

MYTHS OF CANADIAN IDENTITY IN OIL SANDS INDUSTRY ADVERTISEMENTS
A semiotic analysis of the Canadian Association of Petroleum Producer's *Raise Your Hand* campaign

Major Research Paper

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Abstract

The issue of bitumen sands in Alberta has raised more than a few eyebrows, some with excitement and others with disapproval. Canadian citizens are bombarded by the media with images and slogans that attempt to convince them to adopt a position on the subject. The intent of this study is to examine how a lobby group uses elements of national identity to create a social movement in support of the Alberta bitumen industry. In applying Barthes' semiotic theory to advertisements, the present study finds a seemingly natural rhetoric, described as myths, in the messaging presented by the Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers (CAPP) in their *Raise Your Hand* advertising campaign. The semiotic analysis of the campaign uncovered four prominent myths; positivity, responsibility, balance and pride. These myths harbour CAPP ideologies and are published in a way that utilises ideas that seem natural in society.

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Introduction

In 2013, the oil reserve in the Canadian province of Alberta represented the second largest in the world (Perron, 2013, p.xi). By 2014, the province had become an economically prosperous province because of its contribution to the world's addiction to fossil fuel. The Alberta oil reserves, which take the form of a thick substance comparable to peanut butter called bitumen, are described as an "unconventional source of oil" (Levant, 2010, p.8). This oil is unconventional given that bitumen cannot readily be extracted with pumps and pipes, as it is done with conventional oil (Levant, 2010). Some characterise this source of oil as the "ugliest stuff you[ve] ever s[een]" (Nikiforuk, 2010, p.13), while others view it as simply "thick oil" (Levant, 2010, p.3). Two techniques have been developed to extract the bitumen from the ground. The first of which is the "open pit mining" (Nikiforuk, 2010). Open pit mining consists of digging deep into the ground with heavy machinery to reach and extract the bitumen. This method is used for a small percentage of extractions ranging between two and twenty percent of extractions (Perron, 2013, Nikiforuk, 2010). When this method is used, the landscape is heavily degraded by the activities. By law, however, it also has to be restored to something resembling its natural state (Levant, 2010). The second and less invasive technique to extract bitumen is called the "in situ" (in place) technique (Nikiforuk, 2010). This technique consists of drilling to the deep settlements of bitumen, inserting pipes, and melting the substance with steam so it can be pumped up to the surface. Laws concerning water management and treatment as well as carbon foot print management govern the companies involved in the extraction activities (Levant, 2010). These laws help ensure bitumen sands industries do their due diligence. However, even under the protection of the law, the environment can suffer sombre consequences. The mismanagement of tailing

ponds left 1600 birds dead in 2008 (Levant, 2010; Nikiforuk, 2010) and another 122 in 2014 (CBC, 2014). To add to these disasters, a pipeline malfunction in July 2016 lead to the latest oil spill of the industry; two hundred thousand litres of oil spilled into a river in Saskatchewan (CBC, 2016). The bitumen industry is dependent on the world's economy as well as on its surrounding environment. The industry suffers when these two criteria do not play in its favour.

This research paper is interested in the use of messages by the bitumen industry, through the Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers (CAPP) lobby group, in its advertising to Canadians. More precisely, the study aims to unveil portrayed aspects of Canadian identity by CAPP in its *Raise Your Hand* advertising campaign. To do so, this study will utilise a semiotic analysis, more precisely Barthes' semiotic discipline which puts forward the idea that societal myths are leveraged by their user for power (Barthes, 1968). The theory is used to find overarching myths attached to Canadian identity used to create a story about the oil sands industry that seems natural and familiar to the public.

This research paper is divided into three main sections. The first section gives context surrounding the study and the theory used to conduct the research. The second section elaborates on the research design and methodology used during the study. Finally, the last section of this paper is devoted to the discussion of the findings. The study reveals that CAPP has utilised four prominent myths in the *Raise Your Hand* campaign in order to use national identity to their advantage. These myths are; positivity, responsibility, balance and pride in a common culture.

This research goes beyond what is currently known about the use of Canadian myths in advertisements. Not only does this research contribute to the field of semiotics by using the framework to explore a contemporary and controversial subject, but it also engages the field of communications by contributing to the knowledge on marketing. This research also joins current Canadian political dialogue around the role and presence of national identity and how it can be caught in the middle of a power struggle resulting from controversial activities.

Setting the Stage

Everything about the tar sands is big, most significantly its global warming and environmental implications - leading some to now describe the tar sands as "Canada's dirty secret".

Dan Woynillowicz (2016), senior policy analyst with the Pembina Institute

The Canadian oil sands are not unanimously liked or disliked in Canada. The subject of bitumen oil should not be taken lightly since “[a]t stake is [not only] Canada’s largest export industry” (McCarthy, 2014, para. 6), but also the future of the environment. Public opinion matters and makes a difference in the oil sands industry therefore players are trying to influence Canadians to support their initiatives. The following section elaborates on diverging opinions on the subject of oil sands in Canada.

A chief advantage of the oil sands in Alberta is its well-paying jobs. With only a high school degree, workers could expect to make between \$90,000 and \$120,000 yearly in 2014 (Bouw, 2014). Adding to the highly attractive salary, the number of jobs directly linked to the oil sands industry is expected to grow by up to 35 000 workers by 2021 (Bouw, 2014). This excludes jobs in Alberta required to maintain everyday life, like the hospitality and

restaurant industry that serves the influx of population. Not only do the oil sands employ Albertans, but also residents of other provinces; it is one of the ways the economic advantages of the industry are shared across the country. It is common, for example, for residents of Ontario and Newfoundland to work for companies in Alberta in order to support their families (Levant, 2010; Quinn, 2012). Taxes and royalties paid to the federal government by oil companies is another way all Canadians benefit from the industry's activities (Levant, 2010).

For political leaders, economic aspects are not the only attractive feature of the Canadian oil sands. Ezra Levant (2010), author of *Ethical Oil –The Case for Canada's Oil Sands* claims that “Canadian oil sands oil is the most ethical in the world” (p.234), which is a quality largely sought by Western countries. For example, while discussing the Canadian bitumen industry, President Barack Obama said that “importing oil from countries that are stable and friendly is a good thing” (The Associated Press, 2011). Canadian Environment Minister Peter Kent was in agreement on this issue: he justifies Canadian oil by describing it as a product that is regulated in a democracy wherein the profits are used to better a society and are shared throughout the country (Chase, 2011). Levant (2010) argues that the oil sand industry in Canada is the best alternative to all other oil sources available to date since it is environmentally conscious, respects laws and promotes the economy in a stable democracy.

The province of Alberta owns 81% of the land on which the bitumen is extracted ("Ownership of Alberta's", 2016). However, “[m]ore than two-thirds of all oil sands production in Canada is owned by foreign entities, sending a majority of the industry's profits out of the country” (De Souza, 2012, para. 1) even if Albertans do collect royalties from these foreign owners ("Ownership of Alberta's mineral resources", 2016). As of

September 2014, Chinese investors owned forty percent of the Athabasca oil sands (Jones, 2014). This high share holding in the industry means that a significant portion of the money generated by the bitumen sands are enriching China, a country with a poor track record regarding human rights ("China", 2015). Since 40% of the profit of the oil sands is taken out of Canada and input into the Chinese economy, the argument of the oil sands being ethical because it enriches the stable Canadian democracy, is ground to be questioned.

Many Canadians reject the oil sands activities (Grant, 2012). One of the main arguments against the industry is the detrimental effect it has on the environment, which in turn negatively affects the general health of citizens, contributes to global warming, and destroys fauna and flora. Nikiforuk (2010) also brings forward the devastating societal issues brought by the oil sands, like “crystal meth use among [...] rig workers, the wife beatings, the road accidents, the destruction of wildlife, the uprooting of families, the debasement of property rights, and the [...] unmitigated frenzy” (p.58). In 2012, Huseman and Short (2012) published an article, titled ‘*A slow industrial genocide: tar sands and the indigenous peoples of northern Alberta*’, articulating the industrial genocide of the northern Alberta indigenous communities. The activities surrounding oil sands extraction has caused “deforestation of the boreal forests, (...) depletion of water systems and watershed, toxic contamination, destruction of habitat and biodiversity, and severe forcible disruption of the indigenous Dene, Cree and Métis trap-line cultures” (Huseman & Short, 2012, p.230).

The river used to be blue. Now it's brown.

Nobody can fish or drink from it.

The air is bad. This has all happened so fast.

Elsie Fabian, elder in a Native Indian community along the Athabasca River
(Huseman & Short, 2012, p.230)

A report from *Equiterre* suggests “[c]itizen opposition from across North America has successfully stopped and/or delayed tar sands pipeline infrastructure” (McKinnon, Muttitt & alt., 2015). This same report’s analysis concludes that without those pipelines, “some 34.6 billion metric tons” (McKinnon, et al., 2015) of carbon would not be brought to the surface. It is believed that environmentalists “have largely succeeded in raising public awareness about the issue” (Geiling, 2015, para. 3) of climate change linked to fossil fuels, which directly affected the construction of Keystone XL and other pipelines (McKinnon, Muttitt et al., 2015). Some Canadians are so passionate about stopping the negative effects of pipelines that they peacefully gathered for a demonstration in November 2016 in Toronto against the Dakota Access Pipeline project in the United States, a project that does not directly impact Canada (Israel, 2016).

The 2015 election of the Liberal party, not only as the Alberta provincial government but also as the federal government of Canada, is confirmation that citizens are fighting against the oil sands (Struzik, 2016). The Liberal party have openly rejected being a “pipeline cheerleader” (Struzik, 2016), which highly differs from their political opposition, the Conservative Party, which has spent “considerable political capital defending the industry” (McCarthy, 2014, para. 19). However, since his election of October 2015, Prime Minister Trudeau has given “mixed signals” about the future of the



Figure 1- WTI Crude Oil Prices, 2014 to Dec. 2016

oil sands industry in Canada (Rubin, 2016). On the one hand, Trudeau has taken an oath to reduce carbon emissions to meet climate change targets (Rubin, 2016) and also pledged \$1.5-billion for an ocean protection plan against oil spills (Holmes, 2016). On the other hand, the government has accepted a Trans Mountain expansion pipeline project that will span from Edmonton to Vancouver and is “described as one of the most controversial industrial projects on the planet” (De Souza, 2016, para. 2).

Equally important to the global equation is the fact that the oil sands industry cannot control its barrel prices. An economy based entirely on uncontrollable elements is fragile (Perron, 2013). Many now preach the end of the reign of the oil sands industry. Barrel prices have plummeted from \$107 a barrel in the summer of 2014 to \$51 in December of 2016 (See Figure 1) (“Crude Oil Prices”, 2016). The oil sands have been dubbed an “environmental Pearl Harbor” and have caused a heavy rise of CO₂ emissions (Reguly, 2014). For instance, “[e]ach barrel of bitumen produces three times as much greenhouse gas as a barrel of conventional oil” (Nikiforuk, 2010, p.3). Perhaps this is the reason Canada hasn’t met a climate-change target since 1995 (Nikiforuk, 2010). The industry’s consolation “is that it’s better to be dirty than bloody” (Lewis, 2014, para. 4).

Advertising

One method used to gain visibility, and perhaps to ensure support, comes from advertising. Through advertising, players brand their position and aim to gain credibility through their messaging. Advertising is an important element in the study of oil sands messaging. Colbert and colleagues (2006) put forward the idea that, in an institution, it is up to marketing to find and target an audience that will buy the produced goods or ideas. Definitions of what constitutes advertising are diverse but do not contradict one another. In

this research, advertising will be understood as "[t]he placement of announcements and persuasive messages in time or space purchased in any of the mass media by business firms, non-profit organizations, government agencies, and individuals who seek to inform and / or persuade members of a particular target market or audience about their products, services, organizations, or ideas" (American Marketing Association, 2013, para. 5). The American Marketing Association's definition provides a practical understanding and working description of how businesses use advertising. The AMA definition is an agreed standard by marketing academics, industry leaders and subject matter experts (American Marketing Association, 2013) and is therefore the way in which this research defines advertising.

To reach the targeted audience, companies use advertising campaigns. An advertising campaign is " [a] group of advertisements, commercials, and related promotional materials and activities that are designed to be used during the same period of time as part of a coordinated advertising plan to meet the specified advertising objectives" (American Marketing Association, 2013, para. 103). Varda Langholz Leymore (1975), author of the book *Hidden Myths*, believes that advertising uses "accepted themes and well-established symbols" (p. x). Moreover, according to Grant McCracken (1986), advertisements convey cultural meanings which appear familiar to consumers in addition to being a vehicle used to transfer and perpetuate cultural meaning. Furthermore, Chris Barker (as quoted by Bociurkiw, 2011), a British television theorist, claims that "television plays a crucial role in constructing national identity" since it is a vehicle for the circulation of symbols and myths and since it creates "feelings of solidarity and simultaneous identity" (p.7). Barker's findings are significant for the circulation of specific ideas that create a sense of solidarity and national identity, through symbols and myths.

Advertising is an activity carried out by an entity which consists of publishing persuasive messages with the aim of reaching an audience and influencing them in some way. An advertising campaign is a tool used to do just that. In the context of the oil sands, many organizations, businesses and even the government of Canada have taken part in the activity of advertising. For example, environmental groups, like Greenpeace and DeSmog, are vocal about the negative effects of the oil sands industry. These organisations use strong imagery in their campaigns, such as open mining pits and dead ducks, while using strong words such as dirty, unethical, toxic and irresponsible to describe the industry and their product (Nikiforuk, 2010). The interest of this research, however, lies in the advertising tactics of a lobby group campaigning in favour of the oil sands industry. This research aims to analyze how the lobby group Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers, abbreviated to CAPP, tries to connect with and influence its audience by using cultural identity.

The Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers (CAPP)

CAPP declares itself “the voice of Canada’s upstream oil, oil sands and natural gas industry” (Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers. *About Us*, 2016, para. 1). The lobby group was created in 1920 (Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers. *About Us*, 2016), and has been advocating for the oil and gas industry well before Alberta’s first oil sands boom of the 1970s (Perron, 2013). The lobby group’s members are in charge of about 90 percent of the production of natural gas and crude oil in Canada (Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers. *Our Mission*, 2016). CAPP’s mission “is to advocate for and enable economic competitiveness and safe, environmentally and socially responsible performance” (Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers. *Our Mission*, 2016, para. 4).

One of CAPP's core strategies became "engagement" in 2015 (Stanfield, 2015). It is within the context of challenging economical times and a discourse dominated by NGOs that the CAPP launched the *Canada's Energy Citizen* engagement initiative (Stanfield, 2015). In a nutshell, this initiative's *raison d'être* is to create "a more balanced discussion about energy, the economy, and the environment" (Canada's Energy Citizens, 2016, para. 1) by "personalizing and humanizing the industry" (Standfield, 2015, p.10). The *Canada's Energy Citizen* initiative was rolled out in two phases, one in April of 2015 (Standfield, 2015) and the other in November 2015 (What's up at the CAPP?, 2015). The goal of this campaign is to transmit facts about the oil industry in Canada and to create social movement in support of it. The *Canada's Energy Citizen* initiative aims to showcase every day Canadians such as "friends, family [and] neighbours [since] these are the [most trusted] people" in communities (Standfield, 2015, p.10). The first phase of the initiative began mobilizing citizens' support by giving tools to champion supporters via CAPP's *Context* magazine publications (Standfield, 2015). The second phase launched the advertising campaign titled *Raise Your Hand* (Libby, 2015). The *Raise Your Hand* campaign is a multiplatform affair that includes videos, print ads, interactive bus shelter ads and a Twitter hash tag "#ryhcanada" (Libby, 2015). The campaign targets "key communities in Ontario, Alberta and B.C. with positive messages on economic benefits, pipeline and marine safety and environmental innovation, while driving supporters to engage by signing up for the *Canada's Energy Citizens* program" online (What's up at the CAPP?, 2015, p. 6). The campaign "features photographs of smiling people who appear to be ready to give you a high five, with the outline of a Maple Leaf imposed over their upraised hands" (Hume, 2015, para.3).

This ad campaign has not escaped criticism. The environmental group DeSmog Canada was quick to question the industry as it claims that it is “hard to raise our hands in blind allegiance when the failures and questionable behaviour of industry executives are so hard to ignore” (Liddy, 2015, para. 7). Other critics have noted that “raising your hand” for the oil industry did not quite have the same impact and engagement power as “rais[ing] your hand against racism, ignorance or disease” (Hume, 2015, para. 6).

National Identity

“Nationalism serves both as an inspiration and an emotion in TV commercials.”

Sharmila Subramanian (2013, p.263)

National identity has been defined in many ways. It is an important topic to this study and it is by using a diversity of literature that this complex concept will be defined. As a starting point, national identity is defined by Pradip (1996) as a set of stories, based on realities and fictions, which together create a national history. Pradip (1996) claims that this national history creates a national identity and thus represents a shared structure of feelings which are embodied through rituals, symbols and celebrations. The concept of national identity also requires the mention of Benedict Anderson and his work on imagined communities. For Anderson (2006), a nation is a concept that is socially constructed. This imagined nation is defined by the conceived affinity between its members (Anderson, 2006). As Anderson (2006) puts it, “it is *imagined* because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion” (p.6). This conceived affinity can be perceived because of similarities between the members, like interests, traditions or even simply the idea of the same adhesion to the nation (Anderson, 2006). Therefore, both Pradip

and Anderson believe that national identity is not a concrete concept but one that is imagined by members of the same nation.

National identity is invented and reinvented in an ongoing process of negotiation within the nation (Norman, 2006). In his book on *Negotiating Nationalism*, Norman (2006) declares that “[a]lmost any issue can be used to shape and reinforce a national identity, evoke national sentiments, or mobilize nationalist opinion” (p.12). Any society will be inclined to develop “ways for talking only about myths which they value most highly” (Kress & Van Leeuwen, 2006, p. 34). These myths are then reproduced by society as well as by the media to create a collective memory through which the current version of nationalism is born (Billig, 2010). National identity is then solidified by the continuous reproduction of these symbols, values, myths and traditions (Smith, 2001).

Artefacts are also part of the concept of nation. Del Percio (2015) researched how objects become a definition of national identity. He starts his argument by presenting Billig’s views. For Billig’s, “semiotic objects such as art, statues, literature, monuments, flags, and other forms of material culture [play] a key role in the (re)production of public memory, and in the everyday flagging of [banal nationalism]” (Del Percio, 2015, p.517). As Edensor (2002) has discovered in his work on national identity, “stamps, coins, flags, coats of arms, costumes, car stickers, maces and crowns, official documents” are objects that facilitate the transmission of a common meaning of what it is to be part of a specific culture. Webster and Gracia (2010) are of the same opinion and confirm that objects “constitute the symbolic "glue" around which a population develops a sense of common identity” (para. 6). Artefacts are therefore an interesting venue to explore a national culture.

The various definitions of national identity set out by authors complement one another. The recurring themes that come up in the definitions elaborated above are common culture, a set of common followed beliefs, and common identifiers unique to the nation. The present research understands national identity as the values, artefacts and collective memory of a nation that is unique to it and that is reproduced as accepted myths in society.

After detailing national identity, it is important to explore its specific role in Canada. Firstly, nationalism is very important to Canadians. Millard and his team proved in their 2002 research into popular culture, that Canadians were loud and proud when it came to their nationalism. Their findings reveal that in the turn of the 20th century, “Canadians are, statistically speaking, among the most patriotic citizens in the world” (Millard et al., 2002, p.14). A newspaper headline like “No. 2 ranking on index makes Canada one of the world’s best countries” (Butler, 2016) is an example of how Canadians are boastful of their national identity.

A popular theme when speaking of Canada is its diversity. Those who have pondered on the subject came to conclude that Canada views “diversity-as-unity” (Aronczyk, 2013, p.112). Not only does every province in Canada have a distinct regional identity, but Canada is a land of immigration. It greets immigrants from all walks of life; “first from France, Britain, and Western Europe, then from Eastern Europe, Asia, Latin America, the Caribbean, the Middle East, and Africa” (MacGregor, 2007, p.176). Canada has become a nation of multi-ethnicity, religion, language but still manages to appear united when it comes to its national identity - with one exception; the province of Quebec.

The province of Quebec claims to have a distinctive culture in Canada and to therefore not possess the same national identity as the rest of the country. A visual analysis of advertisements in Canada between English and French advertisements by Lick (2015) has shown clear differences in their advertising. For these reasons, the research undergone in this study is concentrated only on English Canada. As a result, it is to be understood that the national identity spoken of in this research is intended to represent English Canada outside of the province of Quebec. It is undeniable that other provinces also have their differences; however, none are as prominent as the ones present in Quebec.

As mentioned earlier, artefacts are also part of how citizens identify with their national identity. In Canada, one can think about the symbolic meaning of the easily distinguishable national flag, for example. On February 15, 1965, the day of the national flag's inauguration, the Honourable Maurice Bourget, Speaker of the Senate, declared that it is meant to be a "symbol of the nation's unity, for it, beyond any doubt, represents all the citizens of Canada without distinction of race, language, belief or opinion" ("History of the National Flag of Canada", 2016, para. 16). Another physical aspect that unites the country is its landscape. Even when living in urban areas, a large portion of identifying with Canada is based on its geography. In a survey by *The Globe and Mail* in 2003, "[...] nine in ten Canadians [chose the landscape] as the defining characteristic of Canada" (MacGregor, 2007, p.288). From the recognizable Canadian Rockies, the Pacific and Atlantic coasts, to the prairies and the boreal forest, and the Great White North of the Canadian territories, the vast and recognizable landscapes in Canada unite citizens.

As stated earlier, national identity is, first and foremost, felt and shared by the citizens of a country. It is a fluid concept that evolves with the development of new identity myths propagated in society. This research aims to provide a snapshot of the version of

accepted myths of Canadian identity that is propagated in light of the controversial subject of the bitumen sands by looking at the myths that are present in CAPP advertisements.

Semiotics and the Idea of Myth

Semiotics is the science of sign-systems that studies language as a system that constructs meaning using signs (Barthes, 1968, Chandler, 1999, Langholz Leymore, 1975, Saussure et al, 1960). A sign, as understood by the European tradition of the field, is a “thing-plus-meaning” (Rose, p.74, 2001). It is composed of two main elements; a signifier and a signified (Rose, 2001). The first element, the signifier, refers to what is used to designate something. A signifier can be, for example, “baby”. The word “baby” is a signifier that could signify either a small being that has recently been born or it could refer to an endearing term used in an intimate relationship. The context in which the signifier is used will determine the correct signified. Roland Barthes introduces the idea that signs are understood on two levels, the first on a literal level (“baby” and its meaning depending on context), and the second level as a representation of the sign that is shared in a society (refer to Figure 2) (Barthes, 1968, Chandler, 1999, Norris, 2002).

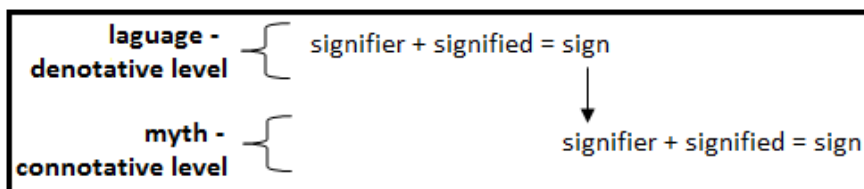


Figure 2 - Barthes' semiotic theory of language and myth (Laughey, 2007, p.57)

The first level of understanding is the denotative understanding and is also known as the “language” level. The second level of understanding, the connotative level, is also referred to as “myth” (Barthes, 1972; Rose, 2001; Laughey 2007). The connotative level can

be understood as “meaning-plus-evocative-attributes”. To take the same example used previously, the sign “baby”, here understood as a “small being”, is a denotative understanding since the sign is understood literally as a small human. On the second level of understanding, the sign of the first level becomes the signifier. On this level, the signifier “baby as a small being” could carry the signified understanding, for example, of the societal understanding of “hope for the future” (Rose, 2001). This second level is tinted with emotions and its meaning is associated to specific cultural experiences and to a specific history (Barthes, 1968, Chandler, 1999). The continuous transition to the second level of understanding imposes a loss on the original meaning and on how it has been understood historically in the specific society (Burton, 2013), in the sense that the continuous use of a specific myth changes its understanding through time. The connotative level is “the point at which the myth is endowed with whatever ideology its creator intends it to have” (Burton, 2013, p.488). This detachment from historical context gives the opportunity to the users of myths to attach new significance to it is used in a context void of the original intentions that lead to its creation (Burton, 2013, Masterman, 1984). Myths are used in ways that make them seem natural and familiar (Masterman, 1984). Semiotics is a tool exploited to look beyond what seems “natural” in a society in order to expose political, or other, motivations of the ones mobilizing them (Barthes, 1968, Burton, 2013, Masterman, 1984).

*“[M]yth has in fact a double function: it points out and it notifies,
it makes us understand something and it imposes it on us.”*

Roland Barthes (1968, p.117)

In his work titled *Myth Of Today*, Barthes (1968) discusses how semiotics is a tool used to expose how elites make use of cultural materials to impose their values on others by

concealing their ideologies within myths. Barthes (1968) suggests that a myth is a type of speech that is, in itself, a message (p.110). A myth is not a lie, it “hides nothing and flaunts nothing: it distorts” (Barthes, 1968, p. 129). Myths consist of ideologies and intentions, such as of a political nature in a specific historical context. As explained by Barthes (1968), “myth has the task of giving an historical intention a natural justification” (p.142). In other words, myths are dominant ideologies that have been masked and presented in a way that is unquestioned. One example used by Barthes to further explain his point is of red wine in French culture. This liquid has a very positive connotation in France. It is associated with health, intelligence and as an essential part of the culture: “knowing *how* to drink [wine] is a national technique which serves to qualify the French-man, to demonstrate at once his performance, his control and his sociability” (Barthes, 1968, p.59). However, Barthes reminds his readers that not only is wine an alcoholic beverage which inebriates its drinker, and therefore does not make him healthy nor smart, but its production is “deeply involved in French capitalism” (Barthes, 1968, p.61). Thus the myth of red wine is not an innocent perpetuated message in French society.

This highlights the fact that myths are used to maintain power in society. The users of myths draw on what seem familiar to their public in order to frame their messages. Semiotics is a useful tool to first help see the familiarities and to secondly see through them to explicit power relations. The concept of myth is central to the present study. As defined before, a myth is a message found in cultural material that is familiar to the society it lives in (Barthes, 1968; Bignell, 2002). Myths are distortions of ideologies that are presented in a way that “will not be resisted or fought against” (Bignell, 2002, p.23). These distortions of reality serve the ideologies of the ones using and perpetuating them (Barthes, 1972; Bignell, 2002;

Rose, 2001). As understood by Roland Barthes, myths are instruments used by the ruling elites for capitalist reasons or to maintain the status quo (Barthes, 1968).

Through media (television, internet, mass communications), society is not only “capable of generating myths, [but also] (...) nurtur[ing] some (...) and not others” (Laughey, 2007, p. 58). Myths are reflected in advertisements (Langholz Leymore, 1975) and thus ads are an opportune venue to learn about familiarities present in a society. This reproduction of accepted understandings through media and ads “guide[s] and reinforce[s] the way society thinks about a certain question, such as acceptable behaviour and what is right and wrong” (Fourie, 2007, p251). Moreover, “advertisements, like myths, prescribe behaviour, (like) a guide to or model” that can be followed, rejected or modified (Richards et al, 2000, p.69). Berger (2012) reminds the semiotician that “signs can be used to communicate, [which can also] communicate lies” (p.15). Bignell (2002) prescribes critically analysing the myth and deciphering it to understand its distortion; a semiotician should be able to separate “the myth, the sign and the signification (as well as) to undo the effect which the myth aims to produce” (Bignell, 2002, p.23).

A parallel can be drawn between how semioticians see myth replication by society and how national identity prevails by its reproduction. Semiotic is therefore a good tool to use to explore nationalism in advertisements.

Research Question

The timely and controversial topic of the bitumen sands is the context for this semiotic. The overall goal of this work is to bring to light specific myths of Canadian culture drawn up by CAPP lobby group. The main research question is formulated as follows:

RQ) How are myths of Canadian identity invoked by the Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers in four nationally-broadcast video advertisements produced as part of their *Raise Your Hand* campaign?

In order to answer this question, the four aforementioned videos are analyzed through a semiotic framework. A semiotic analysis reveals how myths are used by an industry leader to attempt in creating positive emotions in the hopes of mobilizing support for the bitumen sands industry. This project is a synchronic analysis, exploring the current use of Canadian national myths for the purpose of persuasion. Using Roland Barthes' approach, it is demonstrated in this study that the *Raise Your Hand* video campaign works to counter and delegitimize the arguments based on negative impact of the oil sands industry on the environment and communities.

Research Design and Methodology

The advertisements of the CAPP lobby group are the main focus of this study. The lens with which to investigate national identity in oil sands advertisements is semiotic analysis. This section elaborates on the selection of the materials analysed in the study, on the tools developed for the research, and finally on the guidelines that direct the discussion of the findings.

Sampling and Data Collection

The Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers is the focal point chosen for this research. The researcher had noticed their advertisements prior to the conception of this study (on street billboards in Ottawa and publicities on television). The researcher defined the *Raise Your Hand* campaign as the population of the study because the content of the advertisements was deemed rich with Canadian content. This study engages specifically with

video advertisements since the rich medium marries visual and audio information to give well rounded meaning to the messages.

CAPP's *Raise Your Hand* campaign began in spring of 2015 and comprises twenty-one videos (as of the fall of 2016). The videos were organized in six different albums on the lobby group's *YouTube* channel (the videos have since then been taken down). The advertisements selected to be analysed had to be created for a nationwide audience because of the aim of the study. Therefore, out of the twenty-one videos in the population, only eleven could potentially be part of the study given that they these were not explicitly addressed to specific regions or provinces in Canada. As it was mentioned previously, the target audience for the *Raise Your Hand* campaign were mainly regions of Ontario, Alberta and British Columbia. However, since every video analysed contained "National" in their title, the goal remains to seek myths of national identity. This study does not pretend to be an accurate representation of Canadian identity since its objective is to explicit the use of rhetoric circulated in advertisements.

The four ads selected for the study are a total of two minutes and four seconds (2:04). For an overview of the album in question and the four video titles, refer to Appendix 1. By sampling from this population, the study hopes to paint a picture of how advertising uses myths that are circulated in society to conjure emotional responses and gain support from a Canadian public. The study analyses every frame to draw conclusions on the entire campaign. The unit of observation for this research is the individual frames present in the four video advertisements. A frame is defined as every complete picture, including its audio, in the video advertisements. The study aims to draw conclusions on the entire *Raise Your Hand* ad campaign. The campaign is therefore characterized as the unit of analysis.

Semiotics offers an overall view of ideologies present in advertisements (Rhoades & Irani, 2016). However, it does not prescribe any manipulation of the data in a way that sorts and organizes elements, which would point to important analysis avenues.

National Identity and Semiotics

In this research paper, semiotic analysis will be understood as “an *activity*, an open-ended practice of reading” (Norris, 2002, p. 9-10) that serves as a tool to uncover myths of national identity.

It is understood that myths and symbols used in the media “allow those who employ them to supply part of their meaning” (Guibernau, 1996). This means that advertisements provide and convey an interpretation of myths. In advertising, “the intention [is] to promote the reputation and sales of the product [and therefore] frees the analyst to concentrate on *how* [it is promoted] rather than *what*” the purpose is (Bauer & Gaskell, 2000, p.232). It is important, when undergoing semiotic analysis, to not insist that the findings are true but rather that they are simply the reproduction and use of rhetoric present in society. The way in which the myths are intended to be understood will not be explored.

Knowledge of the culture under examination is important when conducting a semiotic analysis. In semiotic studies, the subtleties of certain cultural elements and assumptions require the interpretation of a native individual as the analysis aims to look into “deep assumptions embedded in advertisements” (Rose, 2001, p.71). As Bauer and Gaskell (2000) have put it; “the [analysis at the] level of connotation, require[s] several further cultural knowledges” (p.234). The author of this research on Canadian nationalism, which will draw the connotative meanings of signs from a Canadian knowledge system, is Canadian herself.

The interpretation of the data will be executed with the same cultural background in which the messages were crafted and intended to appear in. The context surrounding this study is therefore ideal. Nevertheless, being Canadian could cause a failure to interpret a sign as being distinctively Canadian, as it would appear to the author as self-evident. This could be obvious to readers in the analysis section of this work. To avoid missing interpretations as much as possible, the data was carefully transcribed and the themes and myths were unveiled using an inductive approach. This approach helps both to not actualize preconceptions and to critically interpret every sign present in the frames, as to not miss elements that would seem self-evident to the author.

This research does not claim to be objective. However, it does claim to be rigorous and to follow a clear methodology. Semiotics is a theory that questions the construction of social meanings (Rose, 2007), it is therefore crucial that there are multiple and opposing interpretations of the data. The Myth Discourse and Analysis section of this research paper intends to fulfill those requirements.

Data Collection and Analysis Tools

The four advertisements from the sampled population were subject to a data collection based on the parameters elaborated from semiotic theory. Semiotics has been used in numerous studies to analyse advertisements (Bauer & Gaskell, 2000; Berger, 2012; Lick, 2015; Rhoades & Irani, 2016). Since the semiotic field offers many tools but no clear methodology (Rose, 2001), structural and methodological steps were drawn from relevant semiotic research. From the comparison of the different studies came the following methodology for the analysis of CAPP video ads. The following elaboration of the study

table and the explanation of the context around which it was populated give the opportunity to replicate the study.

First, since the ads analysed were video ads, three different components to analyse were distinguished: visual elements, audio elements and elements associated with the video medium (Kress & Van Leeuwen, 2006). Every step of the following methodology was therefore applied to each of these three components. In their research, Cian (2012) and Kress and Leeuwen (2006) have divided their analysis of advertisements in a similar fashion. The reasoning behind this division in the analysis is to capture every component having the potential of being a source of myth creation since every element in ads are signs (Van Leeuwen, T. & Jewitt, 2004). The next step was to exhaustively transcribe and describe aspects of the three components (visual, audio, medium) of the video ads. To do so, the videos were paused on every frame and all aspects of the background and foreground were described. The audio, background music and voice over, from the segments were transcribed. Finally, the camera angles, camera rolls and any other comment on the medium were noted. This step is crucial to the legitimacy of semiotic analysis since “[i]t is important that the inventory is complete as the systematic approach helps to ensure that the analysis is not selectively self-confirming” (Bauer & Gaskell, 2000, p.232). Once this blueprint was created (see Appendix 2 for the ads’ transcriptions), an analysis table was created to analyse. An analysis table is used in order to keep track of the data in an orderly manner. The table (Appendix 3) was crafted after the description of methodological steps given by Rhoades & Irani (2016) in their semiotic research publication on farming advertisements. This table was used for all three components (visual, audio and video medium) of the four video ads examined. At the end of the analysis, a total of three tables per video were produced for a

total of twelve tables. The analysis tables are sectioned into five columns and do not have a defined number of rows. The rows were populated by the signs uncovered during the exploration of the ads.

The first column of the analysis table is meant to be filled with explicit denotative signs. The signs were identified with the help of the literature review on semiotics, listed above, which gave examples of signs and elaborates on potential avenues to look for signs. The second column is used to describe the potential meaning of the listed sign according to semiotic literature, found in the works of Lick (2015), Berger (2012) and Bignell (2002). The third column is populated by associating potential national identity characteristics to the sign. These last two columns are very important since they serve as pieces of information to uncover myths.

The fourth column of the analysis table is used for the connotative understanding of the signs present in the advertisement. This step of a semiotic analysis is qualified as “a higher-order level of signification” analysis (Bauer & Gaskell, 2000). It builds on the elements of the denotation inventory elaborated in the steps explained above. This fourth column of the table is meant to be fluid and allows interaction with more than one sign. This column leads to the explanation and exploration of the overarching myths present in the Myth Discourse and Analysis section.

The data’s analysis was declared finished when data saturation was reached. As explained by Fusch and Ness (2015), “[d]ata saturation is reached when there is enough information to replicate the study (O’Reilly & Parker, 2012; Walker, 2012), when the ability to obtain additional new information has been attained (Guest et al., 2006), and when further

coding is no longer feasible (Guest et al., 2006)” (para. 2). The study reached a limit in the gathering of new information and in uncovering of new myths and themes. The methodical analysis exposed many trends and myths valuable to the exploration of the use of Canadian identity and offered a satisfactory response to the research question. The discussion of the data seeks to “remove the impression of naturalness by showing how the myth[s] [are] constructed, and showing that [they promote] one way of thinking while seeking to eliminate all the alternative ways of thinking” (Bignell, 2002, p.23). The next section harbours these results and discussions.

Myth Discourse and Analysis

This section reflects on four recurring myths in the analysed advertisements. The results are presented in four broad themes; 1) Positivity 2) Responsibility 3) Balance and 4) Pride in a Common Culture. Each section first broadly explains the myth in question and offers a summary of the pertinent findings present in the advertisements that brought the elaboration of the myth. Finally, alternative readings for the myth, elaborating on the idea of ideology and power, are presented in each section. The closing remarks in this section offer reflective comments on the research and its design and methodology.

- | |
|--|
| <p>Myth 1- The oil sand industry is a positive element in and of itself and in society.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Displays of happiness, excitement and honesty <p>Myth 2- The oil sand industry is responsible.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Towards the environment○ Towards communities○ Towards the quality of their work○ Towards safety <p>Myth 3- The oil sand industry is a balanced field that is considerate and not radical.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Balance between work/leisure○ Balance between urban/nature○ Balance between office/manual workers <p>Myth 4- The oil sand industry is part of a Canadian common culture.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Recognizable Canadian pride in audio cues○ Relatable membership to Canada through artefacts○ Pride in membership through apparel○ Hockey |
|--|

Figure 3 - Myths and subthemes in the *Raise Your Hand* campaign

Positivity

An obvious theme, throughout the four videos, is positivity. Grouped under this positivity theme are feelings such as happiness, excitement and honesty. The semiotic and thematic analysis of the data reveals the oil sands industry reflected as being positive. The following analysis will demonstrate that many semiotic signs in the visual, audio and video creation were used to denote positivity. By using these signs, the CAPP creates the connotative idea that it is natural to regard the oil sands industry as a positive one.

The beginning of the videos set the tone for what the viewer is about to see and hear. All four videos start on a positive and happy note. This Positivity section will discuss the first frame of each analysed video to demonstrate how positivity is reflected throughout the advertisements.

The first frame of the *Pipeline Safety National* ad is of a young adult male, smiling confidently under a blue sky and lifting his open palmed left hand (see Figure 3). His palm is

immediately covered by the outline of a white maple leaf. This outline is made of multiple layers of thick white lines that appear to constantly change position. This young man is wearing a white hard hat, blue overalls over a white shirt,



Figure 4 - Positivity I, *Pipeline Safety National* - 0:01

sun-glasses and sporting a moustache with a soul patch. His gaze suggests that he is addressing the viewers directly, since he is looking directly at the camera, which creates a feeling of honesty between him and the audience (Kress & Van Leeuwen, 2006). His frontal

angle towards the camera advocates that he is part of the viewer's world, creating a sentiment that he is real and genuine (Kress & Van Leeuwen, 2006). We also see the man from the shoulders up, which creates a close and personal social distance between the young man and the audience (Kress & Van Leeuwen, 2006). This has the effect of viewing him as a close friend or at the very least as a warm and personable character.

In addition to his positioning, the man is smiling a wide smile. Facial expressions in advertisements are signs that provide the audience with information on how to view and feel about the situation to which they are presented with (Berger, 2012). By smiling, the man is creating a favourable attitude towards himself as well as towards the cause presented in the advertisement (Kress & Van Leeuwen, 2006). His body language also portrays him as an open and honest person since his shoulders are open and is holding up an open palm (Bignell, 2002). In addition, the young man's facial hair portrays a well-groomed, mature, cool, and modern person.

Furthermore, the man is wearing sunglasses under a bright blue sky, creating the impression of a sunny day, which in turn generates more positive attitude from the audience. The blue skies above him engender feelings of happiness and of smooth sailing – there are no problems. The blue colour of the sky is also gathered in other objects in the frame; the man's overall and the roofs of buildings in the background. This colour connotes peacefulness, gentleness, calmness and pleasantness (Madden et al., 2000).

Colour is an important venue for connotative meaning in advertising since it “is richly symbolic in its appeal to our senses and feelings [which] adds a powerful dimension of meaning to images” (Thatcher, 2009). Another omnipresent colour in the *Raise Your Voice*

campaign ads is white. White is used in advertisements to be synonym of decency, Good (vs. Evil), positivity, cleanliness and safety (Kareklas et al., 2014). White is also a prominent colour in Canada as it is one of the two colours present on the national flag. Further discussion on colours and national culture is discussed in the Pride in a Common Culture section. In this specific segment of the video, the man is wearing a white hard hat, the maple leaf outline drawn over his hand is white, the writing at the bottom right of the screen (which reads: “Not Actors. Real Canadians”) is white and finally, aspects of the background are white. Blue and white are in fact consistent colours throughout the four advertisements. Together, these colours connote that the oil sands industry is wise, clean, safe and trustworthy.

Two other aspects are consistent in every frame throughout the four videos; the audio style and the filming. The camera filming the young man moves constantly. It does not vibrate or move unpleasantly, it simply never stops moving, slowly and slightly, in every frame throughout the entirety of all the videos, except for the last two seconds of all the videos. This camera movement connotes realness and excitement to the viewers (Berger, 2012). The camera also cuts to new images every second to every 3 seconds throughout the four advertisements. This utilization of the medium also connotes excitement (Berger, 2012). Finally, we see this described happy scene while simultaneously hearing notes of a folksy guitar and piano melody accompanied by harmonic, non-lyrical vocals. In advertising, music is “used to generate a certain response in its audience [;] (...) its cues indicate (...) what they should feel about what they are watching” (Berger, 2012, p.14). The music played in *Pipeline Safety National* sounds inspiring, uplifting and hopeful. Hearing this music gives the viewers a positive feeling about what they are seeing. Not only is the portrayal positive

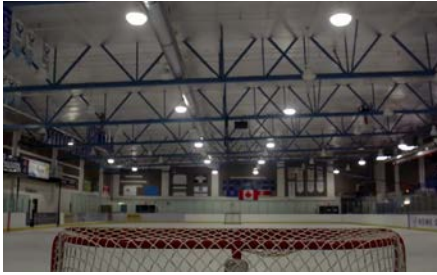


Figure 5 - Positivity II, *Canadian Energy National* – 0:01

but it is also uplifting and inspiring. By playing this music in the background of the ad, it seems like CAPP seeks to harvest hopeful feelings about their cause.

As previously mentioned, the other three advertising videos also start in a fashion that suggests positive emotions to viewers. *Canadian Energy National* (Figure 5) begins with lights turning on in an ice rink arena. At the center of this frame is the red and white Canadian flag. As the camera moves to the next frame, the lights get brighter and brighter. We then see a white-haired gentleman driving a white zamboni, smiling and holding his open palm up, on which is drawn a white maple leaf (Figure 6). This



Figure 6 - Positivity III, *Canadian Energy National* – 0:03

frame is almost completely white; white ice, white boards surrounding the ice, white arena walls and white banner flags hanging from those walls. The zamboni driver is even wearing white shoes. This scene isn't only seen as positive to a Canadian audience because of the colour white but also because of the evident Canadian flag and the sentiments associated with hockey in Canada. For many Canadians, hockey generates positive and happy feelings as it is regarded as the national sport. Hockey as a common cultural recognition will be



Figure 7 - Positivity IV, *Commitment National* – 0:01

discussed in more details in the Pride in a Common Culture section.

The third video ad analysed, *Commitment National*, opens on three young adults with their

hand lifted, open palmed, which harbors the maple leaf (Figure 7). They are standing in the middle of a city. Two of the three characters are wearing blue jeans, a Canadian element discussed in further detail in the Pride in a Common Culture Myth section, and another set of two are wearing white shirts. One of them has his hands in his pocket, which suggests that supporting Canada’s oil industry is easy and does not cause him worry. The three young adults are all looking at the audience and smiling wide, showing their white teeth. At the beginning of the scene, the middle man slightly jumps with his mouth slightly open, connoting excitement. Two of the portrayed people are wearing head gear; one is wearing a toque and the other is wearing a bandana. Besides the toque being very Canadian, also discussed in greater detail in the Pride in a Common Culture section, the headgear makes the people seem laidback, which can be associated with happiness and “coolness” – both positive connotations.

Finally, the fourth ad analysed, *Innovation National*, begins with children playing on a jungle gym; climbing on monkey bars and sliding down a slide (Figure 8). The two boys are smiling and seem excited and to be having fun. They are also both wearing blue



Figure 8 - Positivity V, *Innovation National* – 0:01

jeans and one is wearing a toque. The sense of the scene is positive. Children connote innocence, playfulness as well as hope for the future. By starting the “innovation” segment of their ad campaign with children, the CAPP connotes that their cause is the hope for the future and therefore a positive element in Canada.

The first two seconds of all four advertisements videos are rich in positivity by demonstrating happiness, excitement, hope and honesty. The given examples are only a

sliver of signs in the overarching theme of positivity. This theme will be part, without being explicitly stated, of the following three themes since it is a predominant element throughout the videos.

This first myth, presenting the oil industry as being positive, channels happy feelings through superficial triggers, like music, blue skies, positive colours and smiles. This works in CAPP's favour as it makes the subject of oil sands more appealing since positivity is a desired attribute to Canadians. Positivity is seen as something to be achieved in Canada. As an example, a report commissioned by the UN ranked Canada the sixth happiest country in the world in 2016 (Helliwell, J., Huang, H. & Wang, S., 2016). Many Canadian media outlets, like Global News, The CBC, The National Post, The Globe and Mail, announced the ranking as an accomplishment (Bogart, 2016, Reuters, 2016, Bramham, 2016, Simpson, 2016). The idea of being positive is therefore a good tool for CAPP to use in order to appeal to a Canadian public and to guide the discussion on the controversial subject. As seen in the scene setting section earlier in this work, oil sands are from being straight forwardly positive however, when using signs of positivity, CAPP gain power by having Canadians be more receptive to their messages.

Responsibility

The second underlying theme discussed as part of the *Raise Your Hand* campaign is responsibility. Responsibility is seen as fulfilling a duty and as being accountable. It is worth mentioning that responsibility is a theme important to CAPP as it is explicitly stated in their mission statement ("Our Mission", 2016, para.4). By using signs that connote responsibility, CAPP invokes myths that demonstrate accountability on subject matters which the industry has been criticized for wrongdoing in the past.

Four subthemes will be examined as part of the myth of responsibility; the environment, the communities, expertise and safety. The four videos use signs aligned with these four subthemes to relay to the viewer the idea that the oil sands industry is being responsible.

The first subtheme, the environment, is displayed in the four ads. The first example of the accountability displayed by CAPP is with the speech given by the narrative voice present over all the videos. The man's narrative voice, present throughout all four ads, promises that CAPP is "serious about climate change" (*Innovation National*, 0:01 min). The voice later declares, in the same ad, that CAPP is helping to "mak[e] oil and gas part of a clean energy future – faster" (0:15). In the third ad analysed ad, *Commitment National*, the voice also declares that there is "a balance [to be found] between responsible resource development and the environment" (0:03). This affirmation puts on display the oil sands industry's commitment to respect the environment. Again, in this third ad, the voice says, at 0:06, that the oil sands industry has "invested more than one point two billion dollars developing and sharing eight hundred and fourteen technologies and innovations to accelerate environmental improvements and reduce GHG emissions". Reaffirming their commitment to the environment thus connotes their perceived responsibility towards it. These explicitly voiced instances promote the idea that the oil sands industry plays a positive role when it comes to the environment and that companies affiliated with CAPP are accountable for their activities. These elements create the myth that the industry is good to the environment, contradicting the rhetoric of the industry's opposition.

A second aspect that connotes responsibility towards the environment is the presence of bicycles. Bicycles are used to commute to avoid using vehicles that run on gas. The two-wheeled method of transportation therefore connotes positive change to the environment by reducing CO2 emissions. In the first ad, *Pipeline Safety National*, viewers are exposed to bicycles at three instances. The first time is at 0:09 where there is one bike parked in the background of the three smiling young adults (Figure 9). The next occasion is at 0:14 when a business man is filmed in front of a designated bike parking area – there are about 30 bicycles in the background of this scene (Figure 10). These two scenes are also shown in the third analysed ad, *Commitment National*, at 0:00 and at 0:06, respectively.

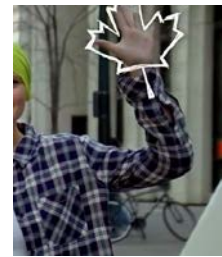


Figure 9 - Responsibility I, *Pipeline Safety* - 0:09



Figure 10 - Responsibility II, *Pipeline Safety* - 0:14



Figure 11 - Responsibility III, *Pipeline Safety* - 0:18

Finally, two men are filmed holding their bicycles in a field overlooking the skyline of Calgary (Figure 11). This same pair is also present in the fourth ad, *Innovation National*, as they are shown at 0:15, again with their bicycles.

Another instance where the connotation of responsibility towards the environment is visible is in the fourth ad, *Innovation National* (Figure 12). In this ad, at 0:10, there is a close-up of a small globe representing planet earth. This globe connotes the



Figure 12 - Responsibility IV, *Innovation National* - 0:10

environment and the essence of being green, in the sense of environmentally friendly. At this moment, CAPP is associated with a healthy looking planet earth. By doing so, the lobby

group is reinforcing their message of being accountable of their impact on the environment. This denotative meaning adds to the connotation of the oil industry being responsible towards the environment.



Figure 13 - Responsibility V, *Pipeline Safety National*, 0:05 – *Canadian Energy National*, 0:22 – *Commitment National*, 0:05

The final aspect of environmental responsibility is shown in three different ads; the first, *Pipeline Safety National*, the second, *Canadian Energy National*, and the third, *Commitment National* (Figure 13). In all of these three videos, the same man is shown knee deep in a body of water, fishing. The area in which the man is found is beautiful and no other signs of civilization can be seen. This scene connotes a clean environment where it is safe to fish and presumably eat the catch of the day. The oil sands industry has had big backlash about polluting bodies of water. These images of a cheerful man fishing create a positive association between the environment and the industry, adding to the previous messaging on responsibility towards the environment.

The second subtheme under Responsibility is community. Evidence of this responsibility is seen in the *Safety Pipeline National* ad in which there is a smiling young teenager in front of a



Figure 14 - Responsibility VI, *Safety Pipeline National* – 0:05

building (Figure 14). She is carrying what seems to be a backpack. The scene, with the building and the backpack, denotes school and education. By having this scene in the advertisement, CAPP connotes that it is involved in different aspects of communities, like the education system.

In the second ad, *Canadian Energy National*, an Asian and a black man are seen taking a stand for Canada's oil industry by raising their hand (Figure 15). This diversity



Figure 15 - Responsibility VII, *Canadian Energy National* – 0:21 and 0:23

connotes that the CAPP is favorable to and welcoming of different communities. Finally, in the third ad, *Commitment National*, and in the fourth ad, *Innovation National*, children are seen playing on a playground (Figure 16). In all two of those instances, a woman is standing in front of the playground and another woman on the playground with the children. These scenes show another dimension of what is important to communities; a safe environment in which children are free to play and grow while being under the care of responsible adults. By showing such scenes, the CAPP is seen to take different needs into consideration and to help provide a desired environment beneficial to communities.



Figure 16 - Responsibility VIII, *Commitment National*, 0:16 - *Innovation National*, 0:01 and 0:19

The third subtheme under Responsibility is expertise. Expertise is seen as an important aspect of the oil sands industry since a job well-done eliminates disastrous consequences on the environment and the economy. By demonstrating a felt duty to be an

expert in their field, the CAPP connotes confidence and reliability. Evidence of high proficiency is seen throughout the videos. For example, in the first ad, *Pipeline Safety National*, a pair of office workers is seen in discussion and pointing at a map (Figure 17). When the pair lifts their hand seconds later, to show their support for the oil industry (Figure 18), the woman is wearing a ring on her pinky finger of her right hand. In Canada, this ring could be either an Iron or Earth ring, which are associated with professional engineers and geoscientists, respectively (Iron and Earth Rings - Engineers Geoscientists Manitoba, 2016). This ring represents “a commitment to a high standard of professional conduct” (Iron and Earth Rings - Engineers Geoscientists Manitoba, 2016, para. 1). It is worn on the professional’s dominant hand as a constant reminder of the impact and importance of their work. For Canadians aware of this tradition, the scene exposing a woman wearing such a ring denotes expertise and connotes a proficient oil industry. In addition, multiple scenes of people in their work place are shown in the ads; some in offices and others in industrial settings (Figure 19). In all these instances, the feeling exuding from the scenes is of competent and positive job performances. These scenes add to the myth that the oil industry employ expert and are therefore responsible in their activities.



Figure 17 - Responsibility IX, *Pipeline Safety National* – 0:14



Figure 18 - Responsibility X, *Pipeline Safety National* – 0:18



Figure 19 - Responsibility XI, *Commitment National*, 0:02, 0:09 - *Canadian Energy National*, 0:09 - *Pipeline Safety National*, 0:03 - *Canadian Energy National*, 0:15 - *Commitment National*, 0:20, 0:12, 0:06, 0:22

Finally, the last subtheme under Responsibility is safety. Safety appears to be very important throughout the videos (Figure 20). The safety theme first appears within the first second of the *Pipeline Safety National* video. The young man in this scene is wearing a protective hard hat as well as what appear to be protective sunglasses. The man in the next scene is also wearing a hard hat and sunglasses but also a reflective safety vest. Later in this video, the two men with their bicycles are wearing protective helmets (0:20). In *Canadian Energy National* video, a man is shown tapping his protective hockey equipment in a changing room, next to three other men dressed entirely in their protective hockey gear (0:04). Moving on to a scene on

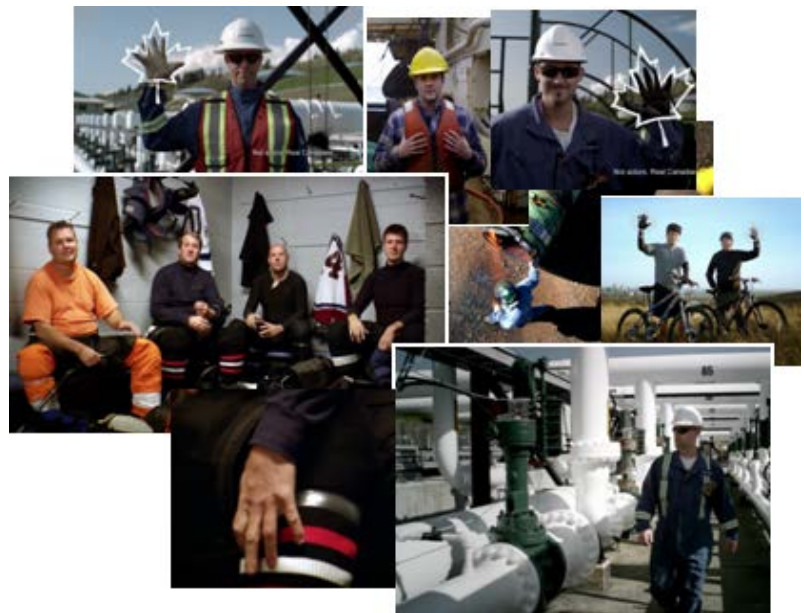


Figure 20 - Responsibility XII, *Pipeline Safety National*, 0:03 - *Canadian Energy National*, 0:08 - *Pipeline Safety National*, 0:01 - *Canadian Energy National*, 0:04, 0:14 - *Pipeline Safety National*, 0:20 - *Canadian Energy National*, 0:04, 0:15

a boat in the same video (0:08), a man is wearing a hard hat, as well as a reflective life jacket. Later on in the video, a man seen welding is wearing an overall as well as a welding helmet (0:14) and another man walking through pipelines is wearing protective gear and a hard hat (0:15) the oil industry. This creates a sense of trust towards CAPP since the lobby group shows responsibility for safety. These instances lead to the reinforcement of the myth of the oil sands industry being responsible.

Responsibility is a familiar sentiment in Canada. As an example, a great sense of responsibility is attached to peace in Canada. There is a persisting myth that Canada has a duty to help nations of the world by means of its blue berets (Gardner, 2006). To reinforce the responsibility sentiment, in August 2016, the federal government of Canada pledged “an unprecedented \$450 million to” the Peace and Stabilization Operations Program (PSOPs) (Canada News Centre, 2016, para. 4). Responsibility evokes gratification and optimism in Canada. By drawing on the idea of having a sense of duty, CAPP appeals to a familiar sentiment for Canadian viewers.

Responsibility is a core theme for CAPP as well as for the anti-oil sands movement. Neither of the two camps can agree with the other on what is a responsible behaviour when it comes to the bitumen sands. Authors like Levant (2010), previously cited in this study, claim that the oil sand industry in Canada is as responsible as it can be and it should be sufficient for Canadians to support the industry. However, on the opposite side of the spectrum, Nikiforuk (2010) argues that there is no “green” way to extract oil and any activity surrounding the oil sands is irresponsible. By making responsibility an omnipresent message in their advertisements, CAPP takes a stand against the movement opposing their industry and frames the discussion on how responsibility should be understood in the industry.

Balance

The third myth found in this study is balance. The concept of balance is important to CAPP since the entire ad campaign analysed was created to balance the discussion around the oil sands industry in Canada (Canada's Energy Citizens, 2016, para. 1). The advertisements seem to go a step further with the concept of balance by representing it in three other aspects; between work and leisure, between urban and nature space and finally, between office and manual workers. By creating balance in these different spheres, CAPP creates the illusion of equality, without displaying extreme positions and seeming logical and fair in the discourse.

Throughout the four advertisements studied, images of working individuals are shown in between images of others that are enjoying a hobby or an activity (Figure 21). Workers are shown in overalls or suits throughout the videos. Some of the individuals are seen working (welding, in a meeting, discussing with coworkers, walking among pipelines) and others are seen proudly standing in their working attires, raising their hand in support of Canada's oil industry. During other

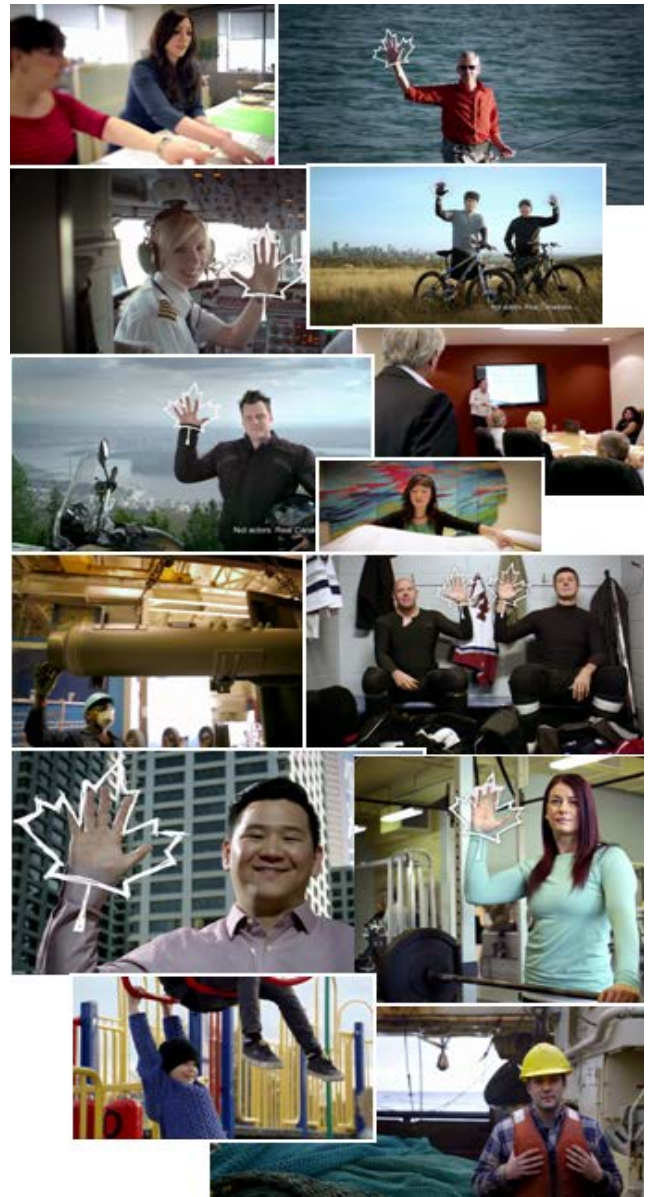


Figure 21 - Balance I, *Commitment National*, 0:19 - *Canadian Energy National*, 0:22 - *Innovation National*, 0:18 - *Pipeline Safety National*, 0:20 - *Innovation National*, 0:17, 0:11, 0:08, 0:13, 0:23 - *Canadian Energy National*, 0:23 - *Innovation National*, 0:21, 0:01 - *Canadian Energy National*, 0:08

instances, individuals are shown fishing, at the gym, getting ready to play hockey, playing on a playground, and midway through a biking adventure outside the city. These two types of images create the impression that the oil sands are part of and favourable to a balanced lifestyle. Moreover, by demonstrating work-life-balance, the advertisements create a positive feeling towards the lobby group. It also creates the image that, whoever you are, you can support the oil industry; whether it provides you with employment or not.



Figure 22 - Balance II, *Canadian Energy National*, 0:20, 0:21, 0:22 and 0:23

Another balance created in the advertisements is the one between urban space and nature. The CAPP advertises that city-dwellers and nature-lovers alike are supportive of Canada's oil industry. The lobby group also promotes that the industry is compatible with both urban areas and nature. In the second ad, *Canadian Energy National*, for example, a woman is seen at 0:20 minutes in a field of yellow grass, overlooking mountains, raising her hand for the industry (Figure 22). The next second, a man is seen in a city, in front of a building, also raising his hand. The video then transports us in a body of water where a man is fishing and showing the camera his open palm in solidarity with the industry. The next scene is of a man, also raising his hand, in front of what appears to be a skyscraper. In four seconds, we are transported from a field, to a city, to a river to a city again. Showing these diverse images creates the feeling that there is a balance between the urban and the rural,

where people are almost lost in nature's grandeur. By showing multiple nature scenes, the company also creates the connotation that the industry does not disturb it.

The third and last balance found in the study is between office workers and manual workers. These two types of workers offer different skills to an industry. Office workers are often seen as occupying management type roles, to make decisions affecting the business or as creating plans for it. Manual workers, or labourers, denote the physical work needed to accomplish tasks, the individuals paid to execute the plans and follow the directions of management. There needs to be a balance between the two types of workers to efficiently reach goals and move the business forward. In the analysed videos, the audience is exposed to both workers in offices wearing suits and to workers in fields wearing overalls. To take the first video, *Pipeline Safety National*, for example, a total of six working individuals are portrayed in the thirty-second video. Amongst the six, three are labourers (two are oil rig workers and one is a farmer) and three are office workers (all three wearing suits and are displayed in previous images presented in the analysis). This variety of images gives the impression that the oil industry is a well-balanced enterprise between the office workers and the ones in the field. It also creates the image of universal support of Canada's oil industry since it seems that regardless of your career, level of education, where you grew up, you can support, and should support, the oil sands industry as it is beneficial to everyone.

The third myth, which puts forward the ideology that the oil sands industry conducts its activities in a logical, moderate and balanced matter, is a concept that is familiar to Canadians. Balance is represented between work and leisure in the studied ads. Hofstede et al. (2010) have created and validated value dimensions that are used to describe national societies. Their research demonstrates that Canadians "tend to have a work-life balance and

are likely to take time to enjoy personal pursuits, family gatherings and life in general” (Hofstede, 2016, para. 7). This cultural study suggests that Canadians tend to strive for a balance lifestyle, whatever they deem it to be. However, reality in the oil sands appears to differ from the image of workers put forward in the advertisements. To work on the pipelines or oil fields, employees are sent to remote areas and live far “away from home for half the year [and are housed in] regimented work camps (...) with thousands of other workers” (Steward & Fellow, 2016, para. 4). The conditions under which the workers are expected to work are not shown or reflected in the advertisements. By displaying balance throughout the videos, CAPP creates an illusion which helps guide the discourse around their activities. CAPP also displays balance between nature and humans in its advertisements. Oil extraction activities, as seen in the first section of this paper, are major sources of pollution and water contamination in Canada.

Pride in a Common Culture

The fourth and final myth elaborated in this study brings the idea of Canadian culture to the foreground. In the advertisements, there are elements that are clearly intended for a Canadian public as they are recognized as important when taken in their context. As mentioned in the National Identity section, Canadians are proud of their nationality. They are a nation that feels like it is positive to share their pride in their country. The elements elaborated in this section become signifiers to the signified of Canadian pride. Using Canadian pride as a signifier on the connotative level, CAPP creates the myth of being associated to and being part of the Canadian unity and pride. Four subthemes of pride are discussed in this section: Canadian audio cues, Canadian artefacts, Canadian apparel and finally, hockey.

The first example of myth of pride and unity is in the audio where there are many explicit mentions “Canada” or “Canadians” throughout the advertisements. These audio cues seek the appeal to and the awakening of a sense of pride and membership and belonging to the viewers. On average, the word “Canada” or “Canadian” is used five times per advertisement – which means that the word is mentioned about once every 6 seconds throughout the four videos. (*Pipeline Safety National* has 3 mentions, *Canadian Energy National* has 7, the *Commitment National* ad has 6 mentions and finally, *Innovation National* has 4 mentions). Visual elements in the videos, present as artefacts, also explicitly refer to Canadian culture. The use of a white maple leaf as the sign of support of Canada’s oil industry is a clear indication of the usage of Canadian pride since the maple leaf is a symbol dear to Canadians. The maple leaf is a known symbol representing Canada and is recognizable by every Canadian. As early as the 17th century, the maple leaf was adopted as an emblem on coat of arms and official badges across what would become known as Canada as of 1867 (Edwardson, 2008). Since then, the maple leaf was adopted on the national flag and as a recognizable element at the Olympics (“The History of the Canadian Maple Leaf”, 2013). Its use in almost every frame of the thirty seconds videos is explicit evidence that the advertisements are meant to pull at the emotional attachments citizens have for their country.

By using the maple leaf, CAPP normalizes the support of the controversial industry and attaches to a sense of national pride to that support. Another artefact associated with Canadian pride is the national flag. In the *Canadian Energy National* advertisement, the



Figure 23 - Pride I, *Canadian Energy National*, 0:02

video starts with the Canadian flag in the centre of the frame (Figure 23). The placement of

the flag connotes that the object is at the middle of the viewer’s universe (Kress & Van Leeuwen, 2006) and therefore that it is of high importance. By promoting the oil industry as important to Canada and Canadians, CAPP invites the viewer to think that their support is a Canadian duty.

It is also interesting to look at the apparel of the characters in the videos as a display of Canadian pride. As mentioned earlier, two characters are shown wearing the very “Canadian” toque (Figure 24). These winter hats are widely worn in Canada and they are recognized “as renowned Canadian accessories” (“Canadian olympic team closing ceremony wear unveiled”, 2006, para. 1). In addition to this hat, the ads highlight two other Canadian stereotyped attires. The plaid design denotes “Canadiennes”. This design is commonly used to represent lumberjacks and it has kept certain popularity in Canada (Mackinney-Valentin, 2012). A plaid design has been on three characters (Figure 25) and is seen, throughout the four advertisements, more than ten times. Taking into account that a lot of the individuals in the advertisements are workers and therefore wear overalls and suits, the fact that the plaid design appears onwards of ten times is significant. The last clothing fabric that denotes Canada is denim. The denim jacket



Figure 24 - Pride II, *Innovation National*, 0:01 - *Commitment National* – 0:01



Figure 25 - Pride III, *Canadian Energy National*, 0:09 - *Commitment National*, 0:22 - *Commitment National* – 0:01



Figure 26 - Pride IV, *Safety Pipeline National* – 0:05 - *Commitment National*, 0:01 - *Innovation National* – 0:01

has been deemed the “Canadian Tuxedo” (Sports, 2012). In 2012, the entire London Olympic cohort attended the closing ceremony wearing denim jackets (Sports, 2012) thus cementing the association between Canada and denim on the international sphere. Denim is a common fabric used throughout the video in the form of a jacket and jeans (Figure 26).

The last discussed Canadian cultural association in the ads is the game of hockey. For Canadians, as mentioned previously, hockey is associated with positive feelings and pride. This would explain why the hockey scenes in the advertisements are shown as an idealized ritual. The *Canadian Energy National* ad begins with the lights in an arena turning on. We then see the zamboni “cleaning”/wetting the ice, a necessary activity before anyone can skate on it. For any hockey player or hockey fan, this zamboni on ice is watched with excitement and anticipation; it is a positive experience. Hockey players are also depicted at three instances in the videos (Figure

27). Integrating hockey in the advertisements draws on national identity and not only promotes a positive attitude towards the cause being advertised but attaches the oil sands industry to a recognizable element seen at the core of being Canadian.



Figure 27 - Pride V, *Canadian Energy National*, 0:00 to 0:05 - *Innovation National*, 0:23

The oil sands industry benefits from creating the myth that they are associated with what it is to be Canadian. CAPP benefits from displaying unity and pride by normalizing their connection with what is common to all Canadians – being Canadian. However, the

common culture in the advertisements is displayed in a shallow way and lacks the depth of a multicultural society that is Canada. Canadian culture is so much more than denim, plaid and hockey. It is also different religions, cultures and traditions. Lack of diversity in the community representation is obvious. In a total of 74 characters throughout the advertisements, 59% were white men. It is clear that the advertisements are not targeted to minority groups. The reality of Canadian cultural pride is manipulated and used in the specific context of what matters to CAPP. The association seems to target the majority in society, the demography that will have interest and will have influence in the oil industry and its activities. CAPP does not need to please the entire Canadian population in order to have the upper hand in the society. Advertisements like the ones in the *Raise Your Hand* campaign can easily be seen as being patriotic. However, it is essential to see through that misconception and understand that CAPP is appealing to nationalistic feelings to guide their message of the importance of the oil industry in Canada.

In the analyzed advertisements, myths justify and give meaning to the activities surrounding the oil sands. The four found myths are used to give CAPP's interpretation of reality — an interpretation that is distorted and manipulated to favour politic and economic advancements of the industry. The myths portray the reality of the ruling class, which is why contradictions persist. Facts are interpreted differently by both groups owing to their differing motivations. While the four ideologies made explicit in this study are present in Canadian society, they are interpreted differently when it comes to the controversial subject of oil sands extraction. Anti-oil sands advocates cannot agree that oil sands can be associated with positivity, with responsibility, with balance or with pride since they believe that the world would be a better place without them. By perpetuating their association with the four

myths, CAPP maintains their success in the oil extractions activities. Semiotic research aims to visit power relations present in the myths and to critique them. CAPP takes power over Canadian ideologies in its advertising campaign. The myths present in the advertisements are used to harvest positive emotions and to advance the interests of the oil sands industry. The myths are manipulated but they remain familiar and comfortable to Canadian viewers.

Reflective Comments

As a general comment, semiotic analysis was a pertinent tool to analyse the desired elements. Semiotics allowed a critical perspective on the data that is consumed nationwide. The myth analysis brought forward interesting elements of ideology and power and semiotics was the ideal tool to use. The methods used were appropriate for the analysis since they were efficient when used. However, in the light of such limited space, the method used could have been more streamlined. The sampled population were also relevant to not only today's reader but also for tomorrow's reader that will look back on the historical events of the controversial subject of oil sands in Canada. However, the corpus of ads analysed for this study was excessively high. In a semiotic analysis, it is ideal to analyse every frame to dig deeper in the mythologies surrounding the entity. Fusch and Ness (2015) elaborate the terminology of thick data ("a lot of data" (p.4)) and rich data ("many-layered, intricate, detailed, nuanced" (p.4)). This study had too much of both thick and rich data. Four videos of 31 seconds contained over one hundred frames overall and an average of 300 semiotic signs each. To add to the limited reach of this study, an entire section on the operationalization of Canadian national identity had to be eliminated. The operationalization tool had been elaborated to determine National Unity drivers and specific dimensions on

Canadian culture. These elements would have been useful to determine how the explicated myths aligned to literature on Canadian nationalism.

Conclusion

This paper presents the results of a semiotic analysis of the CAPP's *Raise Your Hand* campaign. This series of advertisements by an oil industry lobby group began in the fall of 2015 and is part of the greater *Canada's Energy Citizen* initiative. The campaign is important to the CAPP as it is their voice within the discourse of the controversial subject of the bitumen sands industry in Canada. The purpose of the study presented in this research paper was to reveal how CAPP utilized Canadian identity to mobilize support for their industry. The exploration of Canadian myths was done by analysis four nationally broadcasted video advertisements part of the *Raise Your Hand* campaign.

Within the school of thought of semiotics, advertising campaigns reinforce already-existing ideologies and narratives present in society. Semiotics was used as a tool to uncover Canadian myths perpetuated in the lobby groups' advertisements. In doing so, the study reveals how an industry can use familiar ideologies to their advantage and how, at that moment, the industry holds power over its viewers. The study revealed four key myths present in the advertisements; positivity, responsibility, balance, and common culture. In the four videos, positivity is fostered with the help of background music, messages in the narration, the use of colour as well as smiling characters. The videos analysed also utilize the myth of responsibility by prompting the viewers to believe the industry is environmentally conscious in addition to being a part of local communities around Canada. The CAPP also displays and praises the industry's expertise and emphasises safety throughout their

campaign. The advertisements in question also exhibit different facets of the myth of balance; work and leisure, urban and nature and finally, between office and manual workers. All through the ads, scenes of both working individuals and characters enjoying leisure activities are shown. The same is true between urban landscapes and nature scenes and between white and blue collar workers. Finally, the CAPP harbours a nationalistic rhetoric by putting on display recognizable Canadian stereotypical components, like hockey, familiar landscapes, the Canadian flag, the maple leaf and articles of clothing like the toque, the jean jacket and the plaid shirts.

The four myths found in the advertisements are used to create positive emotions and encourage citizens to support the oil sands industry, which is portrayed as being an important part of Canada. CAPP uses superficial elements to display positivity, responsibility, balance and “Canadianness”. The reality remains that the oil sands industry is not indisputably reflective of any of those myths. It could be, for example, problematic to describe an environmentally harmful industry as responsible. The reality of oil rig workers’ lifestyle is not accurately depicted, and human activity perturbs nature in the oil sand regions which brings back into question the myth of balance put forward in the advertisements. Finally, the idea of a Canadian culture is complex and the way it is displayed in the campaign is superficial, even if Canadian traits are recognizable. In Roland Barthes’ field of semiotic, power is a key element associated with the use of myths. Uncovering myths is a way to understand power in society and a way to expose ideologies of the ruling class. In this particular study, the aim is to critically analyse texts of petroleum industries in Canada. The study reveals that, behind the myths put forward by CAPP, naturalizes the ideology of petrol extraction and of capital gain. Petrol extraction is a core link in Canadian capital gains and

therefore encouraging that activity favours the industries involved in the extraction. Exploring interests of the majority and understanding ideologies can be a source of power. Understanding underlying intentions allows a critical view on messages and ideas presented to us, but also helps develop the skills to utilize myths ourselves to benefit a cause, whether it is for personal gain or for a perceived greater good.

When taken in the context of the Canadian bitumen sands, a semiotic analysis gives insight into what Canadian myths resist changing times, and how these can be utilized to prescribe and foster certain feelings *vis-à-vis* a controversial issue. This study brings a new richness, not only to the communication field, but also to the fields of marketing and political science. To add to the richness of the present analysis, the omnipresent theme of energy would have been interesting to explore. Furthermore, research on how the displayed myths' feed back into Canadian myths and how they may offer a source of negotiation to current Canadian identity would be interesting venues to explore.

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Appendix 1 – Videos analysed

The screenshot shows the YouTube channel page for 'Oil and Gas Canada'. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the YouTube logo, a search bar, and buttons for 'Upload' and 'Sign in'. Below the navigation bar is a banner image featuring a collage of people holding up white handprints. The channel name 'Oil and Gas Canada' is displayed, along with a 'Subscribe' button and a subscriber count of 1,061. Below the channel name are navigation tabs for 'Home', 'Videos', 'Playlists', 'Channels', 'Discussion', and 'About'. The main content area shows a playlist titled 'Raise Your Hand - Fall 2015 Ads, National' with a thumbnail image of two people holding handprints. Below the playlist title are buttons for 'Play all', 'Share', and 'Save'. The playlist contains four videos, each with a thumbnail, title, channel name, and duration:

Video Number	Video Title	Channel	Duration
1	Pipeline Safety National	by Oil and Gas Canada	0:31
2	Canadian Energy National	by Oil and Gas Canada	0:31
3	Commitment National	by Oil and Gas Canada	0:31
4	Innovation National	by Oil and Gas Canada	0:31

Appendix 2 – Advertisement Transcriptions

Raise Your Hand – Fall 2015 Ads, National

1) “Pipeline Safety National” video ad – 0:31 min.

Time	Elements	Description
0:00	Visual	<p><u>Foreground: Character-</u> We see a smiling young white adult male, from below his chest up, with a blue/grey overall, with what seems like an electronic device/tool hanging from his front left chest pocket. He is wearing a white undershirt, white hard hat, safety sunglasses and black gloves. He is looking at the camera and his right hand is on his hips. He is barely moving until he raises his left hand with an open palm. His palm stops at about the height of the bottom of his face and about 30 centimetres from it. A white maple leaf is drawn, starting from the top peak of the leaf and circling counter clockwise until the leaf is completely drawn, on top of his open hand. The maple leaf is drawn with multiple thick white lines and the lines are constantly in movement. The leaf is not filled in so we see the full hand behind it.</p> <p><u>Background:</u> The young man is standing in front of a metal machine or structure in what seems to be a grass field. Behind the metal structure, the background is blurred but we can make out a forest, two circular buildings and what seems to be the round peak of a far away mountain. The sky is white/blue and there are 2 small white clouds on the right of the sky.</p>
	Writing	In the bottom right corner, in white, it is written: “Not actors. Real Canadians.”
	Audio	<p><u>Music:</u> The first notes of a folksy guitar and piano melody with accompanying harmonic non-lyric vocals can be heard.</p> <p><u>Voice:</u> A male voice is heard superimpose to the music. His voice is assertive but calm and slightly enthusiastic. His voice sounds American English with no discernible foreign accents. He starts: “As Canada’s oil and natural gas industry...” – frame changes.</p>
	Camera	The camera slightly and slowly moves from the left to the right of the frame.
0:02	Visual	<p><u>Foreground: Character –</u> A smiling middle aged white male can be seen from below his chest up, wearing a blue overall with a bright orange and yellow reflecting safety vest. He is wearing a white hard hat and safety sunglasses and a grey glove on his right hand. He is looking at the camera and standing still except for his rising right arm with an open palm hand. His hand is at a similar distance and height as the one in the previous frame. A white maple leaf is drawn overlaying his open hand, as it was in the previous frame.</p> <p><u>Background:</u> The background is a little blurred. The man is standing in front of a dozen rows of big white metal pipes and valves. He is in an</p>

		enclosed location has a fence and buildings can be seen behind the pipes. There is a grass field on top of the hill on the right side of the screen. A forest can be seen in the distance and the sky is blue with some white clouds.
	Writing	The white “Not actors. Real Canadians.” writing from the other frame is still present.
	Audio	<u>Music</u> : The music notes of the guitar and piano continue – the music stays consistent until the end of the ad. <u>Voice</u> : The male voice continues: “...we will never stop working...” – frame changes.
	Camera	The camera slightly and slowly moves from the right to the left of the frame.
0:03	Visual	<u>Foreground</u> : Character – A smiling Caucasian teenage and blond girl is seen from above her chest up, standing and looking at the camera. She is wearing a jean jacket with a white under shirt. She is carrying what seems to be a backpack, as we see the two black straps on her shoulders. She is seen slightly moving, maybe even slightly laughing, as she simply smiles and blinks her eyes. <u>Background</u> : The background is blurred. We can see that she is standing in front of a building with doors and windows. The walls of the building are brown/orange and the rest of it is white and grey (roof, window and door frames). Something resembling a statue is on top of the roof of the building.
	Writing	No writing in this frame.
	Audio	<u>Voice</u> : The male voice continues: “...to protect our communities...” – frame changes.
	Camera	The camera slightly and slowly moves from the left to the right of the frame.
0:05	Visual	<u>Foreground</u> : A body of water (seems like a lake or a river) takes up about three quarters of the frame. The water is dark and the rippled surface is reflecting the sun (maybe the rising or setting sun). The far right of the body of water is studded with a few big stones. The shore is next to those stones and is full with greenery – tall and wild green and red-ish grass and a few short trees. <u>Background</u> : There is a man’s silhouette about a third of the frame away from the viewer. He is knee deep in the water facing the left side of the frame. He is wearing tan pants with a red rolled-up long sleeved shirt. The man is seen casting a fishing pole in the water in front of him.
	Writing	No writing in this frame.
	Audio	<u>Voice</u> : The male voice continues: “...and our environment...” – frame changes.
	Camera	The camera is slightly and slowly moving from the bottom left of the screen to the upper right of the screen.
0:06	Visual	Full frame on a left hand holding a mechanical pencil over a terrain map. The map is full of thin black lines as well as some blue pale blue organic shapes and thick green, gray, dark blue and yellow lines. The hand, with the wrist in the upper right corner, is in the middle of the frame. It seems

		feminine and is of a white person. A silver band with diamonds and be seen on the ring finger of the hand. The person’s hand has short and unpainted nails. The hand is writing/drawing something on the map. The top and bottom of the frame is slightly blurred.
	Writing	No writing in this frame.
	Audio	<u>Voice</u> : The male voice continues: “That’s why before any pipeline...” – frame changes.
	Camera	Slight movement of the camera but stays centered on the hand and map.
0:07	Visual	Frame stays centered on the map and hand. The feminine hand stops writing and the fingers curl up with its contained pencil as another hand enters the frame from the upper left corner. The new hand points at something on the map. The new hand’s fingers’ nails are also short and unpainted.
	Writing	No writing in this frame.
	Audio	<u>Voice</u> : The male voice continues: “is built we...” – frame changes.
	Camera	The frame slightly moves but stays centered on the hands and map.
0:08	Visual	<p><u>Foreground</u>: Characters: Three young adults in the center of the frame, all standing and looking at the camera. We see them from half of their thighs up. The first person on the left of the frame is a young woman, wearing blue jeans and a white t-shirt that is half tucked inside her jeans. She has a purse slinged across her body. The woman is Caucasian and has long dark blonde hair. She is smiling and has her right arm raised, open palm like previous characters in this commercial. A drawn maple leaf is already drawn on top of her open palm. The drawn outline of the leaf slightly moves.</p> <p>Next to her, in the middle of the frame, stands a young adult male with his right hand also raised and open palmed with a drawn, moving maple leaf in front of it. He is Caucasian and is smiling. He is wearing blue jeans, a long sleeved light green/gray sweater with patterns that reminds camouflage wear and a red/burgundy toque. His left hand is in his pant pocket. When the frame first appears, he is seen opening his mouth and making an upwards motion with his raised hand in what seems to be mild excitement.</p> <p>The last character is on the right side of the frame and is a smiling Caucasian woman. She is wearing a lime green bandana that covers her hair, a blue and white gingham (checkered) long sleeve shirt with a white undershirt and jeans. Her left hand is raised with a moving white maple leaf drawn on her open hand.</p> <p><u>Background</u>: The three people are standing in an urban area, probably a city. They are standing between cream coloured buildings. We can see street lamps, red banner flags hanging from them, and trees in the background. A car and a bicycle can also be spotted.</p>
	Writing	In the bottom right corner, in white, it is written: “Not actors. Real Canadians.”
	Audio	<u>Voice</u> : The male voice continues: “...seek to build relationships with...” – frame changes.
	Camera	Slight movement by the camera.

0:10	Visual	<p><u>Foreground:</u> An older gentleman is seen standing in the middle of the frame, looking at the camera, beside an orange and black farming tractor, with no discernible company make. He is Caucasian, smiling and has white, short and backcombed hair. He is wearing a dark brown collard coat with a button-up gray and white patterned shirt and jeans. We can see him from slightly below his waist up. His right arm is extended so his hand can rest on the tractor and his left arm is raised and bent at about 90 degrees so that his open palmed hand is next to his face. A white, moving maple leaf is drawn in front of his open palm.</p> <p><u>Background:</u> The gentleman is standing in a field of dark looking grass/soil. On the edge of the field is a forest. The sky is clear and light blue.</p>
	Writing	In the bottom right corner, in white, it is written: “Not actors. Real Canadians.”
	Audio	<u>Voice:</u> The male voice continues: “...communities along its proposed path.” – frame changes.
	Camera	The camera slightly moves up and down the frame.
0:12	Visual	<p><u>Foreground:</u> On the bottom left of the frame, on a table, is a three-whole paper puncher as well as some other unrecognizable office supplies. A long rolled up paper is being unrolled by the woman in the background.</p> <p><u>Background:</u> The background is blurry at the beginning of the frame but as the paper unrolls, the background becomes in focus. A Caucasian man with dark brown hair and glasses is sitting on the left of the frame (behind the whole-puncher) and places his hands on the unrolled paper while looking at its content. He is wearing a black suit jacket, a light blue button-up undershirt and a dark blue and white checkered tie.</p> <p>Next to him is a standing Caucasian woman with mid-length brown hair. She does not appear to be wearing makeup and she is wearing a black suit jacket and a dark pink and black patterned undershirt. The collar of the shirt is round and is slightly below her collarbone. As she unrolls the paper with her right hand, she reaches down, mechanical pencil in hand, with her left hand. She leans forward and starts writing on the unrolled paper as it seems like she is talking to the man. Her gaze stays on the paper throughout the frame.</p> <p>The pair appears to be in an office area, with a map displayed on the wall in the background next to another paper the viewer can’t recognize. There are some monitors, what seem to be printers and some cabinets at the right edge of the frame.</p>
	Writing	No writing in this frame.
	Audio	<u>Voice:</u> The male voice continues: “Consulting with aboriginal communities ensures...” – frame changes.
	Camera	The camera slightly and slowly moves from the left side of the frame to the right side.
0:14	Visual	<p><u>Foreground:</u> An adult man stands in front of the camera and lifts his right hand with an open palm. A white, moving maple leaf is drawn over his hand. His left hand is in his pant pocket. We see him from the waist up. The, what seems to be, tanned Caucasian/slightly dark skinned man is</p>

		<p>wearing a blue suit jacket, with very light white checkered patterns. His undershirt is a white button-up shirt and he has a black, light brown, light blue and white patterned tie. He is facing the camera and is smiling. He has short dark brown hair on top of his hair while both sides of his head are shaved.</p> <p><u>Background:</u> The blurred background is of an urban area, with white/gray coloured buildings. We see a tree without leaves next to the man as well as a long row of parked bicycles. There are lampposts with red banners attached and the building closest to the frame has red panels in two of its windows. Two men can be seen walking away in the far left of the screen. As the frame moves, another person walks into sight and is walking down the street.</p>
	Writing	No writing in this frame.
	Audio	<u>Voice:</u> The male voice continues: "...local voices are heard during project development and ..." – frame changes.
	Camera	The frame moves from the left to the right of the frame.
0:17	Visual	The scene goes back to the frame prior with the man and the woman with the unrolled paper in the office space. The camera angle is the same as when the scene previously ended but now both characters are looking at the camera and smiling. The man has his left hand raised and his right hand on the table. The woman has her right hand raised and her left hand, with the pencil, on the table. Both of them have a white, drawn and moving maple leaf on their raised hand when this frame is seen. He is wearing a ring on his left ring finger.
	Writing	No writing in this frame.
	Audio	<u>Voice:</u> The male voice continues: "...the regulatory process." – frame changes.
	Camera	The camera slightly moves from the left to the right of the frame.
0:19	Visual	<p><u>Foreground:</u> Two men are standing, looking at the camera, in a field of medium-tall yellow grass behind their mountain bicycles (wide tires). Wind is making the grass at the front of the frame move. They are both fully in view, so they are seen entirely. The younger man is slightly in front of the middle-aged man. The younger man is standing in the middle of the frame. They are both wearing protective bicycle helmets and black gloves. The younger man is wearing a long sleeved black shirt under a light gray t-shirt with black athletic shorts. The older gentleman behind him is wearing a long sleeved black jacket and long green/khaki pants. They both have an arm raised with a drawn maple leaf over their hand – the right hand for the younger fellow and the left hand for the older gentleman. Their other hand is holding their bicycle.</p> <p><u>Background:</u> Beyond the yellow grass field, on the left side of the horizon, is a city skyline where many tall gray buildings rise. To the right of the horizon are hills with long rounded edges. The sky is light blue and clear.</p>
	Writing	No writing in this frame.
	Audio	<u>Voice:</u> The male voice continues: "Think energy developed the Canadian way is good for..." – frame changes.
	Camera	The camera very slightly moves left to right.

0:20	Visual	<p><u>Foreground:</u> A young Caucasian adult woman with long brown hair is seen from the waist up on the middle-right of the frame, looking at the camera. Her hair is place on the right side of her face and the wind is slightly blowing it on that same side. She is wearing a v-neck dark gray shirt, under a light gray hoodie, under a black leather jacket, opened to under her chest. She is wearing minimum makeup and she has small pearl earrings. She is smiling and her right arm is raised and her open palm is overlaid with the white moving maple leaf.</p> <p><u>Background:</u> The woman stands in a city street where the bottom of buildings can be seen. The background is blurred and nothing but the buildings is present.</p>
	Writing	No writing in this frame.
	Audio	<u>Voice:</u> The male voice continues: "...Canada? Then raise your hand..." – frame changes.
	Camera	Slight movement from the left to the right of the frame.
0:22	Visual	<p><u>Foreground:</u> A young slightly dark skinned woman stands on the left side of the frame with her left hand up, being overlaid with the moving maple leaf drawing. She is shown from the chest up, smiling at the camera. She has minimal makeup and is wearing pearl earring with a black turtle neck with a tan jacket. She has shoulder length black hair and blue eyes. The wind is slightly blowing her hair back.</p> <p><u>Background:</u> The woman is standing in front of a row of buildings and the background is very blurred. It seems to be nice out. A figure is seen walking in the background.</p>
	Writing	No writing in this frame.
	Audio	<u>Voice:</u> The male voice continues: "...and show your support by joining Canada's..." – frame changes.
	Camera	Slight movement from left to the right of the frame.
0:23	Visual	<p><u>Foreground:</u> The outline of a right hand is drawn with multiple thick red lines. The hand is open palmed and fingers are outreached. The hand's outline's drawn lines are in constant movement.</p> <p>The <u>background</u> is almost completely white barring the upper left corner and the lower right corner, which are a subtle faded light blue colour</p>
	Writing	In large bold letters, underneath the open palm, is the website: "ENERGYCITIZENS.CA"
	Audio	<u>Voice:</u> The male voice continues: "...Energy Citizens..." – frame changes.
	Camera	The camera and framing are completely still.
0:24	Visual	<p><u>Foreground:</u> The hand from the previous frame changes to the outline of a red maple leaf, drawn with the same style of thick red lines. The hand starts changing from the middle finger circling counter clockwise until it is completely replaced by the leaf. The lines of the maple leaf are in constant movement.</p> <p><u>Background:</u> The same white and slightly blue from the previous frame is used.</p>
	Writing	The same red bold lettering is used from the previous frame.

	Audio	Voice: The male voice continues: "...at energycitizens.ca" – frame changes.
	Camera	The camera and framing are completely still.
0:27	Visual	In the <u>foreground</u> are three lines of text in the middle of the frame. Same <u>background</u> as previous two frames.
	Writing	The first line of text, which is the smallest of the three, is written in medium-light gray and reads: "A message from". The second line, in big red letters in the center of the frame reads: "CAPP" – the "A" being a half simple shaped red maple leaf – the CAPP logo. The third and last line of text reads, in bold black letters: "Canada's Oil & Natural Gas Producers".
	Audio	Only the ending notes of the music are heard.
	Camera	The camera and framing are completely still.

Appendix 3 – Analysis table

Denotative Inventory (signs)	Potential semiotic meaning in literature	Potential national identity meaning	Connotative Inventory (myths)	Themes