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(continued)
For the Love of Joe: The Language of Starbucks

CONSTANCE M. RUZICH

Early coffee, jazz, and cafe life: Starbucks' coffee shops have become America's public living and dining rooms, or as company founder Howard Schultz describes his store, "an extension of people's front porch" (Sewer and Bonamici). As of January 2004, there were over 7,500 Starbucks locations in 28 countries (Sewer and Bonamici), and based on company predictions, some believe that "the number of Starbucks locations worldwide could someday rival the total of McDonald's restaurants." (Bishop) This paper will examine the ways in which Starbucks' use of language appeals to more than our craving for caffeine. In his book Bobos in Paradise, David Brooks argues that the dominant tone of American culture has been set by America's new educated elite, or "bohos," a term mixing bohemians with bourgeois (11). Brooks notes that bohos have "combined the countercultural styles and the achievement cultures into one social ethos..." (12). The purpose of this paper is to explore how the language of Starbucks appeals to the boho ethos and the ways in which it is socially constructed as the "first taste tests" offered for sale in their stores.

The history of coffee production, consumption, and advertising has less to do with love, however, than with conquest, colonialism, and capitalism. The drink appears to have been brewed first in Ethiopia, and achieved widespread popularity in the Islamic world during the

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