Cultural Schemas for Racial Identity in Canadian Television Advertising

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Quelles significations sont rattachées à la race dans la publicité? Nous analysons un échantillon de publicités télévisées canadiennes aux heures de grande écoute dans le but d'identifier des schémas culturels associés à ce que cela signifie d'être blanc, noir ou d'Asie de l'Est ou du Sud-Est. Notre analyse empirique porte sur la publicité alimentaire et pour restaurants. Par l'entremise d'une analyse quantitative de contenu portant sur les liens entre la race et les sous-types d'aliments, nous démontrons des différences systématiques dans les types d'aliments associés aux différents groupes étudiés. Au moyen d'une analyse qualitative, nous éclairons ces modèles quantitatifs et présentons six schémas culturels de l'identité raciale. Ces schémas appréhendent à la fois la diversité et le privilège associés aux représentations des personnes de race blanche, et des contrastes frappants par rapport au statut et à l'émotivité parmi les représentations plus limitées des deux autres groupes.

What meanings are attached to race in advertising? We analyze a sample of prime-time Canadian television advertising to identify cultural schemas for what it means to be White, Black, and East/Southeast Asian. Our empirical focus is on food and dining advertising. Through quantitative content analysis of associations between race and food subtypes, we show that there are systematic differences in the types of foods that groups are associated with. Through a qualitative content analysis of the commercials, we illuminate these quantitative patterns and discuss six cultural schemas for racial identity. The schemas allow for both diversity and privilege in the representation of Whites, and

This research was funded by a Standard Research Grant from the Social Science and Humanities Research Council of Canada. The authors are grateful for the helpful feedback and guidance of the anonymous reviewers and the editor.

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poignant contrasts regarding status and emotionality in the narrow representations of the other two groups.

WHAT MEANINGS ARE attached to race in advertising? This paper addresses this question through an analysis of racial representation in Canadian prime-time television commercials. Sociological work on media content is founded on the premise that the nature of media content reflects and reproduces important dimensions of culture, of which schemas for racial identity are one salient case. Through investigating schemas for racial identities in advertising, we can uncover understandings of race in Canadian society that are otherwise difficult to measure.

We take the empirical case of food and dining commercials on prime-time Canadian television to address two core research questions. First, how do representations of race vary across different categories of foods? We pose this question to understand the patterns in which different racial groups are presented. Second, what clusterings of contexts, relationships, and character traits are members of different racial groups associated with, and what can these clusterings tell us about how race functions symbolically within commercials? We answer these questions by first examining quantitative data on the distribution of racial representation across different categories of food commercials and comparing these results with data on the distribution of product categories by race. Then, to gain a deeper understanding of the symbolic functions of race, and to address our second question, we conduct a qualitative reading of the predominant cultural schemas for racial identity emerging from our sample. Cultural schemas are broader than stereotypes (associations between a group and a trait) insofar as they define group boundaries, and provide scripts for understanding categories (e.g., categories of people) and for guiding behaviors in social settings (see Blair-Loy 2001; Brubaker, Loveman, and Stamatov 2004; DiMaggio 1997). For example, Baumann and de Laat (2012) provide evidence of a cultural schema for gender and age identity that understands older men as "society's bosses." Rather than just an association between a group and a trait, the cultural schema of society's bosses encompasses an association, as well as suggestions for how to interact with this group, and how to value and understand this group's place in society. Similarly, Roth (2012) argues that a "Hispanicized" schema for race constructs Latino as a racial category (as opposed to an ethnicity), and also suggests how to understand their place and value in society, with attendant scripts for interactions and expectations about Latino identity. Cultural schemas are socially constructed through circulating knowledge, beliefs, and values. Individuals both encounter and reproduce cultural schemas through daily social interactions. In addition to learning about cultural schemas through face-to-face interactions, we follow others in arguing that the media are another source for cultural schemas (see, e.g., DiMaggio 1997:280).

Based on our quantitative and qualitative findings, we identify six cultural schemas for racial identity: *White nostalgia*, *White natural*, *White highbrow*, *White nuclear family*, *Black blue collar*, and *Asian technocrat*. Some of our findings confirm previous research on representation of race and ethnicity in the media, but we also describe cultural schemas about White racial representation that were not found in earlier work.

Scholars have argued that depictions of visible minorities in Canadian media arise from a dominant racial discourse that demeans, demonizes, and stereotypes these groups (Henry and Tator 2003; Jiwani 2009a; Mahtani 2009). We build on this prior literature by examining race in Canadian advertising, in contrast to past studies' predominant examination of news coverage. Advertising is particularly susceptible to stereotypical depictions of social groups, including racial groups, that are shaped by dominant cultural schemas of identity. The media in general, and advertising in particular, play a role in reproducing cultural schemas by using existing cultural schemas to produce content. Constraints on time and space for content mean that advertising often presents extreme versions of schemas that are widely available and culturally predominant in order to efficiently and effectively communicate with broad audiences (Goffman 1979; Schudson 1984). Advertising therefore provides an excellent empirical site for learning about cultural schemas. In systematically studying television commercials, this paper documents portrayals that differ from prior research on race in other forms of Canadian media.

RACIAL REPRESENTATIONS IN CANADIAN MEDIA AND IN U.S. ADVERTISING

Within the Canadian context, scholars argue that the Canadian media underrepresent visible minority groups (Fleras 1994, 2011; Fleras and Kunz 2001). Past work generally employs critical discourse analysis (Van Dijk 1993) to argue that the media tend to marginalize, trivialize, delegitimize, caricature, and dismiss racial and ethnic minorities (Fleras 2011; Henry and Tator 2009; Mahtani 2009). For example, Greenberg's (2000:531) study of news coverage of Asian immigration revealed a pattern of framing of this group as variously an "invasion," as a social and economic hindrance, and greedy. Henry and Tator's (2003:137) study of the coverage of the Tamil community in Toronto newspapers found that Tamils were portrayed as essentially different from mainstream Canadians and implied that they "condone terrorism and illegal activity."

Though most Canadian research has focused on news coverage, one study on advertising found that visible minority women tended to be overrepresented in domestic, cleaning, and tourism advertisements (Kunz and Fleras 1998). The prior literature on racial representations in Canadian media is virtually unanimous in finding strong evidence for Othering and negative depictions of visible minority groups. We examine whether

similar portrayals of visible minorities exist systematically across advertising.

A plethora of research in other national contexts examines racial representation in advertising, with findings varying significantly between groups.[1] For instance, looking at U.S. results and citing population statistics from the mid-1990s, Taylor, Lee, and Stern (1995) and Taylor and Stern (1997) argue that while the Asian-American population was slightly over 3 percent at the time of research, representation of Asian Americans in ads ranged from 4 (Taylor et al. 1995) to 8.4 percent (Taylor and Stern 1997). Ten years later, when the Asian-American population reached 4.2 percent in the United States, Li and Joo (2005) and Taylor, Landreth, and Bang (2005) find that Asian Americans were featured in 8.3 and 10.5 percent of ads, respectively. Similar to their Asian counterparts, Blacks are well-represented in advertising in relation to their population. According to the 2010 U.S. Census, Blacks make up approximately 13.6 percent of the population. Although numbers vary by study, they seem to appear in just over 10 to 25 percent of TV commercials (e.g., Coltrane and Messineo 2000; Wilkes and Valencia 1989) with similar ranges for print media (Millard and Grant 2006; Plous and Neptune 1997; Sengupta 2006), suggesting at least a proportionate numerical representation. Despite healthy rates of representation for Blacks and Asians, other minority groups are underrepresented (e.g., Hispanics) or virtually unrepresented, as in the case of Native Americans (Maestro and Stern 2003). Moreover, when represented, minorities tend to appear in minor/background roles flanking White main characters (Bang and Reece 2003; Seiter 1990; Taylor and Stern 1997; Taylor et al. 1995, 2005).

When racial minorities are represented in advertisements, they often conform to stereotypes. East Asians are commonly portrayed as business professionals or workaholics who are technologically savvy and academically keen (Pake and Shah 2003), as workers in banks, telecommunications, retail (Taylor and Stern 1997), and technology (Maestro and Stern 2003). Some researchers estimate that ads for these types of tech-based services and products constitute 75 percent of Asian-American appearances (Taylor and Lee 1994; Taylor et al. 1995, 2005). At the same time, East Asians are not frequently depicted in meaningful familial relationships or friendships, but are restricted to collegial interactions (Bang and Reece 2003; Taylor and Stern 1997; Taylor et al. 1995). Asian Americans are rarely shown in the outdoors, in the home, or in social settings (Li and Joo 2005; Taylor et al. 2005). Wang (2010) suggests that the relegation of Asian Americans into the technological realm speaks to the reality that Asian Americans are only allowed to integrate into the United States in narrow ways, conceptualized in the media as "technical robots" who,

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1. The numbers of Latino, South Asian, First Nations, and Arab characters are so small that we cannot identify any patterns among them that would constitute cultural schemas. Our subsequent analyses are therefore restricted to patterns among White, Black, and East/Southeast Asian groups in food and dining commercials.

oversubscribing to discipline and hard work, become subhumans lacking emotions.

Unlike Asians, the range of roles Blacks play is slightly broader and includes business people (Maestro and Stern 2003), technicians (Pake and Shah 2003), and athletes (Burton and Klemm 2011; Pake and Shah 2003). They are widely featured in ads for finance/insurance, automobiles, travel (Bowen and Schmid 1997), and food (Bang and Reece 2003; Wilkes and Valencia 1989). Notably, they are underrepresented in tech products (Taylor et al. 1995, 2005). While Maestro and Stern (2003) argue that Blacks are frequently depicted outdoors participating in domestic or recreational activities, Martin (2004) points out that Blacks are confined to the outdoor environments of suburban and urban settings, and excluded from the "Great Outdoors" (Martin 2004), where one might engage in camping, hunting, or fishing—this setting seems to be the exclusive territory of Whites. More critical scholars argue that despite the sizable representation of Blacks in increasingly diverse roles, ad producers continue to employ negative or racist stereotypes, albeit in more covert ways, such as subtly associating Blacks with submissive roles, donning animalistic prints, or bodily objectification (Bristol, Lee, and Hunt 1995; Millard and Grant 2006; Plous and Neptune 1997). Although advertisers have moved away from overtly racist images, some contemporary ads still subtly suggest subservience and low social status (Burton and Klemm 2011; Fuller 2001).

An understanding of the representation of racial minorities is incomplete without some comparisons to the White mainstream. Levels of representation for White characters are at or above population levels for television (Coltrane and Messineo 2000) and print advertisements (Sengupta 2006). Regarding stereotypes, Seiter (1990) reports that ads exclusively featuring White children illustrate themes of nostalgia (e.g., old school days), domestic life (e.g., kitchen table), Victoriana, and great adventures. Corroborating this finding is research by Maestro and Stern (2003), Bang and Reece (2003), and Coltrane and Messineo (2000), suggesting that Whites are most often shown in the home, engaging in domestic or recreational activities.

We start with themes suggested by prior research (e.g., Henry and Tator 2003; Jiwani 2009b), and ask whether the same findings translate across space and time. Specifically, do findings about the representations of Blacks and Asians, relative to Whites, in the United States in the 1990s and earlier predict the way that these groups are portrayed in Canada in the late 2000s? On the one hand, Canadian culture is often thought to be more openly multicultural and inclusive. Moreover, Canadian society is becoming more racially diverse over time. These observations suggest that we might find more equitable and progressive racial representations in our sample, compared to prior research. On the other hand, Canadians consume a great deal of American media and share many cultural values

and ideals with Americans. Thus, it is also possible that our findings will resemble earlier American findings about the representation of visible minorities.

DATA AND METHODS

This paper is part of a larger project analyzing Canadian television advertising. The project includes content analysis of a sample of prime-time (8–11 PM) commercials on three Canadian networks—CBC, CTV, and Global. Despite the growth of Internet entertainment options, television commercials remain the largest advertising medium reaching the broadest audience. The sample was constructed from recordings of broadcasts for 21 evenings, comprised of Sunday through Saturday for each network. In order to diversify the time of year represented in the sample, recordings were spaced over an 18-month period, from July 2008 to December 2009.[2] Descriptive statistics for the larger sample from which the commercials in this study are drawn are found in the Appendix.[3]

Moreover, in order to develop a qualitative analysis of cultural schemas, we limit our study to the product category of food and dining, and only for visually present human characters (not voice-overs or animated characters). We specifically consider food and dining commercials for a number of reasons. First, as the largest product category of commercials in our sample, racial representation is relatively diverse here. Second, food and dining are an enormous market, so these types of ads have a broad target audience and important implications for a diverse general public. Third, food is a cultural object embedded with rich and multiple meanings. Across all races, the production and consumption of food play an important and symbolic role in everyday experiences, family and cultural traditions, and holidays. Following in a tradition of examining patterns in advertising to uncover cultural schemas (Goffman 1979), we expect broadly resonant messages about race in food ads.

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2. We would expect cultural schemas for racial identity to evolve rather slowly, with important changes emerging gradually over perhaps decades, rather than year-over-year changes. We see our findings as applicable for many years following the data collection years of 2008 to 2009. At the same time, we would note that some of the commercials in our sample continue to be broadcast in 2013. Exact dates of recordings are available upon request.

3. Although racial categories are socially constructed, being neither homogeneous nor mutually exclusive, we contend that it is not only still possible to study representations of race in the media, but necessary. We follow decades of content analysis research on race in the media in how we measure and describe how race is represented in commercials. In brief, the code for "race" in the content analysis was based not only on skin color, but also on all visible phenotypic details (e.g., hair, facial characteristics, etc.) as well as contributing cultural details (e.g., dress, accent, etc.). As with all variables, our coding for race involved multiple coders, and intercoder agreement for race was 99%, which is typical for content analyses of race. Race is rarely presented ambiguously in commercials. However, we had a code for racially ambiguous characters, which was applied for those extremely rare characters whose race was not clear.

Our sample for this analysis includes 244 commercials featuring 1,063 characters (primary and secondary combined).[4] We proceed first by breaking down the food and dining commercials to subtypes of this product category. Because particular kinds of food have particular cultural meanings, status, and market locations, we hope to uncover patterns in racial group associations with particular food types that reveal something about the cultural schemas for these groups. These quantitative findings give us a snapshot of racial representation, allowing us to make preliminary comparisons between stereotypes found in previous literature and those that seem to be in operation in our sample.

In order to gain a nuanced understanding of how our food ads conform to or diverge from existing racial stereotypes, we follow with a qualitative reading of the character roles in our ads to identify cultural schemas for racial identities. In our analysis, these schemas are themselves interpreted comparatively, as their meanings are contingent on their place within an ecology of racialized representations that vary by group (Jiwani 2009b:737).

The method for this analysis is inductive, and the process involves viewing each commercial in the sample and noting all details about characters' traits, social contexts (e.g., work, family, interpersonal interactions, etc.), social relationships, and race. After an initial viewing, the commercials were reviewed in order to identify similarities between characters' portrayals. This comparison of characters allowed for clusters of similarities to emerge, which then formed the basis for identifying the six cultural schemas for racial identity.

RACE AND CONNECTIONS TO FOOD AND DINING SUBTYPES

How does race correlate with food and dining subtypes? Taking cues from both the scientific and social scientific fields of food studies, we reviewed our food commercials and developed a typology of categories that are mutually exclusive and that allow us to describe the majority of ads (see Table 1).[5]

We present our data first percentaged across rows in Table 1, to show the racial distribution of characters within each food/dining category. Table 2 helps to contextualize Table 1 by percentaging down the columns to show how characters of each race are distributed across food categories. Whereas Table 1 shows how each food category is represented by characters of different races, Table 2 gives us a picture of how each racial group is represented through associations with food categories. Before looking at

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4. The number of commercials for each race in the tables adds up to more than 244 because some commercials feature characters of more than one race.

5. Category definitions are available on request.

Table 1

Distribution of Characters in Food/Dining Commercials across Racial Categories

Food/dining category	Percent White	Percent Black	Percent East/ Southeast Asian	Total (*N*)
Whole foods	97	2	1	100% (235)
Fast food restaurants	80	14	6	100% (206)
Table service restaurants	87	11	2	100% (195)
Health foods	82	14	5	100% (180)
Processed foods	98	1	1	100% (172)
Other	85	8	7	100% (75)
Number of commercials	227	23	9	

Notes: Row totals may not add up to 100% due to rounding.
$\chi^2 = 64.011$, 10 df, $p < .001$.

Table 2

Distribution of White, Black, and East/Southeast Asian Characters across Food/Dining Categories

Food/dining category	Percent of White	Percent of Black	Percent of East/ Southeast Asian
Whole foods	24	6	9
Fast food restaurants	18	32	36
Table service restaurants	18	25	12
Health foods	16	28	21
Processed foods	18	2	6
Other	7	7	15
Total (*N*)	101% (942)	100% (88)	99% (33)
Number of commercials	227	23	9

Notes: Column totals may not add up to 100% due to rounding.
$\chi^2 = 64.011$, 10 df, $p < .001$.

each category, note that Whites are overrepresented overall in food advertisements compared to their Black and East/Southeast Asian counterparts; their representation in all categories of food ads combined (87 percent) is higher than their representation in the general sample of commercials (79 percent) and than their proportion of the Canadian population (80 percent).

There are several notable relationships in Table 1. The whole foods category is almost exclusively White, while fast food commercials are more dispersed across racial groups, with Blacks and East/Southeast Asians overrepresented relative to their proportion in food commercials generally. Health food commercials are very similar to fast food restaurants in the

breakdown of the race of characters, with representation from all three groups. Processed food commercials closely resemble the racial distribution of characters in commercials for whole foods, almost exclusively White. Given the different cultural meanings associated with food subtypes, these patterns raise intriguing questions about media representations of race, which we explore further in Table 2.

Table 2 shows the distribution of food categories by race and provides another perspective on the data to help clarify the significance of the differences shown in Table 1. Whites are spread almost evenly across all product categories, suggesting that there is flexibility in the associations the characters can make with different food subtypes. Black and East/Southeast Asian characters show a narrower range of associations, being concentrated in fast food and health food commercials, with Black characters additionally appearing in table service restaurant commercials.

The overall picture provided by these results is that whereas Whites are strongly associated with whole foods, Blacks and East/Southeast Asians are most often linked to fast food. These predominant linkages coexist with other secondary associations, namely Whites with processed foods, and Blacks with health foods. A chi-square analysis confirms that the differences between the racial groups are significant at the $p < .001$ level. While predominant associations conform to racial stereotypes, such as those found in the literature review, secondary associations are less prevalent, and less easily explained. In order to illuminate these associations and develop a better understanding of them, we conduct a qualitative reading of the ads.

TRADITION, STATUS, NATURALNESS, AND FAMILY

This in-depth qualitative analysis illuminates how observed associations in advertising inform cultural schemas for racial identity. What social characteristics of each of these racial groups tend to be emphasized, or downplayed, to produce the particular associations we find? To connect our theoretical understanding of race and representation with our empirical analysis of food advertising, we identify six schemas. We are not suggesting that these are an exhaustive list of the dominant schemas for racial identity in our culture; rather, these are the schemas that emerge in our data.

Four schemas pertain to Whites, one to Blacks, and one to East/Southeast Asians. The small number of schemas in these food commercials for Black and East/Southeast Asian characters is related to the small number of primary characters of these races in food ads. We first review these six schemas, and then discuss their cultural significance and possible relationships between them.

"White Nostalgia" Schema

This schema is represented in 58 ads in our sample. Two variations of this schema exist, one that is more closely related to food production, and the other to food consumption. These variations of the "Nostalgia" schema establish the idea that Whites have a long history of producing and consuming quality foods that have an enduring presence in the marketplace. For example, in the production variation, a commercial for Oka cheese depicts a production process circa mid-1800s, while a voice-over informs viewers that White monks have been "crafting" this product for generations. The use of the word "craft" suggests that production is not a mechanical process to mass-produce food; rather, it is an art that skillful monks engaged in to create legacy artisanal cheeses now enjoyed at important social gatherings. We also saw the authority and expertise of traditional food production associated with Whites in ads featuring historical production of bread (Dempster's) and jam (Smucker's). In the other variation, an ad for Ritz crackers romanticizes the consumption of food. A simple scene of a boy laying down crackers for a girl to follow, reminiscent of the children's tale Hansel and Gretel, coupled with the song of uncomplicated friendship and love for an angelic girl, attempts to transport us to a childhood when Ritz crackers was frequently enjoyed. Visual images, shot in a glowing soft light, trigger warm memories of consuming the snack. These nostalgic food commercials link Whites with brands that have an established status, and our sample of ads features only Whites as the bearers of tradition in food.

"White Natural" Schema

In this second schema, appearing in 18 ads, Whites are symbolically linked to nature and the wholesome foods it has to offer. A clear example of this imagery can be found in a relatively upmarket supermarket brand line of foods (President's Choice), where the CEO of the company is shown joining White male farmers from different provinces in their fields, presumably chatting to them about their produce. The CEO's voice-over, heard during the frames featuring farmers, justifies his company's choice to buy local—to support the Canadian farmer and the economy, and for "plain great eating." This ad illustrates the "White Natural" schema in several ways. Only White men are shown, in both producer and consumer roles. Five White farmers symbolize "the Canadian farmer," the ultimate producer of "plain great eating." This schema is noteworthy for the extent to which it diverges from social reality. In farmers' fields across the country, a great deal of agricultural work in Canada is done by racialized minorities, both Canadian and temporary foreign workers. This exclusion of minority farmworkers in ads reinforces the notion that Whites are especially in tune with, and are authorities on the natural world and are responsible for wholesome and natural food production.

"White Highbrow" Schema

It is important to note that not many high-end or luxury food products are advertised on television. However, the "White Highbrow" schema, used in seven ads, was still applicable to advertisements of food products that were not high-end per se, but relied on cues of high cultural and economic capital as selling points. For example, although Europe's Best Frozen Fruits is an affordable food product, the advertisement portrays a family with high cultural and economic capital. Cues include Baroque background music and an elegant dining table and room, with proper settings (including a napkin ring) prepared even for dessert. High economic capital is suggested through the modern and very large kitchen with expensive-looking appliances and kitchen utensils. That both parents are wearing business casual clothes implies that they hold well-paying white collar jobs. In our sample, highbrow status, as expressed through traditional symbols of high cultural and economic capital, is associated only with White characters.

"White Nuclear Family" Schema

The "White Nuclear Family" schema is the most common in our study. Represented by 50 ads, it cuts across advertisements for all our food and dining subtypes. In many of these ads, the White nuclear family is depicted at the dinner table, with one parent at the head, leading conversation as the family enjoys their food (e.g., Mr. Sub, Maple Leaf Prime, Dan Active). Although all ads in this category feature the typical configuration of mother, father, and children, some ads also explicitly depict the mother having the primary responsibility of preparing and serving food to her husband and children. This schema variously features additional elements of idealized family dynamics, such as the mother serving as the guardian of family health (Beagan et al. 2008), or the father as breadwinner. Moreover, the White nuclear family is shown to be both socially and physically healthy. Despite the social reality of a vast reduction in family meals and indeed in nuclear families themselves, the White nuclear family schema suggests that social stability and healthy eating alike are associated with Whiteness.

"Black Blue Collar" Schema

Because White characters so vastly outnumber non-White characters in commercials, the depictions of racial minorities in commercials are relatively powerful insofar as a relatively small number of them represent the schemas for racial minorities. From our sample, only one clear schema for Black characters emerged, which we label the "Black blue collar" schema, appearing in 11 ads. It is communicated through showing Blacks in a variety of blue collar work settings, most prominently in factories and auto

body shops. For example, an ad for "Honey Bunches of Oats" begins with a female voice-over asking "What's our favorite part of Honey Bunches of Oats?" A White food scientist examining a single flake under a microscope responds, "The crispy flakes." The camera then pans to the factory, where among other workers, we are shown two Black men in front of a packaging machine. The first simply smiles while holding a box of cereal, while the other performs a little dance.

The predominant subtext of this schema is one of safe inclusivity. On the one hand, commercials with Black characters provide diversity in advertising. It is recognition of both the racial diversity of the target market for the advertising and of society as a whole. Furthermore, the schema is not inherently negative, insofar as it does not play into traditional negative stereotypes of Blacks. On the other hand, this schema positions Blacks within a relatively *narrow* relationship to food—as working-class producers. This schema avoids the more negative connotations of associations with underclass membership, which at any rate would not make sense from a marketing point of view. Furthermore, because Black characters comprise so few of the total number of characters in our sample of ads, there is no other clear characterization of this racial group to nuance or to compete with this frame. The contrast between a White scientist and a dancing blue collar Black character reifies the Whiteness of the food scientist in this commercial and, implicitly, scientists in general, in contrast to the racial diversity of the category of manufacturing workers.

"Asian Technocrat" Schema

Unlike any of the other schemas we identify in the commercials in our sample, the schema of the "Asian technocrat" is quite negative. It is used in various forms in ads featuring Asians. In this schema, noted in six ads, Asians are portrayed as unemotional overachievers who respond to any and all situations in a robotic way. Again, as with Black characters, Asian characters are represented by a relatively small number of characters, and so only one schema emerged from our reading of the ads. This schema is illustrated by an ad for Baskin Robbins Ice Cream. An Asian grandfather sits in a rocking chair in the family room when the granddaughter approaches, appearing downtrodden. Grandpa asks, "What's the matter?" The granddaughter shows Grandpa a math test with a red F at the top and bemoans, "Mom said if I got an A we can get Reese shakes at Baskin Robbins." Grandpa uses his blue pen to change the F to an A, and states, "See you in the car." He vanishes, leaving his granddaughter to stare at her test with a complete lack of expression on her face.

The characteristics of the Asian technocrat, achievement-oriented, and robotic are communicated through the granddaughter. Immediately, viewers will recognize the Asian student who expects to perform well in math, or in all academic subjects, for that matter (Louie 2004). Though she

fails to achieve an A, which contradicts the model minority stereotype, her reaction conforms to the overused robotic trope (Wang 2010). Moreover, the failing grade for the Asian student is a (supposedly) comedic inversion of the well-worn schema of Asian academic achievement, and retains the link between Asian identity and a focus on academics. Upon receiving a failing grade, her emotions are simplistic and one-dimensional; she is sad. Even after her grandfather decides to take her out for an ice cream anyway, she is unable to demonstrate the basic and antilogous emotion of happiness, let alone more complex emotions that may arise in this situation: surprise, relief, or even guilt. In fact, she stands with her corrected test, face completely blank. It is hard to tell whether or not she was feeling *any* emotion at the offer of ice cream, which she previously lamented over not being able to have, given her bad grade. The grandfather, too, is portrayed as a technocrat. He approaches his granddaughter's emotions as a problem to be solved. She is sad, so change her mark and take her out to ice cream. He is frugal with his words, uttered in a matter-of-fact and monotonous way. Making no attempt to emotionally console the granddaughter, he instantly disappears, to solve her problem in a practical way, through buying ice cream. The robotic mannerisms portrayed by Grandpa and his granddaughter achieve the marketer's manifest goal of providing comedic relief. A latent result is that these types of images reinforce the stereotype that Asians are industrious but emotionless individuals interested only in climbing up the social ladder through academic excellence.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Despite the often-touted differences between Canada and the United States when it comes to issues of race, we find strong similarities between rates and modes of racial representation in advertising. We find underrepresentation of many visible minority groups, but an overrepresentation of Black characters relative to their proportion in the Canadian population, at a rate that resembles their representation in American media. This fact points to an overlap between American and Canadian racial representations in advertising, rather than a divergence. Moreover, as has been found in American research, the representations of Whites in advertising are more diversified and positive than the representations of other races.

Our paper is strongly aligned with Henry and Tator's (2009) claims that "[m]edia discourse plays a large role in reproducing the collective belief system of the dominant White society and the core values of this society" (p. 711) and that the "dominant discourses and representations ... reinforce the construct of whiteness as the normative universe" (p. 712). Our argument supports the main claims of prior scholars of Canadian media insofar as we find highly unequal racialized media content. However, we arrive at our argument through the identification of six schemas for racial identity that have not been identified before in Canadian media.

Our examination of how Whites, Blacks, and East/Southeast Asians are represented in Canadian prime-time food and dining commercials identified significant variations between these three groups. In terms of food subtypes, Whites were most often associated with whole foods, while Blacks' and East/Southeast Asians' appearances were most strongly concentrated in fast food commercials. This finding about fast food supports Henderson and Baldasty's (2003) research on U.S. commercials, and we agree with their interpretation that the association suggests a symbolic connection between race and class.

The cultural schemas we identify provide information about the symbolism attached to race in this sample of mainstream Canadian media content. We interpret the messages we see in these commercials as reflections of some of the dominant cultural schemas for these groups, and at the same time as agents for the reproduction of those dominant cultural schemas. The messages that come through are not only that Whites are associated with whole foods, highbrow food, and natural food, but that Whites *are* wholesome, highbrow, and in tune with the natural. Whiteness comes to symbolize all of these abstract ideas, assigning a type of visual "tangibility" through concrete examples. Furthermore, these schemas contribute to the construction of a script of what it means to be White, including the normalcy (however inaccurate) of the nuclear family, and associations with legitimate or highbrow culture and with authority and tradition. Our qualitative analysis helps to explain the initially surprising association between Whites and processed foods (to the near complete exclusion of other groups). In these commercials we see Whites associated with nostalgia and tradition, ideas on which these generally long-standing and well-known brands are trading. Although it is mostly true that Whites were the group that consumed these brands many decades ago, the continuation of this association may perpetuate a symbolic connection between Whites (but not other groups) and an idealized present and future.

In contrast to the various White schemas, these commercials provide just one schema each for Blacks and East/Southeast Asians. The narrowness of the representations is significant, because they present just one way to be a member of each of these groups. While the schema for Blacks is not overtly negative, it is nonetheless problematic. As the only clear schema in our sample for Blacks, it constrains this group to a relatively disadvantaged socioeconomic position. There is a poignant contrast here with the White Highbrow schema for the difference in status accorded to each group. Our quantitative findings show that Blacks are disproportionately associated with fast food commercials. This association exists within a social context where fast food is connected to lower levels of cultural capital (Johnston and Baumann 2010), and it is much less frequently consumed by people from higher socioeconomic status groups (Kim and Leigh 2011). Regarding health food commercials, this finding corroborates some of the more specific findings regarding stereotypical corporeality of African

Americans in earlier content analysis work (Burton and Klemm 2011; Millard and Grant 2006; Plous and Neptune 1997). Bristol et al. (1995) observe an emphasis on Black bodies in advertising and interpret this emphasis as part of a schematic White/brains versus Black/brawn dichotomy in popular culture. Health food's connection to the body and bodily appearance can thus illuminate the association we find with Blacks.

The schema for East/Southeast Asians is narrow and negative. As the only schema for this group in our sample, it effectively Others them through implicit suggestions of their robotic, emotionless nature. It corroborates other earlier content analysis findings on Asian Americans (Pake and Shah 2003; Wang 2010).There is another poignant contrast, in this case with the White Nuclear Family schema, for the difference in warmth and emotionality accorded to each group.

Our findings point to a problem with the underrepresentation and misrepresentation of visible minorities in the media. Underrepresentation is a problem because it reinforces narrow cultural schemas for what it means to be a member of these groups, including dominant societal expectations (and self-expectations) about the identities and behaviors of group members. The rich, broad, multidimensional, and positive cultural schemas for Whiteness set up a contrast to other groups where Whiteness is implicitly preferable. Whiteness appears in commercials as a balance between production/consumption, labor/leisure, discipline/emotion, mind/body, with Blackness appearing as too bodily or Asianness as too robotic.[6] We interpret the minority cultural schemas as both dependent on, and helping to constitute, the White cultural schemas. It is in contrast to one another that they appear as broad or narrow, and through which their significance is constructed.

In our view, advertisers utilize (rather than invent) dominant cultural schemas (of which race is just one kind), and the organizational constraints (on both time and the need to resonate with broad audiences) that apply to marketing make those schemas especially salient, and therefore ripe for analysis. Although food and dining advertising is a culturally rich source for identifying racial cultural schemas, this empirical choice has influenced which of the particular schemas we identify. We would strongly suggest, however, that these schemas are broader than the realm of food and dining, and encourage future researchers to systematically examine other forms of advertising and other media in Canada.

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6. We are grateful to one of the anonymous reviewers for contributing this insight.

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Appendix

Table A

Descriptive Statistics off all Characters by Race, Gender and Character Role

	White	Black	E./SE. Asian	South Asian	Lation	Arab	Aboriginal	Race Unclear	Gender Total
Male	44% (2581)	6% (346)	2% (102)	1% (83)	1% (61)	<1% (21)	<1% (6)	<1% (38)	55% (3228)
Female	35% (2049)	5% (266)	2% (126)	1% (77)	1% (59)	<1% (2)	<1% (2)	<1% (35)	45% (2616)
Race Total	79% (4630)	10% (612)	4% (228)	3% (160)	2% (120)	<1% (23)	<1% (8)	1% (73)	100% (5854)
Primary Characters	84% (1561)	9% (163)	1% (27)	3% (61)	<1% (18)	<1% (3)	<1% (3)	2% (29)	100% (1865)

Table A describes representation in prime-time commercials by race, gender, and character role. The racial categories replicate those used in the Canadian census, except that our category of East/Southeast Asian combines the categories of Chinese, Korean, Japanese, Filipino, and Southeast Asian.