout Canadian culture, whether it is through the wearing of the Canadian flag, the singing of the national anthem, or through supporting a beloved national brand – Tim Horton’s. Through advertisements and Facebook, Tim Horton’s has shared stories and images that reflect the nation that already loves this homegrown coffee franchise, and tied it to their love and devotion for Canada. As a result, Tim Horton’s has created a culture that encourages patriotism through buying Tim Horton’s products, and cultivated a feeling of unity between Canadians by sharing relatable stories and relevant cultural symbols through their advertisements.

Using Canadian symbols and stereotypes in their advertisements, Tim Horton’s reminds their consumers of their dedication to the “True North.” One of these symbols is Canadian hockey, both professional and house-league. Tim Horton’s sponsors house league hockey teams for four to eight year-old children across the country (Local Programs, 2012), and uses NHL star Sidney Crosby to reinforce the patriotism behind buying Tim Horton’s products. “Hockey... it’s more than just a game, it is a passion that brings us all together,” Sidney Crosby said in a 2010 Tim Horton’s commercial (Sidney Crosby Tim Horton’s Commercial, 2010). While his narration elaborates on the significance of hockey to Canadians, a home video is shown of him as a child,

wearing a “Timbits” hockey jersey. The commercial then ends with another narrator saying “Tim Horton’s celebrates hockey as it brings together all Canadians” (2010). This commercial is just a small example of how Tim Horton’s has sought to create connection between Canadian cultural symbols and its brand. This is not the only case where Tim Horton’s connects their products with Canada’s favorite sport; L. Steele, a writer for the Nanaimo Daily News in British Columbia, wrote an article about Tim Horton’s hold on Canada’s culture, stating “When NHL player and inventor of the apple fritter died at the age of 44, there were 40 Tim Horton’s stores. By December of 2005, there were 2,529 outlets in Canada, supplanting McDonalds as the largest fast food operator” (Steele). Steele claimed that Tim Horton’s integrates hockey into their product promotion and that they succeed in ways that they only could in a NHL-loving culture. “Where else but in Canada, would a coffee earn the nickname a ‘Gretzky’? At Tim Hortons, that's code for nine creams and nine sugars. Get it? 99. The Great One's jersey number” (Steele).

Does Tim Horton’s use other Canadian symbols to create a feeling of Canadian patriotism in its consumers? Tim Horton’s uses, and has used, many symbols of Canada within its commercials over the past decades to gain the allegiance of Canadian consumers. This study will examine the Canadian stereotypes and symbols that have previously been connected with Tim Horton’s by outside media sources. It will then ask when and if Tim Horton’s started to use these symbols and stereotypes to their advantage in advertising. These questions that address the nature of the relationship between patriotism and Tim Horton’s advertising can be assessed more clearly through the lens of Peirce’s theory of Semiotics. It will also explore the overarching question: did Tim Horton’s created a connection between patriotism and its product that was not previously seen, or did they take advantage of an already existing connection in order to more effectively advertise to their Canadian consumers?

In the 1800s, Peirce published a series of conceptions surrounding the nature of communication. In these writings, Peirce theorized that understanding within the human mind depends on the creation and use of signs. “Can we not even discuss that which has no existence in nature or the imagination? We can discuss whatever we can syllogize upon” (Peirce, 1991a, p. 14). Without having syllogisms, or a set of signs by which to establish meaning, our communication is void, lacking understanding. From this assertion, Peirce developed a theory of semiotics. According to Peirce, there are three levels of understanding: basic objects, references to those objects and interpretations of their meanings (Peirce, 1991b, p. 30). These levels create signs and symbols, which are used to create understanding for their interpreters. “All symbols, indeed, are in one sense relative to the understanding, but only in the sense in which also all things are relative to the understanding” (p. 30).

According to Lyne, “one purpose of semiotic theory is to provide a terminology broad enough to encompass the host of different sign systems that may enter the human experience” (p. 159). A sign system that often uses semiotics is advertising and brand building. Applying the terminology of semiotics, especially from the viewpoint of Peirce, gives added insight to modern branding capabilities – especially those of Tim Horton’s.

Some studies have also sought to explain Tim Horton’s and how they have helped to form the Canadian identity, examining what is clearly seen by any Canadian: a love for a coffee company that has successfully incorporated itself into northern pride. One of these studies, written for the *Strathy Undergraduate Working Papers on Canadian English*, described the semiotics used in Tim Horton’s advertising, stating that “The Fast food restaurant Tim Horton’s has adopted these identity markers and itself become part of the answer of what it means to be Canadian” (Barry & Manji, 2010, p. 12) Although the authors, Barry and Manji, defend their

proposition that Tim Horton's has become a staple in Canadian society, they fail to use semiotics theory clearly to identify how they used previously formed symbols of Canadian culture in their advertisements. It also does not answer the question, which will be examined in this study, of when Tim Horton's start to use Canadian symbols in its advertising, and did Canadians already connect Tim Horton's with their Canadian pride prior to Tim Horton's use of Canadian symbols in its advertising?

More literature on semiotics and its use in branding will be discussed in the following chapter. Following that, the research design of this study will be discussed, followed by the research findings, analysis and discussion.

Literature Review

Long before the creation of the written language, humans have been attributing meaning to ordinary items, symbols and images to create shared meaning and tell stories. In modern communication, media and advertising, today's societies are still using symbols to communicate meaning. Thanks to theorists such as Peirce, these symbolic connections now have a name: semiotics. This first section of my review will examine Peirce's theory of semiotics and the triadic elements within it.

In the next section, I will examine how the theory of semiotics has been used to examine various companies' attempts at branding, advertising campaigns and business-consumer relationships. Some of the studies within this section will analyze the brand simply within its use of semiotic messaging, while others will analyze how the brand tries to weave patriotism in with its products, as Tim Horton's does.

The third section will look specifically at the branding and the culture surrounding Tim Horton's café and bakeshop in Canada, and how Canadians have accepted it as a symbol of patriotism. This section differs from the one previous to it as it looks specifically at the Tim Horton's brand, and how consumers view it as a form of patriotism. Not many studies on the Tim Horton's brand exist, so this chapter takes a more macro approach, analyzing what the brand does to encourage a patriotic culture, and how its consumers see it. Unlike the previous sections, its focus on semiotics is negligible.

Theory Analysis: Examining and Elaborating upon the theory of Semiotics

In 1977, Peirce stated in his book, *Semiotics and Significs*, an explanation of the three elements that create his vision of triadic semiotics: sign, object and interpretant. "I define a Sign as anything which is so determined by someone else, called its Object, and so determines an

effect upon a person, which effect I call its Interpretant, that the latter is thereby mediately, determined by the former” (Peirce, 1977, pp. 80-81). These words of Peirce established the meaning of his semiotic terms. His words show a relationship between an object and its interpretation, which create a signification for the interpreter. The unity of the sign, object and interpretant can be applied to all areas of life, and are, as Peirce stated, “Elementary conceptions” that “only arise upon the occasion of experience” (Peirce, 1991b, pp. 25). Whether the interpreter is approaching traffic signals in a moving vehicle or viewing the logo of their favorite food establishment, Peirce’s semiotic theory states that the triadic relationship between the interpretant, sign and object plays into our understanding of what we see and how we interpret it. It is because of semiotics that we know to stop at a red traffic light or know what experience we will have when we purchase food from a specific restaurant.

Although Peirce built on the foundations laid by the Saussurian semiotic tradition, he changed the dyadic approach of sign-object relationships to a triadic approach, which he felt more accurately represented the use of signs and symbolism in society. The main elements of this triadic system are sign, object, and interpretant. According to Lyne, Peirce’s “triadic relationship is irreducible, meaning that the interpretive function is as fundamental to the sign as is the representamen-object relationship... in contrast to the Saussurian semiological tradition, which recognizes only an arbitrary relationship between a dyad, signifier and signified, Peirce conceives of semiotic relations as not simply arbitrary” (Lyne, 1980, pp. 157-158). These terms describe images or tangible items upon which we create meaning or concepts, and these concepts, over time, can conceive new or evolved concepts, which are then joined to the original item or image.

Meaning, to Peirce, is interpretive, according to an article on Peirce from *The*

Encyclopedia of Literary and Cultural Theory. The article states that, “According to Peirce's semiotic logic, interpretation is a process of argumentation structured along the lines of inference. Inferences - deduced, abducted, induced - were abstractions by which meanings and beliefs were created” (Peirce, Charles Sanders, 2011, pp. 2). Peirce's semiotics state that the users of language adapt and create meanings that are attached to various interpretations of the objects and images around them. This is an ever-changing process. It is “Only habit (that) can arrest the possibly infinite acts of interpretation - that is, of sign making - and the creation of meaning” (pp. 2). It is only by habit that a society or group of individuals can halt the altering of interpretations of an object. This is where meaning is no longer created and recreated for an interpretation of an object, and that meaning then is established and shared by a group.

It is fairly established now that, as Lyne stated, “The sign...consists of a ‘representamen’ – a written word, diagram, gesture, etc. – which stands in some respect for an “object” to some “interpretant” (Lyne, 1980, p. 157). Researchers and communication scholars have taken Peirce's model and both reflected on its success as a theory and used it to apply to the many settings of modern culture and human interaction.

According to researcher R. J. Parmentier, there may be limitations to the theory that has been proposed to encompass the entirety of human language and communication. Parmentier explored the Icon-Index-Symbol model articulated by Peirce by examining it within select applications. Parmentier then explores several extensions that could be added to Peirce's theory to more accurately assess the creation of signs and their ability to create meaning.

Parmentier's issue seems to exist within Peirce's ten classes or divisions, which fit within his triadic model of semiotics. According to a writing by Peirce in *Essential Peirce: Selected Philosophical Writings*, “These ten classes will have certain subdivisions according as the

existent correlates are individual subjects or individual facts, and according as the correlates that are laws are general subjects, general modes of facts, or general modes of law,” (Peirce, 1998, pp. 290). In Parmentier’s analysis of Peirce’s theory, it is said that “I have found the ten classes of signs to function as a maximal etic grid that, when imposed on ethnographic material, suggests missing empirical possibilities” (Parmentier, 2009, pp. 142). Parmentier states that he has considered removing some of his results from the research he has done because it did not fit within the confines of the semiotic “grid,” and that this restriction opened his mind to the possibility that Peirce may have missed other applications and semiotic possibilities.

Parmentier, therefore, attempted to add extensions to Peirce’s theory and found that “having clarified that using Peircean tools is substantially different from engaging Peirce philosophically, a further option presents itself, namely, to use these tools for purposes that might run counter to strict interpretations of Peirce’s writings” (pp. 148). Although Parmentier states that this option is not without its challenges, it does allow greater freedom within the application of semiotics to culture (pp. 148).

While Parmentier pointed out some of the flaws that may exist in ethnographic applications, other researchers have used Peirce’s semiotic theory to analyze the semiotic relationship in inter-art translation. Aguiar and Queiroz analyzed the transmission of meaning. When they used a famous Brazilian modernist novel, *Macunaima*, by Mario de Andrade, and a dance interpretation of the novel to explain how Peirce’s triad can and has been applied to inter-art context of shared meaning.

Aguiar and Queiroz said this of their inter-art translation:

Translation is a triadic (S-O-I) relation, not a dyadic-bilateral one. We propose two competing models. (i) The sign is the semiotic source (translated work); the

object of the translated sign is the object of the semiotic-source and the interpretant (produced effect) is the semiotic-target... (ii) The sign is the semiotic-target (translator sign); the object of the sign is the semiotic- source (translated work) and the interpretant is the effect produced on the interpreter. (Aguiar and Queiroz, 2013, p. 286)

To apply this triadic model to the intersemiotic communication, Aguiar and Queiroz created a model in which “the *sign-object-interpretant* (S-O-I) triad corresponds to the triadic relation: novel (S) – novel object (O) – dance choreography (I)” (pp. 287). Aguiar and Queiroz, in conclusion, did believe that Peirce’s theory could be “materially extended” (pp. 291). Within their example of novel and dance conveying meaning developed from the novel’s originally referenced legends, “The dance is determined by the book regarding the effect produced on the viewer, and determines this effect in reference to the book, subsequently producing the effect to be determined by the book through the mediation of dance” (pp. 290).

Peirce’s theory of semiotics has also been applied to the ever-changing world of new media, by researchers such as Lee, who examined its applications. Lee believed that not only could Peirce’s theory be applied to new media, but that it could be combined with narrative form for more accurate analysis. According to Lee, “Narrative cognition is examined objectively by means of semiosis in the process of interpretation inasmuch as Peirce sees consciousness as a process to be constructed within a social context by virtue of synthesis of consciousness” (Lee, 2012, pp. 181). Lee’s paper seeks to “show the potentiality of narrative form as a cognitive tool for meaning-making, as constructing a Storyworld within a narrative semiotic modeling system,” while emphasizing “observing narrative form as mental representation from Peirce’s semiotic framework” (pp. 182). Lee argues that in order to form a Storyworld, one must first establish

meaning for the interpreter through objects, signs and interpretants. Lee explains this concept by stating that “the interpreter and the utterer are mediated by narrative text, or the connected minds become embodied in the text” (pp. 182). In old media, according to Lee, a single medium is used to convey meaning, either through sound, image, spoken word or written word. But, new media “uses multimedia such as sound, image, and word, so that the idea of Object appears to be presented transparently, appealing to our senses more vividly” (pp. 190). Lee believes that this adds new understanding or greater dimensions to Peirce’s theory, as greater meaning can be gained through a compilation of various objects and signs. According to Lee, “new media narrative functions to raise the reasoning system in the interpreting mind” (pp. 191). According to Lee’s study, the growth of new media, greater elements can be added to the interpretation and use of semiosis.

Peirce’s work in semiotics is essential to the understanding of the various elements in Tim Horton’s advertisements that connect the idea of Canadian pride to their brand and name. The following chapter will look at how media and branding have been used by companies to create a semiotic message about a company for consumers, and later studies will be elaborated upon to discuss Tim Horton’s use of brand messaging.

Signs in Branding: The Application of Semiotics to Modern Advertising

Peirce’s semiotic theory not only explains how language is formed by symbols and their designated meanings, but it also gives insight into how companies use symbols and specific messaging to create unified brand imaging. It is because of this brand building that consumers from different backgrounds and mindsets can have a similar impression of a company’s goal and message, as long as they have had prior experiences with that company.

Many studies have been done to examine how various brands use semiotics in their advertising to create an emotional connection for consumers. In one study, for example, the researcher, Bookman, assessed the use of cosmopolitan symbols in the creation of Starbucks and Second Cup's brand cultures (Bookman, 2013, pp. 59). Taking a qualitative approach to her research, Bookman spent 80 hour-long sessions in 22 Starbucks and Second Cup cafés, noting details about the way images, people, objects and sensory aspects came together to coordinate with the brand experience that had been advertised in promotional materials and commercials (pp. 60). This, along with a series of interviews with customers and brand producers, helped Bookman come to her conclusions about the culture that had been created by these coffee giants. She found "Cosmopolitanism was important to how consumers related to and experienced the brands" (pp. 60). Through their advertising, décor, attitude toward and education about new products, Bookman believes the overall café environment "invited (customers) to explore the 'world of coffee' and literally taste the differences in origin" and that "consumers are afforded the possibility of expressing cosmopolitan openness by engaging with cultural diversity as constituted via the medium of coffee" (pp. 62). These symbols of worldliness, global awareness, and modern urbanity, played out through the stores' décor, advertising and product offerings, afforded Second Cup and Starbucks the opportunity to engage their consumers and convey messages that conveyed their desired brand image: "cosmopolitanism cool" (pp. 68). "Such cosmopolitanism is complex; it consists of both a global orientation of openness and awareness as an urban style – a way of being in the city that embraces cultural liveliness, innovation and complexity," Bookman states, believing that the branding of Starbucks and Second Cup is reinforced and perpetuated by the reinforcement of their consumers. According to Bookman, The cosmopolitan cool of Starbucks and Second Cup are "Expressed as a style and displayed through

taste,” and that their “consumers are distinguished by their hip, metropolitan worldliness, especially in contrast to an imagined rural and working-class parochialism” (pp. 69). The semiotic connections between objects, interpretations and signs are not clear in Bookman’s study, but her study’s conclusions are clear: the values of a brand can be clearly conveyed through the atmosphere created and the customers that the company attracts.

Other academics have studied Peirce’s theory, itself. In a dissertation published in 2003, Fan, a researcher out of Illinois State University, compared Saussure’s development of the signifier and signified to Peirce’s sign and interpretant. The difference, according to Fan, is that “Peirce’s interpretant is a combination of the understanding of his/her experience and of the sign itself. In comparison, Saussure’s semiotics, being mostly confined to sign-sign relations in the same system, explores the sign system primarily from the perspective of theoretical aspects, which provides us with an insight about the nature of signs and their relations” (Fan, 2003, pp. 20). Fan, then, elaborates through research on the use of semiotics theory in State Farm Insurance ads, focusing on the “visual and verbal information” given by State Farm Insurance Companies, particularly print ads that he believed “would represent the image and the ideology of an organization... and be sufficient in number so as to recognize patterns in the message for a semiotic analysis” (pp. 80) The ads Fan chose for his semiotic study ranged in years from early 1920s to the present, “However, ads for certain years are missing” he warned (pp. 81). Fan’s studies revealed semiotic features that conveyed the “important message of the company” (pp. 82)

He split the ads into five chronological sections, in which each section represented two decades of State Farm advertisements. The semiotic elements that Fan evaluated were text and images that focus on State Farm agents, and how customers feel about their agent and his or her

services. Using the terms icon, index and symbol, Fan's analysis sought to "explore their significance in an effort to understand how categories of visual signs are used to convey intended meanings" (pp. 84). He also examined visual details such as facial expressions, settings and gender to gain understanding of how visual signs change over time. Finally, he explored the "relationship between visual and verbal representations in State Farm ads to determine changes in the visual and verbal relationships over the years" (pp. 85). Fan found that State Farm has grown in its use of their agents in ads since "the company implemented the Career Man concept, which officially trained its agents" in 1950 (pp. 90.) According to Fan's research "State Farm agents' development from being untrained and inexperienced to becoming the cornerstone of the company explains why the agent theme took prominence in State Farm advertising" (pp. 92). The ads would even include photos of agents, which, according to Fan, "emphasize [the} agents' role in the company's development, even though the agent-theme was not spelled out verbally in ads" (pp. 106).

Along with the visual representation of the supportive, knowledgeable State Farm agent taking precedence in the company's ads, Fan states that the "several conspicuous visual and verbal signs" came to the foreground in State Farm ads (pp. 92). The company adopted a customer-oriented motto, "service, satisfaction, safety and economy," and a visual representation of squares became the company's logo (pp. 93). Beginning in 1927, according to Fan, State Farm declared itself to be "a 4 Square Company" (pp. 96). According to Fan's semiotic analysis, "4-square company" and the visual representation of "square" can be regarded as symbols. In fact, using the visual representation of the four squares creates double meanings: the denotation of the four visual squares representing the four word motto and the connotation of the four squares forming a square symbolizing "stability," "solid foundation," and "reliability" (pp. 99).

Fan states that over the years of State Farm's advertising, "State Farm seems to have used its ads to try to create a friendly, approachable profile through the image of its agents" (p. 106) and that other visual elements were important to State Farm's messaging. Fan said that in "Examining the facial expressions of people in these ads on a semantic level, we find one common feature: everyone is smiling" (pp. 147).

Over the years, according to Fan, although his study attempts to encompass the scope of State Farm's advertising message "this social and ideological microscope cannot explain all the details about the agent image formed over the years" (pp. 180). He does, however, believe that State Farm's "focus and interest in each defined time period also contribute to a unique formation of the State Farm agent image" (pp. 180.)

Cowin and Matusitz of University of Central Florida also applied a semiotic framework to their analysis of the McDonald's logo. The famous golden arches of McDonald's have been relevant to the brand since its inception in the 1950s, but according to Cowin and Matusitz, the logo of the McDonald's brand, itself, has been an evolution of sorts. "A chief conclusion of this analysis is that the communicative purpose of McDonald's, as its logo expressed, has taken a long time to build" the Cowin and Matusitz write. The pair, in their study of the logo, took Peirce's triadic semiotic framework and analyzed the McDonald's logo as it changed over the six decades of its existence (Cowin and Matusitz, 2011, pp. 21). To begin their study, they defined the terms that they would use from Peirce's model of semiotics. "Based on Peirce's "representamen-object-interpretant" model, the representamen is the actual sign itself... A representamen functions to "mean" something in an interpreting mind" (pp. 25). Likewise, "the object, then, is the meaning or concept – what the sign refers to, or the referent" (pp. 25-26). Finally, "The interpretant refers to the meaning or idea of the concept when decoded" (pp. 26).

Cowin and Matusitz collected data by recording what described where the representamen, object and interpretant in each of four developed McDonald's logos over the course of the company's history, noting consistencies such as "the "golden arches" representamen" (pp. 32). Cowin and Matusitz concluded, through their qualitative analysis, that McDonald's "logo changes are mainly attempts to curtail the message trajectory and bend it to convey different mindsets among McDonald's customers, especially in response to criticism and controversy" (pp. 32), but the iconic golden arches that have been staple to their logo "signifies what McDonald's is" (pp. 32).

Another heavy hitter in the world of big-name brands is Wal-Mart. In a 2001 study by Arnold, Kozinets, and Handelman, the theory of semiotics was applied to Wal-Mart's advertising flyers and how they use cultural symbols that communicate "a rich blend of family, community and national norms" (Arnold, Kozinets, and Handelman, 2001, pp. 243). In their research, Arnold, Kozinets and Handelman sought to unravel "the symbolic puzzle presented by the distinctive elements of Wal-Mart flyers" and draw "attention to the importance of retail image and retail symbolism" (pp. 243). To do so, the trio of researchers collected two years of U.S. Wal-Mart flyers, but then selected one in particular to analyze. Although it is unclear why they only chose one flyer to analyze, Arnold, Kozinets and Handelman did say that the flyer they chose "contained, more than any other flyer, the icons and elements shared among all of the Wal-Mart flyers" (pp. 249). The chosen flyer was from the first week of March 1997, specifically chosen because it did not have any holiday emphasis and, therefore, would be most authentic to an "ordinary" flyer situation. Arnold, Kozinets and Handelman then used semiotics theory to answer the following questions: "Who is being addressed and what are they being told to do? Who is the speaker and what emotions do they wish to convey in their subject matter? What are the mythologies?" (pp. 249). They said that the "intended reader of the advertising is an

American citizen, someone whose patriotism would lead them to be favorably predisposed to the pictures of the ‘Stars and Stripes’ on each page (pp. 249). Arnold, Kozinets and Handelman also said that the speaker uses a voice that is “plain-speaking and friendly... The language is simple to understand, busy, talkative, and direct” (pp. 250). The emotions portrayed through the flyers tell the readers, according to Arnold, Kozinets and Handelman, “These folks are obviously trusted friends and friendly neighbors who have the concerns of others at heart” (pp. 250). One of the mythologies shared in these flyers is that Wal-Mart understands the economic needs of the American family, according to Arnold, Kozinets and Handelman, who say that “To advertise examples of low prices on frequently purchased items is a response to these norms” (pp. 250). Another mythology is the family dynamic, according to the authors, who say “The Wal-Mart flyer’s many pictures of infants, toddlers, young children and teenagers caught in a variety of action poses, elicit family activities and concerns... Interrelated in webs of meaning with these concrete images are more abstract elements of caring, loyalty and commitment” (pp. 251).

According to Arnold, Kozinets and Handelman, the flyer analysis revealed “Wal-Mart was creating a basis for trust and acceptance” but that “not all images and texts within the Wal-Mart flyer are consistent with the interpretations presented in this research” (pp. 258). The trio states that although the store claims a strong American message, the “Made in the U.S.A.” tag was missing on most store items, and the all-American family was distorted by the fact that there were few men in the flyer, reflecting that the authors believe are “the realities of American family life – the rise of single mother families” (pp. 258).

The symbols taken from Wal-Mart’s flyers were evident, According to Arnold, Kozinets, and Handelman, as “The analysis yielded a series of examples in which a nostalgic “hometown” is evoked by the imagery of frugality, family, religion, neighborhood, community and American

national patriotism. Wal-Mart in turn is associated with this mythical hometown” (pp. 260).

Although the three researchers stated that this portrayed image was deceptive, its flyers did take advantage of already formed symbolic meanings to connect them with the brand’s image of “frugality, family, religion, neighborhood, community and American national patriotism” (pp. 260).

Semiotics theory can not only be used to understand how a company portrays the character of its brand, as Wal-Mart does through its flyers, but it can also define the origin of a brand, especially in the airline industry where symbols are displayed in global fashion. In an article by Thurlow and Aiello, 561 different airline tailfin designs are analyzed using semiotics theory. According to Thurlow and Aiello, “international travel is in fact one of the best examples of an industry which is deeply semiotically embedded, since a key part of what is actually consumed is the semiotic context of the service and the imagery of tourist destinations pre-figured in brochures, guidebook, holiday travel programmes and so on” (Thurlow, and Aiello 2007, pp. 309). Each tailfin was analyzed descriptively, interpretatively, and critically to analyze how the country is represented by their representative airline (pp. 305). Dividing the tailfins into visual categories, such as national emblems, animals, celestial objects, and markings, Thurlow and Aiello developed conclusions about how designs are created and the significance behind their choices. In regards to color choice, the authors found that 58 percent of airlines used the color blue in their tailfin content, and 43 percent used red. Thurlow and Aiello theorize this is because “blue is an obvious metonymic resource for iconically representing flight, but one which also carries the added symbolic meaning potentials of luxury and royalty (pp. 314). Thurlow and Aiello also believe it was found in most tailfins because it is commonly found in national flags, such as that of the UK, France, the Netherlands and the United States. They also believe this is

the case with red, which appears on 74 percent of all national flags (pp. 314).

Although national flags most certainly portray a nation's identity to the global audience, Thurlow and Aiello also found that "in over a quarter of the tailfins, regional identity was also indicated by the incorporation of... some other recognizable emblem" (pp. 314-5). These include a shamrock found on Aer Lingus's tailfin, and the Aztec figure on AeroMexico's aircraft, which Thurlow and Aiello said explicitly invoked "national/domestic identity" (pp. 315). Although Thurlow and Aiello did not identify the individual aspects that created the semiotic relationship between national emblems and their representations, they did make overarching applications for their study in the world of semiotics. Thurlow and Aiello stated that there is a relationship between the iconicity and the symbolism of the designs of tailfins, which is "clearly dialectical and always a matter of degree. In practice, iconicity is never absolute, and any sign may be simultaneously iconic and symbolic. In their conclusion, Thurlow and Aiello stated "one key semiotic resource we have looked at here is the balancing of cultural and perceptual iconicity. As such, our consideration of airline tailfin design reminds us that the possibly universal perceptual qualities of visual meaning must be central to analyses of visual communication" (pp. 337). According to Thurlow and Aiello, the use of signs, symbols and cultural icons create "the layering of signification through strategies such as combination, localization and abstraction... [which] serves to amplify the visual meaning of the designs" (pp. 319).

As seen in the tailfins of National airlines, companies can convey meaning through the use of cultural icons and national images. As will be clearly articulated in my methodology, the roles of cultural icons and national images can and will be applied to the Canadian cultural context. In the following chapter, I will discuss Canada's identity will be discussed in relation to the affinity Canadians have for Tim Horton's coffee brand. This will lead into my analysis of the

Tim Horton's brand, and its use of Peircian semiotics.

Tim Horton's, Advertising and National Acceptance

While all thriving companies have their patrons, in Canada, one company stands supreme. It is a bold statement, but one that is supported by statistics. In 2001, Tim Horton's surpassed McDonald's in Canadian restaurant sales. According to a 2001 article for *Marketing Magazine*, "while Tim Horton's executives tend to downplay any rivalry with McDonald's, that is an impressive milestone for a company that only 10 years ago had just 500 outlets and now tops 2,000" (Smith, 2001). The company that was started in Hamilton by an NHL hockey player focuses now, according to Smith, on making sure their brand is consistent, providing what Canadian consumers love to buy: "With donuts only making up 14% to 16% of sales, the chain is devoting much of its energies to lunch. That's meant innovative new products to match the brand's wholesome, value-focused image and a continued commitment to fresh coffee every 20 minutes and fresh-baked goods."

As the brand seeks consistency in their products, they seek the same in their ads, which are "well-known for their people-friendly mix of humour and heart" (Smith, 2001). Smith highlights ads from 2001 that not only introduce new and already popular products, but also show the hockey roots of the brand. "Whether it's a father singing along with 'Boys in the Bright White Sportscar' by Canada's Trooper or a teenage boy in a Tim Horton's uniform flirting with a girl on the bus, the ads easily strike a chord," says Smith (2001). As shown by Smith, Tim Horton's has proved to be a favorite among Canadians and their brand reflects that.

In a dissertation for York University entitled *The Social Life of Donuts: Commodity and Community in Postwar Canada*, author Penfold examines the development of Tim Horton's donut shop and how it has become a cultural icon for Canada. Penfold asks the question "What is

the link between commodities (economic goods that can be bought and sold) and communities (a collection of people, sharing some cultural connection)?" (Penfold, 2002, pp. iv).

In the beginning of the study, Penfold made the assertion that Canadians have a love and fascination with donuts. "Almost everywhere across Canada the donut is believed to be the unofficial national food, celebrated in song and story as a sort of ironic replacement for the dramatic national symbols found south of the 49th parallel," Penfold states (pp. 1). Penfold attempts to summarize the history of donut shops in Canada by stating when Country Style and Tim Horton's took root in Canada and how they expanded. Penfold stated that "not only was everybody adding products like soup and sandwiches, but the big players like Tim Horton's and Country Style were redefining the economics of location" (pp. 5-6). As Country Style has failed to keep up with Tim Horton's, the national identity of the donut was established in Tim Horton's branding. According to Penfold "donuts take on a deeper national meaning when linked to other, more established forms of Canadiana. Hockey, for example, is commonly teamed with donuts as a national symbol" (pp. 264).

Penfold's observations of Tim Horton's match the sentiments of researchers such as Smith and Barry and Manji, who were mentioned in the introduction. Tim Horton's has created a Canadian identity. He believes this is because they have monopolized on the connection between donuts and hockey. "The donut-hockey nexus rests to a large degree on the dual iconography of Tim Horton" (pp. 264). Penfold believes that the Tim Horton's brand has integrated Canadian patriotism successfully enough to gain the allegiance of coffee and donut consumers across the great white north. My research seeks to build upon this Tim Horton's-patriotism connection, by examining its source and the original intent of Tim Horton's ad in relation to this connection. As

has been theorized by Penfold, and confirmed by many others, there is a very evident connection between Tim Horton's and Canada, but as for how this connection formed is still a mystery.

In the following section, I will thoroughly explain the details of my study of Tim Horton's and elaborate on how I will use semiotics to answer questions of how Tim Horton's branding has managed to use Canadian patriotism to benefit its company.

Methodology

The Tim Horton's company has become a permanent fixture in towns and cities across Canada. According to an article published September 27, 2013, by Delacourt, a writer for the Toronto Star, even the Prime Minister (P.M.) of Canada is a fan of the unofficially national brew. According to Delacourt, the P.M. Stephen Harper has "managed to link this doughnut store to many great things about Canada: hockey, family and even Pierre Berton, chronicler of Canada's nation-building efforts" (Delacourt, 2013). What is so intriguing about this company is its success in not only integrating patriotism into its advertising, but also creating a movement among Canadians from coast to coast to make Tim Horton's the number one fast food restaurant above all American-based competitors.

So when did Tim Horton's start to integrate the Canadian identity into its branding and advertising? Did Tim Horton's create the connection between their brand and Canadian pride, or did they take advantage of a connection made previously by their consumers? What are the Canadian symbols used in correlation with the Tim Horton's brand in their advertising and how do these advertisements so successfully connect the Canadian culture with buying Tim Horton's products?

In order to answer these questions, I will be using Peirce's triadic semiotic structure, and applying it to Canadian symbols and their use in Tim Horton's branding. Peirce's triadic model consists of three equal parts that combine to create a signification, which by Lyne's definition is "a communication model stripped to its bare ones..." and it is "irreducible, meaning that the interpretive function is as fundamental to the signification as is the representamen-object relationship" (Lyne, 1980, pp. 157). This bare-bones model will allow myself, as the researcher, to apply the objects I see in branding to the representamens and inferences that exist surrounding

them. Instead of breaking down the representamens and inferences, I will draw attention to the significations as a whole as a representation of Canadian culture. I will examine how, when and how much they are used in advertisements to create the brand-culture connection.

Researcher's Role

Although there are no ethical issues to be considered with the research due to the fact that the research material is taken from public domains and were created for mass viewing by a public company, there are ethical issues that should be considered regarding myself as the researcher. Although I am aware and will take steps to remain unbiased over the course of this study, my Christian worldview may affect the results portrayed in this study. The reader should be aware of my biblically based ideological views and that my personal thoughts on this theory will be a reflection of my Christian faith. I do, however, believe that my Christian faith will be an asset to this study as I believe there is an absolute wrong and an absolute right. These ethics are founded in the belief of absolute truth and I do believe that they will help me to remain fair and balanced. Pushing my own personal agenda would go against my moral code and will, therefore, be unlikely.

The reader must also be aware that, although this study will be published out of an American university, I am of Canadian citizenship and have been a consumer of Tim Horton's products over the course of my upbringing in Canada. The reader should be aware that this may create a bias within my study, but I will seek to portray my research findings in a way that does not skew the truth on this issue, but enhances a better understanding for readers around the world.

Theoretical Framework

Peirce's theory of semiotics will be used to assess the use of Canadian significations within Tim Horton's branding over the course of the company's existence. As previously stated, Peirce's triadic structure uses the terms "sign," "object" and "inference" to describe the parts of language and communication that come together to create a signification. This theory separates an image (object) from its created meaning (sign) and the connotation of a greater concept (inference). I, as the researcher, will apply these definitions to significations seen within Tim Horton's branding, but will take the time and effort to separate or categorize the individual parts (object, sign and inference) within the significations. My research will be documented in such a way as to show campaign and thematic changes in campaign strategies from 1980 to the present year of 2014.

I also will search other forms of media, such as news articles and broadcasts being made by outside news sources, which show a correlation between Tim Horton's and Canadian culture. This will allow me, as the researcher, a timeline as to when Canadian media started communicating this Tim Horton's – Canada connection.

Research Questions

The research and analysis of this study will seek to answer a series of research questions. These questions are as follows:

- RQ1: How has Tim Horton's advertising and messaging created a connection between Canadian patriotism and their brand, or, alternatively, have they simply taken advantage of an already existent connection created by Canadians themselves and national media?
- RQ2: How and when did Tim Horton's advertisements start to integrate significations that represented elements of Canadian culture?

- RQ3: How and when did Canada's news media start to communicate a connection between the Tim Horton's brand and their national identity?
- RQ4: What are the significations that exist surrounding Canadian culture, which exist within the Tim Horton's advertisements?

The last three questions will assist in answering the first, which is the overarching question of this thesis.

Defining Terms

For the purpose of this study, key terms must be defined for the reader. The four most important of these terms that will be used in this study are "sign," "object," "inference" and "signification." In the book *The Subject of Semiotics* by Silverman, "The first of these triads consists of what Peirce calls the "sign," the "interpretant," and the "object." Signification is understood as involving all three in a complex interaction" (Silverman, p. 14).

Signs

According to Peirce, a sign is "a representation agreeing with its object, without essential resemblance thereto" (Peirce, 1991c, pp. 21). Silverman says that a sign is "a form capable of eliciting a concept" (Silverman, 1983, pp. 15). In Canadian culture, objects such a hockey stick and a snowy pond represent signs such as "winter" or "hockey." Connecting these signs and objects can represent the larger concept of "Canada" for the Canadian mind. According to Eco, a sign is "anything which determines something else (it's interpretant) to refer to an object which itself refers (its object)" (pp. 69). When deciding whether a sign can be used in the study of Canadian semiotic triads within Tim Horton's advertisements, I will be asking myself whether there is an object and an interpretant within the ads that match it to create meaning.

Objects

So what is an object and what is its relationship with a sign? An object, according to Silverman, is just that – an object. It can be a person, place, item of quality or substance, from which a representamen is developed (Silverman, 1983, pp. 19-20). Peirce calls an object a symbol's denotation (pp. 33), meaning that there is no inference involved in it, but only basic understanding. Canadian objects that may be examined as part of a signification could be an inanimate object, such as snow, or an individual, such as a hockey player like Sidney Crosby. The connotation of the signification occurs within the interpretant, which connects the sign to the object.

Interpretants

An interpretant is the idea or connotation created by examining the object and its representamen. Peirce described the interpretant as a mediating representation between an object and its representation, stating that it “fulfills the office of an interpreter” (Peirce, 1991b, pp. 28). Silverman gives further elaboration on this term, stating “the interpretant is the “mental effect” or “thought generated by the relation between the two terms” (pp. 15).

Eco in “A Theory of Semiotics” stated that the interpretant can come in any of the following forms:

1. An equivalent (or apparent equivalent) sign-vehicle in a semiotic system
2. An index by which a single object is directed for the purpose of universal quantification
3. A scientific (or naïve) definition in terms of a semiotic system. For example, salt signifies Sodium Chloride
4. An emotive association, which acquires the value of an established connotation. For example, a dog signifies fidelity

5. A translation of a term from another language, or a synonym by substitution (Eco, 1976, pp. 70).

As shown in Appendix A, Canadian significations are established through the combination of objects, signs and interpretants. For example, A Canadian may see an advertisement, which shows a backdrop of heavy snow and wind. The wind and snow are objects. The Interpretant, which connects those objects to the viewer's assumption that the setting is in Canada, is that the wind and snow occur during the winter in Canada.

According to Peirce's triadic model, signification is the joining of these three equal sides (Peirce, 1991a, pp. 14). To Peirce, the signification is "an exclusively conscious phenomenon" that allows us to develop meaning and understanding (Peirce, 1991c, pp. 18).

Media terms

These terms will be used to examine images and concepts within Tim Horton's branding and advertisements, and those of outside media. This also leads to other terms that need to be discussed before beginning this semiotic analysis.

What should be considered as part of the process by which Tim Horton's establishes and reinforces their brand identity? Branding, according to LePla and Parker, is much more than "logos, tag lines or ad campaigns," or even the "product's unique selling proposition or corporate identity." Instead, they say, "these examples just scratch the surface [of what branding is]. In reality, a strong brand has to do with every aspect of a company's relationship with its customers" (LePla and Parker, 1999, pp. 1). In regards to Tim Horton's branding, it is necessary to not only consider any graphic design used for advertisement and website and social media layout, or in-store décor, along with all products, services and representative workers to be part of Tim Horton's branding. Tim Horton's branding also involves the way the company relates to

its customers and the way their customers perceive Tim Horton's to be. In my assessment of Tim Horton's advertisements, I will examine the wording and interactions between Tim Horton's and both their customers and Canadians as a whole.

The term "advertisement" or its plural form "advertisements" will be used in my study. The act of implementing advertisements is called advertising. Belch and Belch define advertising as "any paid form of non-personal communication about an organization, product, service or idea by an identified sponsor" (Belch and Belch, pp. 18). According to this text, advertising is one of the best ways to build brand image, by providing "consumers with information as well as to influence their perceptions" (pp. 19). In this study, the term "advertisement" will be used in regards to video advertising that was originally aired on national television but has now been uploaded to youtube.com. It also may be applied to written Facebook posts from the company to Tim Horton's fans and followers, and image-driven print advertisements.

Outside media will also be analyzed in this study. The term "media" is a plural form of the word "medium" which can be defined as the channel by which a message can be communicated. According to Turow, a medium is the technological system that acts as a vehicle for the "distribution, or reception of messages" (Turow, 2008, pp. 9-10). The media that will be looked at may fall into the following categories: television, radio, print, social and online media or many others.

The term "campaign" is defined by D.E. Parente as "a series of advertisements, and the activities that help produce them, which are designed to achieve interrelated goals" (Parente, 2006, pp. 20). The term "campaigns" may also be used to describe a series of advertisements created by Tim Horton's, of which fall under the same theme and appear either sequentially or simultaneously with each other within a given amount of months or years. Although campaign

messages can be sent through print, radio and various other media, this study will consist of the analysis of only advertisements that were originally shown via television, and now can be viewed online through YouTube video archives.

Research Design

I, as the researcher will first gather more than 49 advertisements of various dates for analysis. In a prior search, I found that about 49 advertisements existed on YouTube from the year 1980 to 2013. Although other advertisements did exist outside of these 49, the others were not included in the video pool because they were either duplicates of the chosen videos, they were designed for American audiences, they were in French, not English, which would inhibit understanding and the ability to add cultural context, or they were not created by Tim Horton's and were meant as satire.

Each advertisement will be thoroughly reviewed and categorized by both time of publication and topic and theme. Peirce's theory of signification will be applied as I, as the interpreter, will evaluate how and if the ads within the applied categories use Canadian stereotypes and significations. These significations will be elaborated on within the observations section, which will follow this chapter.

The researcher will then gather at least four examples of media content from major Canadian newspapers that discuss Tim Horton's as a Canadian company and coffee brand. I have chosen four examples, as they coordinate with each decade I have chosen to examine, from the 1980s to the 2010s. I will then evaluate if and which Canadian stereotypes are discussed in regards to the company. These stereotypes are simply widely accepted significations that represent the Canadian culture. They may use objects, signs and inferences about Canadian

weather, colloquialisms, hobbies and personalities. These messages will be categorized, as well, and discussed within the observations section following this chapter.

Once all of the data is collected, arranged and discussed categorically, comparisons will be drawn on the use of Canadian significations in both Tim Horton's advertisements and outside media. Conclusions will then be drawn and the research questions will be answered, specifically in regards to whether Tim Horton's created a bond between Canadian patriotism and its own brand, or whether it was simply used to their advantage. The analysis of this study will follow the appendices in this chapter, giving conclusions to the research questions posed.

Observations

Semiotics and Tim Horton's Advertisements

In this chapter I will discuss the themes of the Tim Horton's ads, over the course of the four decades, which span 1980 to the 2010s. Using the theory of semiotics as a lens, I will examine each advertisement, looking for visual and verbal signs, including narration, slogans, actions, background scenery and the use of characters and celebrities that portray a sense of Canadian culture, community and/or stereotype. According to semiotics theory, these components act as signs, which create meaning through viewer interpretation. By examining the timing and the degree to which Canadian symbols are used throughout Tim Horton's ads, we will be provided a greater understanding of the efforts made by Tim Horton's in order to make cultural connections. This examination will take place over the first half of this chapter, and will be followed by the examination of outside media's use of language to portray a connection between Tim Horton's and Canadian culture.

Tim Horton's in the 1980s: The Promotion of "Always Fresh" Baked Goods and the Appearance of Amanda Tapping

The 1980s were a transition period for the Tim Horton's company. After only a decade and a half of business, Tim Horton's decided to expand their menu to introduce new baked goods that could encourage the company's already growing business. According to Tim Horton's website, "The chain's growth into the 1980s brought about a whole series of new product introductions: muffins (1981), cookies (1981), croissants (1983), and soups & chili (1985)" (The History of Tim Hortons, 2013). These changes became the subject of Tim Horton's advertising over the decade, beginning with the Tim Tarts, which were introduced in a 1980 advertisement. In the commercial, a Tim Horton's employee, smiling brightly from beneath his thick mustache,

holds a tray of “Tim Tarts” for the camera to see. “Come and discover Tim Horton’s newest pastry treat everyone will love,” the narrator boasts, continuing to describe the new strawberry pastry available in store. The narrator concludes with “Fresh from your friend along the way,” (Tim Hortons Donuts Classic TV Commercial 1980, 2009). Although there are no visual indicators of Canadian culture within the commercial, the message “Fresh from your friend along the way,” broadcasted to the Canadian audience, can be seen as an object within a semiotic signification, offering a sign to be created in the mind of the viewer. The signs can be found in connection to the words “friend” and “way.” The word “friend” often is met with the sign of knowing, comfort and community – one that is found within rural Canadian culture. “Way” connotes the sign that a trip being taken, from one place to another, possibly by car or any other vehicle. If this trip is within a short distance, or at least within the country, it is safe to infer Tim Horton’s is within Canada, seeing this ad was broadcasted to a Canadian audience.

The next ad highlights the cookies that had just been introduced to the Tim Horton’s menu. The advertisement is labeled as if it aired in 1984, although the original date could have been closer to 1981, which Tim Horton’s website states was the year they introduced the sweet treat. The advertisement features a father and son with a love for Tim Horton’s donuts. The son gently gesticulates with his father about how quickly his father scarfes down the donuts, stating that his father is the reason for the donuts staying so fresh – “because you keep on eating them” the son says, peering into an empty donut box and turning it upside down to prove there is nothing left inside. His father takes another bite of his donut and shrugs his shoulders (New Tim Hortons Cookies – 1984, 2009). A jingle on the radio then begins to sing “Always fresh ‘cause you keep eating them... Tim Horton’s cookies,” (2009). The word “cookies” stirs both surprise and delight in the men, causing them to respond unison with “cookies?!” A series of other people, standing

in the same Tim Horton's store, echo their response again and again, peering at the Tim Horton's employee holding two trays of cookies in assorted flavors. She affirms that Tim Horton's does have cookies and explains the varieties. The jingle repeats as the b-roll changes to a Tim Horton's sign. This ad does not carry any specific indications of Canadian culture, which is similar to the commercials that followed, highlighting muffins and donuts.

The theme of the introductory ads, which first aired in both 1985 and 1989 highlighting specific products, was emphasized through their jingle: "Always fresh 'cause you keep eating them." In 1985, Tim Horton's aired an advertisement highlighting their donuts, muffins, fancy crullers, Timbits, and éclairs, all tied down with string. In this advertisement, the narrator is never seen, but his voice is heard, as the video scans over each baked good, tied down in a crisscrossed fashion, and fastened with nails to a wooden board. "We are sorry we have to show you our Tim Horton's donuts like this, and our Tim's muffins like this..." the narrator says, but he boasts "everything we make is so beautifully fresh, if we hadn't tied it all down, well, someone would have eaten everything before we'd had the chance to show it all to you" (1985 - Tim Hortons - Tied Down Donuts, 2010). This ad ends with the same tagline as before, "always fresh because you keep eating them... Tim Horton Donuts" (2010). Even to the most discerning of listeners, it is hard to find any indication of a Canadian focus, but a Canadian sign can be found in the pronunciation of the word "sorry," which is said in the first sentence of the advertisement. Pronounced with a hard "o" sound, typical of Canadian pronunciation, the narrator caters to the Canadian ear, consistent with their dialect. Although many Canadians deny that they have an accent of any kind, according to *Varieties of English: The Americas and the Caribbean*, "In Canada, even the common words borrow, sorry, and tomorrow usually have the

vowels of bore, sore, and more... The Canadian pronunciation of sorry with a lower-mid-back vowel is particularly striking to American ears (Boberg, p. 151-152).

The “always fresh” message was echoed by another advertisement featuring “tied down” muffins, which appeared on Canadian televisions the same year. Just as in the advertisement previously discussed, the muffins advertisement features four varieties of muffins, secured to keep anyone from eating them before they could be shown to viewers. Beside the use of Canadian dialect in both of the “tied down” ads, there are no clear significations within these two ads that indicate a connection to Canadian culture.

Two more commercials that were found, which were produced within this decade, feature a new tagline that contains a clearer Canadian sign. The first, which was released in 1989, starts off by showing images of a variety of cakes with different shapes and colors. Each cake shown is iced with the narrator’s message: “Tim Horton’s takes a fresh look at cakes... whatever you are celebrating... whatever your message... whatever your taste... a fresh Tim Horton’s cake makes it a piece of cake” (Tim Horton's cake commercials (1989), 2009). The advertisement then ends with the tagline: “you owe yourself the best in the land” (2009).

This tagline was also used in another advertisement from 1989, which featured Amanda Tapping (then-upcoming Canadian celebrity). In this advertisement, Tapping is dressed as a Tim Horton’s employee, waiting on a socially awkward, thin and tall man dressed in biking gear. The man, speaking in a nasally tone, asks for “corn husks, unsalted” (Tim Hortons Commercial with Amanda Tapping 1989, 2009). Tapping giggles slightly while explaining that no such food could be purchased from the restaurant. “How about some dried alfalfa spurs,” he asks (2009). Tapping says “oh, I’m afraid not. At Tim Horton’s we emphasize freshness and taste” (2009). Her face suddenly lights up as she thinks of a tasty alternative for this man, obviously concerned about

nutrition; “you’ll love our new oat bran muffin,” she says (2009). The man takes a bite and smiles. He obviously enjoys the alternative because he chooses to take a dozen to go, along with one jelly donut – obviously a guilty indulgence. The ad, as previously stated, ends with the same written tagline: “you owe yourself the best in the land” (2009).

This tagline creates a Canadian signification within the mind of the viewer, prompted by the object, “the land.” When Tim Horton’s tells viewers that they owe themselves “the best in the land,” the company creates a quantifiable boundary by which to measure their product. Seeing Tim Horton’s audience is within Canada, the land boundary that is interpreted is one that surrounds Canada’s ten provinces and three (although in the 1980’s it was only two) territories. What Canadians understand from this tagline and the signification it creates is that Tim Horton’s is the best Canada can offer. This tagline is the first clear sign of the decade’s advertisements that puts emphasis on the land or nation of which it focusing on. As a result this tagline creates a connection with the land, as well.

The use of Amanda Tapping is also an interesting and now poignant choice in Tim Horton’s last advertisement of the decade. Amanda Tapping went on after acting for Tim Horton’s to become a well-known Canadian actress, known for her science-fiction roles in *Stargate SG-1* and *Stargate Atlantis*. Although the Tim Horton’s could not have predicted Tapping’s acting success, their choice to use her in the advertisement has now connected her with that advertisement, and, as a result, their company. Her official website reveals how she credits Tim Horton’s for the start of her acting career, saying “To this day she recalls how she vowed never to do television. However, a short time later she found an agent and did her first commercial (*Tim Horton's Oat Bran Muffins*). Several more commercials followed,” (Bio, 2013). Looking back at that advertisement, which has been viewed nearly 20,000 times on

Youtube.com, viewers can draw significations from the connection between Tapping (a Canadian force in the acting community) and Tim Horton's, and, as a result, draw connections between Canada and the Tim Horton's brand.

Research was also done on outside news media. Despite searching for news articles and editorial cartoons from the 1980s in major new papers from cities across Canada, none were found to show a distinct correlation between Tim Horton's and Canadian culture.

Tim Horton's in the 1990s: Bringing Canadians Together to Roll Up The Rim and Share True Stories

Although, according to Tim Horton's company history, their company merged with Wendy's International, Inc., in 1995, "giving new focus and impetus to the expansion of the Tim Hortons concept in the United States," the Tim Horton's brand promotion north of the border remained unscathed (The History of Tim Hortons, 2013.) In fact, the advertisements that Tim Horton's aired in the 1990's showed a more evident integration of Canadian significations – a trend that escalated, showing more and more significations as the decade wore on.

In 1990, Tim Horton's aired a commercial promoting their specialty cakes, decorated for the Christmas season (Tim Hortons Christmas 1990 TV Commercial, 2009). In this commercial, their jingle plays repeatedly, singing "Always got time for Tim Horton's," as the narrator reminds viewers to "stop into their neighborhood Tim Horton's to pick up fresh baking for the holidays" (2009). The video shown consists of multiple clips of various young children excitedly admiring the baked goods featured in Tim Horton's cake and pastry displays. Ten seconds into the advertisement, another clip appears, showing a group of three young boys dressed in hockey equipment, carrying hockey bags and sticks, rushing down a set of stairs. When looking closely, it can be seen that the jerseys have the Tim Horton's logo on them. Another shot of the cakes and

baked goods are shown, by themselves first, and then with the excited gaze of a young boy. At the 20-second mark of the advertisement, the children in hockey garb are shown again, this time meeting a mother outside of her vehicle. She has a box labeled “Tim Horton’s” in her hand. The boys gather around her with wide eyes and large smiles. As they reach into the box, the video cuts to another unidentifiable hand reaches into a larger Tim Horton’s box, pulling out a chocolate glazed donut. Suddenly a clock appears below the donut, as the donut is slowly disappearing, showing only bite marks where the donut once lay. The advertisement ends with a festive greeting: “Season’s Greetings, Tim Horton’s” (2009).

The use of Tim Horton’s hockey players in Tim Horton’s seasonal advertisement provides a large Canadian signification for advertisement viewers. According to a study published by Statistics Canada, over 70 percent of students, ages 15 to 24, participated in sports 1992 (Ifedi, F., pp. 24), and that “boys engaged mostly in soccer, ice hockey, swimming and basketball, in that order” (pp. 31). These statistics indicate that numerous children participating in hockey across Canada, almost as much as soccer². The vision of young children approaching a mother’s vehicle, still dressed in their equipment, after a hockey game is a familiar sight for Canadian families, and would be highly relatable to the advertisement viewer. By showing the hockey players with Tim Horton’s logo across their jerseys, there is a connection that can be drawn easily by the viewers, connecting Tim Horton’s brand to hockey, and hockey to Canada. As a result, this advertisement can create a connection between Canada and Tim Horton’s brand.

Although many ads from this this decade show clear indicators of Canadian culture, some of the ads still remained focused on promoting specific products over integrating Canadian

² This study noted that soccer was the sport of choice for many families, instead of hockey, because of the cost involved with playing hockey, including membership fees, equipment purchase and maintenance. This choice was especially seen in low-income families.

significations. One such ad, first appearing in 1990, features Tim Horton's baked goods, using a grandfatherly older man and a little girl, as well as alternating clips of a little boy, intermixed with close-up video of Timbits, donuts and other baked goods. All three characters are seen in the video, gazing at the display cases of Tim Horton's products. The Tim Horton's jingle is the same as the previously described one, repeating phrases "It's around the clock freshness" and "Always got time for Tim Horton's" (Always Got Time for Tim Hortons 1990, 2011). This ad does not have any clear Canadian significations to connect the Tim Horton's brand to Canada.

In 1991, however, Tim Horton's uses community and cold climate to gently signify Canada within their ad. Opening their advertisement with the sound of a whistling wind, and the view of a Tim Horton's shop, surrounded by a dark, snow-covered parking lot. "That's 20 minutes. Better make another pot," states an employee, who is then seen looking at the clock and then walking over to the coffee maker. Picking up the pot full of Tim Horton's coffee, she walks over to the sink and pours it down the drain. A new pot then begins to brew into an empty Tim Horton's carafe. The video then spans outside again, this time displaying piles of snow being lifted by the cold wind, decreasing visibility. The parking lot is also shown, with no cars parked in it. "They'll never get through in this blizzard," the employee says, leaning up against the glass window, looking out at the storm (1991 Tim Hortons Commercial, 2010).

Within seconds, a voice is heard (assumed to be the other employee) saying "He's here." A snowplow, honking his horn, pulls up to the glass window and parks. Then a line of people is seen parading through the Tim Horton's entrance. The employee comes to the cash register with four Tim Horton's cups in hand. "I wouldn't want all that wonderful coffee to go to waste," states the snowplow driver. The employees smile and chuckle with the driver. The snowplow

driver is then seen sitting at a table with his coffee. He takes a sip and lets out an “ahh.” The advertisement then ends with the jingle, “Always got time for Tim Horton’s” (2010).

The Canadian significations can be seen in the cold weather and snow covered exterior of the Tim Horton’s snow, as well as the willingness of all local residents to brave the weather for a “wonderful” cup of coffee. According to data gathered from a 2004 Canadian Community Health Survey (CCHS), Canadians have a documented craving for the caffeine filled brew. The CCHS reviewed the beverage consumption habits of Canadians aged 19 or older and found that coffee is the most consumed drink, second only to water. “Among those who drank coffee, consumption peaked at ages 31 to 50” and that “coffee accounted for almost all of the caffeine that adults consumed: 80.6%” (Garriguet, D., pp. 3). Knowing the Canadian adoration for coffee, it is logical for viewers to see the individuals in the advertisement braving the blustery cold and snowy weather for a cup of Tim Horton’s coffee and believe that they are Canadians.

In 1992, Tim Horton’s released another commercial where they did not include any Canadian significations. The commercial, instead, focused on emphasizing the affordability of purchasing donuts in sets of six. The advertisement features two men fighting over who would pay for the “six pack” of donuts (Tim Hortons coffee Commercial 1992, 2012). The question the men play with was whose turn it was to “spring” for the donuts (2012). The one man said to the other, “so it is your turn to spring for the donuts.” The other man quickly responded with, “no, it’s not. I sprang last time” (2012). The narrator emphasized that the price of a half-dozen donuts was only \$2.95, so it doesn’t matter who “springs” the bill. As previously stated, there are no clear Canadian significations within this advertisement, demonstrating that Tim Horton’s commercials in the 1990’s still varied between culture-focused and product-focused.

In 1995, Tim Horton's combined product-focused advertising and culture-focused advertising to introduce their "Roll Up The Rim To Win" campaign – an advertising campaign that began in 1986 to thank customers for their patronage by hiding prizes under select hot beverage cup rims. This advertisement shows various individuals dressed for various careers, seen in various Canadian landscapes, making a drum roll sound with their tongue while holding Tim Horton's coffee cups (Tim Hortons "Roll up the Rim to Win" Commercial – 1995, 2012). The significations come through the variety of individuals featured in this commercial. One of the groups of individuals featured in this ad, offering a Canadian connection through Canadian significations, is a group of female hockey players yelling "roll up the rim to win," wearing hockey jerseys that have Canadian flags stitched on the shoulder. One of the players, placed in the center of the group, is holding a Tim Horton's cup in one hand and a hockey stick in the other. While their hockey garb is one sign from which viewers can infer a Canadian connection, the Canadian flag on their jerseys is a very well known and explicit sign, as well. No hockey player would wear a Canadian flag if they were not from, or playing for a Canadian hockey team.

Another clear sign from which Canadians can create a signification is the "Welcome to Regina" sign that previous Roll Up The Rim winner Wayne Schmidt is video taped in front of. Regina is not only a well-known Canadian city, but it is the capital city of Saskatchewan. Having Schmidt shown in front of this sign, creates a connection between him and the city, and in turn the country of Canada.

Christmas of 1995 brought another Tim Horton's commercial, punctuating Tim Horton's role as a comfort that reminds Canadians of their home. The commercial features a young man, lying on the lower bunk beside a porthole window in the cabin of a ship, indicated by the first

clip, which shows a metal ship passing through icy waters. The Christmas season is indicated by the garland and multi-colored lights surrounding strung around his bunk. The man is reading a letter from his mother, as indicated by the nurturing female voice heard but not seen in the picture. “Dear son, we sure miss ya’ this time of year... We wanted to send you a little something from home” she says (Tim Hortons Holiday Commercial (1995), 2006). The man then spots a wrapped box in the corner of the cabin and rushes over to it to see what’s inside. “Dad says they are the genuine article: real Tim Horton’s coffee and real Tim Horton’s mugs, just like in their stores,” the female voice continues (2006). The man then pulls out the coffee and mug set, as the female voice says “maybe you can still share a cup” (2006). The advertisement is highlighting their holiday gift sets but it is also advertising the idea that anyone can have a taste of home wherever they are if they have Tim Horton’s with them. The man is then seen with a shipmate sitting in another room of the ship, drinking from the Tim Horton’s mugs. Their shoulders drop and faces relax as they take a sip (2006). Although “home” is not distinctly stated as being Canada, it is where the majority of Tim Horton’s stores are located. Canadian viewers may see this advertisement and, having a current semiotic connection between “home” and “Canada,” create a new connection: Tim Horton’s is a piece of “home,” therefore Tim Horton’s is a piece of Canada.

During 1996, Tim Horton’s also aired two product-focused advertisements that had no clear Canadian significations. The first focused on emphasizing their bagel and cream cheese selection. Through friendly dialogue between two female Tim Horton’s employees, discussing the perfect pairings of bagel and cream cheese varieties, the employees convey to their audience that there are many combinations to choose from (Tim Hortons Commercial 1996 #1, 2013).

The second product-focused advertisement of 1996 focused on Tim Horton's sandwich varieties. The advertisement is narrated by a female voice, who states that Tim Horton's went to a local market to ask what makes a great sandwich. The baker insisted it was the bread, while the butcher stated that it was the quality deli meats. The narrator states that Tim Horton's uses fresh ingredients including fresh baked bread and bagels, quality deli meats and real Swiss cheese to make their sandwiches (Tim Hortons Commercial 1996 #2, 2013). In the end of the ad, the butcher and baker are shown sitting in Tim Horton's enjoying their own sandwiches. One says to the other "that was good" (2013). As previously stated, these two ads focus specifically on marketing a product, and not a larger concept or cultural connection, although the majority of the advertisements from the 1990s did.

Similar to the 1996 advertisements that strongly focused on marketing a product instead of an overall concept, the 1998 Tim Horton's Roll Up The Rim advertisement showed no Canadian significations, but instead, made a simple proclamation to its customers that Roll Up The Rim is back. The advertisement is narrated by a male voice, announcing "It is time for Roll Up The Rim To Win" (Tim Hortons Commercial 1998 #1, 2013). The advertisement features one man waking up rolling his thumbs to forefingers, mimicking the action used to roll up the rim of a Tim Horton's cup. The narrator states that it's springtime, which also means it is time for the Tim Horton's "Roll Up The Rim To Win" campaign to begin again, and "Everyone is just itching to roll on down to Tim Horton's" (2013). The man is now seen with other individuals, standing in front of a Tim Horton's employee, thumb and forefingers still mimicking their rim roll. The narrator then emphasizes what prizes are to be won by lucky rollers, including 15 Pontiac Trans Sport Montana minivans, over 5,000 bicycles, and 12 million Tim Horton's coffee and baked goods prizes. No clear Canadian symbols were used in this advertisement, although

the narrator's statement that "everyone is itching" to come to Tim Horton's to participate in the campaign indicates that Tim Horton's has already become a popular choice among many Canadians, and its campaign to be already highly successful.

In another 1998 Tim Horton's commercial, a family of a father, his little boy, and the boy's dog are featured. The boy's father is seen dropping off the boy and his dog at what looks to be either a behavior school or a dog show. Inside the auditorium, where the dog is to be performing with the boy, the boy struggles to control his dog. "Sit," the boy says, as the dog does donuts and barks (Tim Hortons Commercial 1998, #2, 2013). The Father is then seen inside a Tim Horton's store, picking up a 6 pack of donuts and a coffee to go. "Now it's easy to pick up six donuts for \$3.50 at Tim Horton's" (2013). The video cuts to the little boy chasing his dog, yelling, "heel, heel" (2013). The narrator then says "we call it the Donut Six Pack," (2013). The father is then seen picking up his son from the auditorium. The boy climbs into the car, looking disappointed with the results of his visit. "How'd it go?" his father asks. "He is a little slow," the son says. The father then decides to cheer him up by telling him he bought a six-pack of donuts from Tim Horton's (2013). At his mention of the donuts, the dog, laying in the back seat of the vehicle, sits up and becomes attentive. "He seems quick enough," the father says jokingly. Although the advertisement focuses on the father's support for his son, and the comfort of Tim Horton's after a difficult situation, there are some signs that are indicators of Canadian culture. In the advertisement, both the father and the boy are wearing thick winter coats, and there is snow covering the grass outside of the auditorium. According to a record of weather conditions across Canada, gathered by Statistics Canada, the average annual snowfall across the country can range from 43.8 centimeters to over 300 centimeters per year (Weather conditions in capital and major cities, 2007). This statistical chart compares various Canadian cities' snowfall averages to

the capitals of other countries, such as Washington D.C., Tokyo, Japan and Moscow, Russia, only to show that most of the cities receive no snowfall whatsoever (2007). With this knowledge, it is fair to assume that any viewer that notices the jackets and snow covered lawns would assume the family lives in any Canadian town.

In 1999 the connection between Tim Horton's and the idea of home comforts was revisited with a commercial featuring a businesswoman and her father. Sighing at her desk and pressing her temple, expressing stress over her work, the businesswoman receives a message over her intercom stating that a guest was at the front to see her. As she approaches the front of the office, she sees her father. "Dad, is everything alright?" she says to her father who is obviously unaware of her hectic schedule (Thea Gill Tim Horton's Commercial 1999, 2011). He asks the woman if he could treat her to lunch. She reluctantly agrees and they go to Tim Horton's. A narrator then emphasizes "the warmth of home is at Tim Horton's" with fresh sandwiches and "hearty homestyle soups" (2011). The father and daughter are then seen sitting in Tim Horton's, enjoying their meals with mugs of coffee. "This was a good idea," the daughter says, looking lovingly at her father, with a notable sense of relaxation to her face and demeanor. "Yeah it was," he replies (2011). "Come home for lunch at Tim Horton's," the narrator concludes. Although not openly stated, Canadian viewers will still sense a connection between their home in Canada and the taste of home that can be found in Tim Horton's products. This creates a signification in the mind of viewers: Canada is home, and Tim Horton's gives me the feeling of home, therefore, Tim Horton's is the feeling of Canada.

The year of 1999 brought about a new wave of commercials with clearly Canadian signs and symbols. One of these ads, used to remind customers that it was time for another Roll Up the Rim Campaign, shows a driver of a vehicle pulling up to a border crossing station. The border

patrol officer says “citizenship?” to which the driver states “Canadian” (Tim Hortons Commercial 1999 #1, 2013). The officer quickly responded by asking for his proof of citizenship. The driver then says “Roll up the rim to win,” making the drum roll sound with his tongue as has been seen in past Roll Up The Rim campaign commercials. He driver then smiles at the officer who lets him through without further questioning. “Yes it is time for Roll Up The Rim To Win,” the narrator announces, as a Tim Horton’s employee is then seen holding up one of the Tim Horton’s “Roll Up The Rim” decorated coffee cups (2013). The video then cuts to a picture of the GMC Jimmy 4X4 vehicle with headshots and names of the past year’s winners, with their names and place of residency along the bottom, as the narrator states that they rolled up the rim and won. The narrator then states that there are plenty more prizes to be won. The video then cuts back to the border-crossing scene. The next automobile is stopped and the driver attempts to roll his tongue and say the Roll Up The Rim saying. The officer looks at him skeptically and asks him to pull over for further investigation (2013).

The “Roll up the Rim” saying is a sign that represents the larger Roll Up The Rim campaign at Tim Horton’s. Therefore, the “Roll Up the Rim” saying and campaign create a signification, but the “Roll up the Rim” saying is also used in this advertisement to create a larger signification between the campaign and the country. Tim Horton’s ad indicates that Tim Horton’s is so much a part of what makes an individual Canadian that a border patrol officer could identify a Canadian’s citizenship by how well they are able to say “Roll up the Rim to Win.”

In another 1999 commercial, Tim Horton’s took a look back in Canadian history to a time when Canadians came together in patriotism. The commercial starts off in a normal living room. A large group of people is seen gathered around an old fashioned television. The date is then

shown at the bottom of the screen, reading “September 28, 1972” (Tim Horton’s Commercial 1999 #2, 2013). The program being shown is a hockey game, as indicated by the group of hockey players that are shown. Their white jerseys are printed with red letters that say “Canada” (2013). This is an important day in Canadian sports history, as this date was when Team Canada beat the Soviet Union in a thrilling eighth game of the Summit Series.

According to the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC), Team Canada matched the Soviet Union’s team goal for goal, and “In the final minutes [of the game], Canadian fans nervously puff[ed] cigarettes and swill[ed] beer” (1972: 'Henderson has scored for Canada', 2014). In the last 34 seconds of the game, Canadian player Paul Henderson scored the winning goal, capturing the series for Canada. It was around this game that Tim Horton’s built their ad, painting a portrait of a regular Canadian household, watching the game together.

In the ad, one of the hockey fans is featured in the center of the couch, trying to grab one of the donuts from the Tim Horton’s donut box being passed around. Taking his eyes off of the television to look in the donut box, he realizes that none are left. A moment passes as he looks at the television with frustration. He quickly gets up from the couch and heads to the table behind the group of standing viewers. There is another Tim Horton’s box there from which he grabs a donut. As he takes a bite, cheers can be heard from the group behind him. It can be assumed that Henderson has scored the history-making goal. A narrator then says “it has always been hard to resist a Tim Horton’s donut... all the favorites you remember, always fresh” (2013). The 1972 hockey game is a symbol that, combined with the date of September 27, 1972, creates a larger signification of Canadian patriotism and pride. By using this historical date and the imagery of the images of the fans sitting around the television watching the game in the Tim Horton’s advertisement creates a connection for viewers between their patriotism and Tim Horton’s brand.

In 1999, another advertisement was released by Tim Horton's to promote their at home brewing system. The advertisement features a husband and wife, at home in their kitchen. The husband is dressed in a suit with briefcase in hand. He looks at his wife and says "I'm off to work," to which his wife quickly corrects, "you mean Tim Horton's, then work?" (Tim Hortons Commercial 1999 #3, 2013). The husband then smiles at her comment and then walks outside. To his surprise, he sees a bear with his front paws on the hood of his car. He is then seen walking quickly into the kitchen, about to explain the situation to his wife. She must have seen the situation as he left because she reassures him by saying, "I know, I know" (2013). She quickly pours him a cup of coffee from a coffee maker with a Tim Horton's logo on it. The narrator then states "now you can brew our coffee like we do," explaining that the Tim Horton's coffee makers are now available for purchase in Tim Horton's stores. Although this advertisement does not have any clear indicators of Canadian culture, the black bear used in this advertisement could be seen as a sign of Canadian culture. According to Parks Canada, a Canadian government information resource, there are over 800,000 black bears living across North America, over half of them can be found in Canada (The Black Bear, 2013). Although this scene could be set anywhere across North America, a viewer of this advertisement may see the black bear and believe that, due to the higher number of bears in Canada, that this scene is actually set in Canada.

Although the 1990s was a decade that hosted a variety of Tim Horton's commercials, focusing on both integrating Canadian culture and simply focusing on promoting products, it also was the birth decade of Tim Horton's True Stories campaign. This campaign featured real stories and inspired stories that were based on Canadians of whom Tim Horton's has played a large role in their lives. The first story, released in 1996, featured Lillian, an elderly woman from

Lunenburg, Nova Scotia. She is seen sitting with a little girl, playing the piano, as her voice is heard telling her story. “I started school here in 1915,” she says, “and most times I’d wait until I’d hear the bell going in the school and that’s when I’d run” (Tim Hortons Lillian.mov, 2011). The video then cuts to a Tim Horton’s employee, saying that Lillian “has been coming in here for years, ever since I came here to work. She’s in here most every day” (2011). Lillian is then seen walking up a steep paved road with her cane, wearing a long red coat and a beret. The words “Based on a Tim Horton’s true story” are then seen in script lettering across the screen. Lillian is seen greeting neighbors as she treks up the hill. The small Nova Scotian town is then spanned on in the video, and Lillian’s voice is heard, saying “I like to start my morning with one special thing: a nice cup of coffee” (2011). The employee is seen again, now recounting the order that her and her fellow employees have memorized: “She always orders the same thing, and if I’m not here, the girls know it is a large coffee, double cream” (2011). The video then cuts again to what looks like a harbor, where a man tells his account of seeing Lillian’s daily routine: “I’ve seen her before. I don’t know why she don’t make her own coffee” (2011). The employee is heard again, stating that it is a difficult walk for Lillian to get to the Tim Horton’s as it is mostly up hill, but then Lillian is seen and heard again, stating that, every time she goes to Tim Horton’s, she sees some of her friends. “It is always great to say ‘hi, I haven’t seen you for a while... gotta go now. Busy day,” Lillian then says. The Tim Horton’s employees are then seen lined up next to each other smiling. The employee previously heard says, “I’d say Lillian’s one of the family” (2011). The ad ends with Lillian seen, saying “In this life, some things are worth the effort,” and the Tim Horton’s tagline is seen at the bottom of the screen saying “Coffee you can count on. Tim Hortons” (2011). This advertisement not only Tim Horton’s role in the lives

of individual customers, but how Tim Horton's had become an integral part of communities across Canada, such as this little coastal town of Lunenburg.

According to R. Buist (2003), former marketing director of Tim Horton's, "this true story was true of more than one lady, and several of the same stories came from the Maritimes... mainly because Tim Horton's had been a fact of life there for so many years that thousands of customers had stories to tell" (p. 141). In this ad, Lillian and her community of Lunenburg became a sign, and her story became a symbol that represented the larger concept of who a true Canadian is. For viewers, seeing Lillian walk to Tim Horton's every day creates a larger signification – a connection between Tim Horton's and Canadian communities everywhere.

According to Buist, Lillian's story was the first of many "True Stories" captured in this campaign. "Between 1996 and 2001, nine True Stories were filmed, and they are still being produced from stories submitted by our customers and store owners" (p. 17). Of the nine True Stories, two more were found in my research to have occurred in the 1990s. One featuring a man and his dog named "Sammy," and another of a Naval Acoustics Operator on the HMCS Toronto in Kuwait's Persian Gulf.

The story of Sammy starts by showing his owner, Larry, a carpenter, working with his tools as his words are heard. Larry speaks about how important he believes loyalty is in life. As the camera moves to where the owner is standing, his golden retriever is seen lying by his feet. As Larry says "It is important to my friends. It is important with me and my dog," different nails, screws and bolts are seen, stored in Tim Horton's paper coffee cups, sitting on the windowsill of his work shop. The silhouette of him and his dog walking together is then seen with the words "Based on a Tim Horton's true story" in script lettering. The video then cuts to a Tim Horton's employee who says "Larry has been a customer of ours for a long time. He has a store just

around the corner” (Tim Hortons Sammi, 2011). Larry is then seen again, stating how much he enjoys a good cup of coffee, and how Tim Horton’s makes that good cup of coffee. The employee then reveals that she knows Larry on a more personal level, stating “I know he has two beautiful daughters, and he has a son, and he’s got Sammy” (2011). Larry then describes an activity that Sammy does, stating that she does it several times a day. Although it is unclear to the viewer what the activity is, Sammy is seen walking quickly to a Tim Horton’s restaurant, and then up to the drive-through window. The employee says, “It’s amazing. I mean, we are all used to it here because it has been going on for a long time, but most people have never seen anything like it” (2011). Sammy is then seen, standing on her hind feet with her front paws on the drive through windowsill. The Tim Horton’s employee is then seen placing the folded-over portion of a Tim Horton’s to-go bag into Sammy’s mouth. Sammy then jumps down from the sill and walks away with the bag in its mouth.

The video then cuts to an adolescent girl, who says “It was cool,” referring to seeing the dog retrieve the Tim Horton’s bag. “She retrieves things naturally,” Larry says, as the dog is seen looking over a large bucket of golf balls. Larry is then seen taking the bag out of Sammy’s mouth, revealing a cup of coffee inside. “Sammy is just a very special dog. She is a special dog to me. She’s a special dog to the whole neighborhood,” Larry said, seen sticking his head out an upper floor window of a white brick building, with his dog beside him. The advertisement ends with the Tim Horton’s employee saying “it is something you can count on... and that’s a good thing,” as Sammy is seen with a Tim Horton’s bag in her mouth, and the words “Coffee you can count on. Tim Hortons,” above her (2011). Just as with Lillian, Sammy and Larry’s story reinforced the importance community and reliability. The advertisement, which also spanned scenes of the New Brunswick landscape where Larry and Sammy lived, connected another

Canadian community, with an individual who loves his pet, to the Tim Horton's brand. Tim Horton's, therefore, built on an already developed signification between New Brunswick, Larry and the Canadian lifestyle, to Tim Horton's, creating a larger semiotic connection.

The Kuwait True Story advertisement featured one service member aboard the HMCS Toronto stationed in the Persian Gulf. The advertisement starts off with b-roll of what looks to be an outdoor market, filled with many people, all in long white garments, and high walls covered in indistinguishable goods. The b-roll then cuts to a large open, flat area with several camels walking freely. More shots are then seen, of the people and the camels, now harnessed. "You get homesick everyday... You have a lot of time to think, and the more you think, the more you wish you were home," says a man speaking clear Canadian English. He is seen wearing a hat that says HMCS Toronto – the name of a Canadian Forces warship used to patrol the seas in attempt to curb terrorism. "Based on a Tim Horton's true story" are then seen above the silhouette of a camel, walking in the barren land at sunset (Tim Hortons Commercial 1999 #4, 2013). The man then explains his role on the HMCS Toronto, and explains how difficult communication can be, when you are so far away from home. "Our email goes out twice a week. A lot of the guys will write about what they are missing. I miss my wife and my son... and I also miss my Tim Horton's coffee," he says with a slight smile, "A lot of people can't make it through a day without a good cup of coffee" (2013). He then said that the minister of natural defense came to visit and said that "someone at home had heard our call and Tim Horton's had sent over many cases" of coffee (2013). The man is seen in uniform with many others, waiting for a large plane as it comes to a stop on a paved tarmac. The boxes are piled in front of them, and the men are pictured, pulling out large cans of Tim Horton's coffee and ripping the seal open with their teeth. "Boy, there was quite a loud cheer throughout," he says. Two female Tim Horton's employees

are then seen standing in a Tim Horton's store, holding a photo of the HMCS crew with Tim Horton's cups in their hands. "If you can't bring family over here, you have to bring something to bring a little bit of home," he says. He quickly followed the statement with a greeting to his family, saying "Hi Moreen, Nathan. Can't wait to get home" (2013). The advertisement ends with a view of the ship, with the same signature phrase "Coffee you can count on. Tim Hortons" seen above it.

Toronto is a key Canadian sign in this advertisement, as the word itself represents Canada's largest city. The name HMCS Toronto is also a key sign that creates a signification of patriotism and protection of Canada. When combined with Toronto, and the idea that the servicemen and women on the ship request Tim Horton's coffee by name, there is a greater signification created, connecting the brand to their patriotism. As seen in previous commercials, the name Tim Horton's becomes so closely associated with "home" through the marketing seen in these ads, often calling it, as was done in this ad, "the taste of home" (2013).

In a search of outside news media from the 1990s, distinct growth was seen in the amount of outside news media published demonstrating the correlation between Canadian culture and the Tim Horton's brand. For instance, in an editorial cartoon published in the Montreal Monitor in 1997, pictured in Appendix A, former Prime Minister Jean Chrétien is featured in an illustration, holding a Tim Horton's Roll Up The Rim To Win Cup that says "Roll Up The Rim to Win the Election" (Buist, 2003, pp. 14). This illustration played on Chrétien's quest for reelection, which he later won, capturing a majority government. While American politicians may use gain the allegiance of celebrities or media outlets portray them in a positive light, this illustration insinuates that the way to gain the vote of Canadian citizens is through their love of Tim Horton's coffee.

Tim Horton's in the 2000s: Using "True Stories" to Unite Canadians, while still

Introducing New Products

Tim Horton's True Stories campaign continued into the 2000s, starting off the new decade with a story of a locomotive engineer making an unexpected stop at Tim Horton's for a large coffee to go. According to Buist (2003), although this story had been told by many sources from various locations across Canada, "the problem with making the story into a commercial was that stopping a train for this purpose is apparently against the rules of the major railways" (p. 156). The marketing team eventually found a private railway where stopping the train for Tim Horton's actually occurred, in Orangeville, Ontario. And that was where they decided to film the advertisement. In the ad, the train tracks are seen from the perspective of a locomotive engineer, advancing distance at a fast speed. The train engine is then seen and the video cuts to the driver located inside. As the train and the two engineers onboard are seen, a country song is heard, singing "I'm going to take it westbound, heading down the rails.... I'm a happy man, now the work is done. Just past the station, I'm always glad to see, what makes my life worth living is what's waiting there for me" (OBRY Tim Hortons Coffee Commercial, 2009). A glove covered hand then flips one of the handles, causing the train to brake. The train bell is heard as the train comes to a stop in front of a Tim Horton's restaurant. From inside the Tim Horton's restaurant, an employee is seen looking out the window while reaching for a Tim Horton's cup. She then reaches for the carafe and pours the coffee. The engineer is then seen at the cash register area. The employee passes him two cups of coffee, and he slides her a toonie and a loonie – the Canadian one-dollar and two-dollar coins. The rails are then seen again, with the words "Based on a Tim Hortons true story" (2009). The country song then sings, "That's when I know I'm home. Oh, that's when I'm home," and the words "The coffee you can count on are seen" with

the backdrop of the engineer's hand holding the Tim Horton's cup (2009). Although some viewers could identify the scenery of Orangeville, the true Canadian symbol seen in this ad are the loonie and toonie coins passed to the Tim Horton's employee. Joined with the phrase "that's when I know I'm home," identify to the viewer that home is Canada. This advertisement uses this song, in conjunction to the signification that the Canadian coins create, to remind viewers that Tim Horton's is what makes Canada home.

Another advertisement from the 2000s decade focused on a group of Canadian students who chose to attend the University of Glasgow in Scotland, specifically focusing on an individual named David Mole. As bagpipe music is heard, landscape scenes of Scotland are shown with the word "the beginning" on the right-hand side of the screen. Mole then is seen entering the Scotland scene, and his voice is heard saying, "My name is David Mole. I'm from Niagara On The Lake, Ontario, and I was a student here at the University of Glasgow" (Tim Hortons Commercial, 2008). Mole is then seen walking across campus, greeting and stopping to talk to fellow students. A shepherd is then seen with a sheepdog walking across a swamp, as Mole says "Scotland's great. The land, the people, the history, but you don't know how much you miss home until you are away from it" (2008). Mole is then seen with another man, placing a hockey stick above a fireplace mantle for decoration, displaying the Canadian flag that had been attached. Mole then states that he and his roommate decided to "create a little piece of Canada" by decorating their dorm room with Canadian symbols, and calling it "The Caribou House" and the "unofficial Canadian Embassy here on campus" (2008). A group of 14 students are then seen gathering for a picture. A tabletop hockey toy is seen in front of the group, while, on the walls, the flag and hockey jerseys are seen tacked up for decoration. Mole, seen in the center of the group, is seen holding the "Caribou House" sign. Mole then stated that, even after the

decorations were put up, “it still didn’t feel completely Canadian yet” (2008). A close-up shot is seen of a letter being penned, “Dear Tim Hortons” the first line reads. “So I wrote home to Tim Horton’s for help,” Mole says. A Tim Horton’s employee is then seen reading the letter and smiling. The video then changes back to the Caribou House. Mole’s roommate is seen walking into the living room in a bathrobe and pajamas. He looks up with a surprised look after rubbing his eyes and sees Mole sitting next to a Tim Horton’s coffee maker, with a canister of Tim Horton’s coffee in hand, and two Tim Horton’s boxes stacked on his other side. “You know, there are some things that just say home,” Mole says. Various students are then seen drinking from Tim Horton’s cups, while a line of students, still dressed in pajamas, file into a line leading to the coffee maker.

There are several signs and symbols that are seen and spoken through this advertisement, including the hockey stick, the Canadian flag, the word “Caribou” – which symbolizes not only one of Canada’s most well-known wildlife, but also is featured on the Canadian 25-cent currency. These symbols, which are already known as distinctly Canadian, are then reinforced in connection to Canada, through Mole’s statement that they helped to create the “unofficial Canadian Embassy” (2008). The larger signification of the Tim Horton’s being part of Canadian culture is made when Mole states that “it still didn’t feel completely Canadian yet” because they did not have Tim Horton’s (2008). When the Tim Horton’s then arrives on the boxes, coffee maker and cups in the last scene of the ad, viewers create a semiotic connection between the many Canadian significations and the Tim Horton’s logo placed beside.

Along with the ever-strong messages behind Tim Horton’s “True Stories” campaign, Tim Horton’s still released ads in the 2000s that focused less on using Canadian symbols to align their product with Canadian patriotism, and instead focused more on emphasizing specific

products and contests. One of the latter is the 2002 Roll Up The Rim ad, which featured a couple sitting at home on a couch. The woman is reading a book, while the man is making what sounds to be a “purring” sound at the paper cup in his hands (Tim Hortons Roll Up The Rim To Win commercial 2002, 2012). As he continues to purr, the woman drops her book and playfully says “I love when you purr like a kitten,” positioning herself closer to his shoulder. Shocked, he looks up and states that he was not purring but that he was “just practicing Roll Up The Rim” (2012). Disappointed, the woman adjusts herself to where she was previously leaning, and the video cuts to the many prizes that are available to be won. The advertisement ends with the man discovering he had won. The woman then says, “what did I win?” trying to remove the cup from the man’s hands. He playfully pulls it from her grip, saying, “well now you’re interested” (2012). The ad ends with the narrator encouraging the viewers to “get rolling” (2012). This advertisement contains no Canadian signifiers, but does clearly convey the desire for immediate purchase to the customer.

In 2005, another product-focused advertisement was released to promote their newest baked good: the cinnamon roll. In this ad, a woman is seen walking into a kitchen in workout attire, meeting a man dressed in a business suit. She is carrying two Tim Horton’s coffees and a Tim Horton’s take-out bag. The man sets down his briefcase on the table and greets the woman, saying “good morning” (Tim Hortons "Busy Day" Commercial, 2009). Curious, he looks in the bag and pulls out a Tim Horton’s frosted cinnamon roll. Making an excited sounding sigh, he takes a bite. He then sits at the table, and music then begins with the words “Because it’s always like the first time when we touch. I’ll never let you go” (2009). As the music plays the video spans from side to side, as he removes each layer one by one to slowly enjoy his treat. Suddenly the woman is seen entering another door, now fully dressed and leafing through mail envelopes.

She looks at him with a quizzical look and asks, “Did you even go to work this morning?” (2009). This seems to release him from the trance that the cinnamon roll had him under. He jolts up from the table, grabs his briefcase and runs out the door. The woman then shakes her head and smiles. The ad then ends by showing a close-up view of the cinnamon rolls, as the narrator states that they are new to Tim Horton’s and only 99-cents each (2009). The tagline “Always fresh at Tim Horton’s” then is heard, sung as a jingle (2009).

This advertisement does not include any Canadian signifiers, focusing solely on promoting the cinnamon roll product.

Another advertisement was released during that time to promote Tim Horton’s steeped tea, which was added to the menu in 2004. In this ad, a mother is seen standing in her kitchen, when her teenage son, wearing a tight band shirt, baggy jeans with a chain hanging from belt loop to pocket and gelled blonde hair, comes into the room. He hands her a cup of Tim Horton’s tea that he had picked up for her. She thanks her son and takes a sip. When she realizes it is to her taste she says “mmm... great!” to which her son replies, “yeah, it’s steeped” (Tim Hortons Steeped Tea Commercial, 2008). She then pauses for a moment to think and then repeats the word “steeped.” Evidently the woman believed that “steeped” was new slang for “great,” and began to use it to compliment her surroundings, including her daughter’s skirt, and her neighbor’s flower garden. This assumption is then followed with the narrator’s confirmation that “Steeped means great... as in a great cup of tea at Tim Horton’s” (2008). In the last scene, a Tim Horton’s employee is seen passing a Tim Horton’s porcelain mug full of tea to the woman, stating, “it’s steeped,” to which the woman replies, “you’ve got that right” (2008). The Tim Horton’s logo is then seen in the corner, as the jingle sings “always fresh at Tim Horton’s” (2008).

In 2005, Tim Horton's added another new product to their menu, and quickly introduced their yogurt and berries to the Canadian public. Their advertisement, which focuses on showing the tastiness and health factors of the yogurt and berries, features a woman lounging on a couch. As she digs in her yogurt cup to get every last morsel, light jazz music – similar to that which would be heard in an elevator – is heard in the background. Suddenly feeling as though she is being watched, the woman looks up and states, “it's low fat” (Tim Hortons – Yogurt & Berries Commercial, 2011). The scene then expands, showing that she is actually sitting on a couch in a furniture store display. Outside of the display window, the faces of several individuals walking by the store are now stopped to gaze upon the woman. Each one of them is bundled in coats, hats and gloves, to brace themselves from the cold snow that is drifting in the wind. She holds up the now empty yogurt cup, and states again that it is “low fat” – this time in a louder voice in hopes that the people outside would hear and understand (2011). The crowd outside now looks at each other with confused gazes, as she giggles and says “I'll get back to work now,” and gets up from couch (2011). The video then cuts to a close-up video of the yogurt, while the narrator states that there is “no explanation required. Tim Horton's yogurt and berries... it's delicious and low fat, with only 2.5 grams of fat per 107 gram serving” (2011).

This advertisement not only promotes a specific product, but it also includes signs and symbols that indicate Canadian culture. These include the snowy, blustery exterior of the furniture store and the use of “grams” as a form of measurement, instead of the empirical measurement of “ounces” that would be used for an American audience. Although these indicators seem small, when used in the ad for Tim Horton's, a connection is created between Tim Horton's and Canadian society.

During this time the “True Story” campaign still raged on, tightening its grasp even more on the Canadian spirit. In an ad that featured two young male friends and an elderly couple, Tim Horton’s captured the view into a cross-country road trip, both east to west and west to east. The male friends are first pictured, loading up their station wagon with luggage. The scene behind them shows two pastel-colored houses overlooking the wide-open water. The pair’s plans are then stated through their conversation. The first man asks, “Are we really going to do this?” and the other replies with confirmation, “Only stopping at Tim Horton’s all the way to B.C.” – B.C. being the commonly used acronym for British Columbia (Tim Hortons Cross Canada Road Trip, 2007). The video then cuts to a misty morning in a neighborhood lined with tall pine trees. In front of one of the homes, a motor home is parked. An elderly man and wife are then seen in front of the motor home. The wife looks at her husband and asks, “only Tim’s?” – the nickname often given for Tim Horton’s. His husband quickly replies, “all the way east” (2007).

The doors quickly close and the two vehicles are seen heading off, the men passing through the fishing towns of what looks to be Nova Scotia, and the husband and wife holding hands as they excitedly pass through the flatlands of what looks to be Alberta or Saskatchewan. The words “Based on a True Story” are then seen above the road where the motorhome passed. The pairs are then seen both in their cars and in the Tim Horton’s restaurants ordering and drinking Tim Horton’s coffee. As the elderly woman drives, her husband is seen drawing Tim Horton’s cups on the map to indicate where they’ve stopped. The one city indicated on the map is Kamloops, British Columbia (2007). The motor home is then seen driving down the road with the mountains behind them. In another shot they are seen stopped along the road, looking at the vast expanse through binoculars. Their map is seen with more Tim Horton’s cup drawings over Calgary, Regina and Winnipeg. The video continues to cut between the station wagon and the

motor home, and each of the travellers as they pick up Tim Horton's coffees. As they go they face trials, as the men crouch over a flat tire, and fun, as one of the men sprays shaving cream on the other as he sleeps in the passenger seat. The men are also seen using the passenger window and a permanent marker to tally the number of Tim Horton's they have stopped at along the way. With only a few moments left in the ad, the two vehicles are seen approaching the same Tim Horton's drive-through window. The men wave on their elders, who politely gesture to the men with a 'thank you' nod and wave. "That boy looked like he'd done this before," the man then said to his wife, drawing once again on his map (2007). The men are then seen approaching the pick-up window. The man in the passenger's seat is then seen again, adding another tally mark to their window. The vehicles are then seen following each other out of the Tim Horton's parking lot, only to head different directions on the road. The words "Always Fresh. Always There." are then seen across the screen (2007).

The connection between Tim Horton's and Canada is clearly created in this advertisement through the continual reference to Canadian cities and the many Tim Horton's within them. The main symbols seen here are the names of the cities, seen on the map, the many Canadian landscapes, and the references made to them, from "B.C." to out "east" (2007). As the two groups made their expeditions, they did so clearly stating that Tim Horton's played a major role in their Canadian journey.

In another "True Story" ad, an Asian man is seen with a tray of Tim Horton's coffees as he walks down a road, dressed in a long coat and hat. He is then seen walking with the tray of coffees through a blue and white building, as men walk by with hockey bags over their shoulders and hockey sticks in hand. He is then seen wandering down the halls of this building where trophy cases are seen. The video then shows gold painted trophies with hockey players posed on

top. Beside the trophies sat pictures of hockey teams of young children dressed in their equipment. A light color flashes and a driveway is seen; a small net is positioned outside with young boys using their sticks and a ball to play hockey on the pavement. The same man, looking slightly younger is heard yelling to his son. As his son gathers his belongings, his father says “you must study harder, not just hockey all the time” (proud fathers, 2008). His son is then seen looking back longingly at his friends still playing hockey on the pavement. The man is then seen again in the building, which is evidently a hockey arena. He is greeted by a janitor that asks him “what are you doing here?” (2008). The man then states, with a smile, that he is here to see his grandson. He passes the janitor a Tim Horton’s coffee from his tray and says “for you” (2008). The man then walks up to a younger man who shares his same Asian features. The man is looking to the hockey rink in front of him, cheering his son. When he notices the older man, he does not smile, but instead says “Dad, what are you doing here?” (2008). The older man then hands him a cup of Tim Horton’s coffee and says “to see Tommy,” gesturing toward the ice (2008). As the coffee exchanges hands, the older man says “double double” – the code phrase used by Tim Horton’s customers to indicate that the coffee has double creams and double sugars. The light color flashes again, and the older man – once again with younger features – is seen in his home, harshly saying to his son, “You study. No Hockey” (2008). The boy then gets up and shuts televised hockey game heard in the background. The older man and his middle-aged son are then seen again watching the boys skate down the ice, with the “Timbits” logo across the top of their jerseys. As they sip on their coffee, the middle-aged man looks at his father and says “he’s good,” speaking of his son (2008). The older man then says that the boy, his grandson, is better than his son at hockey. The middle-aged man then said, “how would you know?” insinuating that his father never came to a hockey game or practice (2008). The older man then

said “I come watch,” and the light flashed again, showing the younger version of himself standing sheepishly at the doorway of an arena, when another man came up to him and offered him a Tim Horton’s coffee. The middle-aged man then questioned his father further, saying “okay, then what team did I play for?” His father then pulled a wrinkled picture from his wallet of a young boy in hockey gear. “You right wing” he said, indicating that he not only knew the team that his son played for, but his team position, as well (2008). The middle-aged man then took the picture and nodded, smiling now. As he looked to his father, his father rose to his feet, cheering and telling the other individuals in the bleachers that the boy on the ice was his grandson. The man then says to his father, “thanks for coming, Dad” (2008). His father nods then quickly says, “give me my picture back” (2008). The Tim Horton’s cups are then seen in their hands, while the words “Every cup tells a story” appear on the screen (2008).

This ad shows how an Asian family can assimilate into Canadian culture and learn to love the sports that are symbols of the larger Canadian culture. The hockey stick, the hockey trophies and the group of small children skating around the hockey rink are all signs of hockey, and hockey is then a symbol that are part of the larger Canadian signification. Tim Horton’s, seen though the signs of the Tim Horton’s cups and the “Timbits” logo on the back of the boys’ jerseys are symbols of the Tim Horton’s brand. When combined with the hockey symbols, a greater signification is created, demonstrating a connection between Tim Horton’s and Canadian culture.

Another “True Story” commercial was soon produced, being released in 2008 to jump-start Tim Horton’s Every Cup Tells a Story online campaign, created for the purpose of sharing user-generated stories, images and videos from Tim Horton’s fans and enthusiasts. In this ad, a husband and wife walk up to a white apartment door. The husband covers his mouth with his

hand, looking concerned, while the wife looks at him and excitedly knocks on the door. The door opens and greetings are uttered, a younger woman is then seen warmly embracing the couple, one by one. As she hugs the man, she says “hey Dad,” revealing that the couple is her parents (Tim Hortons best commercial yet, 2011). The words “based on a true story” are then seen in script type across the screen (2011).

The man is then seen walking through the apartment, followed closely by the daughter. She lifts her hands to gesture, as introduces them to her living space. The father still seems slightly worried, asking, “So, you’re sleeping in the living room?” He is then seen looking closely at his daughter, questioning her on the piercing in her nose, roughly saying, “what happened to your nose,” to which she giggled and said, “it’s called a stud” (2011). The man walks up to the window, examining the view of the street below, as his daughter tries to pull him away. The girl and her parents are then seen walking on the sidewalk, as traffic loudly passes by them. The father then says to his daughter, “what you pay for utilities here, you could get yourself a really nice apartment back home,” (2011). His daughter then takes a deep breath, as if this statement has been said before. “Well, this is home now,” she responds, to which the father persists with another negative comment about her choice: “It’s noisy” (2011). She looks at him and says that she likes the noise, “really” (2011). The girl and her parents then arrive at the entrance to a Tim Horton’s restaurant. They go in together and the mother and daughter are then seen sitting alone at a table. The mother looks at her daughter and says, “your dad really misses you” (2011).

Just then, a friend of the daughter’s arrives at Tim Horton’s and greets her. The father then arrives with a tray of drinks for the group. As they sit and quietly drink, the daughter looks at her father and says, “Hey Dad, don’t ever stop visiting, okay?” The father then softens his

expression and says, “I miss you too” (2011). The advertisement ends as the words “Tim Hortons” and “Every cup tells a story,” and then the web address “everycup.ca” appear at the bottom of the screen (2011).

This advertisement has two key indicators of Canadian culture, one sign -- a Canadian flag perched in a store window as the family walked down the street -- and one symbol, the word “home,” used several times throughout the ad in reference to where the daughter has chosen to live. In past commercials, the word “home” has been used consistently in reference to the Canada. This word choice in the current ad, with the brief Canadian flag sign, creates the idea that home is a city in Canada. When the man arrives at Tim Horton’s with his family, even though he is obviously uncomfortable with the location of her new home, short walk to Tim Horton’s makes it feel more home-like to him. These signs and symbols, joined with the Tim Horton’s restaurant and logo, creates a greater signification of Tim Horton’s making any Canadian city home.

In 2009, Sidney Crosby starred in his first Tim Horton’s ad, released during the World Juniors Hockey Championship. In the ad, Crosby is seen sitting on a large coach bus, as it slowly drives through snowy weather. The driver then slows the bus to a stop. The bus driver then apologizes for the delay but he indicates that something, maybe mechanical problems, were going to take a while. As the other bus passengers grunt at the bad news, Crosby looks out the window and sees a pond outside, with children in hockey equipment skating on it. Crosby is then seen gathering his hockey bag and stick from the bus’s external storage cavity. The video then shows the group of kids, with their hockey jerseys displaying the Tim Horton’s logo. Parents along the side of the ice look at each other and point at Crosby, amazed that he was there. As Crosby walks closer to the rink, the words, “Sidney Crosby, Timbits Player 1993” appear across

the screen (Sidney Crosby – Tim Hortons Commercial [2009], 2009). Crosby then asks one of the kids if he can play, laces up his skates and leads them in a game. The narrator then says, “every year thousands of boys and girls make new friends while discovering a love for the game by playing Timbits hockey” (2009). One of the little boys is then seen scoring a goal, causing Crosby to pat him on the helmet with his hockey glove to congratulate him. The bus driver is then heard yelling Crosby’s name, waving him to return to the bus. The kids wave goodbye and watch as he walks away. The narrator then says, “when you start with fun, it can last a lifetime” – referring to the love for hockey (2009). A man then joins the parents at the side of the ice, a tray of Tim Horton’s coffee in hand. He says, “So, did I miss anything?” and the parents simply take a cup from his tray and smile (2009). The Timbits logo is then seen in the corner of the screen with the words “The first goal is having fun” (2009).

In this ad, Crosby is a symbol of Canada and its pride. According to the Canadian Encyclopedia, Crosby “is known as one of Canada's most famous and successful athletes of the National Hockey League (NHL),” having been named Player of the Year from 2003 to 2005 by the Canadian Hockey League (CHL) while still playing for the minor leagues, and then being chosen first overall in the NHL entry draft in 2005, and then quickly establishing himself as one of the youngest and most talented hockey stars (Sidney Crosby, 2011). There are many Canadian signs and symbols within this ad, including the pond hockey rink, kids playing hockey, the snowy weather and Crosby himself. By including the Timbits name, on jerseys of the children and as part of the title introducing Crosby, as well as the Tim Horton’s cups seen in the end of the ad, this ad creates a new signification that combines Tim Horton’s with Canadian culture.

In 2009, a new Roll Up The Rim ad took the use of Canadian symbols very literally, playing on stereotypes Americans have of Canada. In this ad, two Canadians find themselves at

an amusement park named “Canada Land,” and curiously explore by venturing inside (2009 Tim Horton’s Roll Up commercial in HD, 2009). Inside, Canadian Mounted Police, often referred to as Mounties, greeted them. Among the fake snow, pine trees and mountains stood people dressed in bear costumes, surrounded by moose-crossing signs, canoes and a fake deer. The men then vocally made observation of some of the games advertised. “Shoot a Puck... Knit a Toque... Shovel the Driveway,” the one man says a look of disgust and shock (2009). Just then the other man excitedly says, “This is so Canadian,” to the surprise of the first man, stating “you have got to be kidding me” (2009). The second man then explains why the park was “so Canadian,” – “They have Roll Up” he says, revealing a larger-than-life Tim Horton’s cup, with the words “Win!” showing on its rolled up rim (2009). The first man’s face then changes from distaste to awe and adoration, repeating the words of Tim Horton’s popular campaign, “Roll Up” (2009). He then turns and grabs his friend’s shirt, looking deep into his eyes while insisting, “we’ve got to get back to Canada” (2009). The narrator then says “Come on Canada, its Roll Up The Rim To Win time again,” then stating the many prizes to be won (2009).

This advertisement displays many symbols and signs found in Canadian culture, which are, according to Tim Horton’s, also perceived by Americans to be uniquely Canadian. Although the Canadian Mounties, snow, bears, and the words “toque,” and “puck” are indicators of Canadian culture, this advertisement insists that Tim Horton’s Roll Up The Rim campaign is equally Canadian. Seeing these signs and symbols grouped together with the Roll Up The Rim campaign creates a new signification for viewers – one of unity between Tim Horton’s brand and Canadian culture.

In the last ad found from the 2000s, Tim Horton’s introduces fair trade coffee and the initiative to encourage fair business with coffee bean growers in Central and South America. In

this ad, video clips show different facets of South America, through its landscape, its people, seen picking berries from trees, the roads, and then buildings with the Tim Horton's logo painted on the side. The first words seen ask, "What are the perfect conditions for growing better coffee?" (Tim Hortons Coffee Commercial, 2009). What is the answer? Tim Horton's then answers with "A successful coffee farmer, for one" (2009). A voice is then heard over the video that shows a man wearing a Tim Horton's ball cap, picking berries from trees. The voice, which is later identified as Tim Hortons President and CEO Don Schroeder, says, "Tim Horton's decided to get involved in this because we buy a lot of coffee, we wanted to give back to the community that provide us with that coffee" (2009). Another narrator, with a female voice, is then heard stating, "in the coffee growing communities of Central and South America, giving back starts with helping coffee farmers grow better coffee," (2009). Schroeder is then seen again, in hat and sunglasses, holding a branch with a bunch of berries growing on it, as he says, "they don't want anything for free; they want the opportunity to be successful businessmen" (2009). A man is then seen, speaking in Spanish. His words are translated through close captioning. He says, "We are going to try our best so that in two years we can become businessmen" (2009). The narrator then states that Tim Horton's coffee partnership is still growing that in the past four years it has "improved the lives of nearly 2000 small coffee farmers and their families" (2009). The video then cuts to Schroeder, standing among the trees. He says, "You know, we don't believe in just writing cheques and then walking away" (2009). The ad then ends with Tim Horton's logo and the words "Making a true difference" (2009).

This advertisement does not have any signs or symbols of Canadian culture, but simply focuses on bringing attention to their company's international business and fair trade efforts.

This ad shows that although Tim Horton's used Canadian signs and symbols in the great majority of their ads, a small group of them still did not integrate Canadian elements.

In examining Canadian outside media for use of Tim Horton's brand in conjunction with Canadian culture, many items were found, including one editorial cartoon from the Hamilton Spectator, seen in Appendix B, in which a multiple unit city transit bus is seen curling around a Tim Horton's restaurant. The driver of this car is seen stopped in front of the drive through window, where a speech bubble is seen saying, "...492 Double Doubles, 71 Maple Dipped Donuts, 246 Toasted Grain Bagels..." as if reading off the bus's breakfast order (Hamilton's transportation revolution, 2008). In response to Hamilton's 2008 decision to create a "new rapid transit system it hopes will pull up to 20 per cent of cars off the road over the next few decades," cartoonist G. McKay poked fun at Canadians' addiction to Tim Horton's, using this illustration to state that giving up driving to work would be easier to quit than their daily Tim Horton's drive through run.

Tim Horton's in the 2010s: Connecting Tim Horton's to Canada's Game and Canada as a Community

The 2010s started off, and continues to be, a decade in which Tim Horton's boldly connects their brand with what it means to be Canadian, whether through the use of hockey, showing and glorifying Canadian stereotypes, or through showing families and individuals who welcome outsiders to our country with a warm cup of java. Although the Canadian signs and symbols are minimal in some advertisements, all of the advertisements do have some indication of Canadian culture, for the purpose of connecting the country of its primary target audience to their brand.

A large influencer of Tim Horton's direction could be caused, at least in part, by the 2010 Olympics, which were held in Vancouver, Canada. In an editorial for the Toronto Star, Chair of Torstar's Board of Directors J. Honderich stated that "the country, all 35 million of us, were able to bare our patriotic souls in an outburst of unbridled patriotism not seen before" when the Olympics came to Canada (Olympics were an explosion of passion and patriotism, 2010). This unbridled patriotism was infused, and still is infused through many of Tim Horton's ads.

One such ad was filmed in 2009 but aired in 2010, featuring NHL star and Canada's male hockey captain Sidney Crosby. In this ad, Crosby is the narrator, speaking about how hockey is an element of Canadian life, woven into our identity as a society. "Hockey," he begins, "hockey is our game... but really it is more than just a game" (Sidney Crosby Tim Horton's Commercial (2010), 2010). A little boy is then seen in a dimmed change room, dressed in hockey equipment and a jersey with a Tim Horton's logo. His father is seen crouched in front of him, lacing his skates for him. "It's a passion that brings us all together," Crosby says, as the video then cuts to a black and white picture of a group of men, dressed in hockey gear, holding up their sticks in victory. The video then cuts to another scene – an aerial view of a frozen pond, with a makeshift hockey rink being skated on – as Crosby continues to say "on frozen ponds" (2010). Then another video clip is shown, of a group of men and women gathered together on a set of bleachers, looking at a hockey rink. As Crosby says, "at the community rink," the group is seen cheering and smiling (2010). The video then cuts to another scene, of a group of young people, sitting on couches in a darkened living room. The light highlights their faces as they sit on the edge of their seats, staring at the hockey game on the television. Crosby is then heard saying, "and in our living rooms," as the group rises to their feet in celebration (2010). A woman is then seen skating backwards, holding the blade-end of a hockey stick to pull along a little boy in

hockey gear, toddling on his skates. Crosby then says “It’s the feeling you got the first time you stepped on the ice,” as the logo on the child’s hockey jersey becomes visible, displaying the words “Tim Hortons” (2010). A video of a little boy scoring a goal is then seen, with the words “Sidney Crosby, Timbits player 1993” across the bottom of the screen; at the same time, Crosby is heard saying “it’s the feeling you had when you scored your first goal” (2010). The video then cuts to a group of children playing ball hockey in their driveway, with a hockey net set up, and then a boy sleeping on a bed with his hockey helmet still on, as Crosby says “hockey’s in our driveways. It’s in our dreams...” (2010). The video then cuts to a video of a minivan at a drive-through window; the mother driving is seen passing a box of Tim Horton’s Timbits back to the children in the back seat, as Crosby says “... and every post-game celebration” (2010). The video then cuts to a group of teenage boys, stopping their ball hockey game in the middle of a neighborhood street, pulling their hockey net to the side, as Crosby says, “it’s in the streets each time your friend yells ‘car’...” (2010). Crosby then says, “... and every rink around the country,” as an empty arena is seen, with a Zamboni circling the ice (2010). Then a group of individuals are seen in darkened stands, as two young women are seen hugging each other in celebration, as Crosby says, “It’s in our hearts” (2010). Crosby is then seen sitting in his dressing room, looking straight ahead in a track suit with his skates on. Crosby’s voice is still heard, saying “hockey is that thought inside your head saying, ‘wouldn’t it be amazing getting up every day...’” (2010). The video then simultaneously cuts to a home video of Crosby as a young boy, saying “...getting up every day and playing, doing something that you love to do” (2010). The video then cuts to black, with only the Tim Horton’s logo being shown. A new narrator is then heard, saying “Tim Horton’s celebrates hockey as it brings together all Canadians who love this game” (2010). The saying “our passion grows on ice” then appears below the logo (2010).

This advertisement not only displays Canadian signs and symbols of hockey in its many forms – such as pond hockey, ball hockey, house league hockey and watching NHL hockey – but it uses Crosby to state the connection between Canada and hockey. Crosby states that hockey is an integral part of what it means to be Canadian, and what it means to be part of a Canadian community. This connection is then joined to the Tim Horton's brand through the appearance of its logo on the hockey jerseys, the use of the term "Timbits player" in conjunction with Crosby's name, and the final statement that "Tim Horton's celebrates hockey as it brings together all Canadians..." (2010).

Tim Horton's released another commercial during the 2010 Olympics, not focusing on hockey, but on the consistency of their coffee quality and freshness coast to coast. The ad blends videos of many Tim Horton's stores and employees, brewing and serving coffee, while taking turns narrating the commercial message. The message is as follows, "it could be 7 in the morning... or 10 at night... in Chilliwack, BC... or St. Peters, Nova Scotia... it could be Michelle... or Marc... or Jen... but whenever, wherever you order that cup of Tim Horton's premium blend coffee... you know that it is always... always... always fresh" (Tim Hortons 2010 Olympics Commercial – Always Fresh, 2010). The video then cuts to a Tim Horton's carafe with the words "20 minute fresh. Always" scribed on the side, as another narrator is heard saying, "from Newfoundland and Labrador to Vancouver Island... Tim Horton's... A coffee all our own" (2010). In repetition of the narrator's statement, the Tim Horton's logo is then seen, with the phrase "a coffee all our own" in script type below (2010).

This advertisement uses the names of different Canadian towns, and the images of Tim Horton's restaurants in different Canadian landscapes as signs of Canada. This combination of the Tim Horton's signs and symbols with Canadian signs and symbols, sets the viewer up for

understanding the statement made at the end of the ad: “a coffee all our own” (2010). When “our” is used, the viewer interprets it to mean “all of us Canadians,” and “a coffee” to mean “Tim Horton’s coffee” (2010). The viewer can then interpret the message of this advertisement to mean that Tim Horton’s is the coffee of Canadians.

Tim Horton’s also used the 2010 Olympics as a stage to release their newest addition to their “True Story” campaign. The commercial features an African man with a thick African accent. The man is seen pacing in his apartment, talking on a phone in a South African dialect. He is then seen kissing his fingers and placing them on the photos attached to the refrigerator door. He then says into the phone, “I miss you,” (Tim Hortons Coffee Commercial Welcome Home, 2010). He is then seen, still holding the phone to his ear while he touches a baby mobile and then paces in the living room. The words “based on a true story” then appear in the corner of the screen in script type, as he says “I will see you tomorrow” (2010). He is then seen in a store brightly lit with fluorescent lights; lines of winter coats hung on hangers line the aisles, as a woman, implied to be a store employee, holds up a parka to show the man. He is then seen picking up another coat in a child’s size, lined with a fur hood. He is then seen leaving the check-out area with three tightly packed bags. He is then seen back in his apartment, packing the coats into woven bags. The video then cuts to another scene of a darkened highway, only lit with streetlights; in the background the beeping sound of an alarm clock is heard. Snow is then seen through a window as the man pulls back the blinds. The video then cuts to the dashboard of a car, as the windshield wipers move back and forth to clear snow; a road sign can be seen through the windshield, with an airplane and an arrow indicating an airport is ahead. The man is then seen in an airport, pushing a luggage cart holding the woven bags that he had packed before. A voice is then heard saying, “Welcome to Tim Horton’s, can I take your order, please?” and the

man is then seen at a Tim Horton's counter, saying, "ah, yes, two coffees please, cream and sugar" (2010). He is then seen waiting, pacing slightly. Then a woman with two children, pushing a luggage cart full of bags through opaque glass doors. The children then run to the man, as he says "hey" and reaches down to hug them. The woman then says, "look at you," as she hugs him, tears gathering in her eyes (2010). She then kisses him once and then again. The man then gives her a Tim Horton's cup, and says "welcome to Canada" (2010). She then notices the woven bags in his empty luggage cart, and asks, "what is this?" to which he replies, "you'll see" (2010). The family is then seen bundled in coats, hats, scarves and gloves, holding hands and pushing their luggage out into the snowy weather outside the airport. The man then says, "welcome home," and the Tim Horton's logo then appears in the bottom corner with the words "a coffee all our own" (2010).

This advertisement contains a few Canadian signs including the coats and the snowy weather. These signs are confirmed through the greeting said in the end of the advertisement: "welcome to Canada" (2010). These Canadian signs are then aligned with Canada through the use of the Tim Horton's logo on the sign, the word "Tim Horton's" used by the employee, and the Tim Horton's cup passed from the man to his wife. This combination, joined with the tagline at the end of the advertisement, saying "a coffee all our own," reinforce the connection between Canada and Tim Horton's.

After the Olympics, Tim Horton's still used the concept of Canadian symbolism to play on Canadian stereotypes, aligning Canadians' love for the Tim Horton's brand with the many other Canadian stereotypes. In this ad, two men are seen in a log cabin, heated by a fire. One of the men is wearing a flannel buttoned shirt, while the other man is wearing a knitted zipped sweater. The first man is seen stoking the fire, then turning to the second man to say, "hey, want

to go on a Tim's run?" (Tim Horton's Commercial, 2010). The second man then says, "of course. It's roll up time" (2010). The first man then says, "yah, 'cause that's the cliché Canadian thing to do, right?" (2010). The men then walk outside the cabin to a snow covered forest. As they put on their backpacks and attach snowshoes, the first man jokingly says, "yeah, right, like we just sit around in our igloos, waiting for Roll Up the Rim to Win" (2010). The pair are then seen rushing down a hill on a wooden toboggan, the second man, pushing the first, says, "yeah, and then we hop on a moose and ride it over to Tim's" (2010). The pair are then seen with hockey sticks in hand, skating in hockey skates across a frozen pond, while the second man yells, "hey everybody, grab your toques. It's Roll Up time" (2010). The pair is then seen riding a dogsled, led by huskies, to a Tim Horton's restaurant. As they rub down the dogs in front of the restaurant, the first man says, "I mean, who does that, eh?" (2010). The second man then looks up with a confused look, and says, "did you just say 'eh'?" to which the other man pauses and then denies saying the stereotypical Canadian phrase (2010). The second man then shook his finger at the first, saying "I heard an 'eh'" to make fun of his phrase (2010). The two men are then seen in a picture holding Tim Horton's Roll Up The Rim cups, as a narrator addresses Canadians, stating that the Roll Up The Rim Campaign had begun, once again. The men are then seen in other pictures, showing off the prizes to be won.

Although these two men, featured in the ad, joke about Canadian stereotypes that they believe are not true, including remarks about living in igloos and riding a moose, they exemplify other Canadian stereotypes such as skating across ponds and saying "eh," confirming their validity (2010). The words igloos, moose and toque are symbols, while the images of snow, cabins, flannel shirts, hockey sticks and dog sleds are signs that signify Canada. When Tim Horton's, or its nickname "Tim's" and "Roll Up The Rim" are included in conjunction with

these stereotypes – especially the ones that are validated by the actions of the two men, the Tim Horton’s brand is seen as having equal weight in Canadian culture to the other Canadian signs and symbols. When viewers see this ad, their understanding of Canadian stereotypes is that some of them are actually correct, and that by the inclusion of the Tim Horton’s brand, Tim Horton’s is as much a part of Canadian culture as any other stereotype.

In the autumn of 2010, Tim Horton’s released an advertisement promoting their new Homestyle Oatmeal. In the advertisement, three men are seen up to their waists in a lake wearing hip waders, hats and thick sweaters. The men are seen trying to position a dock and drag it to shore. As they banter back and forth about why they did not “do this on labor day” instead of waiting until it was “so cold,” their breath fogs the air, and they shiver attempting to keep warm (Lee’s Tim Horton’s Commercial, 2010). As they continue to push the dock towards shore³, three women appear from the cottage further up the property. They say hi to the men and offer them “something warm” – a cup of Tim Horton’s coffee and a cup of Tim Horton’s oatmeal each (2010). The men quickly climb out of the water, clutching the Tim Horton’s cups. The oatmeal surprises the men but gladly take it. The video then cuts to a close-up view of a cup of oatmeal, and the sound of a male narrator saying, “start your day in the warmest way with Tim Horton’s new homestyle oatmeal in maple and rich berries, just \$1.99 each” (2010). The men are then seen sitting on the dock in wooden outdoor chairs that are referred to as Muskoka chairs in Canada, still in their hip waders, eating the oatmeal and looking out at the lake. The one man then says, “We could have waited until December” to pull in the dock (2010). The other man

³ Pulling docks to shore in preparation for winter is a common practice for those who own property along the shoreline of Canadian lakes. If the docks are not pulled onto shore prior to the lake freezing over, the docks will often become frozen in the lake, dislodged, damaged or even lost when the water levels change again in the spring.

questions him by saying, “seriously?” as the Tim Horton’s logo appears at the bottom of the screen (2010).

This advertisement appeals to a distinct area within Canada’s diverse landscape: Muskoka. The greatest symbol of this area, beside the lake, fallen maple leaves, and the cold weather, are the Muskoka chairs used in the ad. According to an article by Inside Out Patio Furniture, “The Adirondack chair, or as many Canadians call it, the ‘Muskoka Chair’ is a style of chair favoured for outdoor settings. The idea and design of the Adirondack chair is attributed to an American Thomas Lee in 1903... The chairs have always been a favourite for cottagers alike. Seating on the deck or dock overlooking the water, relaxing while around the fire or lounging in the sun are a hand-full of the uses” (History of the Adirondack Chairs, 2013). Although this advertisement focuses on a specific area of Canada, the chosen landscape is a well-known signification that is part of the Canada, and, therefore, becomes a symbol for the country. When combined with the Tim Horton’s signs and symbols of the coffee cups and oatmeal cups, viewers create a larger signification that combines Tim Horton’s with Canadian culture.

The last Tim Horton’s commercial that was found from 2010 highlighted the specialty hot chocolates available, especially in light of the Christmas season. The ad, which featured a young man and woman watching a parade from behind the glass of a Tim Horton’s restaurant window. The two took seats at a window bar in clear view of the festivities. As the parade marches on to the tune of jingle bells, the man turns to the woman to say, “so, this sure beats standing, huh?” to which the woman replies, “you were not kidding about the good seats” (Tim Horton’s Holiday Commercial 2010 (Peterborough, Ontario), 2010). The couple takes turns sipping whipped cream topped drinks from their Tim Horton’s mugs, while the man comments that they did not need to bring a thermos this year. The woman then quickly replies, “better yet,

we get the fancy hot chocolate,” to which the man adds, “and donuts” (2010). The pair then excitedly says, “bring on Santa,” only to notice that crowds of people were gathering outside the restaurant, blocking their view. The woman then playfully says to the man, “I’m not sure you thought this through” (2010). The video then cuts to a close-up shot of hot chocolate being poured into a mug, then another of chocolate sauce being poured, and another of a mug of hot chocolate topped with whipped cream and chocolate drizzle. The narrator is then heard, explaining the new hot chocolate supreme, and a new chocolate filled donut. The advertisement ends with the man stating, “at least it is good for people watching,” referring to their new view (2010). As they look forward, a Canadian flag is seen waving as part of the parade.

The only clear Canadian sign is the Canadian flag. When this flag is seen in the Tim Horton’s ad, the viewer is reminded again of how Canadian their brand is, and how it is woven into Canadian society.

In 2011, Tim Horton’s emphasized their lunch options in a summer commercial, while playing on the idea that Tim Horton’s are always close by in Canada. In the advertisement, two couples are seen walking out of a church with a large group of people. One of the women turns to the other and, while linking arms with her, says, “Oh, I just love spring weddings,” to which the other agreed, saying “I can’t wait for the reception” (Tim Hortons Commercial, 2011). The guys then joined the conversation, following behind the women, asking “hey, what time do we have to be there?” The answer was “6:30. We’ve got some time” (2011). The one man groaned at the sound of having to wait. One of the women then asked the men, “do you want to grab a snack,” to which they replied that they want a meal instead, “yeah, like a sandwich” (2011). One of the women then suggested going to Tim Horton’s, asking “do you think there’s one around here?” (2011). The group looked at each other and started laughing, as if the question was

senseless – of course a Tim Horton’s would be nearby. The video then cuts to a close-up shot of two tomatoes falling on fresh wet lettuce, and then to another shot of sliced deli meats, and the top of a cheese bagel. The narrator then explains the many lunch options, stating that it is “lunch done right” at Tim Horton’s (2011). The ad ends with the Tim Horton’s logo appearing beside a sandwich on a bagel, with the jingle “always Tim Horton’s” (2011).

This advertisement does not carry any clear Canadian signifiers, but it does emphasize the fact that Tim Horton’s is always nearby, reinforcing the fact that it is consistent in prominence across Canada.

Tim Horton’s started the year of 2012 off with another Sidney Crosby advertisement, seeking, as they state in their commercial, “to bring together all Canadians” (Tim Hortons 2012 Commercial – Feat. Sidney Crosby, 2012). The advertisement begins with a shot of the outside of a hockey arena, covered in a layer of snow. Crosby’s voice is heard saying, “to us, it’s more than just a hockey rink” (2012). A little boy is then seen standing on the tip of his toes, trying to reach his hand through a ticket window. Lines of feet are seen walking through a door, on flat concrete. A boy’s voice is then heard, continuing Crosby’s statement, “... It’s our theatre,” he says. The little boy is then seen handing a ticket to a man on a chair. Sidney Crosby is then seen in a Pittsburgh Penguins jersey skating quickly down the ice, with an opposing player and referee trailing shortly behind. The boy continues, saying, “... of breath-taking drama...” (2012). The scoreboard is seen, counting down seconds on the clock. The video then cuts to a man and woman who rise to their feet, eyes and mouths open, as they watch in anticipation. And a goalie, in an orange and black jersey is seen looking straight at the camera with eyes open wide. The puck then flies through the air, passing the goalie to land in the net. The woman and man in the stands then cheer and clap. The boy continues, “... and pulse-pounding action,” as a group of

small boys are seen in hockey equipment and jerseys with the logo “Timbits” across the shoulders; the boys chase after a puck, and are then seen sitting on the ice, one laying down making snow angels (2012). Another voice is heard, still male, but older, as a group of two men and one woman are seen sitting and talking in the bleachers, holding cups of Tim Horton’s coffee, with a box of Timbits beside them. The voice says, “it’s our town hall... where bonds are forged,” transitioning to a clip of another group of men playing hockey, huddling around in celebration with sticks in the air (2012). A hockey coach is then seen on a team bench, positioned between players, actively engaged with a referee standing on the ice in front of him. The voice continues, saying, “...and issues debated” (2012). The scene transitions again, to a hockey change room where a group of female hockey players crouch, in full equipment, before another woman in a suit, marking positions on a whiteboard. The narration transitions as well, to a female voice, stating “it’s our classroom...” (2012). A young skater is seen, then struggling to upright himself, wobbling in hockey skates and a helmet. “As we grow and define ourselves,” the narrator continues (2012). A female goalie is then seen, defending the goal as a player advances. A little boy is then seen again in hockey equipment and a Tim Horton’s jersey, staring at the flags of won tournaments hanging above the hockey ice, as another, more distinguished male voice states, “it’s our shrine to unsung heroes...” and then another video of an elderly man shoveling the remaining snow off the ice as the Zamboni finishes its work (2012). A young boy is then seen standing in front of a trophy case, fogging the glass with his breath. The voice then continues, “... and revered ones” (2012). Crosby’s voice is then heard again, stating, “it’s not just brick, mortar, and ice,” as the lights of an arena are turned on and Crosby appears at the edge of the rink (2012). Crosby then starts to smile, as he says, “it’s our home,” and the words “Sidney Crosby, Timbits Player 1993” appear beside his face (2012). Crosby is then seen skating

on the rink with children wearing hockey equipment and Tim Horton's jerseys, while another narrator says, "Tim Horton's celebrates hockey as it brings together all Canadians" (2012). The advertisement ends with the Tim Horton's logo, and the words "The game we love. A passion we share" (2012).

This advertisement, like the one released in 2010 for the Vancouver Olympics, emphasizes hockey signs and symbols, such as arenas, hockey sticks, and hockey equipment, as representations of the greater concept of hockey. Hockey, then, is correlated to Canada through the use of snow, and the actual verbal reference to Canadians. When the advertisement uses these signs and symbols in connection with their brand, they, once again, reinforce the concept that Tim Horton's is as Canadian as hockey, and is in support of Canadian cultural phenomena – like viewing and taking part in hockey games and activities.

In the summer of 2012, Tim Horton's introduced two new flavors of their well-loved Timbits: lemon and raspberry. These new flavors, then, became the central focus of an advertisement that featured a man who would invite himself into any social situation, just to taste the Timbits from each event. The man, who is seen wearing a denim-collared shirt, interrupts a business meeting, a baby shower, a family trip in a minivan, and a Korean group's family reunion, just to take one to two Timbits for himself. The video then cuts to a close-up view of a number of Timbits falling on a counter top, and then another of them having glaze poured over them. The narrator says, "yep, they are that irresistible. Try new lemon or raspberry. Just \$1.99 for a 10 pack... It's summer" (Tim Hortons- Timbits Commercial, 2012). The advertisement then ends with the Tim Horton's logo and the saying, "it's time for Tim's" (2012).

This advertisement does not have any Canadian signs or symbols, demonstrating that, even in the 2010s, Tim Horton's does not magnify Canadian signifiers within 100-percent of

their advertisements. Instead, they still use some to simply shine light on a new product or campaign.

2012 was also the year that Tim Horton's created with an agreement with Kraft Foods to create Tassimo single-serve coffee pods for Tassimo home brewing systems. In a 2012 press release, Tim Horton's stated that "TASSIMO is one of the fastest growing on-demand single-serve beverage brands in North America, with more than 950,000 brewers already sold in Canada" (Tim Hortons and Tassimo to Offer Tims Coffee One Cup at a Time, 2012). This agreement prompted a new advertisement, showing many groups of individuals enjoying Tim Horton's coffee from different locations. The advertisement begins by showing a group of construction workers on top of a building, holding up their coffee cups labeled with the Tim Horton's logo. The video cuts to a short clip of a farmer tossing a square bail of hay from his barn into the back of his pickup truck. The video then cuts again to a group of girls riding in a car, holding their Tim Horton's cups out the window to show the bikers beside them. The video then cuts back to the farmer, who holds up his Tim Horton's cup as he climbs into his truck. The song playing in the background sings, "just know you're not alone... I'm going to make this place your home" (Tim Horton's Tassimo Commercial, 2012). The video then cuts to another scene, showing a crowd watching a hockey game. Each one of the crowd members is seen holding a Tim Horton's coffee cup. As the team scores a goal, the crowd members leap to their feet and are seen in the jumbotron's screen holding their Tim Horton's cups high. A woman wearing a business suit is then seen getting into her car, with a school bus behind her. Before she gets in, she lifts her Tim Horton's coffee cup in the air. The video then cuts again to a woman in workout clothes, walking to her Tassimo brewing system; she then sets her cup under the dispenser and sticks a Tim Horton's coffee pod in the top loading area. The narrator then

explains that “Tim Horton’s is coming home” with the new Tassimo home brewing system (2012). He says that the “unique barcode technology” of the Tassimo system brews the Tim Horton’s “coffee the way it was meant to be” (2012).

The Canadian signs in this ad include the hockey game, the various and diverse Canadian landscapes and the reference to “home” given to Canadian viewers. When combined with the numerous Tim Horton’s cups, the Tim Horton’s logo on the Tassimo pod, and the verbal mention of Tim Hortons, this advertisement leads the viewer to connect Tim Horton’s to Canada and what it means to be home.

In 2013, Tim Horton’s released one of its most patriotic advertisements yet, showing the many characteristics of Canada as a people group. The first clip shows a snow covered mountains, and then a car with the words “Canada” written in the snow on the windshield. A female voice is heard saying, “welcome to Canada” (Tim Hortons Ad 2013 March, 2013). A male voice is then heard saying, “Canadians are so nice,” as the video shows a clip of a girl throwing a snowball at the camera (2013). The video then cuts to a flock of Canada geese flying over a lake; a female voice says “they’re so polite” as the geese are heard saying “sorry... sorry... sorry” in a Canadian accent (2013). Another male voice adds on, “so welcoming,” as a group of immigrants are seen pledging allegiance to the Canadian flag in an immigration ceremony (2013). Two people are then seen walking on a sidewalk toward each other. They move back and forth as they try to figure out who is walking on which side, while a male narrator says, “we’re definitely not one for confrontation” (2013). The video then shows a little boy in a superhero costume with his hands on his hips, and another narrator says, “but we won’t let anyone push us around” (2013). A dog and cat are then seen pawing at each other, as the narrator says, “you throw the first punch, we’ll drop the gloves” (2013). A large group of people

are then seen in bathing suits and winter hats, drinking Tim Horton's coffee while dipping in a cold lake; the narrator is then heard saying, "I say we're brave" (2013). A native American woman is then seen smiling as a female narrator says, "we're confident in who we are," and the video then cuts to another man dressed in military attire decorated in medals (2013). Other men and women are then seen smiling with Tim Horton's cups in their hands. A man and woman are then seen arguing and then hugging in a clip, with a female narrator saying, "unless we've done something wrong... then we will apologize" (2013). A group of men are then seen playing ball hockey on pavement, as a young boy's voice is heard saying, "Canada rules" (2013). Another male voice is then heard saying "we grind it out... we go for the gold..." as the video cuts from one of the men stick handling a ball to three people seen holding a sign on an overpass that says, "Go Canada Go" (2013). A man is then seen doing tricks on a bike in the middle of a hayfield as the narrator then says, "we totally rock this nation" (2013). A drip of coffee is then seen falling from coffee maker into Tim Horton's carafe, and the words "what we love" are then seen spelled in coffee beans (2013). A man is then seen covered in red paint with a white maple leaf painted on his stomach and chest, carrying a cup of Tim Horton's coffee and a red noisemaker, standing at a bus stop. A woman standing beside him stares with disgust, as he smiles back; the narrator is heard saying, "and we don't care who agrees or disagrees" (2013). A woman is then seen entering a room with two trays full of Tim Horton's coffee cups, as the narrator says, "we often will grab an extra coffee. We like it..." (2013). The video then cuts to a man waiting in the subway; he finishes the statement by saying, "good" (2013). Another woman is then seen with a cup of coffee; she finishes the statement by saying, "honest" (2013). A young man with a backpack on his shoulder then is seen with a cup, finishing the statement with, "simple (2013), and another older man standing in front of a transport truck with a cup of coffee says "thank you

very much” (2013). The video then quickly cuts from a view of Tim Horton’s employees smiling to a large group of people holding a very large Canadian flag across a set of stadium seats, while a narrator is heard saying, “this is our Canada” (2013). Other individuals of different races, in different clothing and in different settings are seen drinking from Tim Horton’s cups. A Tim Horton’s cup is then seen sitting on a desk, and then another and another, as the background changes. The narrator then says, “this is our coffee” as the words “Our Canada. Our coffee” appear on the screen (2013).

This advertisement includes many Canadian signs and symbols, most notably the words “Canada” and the Canadian flag, both seen on more than one occasion. The connection, which is made through the appearance of Canadian signs and symbols, between Canadian patriotism and Tim Horton’s is then confirmed through the closing statement that Tim Horton’s is the Canadian coffee: “Our Canada. Our coffee” (2013).

In 2013, Tim Horton’s introduced another advertisement that highlighted the quality of its coffee. In the ad, a man in a white lab coat is seen in a darkened room, lit by only a few fluorescent overhead lights and a desk light that illuminated his workspace from under the blank surface. The man quickly scoops a pile of deep brown coffee grounds onto the illuminated workspace, and spreads them with his fingers. As he runs his fingers through the granules, a narrator is heard saying, “what if there was a coffee that was sourced from some of the world’s most renowned growing regions” (Tim Hortons: “Coffee Art” TV Commercial, 2013). The video now changes revealing a picture, being made through the arrangement of coffee grounds, resembling a volcano, trees and bushes, and clouds, with lightning striking down. A bird is then seen, formed by the coffee grounds, flying into the picture’s landscape. The narrator then says, “abundant with rich, fertile soil,” as the picture changes, revealing hands that hold a plant as it

grows and ascends, then growing coffee beans (2013). The narrator then says, “what if this coffee was picked at the perfect moment then packed meticulously and shipped carefully to be roasted under the watchful eye of coffee masters. As he speaks the images change again, from a coffee berry, to a bean, then a flaming bean, to a bean with a cargo ship sailing through it, then to an eye – illustrating the narrators words. The coffee grounds then look like beans and are seen flowing into another lump of grounds shaped like a coffee canister. He says, “what if it was expertly ground and sealed, insuring maximum flavor and freshness, then brewed in small batches and always served fresh within 20 minutes, just the way you like it” (2013). The grounds are then formed into a coffee carafe, which is then poured into a cup. “What if that happened to be the coffee you already know and love,” he says, as the illustration of a coffee carafe then changes to a real coffee carafe, pouring coffee into a real cup. (2013). The narrator then says, “Tim Horton’s. Always fresh. Always great coffee” (2013). This advertisement does not have any Canadian signs or symbols, as it simply emphasizes the quality of their coffee and the process of its preparation and packaging.

The final and most recent ad was created and released in January of 2014 in preparation for the most recent winter Olympics in Sochi, Russia. This ad, once again, features Sidney Crosby, who was once again captain of Canada’s Olympic men’s hockey team. In the advertisement, Crosby and team members are seen hopping the side of their team bench in a hockey game at a major game. A hockey announcer is heard over the speakers saying, “we want to welcome everyone coast to coast for what promises to be a great game tonight,” (Tim Hortons Good Ol’ Hockey Game featuring Sidney Crosby, 2014). As Crosby and his fellow team members gather on the ice, other hockey players, in their own team jerseys, flannel sweaters, and sweatshirts jumped the boards as well, skating onto the ice behind Crosby. A broadcasting video

camera is then seen capturing the players as they skate around the ice. As the referee looks up at the stands, more and more players, both young and old, in full equipment and only partial equipment take to the ice by jumping the boards. At this point the crowd is cheering louder than before. The news commentators from the press box are then seen getting up from their seats to look down upon the scene on the ice. As more and more continue on the ice, a song begins to play with the words “the northern lights are coming... The siren screams our name... the drums keep on pounding... you will know my name” (2014). A little boy sitting on the bench in the team box is then seen looking to his coach who then nods for him to join the others on the ice. The multitude of players then rushes up to the centerline of ice, where Crosby is ready to faceoff. The little boy from the bench is then seen in the multitude of players, displaying the Tim Horton’s logo on his jersey as he sets his stick blade on the ice. A group of goalies, one wearing a Tim Horton’s jersey, are then seen gathered around the team’s net. The song then is heard saying, “Let us run, let us run to the end of the sun... if we remember what we know, we will not be overcome” (2013). As the multitude looks straight ahead at the opposing players, Crosby looks up and over them and smiles. As the referee gets closer, ready to drop the puck, the video expands to show the ice in entirety. Crosby’s team’s half is filled with players standing behind him, and the opposing team only has few. Words then appear on the screen, saying “Nothing brings Canadians together like a good ol’ hockey game” (2013). The ad ends with the Tim Horton’s logo with the words “proud to be part of our game” (2013).

This advertisement symbolizes the Canadian pride that has grown in support of their Olympians who represent Canada every two years on the world’s stage. The clear signs and symbols are hockey related, in addition to the words “northern lights” which are first heard in the advertisement’s music (2013). Tim Horton’s is seen only a few times in the advertisement, on

hockey jerseys, on arena advertisements, and at the end in the closing logo. It is seen in this advertisement as part of the game of hockey, as stated in phrase at the end of the commercial, but also as a part of what it means to be Canadian. This advertisement demonstrates the peak to which Tim Horton's has climbed to become a Canadian fixture. Tim Horton's has become part of the game of hockey as well as part of what it means to be Canadian.

The 2010s have been a decade where publications have used editorial cartoons to show a correlation between Canadian culture and its brand. One cartoon in particular that appeared in the Toronto Star, August 1st, 2013, seen in Appendix C, showed a woman ordering coffee from a Tim Horton's restaurant. At the top of the illustration, a text box read "item: '500 free coffees' trends hits Toronto" (Editorial cartoon August 1 2013, 2013). As the Tim Horton's employee tells the customer, "an anonymous stranger is buying your coffee as long as you promise to vote against the corrupt bank-robbing liberals," a large man in a black suit, assumed to be Toronto Mayor Rob Ford is seen through the window, walking away from the restaurant (2013). In prior news articles published in the Toronto Star, an anonymous stranger had reportedly donated 500 free coffees to customers as a selfless act of kindness. Since then reports had surfaced of other anonymous donors duplicating the act of kindness.

In political reports which had been published during the same time, the troubled "Toronto Mayor Rob Ford said a vote for a provincial Liberal candidate is like 'giving a bank robber another gun'" (Rider and Vincent, 2013). Illustrator T. Moudakis drew attention to both news items, joking through the cartoon that Ford may have been one of the donors, hoping to bribe voters to not vote Liberal. The fact that these free coffees and, as a result, this illustration's setting were for Tim Horton's customers shows Canadians consistent adoration of Tim Horton's

as well as the fact that Ford would likely try to bribe Canadians to vote a certain way by offering them free Tim Horton's coffee.

Discussion

Tim Horton's focus on Canadian patriotism has been evident in many of their advertisements, using signs and symbols of Canadian culture to align their brand with what it means to be Canadian. This research not only revealed, in detail, which signs and symbols were used, but it also showed a progression in their use, moving from sporadic use to persistent and often repetitive use. In the 1980s the advertising focused on simply getting the Tim Horton's name out to the public, letting viewers know what their restaurants sell and how much it cost. Tim Horton's used television advertisements because, as stated by Tim Horton's former manager Ron Buist, "the strongest means of advertising food to increase the customer base is television... nothing beats the movement and appetite stimulation of television" (Buist, 2003, pp. 115). Although the 1980s' commercials did not demonstrate clear connections between their brand and the Canadian culture, the Canadian culture developed an organic connection to the brand, not only becoming loyal customers, but actually Tim Horton's products into their lifestyle. In 1996, Buist states that their marketing team hosted a focus group of both Tim Horton's customers and customers of their competitors, consisting of people who bought "a cup of coffee from a coffee shop every day, once a week, or once a month" (pp. 16). According to Buist, their loyalty was not tied to the liking of their product, but that "Tim Hortons coffee, they told us, was actually a part of their lives" (pp. 16).

This organic growth, which was instigated and cultured by the Canadian community, was then captured and broadcasted back by Tim Horton's through their "True Stories" campaign. This campaign marked a new era in Tim Horton's advertising, which used Canada's love for their brand to their own advantage.

Research Question 1

In examining the first research question, which is “How has Tim Horton’s advertising and messaging created a connection between Canadian patriotism and their brand, or, alternatively, have they simply taken advantage of an already existent connection created by Canadians themselves and national media?” The answer is that the connection was a combined effort between Canadians and Tim Horton’s. As previously stated, by the 1990s, Canadians began to form habits and lifestyle decisions that involved visiting Tim Horton’s on a regular basis. These Canadians, as a result, developed an affinity towards the brand. It was not until Bruist’s marketing group conducted focus group research that a this connection was seen clearly, causing Tim Horton’s to change their direction and use these stories of affinity and lifestyle decisions to their advantage. According to Bruist, “The combination of excellent products and neighbourly stores so treasured by the participants of our focus groups became the heart of the Tim Hortons marketing program” (pp. 17). Patriotism and Canadian sense of community wasn’t just a Canadian value practiced in their coffee purchasing after 1996, it was then the message of Tim Horton’s, reinforcing what Canadians already believed.

Research Question 2

The second research question asks, “How and when did Tim Horton’s advertisements start to integrate significations that represented elements of Canadian culture?” This question can be answered in two different ways: elements of Canadian culture were integrated both purposefully and noticeably in the 1990s, while the Canadian elements were incidentally in advertisements of the 1980s. In the 1980s, the Canadian elements were minor, such as phrasings like “your friend along the way,” meaning your nearby store, and pronunciations, like that of the word “sorry” seen in a 1985 ad (1985 - Tim Hortons - Tied Down Donuts, 2010). But it wasn’t

until the 1990s when Canadian winter weather and sports are used, as well as the mention of Canada as a whole, specifically in the 1999 Roll Up The Rim ad, as well as specific Canadian cities.

Research Question 3

The third research question asks, “How and when did Canada’s news media start to communicate a connection between the Tim Horton’s brand and their national identity?” This appeared in the 1990s through the use of editorial cartoons. No outside media was found to make a clear connection between Tim Horton’s brand and Canada’s identity as a country prior to that time. These cartoons, such as the 1997 illustration featuring a depiction of former Prime Minister Jean Chrétien holding a Tim Horton’s Roll Up The Rim cup, combine current issues of the moment or newsworthy individuals with Tim Horton’s logos and products to show the importance Tim Horton’s has within the Canadian culture.

Research Question 4

The fourth research question, which asks “What are the significations that exist surrounding Canadian culture, which exist within the Tim Horton’s advertisements?” is a difficult one to answer, given there have been numerous significations found within the 49 advertisements examined. Within the advertisements, however, there were several signification types. Many of the earlier significations had to do with Tim Horton’s involvement with communities across Canada. Others involved finding a little piece of home in Tim Horton’s coffee, when Canadians are away from home. Still others showed how Canadians will brave cold and blustery winter weather for a cup of Tim Horton’s coffee. But the majority of the significations, which were found in the 2000s and 2010s showed a correlation between Tim Horton’s and Canadian’s love for hockey.

In a recent article written about Tim Horton's 2014 advertisement, writer S. Krashinsky echoes the message this research has evidenced, stating Tim Horton's "brand is as good as shorthand for Canadian identity" and that, "Over the years, Tim Horton's Inc. has banked on Canadiana in its commercials" (Canadian pride gets louder: Tim Hortons strikes new tone with Sidney Crosby ad, 2014). Playing mostly into Canadians' sentimentality and nostalgia of their personal experiences with hockey and the Tim Horton's brand, Tim Horton's has captured a national emotion and channeled it to their economic benefit. According to Krashinsky, Tim Horton's ad agency, JWT Canada, "did an online study of 900 Canadians to measure how we [Canadians] see ourselves... Most Canadians in the study said they feel more proud of being Canadian than they did five years ago" (2014). This ability to channel national pride, and do it successfully, to benefit a single, superior company has yet to be done by any other company.

Implications

This research reveals the growth and careful use of attitudes expressed by the Canadian audience. Tim Horton's success, as a result, is enviable. Although it does not have the longstanding history that some American companies have, such as Ford and Coca Cola, the heartbeat of this company's message has grown stronger, creating a united pulse of patriotism and brand allegiance. In order for an American company, or any company for that matter, to create such a connection between their brand and their country's people, a few important steps would need to be taken. First, the company would have to do their research and find out how their consumers feel about their product, and what cultural elements do they believe define them as a country. That company would then need to tell their consumers' stories of allegiance to their brand. Finally, the company would need to continue to tell these stories, and integrate unifying

cultural elements into their advertisements in a way that would align their brand with the culture itself.

Limitations

This content analysis was strengthened by the large number of advertisements from various years, as it gave me a clear and repetitive understanding of the brand's development and its thematic voice over the four decades. It also gave me repetitive examples of what Canadian significations were used and at what times.

However, there were limitations to this study. These limitations included the fact that Tim Horton's does not have an archive or database of all of their published advertisements, from 1970s until today. I, therefore, was at the mercy of what I could find on Youtube.com, which was not created until 2005. Although I was able to find 49 unique, authentic Tim Horton's advertisements on Youtube.com, I do believe there are many more that could have been used in my research, had they been available for public viewing.

Another limitation of the study is that news media that was published prior to the dawn of the internet age were often not archived on public websites. Therefore, although there may have been examples of news media that demonstrated a correlation between Tim Horton's and Canadian culture prior to the 1990s, I was unable to find any in my own research.

Another limitation of my research is the lack of evidence that shows Canadians' allegiance to the brand prior to 1996 outside of Buist's account. This could only have been assisted through finding other accounts of Canadian allegiance and lifestyle decisions from other sources, or through doing additional research by surveying large groups of subjects.

Further Research

There are multiple avenues that future research could be taken in regards to the study of Canadian culture and the correlation it has to the Tim Horton's brand. The first of these avenues includes the exploration of advertisements through other media, including billboards and radio advertisements. The exploration of these other media may reveal greater insights into which significations may have been seen and how often they were used.

Another avenue for future research includes a parallel analysis of other Canadian brands, such as Molson Canadian, a beer company whose slogan proudly states "I am Canadian." By looking at these other brands and their timeline for using Canadian significations, assumptions can be drawn as to whether they attempted to mimic the success of Tim Horton's and whether they successfully conveyed the attitude of their consumers.

Finally, Tim Horton's has often been the subject of Canadian satire over the last four decades. By looking at the media that has created comedic and satirical messages directed at Canada's connection to Tim Horton's, an even greater understanding may be found as to how this connection came to be.

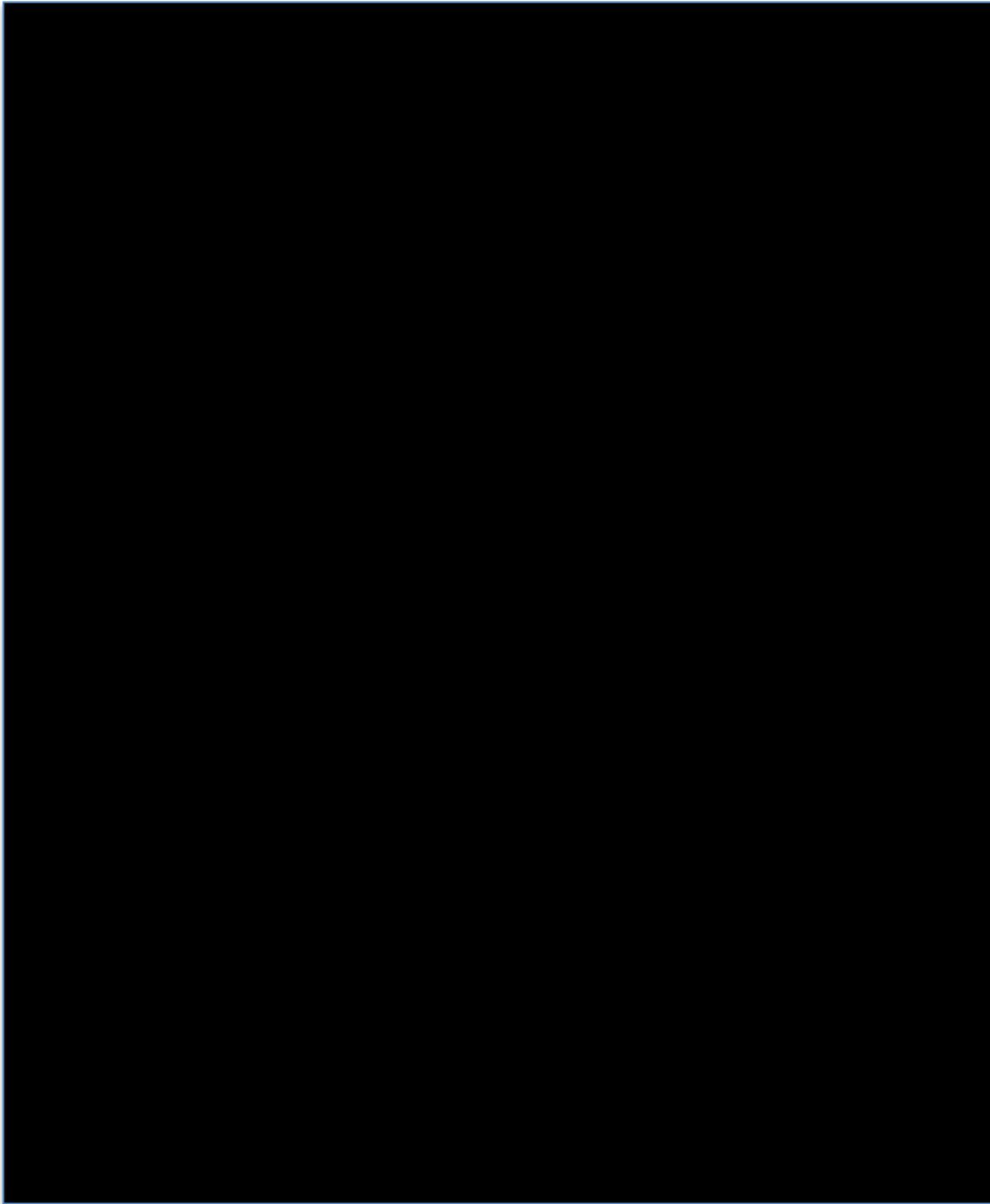
Conclusion

This study found that the connection between Tim Horton's and its consumers is one that has been created through group effort. This was first done through Canadian consumers continual decision to make Tim Horton's part of their lifestyle and social environment. This connection was then articulated on a national platform to promote Canadians' decisions to make Tim Horton's part of their lives. This articulation was done through Tim Horton's "True Story" campaign as well as integrating Canadian signs and symbols into their advertisements to align their products with what it means to be Canadian. The result has been monumental for the Tim

Horton's company, as it is now seen as a prominent element of Canadian life. This research also showed Canada's outside news media not as an instigator for creating a connection between Tim Horton's and Canadian patriotism, but that, instead, the media acted in response to the evident existence of a connection. These findings have the potential to be applied to other businesses, although the same level of success cannot be guaranteed.

Appendix A: Editorial Cartoon from 1990s

Blocked for copyright purposes



Appendix B: Editorial Cartoon from 2000s

Blocked for copyright purposes



Appendix C: Editorial Cartoon from 2010s

Blocked for copyright purposes



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