

FICTITIOUS PEOPLE AS FOOD  
BRAND ICONS: THEIR ROLE AND  
VISUAL REPRESENTATION IN  
CONTEMPORARY INTERNATIONAL  
FOOD PACKAGING

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of  
the requirements of the University of  
Brighton for the degree of Doctor of  
Philosophy

March 2014

The University of Brighton

## **ABSTRACT**

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2014

FICTITIOUS PEOPLE AS FOOD BRAND ICONS: THEIR ROLE AND VISUAL REPRESENTATION IN CONTEMPORARY INTERNATIONAL FOOD PACKAGING.

This thesis focuses upon fictitious people as food brand icons and their role and visual representation in contemporary international food packaging. It presents a new lens that focuses upon the visual reading of examples. Through comparative analysis of historical and contemporary British, Canadian and American examples primarily, ones that share comparable roles and visual characteristics, the study considers its hypothesis: a common visual formula operates across time and cultures in the creation and enduring omnipresence of icons that *appear* as real. It considers how shared visual codes provide identification of types and through such it presents a taxonomy of fictitious brand icons based upon their visual identity. The thesis considers, in relation to notions of storytelling, how examples *read* and are understood as real upon packaging and within wider commercial, social and cultural contexts. It considers how they relate to real people and roles through specific consideration of female home economist/ consumer advisor examples. The thesis focuses upon the American food brand icon Betty Crocker to consider how she may be understood as symbolic of a host of enigmatic examples.

The thesis advances the study of packaging, branding, culinary history and design history through its original focus and methodological approach which evidently have been neglected previously in academic study. It braids interdisciplinary perspectives to present an original understanding of brand icons and packaging. It determines brand icon as key term; to address the need for a clear definition and understanding. The study's visual reading and taxonomy present an original framework that assert that visual codes create complex commercial and cultural fictitious personalities that can be deliberately elusive yet often appear as real. In particular, its interrogation of specific fictitious brand icons as enigmatic commercial home economists/consumer advisors confirms the existence of a commercial sisterhood; clone-types that appear to replicate their roles and appearance via visual codes that endure and appeal.

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## GLOSSARY

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The thesis includes a large range of images that are used to help illustrate key points and examples of the thesis which the reader may otherwise be unfamiliar with owing to the ephemeral nature and limited availability of historical and culture specific packaging examples and materials.

In many instances the packaging examples illustrated are resized and cropped to highlight specific details of their design as relevant to the focus discussion. The majority of the images relate to the packaging collection of the author. Where images are from other sources they are referenced accordingly and the author thanks and acknowledges the owners.

All of the photographs unless identified otherwise have been created by the author: collection K.Hardie. The author acknowledges all brands and manufacturers, as identified, in the inclusion of the images.

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## PREFACE

This thesis provides comparative critical analysis of the visual representation of people and notably fictitious people brand icons on a range of international historical and contemporary food packaging examples. It is based primarily upon, and is informed by, my extensive collection of international food and non-food packaging, cookery publications and women's magazines. The thesis's selected case studies and illustrative content represent a small percentage of the examples collated and researched. Many examples were investigated that illustrated and represented this study's key findings: notably examples identified in wider collections held by archives and museums internationally, including, importantly, the General Mills Inc. Archives, USA. It was thus a delightful challenge to determine the most pertinent examples for this study's focus.

This PhD study developed initially from my love of packaging and my avid collection of historical and contemporary international examples. I first started collecting packaging in c.1982. The on-going collection comprises food and non-food packaging primarily from Britain, Europe, Asia, Canada, South East Asia and America.<sup>1</sup>

Since 1987 I have used this collection in my professional work as a Higher Education academic: a Graphic Design Historian, teaching design history and cultural studies. My pedagogic approach to the study of graphic design and design history has always embraced and celebrated object-based learning and I continue to use my collection as a learning and teaching resource. In addition to the use of my packaging collection in my teaching, in 1987 I created the Arts University at Bournemouth's packaging collection as a teaching and research resource. Some examples from this collection are discussed within this thesis.<sup>2</sup>

My investigation of packaging design subsequently developed from my collection. My empirical study and critical analysis of packaging design and its history developed as my semiotic analysis of its visual surfaces identified an

---

<sup>1</sup> Examples include packaging from across a range of product areas including medical items, alcohol, soft drink, healthcare and beauty items.

<sup>2</sup> This collection developed and other design artefacts were also collected. In 2001 the collection was awarded registered museum status by the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council. In 2007 the museum was renamed Museum of Design in Plastics to reflect its core plastics focus.

area of research that I found particularly intriguing: the depiction of people on packaging and notably people as brand icons. The focus of the collection upon people on packaging was stimulated by the identification of the regular graphic presence of established names and faces of some people and the emergence and transitory appearance and disappearance of others. From c.2000 my collection focused increasingly upon people on packaging and in particular fictitious people. As my research progressed the collection developed through regular international purchases and the donation of examples from manufacturers as a result of empirical investigations to anchor information. The collection resulted in my research at PhD level as I recognised that this was an interesting area of design and one not extensively considered by other researchers.

As a unique and important physical and digital resource the collection provoked questions that became central to my thesis. Packaging examples raised numerous questions regarding the depiction of people and the existence of fictitious and enigmatic characters that initial investigation of established literature could not answer and wider packaging collections did not evidence or address. My unique packaging collection informs and illustrates this thesis.

The thesis is based upon packaging examples drawn primarily from my collection of approximately 2500 international artefacts that include cereal packaging; fruit wrappers and labels; cheese labels; British, American and Canadian brand originators" products; British, North American and Japanese and Iranian confectionery; Asian tobacco products; celebrity endorsed brands and medicinal products. The diverse examples selected for consideration in this thesis are united by their depiction of people that are used as selling device upon their surfaces. Further examples from wider product ranges provide comparative base.<sup>3</sup> A range of comparative examples relating to the focus and scope of the study were selected to evidence and illustrate the key issues addressed. Collated examples evidenced patterns in marketing approaches and pack designs: thematic repetition of visual people motifs that gave birth to this

---

<sup>3</sup> The collection includes alcohol, Chinese medicine packaging; tobacco, including Indian bindi etc. Wider non-food brand icons were also studied to identify the extent of the wider appearance of examples across contemporary markets.

study. Specific packaging examples were selected through the identification of archetypes that best illustrated the core issues and helped evidence the study's findings. In particular comparative examples from the UK, Canada and America established the specific focus. The collection enabled empirical scrutiny of physical packaging examples: the examination of packaging surfaces that is critical to a holistic understanding of the marketing messages played out across the designs.

This thesis presents a unique consideration of diverse yet comparable people on packaging and brand icon examples through its original taxonomy: a framework that offers identification and interrogation of brand icon types based upon their visual characteristics. From its consideration of comparative visual types the thesis identified the existence of distinct visual codes and certain visual formulae in the depiction of brand icons. Whilst some established work to date, such as that by Dotz and Husain;<sup>4</sup> Sacharow<sup>5</sup> and Morgan<sup>6</sup> and Hill,<sup>7</sup> has drawn similarities between brand icons the extent to which the visual characteristics of examples has been scrutinised has remained limited thus this study helps to address this gap in part.

Whilst established research has considered the conundrum of fictitious brand characters in advertising, with focus notably upon the cartoon character and also the role of the fictitious home economist brand advisor, the investigation of the *visual representation of fictitious people brand icons* on food packaging has, as this study determined, remained largely a neglected area of investigation. This study therefore draws from and builds upon established studies and industry practice, and considers notions of narratology and folklore, to offer fresh insight and new focus upon the consideration of the visual identity of fictitious examples.

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<sup>4</sup> Warren Dotz and Masud Husain, *Meet Mr. Product: The Art of the Advertising Character* (San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 2003).

<sup>5</sup> Stanley Sacharow, *Symbols of Trade* (New York: Art Direction Book Company, 1982).

<sup>6</sup> Hal Morgan, *Symbols of America* (New York: Viking Penguin, 1986).

<sup>7</sup> Daniel Delis Hill, *Advertising to the American Woman 1900-1999* (Columbus: Ohio State U. Press 2002).

This thesis considered key academic work within a variety of fields of study that relate to brand icons in conjunction with brand and packaging industry perspectives in its consideration of its foci. Key established studies by Stern;<sup>8</sup> Phillips;<sup>9</sup> Callcott and Lee<sup>10</sup>; Callcott;<sup>11</sup> and Phillips and Lee<sup>12</sup> that noticeably relate to *characters* used in advertising have informed the thesis. They have enabled its consideration of examples within the context of packaging design and help position this thesis as distinct and different as its foci, approach and research examples offer fresh perspective and findings.

The thesis is the result of significant empirical research that has benefited from the generosity of food manufacturers, brand owners and packaging and brand designers in their contribution of marketing information and specific insight regarding the creation and role of brand icons. The corporate owners and guardians of brand icons have provided invaluable insight into the commercial and cultural value of their trademarks that often operate across diverse markets. This thesis has considered icons from across a number of companies to present an original comparative analysis of examples. Whilst commercial sensitivities have on occasion limited access to brand information, the contribution of industry professionals to this study is acknowledged and thanked accordingly. Likewise the considerations of key culinary historians including Driver;<sup>13</sup> Cooke;<sup>14</sup> Shapiro<sup>15</sup> and Marks<sup>16</sup> who have examined the existence of

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<sup>8</sup> Barbara, B. Stern, "The Brand Person: A Literary View of Source Characteristics and Advertising Effects," *American Academy of Advertising Proceedings of the 1991 conference of the American Academy of Advertising*. Ed. Holman, Rebecca, D'Arcy. Masius, Benton and Bowles (1991):136-138.

<sup>9</sup> Barbara J. Phillips, *The Role of Advertising Trade Characters in Forming Product Perceptions* (U. of Texas, 1993); Phillips. "Advertising and the Cultural Meaning of Animals," Ed. Kim Corfman and John Lynch, *Advances in Consumer Research* 23 (1994):354-360; Phillips, "Defining Trade Characters and their Role in American Popular Culture, *Journal of Popular Culture* 29.4 (Spring, 1996):143-158.

<sup>10</sup> Margaret, F. Callcott and Wei-Na Lee, "A Content Analysis of Animation and Animated Spokes-Characters in Television Commercials." *Journal of Advertising* 23 Dec. (1994):1-12.

<sup>11</sup> Margaret, F. Callcott, "Establishing the Spokes-character in Academic Enquiry: Historical Overview and Framework for Definition," *Advances in Consumer Research*. Ed. Frank R. Kardes and Mmita Sujun, *Advances in Consumer Research* 22 (1995):145-151.

<sup>12</sup> Barbara J. Phillips and We-Na Lee, "Interactive Animation: Exploring Characters on the Internet," *Journal of Current Issues and Research in Advertising* 1.27 (2005):1-17.

<sup>13</sup> Elizabeth Driver, *Culinary Landmarks: a Bibliography of Canadian Cookbooks 1825-1949* (Toronto: U. of Toronto Press Incorporated, 2008).

<sup>14</sup> Nathalie Cooke, *Consuming Fictions: Cooking Personalities and the North American Imagination*, 2008. Cooke. n.pag. Web. 22 Jan. 2004.

commercial fictitious home economists within the contexts of Food Studies and Culinary History have supported this study. Discussions with Driver<sup>17</sup> and Cooke<sup>18</sup> regarding the fictitious nature of some American and Canadian examples was particularly helpful. However this thesis's study of the visual representation of brand icon examples on packaging provides original focus and findings.

The thesis has thus braided industry practice and perspectives with theoretical standpoints from across key disciplines in its approach that considers both brand icons and food packaging design in a fresh and original way and determines brand icon as key term to identify the distinct brand device used by companies.

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<sup>15</sup> Laura Shapiro, "I Guarantee: Betty Crocker and the Woman in the Kitchen," *From Betty Crocker to Feminist Food Studies: Critical Perspectives on Women and Food*. Ed. Arlene Avakian Voski and Barbara Haber (Amherst and Boston: U. of Massachusetts Press, 2005).

<sup>16</sup> Susan Marks, *Finding Betty Crocker: the Secret Life of America's First Lady of Food* (New York: Simon, 2005).

<sup>17</sup> Driver, "Fictitious Home Economists," USA, Telephone interview 17 Apr. 2006.

<sup>18</sup> Cooke, "Fictitious Home Economists" Canada, Personal interview. 4 May 2009.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

I thank supervisor Professor Jonathan Woodham and University of Brighton staff that have helped me and the Arts University at Bournemouth and the University of Brighton for their support. I thank all those who have helped me in my research.

*Thanks are due to contacts who have offered help in relation to the research of brand icons and packaging design:*

Professor Robert M. MacGregor, Bishop's University, Canada.

Professor Nathalie Cooke, McGill University, Canada.

Elizabeth Driver, Montgomery's Inn Museum, Toronto, Canada.

Eve Johnson, Vancouver.

Professor Barbara J. Phillips, University of Saskatchewan, Canada.

Vicky Perlman, Manager, Information Center Crain Communications Inc. USA.

David Altschul, Character, Portland, USA.

Chris Mitchell, Epic Icons, UK.

Masud Husain, Graphic designer and author, USA.

Howard Boasberg, Executive Director, Advertising Icon Museum, USA.

Jeff Bremser, Executive Vice President. Bernstein-Rein Advertising, Inc., USA.

My thanks go to all the representatives of the many companies internationally who have responded generously to numerous questions and have provided material to inform and support my research. I am especially grateful to:

The staff of General Mills Inc., Minneapolis, Minnesota, USA for help regarding information about Betty Crocker and their help in my use of the company's archive:

Suzy Goodsell, Manager of Internal Communications and Archive.

Isabel Sanz, Archivist.

Sue Lappi, Archivist.

Kelly Thompson, Thompson, Kelly, Manager, Product Service Manager,  
General Mills Test Kitchens.

Alesia Feiertag, Business Information Researcher, Hill Consulting Group, USA.

Katie Dishman, former Archivist, General Mills, USA.

Pam Becker, Marketing.

Alison Vincett, Quality Assurance.

Thanks are due to those who have helped me access information from libraries, archives and collections:

Pam Langdown, Manager of Museum of Design in Plastic (MoDiP), Arts University at Bournemouth, UK.

Nina Kirk, Senior Library Assistant, Arts University at Bournemouth, UK.

Anne Armitage, Archivist: American Museum in Bath, UK.

Sarah Foden, Information Manager, Archivist, Cadbury's Archive, UK.

Chloe Veale, Archive and Library Collections Manager: History of Advertising Trust Archive, UK.

Sarah Hutcheon, Reference Librarian, Schlesinger Reference Library, Harvard University, USA.

Ken Beck, Public Relations. Museum of Television and Radio, New York, USA.

Lexi Lee, Koch Curatorial Fellow, DeCordova Museum and Sculpture Park, Lincoln, Massachusetts. USA.

Linda Mc Shannock, Curator of the Minnesota History Society Museums' Collections, Minnesota History Centre, St. Paul, Minnesota, USA.

Lesley Owen-Edwards, Senior Archivist, Unilever Historical Archives, UK.

Patrick Pfundstein, Supervisor, Mill City Museum, USA.

Robert Opie, Museum of Brands, Packaging and Advertising, UK.

Margaret Rose, General Manager & Head of Research, History of Advertising Trust, UK.

Laura Salverson, Manager, Mill City Museum, USA.

Susan Strange, Reference Archivist, Archives Center, National Museum of American History, USA.

Archivists at McCord Museum of Canadian History, Canada.

Victoria Dickenson, Executive Director, McCord Museum of Canadian History, Canada.

M.J. Andrews, Archivist, Centre for Ephemera Studies, U. of Reading, UK.

Katie McGowan, Archives Graduate Assistant, Penn State Harrisburg Library, Pennsylvania State University Libraries, USA.

Margaret Moles, Archivist, Wiltshire and Swindon History Centre, UK.

Alex Hutchinson, Heritage Assistant, Nestlé Heritage, UK.

Paul Dryburgh, Borthwick Institute for Archives, U. of York, UK.

*Thanks are due to those who have provided help regarding specific companies, brands and their icons:*

Jennifer Askew-Cummins, Little Debbie® brand, McKee Foods Corp., USA.

Bob Yates, Owner, Tunnell Brewery, UK.

Michael Aaronson, Managing Director, *Elsa's Story*, Israel.

Alan Adler, Joint Managing Director, Doughology, UK.

Mike Ashton, Managing Director. Enterprise Brands Ltd, (*Lonny's* brand), UK.

Thierry Balas, founder & owner of *Bella Lula* brand, France.

Thomas H.Batty, Consumer Services, Pillsbury/General Mills Inc., USA.

Wessel Brand, Director Sales and Marketing (Ouma Greyvensteyn), Nola Foods, South Africa.

Lorraine Brocklehurst, Director Columbine Cakes Limited (Four Anjels), UK.

Jonathan Burrell, Brand Manager, *Elsa's Story*. Petty Wood and Co. Ltd., UK.

Isabel Butcher, Planner, Leo Burnett Agency, UK.

Alan Cameron, Randak Design, UK.

Carol Carey, Campbell's Consumer Relations Department, UK.

Guieseppe Chiapinelli, Senior Brand Manager, Birds Eye Limited, UK.

John Curran, Vice President, Deputy General Counsel, Land O' Lakes, USA.

Consumer Relations Department, Quaker, UK.

Consumer Services, Cadburys, UK.

Susan Cotton, Marketing, Tryton Foods. (Aunt Bessie), UK.

Ron Davies, Creative and Marketing Services Manager, Kellogg Company, UK.

Basil Dean, Devon Rose meats, UK.

Peter Dee, Marketing Director: Brand Image, Diageo, Netherlands.

Mark DeLa Torre, Chief Executive, Juanitas Foods, USA.

Brian Delgrado, Communications Manager, Land O'Lakes Brand, USA.

Caroline Eikland, Brand Manager: IFA salt pastiller, Nidar, Norway.

Andrew Elder, Brand Manager: Loyd Grossman Brand, Premier Foods, UK.

Esther Galan, Marketing manager, Biloxi Foods, USA.

Jill Gent, Assistant Section Manager: Dry Goods, Waitrose (Bournemouth), UK.  
Simon Go, Hong Kong.  
Zoe Godfrey, Interbrand, UK.  
John M.Gray, President, Bubbies of San Francisco, Inc., USA.  
Mary Green, Re: Aunt Bessie; Tryton Foods, UK.  
„Uncle“ George Haddad, owner and founder Pita Gourmet, Handi Foods Limited, Canada.  
Douglas Haggarty, Purchasing Manager, Thomas Tunnock Limited, UK.  
Bruce Hale, Bruce Hale Design, USA.  
Shirley Hall, Consumer response representative. MultiFoods (PET milk), USA.  
Sharon Healey, Marketing Assistant, Zed Candy, Ireland.  
Kevin Hudson, Consumer Care Advisor, Unilever, Interbrand, UK.  
Laura Jameson, Complaints Administrator, Kerry Foods Limited, Ireland.  
Nancy Johnson, Consumer Services, Mars Uncle Ben“s Inc., USA.  
Tara Johnson, Marketing, General Mills Inc., USA.  
Marika Kelokari, Corporate Communications, „Elovena“, Raisio, Finland.  
Samaneh Kermani, Kermani Gaz Company, Iran.  
Andrew, Knowles, Chairman, James Knowles Ritchie, UK.  
Abbie Leeson, Manager, The Ginger People, USA.  
Lawrence Mallinson, Great Uncle Cornelius brand, James White Drinks, UK.  
Amy Mariner, Designer, Bernstein-Rein Advertising, Inc., USA.  
Kjell Manum, Marketing, Nidar AS, Norway.  
Rhonda Lesinski, Senior Brand Manager, Del Monte Foods Inc., USA.  
Rachel McColl, Assistant Brand Manager, Aunt Bessie“s Limited, UK.  
Rose A. Magdziarz, Consumer Affairs: Morton Salt, USA.  
Jonathan Mendel, Brand Manager: Mrs. Elswood, Empire Foods Brokers Limited, UK.  
Minara, Minara Foods Limited, UK.  
Miguel Moral, Tapatio Hot Sauce, USA.  
Bettina Neumann, Brandt Zwieback- Schokoladen GmbH + Co. KG, Germany.

Sandra Oliver, Editor „Food History News“.

Katherine O’Neil, Manager Communications and Community Initiatives,  
Smucker Foods of Canada Corporation, Canada.

William Opie, Managing Director, Opies, UK.

Lana Peckic, Marketing, Podravka d.d., Croatia.

Simon Pollock, Marketing Section, Betty Crocker, General Mills, UK.

Rachel Prior, Account Manger Birdseye, James Knowles Ritchie, UK.

Becky Renfro Borbolla, Renfro Foods, USA.

Emma Ridley, Assistant Product Manager, Kavli UK Ltd, UK.

P. Robby, Mrs. Field’s Consumer Services, USA.

Tim Ryan, Brand Manager, John Bullers, Green Isle Foods Limited, Ireland.

Antoinette Savill, Savill Brand, Wellwoods Food Limited, UK.

Emelie Schuttevaer, Brand Manager Identity, Hema, Netherlands.

W. Scott Patterson, W. Vice President, Kerr Bros. Limited, UK.

Daniel Skellington, Technical Manager, Farmhouse Foods Limited, UK.

Stabburet Consumer Services, Norway.

Suchart Pasaprates, Executive Director, Phiboonchai Maepranom Thai Chilli  
Paste Co. Ltd, Thailand.

Ken Tan, Head of Graphic Design, Limkokwing University, Malaysia.

Betty Thomas, Consumer relations, Nestle & General Mills Cereal Partners, UK.

Katie Towers, Marketing Manager, Terence Stamp Collection, Buxton Foods,  
UK .

Anna Trapido, Marketing, Ouma Grevensteyne brand, Nola Foods, South Africa

Carrie Trauscht, F&F Foods, Inc., USA.

Glenna Vance, Director, Red Star Yeast, Lesaffre Yeast Corporation, USA.

Barry Vincent, Marketing Manager M H Foods, UK.

Debbie W, Consumer Relations Representative, Smucker Foods of Canada.

Abby Wilson, Technical Manager, Farmhouse Fare Limited. UK.

Kip Winter-Cox, Head of Marketing-Cold Eat and Produce, Baakavör Ltd. UK.

Rachel Wood, Director, The Collaborators, UK.

Janet Woodward, Antoinette Savill Brand, Wellwoods Food Limited, UK.

Hephzibah Yohannan, Eugene Halliday Society, UK.

I thank the organisers and audiences that have offered support and advice as a result of the papers I have presented to test and to develop my research and ideas at the following conferences and events:

“Telling Tales? Packaging Text – Writing on Design”, *Writing Design: Object: Process: Discourse: Translation*, *Design History Society Annual Conference*, Hertfordshire U., Hatfield. 3-5 Sept., 2009.

“Food packaging Telling tales?– real or fictitious?” at the 27<sup>th</sup> Annual *Perspectives on Contemporary Legend Conference*, International Society of Contemporary Legend Research (ISCLR ), Baddeck, Nova Scotia June 3-7 2009.

“The Betty phenomenon: the sisterhood of fictitious home economist as food brand characters”, at the Culinary Landmarks: A conference to celebrate the publication of Elizabeth Driver’s *Culinary Landmarks: A Bibliography of Canadian Cookbooks, 1825–1949*, U. of Toronto, Canada, 3 May 2009.

“All Consuming Kitsch: From Elvis to Mr. Whippy”, at the International Association of Art Historians Annual Conference, U. of Bristol, 31 Mar. - 2 Apr. 2005.

“But who is Betty Crocker?: the existence of „real“ and „unreal“ people and personalities in contemporary international packaging” at the 22<sup>nd</sup> *Annual Perspectives on Contemporary Legend Conference*, International Conference for the International Society of Contemporary Legend Research (ISCLR ), U. of Aberystwyth, 21-24 Jul. 2004.

“The Big Picture Show””, MPhil/PhD student show, U. of Brighton, Jul., 2003

Guest lectures to undergraduate students at Bath Spa University College (January, 2005), King Alfred’s Winchester (27 Mar. 2003), Southampton Institute (25 Mar. 2003).

“But who is Betty Crocker?” at the Media, Communications and Cultural Studies Association (MeCCSA) Conference, U. of Sussex, Brighton. 19-21 Dec., 2003.

Various research presentations to colleagues, Art University at Bournemouth Research Forum 2003 - 2006.

“But who is Betty Crocker? the existence of „real“ and „unreal“ people and personalities in contemporary food packaging.” at the Design History Society Annual Conference, U. of Aberystwyth, Sep., 2002.

I thank all students who have helped me in the translation of international packaging and who have provided me with some great examples I otherwise would have been unaware of.

Notably:

I thank Andrew Ford.

I thank my family and ultimately my parents Peter and Jean Hardie.

Kirsten Hardie, 2014.

## **Declaration**

I declare that the research contained in this thesis, unless otherwise formally indicated within the text, is the original work of the author. The thesis has not been previously submitted to this or any other university for a degree, and does not incorporate any material submitted for a degree.

Signed: Kirsten Hardie

Dated: March 2014

## CHAPTER 1

This chapter presents the introduction to this doctoral study. It delineates the focus, scope and key research questions and provides the general outline of the thesis.

### 1.1. INTRODUCTION

This thesis provides original critical interrogation of the visual representation of people on food packaging and in particular the existence of fictitious people as food brand icons and their role and appearance in contemporary international food packaging. It considers how enigmatic fictitious examples that appear as real people exist as a marketing tool: how they relate to the use of images of other people as types on packaging and how they relate to and reflect social and cultural contexts beyond their packaging presence. The thesis determines and asserts brand icon as key term, to address the need for a clear definition and understanding of this particular marketing tool, in the investigation of how such people exist. The thesis presents a new lens that focuses upon the visual reading of the appearance of people-types, and specifically fictitious people brand icons that *appear* and *appeal* as real on packaging. It considers primarily contemporary international examples with reference to historical examples. It interrogates examples in relation to its hypothesis that a common visual formula operates across time and cultures in the creation and enduring omnipresence of people types, and in particular fictitious people brand icons. Notably it focuses upon the comparative analysis of contemporary international brand icons that share comparable roles and visual characteristics. These exemplars are used to evidence and affirm that shared visual codes identify certain people brand icon types: that their visual identities carry meaning, cultural and commercial values, which can transcend historical and cultural boundaries of language and identity. Through the interrogation of examples, to consider how meaning is imbued within and derived from their graphic forms, a new taxonomy of people-types based upon their graphic identity is presented. Notably it considers the existence and position of fictitious people food brand icons. The thesis identifies visual codes and asserts that these help create complex commercial and

cultural characters and brand icons that can be deliberately elusive yet widely understood.

The thesis addresses five key overarching research questions.

1. Why do brands use images of people on food packaging and how do they relate to and reflect social and cultural contexts beyond their packaging presence?
2. What terminology and classification can be used to define and position the use of images of people on packaging, and particularly those used to identify and promote a brand?

The core foci of this thesis:

3. How are brand icon examples visually represented and read? Do they share coded visual characteristics that can be understood across time and culture?
4. Why do fictitious people as a brand marketing tool exist and endure visually upon food packaging and are they represented and interpreted as fictitious?
5. What roles do fictitious people brand icons play and how do they relate to each other?

Whilst fictitious brand icons appear on packaging and endure and proliferate across a range of commercial contexts, working nationally and some internationally,<sup>1</sup> for example Aunt Bessie (c.1995- ,UK)<sup>2</sup> and Aunt Jemima (c.1890- ,USA),<sup>3</sup> hitherto examples have not been grouped together and scrutinized in the way that this study presents. Whilst this thesis does not aim to

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<sup>1</sup> Some examples are country and culture specific and do not relate to, or operate across, wider international markets.

<sup>2</sup> Aunt Bessie is the fictitious icon created in 1995 by Tryton Foods. Aunt Bessie's Limited is now part of the William Jackson Food Group, UK.

<sup>3</sup> Aunt Jemima is the American brand icon created in 1889 by the Pearl Milling Company which became the Aunt Jemima Mills Company and was subsequently acquired by The Quaker Oats Company in 1926. Her visual image was created in 1890 and has subsequently changed throughout her life, notably in 1989, with an update and revision to her social and cultural depiction.

be a complete and exhaustive study of all people-types and fictitious people brand icons, it does seek to provide a firm foundation and framework, through case study examples, from which further study may develop. In particular, one brand icon type is examined: the *female fictitious commercial home economist/customer service advisor*, a type identified by the author, presented as a case study to provide comparative scrutiny of examples that evidence shared visual codes.<sup>4</sup> It considers the complexity of their relationship with packaging and how they relate to, and are rooted in, real counterparts and professional roles. It focuses upon Betty Crocker,<sup>5</sup> the brand icon of American food company General Mills, Inc., for it is her visual presence (and disappearance in c.2004) and reappearance (2012) upon packaging that set the conundrum that provoked this study: a 2003 Betty Crocker cake mix box<sup>6</sup> that quizzed “Who is Betty Crocker?”: her image and name featured, her work identified, but her identity and provenance remained unexplained.<sup>7</sup> This thesis declares Betty as an archetype fictitious people brand icon: a commercial phenomenon, symbolic of a host of comparable enigmatic examples that existed notably in America, Canada and the UK in the 1930s through to the 1950s predominantly, and a type that endures in part today internationally. It asserts, illustrated by its taxonomy, the existence of a commercial sisterhood; what this author presents as a family of clone-types that appear to replicate their roles and appearance via visual codes that endure.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> It is recognised by the author that male fictitious chefs and customer service advisors also exist. This study’s consideration of females specifically was selected to focus comparative interrogation of cross cultural and trans-historical examples. The study of male examples could be pursued in future research.

<sup>5</sup> Betty Crocker was created in 1921 as brand for the Washburn Crosby Company, USA. Washburn Crosby Company merged with General Mills in 1921. The first portrait of Betty was created in 1936 by General Mills Inc. Betty Crocker products are sold internationally.

<sup>6</sup> *Betty Crocker Devil’s Food Cake Mix* packaging, 2003, Minneapolis, Mass.: General Mills Inc.

<sup>7</sup> From 2003 to 2004 General Mills Inc. removed Betty Crocker’s image from its American packaging initially and then UK examples. Betty’s image continued to appear on the company’s website although by 2009 her image was positioned in the context of the company’s brand heritage section: General Mills Inc., *General Mills history of innovation the history of Betty Crocker*. 1-3. General Mills Inc. n.d. Web. 21 May 2009. In 2012 a new illustration of Betty appeared upon UK packaging.

<sup>8</sup> Marling refers to „a sisterhood of look-alike household experts” in her reference to American cooking and wider business examples although does not scrutinize their appearances in depth: Karal Ann Marling, *As Seen on TV: the Visual Culture of Everyday Life in the 1950’s* (Cambridge: Harvard U. Press, 1996) 206. Shapiro identified the notion of sisterhood in her study of Betty Crocker however her focus relates to examples’ comparable roles rather than their similar visual appearance which is the particular focus identified and discussed within this

As discussed in Chapter Two, a number of studies consider the existence of Betty Crocker and comparable historic commercial home economists brand icons, from different viewpoints with varying degrees of scrutiny, notably from American and Canadian social and culinary history perspectives.<sup>9</sup> Such studies include those by, for example, authors Kern-Foxworth;<sup>10</sup> Johnson;<sup>11</sup> Manring;<sup>12</sup> Marks;<sup>13</sup> Driver;<sup>14</sup> Shapiro;<sup>15</sup> and Cooke.<sup>16</sup> However their studies do not focus specifically on the visual appearance of people and their presence on packaging. It is noted that significant study of the visual representation of Aunt Jemima is established so this thesis does not focus upon this example.<sup>17</sup> Therefore this thesis offers original study of the visual image of examples that other studies do not address in this way. Furthermore, its visual methodology makes this thesis particularly distinct through the innovative investigation of a particular genre, affording fresh insight into a field that appears still to be little explored. Cooke,<sup>18</sup> as one of the few contemporary investigators within this field, confirmed that "...although the form and the function of trade characters have been the subject of marketing analysis, only recently have they fallen under the spotlight of cultural analysis."<sup>19</sup> The study's research has established (as discussed in Chapter Two: Literature Review) that limited literature exists

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thesis. See Laura Shapiro, "I Guarantee: Betty Crocker and the Woman in the Kitchen." Ed. Voski Avakian, Arlene and Barbara Haber, *From Betty Crocker to Feminist Food Studies: Critical Perspectives on Women and Food* (Amherst: U. of Massachusetts Press, 2005) 29-40.

<sup>9</sup> For example Marks provided a history of Betty Crocker with concise reference to her appearance. Susan Marks, *Finding Betty Crocker: the Secret Life of America's First Lady of Food* (New York: Simon, 2005). Driver refers to fictitious commercial economists and draws comparisons across companies but does not consider their visual identities in-depth. Elizabeth Driver, *Culinary Landmarks: a Bibliography of Canadian Cookbooks 1825-1949* (Toronto: U. of Toronto Press Incorporated, 2008).

<sup>10</sup> Marilyn Kern-Foxworth, "Kitchen to American Icon: Aunt Jemima." (*Public Relations Review*. 16.8.1990): 55-67.

<sup>11</sup> Eve Johnson, *Five Star Food* (Vancouver: The Vancouver Sun, 1993).

<sup>12</sup> M.M. Manring, *Slave in a Box: The Strange Career of Aunt Jemima* (Charlottesville: U. Press of Virginia, 1998).

<sup>13</sup> Marks *Finding Betty Crocker*.

<sup>14</sup> Elizabeth Driver, *Edith Adams Omnibus* (North Vancouver: Whitecap Books, 2005); and Driver *Culinary Landmarks*.

<sup>15</sup> Shapiro "I Guarantee: Betty Crocker and the Woman in the Kitchen."

<sup>16</sup> Nathalie Cooke, *Consuming Fictions: Cooking Personalities and the North American Imagination*, 2008. n.p. Web. 22 Jan. 2004.

<sup>17</sup> Studies of Aunt Jemima include: Kern-Foxworth; Manring; Karen Sue Warren Jewell, "An Analysis of the Visual Development of a Stereotype: the Media's Portrayal of Mammy and Aunt Jemima Symbols of Black Womanhood" Ph.D. Diss., (Ohio State U., 1976)

<sup>18</sup> Cooke has authored a number of publications that relate to Canadian food and literature and food culture celebrities.

<sup>19</sup> Nathalie Cooke, "Getting the Mix Right for the Canadian Home Baker," *Essays on Canadian Writing* 78 (2003):196.

that considers specifically the visual decoding and categorisation of fictitious people brand icons upon food packaging. To date considerations of such brand icons have primarily been approached from and within historical, marketing and culinary history perspectives and contexts where the visual consideration of examples, whilst mentioned, is not usually prioritized or profiled in any significant depth. Some publications offer collation of examples specifically within the context of logo design as, for example, Sacharow<sup>20</sup> and notably Morgan's<sup>21</sup> rich visual survey of American trademarks and logos. Others highlight examples within the context of packaging and branding, such as Dotz and Morton<sup>22</sup> and Dotz and Husain.<sup>23</sup> However whilst these sources provide valuable reference their examination of images remains most concise.

As discussed in Chapter Two, the wider body of related research evidences established literature with foci different to that of this study: as examples, the practice and historical development of brand spokes-people and trade characters, as considered by Stern;<sup>24</sup> Phillips<sup>25</sup> Phillips<sup>26</sup> Callcott and Lee;<sup>27</sup> Callcott,<sup>28</sup> Phillips,<sup>29</sup> and Phillips and Lee;<sup>30</sup> cartoon and animal examples in advertising, as explored by Phillips<sup>31</sup> and Phillips and Gyoerick;<sup>32</sup> on-line

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<sup>20</sup> Stanley Sacharow, *Symbols of Trade* (New York: Art Direction Book Company, 1982).

<sup>21</sup> Hal Morgan, *Symbols of America* (New York: Viking Penguin, 1986).

<sup>22</sup> Warren Dotz and Jim Morton, *What a Character! Twentieth-Century American Advertising Icons* (San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 1996).

<sup>23</sup> Warren Dotz and Masud Husain, *Meet Mr. Product: The Art of the Advertising Character* (San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 2003).

<sup>24</sup> Barbara, B. Stern, "The Brand Person: A Literary View of Source Characteristics and Advertising Effects." *American Academy of Advertising Proceedings of the 1991 conference of the American Academy of Advertising*. Ed. Holman, Rebecca, D'Arcy. Masius, Benton and Bowles (1991):136-138.

<sup>25</sup> Barbara J. Phillips, *The Role of Advertising Trade Characters in Forming Product Perceptions*, MA thesis (U. of Texas, 1993).

<sup>26</sup> ---. "Advertising and the Cultural Meaning of Animals." (*Advances in Consumer Research*. Ed. Kim Corfman and John Lynch, 23. 1994):354-360.

<sup>27</sup> Margaret, F. Callcott and Wei-Na Lee. "A Content Analysis of Animation and Animated Spokes-Characters in Television Commercials." (*Journal of Advertising*. 23 Dec.1994): 1-12.

<sup>28</sup> Margaret, F. Callcott, "Establishing the Spokes-character in Academic Enquiry: Historical Overview and Framework for Definition," *Advances in Consumer Research*. Ed. Frank R. Kardes and Mmita Sujun, *Advances in Consumer Research* 22. (Provo Association for Consumer Research, 1995):145-151.

<sup>29</sup> Phillips, "Defining Trade Characters and their Role in American Popular Culture."

<sup>30</sup> Barbara J. Phillips and We-Na Lee, "Interactive Animation: Exploring Characters on the Internet." *Journal of Current Issues and Research in Advertising*. 1.27 (2005):1-17.

<sup>31</sup> Phillips, "Defining Trade Characters and their Role in American Popular Culture." and Phillips, "Advertising and the Cultural Meaning of Animals."

<sup>32</sup> Barbara J. Phillips and Gyoerick, "The Cow, the Cook and the Quaker: Fifty Years of Spokes-character Advertising," *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly* 76.4 (1999):713-728.

mascots as discussed by Clemmensen,<sup>33</sup> specific brand icons such as Aunt Jemima as discussed by Jewell; Kern-Foxworth; and Manring,<sup>34</sup> and notions of mythology and branding as commercial storytelling as considered by Twitchell for example.<sup>35</sup> Whilst this literature provides an important foundation and sources for further study, studies tend to focus upon advertising and not packaging contexts, are occasionally now significantly dated, and tend to be American and Canadian based predominantly, with little consideration of UK and cross cultural comparisons. This thesis therefore builds upon such literature as, for example, the theoretical frameworks presented by Callcott and Alvey,<sup>36</sup> and Callcott<sup>37</sup> and takes further counsel from contemporary scholars and professionals working within this field. It utilises information through contact with companies, as brand guardians, and key advertising agencies and brand icon creators, including Leo Burnett,<sup>38</sup> UK and David Altschul<sup>39</sup> at Character,<sup>40</sup> USA, and brand packaging specialists, including James Knowles Ritchie (JKR, UK), and Bruce Hale (USA)<sup>41</sup> in its aim to make a new contribution to the field.

As fictitious people food brand icons exist across, and relate to, a variety of contexts and disciplines, to achieve a holistic critical understanding of their roles and relevance across such, the study has taken a polymorphic approach. It is informed and produced by using methodologies established within and across a variety of disciplines including design history; cultural studies; marketing; advertising; branding; gender studies; food studies. The study is specifically set within the contexts of packaging design and its history, branding, food studies and culinary history. This includes consideration of packaging examples" commercial and cultural storytelling power, in relation to the notions of enigma

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<sup>33</sup> Christian Clemmensen, "A Guide for Defining the Ethos of Online Brand Mascots." Filmtracks.com. Nov.1999-May 2000, n.pag. Web. 7 Mar. 2006.

<sup>34</sup> See Jewell; Kern-Foxworth 55-67; Manring.

<sup>35</sup> James B Twitchell. *Branded Nation* (New York: Simon. 2004) 26.

<sup>36</sup> Margaret F. Callcott, and Patricia, A. Alvey "Toons Sell.....and Sometimes They Don't: An Advertising Spokes Character Typology and Exploratory Study." *Proceedings of the 1991 Conference of the American Academy*, Ed. Rebecca Holman (1991):43- 53.

<sup>37</sup> Callcott.

<sup>38</sup> Leo Burnett, Creative Agency, created classic brand icons such as Kellogg's *Frosties* Tony the Tiger in 1952 and the Jolly Green Giant in 1928.

<sup>39</sup> David Altschul "The Balancing Act of Building Character," *Advertising Age* 4 July, (Detroit: Crain Communications Inc., 2005):14.

<sup>40</sup> Character, USA, are a renowned brand icon design communication company.

<sup>41</sup> JKR are London-based branded packaging specialists.

and myth, through the use of studies from the fields of narratology, folklore and semiotics. The thesis advances study in these fields through its original foci and methodological approach; the braiding of interdisciplinary perspectives to present an original study of a ubiquitous marketing strategy and design phenomenon.

## 1.2. Terminology

To identify this particular marketing tool the thesis determines *brand icon* as key term to provide clear definition that is otherwise elusive in established literature.<sup>42</sup> To date a number of studies use different terms for example Callcott and Lee<sup>43</sup> proposed the term spokes-character whilst more recently Andersson and Iskander<sup>44</sup> have fabricated the expression “notional employee.”<sup>45</sup> The thesis identifies that a confusion and paucity in use of appropriate terminology is evident. To address this it asserts brand icon as core term. To elucidate how the term is understood and applied within this thesis initial definition is presented as:

### 1.2.1. Brand Icon

Brand icon can be defined as a particular character, fictitious or real, animal, human or other, that exists *visually*, employed by a brand to represent and promote its identity and products. In particular it is readily recognisable and memorable as the important visual representation - the symbol - of the brand. As Cross identifies icons are “first of all visual, physical objects. They take up space in reality and in the mind, and they are full of meaning (...)”<sup>46</sup> In the context of this study icon is used in relation to the identification of a specific person who is invested with meaning and has achieved meaningful status; who is recognised, admired and revered by audiences [consumers]. As the

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<sup>42</sup> Chapter One examines terms within established literature and Chapter Three considers the related issues. I use the term brand and product synonymously.

<sup>43</sup> Callcott and Lee 1-12.

<sup>44</sup> Angelic Andersson and Madelene Yavuz Iskander, “*Frank, Robert & Stig: A Study About Organizational Core Value Branding through Notional Employees.*” Jönköping U., 2010, n.pag. Web. 21 May 2011.

<sup>45</sup> This term appears not to be used in any other study or context and as such could be considered as unnecessary and potentially confusing. It illustrates how researchers fashion terms in attempt to anchor definition otherwise illusive.

<sup>46</sup> Mary Cross, Ed. *A Century of American Icons: 100 Products and Slogans from the 20<sup>th</sup> century* (Westport, CT. Greenwood Press, 2002)16.

Advertising Icon Museum<sup>47</sup> identifies, icons are “...embodiments of a brand, highly memorable symbols.”<sup>48</sup> Whilst Callcott identifies a brand spokes-character that has a voice and literally speaks for the brand, a brand icon does not necessarily physically speak.<sup>49</sup> The importance of the brand icon status is its visual personification of, or visual standing for, and of, the brand primarily: as established and enduring symbol. Further discussion of this is addressed in Chapter Four. I do not purport to have invented the term brand icon but I do assert its use as the generic term to provide clear definition and understanding for future use. This study uses the term brand icon and also brand character. These proposed definitive terms are drawn from the review and critical consideration of existing terminology and are determined by my consideration of the views drawn from industry professionals and cultural theorists.

### 1.3. Fictitious People Brand Icons

To clarify, the focus on fictitious people food brand icons relates to the existence of certain people that live in and through food marketing contexts, and for the particular focus of this study, in packaging. Fictitious people brand icons is a specific type identified by the author: people brand icons that appear to be real but in reality are fictitious. Such examples have clear human characteristics - names, physical appearance and traits; they are represented visually as a person; their image, visual appearance and identity suggest someone real and they *are* the brand’s identity, its personality, and they represent it directly.<sup>50</sup> The examples have no cartoon association or depiction.<sup>51</sup> Key examples, investigated within this thesis, include *General Mills, Inc.’s Betty Crocker (USA)*

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<sup>47</sup> Existing currently virtually (<<http://advertisingiconmuseum.org/>>) this American museum, owned and created by communications company Bernstein-Rein, is poised to open in 2013 as showcase for what they term advertising icons.

<sup>48</sup> Advertising Icon Museum. “Frequently Asked Questions surrounding the Advertising Icon Museum,” *Advertising Icon Museum*, 2005, n.pag. Web.28 Oct. 2009.

<sup>49</sup> Callcott 145-151.

<sup>50</sup> Other brand icons do appear as human but their distinctly unreal characteristics and visual appearance do not suggest or secure the identification of a possible or plausible actual and authentic person. These examples, such as the Jolly Green Giant, evidence a pseudo-human type: they have human traits and human visual characteristics but remain unreal as their names and look are clearly fictitious: for example, their appearance is obviously illustrated and a caricature and their name generic.

<sup>51</sup> Many brand icons exist as cartoon, often animated, as anthropomorphic animals used to give colourful and playful identity, often to food products aimed at children, for example Kellogg’s breakfast cereal icons *Frosties Tony the Tiger* (1952- ) and *Planters Peanuts Mr. Peanut* (1916- ).

and *Elsa of Elsa's Story* (Israel) where in name and visual appearance the fictitious characters live as real in the representation of a brand; they are the personification of the brand. The thesis focuses specifically upon people brand icons that propose to be real, and can be understood as real. They have clear individual identification in name and a visual representation that is plausibly real. Whilst many fictitious icons appear upon packaging aimed at children this study focuses upon examples that feature on products that target adult audiences. The study does not focus upon *name only* examples, such as Mr. Kipling who is not represented visually.<sup>52</sup> The thesis is primarily concerned with, and focuses upon, the interrogation of the visual appearance and representation of icons and considers their roles in relation to the wider visual depiction of people on packaging.

#### **1.4. Thesis structure**

This thesis is structured in nine chapters as outlined in this section.

**Chapter One** introduces this research, the thesis's hypothesis and its key questions, the originality of this work and its structure.

**Chapter Two** reviews the established literature in relation to the thesis foci, brand icons, within the disciplines of branding (including practice, history and theory); marketing; graphic design and its history. This Chapter considers the particular established theoretical perspectives, methodologies and conclusions to identify the distinct trends and noticeable gaps within the literature. The literature is assessed in relation to the thesis' research questions to position and help make distinct my thesis accordingly.

It is to be noted that review of literature relating to packaging and fictitious home economist brand icons, within the disciplines of branding (including practice, history and theory); marketing; graphic design and its history and culinary history studies, is positioned within the relevant Chapters to ensure efficient positioning of context.

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<sup>52</sup> Mr. Kipling is a UK brand owned by Premier Foods. Identified by the brand's slogan as making "Exceedingly Good Cakes", he is a fictitious character that does not appear visually.

**Chapter Three** discusses the research methodology: how research was approached and conducted: the areas investigated and the methods and sources used; how examples and perspectives were collated and analysed. It discusses the study's theoretical perspectives. It considers how original, relevant and reliable research was.

**Chapter Four** initially considers brands and their function. It considers the notion of brand icon and discusses their functions and contexts of use and confirms this distinct marketing tool as a commercial and cultural phenomenon.

This chapter defines and anchors brand icon as the generic cross discipline term through consideration of the terminology used in existing literature. Historical examples are discussed to establish the continued existence of the brand icon, and to identify the diverse defining terms used to date. It is not the intention to provide a methodical and complete account of their history.

Types of brand icons are considered including cartoon and anthropomorphic examples to establish the wider field which people-type brand icons relate to. In particular fictitious people brand icons are investigated. Their fictive yet enigmatic presence and narrative appeal is considered in relation to notions of myth and storytelling to establish their wider cultural and social meaning and commercial value. The study identifies that fictitious types can be considered, categorised and understood in relation to the degree of their fabrication: the nature of their visual identity in relation to the brand's intent of their representation and existence. The thesis discusses three types of fictitious representations: *the purely and explicitly unreal* – examples that are explicitly invented; *the fictitious but with believable elements*; *the truly enigmatic – fictitious yet appear as real and are not readily proven to be otherwise*. Whilst many fictitious icons appear upon food packaging aimed at children, this study is primarily concerned with examples that feature on products that target adult audiences.

**Chapter Five** initially considers the role of food packaging utilising established literature and fresh insight secured via empirical research into industry practice and the scrutiny of packaging examples. Packaging's wider social and cultural meaning and value is considered in the contexts of consumerism and popular

culture. Why people appear on packaging and what different people-types exist is explored. Through critical analysis of international historical and contemporary examples their role and appearance is discussed.

**Chapter Six** considers the visual appearance of people-types and brand icons on food packaging. It presents an initial taxonomy of people-types and brand icon examples: a framework for the visual identification and reading of examples through semiotic analysis of the coded visual characteristics of exemplars. It offers consideration of categories of people types, for example, family members: the grandmother, as illustrated by *Ouma* (Nola, South Africa, 1939 - <sup>53</sup>), and maids, as illustrated by the *Land O' Lakes Maiden (Land O' Lakes, 1928- )*.<sup>54</sup> The discussion identifies the visual characteristics shared by brand examples that create the basis of the identified categories.

**Chapter Seven** evidences through specific case studies the ability of some packaging and brand icons to travel across historical and international spheres: to cross and transcend cultural boundaries of language and identity. Examples include Captain Birdseye (1967 - , Permira, UK)<sup>55</sup> and Elsa's Story (c. 2002 - , Elsa's Story, Israel).<sup>56</sup>

**Chapter Eight** examines a specific brand icon type: the fictitious female commercial home economist who has been employed by companies to personalise their brands and to communicate with consumers. Real and fictitious historical and contemporary examples are examined within the contexts of culinary history and the home economics discipline. The study considers the role and representation of the female home economist and female consumer in relation to notions of gender roles to establish how fictitious commercial home economist icons reflect and perpetuate complex social and

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<sup>53</sup> Ouma translates as grandmother in South Africa. The Ouma brand is related to the real Ouma Greyvensteyn who started cooking in 1939 and who provides the heritage for the brand according to the company website, Nola, "Home" Nola, 2005, n.pag. Web. 24 July 2005.

<sup>54</sup> Sun-Maid is the icon for the Sun-Maid Growers of California company, USA.

<sup>55</sup> This icon exists with different names across different countries, for example Captain Iglo in France and Captain Findus in Italy, notably where his appearance is different also.

<sup>56</sup> The company is privately owned and based in Israel. This brand offers a fictitious brand icon that changes identity visually across its packaging and as such offers distinct case study for this investigation.

cultural attitudes and developments relating to gender that shape and give meaning to their appearance.

Through semiotic analysis of the visual identity of Betty Crocker as archetype, and comparable American, Canadian and British historical and contemporary examples including Mary Baker, Nabisco, UK, (c.1955-1957)<sup>57</sup> and Carol Stevens, Red Star®, USA, (1975 - ),<sup>58</sup> this chapter confirms the existence of a host of brand icons that are comparable visually and have, on occasion mimicked each other in their role and appearance. Through scrutiny of their visual identity the study presents a cultural and commercial paradigm: the existence of visually coded fictitious female icons that work as commercial employees, whilst providing a socialising function and cultural service that is created from and woven into the very fabric of social and cultural history.

**Chapter Nine** provides the general conclusion. It presents a summary of the research and discussion of the thesis's most important findings. It considers the major implications of this research and presents its strengths and limitations. The conclusion confirms that this thesis does offer original contribution and offers recommendations for further research.

The thesis includes a range of food packaging figures to support and illustrate its discussion. It presents a unique collation of visuals that provides comparative consideration of examples and evidences the study's findings.

## **Summary**

I conclude that the use of people on food packaging and in particular fictitious people food brand icons is a distinct and popular marketing strategy that operates across time and countries internationally. Through their visual appearance such examples communicate social and commercial messages that are decoded by consumers. The study's visual reading and taxonomy of people on food packaging present an original framework that identifies the existence of

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<sup>57</sup> The apparently fictitious icon appeared on own brand cake mix boxes and television and press advertisements in the mid -950s.

<sup>58</sup> Brand icon for the Red Star Yeast Company, Lesaffre Yeast Corporation, USA. She endures upon brand's packaging and website.

people-types that share visual characteristics that can be understood as visual codes. The thesis asserts that such codes evidence what it considers to be a distinct marketing formula that is used in the creation of complex commercial and cultural characters and brand icons that can appeal and endure. It identifies that specific characters that stand for the brand are identified as brand icons and that icon types often share visual characteristics with wider people-types on packaging and relate to people in wider social and cultural contexts. It identifies that fictitious people brand icon examples use and share key visual codes. The thesis asserts that through the use of such visual codes, fictitious people brand icons can be deliberately elusive and are often seen as real. In conclusion this study aims to advance the study of packaging and brand icons and aims to offer original insight and potential for further research.

## CHAPTER 2

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.1. Introduction

The review of established literature in relation to the thesis's focus of brand icons considers the contexts, theoretical perspectives and methodologies of key studies. Review of literature relating to brand terminology, packaging and Fictitious Home Economists is positioned subsequent chapters to make more pertinent its consideration in relation to each chapter's discussion. The review of literature related to packaging history, marketing and narratology and is not addressed as this is beyond the scale of this study however certain aspects provide frame of reference in certain chapters.

The review aims to consider the terms used so that this thesis can anchor and develop an understanding of terminology; how the use and representation of the visual reading of brand icons has been considered and whether the studies have provided valuable frameworks for the understanding of the visual codes and the identification of generic icon-types that this thesis may refer to and build upon as appropriate. This chapter positions this thesis in relation to established literature to evaluate its focus and approach; to help address the core questions and also to help make it distinct accordingly. This review uses the term brand icon whilst recognising the different terms are used by others. The next chapter provides consideration of the nuances of the wider terms used and their relevance and validity, initially through review of established literature.

In recent years there has been significant research in relation to branding: practice.<sup>1</sup> Studies have investigated branding strategies, methods and theories,<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> For example see Marcel Danesi, *Brands* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2006); David Aaker, *Building Strong Brands* (London: Simon, 2002); Jane Pavitt, *Brand New* (London: V & A Publications, 2000); Per Mollerup, *Marks of Excellence* (London: Phaidon, 1997).

<sup>2</sup> For example see Dan Cowley, ed. *Understanding Brands* (London: Kogan, 1996); Lloyd Conway, *Logo, Identity, Brand, Culture* (Rotovision, 1999); Kevin Lane Keller, "Brand Synthesis and Multimensionality of Brand Knowledge," *Journal of Consumer Research* 29.4 Mar. (Uni. Chicago Press. 2003):595-600; Alan Mitchell, *Right Side Up: Building Brands in the Age of the Organized Consumer* (London: Harper Collins Business, 2001); Wally Olins, *On Brand* (London: Thames and Hudson, 2003); and Leslie De Chernatony and H.B. McDonald, *Creating Powerful Brands* (Oxford: Butterworth-Heinemann Ltd, 1992).

critical debate<sup>3</sup> and consumer contexts.<sup>4</sup> This evidences the complexity and importance of this discipline and its significance and popularity as an area of study. A wealth of branding studies by industry professionals<sup>5</sup> complement and offer different perspective to the many academic works. As Twitchell commented “It seems that every publisher of business books has a ready supply of Brand-this and Brand-that titles (...).”<sup>6</sup> The range of material available, whilst immense, informs an understanding of branding and in part the consideration brand icons. The review of the extensive literature related to branding - and that relating to marketing, advertising and packaging in general- is not addressed by this thesis as this is beyond the scale of its study however aspects of such are considered within relevant chapters to provide frame of reference for discussion.

## 2.2. Brand Icons

A wealth of brand icons exist nationally and transnationally across a diverse range of marketing platforms, including broadcast and press advertisements, packaging, websites and social media. Garretson and Burton’s research into icons role within Integrated Marketing Communications<sup>7</sup> identified the importance of the brand “visual match” across its marketing activities.<sup>8</sup> However brand icons’ presence is changeable as their role and appearance are determined by their relevance, success and popularity and therefore they may be considered to have cultural and commercial *use by dates*. Some examples may endure for decades, as highlighted by the *Advertising Age*<sup>9</sup> *Top Ten* list of

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<sup>3</sup> For example see Naomi Klein, *No Logo* (London: Flamingo, 2000).

<sup>4</sup> For example see Celia Lury, *Brands: the logos of the global economy* (London: Routledge, 2004); Greg Myers, *Ad Worlds: Brands, Media, Audiences* (London: Hodder Headline group, 1999); Kevin, Roberts, *Lovemarks; the Future Beyond Brand* (New York: Powerhouse Books, 2004); and James B. Twitchell, *Branded Nation* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2004).

<sup>5</sup> For examples see Millward Brown „a leading global research agency specializing in advertising, marketing communications, media and brand equity research.“ Millward Brown. Web. 12 Jan. 2012; Lippincott Mercer, *Sense: the Art and Science of Creating Lasting Brands* (Gloucester: Rockport, 2004). Lippincott Mercer design and brand strategy consultancy’s glossary and articles offer useful discussion of branding; and David Altschul, “Weaving Character Development into an Engaging Brand „Story” Brand Packaging, Feb/Mar. 2004. Web. 3 Mar. 2005.

<sup>6</sup> Twitchell 1.

<sup>7</sup> See glossary.

<sup>8</sup> Judith A. Garretson and Scot Burton, “The Role of Spokescharacters as Advertisement and Package Cues in Integrated Marketing Communications” *Journal of Marketing* 69 (Oct 2005): 118-132.

<sup>9</sup> American advertising trade publication Advertising Age published by Cairn Communication.

*Advertising Icons of the Century* that acknowledged brand icons “powerful resonance in the marketplace” and identified the most “enduring and popular” exemplars (USA).<sup>10</sup> However some icons may exist fleetingly whilst others may be retired and then revived,<sup>11</sup> as Callcott determined, examples have “lifecycles” that may be determined by various factors including their “nostalgic appeal”<sup>12</sup> and thus brand icons lifespans can vary.

Whilst Callcott<sup>13</sup> observed that by the 1970’s examples were “consigned to children’s markets” and Asher claimed that “many well-known character icons lately have been relegated to second-class status and exiled to the package back or jettisoned altogether”,<sup>14</sup> today there exist a significant number of established examples and newer icons too that appeal to a wide audience. For example anthropomorphic icons Aleksandr Orlov the meerkat (2009- , *comparethemarket.com*, UK)<sup>15</sup> and Churchill the dog (1996- , Churchill Insurance, UK) both operate across a variety of marketing contexts.<sup>16</sup> Whilst Phillips and Lee found that brand icons “overwhelmingly appeared as non-moving, non-speaking images”<sup>17</sup> today there is evidence of the greater dynamic presence of examples online where they can interact with the consumer and may move and talk.<sup>18</sup> The existence and evolution of brand icons is thus ongoing. Within this context it is appreciated however that the fluctuating lives and presence of brand icons perhaps determines their appeal to researchers. In

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<sup>10</sup> Dottie Enrico, “Top Ten Icons”. *Advertising Age*, AdAge.com, 29 Mar.1999, n.pag. Web. 2 Feb. 2004. Examples were judged on their “effectiveness, longevity, recognizability and cultural impact.”

<sup>11</sup> For example Tetley Tea Folk brand icons were used from 1973 to 2001 and were revived in 2010 as their nostalgic appeal used to attract consumers.

<sup>12</sup> Callcott and Patricia A. Alvey, “Toons Sell....And Sometimes They Don’t: An Advertising Spokes Character Typology and Exploratory Study.” *American Academy*, Ed. Rebecca Holman (1991):43-53.

<sup>13</sup> Callcott 1993:11

<sup>14</sup> Jonathan Asher, “For Marketing Icons, Character Counts.” *Brand Week*. 13 Jul. 1998, n.p. Web. 3 Mar. 2003.n.pag. Web. 3 Mar. 2006.

<sup>15</sup> The spokes-meerkat provides engaging narrative and successful identity that resulted in his biography *A Simple Life: the life and of Aleksandr Orlov* (London: Edbury Press, 2010)

<sup>16</sup> Both operate via social networking channels and websites.

<sup>17</sup> Barbara J Phillips and Wei-Na Lee “Interactive Animation: Exploring Spokes-Characters on the Internet.” (*Journal of Current Issues and Research in Advertising*.1: xxvi:1. Spring, 2005): 1-17 The authors’ investigation of animated advertising spokes-characters within websites concluded that movement increased their appeal but advertisers were not making full use of this aspect.

<sup>18</sup> For example Poppin’ Fresh the Pillsbury Doughboy™ brand icon, whilst non-talking, invites consumers to „make him dance” on the brand website. This fun interactivity makes the icon charming and memorable. “Pillsbury, Dancing Doughboy.” Pillsbury. 2011, n.p. Web. 2 Mar. 2011.

many instances access to company information is denied owing to commercial sensitivities and examples" individual appeal and extent of use may limit the examination of their work beyond articles in trade publications. That examples may have a best before date or operate in markets that are volatile and their presence may not be assured may make them less viable to pursue and interrogate.

### 2.3. Scope and focus of established literature

The omnipresence of brand icons has led to a growing body of research produced by academics, icon creators and branding specialists. Established literature evidences that many studies focus upon the role and appearance of brand icons within advertising - press, television and, increasingly, the internet – and in particular anthropomorphic cartoon/animated types, for example the work of Callcott and Lee;<sup>19</sup> Phillips;<sup>20</sup> Callcott and Phillips;<sup>21</sup> Hosany, Prayag, Martin and Lee;<sup>22</sup> Phillips and Gyoerick;<sup>23</sup> and Rossolatos.<sup>24</sup> By comparison that which focuses upon brand icons within the context of food packaging, for example Garretson and Burton's study, tends to be less prolific and studies of the visual representation of fictitious people are particularly sparse: Dotz and Husain,<sup>25</sup> Dotz and Morton<sup>26</sup> offer some examples though. Callcott identified that the study of brand icons had been "largely ignored"<sup>27</sup> and Phillips<sup>28</sup> concurred.

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<sup>19</sup> Margaret F. Callcott and Wei-Na Lee, "A Content Analysis of Animation and Animated Spokes-Characters in Television Commercials" *Journal of Advertising* (23 Dec.1994):1-12.

<sup>20</sup> Barbara J. Phillips, "Advertising and the Cultural Meaning of Animals," *Advances in Consumer Research*. Eds. Kim Corfman and John Lynch, 23. (1996): 354-360.

<sup>21</sup> Margaret F. Callcott and Barbara J. Phillips, "Elves Make Good Cookies: Creating Likeable Spokes-Character Advertising," *Journal of Advertising Research* 36 (Sept./Oct.1996): 73-79.

<sup>22</sup> Hosany, Sameer, Girsih Prayag, Drew Martin, Wai-Yee Lee, "Theory and Strategies of Anthropomorphic Brand Characters from Peter Rabbit, Mickey Mouse, and Ronald McDonald, to Hello Kitty." *Journal of Marketing Management*, 1-2 (2013) *Academia*. Web. 12 Jul. 2013.

<sup>23</sup> Barbara J. Phillips and J. Gyoerick, "The Cow, the Cook, and the Quaker: Fifty Years of Spokes-Character Advertising," *J & MC Quarterly* 76:4. (1999):713-728.

<sup>24</sup> George Rossolatos, "Representing the manimal: A semiotic/psychoanalytic approach to the strategic importance of anthropomorphism in branding," *Social Science Research Network*. n.d. : n.p. Web. 3 Feb.2012.

<sup>25</sup> Warren Dotz and Masud Husain, *Meet Mr. Product: The Art of the Advertising Character* (San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 2003).

<sup>26</sup> Dotz and Jim Morton, *What a Character: 20<sup>th</sup> Century America Advertising Icons* (San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 1996).

<sup>27</sup> Margaret F. Callcott, *The Spokes-Character in Advertising: An Historical Survey and Framework for Future Research*. PhD Diss., (Austin: U. of Texas, 1993).

<sup>28</sup> Barbara J. Phillips, "Advertising and the Cultural Meaning of Animals," *Advances in Consumer Research*, Ed. Kim Corfman, Kim and John Lynch, 23. (1994): 354-360.

Likewise, Cooke<sup>29</sup> observed that “(...) although the form and the function of trade characters have been the subject of marketing analysis, only recently have they fallen under the spotlight of cultural analysis”<sup>30</sup> and more recently Hosany, Prayag, Martin, and Lee lamented the paucity of studies regarding “building and sustaining” examples.<sup>31</sup> Such assertions are in part still true and help validate the purpose and contribution of this thesis and confirm that this territory is one still rich for further investigation.<sup>32</sup> This thesis does not attempt to offer a „how to“ consideration of brand icons, but it does suggest that future research into brand icon construction and management could be better positioned if the branding strategies and experiences of companies, branding agencies and designers are considered.

Thus despite brand icons“ established history and enduring omnipresence there exists a diverse<sup>33</sup> yet narrow<sup>34</sup> range of literature that specifically scrutinizes their role, and in particular, their visual appearance. Some studies have focused upon specific brand examples and as corporate literature have offered unique insight and the dissemination of information otherwise difficult to access. However as literature is produced often in celebration of and on behalf of the brand<sup>35</sup> the extent to which the discussion is objective is an issue for consideration and noticeably when the author is an employee/ex-employ of the company.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> Cooke’s publications relate to Canadian food and literature.

<sup>30</sup> Nathalie Cooke, „Getting the Mix Right for the Canadian Home Baker,“ *Essays on Canadian Writing* 78 (2003):196.

<sup>31</sup> Sameer Hosany, Girsih Prayag, Drew Martin, Wai-Yee Lee, “Theory and Strategies of Anthropomorphic Brand Characters from Peter Rabbit, Mickey Mouse, and Ronald McDonald, to Hello Kitty.” *Journal of Marketing Management*, 2013: 1-2 Academia. (Web. 12 July 2013).

<sup>32</sup> It is curious why this area has attracted relatively scant attention compared with other areas. This may be because it is only one aspect of a brand’s identity and in many instances its role is less important than the brand’s wider marketing approach.

<sup>33</sup> Studies appear in marketing journals; academic journals; company and fan websites.

<sup>34</sup> Studies often focus upon a specific range of characters only or within one particular context; for example. Phillips. “Advertising and the Cultural Meaning of Animals.”

<sup>35</sup> For example see the following publications that relate to key companies: Arthur F. Marquette, *Brands, Trademarks and Goodwill: the Story of the Quaker Oats Company* (New York: Mc Graw-Hill Book Company, 1967); Roger E. Bengston, *A History of the Green Giant Company 1903 -1979* (Minneapolis: U of Minnesota, 1991); James Gray, *Business without Boundary: The Story of General Mills* (Minneapolis: U of Minnesota Press, 1954); and Land O’Lakes. *Celebrating Tradition: Building the Future: 75 years of Land O’Lakes* (Minneapolis/St. Paul: Land O’ Lakes, Inc., 1996).

<sup>36</sup> For example Susan Marks who wrote *Finding Betty Crocker: the Secret Life of America’s First Lady of Food* (New York: Simon. 2005) once worked for General Mills Inc. the

Notably, significant literature sits within specific disciplines: for example Altschul's;<sup>37</sup> Baer Capitman's,<sup>38</sup> and Asher's<sup>39</sup> work that relates to branding; Unruh's<sup>40</sup> and Garretson and Burton's<sup>41</sup> studies of marketing; Dotz and Husain's,<sup>42</sup> Dotz and Morton's,<sup>43</sup> Morgan's<sup>44</sup> investigations of graphic design and its history; and the studies of culinary history undertaken by Johnson;<sup>45</sup> Marks;<sup>46</sup> Driver;<sup>47</sup> Shapiro,<sup>48</sup> and Cooke.<sup>49</sup> Such literature comes from, and is situated within, two distinct spheres: academia and industry. Within each, the focus and intentions of the work are positioned and considered via different approaches relating to distinct contexts. On occasion, as discussed, this results in a multiplicity of terms used in the definition and understanding of examples, that can cause confusion: on occasion the created language of academe does not necessarily match that of industry.<sup>50</sup> This review considers examples of literature and evaluates the strengths and limitations and the tensions that exist accordingly.

Whilst Calcott observed "Industry interest in spokes-characters as advertising tools has never been matched by academic interest in their effectiveness or in

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manufacturers of Betty Crocker and Dave Stevens, author of *The Nabisco Brands Collection of Cream of Wheat Advertising Art* (San Diego: Collector's Showcase, Inc., 1986) worked for Nabisco.

<sup>37</sup> David Altschul, POV – "Icons in Advertising," *Creativity* Dec. 2001. n.p. Web. 24 Dec. 2004.

<sup>38</sup> Barbara Baer Capitman, *American Trademark Designs* (New York: Dover)1976.

<sup>39</sup> Jonathan Asher, "For Marketing Icons, Character Counts." *Brand Week*. 13 July. 1998, n.p. Web. 3 Mar. 2006.

<sup>40</sup> Christine Unruh, "Snap, Crackle, Pop." *Journal of Business Strategy*. (New York: Faulkner and Gray Inc., 16:2. (1995): 39-43.

<sup>41</sup> Garretson and Burton.

<sup>42</sup> Warren Dotz and Masud Husain, *Meet Mr. Product: The Art of the Advertising Character*. (San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 2003).

<sup>43</sup> Dotz and Jim Morton. *What a Character: 20<sup>th</sup> Century American Advertising Icons* (San Francisco: Chronicle Book, 1996).

<sup>44</sup> Hal Morgan, *Symbols of America* (New York: Viking Penguin, 1986).

<sup>45</sup> Eve Johnson, *Five Star Food* (Vancouver: The Vancouver Sun, 1993).

<sup>46</sup> Marks.

<sup>47</sup> Elizabeth Driver, *Edith Adams Omnibus* (North Vancouver: Whitecap Books, 2005); and Driver, *Culinary Landmarks*.

<sup>48</sup> Laura Shapiro, "I Guarantee: Betty Crocker and the Woman in the Kitchen" *From Betty Crocker to Feminist Food Studies: Critical Perspectives on Women and Food*. Ed. Arlene Avakian Voski and Barbara Haber. (Amherst and Boston: U of Massachusetts Press, 2005).

<sup>49</sup> Nathalie Cooke, *Consuming Fictions: Cooking Personalities and the North American Imagination*. 2008. Web. 22 Jan. 2004.

<sup>50</sup> Andersson and Iskander 2010 proposed their invented term "notional employees" but it appears not to be used in industry. It is questioned whether this makes any real contribution to the field. Angelic Andersson and Madelene Yavuz Iskander, *Frank, Robert & Stig: A Study About Organizational Core Value Branding through Notional Employees*, Master's Thesis, Jönköping: Jönköping University, 2010).

their considerable visibility through advertising history (...),<sup>51</sup> literature evidences that increasingly this gap is being addressed. However such studies<sup>52</sup> have mainly related to aspects different to that of this thesis, for example, cartoon and animal examples in advertising, and the investigation of specific brand icons, such as Aunt Jemima by Jewell;<sup>53</sup> Kern-Foxworth;<sup>54</sup> Manning;<sup>55</sup> and the examination of brand icons in advertising to children as discussed by Callcott and Lee;<sup>56</sup> Neeley and Schumann;<sup>57</sup> Van Auken, Subhash and Lonial;<sup>58</sup> Fischer et al<sup>59</sup> and Mizerski.<sup>60</sup> Academic journals<sup>61</sup> and their corresponding conferences do bridge academia and industry spheres and present some significant studies that make major contribution to this focus; for example *Journal of Advertising*<sup>62</sup>; *Advances in Consumer Research*;<sup>63</sup> *Journal of Business Strategy*;<sup>64</sup> *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly*;<sup>65</sup> *Journal of Consumer Research*;<sup>66</sup> and the *Journal of Popular Culture*.<sup>67</sup> Such journals have cross-discipline relevance, as this review evidences through its evaluation

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<sup>51</sup> Callcott 1993,15.

<sup>52</sup> Industry's consideration of icons can be seen as perhaps still more prolific in terms of their scope and accessibility however such studies are very different in terms of depth and purpose.

<sup>53</sup> Karen Sue Warren Jewell, "An Analysis of the Visual Development of a Stereotype: the Media's Portrayal of Mammy and Aunt Jemima as Symbols of Black Womanhood," PhD Diss.,(Ohio: Ohio State U.,1976).

<sup>54</sup> Kern-Foxworth, 1990: 55-67.

<sup>55</sup> M.M Manning, *Slave in a Box: The Strange Carer of Aunt Jemima* (Charlottesville: U. Press of Virginia, 1998).

<sup>56</sup> Margaret F. Callcott and Wei-Na Lee. "Establishing the Spokes-Character in Academic Enquiry: Historical Overview and Framework for Definition." *Advances in Consumer Research*. Eds. Frank, R. Kardes and Mita Sujan. 22. Provo Association for Consumer Research, (1995):145-151.

<sup>57</sup> Sabrina M.Neeley and David W. Schumann "Using Animated Spokes-Characters In Advertising To Young Children," *Journal of Advertising* 33. 3 (2004): 7-23.

<sup>58</sup> Van Auken, Stuart, and Subhash C. Lonial "Children's Perceptions of Characters: Human Versus Animate, Assessing Implications for Children's Advertising" *Journal of Advertising* 14. 2 13-22 (1985):61.

<sup>59</sup> Paul M. Fischer, Meyer P. Schwartz, John W. Richards, Jr., Adam O. Goldstein, and Tina H. Rojas. "Brand Logo Recognition by Children Aged Three to Six Years: Mickey Mouse and Old Joe the Camel." *Journal of the American Medical Association*, 266 (Dec. 11) (1991):3145-148.

<sup>60</sup> Richard Mizerski, "The Relationship Between Cartoon Trade Character Recognition and Attitude Toward Product Category in Young Children" *Journal of Marketing*, 59 (Oct. 1995): 58-70.

<sup>61</sup> The academic journals aim at academic and professional readers internationally. The papers are peer reviewed so credibility of quality is somewhat ensured.

<sup>62</sup> This journal is concerned with advertising theory and practice nexus and includes papers that address different themes across the advertising landscape.

<sup>63</sup> *Advances in Consumer Research*, Association for Consumer Research, USA.

<sup>64</sup> *Journal of Business Strategy*, American Sentinel U., USA, focuses upon management issues.

<sup>65</sup> *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly* is the journal of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication, Columbia, SC, USA.

<sup>66</sup> *Journal of Consumer Research*, U. of Chicago Press, is an interdisciplinary journal.

<sup>67</sup> *Journal of Popular Culture* is and the official publication of the Popular Culture Association published by Wiley Periodicals, Inc .

of specific examples from these publications, including Callcott and Lee,<sup>68</sup> Callcott and Lee,<sup>69</sup> Phillips;<sup>70</sup> Phillips and Gyoerick.<sup>71</sup> Likewise the publications from key industry organisations also provide valuable study of this field.<sup>72</sup> Marketing publications, and their corresponding websites that aim more specifically at industry professionals, for example *Advertising Age*<sup>73</sup> and Marketing.ie,<sup>74</sup> Brand Week<sup>75</sup> also offer valuable contemporary focus and industry perspective.

A number of postgraduate studies internationally have emerged in recent years that suggest the popularity and intrigue of brand icons, for example Sheih<sup>76</sup> and Ko.<sup>77</sup> The investigations, notably within the disciplines of media studies, marketing and business, focus upon particular aspects of brand icons and in many instances relate to their screen, digital and print advertising contexts rather than the packaging focus of this thesis. For example Bengston's study of the Green Giant icon and the company's history;<sup>78</sup> Phillips study of the role of characters in shaping product perceptions;<sup>79</sup> Yu-Chen Huang's study of the likeability of animated spokes-characters in advertising<sup>80</sup> and Andersson and

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<sup>68</sup> Margaret Falwell Callcott and Wei-Na Lee. "A Content Analysis of Animation and Animated Spokes-Characters in Television Commercials," *Journal of Advertising* 23 Dec.(1994):1-12.

<sup>69</sup> Margaret F. Callcott and We-Na Lee "Establishing the Spokes-Character in Academic Inquiry: Historical Overview and Framework for Definition" Ed. Frank R. Kardes and Mita Sujan *Advances in Consumer Research*. 22. Provo : Association for Consumer Research (1995): 144-151.

<sup>70</sup> Barbara J. Phillips. "Advertising and the Cultural Meaning of Animals," *Advances in Consumer Research*, Ed. Kim Corfman, Kim and John Lynch. 23. (1996): 354-360.

<sup>71</sup> Barbara J. Phillips and Gyoerick, "The Cow, the Cook and the Quaker: Fifty Years of Spokes-character Advertising," *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly* 76:4.(1999): 713-728.

<sup>72</sup> For example the Association of Chinese Management Educators unites academic and industry practitioners in the consideration of issues.

<sup>73</sup> *Advertising Age*, Crain Communications, USA.

<sup>74</sup> Marketing.ie is an advertising, media and marketing magazine that is published monthly by Marketing.

<sup>75</sup> Brandweek was an American marketing magazine published by The Nielsen Company.

<sup>76</sup> Bernie Shieh. "Cartoon spokespersons on advertising attitude, brand attitude and influence purchase intent," thesis, National Central U., Taiwan (2005).

<sup>77</sup> Yen-Ling Ko *Building and Management of Character Brands*. Thesis, Graduate Institute of International Trade, National Cheng Chi University, Taiwan (2007).

<sup>78</sup> Roger E. Bengston, *A History of the Green Giant Company, 1903-1979*. PhD Diss., Minneapolis: U of Minnesota, (1991).

<sup>79</sup> Barbara J. Phillips, *The Role of Advertising Trade Characters in Forming Product Perceptions*, Thesis, U of Texas (1993).

<sup>80</sup> Yu-Chen Huang. *A study on Advertising Effectiveness of Animated Spokes-Characters*. Master's Thesis. Department and Graduate Institute of Business Administration. Chaoyang U. of Technology, Taiwan. 2006.

Iskander study of the brand values of Swedish television icons.<sup>81</sup> Each study draws heavily from established literature and in some cases offers little new perspective or findings. Those that offer case studies of particular brand icons do however provide valuable documentation and interrogation of examples.

#### **2.4. Seminal studies**

Since the 1990"s there have been a small but growing number of academic studies that have focused upon fictitious people brand icons specifically. In general, most studies tend to focus upon a range of icon types and are often American based with focus upon related commercial contexts, companies and case study examples accordingly. Notably the majority of studies appear to focus upon examples use within advertising rather than the packaging focus of this study. It is recognised that brand icons are perhaps more prevalent within advertising and their roles and personalities may be more active within these contexts rather than the two dimensional structures of packaging. However a number of key studies make major contribution to the body of knowledge under review. Importantly Callcott and Lee prescribed that advertising spokes-characters may be defined by two essential determinants: "First, a character must be used consistently in conjunction with the product it advertises (...). Secondly, the spokes-character must have a recognizable "character" or "persona."<sup>82</sup> This definition remains pertinent to research and is adopted for this study"s identification of brand icons.

Stern explored the relationship between spokes-characters and allegorical figures in literary criticism.<sup>83</sup> Callcott and Alvey presented a spokes-character typology, which became the basis for research linking character type to product recall.<sup>84</sup> Phillips (forthcoming) presents a different definition of advertising

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<sup>81</sup> Angelica Andersson and Madelene Yavuz Iskander, "Frank, Robert & Stig: A Study About Organizational Core Value Branding through Notional Employees." Jönköping: Jönköping International Business School, 2010):18.

<sup>82</sup> Margaret F. Callcott and Wei-Na Lee 145-151.

<sup>83</sup> Barbara, B. Stern, "The Brand Person: A Literary View of Source Characteristics and Advertising Effects," *American Academy of Advertising Proceedings of the 1991 conference of the American Academy of Advertising*, Ed. Holman, Rebecca, D"Arcy. (Masius, Benton and Bowles, 1991):136-138.

<sup>84</sup> Margaret F. Callcott and Patricia A. Alvey, "Toons Sell.....And Sometimes They Don't: An Advertising Spokes Character Typology and Exploratory Study." *American Academy*, Ed. Rebecca Holman (1991): 43-53.

characters, which is adapted to a study of character meaning transfer in advertisements. Callcott's works<sup>85</sup> notably set key benchmarks for the study of brand icons. Callcott and Lee's "Content Analysis of Animation and Animated Spokes-Characters in Television Commercials"<sup>86</sup> identified the function and nuances of examples through close reading of examples<sup>86</sup> and Phillips' consideration of "Advertising Trade Characters in Forming Product Perceptions"<sup>87</sup> further considered the role of examples.<sup>87</sup> These studies provide valuable guides for the identification and definition of brand icon and offer key frameworks for their analysis that have been widely used by other key scholars.

In particular Callcott provided definition of what she termed "*spokes-character*", a historical survey of (American) examples,<sup>88</sup> and a framework for their study. It considered spokes-characters in the context of advertising, mainly in relation to children and television, but did not consider their work across wider marketing contexts, such as packaging, in any depth and did not consider their existence and relevance external to America. Thus Callcott provided a tightly focussed<sup>89</sup> study that is distinct and different in terms of focus and approach to this study. This thesis aims to provide an important complement to her work.

Callcott identified that the evolution of what she termed as spokes-characters relates to the development of commercial history and the mass media: that as "cultural mirrors"<sup>90</sup> they represent "significant events in American history and culture."<sup>91</sup> Spokes-characters are observed as a „cultural phenomenon in their

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<sup>85</sup> Callcott's works on occasion have been produced collaboratively with other authors including Barbara J. Phillips and Wei-Na Lee who are also key researchers in this field. Her works include: Margaret Falwell Callcott and Patricia A. Alvey 1991; Callcott, "The Spokes-Character in Advertising: An Historical Survey and Framework for Future Research." PhD Diss., Department of Advertising, College of Communication, Austin: U. of Texas, 1993; Callcott, and Wei-Na Lee, 1994:1-12. This collaborative study was undertaken by Callcott and her PhD supervisor Wei-Na Lee; Callcott and Wei-Na Lee "Establishing the Spokes-Character in Academic Inquiry: Historical Overview and Framework for Definition."

<sup>86</sup> Margaret, F. Callcott, and Wei-Na Lee. "A Content Analysis of Animation and Animated Spokes-Characters in Television Commercials." *Journal of Advertising*. 23 Dec. (1994) 1-12.

<sup>87</sup> Barbara J. Phillips, *The Role of Advertising Trade Characters in Forming Product Perceptions* (U of Texas, 1993).

<sup>88</sup> Callcott's visual references relate to a survey of archival advertising print examples from American general interest magazines sourced predominantly at the Centre for Advertising History, Smithsonian Institute and The American Advertising Museum, USA.

<sup>89</sup> The examples discussed are in many cases enduring classics, however the time of the thesis's production does mean some examples are dated.

<sup>90</sup> Callcott 1993 36.

<sup>91</sup> Callcott 1993 1.

own right”<sup>92</sup> and that they “provided more for consumers than just an identifying symbol or guarantee of product quality.”<sup>93</sup> These observations are also made by Morgan<sup>94</sup> whose discussion of the evolution of examples is further quoted by Callcott and Lee.<sup>95</sup> Callcott and Lee observed that “Advertising characters have maintained a continuous presence in the American marketplace as product endorsers, symbols of company/brand continuity, and objects of nostalgia”<sup>96</sup> and identify their function, including their remit to gain consumer trust and to develop personal relationships with consumers.<sup>97</sup> To set the context for their definition of spokes-character, Callcott and Lee provided overview of the evolution of the marketing form and highlighted key examples in relation to the notion of personification and their links with folklore and storytelling. Likewise this study follows Callcott and Lee’s lead in terms of considering icons in relation the notions of myth and storytelling as its fictitious examples focus sit effectively within such contexts however its focus and selection of examples is very different. With reference to Stern’s<sup>98</sup> work Callcott and Lee identified “Personification, which is the representation of an object or creature as a person, is historically one of the most popular techniques used in the creation of advertising spokes-characters” and observe that “The human need to personify things, to give them a personality that can be identified with” is an established approach in traditional narrative and meaning making.<sup>99</sup> This concept remains core in the study of brand icons and is considered in key studies accordingly.

Whilst the terminology of brand icons is discussed in Chapter Four it is noted that Callcott reported that literature “(...) is consistently vague about what

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<sup>92</sup> Callcott 1993 37.

<sup>93</sup> Callcott 1993 1.

<sup>94</sup> Hal Morgan, *Symbols of America* (New York: Viking, 1986).

<sup>95</sup> Callcott and Lee 1995.

<sup>96</sup> Callcott and Lee 1995

<sup>97</sup> Callcott and Lee 1995

<sup>98</sup> Barbara Stern, "Medieval Allegory: Roots of Advertising Strategy for the Mass Market," *Journal of Marketing*, (52 July, 1988):84-94.

<sup>99</sup> The authors explain, with reference to Stern’s work (1988) that traditionally (referring back to Medieval times) abstract concepts have been explained and communicated through allegoric approaches. Symbolic representations and metaphors have been used to visually communicate ideas and concepts. The use of „symbolic narrative“, as referenced by the authors, is evidenced through the use of stories and characters that help make explicit key meanings and concepts – a strategy that is continued today in marketing. The notion of storytelling and myth in relation to this study’s focus upon fictitious brand icons therefore builds upon Callcott and Lee and Stern’s consideration of allegory and metaphor.

constitutes an advertising spokes-character<sup>100</sup> yet frustratingly she did not define her chosen term until Chapter 3 of her thesis. It is difficult therefore to determine if this was the accepted marketing term prevalent at the time of writing or if it was her preferred term. Callcott quoted Obermeyer<sup>101</sup> to provide identification of the purpose and roles of the *trade character*, although viewed this term as “dated.”<sup>102</sup> Callcott determined that the spokes-character must move between an active and symbolic status and that it must actively speak for the product to be considered as spokes-character. This view is thus interrogated within this thesis in relation to the notion of brand icon where it is proposed that such status does not require that the example physically speaks as Callcott determined.

Callcott and Lee’s<sup>103</sup> “Framework for Spokes-Character Definition”<sup>104</sup> provided greater clarity of definition and valuable structure for determination of the marketing tool. Their criteria determined that to be a spokes-character an example “(...) must be used consistently in conjunction with the product it advertises” and that it “must have a recognizable “character” or “persona.”<sup>105</sup> Examples which do not meet these criteria are considered “symbols” and this thesis takes this stance too. Callcott and Lee presented four defining “parameters” in their definition framework: “the physical Appearance of the character, the Medium it appears in, advertising or non-advertising Origin, and spokes-character Promotion of the product (AMOP).”<sup>106</sup> These aspects of defining what a true active brand icon is compared with the more passive and general character are used within this study accordingly.

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<sup>100</sup> Callcott 1993 46.

<sup>101</sup> Henry Obermeyer, “The Multiple Mr. Gus Gas.” *Gas Age* (17 April 1947) 48 in Callcott 1993 18.

<sup>102</sup> This term is still in currency today however although perhaps less well used than comparable terms advertising character and brand icon

<sup>103</sup> Callcott and Lee 1995.

<sup>104</sup> Callcott and Lee. Their study was based upon „a survey of over 700 ad character images from the past century of American advertising, The majority of these images were collected from the Center for Advertising History (Smithsonian Institution) in Washington, D.C., and the American Advertising Museum in Portland, Oregon.

<sup>105</sup> Callcott and Lee 1995.

<sup>106</sup> Callcott and Lee. The author’s noted that “Spokes-characters may be defined along all four parameters, or on any combination of parameters that is desired for research purposes.”

Kyung et al,<sup>107</sup> drawing upon Aaker's "brand personality" work – "the set of human characteristics associated with a brand"<sup>108</sup> - considered the various facets of brand icons: their dimensions which in part relate to and are dependent upon their intended use and the context of their existence. Cooke and LeBel identified different icon types – anthropomorphic; personalisation, for example the Green Giant and the Pillsbury Doughboy, and considered their human-like characters referencing the "collage of traits with which marketers believe their target audience will identify."<sup>109</sup>

These authors identified that icons' dimensions can include their attributes and personality traits, visual appearance, voice and action, and their particular qualities such as credibility and likability.<sup>110</sup> This important consideration of icons in relation to this thesis's people focus therefore draws parallels with the authors' recent research.

In terms of the visual identity of examples Callcott referred to the VisCAP<sup>111</sup> marketing model presented by Rossiter and Percy<sup>112</sup> and the four characteristics deemed important in characters' communication: Visibility; Credibility;<sup>113</sup> Attraction;<sup>114</sup> and Power.<sup>115</sup> Notably the importance of character's ability to "hook" consumers' attention was considered.<sup>116</sup> The notion of the visibility hook refers to how examples visually secure consumer attention, how they make memorable the product/brand and how they have "positive affect" on consumers. This consideration of the visual role of examples is critical to this thesis.

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<sup>107</sup> Hobin Kyung, Ohyeon Kwon and Yongjum Sung, "The Effects of Spokes-Characters' Personalities of Food Products on Source Credibility," *Journal of Food Products Marketing* 17 (2011): 65-78.

<sup>108</sup> Jennifer. L. Aaker, "Dimensions of Brand Personality," *Journal of Marketing Research* 34 (1997):347.

<sup>109</sup> Cooke and Le Bel 144.

<sup>110</sup> Kyung et al.

<sup>111</sup> VisCAP is the acronym for the characteristics identified: Visibility, Credibility, Attraction, and Power.

<sup>112</sup> J.R. Rossiter, and L. Percy, *Advertising Communications and Promotion Management* (New York: McGraw Hill, 1987).

<sup>113</sup> Expertise and Trustworthiness.

<sup>114</sup> Physical attraction and similarity to target audience/consumer - likeability.

<sup>115</sup> Strong personality or persuasive power.

<sup>116</sup> Callcott determines the visibility hook as a consistent visual reference to a product, brand or packaging – a cue that secures attention.

The use of commercial images that appear as human, anthropomorphic character, animal or other visual symbol for brand identity and promotion is well established. Researchers have investigated the historical development of what they term “advertising spokes-characters”<sup>117</sup> “brand characters and trade characters”<sup>118</sup> notably within the context of advertisements. Whilst studies have identified the evolution of brand characters in relation to advertising, comparatively few have focused upon the use of people images on food packaging and in particular fictitious people food brand icon.<sup>119</sup>

The historical development of food manufacture and promotion, notably in relation to comparable America, Canada and UK markets, evidenced the creation and application of symbols and people’s names and portraits as registered trademarks and brand names by companies as they attempted to secure distinct identity and make competitive their brands and products.<sup>120</sup> As Morgan identified, “By the 1890’s the idea of adding picture symbols to packages was already well established”<sup>121</sup> and he cited the rise of design agencies in America by the 1880’s as important to the creation and coordination of such “commercial symbols” used within advertising and packaging design.<sup>122</sup> “Advertising characters”<sup>123</sup> were employed by companies to distinguish their brand in ever competitive markets and to protect it from potential piracy of unscrupulous competitors. As Marchand identified, the characters were important in securing consumer trust as retail experiences changed: as mass production and consumer markets developed and self-service shopping evolved from the traditional context of the local retailer.<sup>124</sup> Many companies employed their founder’s name, portrait and signature to distinguish their brand whilst others created “personified” “animals or objects.”<sup>125</sup> Contemporary focused

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<sup>117</sup> Callcott, and Wei-Na Lee 1995.

<sup>118</sup> Barbara J. Phillips, “Defining Trade Characters and their Role in American Popular Culture,” *Journal of Popular Culture* 29.4 (Spring, 1996): 143-158.

<sup>119</sup> Morgan’s work discussed fictitious examples. See Hal Morgan, *Symbols of America* (New York: Viking Penguin Inc., 1986.): 7.

<sup>120</sup> As discussed by Callcott, and Lee 1995.

<sup>121</sup> Morgan 7.

<sup>122</sup> Morgan 7.

<sup>123</sup> Callcott and Lee.

<sup>124</sup> Roland Marchand, *Advertising the American Dream: Making Way for Modernity 1920-1940* (Berkeley: U. of California Press, 1985).

<sup>125</sup> Callcott and Lee 1995 144.

research such as Phillips and Lee's examination of animated spokes-characters in websites confirmed that their movement helps increase their likeability by consumers however the study concluded that the extent of their interactivity was not being exploited and their call to brands to exploit such is an appropriate emphasis.<sup>126</sup>

#### **2.4.1. Cartoon spokes-people**

A key aspect of Callcott's 1993 study was the comparison of the advertising spokes-character with cartoon, comic strip and animated characters. It identified that consumers have learned to respond to spokes-characters through their experience of cartoons.<sup>127</sup> Her observations best relate to specific examples such as illustrated, animals and the obviously fictitious characters rather than the fictitious people-types that this thesis is concerned with. However the parallel that is drawn between the two areas is considered further within Chapter Four of this thesis as the understanding of how brand icons are read, based upon our familiarity with wider examples of cartoon characters in popular culture has ramifications for how the fictitious person brand icon may be understood and indeed accepted by consumers.

Interestingly cartoon brand icons are many and appear to endure and operate internationally relatively successfully. Classic examples endure such as Kellogg's Tony the Tiger, and Snap, Crackle and Pop and such examples have drawn the attention of other researchers. It is perhaps the fun aspect of such characters and their obvious presence in advertising that draws curiosity.

Notably Callcott presented a "descriptive typology and framework"<sup>128</sup> that provides definition of spokes-characters through identification of 4 basic modes of representation: personification (of objects);<sup>129</sup> human caricature;<sup>130</sup> human illustration;<sup>131</sup> and live humans or animals. This can be cross referenced to

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<sup>126</sup> Barbara J. Phillips and We-Na Lee, „Interactive Animation: Exploring Characters on the Internet,“ *Journal of Current Issues and Research in Advertising* 1:27 (2005): 1-17.

<sup>127</sup> The consideration of how cartoon characters are employed as advertising product endorsers.

<sup>128</sup> Callcott 1993 28.

<sup>129</sup> The examples given include Bibendum, the Michelin man.

<sup>130</sup> The examples given as mythical creatures, ethnic distortions – eg. Sunny Jim, Campbell Kids.

<sup>131</sup> The examples given as Morton Soap Girl and the Cream of Wheat Chef.

Cooke and LeBel's<sup>132</sup> discussion of the different techniques that are used to create types: anthropomorphization and personalisation<sup>133</sup> and the use of "a collage of traits with which marketers believe their target audience will identify"<sup>134</sup> to create human-like characters. The authors' consideration of different types and their construction provide a valuable springboard for this study's approach in determining brand icon types.

Callcott's 1993 study provides a sound platform for initial consideration of brand icons although the work is relatively concise, advertising biased, American dominant<sup>135</sup> and now considerably dated in terms of examples cited.<sup>136</sup> This thesis draws from and builds upon Callcott's identification of the defining characteristics and functions of a spokes-character. Its taxonomy augments Callcott's typology to establish a more rigorous and developed identification of types through consideration of their visual characteristics.

Cooke and LeBel considered the relationship that consumers have with food "branded spokescharacters":<sup>137</sup> how consumers create narratives that give meaning and personality to examples. Their study<sup>138</sup> took a literary theory approach, and used brand personality theory and reader response theory, in the examination of a mix of cartoon and "fictitious human"<sup>139</sup> Canadian and American based characters, in consideration of consumers' active role in the

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<sup>132</sup> Nathalie Cooke and Jordan L. Bel. "Branded Food Spokecharacters; consumers' contributions to the narrative of commerce," *Journal of Product and Brand Management* 17:3 (2008):143-153.

<sup>133</sup> The examples given are the Green Giant and Poppin' Fresh the Pillsbury Doughboy.

<sup>134</sup> Cooke and Jordan LeBel 143-153.

<sup>135</sup> Callcott noted that spokes-characters are predominantly Anglo-American representations and that ethnic examples are lacking. This study evidences that some ethnic characters now exist. For example the 1995 Betty Crocker portrait by John Stuart Ingle specifically aimed to represent the ethnic diversity of contemporary America. However this portrait was criticised by some consumers as being too ethnic. Interestingly the Aunt Jemima brand icon portrait was updated in 1989 to address the shifts in cultural ideals and attitudes. Her image was made more contemporary and politically correct and less racially stereotypical

<sup>136</sup> The examples highlighted tend to be relatively obvious. Callcott refers to popular and well established examples, for example the Quaker icon of Quaker Oats. This study by comparison considers wider international examples.

<sup>137</sup> Nathalie Cooke and Jordan L. Bel. "Branded Food Spokecharacters; consumers' contributions to the narrative of commerce." (*Journal of Product and Brand Management*. 17:3.2008) 144.

<sup>138</sup> The study is based upon a sample of student responses to spokescharacter examples in relation to examples likeability; personality traits and recognition factor.

<sup>139</sup> Cooke and LeBel 143.

construction of a spokescharacter's personality.<sup>140</sup> The study considered "the complex narratives that consumers project (sometimes unwittingly) onto the spokescharacter" and how the connotative meaning of characters gives shape to their being. Cooke and LeBel's study, whilst concise and rather general in its consideration of its „model of narrative engagement“,<sup>141</sup> spotlights the importance of narrative and the brand icon and consumer relationship. As Cooke and LeBel note, the role of narrative in the brand icon-consumer relationship is one that can be read from two sides: the narrative created by the company in their presentation of their icon (denotative meaning) and the narrative created by the consumer in their reading of the icon (connotative meaning.) In this respect this thesis further explores the notion of narrative in Chapter Four in relation to the notion of storytelling and within its consideration of the fictitious home economist examples in Chapter Seven. Whilst Cooke and LeBel make reference to such examples in their study, the conciseness of their consideration provides sign posted points primarily.

Aspects of the *company-brand-product-brand icon-consumer* relationship chain have been studied from a variety of perspectives to establish how meaning is exchanged. A number of studies focus upon the brand icon and consumer relationship and take a qualitative approach to investigate consumers' attitudes towards brand icons and how they take and make meaning from their forms.

## **2.4.2. Anthropomorphic examples**

Key advertising character types are scrutinized in established literature by Callcott and Phillips;<sup>142</sup> Phillips;<sup>143</sup> Brown;<sup>144</sup> and Hosany et al.<sup>145</sup> Notably the anthropomorphic stable appears to garner regular attention. These characters,

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<sup>140</sup> The study is based upon student survey responses relating to specific spokescharacters.

<sup>141</sup> Cooke and LeBel 150.

<sup>142</sup> Callcott and Phillips 1996, 73-79.

<sup>143</sup> Phillips 1996, 354-360.

<sup>144</sup> Stephen Brown, "Show me the Mascot: Corraling Critters for Pedagogic Purposes." Belk, Russell W. Kent Grayson, Albert M. Muñiz, Hope Jensen Schau. *Research in Consumer Behavior*. (2011) 39-55; Stephen Brown, "Where the Wild Brands Are: Some Thoughts on Anthropomorphic Marketing," *Marketing Review* 10.3 (2010) 209-224.

<sup>145</sup> Sammeer Hosany, Girsih Prayag, Drew Martin, Wai-Yee Lee, "Theory and Strategies of Anthropomorphic Brand Characters from Peter Rabbit, Mickey Mouse, and Ronald McDonald, to Hello Kitty," *Journal of Marketing Management* 2013: 1-2. Web. 12 July (2013).

whether taking dogs or tigers, are extensively evident across advertising platforms and thus offer effective access for investigation.

The use of animals and animal brand icons is a popular marketing strategy evidenced across time and cultures.<sup>146</sup> A number of studies have focused upon this area including Phillips;<sup>147</sup> Phillips and Gyoerick;<sup>148</sup> and Callcott and Lee.<sup>149</sup> Phillips<sup>150</sup> examination of animal “trade characters (...)”<sup>151</sup> ability to communicate commercial messages considers the common cultural meanings that audiences give to examples.<sup>152</sup> In the qualitative study of people’s responses to names of animals, Phillips identified that consumers apply shared meanings to animals and that when an animal is used in marketing a “product acquires the image’s cultural meaning”.<sup>153</sup> This study confirms that shared cultural meanings are important in the construction of advertising messages. This study does not focus upon a visual analysis of such examples however and its core focus on word association perhaps limits the opportunity to further consider the nuances of particular types within a certain species.<sup>154</sup> Based on the work of previous researchers<sup>155</sup> Mou and Jeng’s<sup>156</sup> investigation of animal-type spokes-characters appeal to adults in the advertising of „intangible products”<sup>157</sup> reflected

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<sup>146</sup> A pack of animal brand icons exist in relation to wider products, for example the Dulux dog, IC1 (1961- ) and the Andrex puppy, Kimberly-Clark (1972- ).

<sup>147</sup> Phillips “Advertising and the cultural meaning of animal.”

<sup>148</sup> Phillips, Barbara. J. and Gyoerick. “The Cow, the Cook, and the Quaker: Fifty Years of Spokes-character Advertising,” *J&MC Quarterly* 76.4 (1999):713 -728.

<sup>149</sup> Margaret F. Callcott and Wei-Na Lee, “A Content Analysis of Animation and Animated Spokes-Characters in Television Commercials,” *Journal of Advertising*, 23 Dec. (1994) 1-12.

<sup>150</sup> Phillips “Advertising and the Cultural Meaning of Animals.”

<sup>151</sup> Phillips “Advertising and the Cultural Meaning of Animals” 354.

<sup>152</sup> Phillips’ qualitative research approach involved the presentation of animal words to a sample of undergraduate respondents to test the meanings and associations that they gave to specific words.

<sup>153</sup> Phillips “Advertising and the Cultural Meaning of Animals” 354.

<sup>154</sup> The study of animals and the associative meanings through the consideration of words only does not consider that within an animal type category, for example dogs, there exist different associations and cultural meanings in relation to different breeds.

<sup>155</sup> For example Garretson & Niedrich; Sabrina M.Neeley and David W. Schumann, “Using Animated Spokes-Characters In Advertising To Young Children,” *Journal of Advertising* 33: 3. (2004): 7-23; Phillips “Advertising and the Cultural Meaning of Animals”; and Mou, Tsai-Yun and Jeng, Tay-Sheng, “Appeal or rationality? On design of spokescharacter,” *International Design and Cinema Conference, DESIGN CINEMA 2008. Istanbul, Nov.19 - 22, Web. 2 Apr. 2010.*

<sup>156</sup> Mou, Tsai-Yun and Jeng, Tay-Sheng. Appeal or rationality? On design of spokescharacter. *International Design and Cinema Conference, DESIGN CINEMA 2008. Istanbul, Nov.19 - 22, Web. 2 Apr. 2010.*

<sup>157</sup> The research focused upon the spokes-character *A-Lung*, a 3D dinosaur, used by a Taiwan Life Insurance Company. Research was drawn from surveys and interviews with a sample of 12 respondents only.

Neeley and Schumann's consideration of children's responses to animal characters. Both studies concluded that such characters are not significantly influential in consumer product choice or purchase intent.

### 2.4.3. Children and television

Like Calcott<sup>158</sup> a number of researchers have also focused upon advertising characters targeting children via television advertisements including Neeley, and Schuman;<sup>159</sup> Mizerski<sup>160</sup> and Lawrence.<sup>161</sup> The use of brand icons in children's marketing is widespread and although this focus is not that of this thesis, aspects of this field<sup>162</sup> and its related research do inform this study.<sup>163</sup> Key studies have focused upon the relationship of brand icons and children in advertising, for example Van Auken, Subhash and Lonial,<sup>164</sup> Fischer et al<sup>165</sup> and Mizerski;<sup>166</sup> and Neeley and Schumann<sup>167</sup> provided valuable overview of the approach and key findings of others work whilst undertaking their own qualitative research in the examination of the animated spokes-character influence on preschool age children. Their findings confirmed that children's relationship with the brand is not necessarily harnessed by the icon: the icon is recognised by children as a character in its own right and not necessarily linked with the related brand or to their choice of product. They observed that as our cognitive abilities develop and our exposure to and experiences of icons becomes more established we are more able to relate to and use the icon as a factor in our purchase decisions. Likewise Lawrence<sup>168</sup> identified the "cognitive powers of interpretation"<sup>169</sup> of specific children's age ranges in relation to their

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<sup>158</sup> Callcott, "The Spokes-Character in Advertising."

<sup>159</sup> Sabrina and Schuman 7-23.

<sup>160</sup> Mizerski 58-70.

<sup>161</sup> David Lawrence, "The Role of Characters in Kids Marketing," *World Advertising Research Center* 4.3. (2003):43-48.

<sup>162</sup> Calcott (1993) commented that research regarding examples that target adult audiences are neglected and to some extent this still holds true. As such this thesis is positioned accordingly and it does provide consideration of examples that are specifically aimed at adult audiences.

<sup>163</sup> Key aspects relating to brand icons aimed at children are discussed in Chapter Four.

<sup>164</sup> Van Auken and Lonial 13-22.

<sup>165</sup> Fischer, Paul M., Meyer P. Schwartz, John W. Richards, Jr., Adam O. Goldstein, and Tina H. Rojas, "Brand Logo Recognition by Children Aged Three to Six Years: Mickey Mouse and Old Joe the Camel," *Journal of the American Medical Association*, 266 (Dec. 11 1991) 3145-148.

<sup>166</sup> Mizerski 58-70.

<sup>167</sup> Neeley and Schumann.

<sup>168</sup> Lawrence.

<sup>169</sup> Lawrence 43-48.

ability to relate to and understand examples in an article aimed at marketing professionals. The changing sophistication of consumer's ability to read and relate to examples is pertinent to an understanding of how audiences learn early to read brand icon images. Schumann's<sup>170</sup> article provided detailed discussion of such and his own qualitative research with children makes important contribution.

Overall Calcott provides a sound platform for initial consideration although the work is relatively concise, advertising biased, American dominant and now considerably dated. Examples highlighted tend to be relatively obvious, for example the Quaker icon, however some of her ideas provide interesting comment and allow me to position and test my own concepts and approaches against accordingly.

#### **2.4.4. Books**

A number of key publications relating to branding and corporate and trademark history provide consideration of brand icon examples in terms of their design and commercial use. In some instances publications present lavish and extensive illustration of examples within the context of their catalogue documentation of logo and trademark category types, for example Baer Capitman.<sup>171</sup> Whilst they provide valuable visual reference, with some discussion of the example types and some historical details, their interrogation of the visual aspect of examples generally remains limited: scant or no reading of examples and their associative meanings is evident. Two of the most incisive studies however are Morgan's 1986 book *Symbols of America* and Kovel and Kovel's „*The Label Made Me Buy It*“.<sup>172</sup> Both books highlight a wealth of relevant examples and imagery however discussion is still concise, focusing upon examples within socio-cultural historic contexts primarily.

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<sup>170</sup> David W. Schumann, "Using animated spokes-characters in advertising to young children: does increasing attention to advertising necessarily lead to product preference? *Journal of Advertising*. 24 Sept. 2004. Web. 2 April.

<sup>171</sup> Barbara Baer Capitman, *American Trademark Designs: A Survey with 732 Marks, Logos and Corporate Identity Symbols*. (New York: Dover Publications Inc., 1976).

<sup>172</sup> Ralph and Terry Kovel, *The label made me buy it* (New York: Crown Publishers, Inc., 1998).

A range of books relating to brand icons, advertising characters and packaging also exist: what can be considered as visual „coffee table books“,<sup>173</sup> for example Dotz and Morton;<sup>174</sup> Jankowski<sup>175</sup> and Dotz and Husain.<sup>176</sup> As typical example, Dotz and Husain provided a nostalgic colourful survey of historical “ad characters”<sup>177</sup> identified with press and television advertising and package design. Like others, this publication provided collation of mainly American examples and offered little discussion as was the book’s intent. It did categorise examples however the groupings conflicted at times as themes were identified and provided valuable collation of visual examples however with little discussion of their design, history or contexts. No visual reading of examples was offered. The author’s provided a nostalgic colourful survey of historical „ad characters”.<sup>178</sup>

#### **2.4.5. Advertising Icon Museum, Kansas City, USA.**

The Advertising Icon Museum<sup>179</sup> in Kansas City, USA created by Robert A. Bernstein,<sup>180</sup> Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of the prominent American marketing and communications company Bernstein-Rein,<sup>181</sup> evidences the interest in and importance of brand icons to their commercial creators and guardians. Poised for opening since 2007 it aims to showcase examples of what the company refers to as advertising icons. Importantly the display will unite examples from across manufacturers and brands to consider the icon-consumer relationships. It aims “to educate and enhance the public’s

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<sup>173</sup> “Coffee table books are accepted to have very definite agenda. They are expected to romance the beauty of a place, a design style or an art craft form; or share with the reader a particular indulgence of the author’s or photographer’s personal adventure or obsessive study. Although the intention is to reveal its subject, the nature of the genre is more often rather exoticizing, with its focus on exquisite, full colour, detailed photography”. Dipti Bhagat, Review of Mkulika Banerjee and Daniel Miller, 2003, “The Sari,” *Berg Journal of Design History* 19:2. (Oxford: OUP: 2003): 169.

<sup>174</sup> Dotz and Morton, *What a character: 20<sup>th</sup> century American Advertising Icons*.

<sup>175</sup> Jerry Jankowski, *Shelf Life: Modern Package Design 1920 -1945* (San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 1992); Jankowski, *Shelf Space Modern Package Design 1945 – 1965*. (San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 1988).

<sup>176</sup> Dotz and Husain *Meet Mr. Product: The Art of the advertising character*.

<sup>177</sup> Dotz and Husain, *Ad Boy: Vintage Advertising with Character* (Berkeley: Ten Speed Press, 2009).

<sup>178</sup> Dotz and Husain, *Ad Boy: Vintage Advertising with Character*.

<sup>179</sup> The Advertising Icon Museum was reported to potentially open in 2013.

<sup>180</sup> Working with Howard Boasberg, Executive Director of The Advertising Icon Museum.

<sup>181</sup> Bernstein-Rein was ranked as 13<sup>th</sup> in the top US Branding and Identity Agencies rating in 2009. Top U.S. Branding and Identity Agencies available from Advertising Age 2010 April 5 Web. 25 May 2010.

appreciation and understanding of advertising and product branding through the use of advertising icons and fictional characters, and to explore how they reflect social and cultural values.”<sup>182</sup> Whilst at present in virtual existence<sup>183</sup> this resource evidences the importance of icons as historical, social and cultural markers of commercial worlds and should offer important empirical material for consideration of brand icons specifically, though apparently from a predominantly American base. It will provide comparative consideration of examples however it appears, through the exhibits as currently evidenced, that the focus perhaps relates more predominantly to advertising icons in general, including an extensive range of cartoon examples, rather than this thesis’s specific focus. Notably it appears not to offer scrutiny of examples within the context of packaging specifically and thus positions its consideration of wider examples more generally than the specifics of this thesis. Their identification of *advertising* icons relates to the museum’s creation and positioning by its advertising industry professionals. An explanation of their use of the term icon in preference to character is presented:

(...) while we do consider the subjects of our museum “characters” we also think their employment in advertising as powerful brand symbols qualifies them for higher status. Any old creation might be a character; ours work for a living. And ad icons are not really spokesmen. Many, if not most, don’t speak at all. They are embodiments of a brand, highly memorable symbols, even without saying a word.<sup>184</sup>

This provides concise identification of the key term icon and helps to position and to reinforce this thesis’s assertion of the use of icon as generic term. It helps to make distinct the difference between icon and spokesperson. Whilst Bernstein-Rein offer some initial consideration of what qualifies as an icon and highlight the role of fictitious people as icons, it has yet to match its claim that its museum will determine what is an advertising icon.<sup>185</sup> Subsequently this thesis does offer such, and whilst drawing from and building upon the valuable insight

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<sup>182</sup> Advertising Icon Museum n.p. Web. 2 Oct. 2009.

<sup>183</sup> Advertising Icon Museum n.p. Web. 2 Oct. 2009.

<sup>184</sup> Advertising Icon Museum. n.p. Web. 2 Oct. 2009.

<sup>185</sup> The museum website stated “Some realistic characters really are real people, some are fictitious, and the line gets blurred on what qualifies as an icon but somebody has to make the call. We think it should be our museum.” Advertising Icon Museum, “News Room: Frequently Asked Questions surrounding the Advertising Icon Museum”. n.p. Web. 2 Oct. 2009.

offered by the present museum, it presents an anchored and evidenced consideration of what constitutes a *brand* icon.

## **Summary**

The review of literature identified and confirmed the key gaps in research. It has made possible the confirmation that this thesis, whilst complementing some important key scholarship and industry practice, offers fresh perspective to the particular field and focus. It identified that established studies sit within different disciplines and have taken specific perspectives in their examination of examples. It sparked the criticisms that the spheres of academe and industry (theory and practice) appear to rarely collaborate and it can be seen that such opportunity would advance knowledge further. This study does offer some indication of how this may be developed and recommends that this progression is important.

Published literature to date evidences American and Canadian academics and advertising professionals work that positions brand icons within their geographical locations primarily; where examples do not necessarily exist or cross over to UK or wider international markets and experiences. Studies appear to preference certain examples, for example Smith Bros.; Aunt Jemima, Betty Crocker, and many other brand icons examples are sorely overlooked. Gaps in the research and interrogation of UK examples from a UK and cross cultural perspective are therefore identified. It is these significant gaps which this thesis in part aims to bridge. The paucity of the historical documentation and discussion of examples internationally highlights a significant void in this field and it is recognised that with changing commercial markets and varying levels of interest (public, corporate and academic) in the focus upon examples this gap is one that may not be filled. Whilst corporate archives hold rich evidence of brand icon related materials the extent to which research may be developed from such is questionable as company collection can change and also be dissolved. It is concluded that whilst there exists some significant knowledge relating to the historical development and contemporary practice of the focus areas, the specific consideration of the visual representation of fictitious people as brand icons specifically on food packaging is distinctly

lacking. Therefore this study's investigation offers a new lens in the consideration of brand icons.

Literature to date offers valuable consideration of brand icon types across a wide range of contexts and anchors key identification and the existence of more recent studies suggests that increasingly this area of branding is appealing to a new generation of students undertaking research in relation to media, business and advertising at key universities. Notably few studies have interrogated the visual identity of people-type brand icons and in many instances the visual analysis of wider examples remains concise.

Whilst the study of packaging and branding is increasingly explored the two spheres appear rarely to be considered in tandem or combined and the design of the icon in relation to its packaging is not fore fronted. The thesis therefore provides an original approach to the consideration of these two distinct yet overlapping fields and offers a unique consideration of examples previously unexamined in this way. It advocates further research in this way to advance understanding of global practice.

The review has found the terminology used to date as diverse and changes over time as language is honed by industry and then interpreted and further by different disciplines. This thesis therefore provides anchorage of the term brand icon in its proposition of this generic term and advocates its future use across disciplines. Chapter Three builds upon this literature review and considers further the concept and role of brand icon to address the thesis's research questions. In particular it provides definition of brand icon through consideration of existing terminology evidenced in established literature. This thesis is informed by and builds upon previous studies to provide fresh insight and original examination of the language and practice of brand icons.

It is recommended that future academic studies work with industry professionals and draw upon the relevant branding strategies and market research that companies and designers use in the creation and development of brand icons.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1. Introduction**

This chapter discusses how research was approached and conducted and it considers the methods and sources used; how examples and perspectives were identified and utilised. Evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses of these in relation to how original, relevant and reliable research was is provided. This chapter provides discussion of the methodology proposed by this thesis, as evidenced in Chapter Six, in consideration of how the study of brand icons can be progressed.

#### **3.2. Research Approach**

In order to achieve an effective interrogation of fictitious people food brand icons, and their role and visual representation in contemporary international food packaging, study has taken a mixed research approach. The study has also taken a polymorphic approach that resulted from the initial mapping of its core foci and research questions across a variety of distinct and overlapping contexts – design, social, commercial, historical and cultural. Accordingly, it is positioned primarily in relation to the disciplines of design history; cultural studies; marketing; advertising; branding; food studies and culinary studies. Exploratory research enabled consideration of the established literature and practise and the synthesis and application of the different and diverse discipline perspectives and approaches in order to secure a holistic critical understanding of the foci and to produce an original analysis of a distinct area with many interconnections. This complex interdisciplinary approach meant research could not be exhaustive. The study's strands and sources, diverse in scope and scale, that embraced a variety of materials, set certain challenges, opportunities and

limitations as outlined here.<sup>1</sup> Effectively, research focused upon pertinent sources that related distinctly to the research questions.

Initially the thesis developed through an inductive research approach: the scrutiny of people upon food packaging and the collation of primary examples that led to the study's formulation of its specific hypothesis. Through qualitative research methods that included the content analysis and content assessment of packaging examples and the evaluation of relevant established literature and interviews with industry professionals, (to secure information and insight identified as otherwise unavailable) a deductive research approach followed.<sup>2</sup> The interpretative analysis of collated brand icons examples enabled the comparative examination of their visual identity.<sup>3</sup> This developed the creation of a taxonomy and semiotic visual analysis of specific case study examples to test and confirm the validity of the original hypothesis.

### **3.3. Data Collection**

#### **3.3.1. Secondary Data**

Through a descriptive research approach a review of established literature was pursued in order to anchor an understanding of the scale, scope and depth of historical and current research and practice within the related disciplines. The research aimed to establish what studies exist relating to the core areas of branding and brand icons, Betty Crocker and comparable brand icon examples, and packaging design.<sup>4</sup> This was addressed to help answer the key questions in this thesis in order that its focus and aim could be positioned accordingly and

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<sup>1</sup> Sources included academic journals, books, articles, company websites, conference papers, audio visual material, glossaries, marketing and company reports, trade publications.

<sup>2</sup> Marzolf identified content assessment as the process of reading the cultural context of images to understand the context examples are shaped by and relate to. Marion Marzoff qtd. In Carolyn Kitch, "Changing Theoretical Perspectives on Women's Media Images: The Emergence of Patterns in a New Area of Historical Scholarship," *Journalism and Mass Communication Quarterly* 74 (Autumn 1997):477-489. Marion Marzoff, "American Studies - Ideas for Media Historians?" *Journalism History* 5 Spring (1978):15.

<sup>3</sup> Schroeder defined Interpretative analysis as "detailed visual description with interpretation and cultural criticism." Jonathan. E. Schroeder, *Visual Consumption* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2002) 116.

<sup>4</sup> Whilst fan based websites and blogs provided interesting evidence of brand icons appeal, the validity of such sources resulted in their absence within this study. The website TV Acres proved to be one of the more informative sources regarding brand icons – or what it terms "Advertising mascots". TVAcres. "Advertising Mascots-People." 2003.TVAcres.com. n.pag. Web. 23 Feb. 2003.

its contribution to knowledge clearly established. This provided immediate opportunities: the different spheres of research offered widespread resources, particular design examples, alongside perspectives deriving from different discipline fields which could be connected in a way that the study identified as not having been primarily attempted. However, such an approach also posed a number of challenges - opportunities -, not least the necessity of undertaking further research into the disciplines and contexts beyond the core foci in order to secure an appropriate wide-ranging and cohesive knowledge base. This was secured alongside the acquisition of appropriate tools to facilitate appropriate investigation of the wide variety of sources and approaches.

To address the thesis's questions an understanding of branding and the role of brand icons was pursued. An essential foundation for this was provided by an investigation of brands, brand strategy and brand terminology.<sup>5</sup> A wealth of established literature exists; drawing upon a wide variety of perspectives and sources, so the selection of pertinent references was both challenging in scope yet well provided for. The study of brands was positioned in relation to wider business, marketing and advertising contexts and was further developed through consideration of social and cultural historical perspectives utilising established literature and historical collections of artefacts (see 3.3.2.2). Reflections on contemporary branding were informed by current ideologies, practice and developments via key publications as well as through contact with practitioners.<sup>6</sup>

Peer reviewed articles were identified in discipline-specific journals, for example, the *Journal of Home Economics; Advances in Consumer Research; the Journal of Advertising Research; the Journal of Consumer Research; the*

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<sup>5</sup> For example the framework offered by Suzanne Hogan, Eric Almquist and Simon. E Glynn, "Building a Brand on the Touchpoints that Count," *Mercer Management Journal*, Lippincott Mercer Design and Brand Strategy Consulting (2004): 1-10; Kevin Lane Keller, "Brand Synthesis: The Multidimensionality of Brand Knowledge," *Journal of Consumer Research* 29.4 Mar. (2003): 595-600.

<sup>6</sup> The work of contemporary brand agencies was researched to gain insight into branding practice and to develop a clearer understanding of the terminology used: their websites provided particularly useful reference in terms of terminology, notably the global agencies Brand Union (Brand Union. "About Us." n.d. Brand Union. n. pag. Web. 15 Aug. 2010.); FutureBrand ("Home." n.d. *FutureBrand*. n.pag. Web. 5 Jan. 2004.) and Interbrand (Interbrand. "About Us." n.d. *Interbrand*. n.pag. Web. 5 Jan. 2004).

*Journal of Economic Psychology*; *Public Opinion Quarterly*; the *Journal of Current Issues and Research in Advertising*; the *Journal of Business Strategy*, the *Journal of Popular Culture*; and *Journalism and Mass Communication Quarterly*.<sup>7</sup> These provided consideration of themes and issues that, whilst specific to their field, are also relevant in terms of a cross-disciplinary approach. Such articles were cross referenced and used to position and inform the thesis, enabling perspectives to be woven together to strengthen the thesis discussion. Likewise, information and industry viewpoints provided in marketing, branding and packaging magazines and trade publications underpinned knowledge of current developments and discipline terminology that informed the study accordingly.<sup>8</sup> This included *Campaign*; *Marketing*; *Packaging News*, and on-line sources such as *The Dieline*;<sup>9</sup> *AdAge*;<sup>10</sup> *Brand Channel*.<sup>11</sup> Companies' publications,<sup>12</sup> often biography-like, provided some deeper understanding of their histories and marketing activities. However, in some instances, as promotional tools, charting their development and marking their success,<sup>13</sup> the information provided inevitably have elements of bias and can lack critical depth.

The relationship between brand icon and consumer - how examples are read and product choices are subsequently made - was investigated through the use of marketing and consumer behaviour studies where relevant theoretical perspectives were applied.<sup>14</sup> Brand icons' cultural meanings and decoding by

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<sup>7</sup> To ensure the reliability of materials, peer reviewed examples were used whilst recognition of wider articles was also made to ascertain the extent to which consideration of themes have been considered. Both UK and wider international journals were referenced to secure international perspectives in research areas.

<sup>8</sup> Trade publications are particularly useful for keeping abreast of brand icon developments, the work of their brand agencies and their advertising exploits.

<sup>9</sup> Established in 2007 this website offers a showcase of contemporary packaging. It is sponsored by packaging industry organisations.

<sup>10</sup> *Advertising Age*, Crain, USA.

<sup>11</sup> This website offers useful news, articles and resources relating to branding. It is produced by Interbrand, the international brand consultancy.

<sup>12</sup> Business History. Web. 19 Jan. 2010. This website provides useful identification of publications relating to specific companies.

<sup>13</sup> As examples, Jack El-Hai, *Celebrating Tradition, Building the Future: Seventy-Five Years of Land O'Lakes* (Minneapolis: Land O'Lakes, Inc., 1996.); James Gray, *Business Without Boundary; the Story of General Mills* (Minneapolis: U. of Minnesota Press, 1954).

<sup>14</sup> For example, Grant McCracken, "Culture and Consumption: A Theoretical Account of the Structure and Movement of the Cultural Meaning of Consumer Goods," *Journal of Consumer Research* 13 (Chicago: U. of Chicago Press. 1986):71-84; and Margaret, F. Callcott,

consumers was further considered in relation to the notion of brand icons" stories and was explored in relation to studies within the fields of narratology and folklore.<sup>15</sup>

To answer this study"s questions *How are brand icons examples visually represented and read? Do they share coded visual characteristics that can be understood across time and culture?; Why do fictitious people as a brand marketing tool exist and endure visually upon food packaging and are they represented and interpreted as fictitious?* and to address its hypothesis and inform the creation of its taxonomy, a visual reading, and the decoding of examples, was approached through the application of communications theory using semiotic methodology.

Whilst recognising that there are a number of ways that images can be interpreted, this study took a critical approach in its interpretation of the visual appearance of brand icons and packaging.<sup>16</sup> Initially the compositional interpretation of examples was undertaken: consideration of their content, form and function to establish and understand their core properties. A content analysis methodology was undertaken: the study of examples to identify trends in their design and the particular messages communicated. Through examination of their visual characteristics similarities in brand icon- types were identified that inspired and enabled the foundation of a coding system – the taxonomy. This approach was undertaken through the collation of examples, notably the creation of a personal packaging and brand icon collection, with items charted and cross referenced. This approach proved to be valid as it enabled a mapping of examples and the identification of types that inspired supported the thesis"s core hypothesis. The scale and selection of examples however limited the extent to which a full understanding could be secured and it

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"Establishing the Spokes-Character in Academic Enquiry: Historical Overview and Framework for Definition" *Advances in Consumer Research*. Eds. Frank, R. Kardes and Mmita Sujana. 22. (1995):145-151.

<sup>15</sup> For example, Tom. E. Sullenberger, "Ajax Meets the Jolly Green Giant: Some Observations on the Use of Folklore and Myth in American Mass Marketing," *The Journal of American Folklore*, 87: 343, (Jan.-Mar.1974): 53-65; Richard M. Dorson. *Folklore and Fakelore: an Essay Towards a Discipline of Folkstudies*. (Cambridge: Harvard U.P., 1976); Laurence Vincent, *Legendary Brands: Unleashing the Power of Storytelling to Create a Winning Market Strategy* (Chicago: Dearborn Trade Pub., 2002).

<sup>16</sup> Gillian Rose, *Visual Methodologies: An Introduction to the Interpretation of Visual Materials*. (London: Sage, 2007).

is recognised that this study offers distinct findings in relation to a specific sample.<sup>17</sup> (Appendix A includes indicative examples of research mapping records).

The study further used a semiotic methodology in its reading of images of case study examples to establish how brand icons communicate and how they relate to wider social and cultural contexts.<sup>18</sup> This methodology, one that is well established within Visual Culture and Cultural Studies in the examination of artefacts and their contexts, provided valuable framework for this study's reference.<sup>19</sup> As brand products are "signs" "imbued with specific kinds of personal and lifestyle meanings" their reading is placed in relation to the various contexts of their existence.<sup>20</sup> As Rose identified, there are three sites at which meaning is made: the site of image production; the site of image itself and the site where the image is seen by the audience.<sup>21</sup> The consideration that different meanings can be applied to and extracted from examples depending upon their contexts and the intent of their producer and the response from consumer (audience) is important for this study's analysis of examples. However the interpretation and exchange of meaning is determined by a number of variables; our prior knowledge and experiences, as shaped by social, cultural, economic and historical contexts, for example. This set certain challenges for this study as its scope crosses, and its examples come from, different time, cultural and social contexts where a number of factors impact upon the identification and allocation of meanings. This study therefore recognises that reading of its focus examples may differ from some of the ideas it presents. However through the mapping and the visual analysis of brand icon examples it was recognised that key visual codes exist that utilise and reflect established inter culture and cross culture associations (preferred and predetermined); meanings which are carried to and across the examples from wider social, cultural and historical contexts. Chapter Six provides discussion of brand icon examples that operate using established meanings and Chapter Eight's discussion of Betty Crocker in

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<sup>17</sup> The study analysed a sample of archetypal examples drawn from an extensive collection.

<sup>18</sup> The study also considered what brand icons say about themselves through discourse analysis of examples.

<sup>19</sup> The discipline of Visual Culture emerged in the late twentieth century and scholars in this field use a variety of methodologies in their investigation.

<sup>20</sup> Marcel Danesi, *Brands* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2006) 1.

<sup>21</sup> Rose.

particular evidences the social and cultural constructs of meaning that are shared and that shape the understanding of this icon.

Semiotic analysis of examples was combined with consumer studies, marketing perspectives and folklore studies to develop a rounded consideration of brand icons.<sup>22</sup> Whilst ambitious in its attempt to position and weave the visual reading of examples from cross disciplinary positions the study does present a distinct way forward in the consideration of examples. However it is recognised that further work is to be pursued however as icon-type examples from wider cultures may present different readings and may offer additional types.

Research into Culinary Studies perspectives was undertaken in order to position fictitious food brand icons in their wider food history contexts. As culinary history and food marketing are increasingly popular fields of academic investigation key studies were examined.<sup>23</sup> Culinary Studies' consideration of food history and culture provides important material and ideas from which an understanding of food brand icons has developed. Whilst the scope and scale of investigation opportunities within this context are immense, it soon became evident that the comparative consideration of food experts and their roles in relation to the consumer and food marketing was most pertinent. Thus this study's consideration of fictitious female home economist food brand icons is informed by culinary studies perspectives of the food expert both real and fictitious. Exploration of such food brand icons and their real life counterparts necessitated consideration of the social and cultural role of women in relation to the specific case study examples and their time periods as identified. As a consequence consideration of female gender roles and representations from social, cultural and historical perspectives were considered through Culinary Studies, Food Studies and in part Women's Studies. The braiding of

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<sup>22</sup> McCracken.

<sup>23</sup> For example: Driver, 2008; Nicola Humble, *Culinary Pleasures: Cookbooks and the Transformation of British Food* (London: Faber and Faber Limited, 2005); Sherrie. A. Innes, *Dinner Roles: American Women and Culinary Culture* (Iowa City: U. of Iowa Press, 2001); Laura Shapiro, *Perfection Salad: Women and Cooking at the Turn of the Century* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1986); Arlene Voski Avakian, ed. *Through the Kitchen Window: Women Explore the Intimate Meanings of Food and Cooking*. (Oxford: Berg, 2005); James. L. Watson and Melissa, L. Caldwell, eds. *The Cultural Politics of Food and Eating: a Reader* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2005); Manuel Actis, "Deconstructing *Culinary Culture: a Critical Outline of a Theory on the Culinarization of the Self*" (Lund: U. of Lund, 2003).

perspectives whilst challenging, as each discipline offered distinct emphasis and particular intent, was helped through reference to established literature that offered valuable framework for such an approach.<sup>24</sup>

### 3.3.2. Primary data collection

#### 3.3.2.1. Food Packaging

Fundamentally food packaging contains and sells a product, and promotes a brand. As a commercial entity, what MacGregor refers to as a “business artefact”,<sup>25</sup> packaging also operates as an important document that evidences social, cultural, historical and technological change.<sup>26</sup> It reflects societies’ consumption habits, food manufacture processes and retail trends.<sup>27</sup> Thus whilst food packaging is largely ephemeral and generally readily discarded, its value as a research tool is significant. MacGregor observed that “The study of material objects may allow researchers to answer specific and descriptive explanatory questions about the behavioural and organizational properties and actions of past economic, political, social and cultural systems.” and that such artifacts “can further illuminate, enhance, modify, or even contradict existing written records.”<sup>28</sup> Thus this study undertook exploratory empirical research and analysis of packaging and food marketing using primary and secondary sources: packaging examples, supermarkets, historical and contemporary publications, and archives, libraries and collections internationally to develop an understanding of packaging and its related meanings and relevance.

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<sup>24</sup> For example Arlene Avakian Voski and Barbara Haber, Eds. *From Betty Crocker to Feminist Food Studies: Critical Perspectives on Women and Food* (Amherst and Boston: U. of Massachusetts Press, 2005); Sherrie. A. Inness, Ed. *Kitchen Culture in America: Popular Representations of Food, Gender and Race*. (Philadelphia: U. of Penn. Press, 2001).

<sup>25</sup> Robert M. MacGregor, “Cultural Values Reflected in Business Artifacts: a Rediscovery of our Historical Past,” *Journal of Eastern Township Studies*. 18. Spring. (Lennoxville: Bishops University 2001):19. MacGregor is Professor of Marketing, Williams School of Business and Economics, Bishop’s University, Canada.

<sup>26</sup> MacGregor.

<sup>27</sup> Food historian Weaver observed that printed ephemera creates a “paper trail” by which social and cultural activities and attitudes can be tracked. Weaver, William Woys, *Culinary Ephemeral: an Illustrated History* (Berkeley: U. of California Press, 2010).

<sup>28</sup> MacGregor.

Whilst an abundance of contemporary food packaging exists in supermarkets, information relating to its design is evidently less readily available.<sup>29</sup> Likewise historical examples within collections often appear to have limited archival reference and commentary relating to their design and use; their selection subject to a determined collection policy, hierarchical system or preference where brand type or design aesthetic is core, rather than a general amassing of examples.<sup>30</sup> It appears, as noted by design historian Hewitt, that packaging is a “poor relation” in the family of graphic practice and theory and design history and that little academic critical analysis of its aesthetic value and social and cultural meanings beyond its immediate function is often readily available.<sup>31</sup> I suggest that perhaps packaging’s history is less well documented than other areas of design because it is mass produced and ephemeral and is viewed differently to more enduring design. Indeed it appears that packaging design is positioned in a lower, less revered position in what could be seen as the hierarchical structure of graphic design where greater credence is given to other areas such as corporate identity or type design for example. Packaging design is often only a part of a design story where the larger roles, such as brand design, take pole position in terms of importance. As example, Ford observed “Traditionally, advertising has led the creative communication for the brand and marketing campaign, with packaging being a smaller and more isolated component of the brand development”.<sup>32</sup> Therefore this study attempts to explore and assert the importance of packaging and address a gap in established knowledge, in part, by providing collation and consideration of examples that otherwise perhaps would be neglected. Whilst many studies have focused upon innovative, different/ niche and extraordinary packaging design, this study focuses upon the ordinary common place in its consideration of distinct visual marketing approaches.

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<sup>29</sup> As identified in literature review books usually highlight and prioritise specific designed examples rather than covering the wealth of mundane examples.

<sup>30</sup> Some museums hold a particular company’s collections. Whilst providing valuable evidence of the company’s history and work, opportunity for comparative study in relation to that of others may not readily be afforded. Therefore an understanding of packaging history is determined in part by the rationale of its collection and thus preferences may skew what is prioritised and presented.

<sup>31</sup> John Hewitt, Strand chair, “Writing Design: Object: Process: Discourse: Translation”, Design History Society Annual Conference, 4 Sept. (Hatfield: Hertfordshire U. 2009).

<sup>32</sup> Jonathan Ford, “Which Came First: the Packaging or the Advertising?” *Gain: Journal of Business and Design*. 2006. AIGA, n.pag. Web. 31 Oct. 2006.

### 3.3.2.2. Packaging Collections

The study developed initially from design history and cultural studies practice and perspectives: empirical study and critical analysis of collated primary source materials; the study of packaging, its history and the semiotic analysis of its visual depiction of people as brand icons and graphic devices. In the first instance the study drew from my own extensive packaging collection totalling in excess of two thousand international historical and contemporary artefacts.<sup>33</sup> As a unique and important physical and digital resource, it focuses upon the depiction of people as illustrative devices, graphic symbols and brand icons upon food packaging primarily. It provided the motive for and the research problem of this thesis as it raised numerous questions regarding the depiction of people that initial investigation of established literature could not answer and wider packaging collections did not evidence or address. Established in 2000, the collection was stimulated by the identification of the regular graphic presence of established names and faces of some people and the emergence and transitory appearance and disappearance of others.<sup>34</sup> It has developed through regular international purchases and the donation of examples from manufacturers. Examples include cereal packaging; European cheese labels; British, American and Canadian brand originators products; Japanese and Iranian confectionery; celebrity endorsed brands etc: diverse examples united by the people as selling device upon their surface. Further examples from wider product ranges provide comparative base.<sup>35</sup> The collection ensures study that perhaps would otherwise be limited or denied owing to packaging's ephemeral nature and the fluctuation of food markets that can result in instability in packaging's design and availability.<sup>36</sup> This unique international collection informs and illustrates this study. Apparently not duplicated elsewhere, it offers

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<sup>33</sup> All examples are digitally recorded, referenced and categorized: most have supporting information.

<sup>34</sup> As a Graphic Design Historian and lecturer the artifacts were initially used as a pedagogic resource. In addition to my collection, I donated many examples to the Arts University at Bournemouth's registered museum's packaging collection.

<sup>35</sup> The collection includes alcohol, Chinese medicine packaging; tobacco, including Indian bindi etc. Wider non-food brand icons were also studied to identify the extent of the wider appearance of examples across contemporary markets.

<sup>36</sup> Packaging is usually a throwaway commodity. Brand and packaging changes and redesign and the commercial constraints dictated by product's commercial shelf life mean that packaging examples can exist over relatively short timescales.

important potential for further research. (Indicative examples are evidenced in Appendix A).

The study's selected sample of packaging examples was drawn primarily from this collection. A range of comparative examples relating to the focus and scope of the study were selected to evidence and illustrate the key issues addressed. Collated examples evidenced patterns in marketing approaches and pack designs: thematic repetition of visual people motifs that gave birth to this study. Findings and examples were cross referenced to established research: industry studies and comparable theoretical studies and frameworks to position the investigation accordingly. Specific packaging examples were selected through the identification of archetypes that best illustrated the core issues and helped evidence the study's findings. In particular comparative examples from the UK, Canada and America established the specific focus. The collection enabled empirical scrutiny of physical packaging examples: the examination of packaging surfaces that is critical to a holistic understanding of the marketing messages played out across the designs.

### **3.3.2.3. Museums, Collections and Archives**

Valuable resources regarding companies, their histories and promotion exist at the: Historical Advertising Trust (HAT), Norwich, UK;<sup>37</sup> Museum of Advertising, Brands and Packaging, London, UK;<sup>38</sup> Centre for Ephemera Studies, University of Reading, UK<sup>39</sup> and its Special Collections: Huntley and Palmer (biscuit manufacturer) Collection;<sup>40</sup> and the Archives of the McCord Museum of Canadian History, Montreal, Canada.<sup>41</sup> Empirical study of these collections has

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<sup>37</sup> This specialist archive of UK Advertising holds collections that include client archives – those belonging to, and held on behalf of, particular companies and advertising agencies (e.g. food company Hovis (Premier Foods)).

<sup>38</sup> The extensive packaging collection of Robert Opie, the prolific collector, author and authority on packaging and social history. The museum offers rich visual source, yet detailed supporting reference material is limited. Opie's packaging publications, such as *Packaging Source Book* (London: MacDonald Orbis, 1989); *Art of the Label*. (London: Simon and Schuster, 1987) and *Sweet Memories* (London: Pavilion, 1988) offer some information however the specifics of this study's focus still are lightly touched upon within these.

<sup>39</sup> Founded in 1992 this important collection of printed ephemera contains some food packaging, though notably labels.

<sup>40</sup> The company's archive 1837-1995 includes advertising, biscuit tins and a rich collection of food labels.

<sup>41</sup> The Museum's Archives were used in June 2005 to study examples of cookery publications relating to key Canadian brand icons.

supported this work,<sup>42</sup> notably in relation to historical examples.<sup>43</sup> The scope and content of the collections and their access varies however, making investigation of food packaging diverse and at times serendipitous.<sup>44</sup> Wider collections also exist that were not accessed owing to the limitations of, and relevance to, this study.<sup>45</sup> Additional digital sources, such as The Food Timeline;<sup>46</sup> The American Package Museum;<sup>47</sup> and The Food Museum on-line,<sup>48</sup> provide easier access to historical information. Nonetheless, specific reference to packaging examples and discussion of facts remain very limited. Some museum's collections were accessed via their publications but it is noted that secondary sources deny empirical scrutiny of packaging's physical form.<sup>49</sup>

### **Mill City Museum, USA**

Mill City Museum, Minneapolis offers specific research materials relating to American brand icons.<sup>50</sup> It evidences the interwoven socio-economic history of this city historically recognised as the „milling city of the world 1880 – 1930“, through its exploration of flour manufacturing history.<sup>51</sup> Exhibits include brand icons that evidence marketing approaches that have attempted to create rich visual messages in the promotion of bland flour.<sup>52</sup> The museum's exploration of

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<sup>42</sup> Further food company archives exist but were not used in this thesis as they do not readily relate to its core foci.

<sup>43</sup> Some universities are repositories for company archives. A range of UK museums hold collections of historical food packaging as part of their social history focus. Examples include Welwyn Museum, Hatfield; Buckley's Yesterday's World Museum, Battle; and Portsmouth City Museum and Art Gallery. International collections include the New Zealand Museum, Wellington. Notably such collections are often displayed as exhibits in recreated shop displays and do not offer further information.

<sup>44</sup> The digitalization of collections further enhances research opportunities internationally.

<sup>45</sup> For example, the German Packaging Museum, Heidelberg, Germany; the archives of British retailers Fortnum and Masons and John Lewis; the Warshaw Collection of Business Americana, Smithsonian National Museum of American History, Washington D.C., USA and The John Johnson Collection of Printed Ephemera, U of Oxford.

<sup>46</sup> "Food Timeline" provides detailed timeline of food history including products and food related publications. Created by reference librarian Lynne Olver this historical overview tends to give American emphasis in examples highlighted. "Food Timeline." 1999. Lynne Olver. n.pag. Web. 2 Aug. 2005).

<sup>47</sup> This appears to be an American packaging enthusiast's visual collection only. The American Package Museum. n.d. Ian House. n.pag. Web. 2 Jan. 2005

<sup>48</sup> The Food Museum. n.d. n.pag. Web. 21 May 2010.

<sup>49</sup> For example information relating to the exhibition of American advertising of the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century: *An American Dream: the Art of Free Enterprise* Exhibition, DeCordova Museum and Sculpture Park, Lincoln, USA, 13 Feb. to 10 Apr. 1977.

<sup>50</sup> Managed by the Minnesota Historical Society. Research visit was made in 2006.

<sup>51</sup> Kate Roberts and Barbara Caron, "To the Markets of the World: Advertising in the Mill City 1880-1930," *Minnesota History* 58 (Spring/Summer, 2003): 308.

<sup>52</sup> Exhibits include those from the Richard Ferrel Collection of Flour Milling History, Kansas.

the roles and looks of Betty Crocker and other flour brand „sisters“ provided valuable comparative material for this study.<sup>53</sup>

### **The Minnesota History Centre, USA**

The Minnesota History Centre, Minneapolis,<sup>54</sup> enabled access to important company publications<sup>55</sup> and correspondence relating to Betty Crocker and comparable brand icons.<sup>56</sup> Information helped to establish the extent to which mythic characters were interwoven with the work of real company employees and how critical their *faces* were commercially.<sup>57</sup> This resource complemented and extended the materials held by the Mill City Museum and the General Mills Archive.

#### **3.3.2.4. Company Archives**

“Business archives are irreplaceable and reflect the key contribution of industry and commerce to the development of Britain's economy and society”.<sup>58</sup> As valuable research resources a number were used to access information whilst further research was undertaken using company websites,<sup>59</sup> for example, supermarket Sainsbury's on-line „Our history”.<sup>60</sup> Some companies have designated archives, for example Cadbury's, UK<sup>61</sup> and Unilever Historical

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<sup>53</sup> The museum's presents the reconstruction of a flour company's test kitchen and museum Manager, Laura Salverson, as history player (interpreter), acted as Ruth Andre Krause (the real Pillsbury Home Services Director of the 1950's) in role as *Ann Pillsbury* (Betty Crocker's fictitious competitor).

<sup>54</sup> This Resource Centre, located in St. Paul Minnesota, comprises a museum, library and archives: the collections of the Minnesota Historical Society (MHS). It holds information relating to some of the local manufacturing companies (some of the world's most important food brands) including Pillsbury, Green Giant and Land O' Lakes.

<sup>55</sup> For example, *Modern Millwheel* (1960's), General Mills in-house employee publication and *Pillsbury People*. Pillsbury Mills Employee magazine (1950's).

<sup>56</sup> Examples include Ann Pillsbury, Mary Ellis Ames and Virginia Roberts.

<sup>57</sup> As example, the papers relating to Pillsbury Consumer Service Kitchen 1945-1970, within the file of Barbara Thornton Lockwood, Pillsbury's 4<sup>th</sup> Director of Consumer Services, provide important insight of the work of the home economist and fictitious brand icons. Thornton Lockwood joined the Pillsbury Company in 1953 as home economist and became Director of the company's kitchens in 1967. Her papers include internal memos to staff that regarding the roles of home economists.

<sup>58</sup> Business Archives Council, "Activities," n.d. Business Archives Council. n.pag. Web. 12 Apr. 2011. The UK Business Archive Council aims to preserve important historical records.

<sup>59</sup> Increasingly food companies appear to include reference to their history within their website to help promote their brands and give credence to their heritage.

<sup>60</sup> "Our History", n.d. J. Sainsbury Plc. n.pag. Web. 24 May 2009.

<sup>61</sup> The archive holds material on Cadbury's history.

Archives, UK,<sup>62</sup> whilst other company records are located with museum and regional collections, such as the Cow and Gate archive held by Wiltshire and Swindon History Centre. It appears that many companies do not have the desire or space for an archive. In many instances, for example owing to company relocation, demise, takeover and/or merger, important information is simply „lost“, disposed of or potentially sold: the value of archive material is perhaps overlooked by companies.<sup>63</sup> However business collections offer golden resources for researchers, for example the Huntley and Palmer packaging collection at the University of Reading.<sup>64</sup>

### **General Mills Archive**

Research into Betty Crocker brand was undertaken at the General Mills Archive.<sup>65</sup> An important research resource for business history, design, marketing and social and popular culture, it comprises extensive records relating to the company's history and in particular, Betty. Substantial material relating to Betty provides important insight into her construction, life and commercial value.<sup>66</sup> In particular intra-company correspondence, reports and artefacts reveal her past in a way that no other established literature offers to date; for example, the 1954 decisions to test and up-date her image as evidenced by the original competition portraits.<sup>67</sup> Extraction of material relevant

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<sup>62</sup> The archive holds information relating to the company and its subsidiaries including Birds Eye.

<sup>63</sup> As an example, in 2007 *Robert Edward Auctions* (USA) sold the original 1901 portrait of the *Nabisco Uneeda Biscuit*'s brand icon accompanied by other historical company information. This archive material came from the „personal collection of Mr. Wayne Guest, former Vice President of Nabisco, and has been in his sole possession for over thirty years. Prior to being presented to him as a special gift, the painting hung in special places of honor in the offices of top Nabisco company officers [sic].“ *Robert Edwards Auctions*. Web. 11 April 2011. The move of companies' historical materials to contemporary private owners makes difficult research access to companies' histories.

<sup>64</sup> Company's published histories were used, however as Fitzgerald observed, the promotional and focused nature of such publications can mean that their comparative consideration of products and their development and promotion may be missing. Robert Fitzgerald, *Rowntree and the Marketing Revolution 1862-1969* (New York: Cambridge U Press.)

<sup>65</sup> Research visit was made in Mar. 2006. General Mills Inc., Minneapolis, USA. The archive was established in 1981.

<sup>66</sup> Material includes packaging, advertising, company records, promotional items, customer correspondence, brand manuals, recipe books, oral history records, interviews, related authors manuscripts, intra-company correspondence, policies relating to Betty, Betty Portraits. The Company's pride in Betty is evidenced in its central display that celebrates the brand's heritage.

<sup>67</sup> In 1954 the company decided to up-date Betty with a new portrait via a competition. Correspondence relating to six portrait submissions in particular confirms the rationale for

to this thesis was challenging as the layers of information offered distracting pathways away from my core questions: so many other rich veins of research are present within this archive. As home also to the archives of the Pillsbury Company and its brands, including Poppin<sup>®</sup> Fresh Doughboy<sup>™</sup><sup>68</sup> and the Green Giant<sup>69</sup> a wider appreciation of icons was possible. Records relating to competing mill companies and their comparable brand icons and spokespeople provide exquisite evidence of how companies carefully monitored and viewed their competitors. In this way access to further brand icon histories and wider contextual material was possible whilst company staff provided unique interpretation of materials.<sup>70</sup> The foresight of General Mills to collect their material since at least the 1920<sup>’</sup>s indicates the importance of this archetype.

### **3.3.2.5. Women’s magazines**

As the thesis focuses upon British, American and Canadian fictitious female brand icons corresponding historical and contemporary home-related women<sup>’</sup>s magazines were researched to help develop the understanding of the foci and related contexts.<sup>71</sup> Research aimed to identify how female brand icons appeared within the publications and how they related to magazine representations of the female consumer, and in particular the depiction of the housewife. In this way the study aimed to explore the brand icons place within wider marketing and to better understand how they related to female consumers. In particular magazine examples from the 1940<sup>’</sup>s and 1950<sup>’</sup>s were studied in investigation of the early existence of fictitious commercial home economist brand icons.

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Betty<sup>’</sup>s face-lift and the artists who submitted their work, including the famous American illustrator Norman Rockwell.

<sup>68</sup> Poppin<sup>®</sup> Fresh, the Pillsbury Doughboy<sup>™</sup> brand icon was born in 1965, created by Rudy Perz, Leo Burnett advertising agency, USA.

<sup>69</sup> General Mills Inc. acquired Pillsbury in 2001. The Pillsbury Company acquired Green Giant company in 1979.

<sup>70</sup> General Mills claims to hold the largest corporate cookery book collection in the USA.

General Mills staff Suzy Goodsell, Manager of Internal Communications, Kelly Thompson, Product Service Manager, General Mills Test Kitchens, Sue Lappi and Isabel Sanz, archivists, Alesia Feiertag, Business Information Researcher, provided significant help.

<sup>71</sup> The majority of magazines were purchased and some others were referenced at libraries in UK, America and Canada.

Historical content analysis of advertisements evidencing brand icons in magazines helped to identify and map the use of brand icons, fictitious human, real human and other,<sup>72</sup> as marketing tools. These included *Woman and Home* (UK);<sup>73</sup> *Home Chat* (UK);<sup>74</sup> *Better Homes and Gardens* (USA);<sup>75</sup> *The American Home* (USA);<sup>76</sup> *Home* (USA);<sup>77</sup> *Home Notes* (UK);<sup>78</sup> *Woman's Own* (UK)<sup>79</sup> *Woman's Weekly* (UK);<sup>80</sup> *House Wife* (UK);<sup>81</sup> *Chatelaine* (Canada);<sup>82</sup> *Good Housekeeping* (USA);<sup>83</sup> *Saturday Evening Post* (USA);<sup>84</sup> *Illustrated* (UK);<sup>85</sup> *Everybody's* (UK)<sup>86</sup> and *Ladies Home Journal* (USA).<sup>87</sup> This facilitated a better understanding of their use in advertising and enabled identification of how packaging examples appeared in food advertisements and how some brand icons exist within press advertisements but are not carried across to packaging. Advertisements evidenced the icons' voices and their conversational tones, both of which helped to construct an understanding of their overall persona and roles. Consideration of the representation of other people in advertisements was also undertaken to help develop comparative evaluation of how images of people communicate with readers. For example, the magazine's editorial sections, including the editor's introduction the food column and its agony aunt page, were examined in consideration of examples of advisors, notably often fictitious, which shared in part comparable roles to that of the fictitious commercial home economists. In this way the study was able to draw reference

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<sup>72</sup> For example animal icons and other graphic symbols.

<sup>73</sup> *Woman and Home* examples 1955-1958 (London: Amalgamated Press Limited).

<sup>74</sup> *Home Chat* examples 1941-1952 (London: Amalgamated Press Limited).

<sup>75</sup> *Better Homes and Gardens* examples 1934, 1960, 1964 (Des Moines: Meredith Publishing Company).

<sup>76</sup> *The American Home*, examples 1948-50 (New York: The American Home Magazine Corporation).

<sup>77</sup> *Home* examples 1950. (London: Amalgamated Press Limited).

<sup>78</sup> *Home Notes*, random samples 1950 and 1951 (London: C. Arthur Pearson).

<sup>79</sup> *Woman's Own* example Dec. 1952; Sep. 1953; Oct. 1953; Nov. 1953; Sept. 1954. (London: George Newnes Limited.)

<sup>80</sup> *Woman's Weekly* examples 1948-1962 (London: Amalgamated Press Limited).

<sup>81</sup> *Housewife* examples 1956 (London: Hulton Press Limited).

<sup>82</sup> *Chatelaine* examples Oct. 1955; Dec. 1957; Oct. 1958; Dec. 1959. (Toronto: MacLean-Hunter Publishing Company Limited).

<sup>83</sup> *Good Housekeeping*, random issues 1938 - 1950s (New York; Hearst Magazines Inc).

<sup>84</sup> *Saturday Evening Post*, various issues 1910-1965. (Philadelphia: Curtis Publishing Company).

<sup>85</sup> *Illustrated* issues July 1952; March 1953; May 1953; Feb. 1954; Sept. 1954; Nov. 1954; Feb 1957; (London: Odhams Press Limited).

<sup>86</sup> *Everybody's* June 1953 (London: Everybody's Publication Limited).

<sup>87</sup> *Ladies Home Journal*, July 2005; Dec. 2006, Aug. 2007; Oct. 2008. (Philadelphia: Curtis Publishing Company/ Windsor: Meredith Corporation).

to establish an understanding of how commercial icons utilise and reflect established media practice of the use of authoritative characters to communicate with audiences. The magazines helped identify the similarities and differences between American, Canadian and British female brand icons. Their publication dates and cultural contexts helped evidence how brand icons proliferated in the mid-twentieth century when food manufacture and consumerism expanded.<sup>88</sup>

However, primary research of magazines was not systematic as the scale of publications and scope of study necessitated the use of a selective sample determined by dates of icon existence and particular manufacturers.<sup>89</sup> Whilst this resulted in partial consideration of sources available, it is felt that the sample examined provided sufficient indicative evidence from which to draw meaningful conclusions. The study of brand icons within wider international women's magazines would also in itself offer original research focus for future study.

### **3.3.2.6. Correspondence and Interviews**

Qualitative research has been essential to inform and position this work. The review of literature relating to brand icons in packaging evidenced a distinct paucity in the documentation of current practice and a noticeable predominance in the documentation of American examples. Interviews,<sup>90</sup> telephone and email correspondence with British and key international brand industry professionals (such as Husain),<sup>91</sup> company managers, archivists, curators, brand owners, academics and authors were therefore pursued to secure fresh insight and

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<sup>88</sup> The difference in the economic, social and cultural circumstances of America and Britain in 1930's-1960's is evidenced through the magazines. The growth in American food manufacture, product range and advertising is distinct and different to that of Britain during these periods and this is evidenced by the magazine advertisement content.

<sup>89</sup> The research amassed the author's sizable reference collection which offers further research potential.

<sup>90</sup> Semi-structured interviews, with questions tailored to the field of practice and context of the professionals' work whilst allowing for fluid discussion and the additional inclusion of points and examples.

<sup>91</sup> Husain, Telephone interview. 12 Jan. 2010.

original findings.<sup>92</sup> A wide number of companies that use people on their packaging were contacted.<sup>93</sup> Responses helped to identify common approaches to the use of people on packaging; evidence of a shared practice that helped support this study's hypothesis. In many instances companies provided information otherwise unavailable.<sup>94</sup> However companies' commercial and cultural sensitivities in competitive markets mean that they protect their brands from external scrutiny and potential criticism (e.g. Aunt Jemima) through careful guardianship.<sup>95</sup> This meant access to certain information was prohibited on occasion.

The work of other scholars has been critical to this study to secure specialist knowledge from unfamiliar disciplines. Through contact with key researchers from other contexts (marketing; packaging design; food manufacture; branding; and culinary history), through correspondence and interviews, this thesis has been able to utilise a variety of perspectives. An appreciation of marketing history studies, notably in relation to America and Canada, was helped by MacGregor who offered insight into the cultural nuances of marketing examples.<sup>96</sup> To aid an understanding of Canadian culinary history and commercial brand icons key Canadian researchers were consulted. Food historians Elizabeth Driver<sup>97</sup> and Nathalie Cooke<sup>98</sup> and journalist Eve Johnson provided considerable help in relation to fictitious home economists.<sup>99</sup> Primary contacts helped to position this work so that it may provide a different

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<sup>92</sup> It was found that information relating to historical examples is often relatively limited as few publications and documents appear to exist and published information tends to relate predominantly to established brands.

<sup>93</sup> Companies were contacted to establish why and how people and icons are used and how their icon developed; the significance of its use and meaning in relation to the brand's philosophy. Industry professionals - company founders; brand managers; marketing managers, for example, those directly involved in the creation, management and guardianship of brand icons - were contacted via email, letter and telephone. In many instances examples and findings were not included within the thesis as they fell outside of the core remit: they did however help shape the author's more effective understanding of the context and approaches of this branding approach across a wider base.

<sup>94</sup> As examples Lawrence Mallinson, owner of Uncle Cornelius brand and Elsa's Story were generous in the provision of information.

<sup>95</sup> Both examples have received query and criticism of the depiction of their icon in relation to notions of race stereotypes.

<sup>96</sup> MacGregor. "Advertising Characters." Canada. Personal Interview. 22 Jul. 2004.

<sup>97</sup> Driver, as food historian and author, has researched British and Canadian food histories.

<sup>98</sup> Cooke's research includes Canadian food history and food brand spokes-characters.

<sup>99</sup> Johnson, a Canadian food author, provided information relating to fictitious home economist *Edith Adams* of the *Vancouver Sun* newspaper.

perspective and make an original contribution to established bodies of knowledge. It is recognised that primary contacts can offer subjective perspectives. To address this potential limitation information and views received were, wherever possible, cross referenced to established literature to check accuracy and reliability.

### **3.3.2.7. Conferences**

The consideration of current studies relating to brand icons was identified in part through reference to international conferences across the foci fields.

Conference papers and contact with speakers helped to inform and position this thesis. International cross discipline conferences evidenced increased research activity relating to aspects of this thesis. Although not identical, such studies give credence to the growing significance of this field and on occasion have directly informed this study.<sup>100</sup> Conferences also enabled initial research findings and tangential research to be presented, tested and developed.<sup>101</sup>

### **3.3.2.8. Cookery publications**

In examination of food brands and the fictitious female home economists - in relation to the representation of the female consumer and notions of the housewife - research into cookery publications was undertaken to locate the existence of examples and to understand how they featured across companies' marketing.<sup>102</sup> As food's social and cultural history is merged with that of business, food company publications provide important narrative and evidence of this relationship. Study of brands' cookery books provided both social and commercial perspectives. As „cultural artefacts“<sup>103</sup> cookery books can provide

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<sup>100</sup> Cooke's paper *Economists on the Home Front in 1939* at the *Culinary Landmarks Conference*, May 1–3, Toronto: U. of Toronto, 2009, discussed brand icon examples that crossed-referred to this study. Subsequently I was able to discuss further with Cooke the notion of commercial economists as brand icons.

<sup>101</sup> For example, *Food packaging Telling tales? - real or fictitious?* was presented at the 27<sup>th</sup> *Annual Perspectives on Contemporary Legend Conference*, International Society of Contemporary Legend Research (ISCLR), Nova Scotia June 3-7, 2009; and *The Betty Phenomenon: the Sisterhood of Fictitious Home Economist as Food Brand Characters* was presented at the *Culinary Landmarks Conference*, 3 May, (U. of Toronto, Canada, 2009). Dissemination of ideas and materials was cautious so no detriment to this thesis ensued.

<sup>102</sup> Old and international cookbooks can be difficult to source. On-line auction sites enabled the author's creation of a specific collection for this study.

<sup>103</sup> Innes 115.

valuable documentation and indication of changing tastes in food preparation and consumption and „as agents of society“<sup>104</sup> can reflect and present social constructs of gender. As “barometers of changing gender roles” they may also indicate the prevalent social, cultural and economic circumstances or attitudes of the time of their publication.<sup>105</sup> However as Humble cautioned the accuracy of their communication may be blurred.<sup>106</sup> Yet their importance as empirical research resource is recognised.<sup>107</sup> As commercial cookery publications provide views of domestic cooking and the role of women as cook and consumer, as informed and positioned by manufacturers, a range of examples were used to support investigation of fictitious home economist brand icons. Examples were selected in relation to chefs and fictitious home economists brand icons primarily (wherever associated publications existed).<sup>108</sup> They provided valuable evidence of the work of the examples: the construction of their image and the range of their marketing activities.

### **3.4. Case studies**

Case studies are used to present an in-depth interrogation of specific examples to evidence the thesis’s hypothesis and to illustrate its taxonomy. Betty Crocker was selected as a major case study: as archetype of generic fictitious person brand icons.

### **3.5. Qualitative data presentation**

#### **3.5.1 Taxonomy**

A taxonomy was devised to order and formalise the people brand icon category-types that were identified throughout the research phase. This was constructed to help structure data, developed through descriptive and exploratory research

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<sup>104</sup> McFeeley 3.

<sup>105</sup> McFeeley 10.

<sup>106</sup> Humble.

<sup>107</sup> For example, the extensive cookbook collection within the Culinary Collection of The Schlesinger Library, Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Studies, Harvard University Studies, USA offers important research resource. The use of cookbooks in the investigation of culinary history, gender studies and marketing history is increasingly evidenced, for example, Driver, *Culinary Landmarks*.

<sup>108</sup> Further examples of cookery publications were also consulted to gauge a wider appreciation of their methods of communication and their reference to and depiction of their author.

approaches, and to help analyse and anchor a visual comparison framework that identified characteristics, differences and similarities; thus charting types and their relationships with each other. The taxonomy was created to present research findings, to aid analysis and to draw meaning from and through the visual reading of comparative examples; to establish people types.

This was developed initially through consideration of Callcott's typology that defined "spokes-characters" through the identification of "4 basic modes of representation: personification (of objects); human caricature; human illustration; and live humans or animals".<sup>109</sup> Callcott's model provided valuable basis from which the further, new, model could be constructed. Further reference to other attempts to group brand icons informed an understanding of how examples were identified and categorised. Cooke and LeBel's<sup>110</sup> concise themes were considered and Maasik and Solomon's identification of celebrity types provided further useful reference.<sup>111</sup> Altschul's identification of character-types presented more specific reference to brand icons than offered by others, for example his terms, "live founder character"; "live celebrity character"; "fictional character"; "purely fictional character" cross over in part with those identified in this study.<sup>112</sup> Furthermore Aaker's "Brand Personality Dimensions Framework"<sup>113</sup> that described and measured the "personality" of a brand based upon key human characteristics, "facets" and "traits", provided a valuable model which this study's taxonomy referred its visual icon characteristics to. This this study's taxonomy augments established examples whilst offering new model for future use.

### **3.6. Validity and Reliability of Research**

A range of methods, sources and perspectives were employed and interrogated to produce this original study. The use of primary artefacts and sources, notably the collation of a personal packaging archive and the study of wider

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<sup>109</sup> Callcott 1995.

<sup>110</sup> Cooke and LeBel.

<sup>111</sup> Maasik and Solomon.

<sup>112</sup> David Altschul, "Brand Icons," Message to the author, 7 Mar. 2006, E-mail.

<sup>113</sup> Jennifer L. Aaker, "Dimensions of Brand Personality," *Journal of Marketing Research* 34 (1997): 347-356.

complementary materials, ensured that empirical scrutiny of examples was secured. The pluralistic approach of employing cross discipline methods and approaches enabled a multifaceted investigation of brand icons, positioned in relevant contexts, to avoid a flat and narrow consideration of their existence. The critical examination of established literature provided a balanced consideration of historical and contemporary perspectives and findings that informed the position and development of this study. The use of academic and industry viewpoints and perspectives, via primary contact, provided holistic, contemporary understanding of key issues and examples. Notably research using insight and experiences from brand managers, branding companies and marketing professionals provided pertinent understanding of the core foci issues and examples that both complimented and extended theoretical perspectives. Potential bias was gauged and balanced by the use of a variety of contacts accordingly and critical scrutiny of published materials.

### **3.7. Variables and Limitations of Research**

The interdisciplinary approach, scope and scale of this study meant that research could not be exhaustive.<sup>114</sup> The study's research strands and sources, diverse in range, type and size, were challenging to navigate in parallel and to weave together in unison. However this thesis has succeeded in providing a new and wider understanding of its foci by working together symbiotically perspectives and methodologies across contexts, disciplines and sources in its investigation of a wealth of international examples which have been united and interrogated in a way previously not evidenced.

### **Summary**

This chapter has discussed how research was conducted: the methods and sources used together with the ways that examples and perspectives were identified and understood. It evaluates the strengths and weakness of such in consideration of the originality, relevance and reliability of different approaches.

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<sup>114</sup> Throughout the duration of the work a wider research spectrum of materials, publications, examples and activities relating to branding and packaging emerged regularly which could not be considered as the study was harnessed to its set focus. Whilst examples of newly published literature offered further consideration of branding and packaging, it is interesting to note that comparatively few made reference to brand icons specifically.

This chapter provides discussion of the methodology proposed by this thesis, as presented in Chapter Six, in consideration of how people-type brand icons can be grouped into specific categories and how the study of brand icons can be progressed through their visual study. The findings of this research inform the discussion within the proceedings chapters.

## CHAPTER 4

### BRAND ICON

#### 4.1. Introduction

This chapter focuses upon the notion of brand icons and in particular fictitious people examples. It considers the role and different types of brand icons through examination of contemporary examples. It first considers the function of brand icons and delineates and substantiates *brand icon* as the definitive term that this author advocates should be used to secure consistency in brand identification and language. Discussion then focuses upon fictitious people-type brand icons and identifies three types: *the totally fictitious; the fictitious but plausible and the truly enigmatic*.

Brand icons' fictional character, narrative role and appeal are discussed in relation to notions of storytelling and myth to consider how examples work and how they are understood as fictional. The initial consideration of fictive types provides the basis for the interrogation of examples presented in subsequent chapters; notably Chapter Six's Taxonomy and Chapter Seven and Eight's specific fictitious icon case studies. Further discussion of icon-types is located in the Appendix.

The thesis does not provide a detailed consideration of branding, a history of brand icons or a methodical account of individual histories as this is beyond its scope. Whilst a myriad of graphic symbols are used as visual devices to give brands identity this study does not aim to offer consideration of symbols and brand icons wider than its focus of people-types, notably as such examples within the field of branding and logo design are extensively discussed.

## 4.2. Brands

A brand is identified as “[...] a mixture of attributes, tangible and intangible, symbolised in a trademark, which, if managed properly, creates value and influence”<sup>1</sup> and “a name, term, design, symbol, or any other feature that identifies one seller's good or service as distinct from those of other sellers [...] A brand may identify one item, a family of items, or all items of that seller.”<sup>2</sup>

The brand identity in the promotion of food companies and their products is critical in competitive markets where products of a similar nature often have to battle for consumers’ attention. A company’s visual identity must embody the essence of the brand, communicate clearly and directly and operate competitively to attract consumer sales. Brands aim to engender consumer trust and loyalty through identities that ideally must be instantly recognisable and memorable and this may be achieved through use of its “design vocabulary “: “colour, typography, graphics elements and style” which are combined to create a distinct and coordinated identity.<sup>3</sup>

Food companies may use a variety of visual devices to identify and promote their brands, for example logos, graphics symbols (such as shapes or animals) are used as logo, trademark and/or associated character or icon. The symbol’s visual characteristics - the visual vocabulary of colour, shape, style etc - can create a strong identity readily identified by consumers, for example the Golden Arch of McDonalds or the birds nest logo of Nestle. The symbols differentiate and communicate a brand’s attributes, personality and intentions and can potentially identify its provenance, heritage and market position. The symbol can make a brand memorable and can encourage consumers’ positive perception of, and relationship with, the brand which hopefully will result in repeat purchase of its products. They operate as sign of quality used to assure consumers of the brand’s worth and as a consequence they can inspire

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<sup>1</sup> Glossary, “brand” brandchannel, n.p. Web 2 May 2005.

<sup>2</sup> „Definition of Brand” n.d. American Marketing Association. Marketing Power. n.p. Web. 22 May 2009.

<sup>3</sup> Kenneth D. Love, „How Design Helps Create Memorable Brands,” Sense 95 1995, Lippincott Mercer Web. 18 July 2005.

consumer loyalty and help build powerful brands: they can become a valuable brand asset.<sup>4</sup> This thesis focuses upon people symbols as brand icons.

#### 4.2.1. People Brand Symbols

Many brands use images of people as brand symbols as discussed in Chapters 5 and 6. The types of people used are wide ranging and represent a variety of associations, meanings and values. In some instances the people-images may be generic, anonymous people - *characters* - that give quick cue to particular meanings. In other instances they may be specific and have greater purpose and meaning - as *icons* - they relate specifically and uniquely to the brand: their role is distinct and of greater importance to the brand. The human characteristics and traits of people as symbols can personify a brand. The characters can breathe life into a brand and as Solomon observed “they can help humanize a faceless corporation”.<sup>5</sup> Examples are understood by consumers who can read and relate to their appearance and profile, and who can understand their social and cultural relevance, whilst appreciating their commercial intent.

The use of a person – a visual character- as a company/brand symbol is a well-established marketing strategy. From the Industrial Revolution (UK) and by the late nineteenth century (UK and USA) the growth in commercial markets and mass production resulted in many food products often similar in type, such as flour, competing for consumer attention. Brands made distinct their identity to appeal to consumers through the use of their own characters, real or fictitious people, upon packaging and within advertising.<sup>6</sup> The images, often company founders, offered consumers a reassurance of the product’s quality as Klein remarked the faces offered “branded comfort” that “humanize[d] production for a population fearful of industrialization.”<sup>7</sup> These symbols gave products unique identities and as Lupton and Miller remarked they created “a nationwide

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<sup>4</sup> Philip Kotler, “Semiotics of Person and Nation Marketing,” *Semiotics and Marketing: New Directions in the Study of Signs for Sale*, Jean Umiker-Sebeok. (Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter. X. 1987):7.

<sup>5</sup> Wendy Solomon, “Is Betty Crocker a crock? Does Uncle Ben have any relatives?” *The Morning Call*, Mar. 2006. Web. 26 March 2006.

<sup>6</sup> Naomi Klein, *No Logo* (London: Flamingo, 2006) 6.

<sup>7</sup> Klein 2.

vocabulary of brand names [that] replaced the small shopkeeper as the interface between the consumer and the product.”<sup>8</sup> The icons became popular and memorable and many have endured for decades accordingly. For example Force breakfast cereal’s fictitious *Sunny Jim* was created in 1903<sup>9</sup> and despite his dated attire he continues to work upon the packaging where his „story” is proudly told.<sup>10</sup>

### 4.3. Function

The use of a *distinct* people symbol used in advertising and branding to give identity and visibility to a brand is a well-established marketing strategy. Stern identified that “the advertising persona (like the literary one) is the “voice” behind a message – the presence, intelligence and moral sensibility responsible for selecting, ordering, and expressing content and form.”<sup>11</sup> Their distinctive name and visual appearance can make personal the brand. As Asher confirmed they are “a potent tool in establishing brand distinction, creating instant recognition through memorable imagery and enhancing brand propriety.”<sup>12</sup> Such symbols can work as the visual shorthand of a brand’s identity. They operate as visual cues that communicate brand messages where their meanings are decoded by consumers. The consumer takes meaning from the sign and transfers it to the brand.<sup>13</sup>

The symbol’s distinct identity defines and positions its, and the brands, difference and individuality in relation to comparable icons and brands. Whilst distinct, this symbol can possess key attributes and visual references that may be shared with, and common to, other examples. This is so its character and

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<sup>8</sup> Ellen Lupton and J. Abott Miller, *Design Writing Research: Writing on Graphic Design* (New York: Kiosk, 1996) 177.

<sup>9</sup> Sunny Jim, originally known as Jim Dumps was created by artist Dorothy Ficken. Force was introduced to the UK in 1902. The brand is owned by Nestlé.

<sup>10</sup>He has moved on and off packaging over the years. Morgan, 1986.

<sup>11</sup> Barbara Stern, “The Brand Person: A Literary View of Source Characteristics and Advertising Effects,” *American Academy of Advertising Proceedings of the 1991 conference of the American Academy of Advertising*. eds. Rebecca Holman, Masius D’Arcy, Benton and Bowles. (1991):136.

<sup>12</sup> Jonathan Asher, “For Marketing Icons, Character Counts,” 13 Jul.1998, *Brandweek*, CBS Interactive Business Network. n.p. Web. 13 May 2004.

<sup>13</sup> Barbara J. Phillips, *The Role of Advertising Trade Characters Informing Product Perceptions* (U. of Texas, 1993):10.

appearance is not too different and so that it is not troublesome to consumers" recognition and understanding of its form or role. (The consideration of such visual characteristics, meanings and their similarities are discussed in Chapter 6).

Character types are wide ranging and represent a variety of associations, meanings and values. *Invented characters* offer companies the opportunity to create their own unique and controlled figurehead, a *spokesperson* or *icon* that is solely theirs and synonymous with their brand. As Smith commented "As appealing as advice from „experts" might be, food manufacturers have sought to imbue their brand name products with personality by using , or more often inventing, icons or spokespeople to hawk their wares."<sup>14</sup>

#### 4.4. Terminology

Within marketing and branding and across academe research has evidenced that there appears to be no consistent term used to identify and explain the use/representation of people symbols in brand identity. Whilst a popular branding approach, where various people-types exist, related terminology is varied and indeed elusive. The types of application and different roles of people are identified by various terms which over time appear to alter and develop as a result of changes and preferences in language, for example the evolution of business and its related vocabulary. It appears that some terms are determined and preferred by specific companies or authors. This sets certain challenges when attempting to understand this field.

Research has examined the various terms used. Smith discussed *icons* and *spokespeople* but tended not to differentiate the terms.<sup>15</sup> Branding consultant Asher talked of "*marketing icon*"<sup>16</sup> whilst author Morgan used "commercial symbols".<sup>17</sup> Key branding organisations and companies – Interbrand (the world's largest online branding portal), Brandcahannel.com and Lippincott Mercer's provide branding glossaries however surprisingly no entries exist for

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<sup>14</sup> Smith 11.

<sup>15</sup> Andrew Smith is editor of The Oxford Encyclopedia of Food and Drink in America.

<sup>16</sup> Jonathan Asher, "For Marketing Icons, Character Counts," *Brand Week*. 13 Jul. 1998, n. p. Web. 3 Mar. 2003.n.pag. Web. 3 Mar. 2006.

<sup>17</sup> Hal Morgan, *Symbols of America* (New York: Viking Penguin, 1986).

such terms. Glynn at Lippincott agency confirmed “the general consensus [at Lippincott] is there isn’t a common term for fictional characters. The suggestion is that brand icon is a better term as Brand Spokesperson might be used for a real person.”<sup>18</sup> Butcher at Leo Burnett agency preferred the term brand icon.<sup>19</sup>

Altschul, president and founder of *Character*, the American Brand Analysis and Strategy company, and creator and custodian and Project Manager for branding greats such as the Green Giant, Poppin’ Fresh the Pillsbury Doughboy and Kellogg’s Quaker offered important consideration of terminology. Altschul uses the term *brand character* to identify examples and noted that “iconic brand character” is a recurring term also.<sup>20</sup> Altschul identified character-types within this context: “live founder character; „live celebrity character; fictional character; purely fictional character” and thus further determined the nuances of brand types. Altschul’s partner Lanahan used the term *brand characters* and *brand icon interchangeably*.”<sup>21</sup> Likewise marketing professional Gray has spoken of iconic brand characters in advertising.<sup>22</sup> By comparison Mitchell of Epic Icon specifically uses the term “illustrative icon” to identify his company’s brand work although he felt that icon can be confusing and can slightly de-value his work. However Mitchell identified that brand icon offers important definition and he likes “to use it in the “grandest sense” that has hallmark association an almost elitist association – the ultimate, the best known.”<sup>23</sup>

Phillips defined *trade characters* as “a fictional, animate being or animated object that has been created for the promotion of a product, service, or idea”<sup>24</sup> used to communicate marketing messages however this term appears to be dated and has potential trademark associations. Calcott and Alvey identified “*spokes-characters*” someone actively involved in the promotion of a product /brand and speaks<sup>25</sup> and Cooke’s research into commercial food marketing

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<sup>18</sup> Simon Glynn, Lippincott, Telephone interview, 30 Jul. 2009.

<sup>19</sup> Isabel Butcher, “Leo Burnett Agency.” Telephone interview, 15 Jul. 2005.

<sup>20</sup> David Altschul, Telephone interview, 9 Mar. 2006.

<sup>21</sup> Brian Lanahan, “Top of mind perspectives and commentary: Keeping your brand icon alive and well,” *Brandweek* 19 May (2003): 22.

<sup>22</sup> Robert Gray, Robert, “75th anniversary issue: Disciplines - Brand Characters and Icons – Symbols of Success,” 2007, Marketing. n.p. Web. 10 Feb. 2009.

<sup>23</sup> Chris Mitchell, “Epic Icon,” Telephone interview, 17 Aug. 2009.

<sup>24</sup> Barbara J. Phillips, “The Role of Advertising Trade Characters in Forming Product Perceptions.” U. of Texas, 1993.

<sup>25</sup> Margaret F. Calcott and Patricia A. Alvey, “Toons Sell.....And Sometimes

identified “fictional folk”<sup>26</sup> commercial “*fictitious personalities*” *trade characters* or *spokes characters*<sup>27</sup> “designed to put human faces on products of large corporations and thus sell more products to consumers”<sup>28</sup> and (in the context of research into fictitious home economists “pseudonymous personalities”).

Additional terms include brand ambassador or representative however it is felt such terms are too passive for the work of characters that undertake significant work and responsibility for a brand.

Thus the differences in viewpoints and practice in the use of terms is significant. It is suggested that the terminology should be informed by commercial practitioners and thus this thesis takes advice from industry professionals. This thesis identifies three broad and distinct types.<sup>29</sup>

1. brand **character**
2. brand **spokes-person**
3. brand **icon**

This thesis aims to both consolidate the identification and the appropriate terminology relating to examples accordingly. Notably it determines the term brand icon as key term.

### **Brand Character**

The term *character* is frequently used in marketing to identify a brand’s use of a person or personality that may be human or other in the promotion of its products. A character is identified as a person or figure that has certain features and traits that give individual identity to their being. Phillips identified *spokes-characters* as “beings or animated objects that are used to promote a product, service, or idea”:<sup>30</sup> a wide definition that embraced a variety of types. Brand character and brand icon are interchangeable terms to a degree but the former

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They Don’t: An Advertising Spokes Character Typology and Exploratory Study,” *American Academy*. Ed. Rebecca Holman(1991): 43-53.

<sup>26</sup> Nathalie Cooke, “Cooking up a Character,” Mar.21, 2002 34: 13. McGill University. n.p. 14 Mar. 2006.

<sup>27</sup> Cooke “Getting the Mix Right for the Canadian Home Baker.”

<sup>28</sup> Cooke “Getting the Mix Right for the Canadian Home Baker.” 192.

<sup>29</sup> These category types relate also to anthropomorphic examples.

<sup>30</sup> Barbara J. Phillips, “Defining Trade Characters and their Role in American Popular Culture,” *Journal of Popular Culture* 29.4 (Spring, 1996): 143-158.

may not necessarily be created by or specifically coordinated by the brand, but may be a personality that relates to it in some way.

Brand character is an ambiguous term however as it relates to, and is often used in relation to *brand personality* which may be identified as the "(...) psychological nature of a particular brand as intended by its sellers"<sup>31</sup> and "The attribution of human personality traits (seriousness, warmth, imagination, etc.) to a brand as a way to achieve differentiation. Usually done through long-term above-the-line advertising and appropriate packaging and graphics. These traits inform brand behavior [sic] through both prepared communication/packaging, etc., and through the people who represent the brand - its employees."<sup>32</sup> As Aaker identified, "the term personality is used differently in the context of brands (consumer behaviour) than in the context of persons (psychology)."<sup>33</sup>

Therefore brand character or personality can embrace wider associations and components and activities and may not necessarily be related to a single individual.<sup>34</sup> Hence this thesis elects to use the more distinct and precise term of *brand icon* to identify an individual character that is used as key/core identity for a brand.

### **Brand Spokes-Person**

The terms spokes-person and spokes-character are interchangeable and can be used to identify a person, real or fictitious - a celebrity for example, who promotes a brand; whose image is used to suggest /transfer associative meaning to the brand as added value but the individual may have no further direct involvement with the brand. Ohanian identified a spokes-person as an individual who promotes a certain product or service, whose name may become associated with the product; however the duration of their association with the

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<sup>31</sup> Dictionary. Brand Personality, American Marketing Association., Web. 2 Apr. 2009.

<sup>32</sup> „Glossary: Brand Personality. brandchannel. Web.4 May 2009.

<sup>33</sup> Jennifer Aaker and Susan Fournier, "A Brand as a Character, a Partner and a Person: Three Perspectives on the Question of Brand Personality," *Advance in Consumer Research* 22 (1995): 391-395.

<sup>34</sup> Aaker and Fournier.

brand may be temporary.<sup>35</sup> A spokes-person can be determined in part as one that talks on behalf of a brand; they have a voice and literally speak. The brand spokes-person may be considered as brand endorser used to recommend and to promote the brand through their associated skills, expertise or particular qualities that are attractive to consumers. They may communicate across a variety of commercial platforms though notably in advertising. The spokes-person, although serving the same function as brand icon in terms of the brand's promotion, may not necessarily be created or owned by a brand. They may be employed by or affiliated with the brand and have limited brand association and use.

## **Brand Icon**

To establish the relevance of the term brand icon it is necessary to define icon and understand the contexts of its use and connotations. An icon is defined as "a person or thing regarded as a representative symbol or as worthy of veneration."<sup>36</sup> Historically the term has been understood in relation to religious symbolism. As Cross noted "An icon, in the ancient world, was a physical image, a monumental figure, a sacred representation to be worshipped."<sup>37</sup> However as Meades observed the usage of the term icon and iconic has become extensive in the identification of artefacts within popular culture and consumerism, and beyond, and that their meanings are numerous.<sup>38</sup> As Cross identified "Icons are first of all visual, physical objects. They take up space in reality and in the mind, and they are full of meaning, whether religious, psychological, cultural or personal."<sup>39</sup> The notion of an icon as visual object that has meaning and is used as a sign is important within the context of this study. As Panofsky identified, the intrinsic meaning or content of examples is

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<sup>35</sup> Roobina Ohanian, "The Impact of Celebrity Spokespersons' Perceived Image on Consumers' Intention to Purchase," *Journal of Advertising Research*, 31:1, (1991): 46-53.

<sup>36</sup> Oxford Dictionaries. Web. 1 Apr. 2008.

<sup>37</sup> Mary Cross, Ed. *A Century of American Icons: 100 products and slogans from the 20<sup>th</sup>-century consumer culture* (Westport, CT.: Greenwood Press. 2002) xiii.

<sup>38</sup> Jonathan Meades, "The Adjective of the Age" *Intelligent Life* Spring (London: Economist Group Business, 2009):68. As example of the wider use of the term icon, it is now used to identify a particular graphic symbol on a computer screen used to symbolize a specific function.

<sup>39</sup> Cross xvi.

important, rather than their form:<sup>40</sup> as symbols, icons are invested with and communicate meanings and expressions that are understood and positioned by audiences. Meades identified that for something to be iconic it must have four “conditions”: it must “affect us”; it must “transcend its subject”; “the subject should be legible in a sort of visual shorthand” and it must be “immediately recognisable.”<sup>41</sup> These four characteristics in part help determine the notion of icon and its use in the context of this study.

This thesis understands brand icons as “...embodiments of a brand, [and] highly memorable symbols”<sup>42</sup> and specifically defines the term brand icon, in the context of its study, as a specific character (person or people-type) that is used by a brand as its identity, and representation of its personality, and as such undertakes specific branding activities; is invested with meaning and has achieved *significant* meaningful brand status as recognised by consumers.<sup>43</sup> Davies, Kellogg Company UK Creative and Marketing Services Manager, identified that brand icons are those characters that have existed for many years, people have grown up with them; they operate globally and are seen on television and in wider marketing. Icons are well known and respected by audiences.<sup>44</sup> Industry professionals confirm brand icon as a “powerful symbol” that commands a “higher” status than other character symbols used by a brand.<sup>45</sup> As Davies identified, brand *characters* have less prolific roles and some examples will never become icons as their market profile does not attract wide recognition.<sup>46</sup> This differentiation in role and identity offers valuable understanding of commercial approaches and how brands refer to and use their designs. This thesis uses the terms brand icon and brand character accordingly. Thus a brand icon may be employed as a sign to unify and project the brand’s identity and to aid consumers’ recognition and understanding of the brand and to encourage purchase. The coordinated use of the icon may position it in a

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<sup>40</sup> Erwin Panofsky, *Studies in Iconography; Humanistic Themes in the Art of the Renaissance*. (New York: Icon Edition, 1972) 3 & 5.

<sup>41</sup> Meades 73.

<sup>42</sup> “Questions and Answers,” Advertising Icon Museum, n.p. Web. 28 Oct. 2009.

<sup>43</sup> Significant in terms of the importance of their role, their recognition, popularity and longevity.

<sup>44</sup> Ron Davies, “Kellogg’s Brand Icons,” Kellogg. Telephone interview. 18 Aug. 2009.

Davies has worked with Tony the Tiger® for over twenty years.

<sup>45</sup> Advertising Icon Museum. Web. 28 Oct. 2009.

<sup>46</sup> Davies, Telephone interview 18 Aug. 2009.

variety of marketing contexts, potentially simultaneously: for example within broadcast and press advertisements; packaging; and increasingly wider digital platforms, including websites and social media.<sup>47</sup>

#### 4.5. Brand icon-consumer relationships

The visual identity of a brand icon is particularly important. Its appearance and the associated meanings give identity to the brand and can help consumers recognise and understand the brand. Mitchell confirmed that psychological research has shown that people have excellent memories for pictures, so a brand icon can make a brand memorable.<sup>48</sup> Their image contains key elements as Mulvey and identified: “appearance (age, gender, national and racial, hair, body size, looks)”; “manner, (expression, pose, eye-contact, clothes)” and “activities (touch, body movements, positional communication)” – how they act, their body language.<sup>49</sup> The character’s behaviour is also important; how they *perform*, for example their manners, temperament and actions profile and position the brand accordingly. The visual characteristics form and reflect character’s personality traits and dependent upon their exact role, what they say in context, meaning and tone, can create and reflect the brand personality and shape audience understanding. Their personalities can be strong and attract consumer attention, awareness and affection. Love observed “It is the cumulative sum of tangible and intangible identity elements that creates a brand’s distinctive tone and manner. When managed systematically for all it is worth, a powerful and valuable brand identity reverberates to the corporation over all.”<sup>50</sup>

The icon’s engaging appearance and personality may present and communicate particular meanings, feelings or emotions and positive associations and connotations that help the brand to develop an empathy and

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<sup>47</sup> Some brand icons, such as the meerkat for comparethemarket.com company, feature on Facebook and some, such as the meerkat, operate via Twitter too giving greater life and advertising potential to the character.

<sup>48</sup> Alan Mitchell, “The Brand Engagement Myth.” 25. Jan. *Marketing* (Haymarket Brand, 2011): 32-34.

<sup>49</sup> Mulvey 4.

<sup>50</sup> Kenneth D. Love “How Design Helps Create Memorable Brands Sense.” 1995: n.pag. Web. 18 July 2005.

rapport with consumers. A character's emotional profile/personality, for example as happy, serious or excited, can be communicated visually and verbally, explicitly and implicitly, and can project the feel for the brand and can "tilt consumer mood."<sup>51</sup> In many instances happy emotions are communicated by the character's name, smile, dynamic pose or words. For example Force cereal's *Sunny Jim*'s character and story communicates the brand's holistic happiness and, as Edwards noted, this can affect consumers' choice.<sup>52</sup> As brand specialist Knowles remarked "Brand icons don't polarise people; they have human characteristics without alienating the consumer. They embody the brand and are universally liked. Consumers buy into the brand and buy the products."<sup>53</sup> Icons can stimulate various consumer responses: feelings, memories or nostalgic thoughts can be stirred through contemplation of a family member or character type for example. An icon's emotional influence can be provocative and powerful: its emotional impact can be great. The icons are familiar to them and offer reassurance. They offer a warm response "They are a powerful way to dramatise the brand proposition."<sup>54</sup>

Brands operate by building meaningful relationships with consumers and as Bernstein commented "characters only succeed if they accurately portray a brand and connect with the Public."<sup>55</sup> The icon can form a personal relationship as it may appeal to or satisfy consumers in such a way that an emotional bond may be forged which can result in consumers' loyalty: their trust in, commitment to, preference for and dedicated repeat purchase and advocacy of the brand. The actual and perceived benefits and values of the brand determine consumer loyalty. Brand consultancy Millward Brown identified six key brand "drivers of loyalty": "Rational benefits; Emotional benefits; Popularity; Difference; Dynamism and Value."<sup>56</sup> The brand may achieve consumers' loyalty through addressing their needs and securing, in part at least, customer

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<sup>51</sup> Helen Edwards, *Opinion*. 25. Jan. *Marketing* (London: Haymarket Brand, 2011): 22.

<sup>52</sup> Edwards, 2011:22.

<sup>53</sup> Andrew Knowles, "Brand icons and food packaging." James Knowles Ritchie. Telephone interview, 2 Nov. 2007.

<sup>54</sup> Knowles.

<sup>55</sup> Bernstein qtd. in Robert Gray, "75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Issue: Disciplines – Brand characters and Icons – Symbols of Success," *Marketing* 2007, n.p. Web. 10 Feb. 2009

<sup>56</sup> Millward Brown 6.

satisfaction and pleasure in the brand, for example by reassuring consumers that their product is reliable and of quality or through other explicit and intangible associations. Strong brand-consumer relationships are of value to brands<sup>57</sup> as Ray confirmed, a brand is (...) a relationship that secures future earnings by creating customer loyalty.”<sup>58</sup> Brand equity, “the power of a brand through successful creation of a positive image to shift demand and change customer behaviour” is an important aspect of the brand icon.<sup>59</sup> The icon can add value to a brand and it can be an enduring asset, as Millward Brown confirmed “Brands are valuable to businesses because they are valuable to consumers.”<sup>60</sup>

Morgan observed that “many of the symbols have become so famous that they are key elements in our national culture (...)”, for example brand icon Aunt Jemima can be seen to operate as a commercial and cultural emblem of America.<sup>61</sup> Once the icon is popular it may acquire value beyond its commercial parameters though, as consumers give and relate the icon to, wider social and cultural meanings and significance. Consumers may take the icon as a cherished cultural artefact that can be appropriated for use in contexts other to its original commercial intent. As Katyal observed “Since trademarks inhabit a multiplicity of meanings, they can operate as devices of owned property, and at other times, they can also operate as devices of expression and culture.”<sup>62</sup> In this way brand icons can shift across different contexts of use depending upon consumers attitudes.

The icon’s name and visual appearance communicate the identity of the person and shapes how the consumer perceives the brand. Initially the name can be of particular importance. It immediately identifies and introduces the brand and offers the consumer an understanding of the character type. A character identified by first name can suggest a certain openness and

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<sup>57</sup> Millward Brown 3.

<sup>58</sup> Carolyn Ray, “Integrated Brand Communications: A Powerful New Paradigm,” brandchannel. Web. 7 Feb. 2013.

<sup>59</sup> Glossary. Lippincott Mercer Branding. n.p, Web 18 Jul 2005.

<sup>60</sup> Millward Brown 3.

<sup>61</sup> Hal Morgan, *Symbols of America* (New York: Viking Penguin Inc., 1986) 13.

<sup>62</sup> Katyal, Sonia K. “Trademark Intersectionality,” *57 UCLA Law Review* (Los Angeles: U.of California, 2010): 1601-1698 and 1606.

helps the brand appear more personal. For example Little Debbie® (McKee Foods Corporation, USA)<sup>63</sup> has featured Little Debbie's name and face across the brand's marketing since 1960 to connote a happy affability. (fig.4.1 ).<sup>64</sup>

fig.4.1 This material is unavailable due to copyright restrictions.

In some instances the icon exists in name only with no visual identity. Here the name, for example Mr. Kipling (of exceedingly good cakes fame) operates with absent face. The consumer draws from the wider reference of the brand's identity and advertising and relates to wider social and cultural contexts to construct the potential character image. The use of a title such as Mr. or Mrs. as brand name can position its icon slightly differently perhaps as it can suggest a more authoritative figure, a position of respect and potentially someone older. A titled character can indicate a professional role. For example brand icons Mr. Muscle®<sup>65</sup> emphasise his title role – his first name apparently unimportant in the context of his work. Thus the name of the character can be critical to its role. The name of the brand is important to its personification and where the name *is* the brand the character is shaped accordingly. In some instances the brand name is used but the characters individual personal name is not. For example pretty Miss Sunbeam bread icon (USA) has no other name than that of the bread she promotes.<sup>66</sup> Her face echoes her name, a joyful radiance to give light

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<sup>63</sup> Named after the founder's granddaughter, the portrait was created by Pearl Mann and was revised in 1997. "Little Debbie®" McKee Foods Corporation n.d.: n.p. Web. 18 July. 2005. It was further updated in 2013.

<sup>64</sup> A number of food brands use the founder's child's name as identity.

<sup>65</sup> Mr. Muscle®, an action hero-like brand icon of cleaning product by S.C. Johnson (UK)

to the brand. Food writer Johnson commented on the attraction of the Miss Sunbeam icon:

Until I was seven my mother baked every week. I would rather have eaten Sunbeam bread from the store, having fallen under the spell of the eternally happy little blue-eyed, blond-haired girl pictured on the waxed paper wrapper eating a slice of bread, an image even more powerful when you saw it larger than life on the side of a delivery truck. I wanted to know her. As a second choice I wanted to eat her bread.<sup>67</sup>

In this way the name and image work symbiotically with the brand: name and face give life and personality to the brand.

#### **4.6. Context of Use: Channels of Communication**

The brand icon may be used in a variety of contexts to communicate a brand's values. Its coordinated use may see it positioned, potentially simultaneously across marketing platforms. Many have traditionally operated within press and television advertising, publications and packaging whilst some have existed within radio and as live presentation also. The nuances and extent of their existence, and their roles across different contexts, can vary however, notably as changing multimedia environments increasingly offer more numerous and more diverse communication channels and opportunities.<sup>68</sup> Some examples may only appear silently, statically on packaging whilst others may operate with voice and movement across a variety arenas.

As strong graphic communicators icons can speak without words. Their look, position, expression, and attire can communicate meanings efficiently and effectively; they operate as their own text or may be supported by additional information: a short narrative or story perhaps. In some contexts, for example in television advertisements, an icon may be given voice; dialogue helps communicate specific information or and meaning may be added or enhanced

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<sup>66</sup> Miss Sunbeam was created in 1942 by artist Ellen Segner. The brand is owned by the Quality Bakers of America.

<sup>67</sup> Eve Johnson, *Eating My Words* (North Vancouver, BC: Whitecap Books, 2003) 4.

<sup>68</sup> Multimedia channels for promotion include: Print; Outdoor; In-store; Digital [including social media – blogs, social networks]; TV; Cinema; Radio; Experiential and Direct Mail. Alan Mitchell, „The Brand Engagement Myth,“ 25. Jan. *Marketing* (Haymarket Brand 2011): 32-34.

accordingly. In some instances the immediate recognition of the brand can be achieved by the voice, for example the “Ho Ho Ho” of the Green Giant. The consumer may therefore encounter and experience a brand icon in various locations and contexts. Each touchpoint is important to how the brand is recognised and responded to.

Online branding has increasingly evidenced the development of people brand icons.<sup>69</sup> Some icons that have lived previously in the traditional marketing contexts of advertisements and packaging now can walk and talk in virtual worlds. Phillips and Lee’s study of brand icons’ online presence identified that their movement (animation and interactivity) increased their appeal and the authors advocated that brands should consider giving such dynamism to their icons.<sup>70</sup> Yet whilst brand icons’ online presence has proliferated it is observed that many icons still remain static in their digital realms although some pursue consumer interaction, for example Poppin’ Fresh the Pillsbury Dough Boy™ can be made to dance; an endearing opportunity that emphasises his fun character.<sup>71</sup> The icon’s entertaining way enhances the brand message and makes more memorable the brand. Likewise some icons now also work across wider virtual contexts: on social networking sites which give further opportunity for the brands to speak with their consumers, to appear to be real, and to encourage brand loyalty.<sup>72</sup> The increased visual and interactive presence of the brand icon helps to emphasise the brand’s personality which may develop further consumers’ emotional connection with the brand.

#### **4.7. Fictitious Brand Icons**

Fictitious icons are created by brands who wish to own and control a unique symbol that is synonymous with their brand. As examples, individual characters,

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<sup>69</sup> Further representatives, though not brand icons also operate, for example, brand interactive virtual advisors: chatbots. These avatars „talk” to consumers. For example, Ananova the virtual newscaster for Orange telecommunications brand (created by avatar creation company Charamel, 2000) and Anna the customer service figure for IKEA (© Inter IKEA systems B.V. 1999-2011).

<sup>70</sup> Barbara Phillips and We-Na Lee, “*Interactive Animation: Exploring Spokes-Characters on the Internet,*” *Journal of Current Issues and Research in Advertising*, 27:1, Spring, (Columbia: CtC Press, 2005):1-18.

<sup>71</sup> Poppin’ Fresh the Pillsbury Dough Boy™ appeared blinking on the 2011 website.

<sup>72</sup> For example Aunt Bessie can be followed on Twitter: her regular Tweets offer competition opportunities and positive messages to consumers.

as a person, anthropomorphic or cartoon/fantasy figure, are created to make distinct and to differentiate individual brands in commercial markets that are highly competitive and often saturated with similar products. Fictitious icons help build and promote a brand's identity and embody its values and equity.

Whilst Altschul observed that a fictitious icon may not be as valuable as a living character to a brand they can offer financial benefits as Boasberg jokingly commented, they are "working stiffs. And they don't get residuals, pensions or healthcare".<sup>73</sup> Importantly they can provide continuity to a brand's identity. A created character can be controlled: used constantly, or for a significant duration, often without aging or deviating from the brand's preferred image and values. If outdated or out of touch in relation to social or cultural norms or preferences the brand can revise or remove its icon.

Whilst unreal, invented people icons may have name, appearance and characteristics that appear real. This thesis considers fictitious examples in relation to the degree of their fabrication: the nature of their visual identity in relation to the brand's intent of their representation and existence. It identifies three fictitious types: *the totally fictitious*; *the fictitious but plausible*; *the truly enigmatic*.

In some instances brands create a fictitious character that is obviously unreal: the *totally fictitious*. Their physical appearance will indicate their fiction. For example the incredulous Great Uncle Cornelious icon of James White company (UK).<sup>74</sup> The brand was founded by owner Lawrence Mallinson in 1999 and his photograph as a Victorian styled gentleman operates as brand icon. Notably the exaggerated comic moustache, which was selected to give the brand a nostalgic and eccentric identity, reveals the fiction of the image. As Mallinson explained the company's quirky business sells via specialist and premium niche outlets and a distinct personality was required to present an "interesting proposition" that differentiated its products from others.<sup>75</sup> The brand uses the

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<sup>73</sup> Boasberg.

<sup>74</sup> The company was established in the UK in 1999.

<sup>75</sup> Lawrence Mallinson, "Uncle Cornelious," Telephone interview, 15 Feb. 2005.

associative values of a sepia portrait to suggest tradition and to present a unique identity (fig. 4.2).

By comparison some fictitious brand icons may appear believable as elements of their appearance are real and there is limited evidence of their fakery. For example the Victorian gent and the suggestion of founder status is used by Angus Ogilvie brand (Australia).<sup>76</sup> A photograph of Angus in stove hat gives historic and gracious identity to the Angus Ogilvie range of Ogilvie & Co Fine Food Merchants (Australia). The icon suggest company founder. However the company was established in 1987 so it is suggested that the image is not authentic to the brand (fig. 4.3) The fictitious person, or the real person in a fake context, offers example of how brands may create icons to suit their specific circumstances. False histories may be created where elements of truth bind the narrative to suggest plausible story.

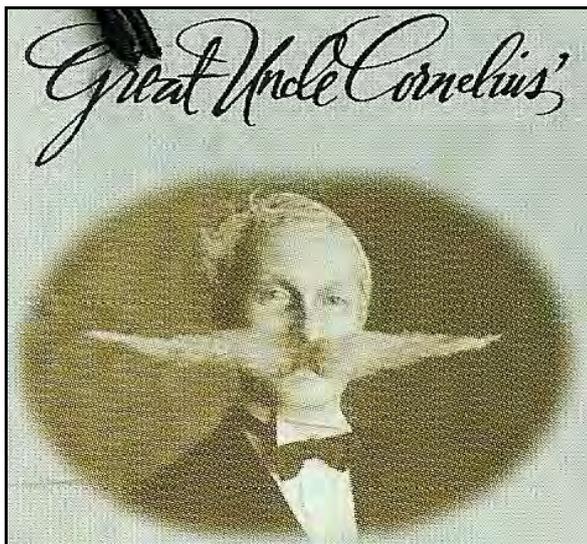


fig. 4.2



fig.4.3

As discussed in Chapter 7 and 8 some brands create fictitious icons that deliberately appear as real and little evidence exists to dispute their authenticity. In some instances no information is provided to identify the icon – no back story – no company history. Their construction is such that their identity is plausible and indeed their existence may be readily promoted as real and is thus accepted as such by consumers. For example Mrs. Adler's brand icon is

<sup>76</sup> Ogilvie & Co Fine Food Merchants.

presented in name and illustrated portrait on all of the brand's products (fig.4.4 and 4.5)<sup>77</sup> She appears to be middle-aged and whether a home economist, brand founder, company family member or Jewish mother she endures today as a brand symbol of American kosher food. However whilst present in contemporary supermarkets Mrs. Adler may be read as dated: her style (notably her spectacles and pearl necklace) suggests a time past – perhaps the 1950's when the brand was possibly first established? In this example the brand icon is challenging to determine as unfortunately it appears that the purchase of the original manufacturing company (the assumed creators of the brand) by another have limited the access to Mrs. Adler's original identity so it is not possible to confirm if she is indeed real. However, as Mrs. Adler has details on the company's website, no text tells of her life on the label and she appears as illustration it is taken that she is in fact unreal. The extent to which this matters to consumers is debatable however. She looks professional and potentially motherly so these qualities can perhaps be expected of the brand.

Likewise Mrs.Elswood brand icon (UK) is identified only by her name and face on her packaging and, similar to Mrs. Adler, she operates as a visual symbol and brand identity and one that has connotations of tradition, home-made and (jewish) motherly love (fig. 4.6 and fig. 4.7). In both instances little is now known of the brands' origin and the icons' authenticity. It is hypothesised that both figures are fictitious and can appear as real to customers.<sup>78</sup>



fig. 4.4



fig. 4.5

<sup>77</sup> Mrs. Adler's brand, that has a range of kosher products, is owned by Manischewitz Company who obtained the brand in 2006.

<sup>78</sup> Mrs.Elswood (pickles brand) is owned by Empire Food Brokers Limited. Her name could be a composite of Elstree and Borehamwood which relates to the company's Middlesex location.

fig. 4.6. This material is unavailable due to copyright restrictions.



fig. 4.7

#### 4.8. Creating and perpetuating the fiction: telling tales

Fictitious brand icons may be considered as a commercial storytelling strategy. In many instances they are created and exist through commercial narratives. They play their part in stories which can be told in advertisements and on packaging. The stories may be presented as fact or fiction or blurred to suggest fact although fictitious: made difficult for the consumer to interpret as true. Such blurring is deliberate spin and helps brands create their enigmatic identity.

Food packaging may present particular stories to shape the brand's identity. In some instances the image of an individual -as story character- is positioned within the brand's story. Their identity- their name, image and signature- act as components of the story. The individual may feature as narrator and character of their own story (biography), for example brand founders often represent and are their own tale. Thus stories are an important part of brand identity and examples presented on food packaging evidence the role they play in creating the character and life of brand icons respectively. Ultimately a story can enhance the product as it tells more than of just its ingredients. It adds flavour and context to the brand.

Ryan identified that examples can be narratives: when an example has a structured plot and sequence of events it can be identified as a narrative – a story. When an example does not present a clear story line but does offer

associated aspects – a story is suggested – it has “narrativity”.<sup>79</sup> These differences are useful in the consideration of packaging examples. In some instances a story is clear, although perhaps concise owing to the size and context of its medium. In other examples there is a character but no explicit plot or sequenced narrative. The latter example may suggest a story and we may help create it.

In competitive markets narratives and narrativity can make brands appealing and memorable through use of interesting and entertaining content. A story can be constructed through image and text where a number of elements work to create its structure. Names, words, phrases, photographs, illustration and text work together and operate as cues for the consumer to follow the messages. Some stories may be openly declared, told directly through text and image. Others are implicit and are revealed through visual clues which the consumer reads and then constructs the story from. Such reading can be identified by what Chatman termed as “naturalization” as “the reader „fills in” gaps in the text, adjusts events to a coherent whole (...).”<sup>80</sup>

Some examples of food packaging contain a significant percentage of story suggesting that the brand expects the consumer will pick up and read the pack. How the story matters to the consumer is important to consider. In some examples a traditional story is used as reference– it relies upon customer recognition of an original tale. For example the children’s story character Struwwelpeter was used on the 2007 orange wrappers of the German Struwwelpeter brand (fig 4.8).

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<sup>79</sup>Marie-Laura Ryan, *Narrative Across Media: the Language of Storytelling* (Lincoln: U. of Nebraska Press, 2004).

<sup>80</sup> Seymour Chatman 49.



fig. 4.8



**our story...**  
 back in 2003 jon and tristan started making pies. they fed them to their friends and took them to music festivals. people loved them and wanted more. later that year they opened a café, reinventing the pie and mash shop.  
 the pies won lots of awards and became friends to the stars. even hm the queen had them for her christmas party in 2005.  
 more cafes followed and today their delicious food can be found in some of the finest food halls, delis and restaurants across the country.

fig. 4.9

In some instances the story is the brand's history that can provide valuable brand equity. For example in 2009 Pieminster pies presented the founders and "our story..." as brand provenance presented as a seal of quality (fig. 4.9).

Contemporary food marketing evidences a range of stories. Some packaging depicts fictitious people with unreal stories that are created by the brand to capture consumers' attention and imaginations. For example Thomas Chipman Potato Chips packaging (Yarra Valley Snack Foods, Australia, 2007) evidenced a plausible yet fictitious tale (fig. 4.10). The portrait of the supposed creator suggested a real historic character. However Chipman's authenticity is challenged when reading the final story line... "Fact or Fiction? Try them and decide for yourself."<sup>81</sup> A playful dilemma suggested Chipman as fictitious yet the brand proposed that the consumer should determine his veracity. Likewise Phileas Fogg (KP Snacks, UK, 1982 - ) used the Jules Verne fictitious explorer as brand icon.<sup>82</sup> The reputation and associated exploits of the Victorian legend were carried over to the brand.<sup>83</sup> No reference to his fiction was made so it was consumers' knowledge of the Verne character that determined if they recognised Fogg's fiction. (fig. 4.10 and fig. 4.11) In both examples fictitious historical stories are core to the brand's identity.

<sup>81</sup> Thomas Chipman Potato Chips packaging, Yarra Valley Snack Foods, Australia, 2007.

<sup>82</sup> Jules Verne, „Around the World in Eighty Days“, 1873.

<sup>83</sup> Early packs incorporated Fogg's letters to his Aunt Agatha regarding his travels and later these were presented as Dear Diary excerpts.



fig. 4.10



fig. 4.11

As marketing vehicles, stories add value to the icon and the brand. They can make personal the brand icon by imbuing it with character and voice. They can help bring alive icons and assist explanation and justification of their existence in relation to the brand. The identity of the icon can be shaped through telling tales that can intrigue. Thus narratives work to lure the customer, to make them buy and remember the brand.

Brand icons often operate as, and within, the context of stories; stories that give further meaning and associative value to a brand. Brand narratives –“a narrative recounts a story, a series of events in a temporal sequence”<sup>84</sup> – are told and played out through brand icons. Stories provide opportunity to bring the icon to life, thus emphasising the realistic quality that brands can give their creations. In the minds of the consumer, even if the icon is obviously unreal, a tale can be constructed, and, as Lanahan observed, the icon can be “the living and breathing heart of [a] brand story.”<sup>85</sup>

<sup>84</sup> Cohan and Shires, *Telling Stories: a Theoretical Analysis of Narrative Fiction* (London: Routledge, 1988) 1.

<sup>85</sup> Lanahan 22.

Brands may utilise fictitious, mythic characters and stories. Twitchell confirmed that “Much of our shared knowledge about ourselves and our culture comes to us through a commercial process of storytelling called branding.”<sup>86</sup> The notions of storytelling and myth are therefore important to an understanding of the function and interpretation of brand icons. Companies create mythic brand icons often as new characters drawing upon old myths or through associations with the notion of myth. Consumers decode these symbols through learnt experiences of storytelling traditions.

In consideration of brand narratives, fiction and storytelling and associated myth and legend reference, use of discipline perspectives and established literature from Folklore Studies, for example Dorson;<sup>87</sup> Sullenberger;<sup>88</sup> Mythology for example Patai;<sup>89</sup> and Narratology, for example Cohan and Shires;<sup>90</sup> Chatman<sup>91</sup> and Cupitt<sup>92</sup> have provided valuable understanding of examples. Branding practitioners such as Novosedlik<sup>93</sup> and Altschul<sup>94</sup> have offered additional perspective regarding how brands use stories.<sup>95</sup>

Stories and storytelling are common experiences and processes we encounter throughout our lives. Stories are prolific vehicles for communication. Throughout world cultures stories and storytelling are an important part of the explanation and meaning-making of and for our lives and histories. From childhood we learn stories and the codes of their structure and functions; we grow up

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<sup>86</sup> James B. Twitchell. *Branded Nation* (New York: Simon, 2004) 2.

<sup>87</sup> Richard M. Dorson, *Folklore and Fakelore: an Essay Towards a Discipline of Folkstudies* (Cambridge: Harvard U.P., 1976).

<sup>88</sup> Sullenberger, Tom. E. “Ajax Meets the Jolly Green Giant: Some Observations on the Use of Folklore and Myth in American Mass Marketing,” *The Journal of American Folklore*, 87: 343, (Jan. - Mar. 1974): 53 – 65.

<sup>89</sup> Raphael Patai, *Myth and Modern Man* (Eaglewood cliffs: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1972).

<sup>90</sup> Steven Cohan and Linda M. Shires. *Telling Stories: a Theoretical Analysis of Narrative Fiction* (London: Routledge, 1988).

<sup>91</sup> Seymour Chatman, *Story and Discourse: Narrative Structure in Fiction and Film* (Ithaca: Cornell Uni. Press, 1978).

<sup>92</sup> Don Cupitt, *What is a Story?* (London: SCM, 1991).

<sup>93</sup> Will Novosedlik, “Branding as Mythology,” *Eye* 19. 5. (Winter 1995):36-43.

<sup>94</sup> Altschul.

<sup>95</sup> The following literature considers brand stories: Marcel Danesi, *Brands*, (Abingdon: Routledge, 2006) and Laurence Vincent, *Legendary Brands: Unleashing the Power of Storytelling to Create a Winning Market Strategy*. Chicago: Dearborn Trade Publishing, (2002) 32.

understanding how to *read* stories. Stories are memorable and act as valuable interpretation and explanation of complex ideas and issues.

#### 4.9. Folklore, “folklore”<sup>96</sup> and “fakelore”

In some instance brands draw from folklore to create their mythic icons. Folklore Studies have provided some valuable criticism of this accordingly. Notably Dorson’s provocative discussion of the media’s use of folklore as “an attack on the growing popularization, commercialization, and resulting distortion of folk materials”<sup>97</sup> viewed the media as “the enemy” of folklore.<sup>98</sup> However this author believes that such harsh criticism is perhaps unjust. The media, and noticeably advertising, whilst admittedly manipulating folk tales and creating their own “pseudo”<sup>99</sup> stories, could be seen to help perpetuate the very concept of folklore and arguably keep alive its tradition. It is from this perspective that this study acknowledges the power of advertising and branding and the creation of fictitious brand icons. With some sympathy with Dorson’s views, this author recognise the sensitivity that exists across audiences regarding their reception and perception of such commercial creations. To view advertising examples as contemporary folklore is perhaps too simplistic. Whilst similar narratives, motifs and structures may feature differences abound. Botkin identified traditional folklore as “anybody’s property” whilst advertent tales are, in the main, the property of the company.<sup>100</sup> Whilst audiences may share in the marketing stories, the ownership and control of such lies firmly with the brand and at the end of the day the bottom line is that the icons are used to sell. Further criticism of icons has been made Maasik and Solomon who commented “the artificial pantheon of advertising beings represents not a link with our history and culture but a break from any meaningful sense of who we are”.<sup>101</sup> Thus brand icons have their critics and their work, despite their best intentions, is not always well received.

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<sup>96</sup> Dorson 5

<sup>97</sup> Dorson 5.

<sup>98</sup> Dorson 61.

<sup>99</sup> Dorson 4.

<sup>100</sup> B.A.Botkin, ed.. *A Treasury of American Folklore, Stories, Ballads, Traditions of the People* (New York: Crown Publishers, 1944) xxvii.

<sup>101</sup> Sonia Maasik and Jack Solomon, eds. *Signs of Life in the USA: Readings on Popular Culture for Writers*. 2nd ed. (Boston, M.A.: Bedford/St. Martin’s, 1997.)

Critical of marketing's fiction suggested as genuine folklore, Dorson created the controversial concept of "faklore" to describe what he saw as the improper, manipulative and misleading use of folklore.<sup>102</sup> Identified "as a synthetic product claiming to be authentic oral tradition but actually tailored for mass edification" this concept can be used in relation to an identification of the use of folklore, myth and legend in branding.<sup>103</sup> This interesting term does perhaps well identify the commercial narratives of some brands.

The appeal of the unreal in this context, as highlighted by Dorson, was identified by Denby as "Folklore" –"the use of folkloric associations to help sell a product".<sup>104</sup> This may be seen as a negative use of folklore, similar to Dorson's criticism of faklore, and Sullenberger commented "the saddest aspect of this fraud is that the spurious article is so dull and thin, and the genuine material so salty and rich."<sup>105</sup> However this author challenges the views that marketing's faklore is misleading, improper and poor quality. Commercial faklore can be seen as positive as it works successfully for brands and consumers. For many the „fakery“ is appealing. Consumers appreciate the fiction and value of the story, even though in some instances they may not know its folklore origin.

Consumers often recognise and understand the mythic reference and qualities presented and embodied by a brand icon and, despite the fiction, they accept the brand's story. The use of (or reference to) folklore association by some brands has proved to be so successful that their brand icons have been accepted by generations of audiences as likeable , „believable“ characters, for example the Green Giant.<sup>106</sup> As Phillips noted "The target audience suspends disbelief when entering the fantasy world of a trade character"<sup>107</sup> and as Vincent commented "storytellers call this the willing suspension of disbelief. Salesmen call it marketing."<sup>108</sup> As Sullenberger commented, some mythic advertising

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<sup>102</sup> Dorson 5.

<sup>103</sup> Dorson 5.

<sup>104</sup> Priscilla Denby, *Folklore in the Mass Media*, (Folklore Institute: U. of Indiana, 1971)113-123.

<sup>105</sup> Sullenberger 6.

<sup>106</sup> This icon has become entrenched in popular culture as a friendly companion who provides us with good food. His myth has been created by marketing.

<sup>107</sup> Barbara J. Phillips, "Advertising and the Cultural Meaning of Animals." *Advances in Consumer Research*. Eds. Kim Corfman and John Lynch. Vol. 23. (1996) 145

<sup>108</sup> Vincent 32.

characters have a “curious aura of credibility”.<sup>109</sup> In some instances examples perhaps appeal to our subconscious and we transfer meaning and emotions from and to created characters. Their mythic quality may help them to transcend their commercial context as they take on and are given a different life in different contexts; they may acquire popularity beyond the brand and potentially attain legendary status, perhaps as new myths. Thus some brand icons may create new folklore, for example the popular anthropomorphic meerkat brand icon of comparethemarket.com (UK) has an illustrated autobiography<sup>110</sup> that evidences the icon’s successful life beyond the brand.

In the study of fictitious brand icons the notion of fiction and storytelling is important to an understanding of how brands utilise narrative and the concept of the unreal to create their identities.

#### **4.10. Cartoon Characters Brand Icons**

Food brands often use fictitious cartoon people as brand icon or character. These illustrated creations may appear in anthropomorphic form, for example as food, animal or as a particular figure-type. Whilst this study does not focus upon such fictitious examples, summary consideration of this particular category-type is important as examples share comparable roles to that of their fictitious „people“ counterparts and feature prominently on food packaging. Indeed these examples may occasionally compete directly with the icons of this study’s focus. Consideration of their use therefore helps to establish an understanding of how we develop relationships with fictitious examples, notably from childhood onwards.<sup>111</sup>

Many brand cartoon creations are comparable with a myriad of other visual figures, “entertainment characters”, that exist in numerous cultural spheres such as cartoons, animation, computer games and cyberspace avatars.<sup>112</sup> Lanahan identified these contexts as “a consumer frame of

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<sup>109</sup> Sullenberger 56.

<sup>110</sup> Aleksandr Oslov, *A Simple Life: the Life and of Aleksandr Orlov* (London: Edbury Press, 2010).

<sup>111</sup> Authors Dotz and Husain (2009) offer valuable documentation of the significant history and popularity of such examples, though notably the collation of a sample range of examples considered from an American perspective.

<sup>112</sup> Calcott 1993.

reference”<sup>113</sup> and Callcott observed that the brand cartoon examples utilise our familiarity and relationships with popular media cartoon characters to transfer associative meaning and feeling to their commercial profile.<sup>114</sup> As Lanahan observed, brand cartoon characters “straddle the worlds of marketing and entertainment”: they appeal and amuse whilst operating as commercial agents.<sup>115</sup> Consumers’ prior experience of entertainment characters informs and shapes their understanding of the commercial counterparts. The use of a cartoon character often relates to brand products that aim to appeal to children. As Lawrence explained children “have much less developed analytical abilities than adults”<sup>116</sup> and simple, colourful characters operate as useful devices to draw attention and make the product memorable. Drawing upon children’s wider experiences with cartoon characters brand’s use of cartoon people or animal creations utilise the familiarity and comfort that such characters offer.<sup>117</sup> Their obviously fictitious and often fantasy-like appearance facilitates quick recognition and offers connotations of friendly fun.<sup>118</sup>

Some brands licence cartoon characters as endorsers from other companies: their popularity and associative meaning are generally used to target children. For example Heinz Pasta Shapes labels (2009) featured trademark characters from the film *Shrek the Third* (2007) and the characters’ also formed the very pasta shapes.<sup>119</sup> As licensed characters not owned by the brand they are brand spokes-people rather than brand icons. They operate as an associative device and may have a temporary relationship with the brand. Whilst useful, as Asher advised, for the brand they “are not their exclusive province, neither in consumer perception nor the extent of allowable usage.”<sup>120</sup>

Some brands have invented their own brand icon. As Unruh observed “images

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<sup>113</sup> Lanahan 22.

<sup>114</sup> Callcott 1993.

<sup>115</sup> Lanahan 22

<sup>116</sup> In particular Vincent identifies different character types and traits that appeal to children from different age ranges.

<sup>117</sup> As Callcott confirmed, children engage with cartoon characters through animation, film and comics as examples. Callcott 1993.

<sup>118</sup> Lawrence.

<sup>119</sup> *Shrek* (2001) was directed by Miller and Hui, DreamWorks Animation, L.L.C. 2007.

<sup>120</sup> Jonathan Asher, “For Marketing Icons, Character Counts,” Brandweek Jul. 13. 1998, Web 13 May 2004.

can represent a product accurately and reliably while crossing audience boundaries more effectively than humans”.<sup>121</sup> Such characters frequently front children’s breakfast cereal brands.<sup>122</sup> For example Kellogg Company (UK) and General Mills Inc., (USA) both use their well-established family of examples. Whilst the parent brands have the overall corporate identity, their individual brands have specific icons with individual personalities, for example, Tony the Tiger® of Kellogg’s Frosties cereal.<sup>123</sup> Whilst such icons endure their appearance is often revised to ensure currency with changing audiences and to address marketing needs. For example the 2003 Caramel Frosties packaging (Germany) showed only Tony the Tiger’s® claw scratching across its front (fig.4.12) thus evidencing the power of the icon as consumers identified him by his paw alone.<sup>124</sup> The 2011 Frosties pack (UK) depicted a larger than usual Tony thus evidencing the brand’s greater reliance upon the icon to attract consumer attention (fig.4.13).



fig. 4.12



fig.4.13



fig.4.14

<sup>121</sup> Christine Unruh, “Snap, Crackle, Pop,” *Journal of Business Strategy* Mar./Apr. 16.2 (1995) 40.

<sup>122</sup> The competitive cereal market evidences a range of brand cartoon characters and icons.

<sup>123</sup> Tony has operated as brand icon since 1957.

<sup>124</sup> This depiction did not appear on UK packaging. Tony’s claws are banned by Kellogg. His appearance was made uniform across international markets in 2006.

#### 4.11. Anthropomorphic Brand Icons

A plethora of anthropomorphic food brand icons exist internationally - the icon physically personifies the product as if living, it has human characteristics:<sup>125</sup> it is the product.<sup>126</sup> Puzakova, Kwak and Rocereto defined brand anthropomorphisation as “brands being perceived by consumers as actual human beings with various emotional states, mind, soul and conscious behaviors that can act as prominent members of social ties.”<sup>127</sup> Anthropomorphism can be understood as “personification”<sup>128</sup> and what Guthrie described as the “self-conscious portrayal of abstractions or invisible entities as concrete humans”<sup>129</sup> Anthropomorphism is a popular marketing approach. As Lakoff and Johnson identified it “allows us to comprehend a wide variety of experiences with nonhuman entities in terms of human motivations, characteristics, and activities”<sup>130</sup> however Brown and Ponsonby-McCabe observed that anthropomorphism’s “appeal is poorly understood.”<sup>131</sup> The anthropomorphic icon embodies human traits, such as wearing clothes (fig. 4.14). Consumers can relate to their appearance and their associated human qualities and gain comfort and reassurance in their personality.<sup>132</sup> The food is brought to life and is made non-threatening to assure the consumer who is perhaps unfamiliar with its taste or suspicious or critical of its worth. The character helps make easier the encounter with the product and encourages the consumer to eat, and trust brand. For example Miss Chiquita Banana introduced in 1944 as a living female banana literally embodied the brand in her aim to educate and to entice consumers to buy a product that for many was

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<sup>125</sup> Stewart E. Guthrie, *Faces in the Clouds*. (New York: OUP, 1993) 52.

<sup>126</sup> For example the American ice-cream icon Mr. Softee and the UK equivalent Mr. Whippy appear as people made from an ice cream cone.

<sup>127</sup> Marina Puzakova, Hyokjin Kwak, Joseph F. Rocereto, “Pushing the Envelope of Brand and Personality: Antecedents and Moderators of Anthropomorphized Brands,” *Advances in Consumer Research* 36. (2009):413-414. Qtd in. “Representing [sic] the Manimal: A Semiotic/Psychoanalytic Approach to the Strategic Importance of Anthropomorphism in Branding” George Rossolatos, Social Science Research Network, Web. 12 Feb. 2012.

<sup>128</sup> Theodore Levitt, *The Marketing Imagination*. (Free Press, 1986).

<sup>129</sup> Stewart Guthrie, *Faces in the Clouds: a New Theory of Religion*. (Oxford: OUP, 1995) 136.

<sup>130</sup> George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By*. (Chicago: U. of Chicago, 2008) 35.

<sup>131</sup> Stephen Brown & Sharon Ponsonby-McCabe, “Special Issue: Anthropomorphic Marketing,” *Journal of Marketing Management* Newsletter, Korean Academy of Marketing Science, 21, 1. Kams.org. [pdf] 28 May 2011: 30. Web. 12 Aug. 2011.

<sup>132</sup> *Journal of Marketing Management Call for papers: Anthropomorphic Marketing*. Web. 12 Jan. 2012.

unfamiliar.<sup>133</sup> Such examples are distinct in character and their visual appearance readily identifies the product type. Whilst wholly invented it appears that their friendly fiction is popular with consumers as their existence continues and according to Balcombe has increased.<sup>134</sup>

For example Planters® Mr. Peanut first appeared on packaging in c.1918 and although his attire, of top hat, spats, cane and a monocle appears dated,<sup>135</sup> he still works as important brand asset (fig.4.15).<sup>136</sup> Dotz and Morton referred to such examples as literal characters.<sup>137</sup> The product literally is alive and does the talking. Such characters are often visually relatively simplistic and blatantly depict the product and where possible its use.<sup>138</sup> For example Bertie Bassett, Bassett's Liquorice Allsorts confectionery (UK), is made of the very sweets he promotes. Created in 1929, Bertie has featured upon the packaging recognisable by his distinct assorted bits (fig.4.16). In 2009, on his 80<sup>th</sup> birthday, Bertie's arranged marriage witnessed the new icon Betty Bassett introduced to promote Bassett's Red Liquorice.<sup>139</sup> Here the icons were recognised as real as the parent company gave life to their graphic form in celebration and joining together of established and new marketing creations. In such examples the plausibility of the icons as real is an appealing feature. The personalities are shaped predominantly by their visual appearance as few are given voice and life in contexts beyond their packaging. Thus anthropomorphic brand icons feature upon packaging; some endure whilst others disappear as tastes change, markets shift and brand needs alter.

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<sup>133</sup> This icon was illustrated by Dik Browne and she first appeared on fruit labels in 1963. In 1987 she was illustrated as a woman rather than banana. Today the brand is owned by Chiquita Brands.

<sup>134</sup> Balcombe Cited in Stephen Brown, "Where the Wild Brands Are: Some Thoughts on Anthropomorphic Marketing," *Marketing Review* 10. 3 (2010) 209-244.

<sup>135</sup> Mullen referred to this character-type as „The Toff.“ *Chris Mullen, Brand Characters: The Toff and Monocle. The Visual Telling of Stories.* (Chris Mullen, n.d. Web. 13 Oct. 2006).

<sup>136</sup> Planters® was established in America in 1906. Mr. Peanut was created in 1916 and has appeared in American press advertising since 1919 and in billboard advertisements since 1933. "Planters® Historic Timeline 1906 – present." (Web. 25 June 2009. Mr. Peanut®) .PLANTERS® is a registered trademark of Compagnie Gervais Danone and is used under licence by Trigon Snacks Limited.

<sup>137</sup> Warren Dotz and Jim Morton, *What a Character: 20<sup>th</sup> Century American Advertising Icons.* (San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 1996).

<sup>138</sup> Such characters exist for food and non-food brands.

<sup>139</sup> Bassett's staged a real wedding ceremony for Bertie and Betty at its factory. "Betty and Bertie Bassett's Wedding" n.d. You Tube. n.p. Web. 12 Oct. 2011.



fig. 4.15



fig. 4.16

In many instances anthropomorphic examples are used to attract attention to a child-orientated product. Whilst expansively used, the extent to which icons influence children's choice of product appears to be inconclusive however as Newley and Schumann confirmed.<sup>140</sup> As Lawrence explained, from childhood our experience of icons develops.<sup>141</sup> In adulthood examples may remain memorable: the consumer has aged but the icon has not. A recognition of and fondness of icons can help ensure their longevity as adults may continue to consume the product beyond their experiences. That consumers relate to such icons is testament to their power and success.

## Summary

This chapter has considered the role and identity of people brand symbols – brand icons. It has considered the terminology used to define such examples and has determined that brand icon is appropriate term to identify those examples that specifically represent a brand.

Discussion has considered types of brand icons including cartoon and anthropomorphic examples notably in relation to the notion of fictitious brand icons. This chapter has considered fictitious types in relation to the degree of their fabrication. Their fictive presence and narrative appeal is considered in

<sup>140</sup> Neeley and Schumann focused upon animated character's action and voice in relation to television advertising. Neeley and Schuman. "Using Animated Spokes-Characters in Advertising to Young Children."

<sup>141</sup> Lawrence 43-48.

relation to notions of myth and storytelling. This chapter confirmed that food brand icons can be represented and interpreted as fictitious and the extent to which they can be understood as being unreal can vary. The following Chapters build upon this initial consideration and notably examine specific case studies of fictitious people brand icons.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **FOOD PACKAGING AND PEOPLE ON PACKAGING**

#### **5.1. Introduction**

This chapter provides a consideration of food packaging to establish the context of the thesis's focus. It considers packaging's functions, contexts of use, and its commercial meanings and its value as a cultural and social artefact and historical document that reflects and is a result of technological, social and environmental changes and developments. It considers the experiences and views of historical and contemporary packaging researchers and packaging designers and brand managers and examines historical and contemporary international packaging examples selected from the author's collection. This chapter does not attempt to provide an overview of packaging's history as this is beyond the scope of this study.

This chapter then considers the use and representation of the imagery of people on food packaging and notably the role of faces in food brand identity. Through the examination of contemporary cross cultural packaging examples the discussion assesses how packaging speaks to the consumer through its surface design and the people that are presented to represent brands. This chapter establishes the context in which the subsequent consideration of people-type brand characters and icons can be positioned and understood.

Contemporary retail environments present rich visual arenas in which consumers purchase food through their considered readings of product packaging. Consumers navigate their way through the goods presented and make their purchase decisions in part through their response to the messages presented upon the packaging. The positioning of packaging upon supermarket shelves is important to the ease in which the consumer may recognise and locate the product and the speed and efficiency of their selected purchases. When located centrally at eye level the package is more readily accessible to

consumers however in competitive markets the packaging's design must attract and hold attention and encourage its selection over others. As a sign the packaging communicates key messages which the consumer reads and decodes and it is through this sign system that the brand communicates.

The packaging designs utilise complex systems of communication which can comprise images, such as illustrations or photographs, and text. The designs contain certain signs – associations and meanings – which generate meaning that consumers extract, interpret and apply accordingly to the product. Through an understanding of this process, that which is understood as semiotics – “the method for describing the connotative functioning of meaning” – the packing operates as an important coded vehicle – the denotatum”.<sup>1</sup> As Baudrillard asserted “In order to become an object of consumption, the object must become a sign (...)” and packaging operates a key component of the commercial sign system.<sup>2</sup>

The creation, transmission, receipt and interpretation of meanings presents food packaging as an important text that contains layers of meaning potentially. The consumers must decode the marketing messages efficiently, notably through the application of their wider social and cultural experiences and knowledge as Umiker-Sebesk observed “product meanings are not simple labels affixed to goods in advertising but are created against a backdrop of culture at large.”<sup>3</sup> Consumers are active interpreters of marketing messages and understand commercial intentions: “as [...] practicing semioticians with a considerable expertise in reading and manipulating the meanings circulating in their society, [they are] not just rational discussion-makers in the economic sense or slaves of social convention or psychological impulses”.<sup>4</sup>

The relationship of products and their associated meaning and values as understood by consumers is critical to the success of brands. Therefore brand

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<sup>1</sup> Jean Umiker-Sebesk, ed. *Marketing and Semiotics: New Directions in the Study of Signs for Sale* (New York: Mouton de Greyter, 1987) x.

<sup>2</sup> Jean Baudrillard, *The System of Objects* (New York: Verso, 1996) 200.

<sup>3</sup> Umiker-Sebesk, 1987:xi.

<sup>4</sup> Umiker-Sebesk, 1987:xi.

packaging is carefully constructed to communicate targeted messages which may be easily negotiated by consumers. The packaging's surface may use visual symbols that identify key attributes of the brand or product. The symbols enable ready decoding as Love observed "Symbols are the world's design cues. They facilitate communications, breaking down linguistic and cultural barriers and reinforcing a brand's core attributes that appeal to multiple audiences".<sup>5</sup> As brand identity and communicator of a brand's messages, the brand icon can sit on packaging as a powerful symbol that is understood socially and culturally.

## 5.2. Packaging design roles and contexts

The presence of food brand packaging in contemporary culture is prolific. As Roberts observed "In an average day you can expect to have contact with around 15,000 trademarked products. If you go to the supermarket, rack that up to 35,000!"<sup>6</sup> Within food retailing brands exist through packaging and vie with competitors in their attempt to attract consumer attention. Packaging differentiates products and is "used to create uniqueness where non exists."<sup>7</sup> Packaging must satisfy brand and consumers' needs. It is critical to a brand's identity and success. It forms important relationships as Pilditch commented "It is the connecting link between company and consumer. The sales clincher (...) The final step, from shelf to shopping basket, depends on the package."<sup>8</sup>

Consumers choose and use packaging in their purchase, preparation and consumption of food; we live with it; we use it; we dispose of it. Often food packaging maybe disregarded; its form (shape and look) maybe be overlooked as we preference its contents. Our contact and relationship with packaging can be both intimate and indifferent. We read its surface to understand its contents and their contexts; we hold, handle and open it to access what it presents and protects. We may scrutinize and delight in its visual presence as we make and

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<sup>5</sup> Kenneth, D. Love, "How Design Helps Create Memorable Brands," Sense 1995. Web. 18 July 2005.

<sup>6</sup> Kevin Roberts, *Lovemarks: the Future Beyond Brands* (New York: Powerhouse Books, 2004) 27.

<sup>7</sup> James Pilditch, *The Silent Salesman: How to Develop Packaging that Sells* (London: B.T. Batsford Limited, 1961) 4.

<sup>8</sup> Pilditch 3.

take meaning from its design or we may pay it scant attention as we focus upon its immediate physical purpose to access its contents only. The ephemeral nature of packaging is an important feature of its existence. However, despite its often short *use-by* lifespan, packaging plays a variety of important roles. From manufacturer to market place, from supermarket shelf to kitchen shelf and from shopping basket to bin, packaging exists within a variety of multifaceted contexts. As “an uncommonly complex marketing tool”<sup>9</sup> the package “must be able to serve the total retail environment”<sup>10</sup> and indeed the consumer’s needs within the home. Increasingly packaging’s function and force extends beyond its original utilitarian role and traditional physical existence to contain and protect its contents within the retail environment. It serves various functions: it is an important sales tool; it can be (part of) a brand’s identity and personality; it can be considered to be a product in its own right with rich social and cultural connotations. As Huffman, assistant managing director of Metal Box Company commented in 1958 “in many cases the package has become indistinguishable from the product it contains”<sup>11</sup> and as Pilditch commented “Often the package is more important than the product it contains”.<sup>12</sup>

As ephemeral, packaging design is subject to potential change in a fast moving consumer market. Whilst some brand packaging can remain relatively unchanged much is revised and redesigned to work more effectively in highly competitive changing markets with different and changing consumers as Behaeghel noted packaging is “constantly evolving because it lives in an environment of perpetual motion”<sup>13</sup> and as Larrabee remarked “In the world of modern merchandising the package has no permanency.”<sup>14</sup> Packaging is shaped by various factors: as Behaeghel noted and Reese observed, it reflects “changes in products, technology and the attitude of the public and the design

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<sup>9</sup> Pilditch Preface.

<sup>10</sup> Stanley Sacharow *The Package as a Marketing Tool*, (Radnor: Chilton Book Company, 1982) 42.

<sup>11</sup> Huffman quoted in Pilditch 1.

<sup>12</sup> Pilditch 1.

<sup>13</sup> Julien Behaeghel, *Brand Packaging: the Permanent Medium* (London: Architecture Design and Technology Press, 1991) 6.

<sup>14</sup> Carroll B. Larrabee, *How to Package for Profit: a Manual of Packaging*, (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1935) 17.

community.”<sup>15</sup> The form and aesthetics of packaging design change in response to commercial and social needs, concerns and tastes. For example consumer concerns and preferences regarding health, food ingredients and manufacture have influenced how food is marketed. As Ridley<sup>16</sup> reported a preferred trend in food packaging was that the design focused upon ingredients and food usage to assure and attract consumers.

Food packaging design must consider a number of factors that determine its effectiveness: for example the choice of colour, shape and design and how it is made to appeal to a specific target market. Its physical design must address various considerations including storage, display, stack ability, ergonomics, weight etc. The design will be shaped by how the package is marketed; marketing trends, the brand family image and competitors’ designs. To target a specific market, the market type must be identified and consumer testing may be considered. Sacharow<sup>17</sup>, Pilditch<sup>18</sup> and Phillips<sup>19</sup> have discussed these considerations in greater depth but these highlighted factors evidence the complexity of the packaging’s design. When exporting brands internationally climate and shipping conditions may impact upon the physical design of packaging and social and cultural contexts may further determine the packaging’s visual presence. For example issues of language, cultural colour associations and use of imagery may need to be considered to avoid potential ambiguity or offence.

Food packaging serves key essential functions that extend across a range of requirements.<sup>20</sup> As Reese<sup>21</sup>, Behaeghel<sup>22</sup> and Pilditch<sup>23</sup> acknowledged packaging must be functional and be able to communicate quickly with

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<sup>15</sup> Theresa Philips, *Print Casebooks 10: The Best in Packaging*, (New York: RC Publications, Inc., 1994) 4.

<sup>16</sup> Emma Ridley, “Primula Maid.” Kavli Ltd., UK. Message to the author. 4 Aug. 2009. E-mail.

<sup>17</sup> Sacharow, Stanley. *Symbols of Trade*. (New York. Art Direction Book Company, 1982).

<sup>18</sup> Pilditch.

<sup>19</sup> Renee Phillips, *Packaging Graphics and Design* (Massachusetts: Rockport Publishers, Inc., 2001).

<sup>20</sup> Walter Stern, *Handbook of Package Design Research*. (New York: John Wiley, 1981) 22.

<sup>21</sup> Theresa Reese, *Print Casebooks 10: The Best in Packaging*.(New York: RC Publications, Inc., 1994).

<sup>22</sup> Behaeghel *Brand Packaging*.

<sup>23</sup> Pilditch, 1961.

customers to sell the product. As Fladager observed it must have “eye appeal and buy appeal<sup>24</sup> - or what is known as standout - the immediacy and effectiveness of its message to persuade consumers to buy is critical. As Pilditch noted it must be easy to identify and easy to remember. Packaging designer Minale of design group Minale Tattersfield talked of packaging as “the marketing hero”<sup>25</sup> that is responsible for the containment and protection, display and storage of goods and is important in the persuasion of customers in their purchase of products. It is a vital promotional tool; it must speak of and for the product.<sup>26</sup> As Dichter confirmed packaging gives consumer confidence in the product and in the reliability of the manufacturer.<sup>27</sup> Packaging design must provide product and brand identification and distinguish the brand and differentiate products; as Pilditch commented it is “used to create uniqueness where non exists”<sup>28</sup> and as such it must have physical and visual impact. As Booth Clibborn stated “Visibility in package decoration, an enabling quick selection or recognition, should always be sought.”<sup>29</sup> Packaging’s efficient communication of marketing messages is important as Novosedlik stated “In packaging design, for instance, there is no place for complexity, no time for going beyond what is immediately visible because brand communication must hit their marks within a fraction of a second or not at all.”<sup>30</sup>

The packaging form (box, packet, bottle or other) is a key factor in the design and its surface graphics builds upon and works with the physical shape to create an overall identity that distinguishes the brand. The design concept and layout aims to attract and inform the consumer. As Ewen noted, in advertising and packaging “the power of provocative surfaces speaks to the eye’s mind, overshadowing matters of quality or substance”.<sup>31</sup> Type, layout, image and

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<sup>24</sup> Behaeghel, 2.

<sup>25</sup> Marcello Minale, ed. *The Leader of the Pack* (London: Elfande, 1993) 9.

<sup>26</sup> Legal regulations such as the European Food Labelling Directive require that food packaging communicates certain information: Product name; ingredients in descending order of weight and including additives GM ingredients; weight and volume; company details, storage conditions, use by/best before date and cooking instructions.

<sup>27</sup> Ernest Dichter *Packaging: the Sixth Sense* (Boston: Cahnerns Books, 1975) 19.

<sup>28</sup> Pilditch 1961 4.

<sup>29</sup> Booth-Clibborn 10.

<sup>30</sup> Will Novosedlik, “Branding as Mythology,” *Eye* 19. 5. (Winter 1995) 36-37.

<sup>31</sup> Stuart Ewen, *All Consuming Images: the Politics of Style in Contemporary Culture* (London: Basic Books, 1988).

colour make the brand appealing, appetising and memorable. Visibility, legibility, recognition and identification are important in the brand's identity.<sup>32</sup> Its packaging gives character; as Booth Clibborn stated, packaging can "charmatised" the product; it can make a relatively mundane product visually appealing.<sup>33</sup> The graphic identity, appeal and visual language of the brand, through its packaging, is all important.

The relationship between the consumer and the packaging is an important one for companies to secure and maintain in the promotion of their brands. Packaging ideally must have psychological appeal to encourage sales as Hargreaves stated "Packaging is where the consumer finally comes into tangible contact with a food and drink brand, and the relationship between a product's brand values and the packaging is thus of tremendous importance."<sup>34</sup> Davies, Creative and Marketing Services Manager, Kellogg Company, UK reflected that brands packaging must have a strong shelf presence and comments "The pack for me, personally, is basically the last chance we have on the supermarket shelf to influence the consumer to buy"<sup>35</sup> and Pilditch observed that the time when product and consumer come together is „the moment of truth" where the "total character" of the brand is weighed up.<sup>36</sup> The connection that is secured through these elements influences purchase accordingly. Whilst Pilditch claimed "At the point of sale, the package is lonely. Advertising must force package identification"<sup>37</sup> and Hine stated "(...) advertising creates a widespread awareness of a product, and packaging completes the message, closes the sale"<sup>38</sup> it is observed that today many products are not widely advertised and many brands rely heavily upon packaging as the core touchpoint with consumers; packaging *is* the advertisement.

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<sup>32</sup> Howard Milton, *Packaging Design* (London: Design Council, 1991).

<sup>33</sup> Booth-Clibborn 10.

<sup>34</sup> Ben Hargreaves, *Eat Me: Delicious, Desirable, Successful Food Packaging Design*. Mies: Rotovision, 2004) 45.

<sup>35</sup> Ron Davies, "Kellogg's Brand Icons." Kellogg. Telephone interview. 18 Aug. 2009.

<sup>36</sup> Pilditch 6.

<sup>37</sup> Pilditch 6.

<sup>38</sup> Thomas Hine, *The Total Package* (New York: Little Brown and Company, 1995) 107.

Whilst food packaging has long attracted consumers via words and images increasingly the way in which packaging as “silent salesman”<sup>39</sup> such evidences greater complexity in packaging designs. We are often spoken to personally in familiar tones as packaging appears to enter into conversation with us. In some instances pack copy alone constructs powerful messages and combined with visuals it can also present alluring reading. Accompanying the obligatory information clever puns, witty lines, intimate stories and interesting facts can give personality and emotion to the brand.<sup>40</sup> In some instances packaging tells tales about the product or company: unusual and unique facts are revealed as the brand shares its story. The use of such narratives reflect Vincent’s view that “Today, story enjoys an exaggerated influence upon our lives- an influence unprecedented in human history. Our culture demands a story from every object, every place, every institution, and every human being.”<sup>41</sup> Occasionally mythic stories appear to connect the brand with historical settings, geographical locations or events. Notably microbreweries beer labels often create fictional tales to pull attention and make unique their products.<sup>42</sup> Whether consumers read such designs is questionable.

Packaging is a vehicle for the transference of values and meanings from the brand to the consumer, an expression of brand meaning. The emotional relationship that packaging forms with consumers is important they can take pleasure in its design; enjoy its marketing message and gain satisfaction in purchase. Hine talked of “sensation transference” where the feelings and messages generated by the packaging are picked up and absorbed by the consumer.<sup>43</sup> The emotional pull of the design is important as Ford, Creative Partner of packaging consultancy Pearlfisher, confirmed “It is the key interface between brand and consumer as it can connect on a physical, spiritual and sensory level to create that all-important ingredient to guarantee brand success:

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<sup>39</sup> Pilditch.

<sup>40</sup> Hargreaves 25.

<sup>41</sup> Laurence Vincent, *Legendary Brands: Unleashing the Power of Storytelling to Create a Winning Market Strategy* (Chicago: Dearborn Trade Publishing, 2002).

<sup>42</sup> Bob Yates, “Packaging,” Tunnell Brewery, Personal Interview, 14 Jun. 2006.

<sup>43</sup> Hine 107.

desire”.<sup>44</sup> Consumers therefore can invest emotionally in the packaging and brand and a bond and brand loyalty may be secured. Packaging’s appeal to consumers can extend beyond its contents and the identification of a product: its physical shape and surface design can be aesthetically pleasing and can engage and satisfy us emotionally. The package itself can be seen as brand and as Pilditch commented it can be a personality that enters the customer’s home.<sup>45</sup> Such packaging can be referred to as iconic: “a package that, in its essence, becomes a signature part of the overall brand”<sup>46</sup> As Hargreaves suggested “If packaging is the manifestation of the brand in the hand, then in our acutely brand-conscious times, it performs a critical function.”<sup>47</sup>

### 5.3. Packaging in advertising

Our contact with food packaging exists across a number of contexts: normally in shops, at home and as pictured in advertising. Within advertisements packaging helps introduce and reinforce brand identity and makes memorable products to consumers. Not all food brands use their packaging within advertising however. In many instances the brand name is preferential and made prominent rather than the depiction of the packaging. Yet the positioning of packaging within advertisements is a well-established marketing approach. In many instances the pack is the main focus for the advertisement’s design. The pack shot is often central to the layout or made large within its design so it can be recognised and remembered by the consumer so when the packaging is then seen in the supermarket it hopefully will secure sales. This is illustrated in advertisements such as the 2009 Shape yoghurt advertisement (fig. 5.1). The relationship of brand name to package identity is important. The name (and accompanying text as necessary) is made legible within the advertisement and may also be placed beside the pack to further echo the brand identified on the pack.

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<sup>44</sup> Ford, Jonathan, “Which Came First: the Packaging or the Advertising?” *Gain: Journal of Business and Design*. n.d. n.pag. Web. 31 Oct. 2006.

<sup>45</sup> Pilditch 7.

<sup>46</sup> Stacey King Gordon, “Isn’t it iconic? What’s the secret to elevating your packaging to iconic status? Learn from four brands, old and new, that have struck on the magic formula.” 1 Sep. 2007. *Brand Packaging*. 1 Sept. 2007. n.p. Web, 10 Feb. 2009.

<sup>47</sup> Ben Hargreaves, *Successful Food Packaging Design* (Mies: Rotovision, 2006) 6.

The positioning of the package within an advertisement (press or broadcast) can vary and messages communicated can be accentuated accordingly. The pack shot often positions it at an angle to emphasise its 3-dimensional form and to make clear that it is a package as shown in Scott's Original Oats 2009 advertisement (fig. 5.2). The packaging may be enlarged to add dominance to the identity or may feature in scale to help identify the product's actual size.

fig. 5.1 This material is unavailable due to copyright restrictions.

Some advertisements may present two or more packs: to indicate a product range; to identify different sizes of products available; or to identify the pack open – to display contents within - and pack closed. For example the 1953 Clarrico Regency Candies advertisement (fig. 5.3) demonstrated its box open and closed. Some brands present their packaging opened to emphasise the contents that appear to spill out abundantly to entice the consumer. Other approaches include the encasement of the package within the product where the food opens shell- like, metaphorically, to reveal its packaging as precious – pearl-like (fig. 5.4) or to surround the packaging with the products ingredients to illustrate its content.

This material is unavailable due to copyright restrictions.

fig. 5.2

fig. 5.3

fig. 5.4

Actual physical use of the packaging provides important display its function and to reveal its contents. Images of hands holding the packaging can help identify its scale for example. Depending upon how the packaging is held and posed can suggest various meaning such as its worthy of admiration. The location of the packaging within the overall advertising image is also important to how its relevance and use is anchored. For example the packaging pictured in a supermarket on a shelf or in a shopping trolley suggests the notion of distinct choice, worthy of purchase; within the home positioned on a kitchen shelf or suggests the products use and value as a prominent and good choice.

In some cases the package is featured in front or beside food. As serving suggestion the food is proof of the pack and product's use. The package connotes the idea that it is an essential ingredient in the meals creation. The packaging can suggest a before and after use of the brand. Cleverly some food brands co-brand advertise and their respective packaging is presented to show that their products can share in meal making.

Packaging may repeat its imagery upon a package and within an advertisement where "the image contains itself on a smaller scale."<sup>48</sup> Giampietro identified this as the Droste Effect with reference to the Dutch Droste cocoa packaging design (fig. 5.5) where the packaging portrays repeated images of itself upon its front.<sup>49</sup> This device can be seen in some food packaging and advertising, for example the tins of Royal Baking Powder (fig.5.6) and the Crosbie's Nell Gwyn (1952) marmalade (fig. 5.7) where the recursive design reinforces the importance of the brand's packaging identity.

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<sup>48</sup> "Droste Study Material" n.d. Droste B.V. n.p. Web. 18 Jan. 2011.

<sup>49</sup> Rob Giampietro, "Droste Effect. Collected Words," *DOT DOT DOT* 14: S as in stenographer. (2007): 65.

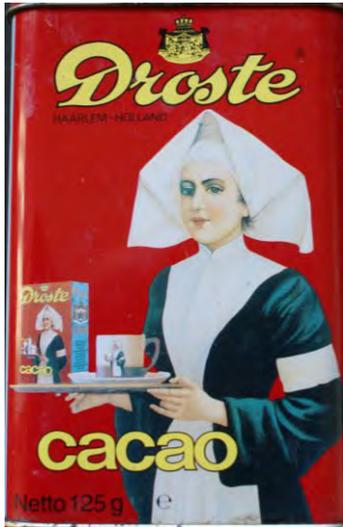


fig. 5.5



fig. 5.6

This material is unavailable due to copyright restrictions.

fig. 5.7

In some advertisements the packaging may be emphasised by appearing to float within the layout or maybe highlighted by a pointing hand, for example the 1952 advertisement for Crosbie's „Nell Gwyn" marmalade (fig 5.7). The connection between the packaging and the brand icon through the depiction of both is important. Brands occasionally position their icons with their packaging in advertisements. Examples illustrate how the icon is featured centrally, often holding the product to reinforce associative recognition. For example the Sun-Maid advertisement (fig.5.8) depicted the icon with packs to display the product range. Likewise the 2005 Pillsbury ice cream (fig. 5.9) and the Quaker Graham Bars advertisements (fig. 5.10) used their icons to anchor immediate brand identity. The icons" presence adds immediate character to the advertisement, a friendly face where the icon and packaging work together.

This material is unavailable due to copyright restrictions.

fig. 5.8

fig. 5.9

fig. 5.10

This thesis advocates that food packaging is an important and complex commercial, social, cultural and historical artefact. As a field of study it offers important evidence of commercial practice that reflects, draws from and informs complex social and cultural issues and contexts. This thesis evidences that packaging provides an important commercial vehicle to promote brands and it also operates as a mirror on and window into the consideration of wider cultural and social contexts, such as consumerism, gender roles and food production issues and concerns. The study of packaging design and its visual reading offers an important understanding of such. However whilst trade publication *Packaging News* confirmed “Packaging is one of the most vibrant, creative, diverse and, in uncertain economic times, resilient businesses in the UK and global economy”<sup>50</sup> and food packaging is prolific in daily life, it appears that it remains somewhat overlooked in terms of academic scrutiny of its complex roles.

Established literature provides an understanding of packaging functions, such as the work by Paine,<sup>51</sup> Charlton,<sup>52</sup> Gray<sup>1955</sup>;<sup>53</sup> Dichtner 1957;<sup>54</sup> Davis; Milton; Hine;<sup>55</sup> Calver<sup>56</sup> Ambrose and Harris.<sup>57</sup> Opie<sup>58</sup> discusses packaging design key

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<sup>50</sup> Josh Brooks, “Welcome to Packaging News”, 2013, *Packaging News*. Metropolis Business Media, n.d. Web. 2 May 2013.

<sup>51</sup> F.A. Paine, ed. *Fundamentals of Packaging* (London: Blackie and Son Limited, 1962).

<sup>52</sup> D.E.A. Charlton, *The Art of Packaging* (London: Studio, 1937).

<sup>53</sup> Milner Gray, *Package Design* (London: Studio, 1955).

<sup>54</sup> Dichter 1975.

<sup>55</sup> Hine 1995.

<sup>56</sup> Giles Calver, *What is Packaging Design?* (Mies: Rotovision, 2004).

<sup>57</sup> G. Ambrose, and P. Harris, *Packaging The Brand* (AVA Publishing, 2011).

<sup>58</sup> Robert Opie, *Packaging Source Book* (London: Chartwell Books, 1989).

historical developments and Sutnar;<sup>59</sup> Pilditch;<sup>60</sup> Fladger;<sup>61</sup> Franken and Larrabee;<sup>62</sup> Larrabee;<sup>63</sup> Sacharow;<sup>64</sup> Stewart;<sup>65</sup> Milton discuss packaging marketing contexts and considerations. Hargreaves;<sup>66</sup> Lloyd Morgan;<sup>67</sup> Phillips<sup>68</sup> provide consideration of packaging design approaches. However, the academic study of this particular design field still remains remarkably lean compared with other design areas such as typography, poster design and branding. It appears, as noted by Hewitt (design historian), that packaging is the “poor relation”<sup>69</sup> in the family of graphic practice and theory and design history and that little academic critical analysis of its aesthetic value and social and cultural meanings beyond its immediate function is often readily available. In particular critical investigation of food packaging’s combined commercial, social and cultural relevance appears to be relatively limited.<sup>70</sup> Food packaging appears to be a more pedestrian area of design and is thus often neglected in its analysis by researchers and designers. In 1981 Stern<sup>71</sup> noted the lack of research available regarding packaging and Hargreaves later notably observed, when researching for his book on packaging, “that the majority of the designers I interviewed for this book didn't particularly rate food packaging”<sup>72</sup> Such views are perhaps because of the ubiquitous, commonplace, functional and disposable nature of food packaging and its mass existence; where it is used but the wider importance and contexts of its design are perhaps overlooked. Such brevity of consideration underscores the rationale and importance for this study which aims to provide a fresh investigation of food packaging through key

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<sup>59</sup> Ladislav Sutnar, *Package Design: the Force of Visual Selling* (New York: Arts, Inc., 1953).

<sup>60</sup> Pilditch, *The Silent Salesman: How to Develop Packaging that Sells*.

<sup>61</sup> Vernon L. Fladager, *The Selling Power of Packaging* (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company Inc., 1956).

<sup>62</sup> Richard Benjamin Franken and Carroll Burton Larrabee, *Packages that Sell* (New York: Harper & brothers, 1928).

<sup>63</sup> Carroll B. Larrabee, *How to Package for Profit: a Manual of Packaging* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1935).

<sup>64</sup> Sacharow, *The Package as a Marketing Tool*.

<sup>65</sup> Bill Stewart, *Packaging as an Effective Marketing Tool* (Leatherhead: Kogan Page, 1996).

<sup>66</sup> Hargreaves, *Successful Food Packaging Design*,

<sup>67</sup> Conway Lloyd Morgan, *Logo, Packaging Design* (Rotovision, 1997).

<sup>68</sup> R. Phillips, 2001.

<sup>69</sup> Design History Society Conference September 2009.

<sup>70</sup> Visser does consider these contexts in his book Edwin Visser, *Packaging Design: a Cultural Sign*. (Barcelona: Index Books, s.l., 2009).

<sup>71</sup> Walter Stern Stern, ed. *Handbook of Package Design Research* (New York: John Wiley, 1981).

<sup>72</sup> Hargreaves, *Successful Food Packaging Design*, 6.

foci. This thesis examines everyday packaging: whilst award winning and innovative packaging examples do attract research attention this study focuses on less remarkable examples that possibly would otherwise not receive such examination- for it is the very essence of their non-exclusive readily available and pedestrian presence that shapes the interest of this study. This thesis advocates that food packaging offers a rich terrain for study to better understand how packaging communicates to consumers and how consumers relate to commercial contexts. As Hargreaves remarked "Packaging is where the consumer finally comes into tangible contact with a food and drink brand, and the relationship between a product's brand values and the packaging is thus of tremendous importance."<sup>73</sup>

Studies of packaging extend across a range of areas: practical structural design qualities; material-types; specific types and fields; history of advertising and packaging graphic design, for example Davis; Fischel; and Hargreaves.<sup>74</sup> Specific research has focused upon particular packaging genres such as Fennings' study of match box labels,<sup>75</sup> Mullen's<sup>76</sup> research into cigarette packaging and Griffith's study of decorative printed tins.<sup>77</sup> Such publications offer detailed consideration of specific genres, usually including historical information, discussion of specific collections and case studies and illustration of examples. The wider context of packaging however appears often not to be discussed in greater depth. Many key publications discuss the role of packaging for example Larrabee;<sup>77</sup> Charlton; Sutnar (a really useful discussion of packaging as a visual selling tool); Gray;<sup>78</sup> Pilditch;<sup>79</sup> Sacharow;<sup>80</sup> Behaeghel; Reese;<sup>81</sup> Hine<sup>82</sup> (hailed as *the* key text); Phillips<sup>83</sup> and Calver (useful glossary). Such publications jointly offer comprehensive consideration of such and therefore this study does not aim to duplicate this.

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<sup>73</sup> Hargreaves, *Successful Food Packaging Design*, 45.

<sup>74</sup> Hargreaves, *Successful Food Packaging Design*.

<sup>75</sup> Roger Fenning, *The Book of Matchbox Labels*. (London: New Cavendish Books, 2001).

<sup>76</sup> Chris Mullen, *Cigarette Pack Art*. (London: Hamlyn, 1979).

<sup>77</sup> Larabee, *How to Package for Profit: a Manual of Packaging*.

<sup>78</sup> Milner Gray, *Package Design* (London: Studio, 1955).

<sup>79</sup> Pilditch, *The Silent Salesman: How to Develop Packaging that Sells*.

<sup>80</sup> Sacharow, *The Package as a Marketing Tool*.

<sup>81</sup> Reese, *Print Casebooks 10: The Best in Packaging* (New York: RC Publications, Inc., 1994).

<sup>82</sup> Hine, *The Total Package*.

<sup>83</sup> Phillips, *Packaging Graphics and Design*.

For many years a critical discussion and analysis of food packaging visual design appears to have existed predominantly within the spheres of related trade publications or within the domain of generic graphic design publications. Specialist trade publications such as *Modern Publicity* have provided useful overview of award winning design examples however very concise analysis of examples has been evidenced. Further trade publications such as *Packaging News* and *Packaging Today*,<sup>84</sup> report on technical, industry and commercial developments in packaging design. They occasionally discuss particular award winning<sup>85</sup> and innovative physical and aesthetic designs however their exploration and exaltation of packaging's design and its interrelationship with social and cultural issues and contexts remains concise.

Thankfully the design of food packaging has enjoyed increased consideration in recent years as its position within the marketing mix has become more prolific within competitive markets which has demanded greater consideration of its visual design. As consumers have become more visually literate and engage more directly with the aesthetics of packaging design, as recognised and responded to by marketing, a wider range of design publications have emerged that address this focus.<sup>86</sup>

Phillips<sup>87</sup> discussion of contemporary examples considered the relationship of product, advertising and packaging and advocated that for packaging to stand out from the competition it must communicate quickly and efficiently through its colour, shape, materials. The importance of pack shelf presence and its ability to communicate different meaning and associations to attract consumers and increase sales; to attract different audiences; to create impulse purchase is critical. For example Phillips considered how certain designs can create certain meaning such as simplicity and elegance; seasonal reference; environmental association etc. Phillips discusses packaging as interactive - how consumers pick up and open packaging – and how its design can underscore the benefits

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<sup>84</sup> Published by Global Trade Media.

<sup>85</sup> The annual Starpacks Awards are organised by Institute of Materials Communications Ltd. The annual UK Packaging Awards competition is organised by Packaging News.

<sup>86</sup> See Calver; Booth-Clibborn; Hargreaves; and Reese.

<sup>87</sup> Phillips, *Packaging Graphics and Design*.

of the product and influence consumer understanding and appreciation. Phillips commented that shopping “can be an overwhelming visual experience so an unusual package, or a surprising visual twist on an established package, can make the customer stop and pick-up the package.”<sup>88</sup> Likewise a familiar package and well established brand identity can also be a unique selling point.

Whilst contemporary graphic publications showcase examples of packaging, it has been found that the *older texts*<sup>89</sup> provide invaluable insights and perspectives into the packaging’s design and its wider contexts. Texts from the 1930’s through to 1960’s hold perceptive discussion that appears to be reiterated in later sources. For example Larrabee offered valuable consideration of packaging and useful guidelines and advice which remain relevant today. Likewise Charlton’s discussion of packaging’s function and design requirements: protection, convenience, “merchantability” and “adaptability” types of packaging, the positioning of information and design layout, use of type and colour, remains pertinent.<sup>90</sup>

Dichter’s “panoramic assessment of packaging”<sup>91</sup> and consideration of its practical and psychological aspects identified packaging’s key roles: the efficient and appealing communication of a product; the creation of an individual personality and uniqueness for each brand; to attract the consumer and to create a consumer–product relationship by establishing the customers psychological affinity with the product; and to facilitate choice for the consumer. Dichter’s consideration of packaging’s visible and tangible design considerations including aesthetics and effectiveness (form and function) and psychological perspective offers useful points from which packaging can be considered.

In 1956 Fladager reflected upon America’s packaging revolution, the result of the growth in commercial markets and the rise in consumerism, and declared

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<sup>88</sup> Phillips, *Packaging Graphics and Design*, 75.

<sup>89</sup> Examples such as Larabee; Charlton; Dichter; Sutnar; Fladager; Dichter; Pilditch and Sacharow.

<sup>90</sup> Charlton 22.

<sup>91</sup> Dichter 9.

[Packaging] It's a potent new weapon for the business strategist, an amazingly versatile new mechanism to project automation out of the factory and field and into the outermost periphery of the marketing territory, a super salesman, an advertising medium, and a public-relations representative at the grass-roots level of „point of-use.<sup>92</sup>

Fladager identified that 70.8 % of all supermarket purchases were decided in the store<sup>93</sup> and interestingly in 2003 it was reported that “68-80% of purchasing decisions are made in store (...).<sup>94</sup> By the late twentieth century the “package as a marketing tool” was “proven to be one of the most important and viable advertising mediums available and an integral part of advertising, marketing and sales strategy.”<sup>95</sup> Today food packaging remains ubiquitous and an important marketing force. As Herdeg commented “[it is] one of today's most important artefacts (...) [it] presents a clear reflection of our evolving society.”<sup>96</sup> Packaging acts as a commercial and cultural marker offering valuable indication and documentation of lifestyles, social attitudes, and commercial strategies and purchasing behaviours. It represents an important business and culture relationship.<sup>97</sup> It addresses, identifies, represents and reflects consumer society and local and global commercial contexts and developments. Increasingly as competitive food retail markets develop and extend globally, food packaging addresses and reflect changing and expanding food consumption tastes, habits and patterns. It operates within and often across different markets locally, nationally and internationally and as such it must communicate with different audiences through its design. Increasingly its visual design and language, beyond its typographic text, is important to identify and make distinct the product and the brand to potentially wider consumer audiences.<sup>98</sup>

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<sup>92</sup> Fladager 56.

<sup>93</sup> Fladager 56.

<sup>94</sup> Neil Farmer, “Innovations in Packaging Design, Print and Labels” *Institute of Packaging Directory and Review 2003/4*. (Melton Mowbray: Institute of Packaging, 2004): 55.

<sup>95</sup> Sacharow, Preface.

<sup>96</sup> Walter Herdeg, *Packaging: An International Survey of Package Design*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Zurich: The Graphis Press, 1961).

<sup>97</sup> Robert M. MacGregor, “Cultural Values Reflected in Business Artefacts: a Rediscovery of our Historical Past.” *Journal of Eastern Township Studies*. 18 (Spring ). Quebec: Bishop's University, 2001) and Visser 2.

<sup>98</sup> The impact of on-line shopping on food packaging will be interesting to research.

#### 5.4. Images of People on Food Packaging

Contemporary food packaging regularly combines text and image to attract and inform consumers. In many instances the packaging's visual design secures the consumer's attention as White confirmed "We are, psychologically, more responsive to pictures than words, and we can take them in much more quickly."<sup>99</sup> In particular images of people, and particularly faces, are often used on food packaging as these may be recognised and read swiftly (fig. 5.11). To understand how the face as visual sign operates within this context consideration of nonverbal communication and the semiotic analysis of examples is necessary. This section considers the use of the face upon food packaging examples from different cultures with cross-reference to non-food examples to establish how signs and meanings are constructed, communicated and interpreted. This section provides context for the consideration of brand icon examples discussed in subsequent chapters.



fig. 5.11

<sup>99</sup> R.White, *Advertising*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed. (McGraw-Hill, 2000) 92.

### 5.4.1. The use of images of people

Images of real and fictitious people on food packaging have been used to communicate the content and value of the product and brand increasingly since Victorian times to make brands distinct and competitive. Notably people's depiction upon packaging for items such as food, cosmetics, tobacco, alcohol, and cleaning products, became more prolific with the increase of the mass production of consumer goods, the rise of mass consumerism and the development of the advertising industry from the 1920's onwards.<sup>100</sup> Individuals and groups, beautiful women and children for example, have been used: the extent of their appearance across diverse product ranges across cultures suggests the ease of their use and their effectiveness in communicating key meanings.<sup>101</sup>

Their physical appearance can appeal to consumers instantly and can bestow positive meaning and associations on the product. Their presence, facial expressions, pose, gestures, age and attire can give meaning and emotion to the brand. Their depiction, full body or head and shoulder portrait, can be illustration or photograph. As a photograph can suggest truth and reality its use can give truth-value and greater authenticity to an icon's image. As Kress & Van Leeuwen observed "There is more trust in a photograph when it is realistic in saturation, sharpness and detail"<sup>102</sup> and thus the apparent detailed photographic depiction of a fictitious brand icon (or illustrated depiction that appears photograph-like) perhaps helps make more believable its existence.<sup>103</sup> Thus people's depiction can shape how we engage with a brand. A brand can be made personal and be given personality by people images as we identify with people and can relate to their status and roles through our own social and

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<sup>100</sup> Ewen and Fine discuss the development of mass production, advertising and consumerism: Stuart Ewen, *Captains of Consciousness: Advertising and the Social Roots of the Consumer Culture*. (New York: Basic Books, 2001). Ben Fine, *The World of Consumption: The Material and Cultural Revisited*. (London: Routledge, 2002).

<sup>101</sup> The study's research (2003-2009) identified the seasonal variation in the use of people on packaging and the increased use of people in the summer months, notably on cereal packaging.

<sup>102</sup> C, Kress and T. Van Leeuwen, *Reading Images*, 2nd ed. (London: Routledge, 2006).

<sup>103</sup> Marita Sturken and Lisa Cartwright, *Practices of Looking: An Introduction to Visual Culture* (Oxford: OUP. 2001)17.

cultural relationships and experiences. Marketing draws upon such experiences to create further meaning through its use of people on packaging.

As Dichter commented, “When a person (historical, mythical, living) is used as a symbol, the symbol usually takes on a functional role in relation to the company.”<sup>104</sup> People as symbols can work in various ways and we take clues from their appearance: as cues of historical reference and brand history, place of manufacture (nationality); as indicators of product-type; and as pointer to the target audience. Their particular characteristics and associations can be transferred to the brand: dependent upon their age, role and status they can communicate visually notions of youth and vitality, professionalism and care for example. They can suggest trust and honesty and offer reassurance, even when they may in fact be fictitious. As guarantors of the brand they can be seen to evidence the brand’s authenticity: they may operate as the authoritative stamp of approval of a brand’s value. The range of people-types and their intended roles is therefore diverse, as illustrated in fig. 5.11 and fig. 5.12.



fig. 5.12

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<sup>104</sup> Dichter 1975.

Images of people usually adhere to and reinforce social, cultural, and historical norms in terms of appearance, gender roles and people types: they “incorporate and exemplify the official values of the society in which it occurs.”<sup>105</sup> They often appear as stereotypes that can be recognised easily and decoded quickly, as Perkins commented “The strength of a stereotype results from a combination of three factors: its „simplicity“; its immediate recognisability (which makes its communicative role very important), and its implicit reference to an assumed consensus about some attribute or complex social relationship. Stereotypes are in this respect prototypes of 'shared cultural meanings“ ”.<sup>106</sup> As discussed in Chapter 6 examples may appear and appeal as respected, traditional role models, such as mothers, or they may be presented as topical celebrities. In some instances people may be presented visually as an anonymous group or family: they communicate the idea of a happy unity; a product that can be shared and enjoyed.

A person’s pose can offer specific meanings. For example an image may focus purely on the face: a head and shoulder portrait or even a decapitated floating head. The figure may take a traditional pose: a formal seated portrait-style, or depending upon the product type, may appear active, running or jumping: dynamic poses that help reference health, vitality, and sport, useful in the promotion of children’s foods and nutritional cereals for example. People’s body language offers important meaning. Facial expressions and the tilt of the head can suggest a knowing reassurance, an empathy with the consumer. The direct look, hand gestures, such as the „ok“ sign to communicate excellence, can operate as universal signs of assurance and recommendation. In some instances a person’s image can sell a product regardless of their identification: an attractive feature to make a product desirable. For example fruit labels often carry anonymous people to give distinct character to an otherwise anonymous item, such as the Spanish *Carmencita* watermelon label (c. 2007) (fig.5.13).

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<sup>105</sup> Goffman, 45.

<sup>106</sup> Teresa Perkins considers the face in her study of women’s magazines. Teresa Perkins Qtd, in Carolyn Kitch, *Girl on the Magazine Cover: The Origins of Visual Stereotypes in American Mass Media* (Chapel Hill: U. of North Carolina, 2001) 5.



fig. 5.13

#### 5.4.2. The Face

“The most distinctive, most recognisable and most memorable feature of any human being is the face”<sup>107</sup> and the symbolic iconography of the face is a marketing device well used in magazine covers,<sup>108</sup> advertising<sup>109</sup> and packaging design.<sup>110</sup> It provides identity for many products and is regularly positioned on graphic surfaces giving testament to its power to communicate quickly. It is an abbreviated visual of a person, it identifies a person and gives personality and requires our ability to understand and decode its presence, context of use and purpose: to interpret its visual expression (Morris)<sup>111</sup>, and to recognise the impression it relays in relation to the item it promotes. The complexity of faces gives multiple meanings and as McNeill commented “the living face is the most important and mysterious surface we deal with.”<sup>112</sup> The face is a “compelling channel of communication” and an assessment of character can be made through reading its surface.<sup>113</sup> As consumers we understand non-verbal communication and our readings of the face enable us to navigate and understand commercial contexts where the face is present. As Mulvey discussed, our readings of person’s emotions can affect how we relate to and

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<sup>107</sup> Lalian Young, *The Naked Face: the Essential Guide to Reading Faces*. (London: Century, 1993) 9.

<sup>108</sup> For discussion on such see Carolyn Kitch, *The Girl on the Magazine Cover: The Origins of Visual Stereotypes in American Mass Media*. (Chapel Hill: Uni. of North Carolina, 2001).

<sup>109</sup> For related studies see Erving Goffman, *Gender Advertisements*. (Cambridge: Harvard U.P. 1979); Gillian Dyer, *Advertising as Communication* (London: Routledge, 1986) and Daniel Delis Hill, *Advertising to the American Woman 1900-1999* (Ohio: Ohio State U. Press, 2002).

<sup>110</sup> For discussion of such see Stanley Sacharow, *Symbols of Trade*. (New York. Art Direction Book Company, 1982) and Mullen, *Cigarette Pack Art*.

<sup>111</sup> Desmond Morris, *Manwatching: A Field Guide to Human Behaviour*. (Triad Books, 1978).

<sup>112</sup> Daniel McNeill, *The Face*. (New York: Little Brown and Company, 1998) 4.

<sup>113</sup> Physiognomy is the science of reading the face. Young 10.

emotionally connect with them:<sup>114</sup> an important consideration the depiction of brand icons.

The face is often the identifying visual for particular brand or product. It can accompany the brand name, appear on packaging, and on occasion, as illustrated by *Le Petit Normand* biscuits (2012) may also appear imprinted upon the food to make distinct the product (fig.5.14).<sup>115</sup> This study evidences that people's faces, rather than their full body, are predominantly used on food packaging. The compact image is used efficiently spatially upon the packaging, usually placed on pack fronts to capture consumers' attention.<sup>116</sup> Usually the full face, not profile, allows the consumer to extract meaning through visual cues - the eyes, expression, and overall look. The face's direct eye contact hopefully hooks and holds the consumers' attention. Facial expressions reveal emotions and brands use such to communicate. For example Fry's *Five Boys* chocolate wrapper (1902-1971) depicted five different images of an anonymous boy's face with text that identified each expression: "Desperation, Pacification, Expectation, Acclamation and „Realisation".<sup>117</sup> The faces communicated the emotional brand experience (fig. 5.15).



fig. 5.14

<sup>114</sup> Michael S. Mulvey, "How Does It Feel? Reading the Emotions Displayed by Characters in Ads," Ross School of Business, U.of Michigan, 2000. n.p. Web. 21 June 2007.

<sup>115</sup> Le Petit Normand biscuits, Biscuiterie de l'Abbaye, (France, 2012).

<sup>116</sup> The study of food packaging over a five year period specifically has identified that face and head and shoulder portraits predominate in food packaging. Occasionally a full body portrait is presented, for example the Captain Birdseye Fish Finger packaging 2008.

<sup>117</sup> Launched in 1902 and manufactured until 1971. Robert Opie, *Sweet Memories*, (London: Pavilion Books, 1988)108.

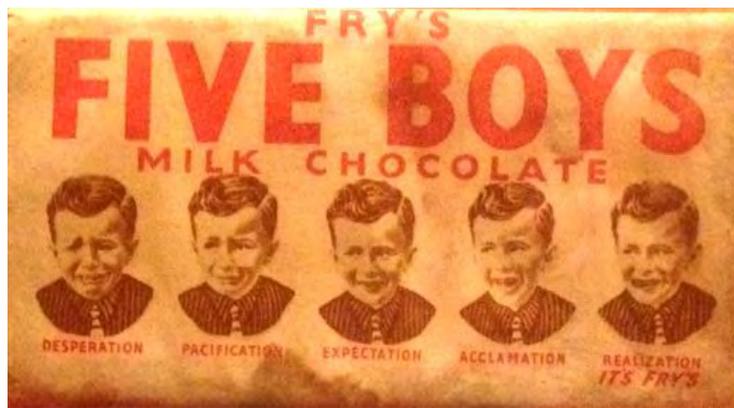


fig. 5.15

The smiling face is welcoming; perhaps suggesting good humour and spirits.<sup>118</sup> It is a universal expression of pleasure and enjoyment and whilst Goffman observed “smiles, it can be argued, often function as ritualistic mollifiers”<sup>119</sup> they do offer an important visual cue that can communicate immediate connotations of happiness, and, as McNeill noted, honesty and openness.<sup>120</sup> As Mogliner et al identified, the emotion of happiness can influence a consumer’s choice and marketing’s depiction of smiling people can suggest the promise of happiness.<sup>121</sup> Thus many brands present smiling people that appear sociable on their packaging, for example Dutch brand *Bolletje* biscuits in 2007 (fig.5.16) and Malaysian brand *Pagoda* peanuts in 2004 (fig. 5.17) presented open mouth smiles as a particularly active emotional expression. A smiling person suggests pleasure in, and as a result of, product use and offers a positive and friendly introduction to a brand. They can suggest a sincere, reliable, safe, and trustworthy character: one that happily promotes a good product. Interestingly, the majority of people-brand icons identified in this study smile.

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<sup>118</sup> Morris.

<sup>119</sup> Goffman 48.

<sup>120</sup> McNeill 4.

<sup>121</sup> Cassie Mogliner, Jennifer Aaker and Sepandar D. Kamvar, “How Happiness Affects Choice,” *Journal of Consumer Research* 39: 2, 1 Oct. 2012. n.p 8. Social Science Research Network. Web. 21. Jan. 2013.

This material is unavailable due to copyright restrictions.

fig. 5.16

fig.5.17

### 5.4.3. The Female Face

The female face has been used extensively upon packaging and a pretty face is used across popular media to arrest attention, as Hill observed 'the pretty woman has been a prevalent and potent visual device in advertising all through the twentieth century.'<sup>122</sup> In some instances the female face operates as decorative feature upon packaging whilst in other instances she is the brand's icon. As Kitch identified, a woman's face can represent a certain type of female beauty that may be associated with a particular era.<sup>123</sup> Therefore as Rowsome Jr.<sup>124</sup> and Hill observed, advertising's attempts to "harness the personalities of pretty girls in their trademarks" can be challenging as "difficulty arises from the inconsistency of public tastes in the ideal female".<sup>125</sup> However stereotypical beauties can endure as trademarks and they also continue to exist upon packaging to catch consumers' attention and make memorable the brand.<sup>126</sup> For example Tennent's lager featured sexy „Juvlies“ on their cans from 1962 to 1991<sup>127</sup> and the French brand Bella Lula's packaging in 2008 depicted the

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<sup>122</sup> Hill 239.

<sup>123</sup> Kitch 93.

<sup>124</sup> Frank Rowsome, Jr „They Laughed When I Sat Down“ 1959 qtd. in Sacharow 153.

<sup>125</sup> Hill 273.

<sup>126</sup> Examples are discussed in Sacharow and Mullen.

<sup>127</sup> Charles Schofield and Antony Kamm, *Lager Lovelies; the Story Behind the Glamour*. (Glasgow: Richard Drew Publishing, 1984).

1950's pin-up-like "beautiful Lula",<sup>128</sup> the brand's founder's mother-in-law: such images give glamour and sex appeal to the brand's identity (fig.5.18).



fig. 5.18

On occasion a pretty woman's face that is core to a brand's identity can even appear similar to that of another brand. For example the British linen brand Dorcas used monochrome illustrations of nurses.<sup>129</sup> Two separate faces were used and on occasion simultaneously during the c.1950s to the 1970s. For example the boxed linen set c.1955 presented a large portrait of a side glancing serene woman on its lid (fig.5.19) and a small portrait of a more demure looking female label (fig.5.20). Dorcas, a Biblical name meaning a woman who "abounded in good deeds and gifts of mercy" was used to represent the brand's qualities and the nurse embodied such accordingly.<sup>130</sup> Her uniform identified her status and communicated care, cleanliness, hygiene, help and professionalism which could be transferred to the brand's items accordingly. The face evoked notions of a young Florence Nightingale and suggested reliability and trust. The faces of Dorcas are synonymous with the brand, and perhaps now are more readily recalled than the name.

<sup>128</sup> Thierry Balas. "Bella Lula," Message to author, 12 May, 2009. E-mail.

<sup>129</sup> Dorcas, founded in 1747, was owned by J.N. Philips and Co. Ltd. (UK). It is possible that artist Eugene Halliday created one of the portraits. Hephzibah Yohannan. Message to author. 3 April 2013. E-mail. It is unclear when the portraits were created.

<sup>130</sup> "Dorcas" *Think Baby Names*, n.d. n.p. Web. 18 Aug. 2009.

Dorcas's face is comparable with the San-Tox brand icon (USA) that appeared on packaging and in advertisements (c. 1918 – n.d). The 1919 advertisement "Look for this nurse-face" (fig.5.21)<sup>131</sup> featured the signed portrait by renowned illustrator Neysa McMein.<sup>132</sup> The title of nurse sufficed as identity as the comparable *Red Cross Magazine* advertisement (1918) stated, "She Is An Emblem - of high ideals and cheerful service": a "symbolic face".<sup>133</sup> It is unclear whether Dorcas brand were aware of McMein's "nurse-face"<sup>134</sup> however the two characters are similar. Identified by Kitch as "signature" types, where artists were associated with their particular type of women-illustration style, McMein's distinct commercial female portraits are further evidenced by her 1936 Betty Crocker portrait for General Mills (fig. 5.22).<sup>135</sup> Like Dorcas, Betty's portrait was comparable with the San-Tox nurse, perhaps suggesting that McMein and General Mills utilised an established illustrated face-type that consumers would feel familiar with. Likewise the anonymous face upon the „Nylcord“ jewellery thread pack (UK, c.1930"s) (fig. 23) is comparable with Betty (1936); an attractive woman to attract female consumers. Thus it is concluded that across different countries audiences have been accustomed to reading comparable styles of faces – images that share connotations and values even though the products are very different. This notion of an established visual formula is discussed further in Chapter 8.

This material is unavailable due to copyright restrictions.

fig. 5.19

fig. 5.20

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<sup>131</sup> „Look for this Nurse-Face in the Drugstore Window“ San-Tox advertisement, *The American Magazine*, Springfield: Crowell-Collier, 1919:185. The image was copyrighted in 1918 by the De Pree Chemical Company, USA.

<sup>132</sup> American illustrator Neysa McMein produced illustrations for advertisements and for the cover of *McCalls* (from 1923-1934) and *Saturday Evening Post* magazines. Kitch 15.

<sup>133</sup> „Look for this Nurse-Face in the Drugstore Window“ San-Tox advertisement, *The American Magazine* Springfield: Crowell-Collier, 1919:185.

<sup>134</sup> Kitch 179.

<sup>135</sup> Kitch 177.



fig. 5.21

fig. 5.22 This material is unavailable due to copyright restrictions.



fig.5.23

#### 5.4.4. Faces: Cross Culture

The face can operate as a universal sign across time and cultures where its appearance and expressions can be generally understood, although some variation in interpretation may exist. Internationally food packaging examples offer a plethora of distinct and fascinating faces. As markets expand internationally, we travel more widely and countries become increasingly multicultural, culture specific brand packaging can be seen more readily. Some brands can travel well and appeal to consumers globally using recognised faces. Others remain relevant to home/local markets and are culture specific. The faces used can attract attention but they may appear elusive to new consumers unfamiliar with the culture and country of origin. Schmidt and

Simonson identify four facts of a culture: language, customs, values and physical artefacts.<sup>136</sup> Problems in identification of a brand/product can occur when culture specific languages and codes are not translated or understood and packaging [artefact] cannot be read. For example Isfahan Kermany Gaz nougat packaging, Iran, 2004, presented the founder's portrait: the face, decorative frame and the script suggested Middle Eastern origin, however for the non-Arabic reader, the product was not revealed until the lid was lifted (fig.5.24). As Schmidt and Simonson noted for brands to communicate successfully to wide audiences they must relate to, or transcend the indigenous codes<sup>137</sup> thus faces can help bridge the problems of language or at least give some nod towards the product as consumers draw upon their own cultural knowledge of packaging's use of faces and construct meaning accordingly.

The personality and credibility of the product can lie in the visual appeal of the face where its culture-specific significance is attractive. In the study of Indian grocery stores Mankekar observed "meanings attached to products are obviously shaped by the contexts in which these consumption practices occur"<sup>138</sup> consequently food packaging is read according to its commercial location. Thus as Mankekar noted, in a diasporic context the images of people on packaging can work to communicate national identity where consumers recognition can trigger their memories of, or associations with, their homeland.<sup>139</sup> The familiar faces can make the brand particularly welcome and consumers' potential nostalgia for the product may bring about its purchase. Likewise in some instances the face upon packaging from another country may be appealing because it is different, as Hine commented "their foreignness is part of their selling power".<sup>140</sup>

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<sup>136</sup> Bernd Schmidt and Alex Simonson, *Marketing Aesthetics*. (New York: Free Press, 1997).

<sup>137</sup> Schmidt and Simonson.

<sup>138</sup> Purnima Mankekar. "India Shopping: Indian Grocery Stores and Transnational Configurations of Belonging." *The Cultural Politics of Food and Eating: A Reader*. Eds., James L. Watson and Melissa L. Caldwell. Malden (Blackwell, 2005) 207.

<sup>139</sup> Mankekar 197-214.

<sup>140</sup> Thomas Hine, *The Total Package*. (New York: Little Brown and Company, 1995).



fig. 5.24

Faces are evident in the competitive markets of traditional Chinese and South East Asian medicinal products. Traditionally many brands have used their founder's name and face as trademarks.<sup>141</sup> The sacrosanct images, comparable with British and American food examples, were used from the early 19<sup>th</sup> onwards predominantly to protect brands from unscrupulous copy.<sup>142</sup> Such portraits continue to appear today, for example founder Lui Moon Cheong and one of his descendants (c. 1920's) appear on the Hung Far Oil packaging, Koong Yick, Singapore (fig.5.25)<sup>143</sup> and Siang Pure Oil, Betram Chemical (1982) Co., Ltd., Thailand, presents its inventor (fig.5.26).

The face is also often used in Asian tobacco packaging and could be considered as commercial custom. Generic products appear to assume a generic style in their identity; a curious similarity in the attempt to be different. Examples of Beedies (Indian cigarettes) packaging often incorporate a face as distinctive stamp. For F.Rahman and Co., India, 2004, beedies presented an illustration of what may be understood as its founder (fig.5.27). In some instances faces can be perplexing for audiences unfamiliar with the product's related language and culture. For example the boy on the Aziz Chemical Works,

<sup>141</sup> Simon Go, *Hong Kong Apothecary: A Visual History of Chinese Packaging*. (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2003).

<sup>142</sup> Like banknotes, brands also used intricate patterns to make copies of their designs more difficult to produce. Go 9.

<sup>143</sup> Faces appeared across the box surfaces and upon the accompanying leaflet (2003)..

Bangladesh, 2005, chewing tobacco tins (fig.5.28) could be viewed as an incongruous image for a tobacco product in certain cultures.

Other examples may remain unidentified for many, for example the „Synthetic Syrup“ label (India, c.1970s) (fig. 5.29) presented a film star who may remain an intriguing figure to those who are unfamiliar with his status. Ultimately faces add character to brands and document and evidence the particular relevance and value of a particular face at a particular time and within a specific culture.

#### 5.4.5. The Design and Positioning of People on Packaging.

People’s portraits within packaging design often draw upon the established practice and history of fine art and photography portraiture. These contexts help inform an understanding of the portrait’s role and value on packaging and how it is read. As ‘two dimensional images that have been processed into fixed form’<sup>144</sup> food packaging portraits can be considered as what Goffman termed as



fig. 5.25



fig. 5.26

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<sup>144</sup> Goffman 12.

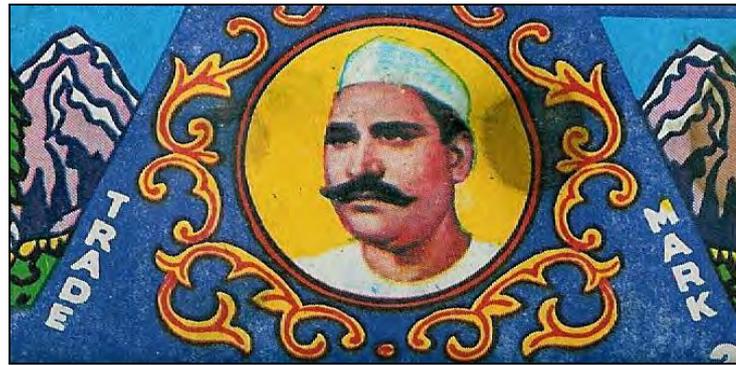


fig.5.27



fig. 5.28



fig. 5.29

“public” commercial pictures, designed for a wide audience.<sup>145</sup> Some portraits may be, or appear as, “private pictures” “designed for display within the intimate social circle of the persons featured in them”<sup>146</sup> yet are shared publicly as the brand proudly uses the images to communicate trust, heritage and authenticity etc. Many images take a formulaic approach reminiscent of family portraits. Such portraits can vary in medium; they can be photographic, painted or illustrated. The use of monochrome or sepia photographs can act as evidence: proof of the person’s identity. Some brands use monochrome imagery to suggest heritage and nostalgia. As Schroeder observed “Family photography is tied up with social psychological significance for identity, belonging, and

<sup>145</sup> Goffman 10.

<sup>146</sup> Goffman 10.

togetherness”<sup>147</sup> and thus these associative qualities can be transferred to brand when comparable images are used. The faces draw upon our related experiences and understanding so that we can make sense of their image which appears personal.

A formal portrait can suggest the importance of the person; the positioning of the face and its expression indicating how we should understand the brand. As McNeill observed portraiture is associated with eternity; thus a portrait can be understood as an enduring permanent record of a perhaps distinguished person.<sup>148</sup> In branding this associative value can be drawn upon to help companies establish or reassure and reaffirm their heritage and/or the notoriety of the person presented and their brand affiliation/pedigree. In time, if distinct or memorable, the portrait can stand as the brand; our recognition and understanding of it can position it as the core identifier. For example the 2008 Uncle Ben’s® advertisement presented its icon’s portrait boldly centrally upon a backdrop of repeat packaging examples.<sup>149</sup> It was further referenced upon the packaging; his classic image (used since the 1940’s), recognised readily by consumers, encapsulated the brand (fig. 5.30).

fig. 5.30 This material is unavailable due to copyright restrictions.

Historical examples across product ranges evidence this marketing approach. Brands that were established in the 19th century used their founder’s face to anchor the brand’s credentials and credibility and as a mechanism to distinguish the brand from competitors. Sacharow’s consideration of the proliferation of

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<sup>147</sup> Schroeder 55.

<sup>148</sup> Mc Neill 122.

<sup>149</sup> Uncle Ben’s® advertisement, *Martha Stewart Living* 2008 (New York: Martha Stewart Living Omnimedia) 229.

trademarks in late 19th century highlighted Lydia E. Pinkham's medicinal product (USA) that featured her image by 1879.<sup>150</sup> Likewise John H. Woodbury's Soap (USA) presented its creator's face centrally as trademark (fig.5.41) and as core device in its advertising (fig.5.31).<sup>151</sup>



fig. 5.31



fig.5.32

An example widely acknowledged as important in marketing history (Klein,2000; Munsey, 2005; Fucini and Fucini, 1985) is Smiths Brothers (USA) cough drops; a brand that endures today. It introduced portraits of its relatives as registered trademark on its packaging in 1872 to make unique its products and to protect from brand piracy (fig. 5.33).<sup>152</sup> Identified as "one of the world's most famous trademarks",<sup>153</sup> whilst the brand's packaging has been updated since 1872 the portraits remain dominant (fig.5.34).<sup>154</sup> As Trauscht, Marketing/Creative Services Manager F&F Foods, Inc., commented "It is the one thing that people recognize and remember. To put it simply; the portrait is the brand. Without it, I don't think anyone would notice the brand."<sup>155</sup>

A more recent comparable version is IFA (Nidar) pastilles (Norway) created in 1930 and named after Norwegian opera singer Ivar Fridtjof Andresen.<sup>156</sup> As celebrity endorser the singer's photograph and initials have featured

<sup>150</sup> Sacharow talked of the prolific proliferation of trademarks in late 19<sup>th</sup> century. Pinkham's product was created in 1875.

<sup>151</sup> The Woodbury Soap Company was founded in New York in c.1870. The monochrome photograph of Woodbury and his signature was used on soap wrappers and featured on the packaging until the c.1930's in America.

<sup>152</sup> This brand was established in 1847 and became officially known as Smith Brothers in 1866, named after the founder's sons. It was family owned until 1964 and is now owned by F&F Foods, Inc.

<sup>153</sup> Carrie Trauscht, "Smith Brothers," Message to author. 20 Jan. 2009. E-Mail.

<sup>154</sup> In 2007 the packaging was redesigned by advertising agency Garry Alan Design.

<sup>155</sup> Trauscht.

<sup>156</sup> Nidar was established in 1912. Caroline Eikland, "IFA." Nidar, Norway. Telephone interview. 25 Apr. 2005.

continuously upon the pack front and his testimonial on the pack's back and although the current (2008) pack presents a smaller portrait his face remains dominant. (fig.5.35)<sup>157</sup>



fig. 5.33

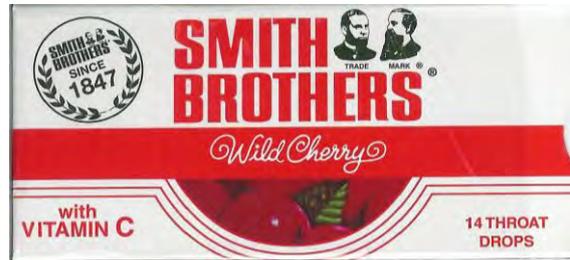


fig. 5.34



fig. 5.35

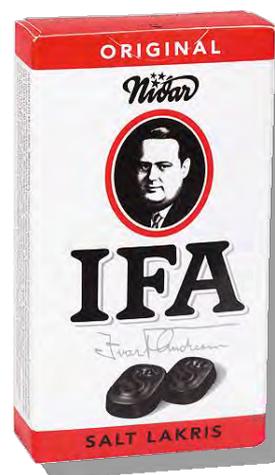


fig. 5.36

Thus within packaging the portrait is often used as a coded sign read and interpreted according to learnt cultural codes and shared experiences that have been historically entrenched. It acts as an immediate identifier; a visual reference point that communicates effectively; symbolic iconography that represents brands' values and it helps anchor consumers' recognition and understanding of the brand. In packaging the portrait is often framed: a border operating as a graphic device to denote further meanings. The frame as a 'mechanism of art display' can "connote status" and gives weight to the image.<sup>158</sup> It helps to create the face's distinct position and profile within the overall design scheme and adds prominence and status to the portrait. It holds

<sup>157</sup> The singer's endorsement of the throat pastilles was important originally to support their throat enhancing qualities.

<sup>158</sup> Marita Sturken and Lisa Cartwright, *Practices of Looking: An Introduction to Visual Culture*. (Oxford: OUP, 2001) 32.

the person's image although on occasion the image may spill out from its frame's edges to suggest the abundance of the icon's personality or the wealth of the packaging's contents. For example the Sun-Maid® brand icon breaks its frame with her basket's contents spilling over as they appear too copious (fig.5.37) and likewise the lady of the La Palma brand (Italy, 2009) rests her heaving load on the frame surround (fig.5.38).



fig. 5.37



fig. 5.38

In many examples a decorative flourish, ribbon or scroll device is used to suggest product heritage: a framing device as signifier of age, tradition, sophistication and quality. For example Ben MacAllaister's 2005 confectionery (fig.5.39) and Welsh Maid's 2003 shortbread (fig.5.40) packaging used a scroll to frame and give prestige to the face. The use of such graphic device is evident across international food packaging; apparently commonly understood and translated across cultures. For example Emel'ian Petrovich pelmeni<sup>159</sup> (Russia, c. 2004) used a face within a scrolled frame as trade mark (fig. 5.41). Whilst audiences may not understand the product, the scroll motif may indicate the man's revered status.

<sup>159</sup> Pelmeni are traditional dumplings.

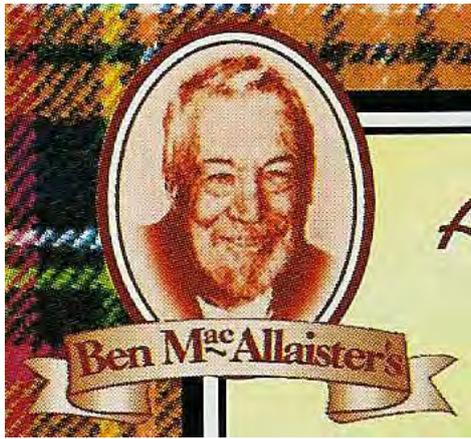


fig. 5.39



fig. 5.40

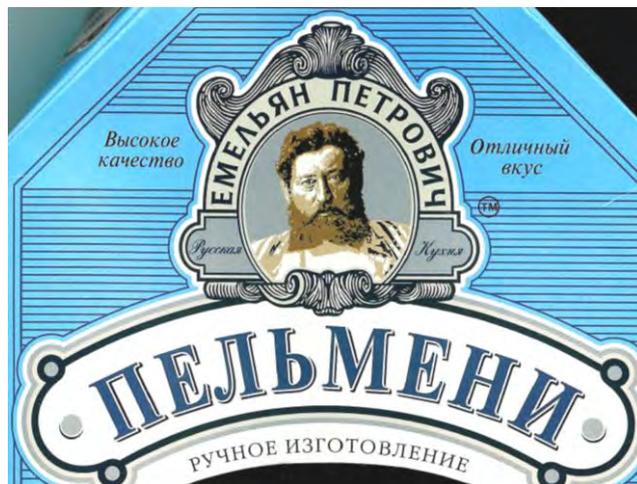


fig. 5.41

A hierarchy in the importance of information and design in relation to the brand message and values dictates the positioning of the face on packaging. In some examples the face is discretely incorporated as the name takes prominence. Some brands may position their icon across the pack's sides or on the pack back as well as, or solely on the pack front. When an image is placed upon the back its importance as a brand identifier is secondary to the name. This may be because the face and image of the person are perhaps less recognisable to consumers. Preference for name over face may relate to the popularity or profile of the person; where their image may be dated but their name can continue. For example, the Linda McCartney frozen food brand (UK) featured the small portrait of its founder upon packaging's rear in 2003 (fig. 5.42) and

5.43 ).<sup>160</sup> The design's positioning and portrait (illustration rather than photograph) can be seen to be sensitive to the fact that the founder was recently and tragically deceased. The discrete portrait offered subtle reference to the celebrity icon whose name as brand is foremost; the portrait as a respectful sign - a visual reminder. The portrait suggested a lively image; a deliberate attempt perhaps to present an image that demanded less emotional pull on the consumer.

Interestingly the redesign of the packaging from 2003 to 2009 evidenced significant changes to this brand's image and portrait.<sup>161</sup> From portrait as photograph, to illustration, to the removal of any image of Linda and then the use of a symbol, this brand illustrates how the portraits of real people are reviewed and can be removed: the face can change whilst the name can remain constant. The 2005 packaging (fig.5.44 and fig. 5.45) saw Linda's photographic portrait positioned again on the pack back. The monochrome photograph at a jaunty angle added a happy touch; a sign that Linda can live on through the brand. By 2012 Linda's portrait was removed and a heart shaped smiley symbol was used as visual identity (fig.5.46). Whilst the brand continues in Linda's name, it is now the "The McCartney's" family signature that signs the pack and not hers suggesting that the brand targets consumers that may be unfamiliar with the original Mrs. McCartney (fig.5.47). By comparison some brands use images of people for illustrative purpose only; where their specific identity is not important but their overall appearance creates an image, often historic, that helps to place the brands heritage or shape its character.

#### **5.4.6. Attire**

People's attire provides valuable visual cues that help consumers to identify the characters' role, nationality and relationship to the brand. They provide an abbreviated translation, where words perhaps fail, and aid product identification. Internationally food packaging images of generic national-types are common and particular national costumes or cultural styles communicate specific

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<sup>160</sup> Linda Mc Cartney, wife of musician Paul McCartney, created her vegetarian food brand in 1991. She died in 1998.

<sup>161</sup> The brand changed ownership during this period.



fig. 5.42



fig. 5.43



fig. 5.44



fig. 5.45



fig. 5.46



fig. 5.47

meanings .National dress (which may appear archaic) operates as cultural a symbol that can offer important explanation and illustration of a product and its country of origin.<sup>162</sup> For example Scottish Walkers Shortbread Limited has presented famous Scots in traditional dress across its packaging and Walker confirmed “We believe that we are selling more than just a biscuit - rather

<sup>162</sup> Katherine. J. Parkin, *Food Is Love: Advertising and Gender Roles in Modern America* (U. of Philadelphia: Pennsylvania Press, 2006).

selling part of Scotland's culture and heritage. Because of this portraying Scottish history is extremely important for our brand and to add to the authenticity and integrity of our products."<sup>163</sup> The brand's use of the painting of Flora McDonald and Bonnie Prince Charlie, for example, offers romantic historic Scottish connotations that the consumer may admire.<sup>164</sup>

Such visual devices rely upon established cultural meanings to convey quickly product information. They can connect the brand to its geographic home, for example the Spanish Jose Garcia Gomez raisin packaging (2005) (fig.5.48 & 5.49) depicted alluring flamenco ladies that immediately identified the country of origin.<sup>165</sup> Dress styles and codes can also delineate a person's status and profession; for example the chef's white hat and the cook's apron. Thus coded attire operates as generic visual strategy across food types in food marketing. Chapter 6 discusses these considerations further.



fig. 5.48

<sup>163</sup> John N. Walker, Message to author, 23 Aug. 2011. E-mail.

<sup>164</sup> „Flora MacDonaldbids farewell to Prince Charles Stuart“ (c. 1880) by George William Joy (c. 1880).

<sup>165</sup> The package depicted a senoirita on both sides.

### 5.4.7. Signature

In conjunction with the symbol of the face, many brands incorporate visually the signature of the founder, manufacturer or celebrity endorser to personalise and professionalise and authenticate and make original the brand. The signature has been used as the authoritative proof of goodness, a sign of value, the genuine and the reliable. As Hill observed, historically the signature was used to assure the consumer of the authentic product which was necessary when a number of substitute products were offered by retailers.<sup>166</sup> When fictitious brand people are used *their* signature can underscore their identity and suggest that they are real.

The signature penned across pack fronts and in advertisements, seals the quality message. For example W. K Kellogg's signature and the slogan "The original bears this signature" has featured upon the company's packaging since 1906.<sup>167</sup> "The Story of the Signature" 2009 television and 2011 press advertisements featured the founder proudly signing each pack to confirm its originality and explained the signature as a trusted sign (fig.5.48).<sup>168</sup> Increasingly it appears that food brands use a signature to emphasise brand authority in to attempt to reassure consumers of food quality and origin, notably at a time when concerns regarding food standards are particularly sensitive. For example Walls, UK, c. 2010, used illustration of butcher- founder Thomas Walls and his signature as brand endorsement. (fig. 5.49)<sup>169</sup> The real celebrity signature is also prominent in food promotion. For example UK celebrity cook Ainsley Harriott's photograph and distinct signature with unique symbol - smiley face with chef's hat – suggested friendly professional qualities. In some instances the brand name can appear signature-like even if there is no person behind the brand or no person evident on the packaging, for example Mr. Kipling's packaging uses a signature-script-like logo. Likewise fictitious brand icons can appear real with the flourish of a fake signature applied to their

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<sup>166</sup> Hill 5.

<sup>167</sup> Horace B. Powell, *The Original Has This Signature - W.K. Kellogg*. (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1956).

<sup>168</sup> The advertisement was created by Cheetham Bell JWT.

<sup>169</sup> Walls was founded in 1878. The details feature on the pack back.

packaging; their legitimacy made that little more believable when they sign also their additional personal message to us. The authenticity that the signature suggests becomes an important design element. Ultimately the signature offers distinct associations that consumers may draw meaning from. They can give strong identity to or actually be the identity of the brand.

fig. 5.49 This material is unavailable due to copyright restrictions.

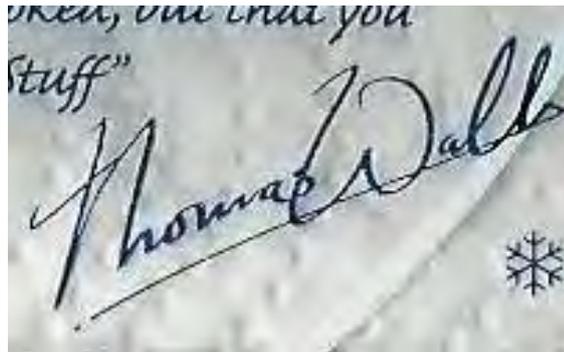


fig. 5.50

#### 5.4.8. Images of people as indicators of food provenance

In recent years consumers' concerns regarding food manufacture and food quality have developed.<sup>170</sup> In the attempt to reassure consumers, and to add value to their products, some brands have used images of their makers and suppliers on their packaging to communicate notions of trust and responsibility. Images of farmers, growers, and company workers have been used as a quality assurance mechanism. Referred to as "provenance-proven"<sup>171</sup> the professionals operate as product guarantors and their image helps to anchor the product's origin and to promote the associative values of authenticity and quality. For example Tesco's mince label (2008) (fig.5.51) presented the photograph of its farmer Troy Stuart and likewise Quakers Oats *Oats So Simple* packaging (2008) (fig. 5.52) portrayed John Hutcheson.<sup>172</sup> Hovis bread (2013) presented illustrations of "British Farmers", for example "Drew Smith, Home Farm, (2008)

<sup>170</sup>Concerns regarding animal welfare, food ingredients (additives) and hygiene as confirmed by the Institute of Grocery Distribution. Web.12. Jan. 2011.

<sup>171</sup>Claire Hu, "Producing a Personal Touch," *The Grocer*. 14 May. (Crawley: William Reed Publishing. 2005) 66.

<sup>172</sup> Text identified the town where the produce was grown.

(fig. 5.52) portrayed John Hutcheson.<sup>173</sup> Hovis bread (2013) presented illustrations of “British Farmers”, for example “Drew Smith, Home Farm, Lincolnshire” on the 2008 soft white loaf packaging (fig. 5.53) and “Gavin Davies, Stowell Farm, Wiltshire” on the wholemeal loaf (fig.5.54).The designs evidenced the importance of their presence to the brand whilst distinguishing the different loaf-types.<sup>174</sup> Such professionals are used to endorse provenance and quality and whilst a prolific marketing approach in recent years it is not new as Woys Weaver reported, the confirmation of the source of a specific food product was evident in early 20th century food marketing.<sup>175</sup> The use such people-images for this purpose is on-going however.



fig. 5.51

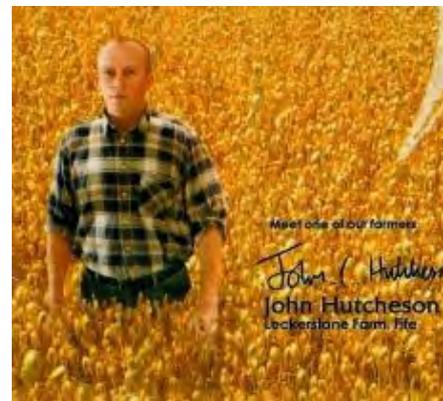


fig. 5.52



fig. 5.53



fig. 5.54

<sup>173</sup> Text identified the town where the produce was grown.

<sup>174</sup> Davies holds a wheat sheaf as if it is a pen.

<sup>175</sup> William Woys Weaver, *Culinary Ephemera: An Illustrated History* (U of California Press, 2010).

## Summary

People's images on food packaging are diverse in terms of the purpose of their use and the nature of their appearance. As brand identity, a person may endure upon packaging for a significant time. However some faces may appear fleetingly as determined in part by the pertinence of their popularity. In some food-types, such as breakfast cereals, faces may change regularly depending upon marketing messages or particular commercial tie-ins which add a certain topicality and currency to attract consumers.

This chapter has considered the role of packaging and the contexts in which it works and the representation of images of people and notably faces on food packaging: the various components involved and how these are used to communicate brand messages. It confirmed that images operate as a coded signs that are read and interpreted by consumers according to learnt cultural codes and shared experiences. It evidenced that images of people provide a visual reference for brand messages: symbolic iconography that represents brands' identity and values. The discussion identified that images of people, often smiling and accompanied by their signatures, function as a powerful marketing device that can operate across time and culture and that they can be used to respond to and communicate changes in culture and commerce to attract and reassure consumers in their food purchases.

This chapter provides important context for subsequent chapters' examination of brand icon people-types and the visual characteristics that are used to inform and determine the thesis's taxonomy.

## CHAPTER 6

### TAXONOMY: PEOPLE TYPES AND PEOPLE BRAND ICONS ON FOOD PACKAGING

#### 6.1. Introduction

This chapter answers the thesis's key questions through the interrogation of the visual identity of key examples to consider how meaning is imbued within and derived from their graphic forms. This chapter presents a framework for the visual identification and reading of people-types and the differentiated classification of examples: a taxonomy of brand icon and brand character people-types on food packaging. In particular, specific fictitious brand icon case studies are analysed to illustrate a category-type and to identify how certain icons use a generic visual code shared with others, yet are able to operate as distinct individuals: that the generic type is made specific through their brand identity.

This chapter is divided into sections to address each of the taxonomy's categories. A category table at the end of each section summarises the indicative associative values and qualities and characteristics of the people-type as discussed. The tables delineate the following in relation to each member-type: associative values and qualities - associated attributions; visual characteristics - for example their costume; facial expression; location and accessories; identity components – identifying marks - for example, symbols such as name, signature, national colours and the indicative food product -types that are associated with the people-type and/or the types of food they are used to promote.

The indicative associative values, qualities and characteristics were identified through analysis of examples and information from companies and established studies. The identification of characteristics and qualities is not exhaustive. They are presented to enable cross reference of category types in relation to visual representations, and notably that of fictitious brand icons. Indicative

examples of brand icon category-types are examined whilst further case studies are positioned in Appendices C, D, E and F). The taxonomy identifies the category of Commercial Home Economists which is discussed in Chapter 8.

## **6.2. Taxonomy: People-types**

The taxonomy has been informed by and created from the collation and mapping and comparative investigation of international examples of images of people on food packaging, gathered from across a range of countries, over a five year period predominantly. The selection criteria were that packaging examples featured a person visually, either illustratively or photographically, and that they were food products.<sup>1</sup> Through visual content analysis of examples a pattern of visual people-types was identified and charted. Their names, attire, particular roles, visual contexts and relationship with the product helped to identify and arrange visual groupings of diverse yet comparable people-types.

Through analysis of the coded visual characteristics of key people types this study presents consideration of generic categories, and related subgroups, and their particular member-types that evidence the existence of shared visual codes that operate across time and cultures: it identifies number of people-type categories - what could be termed as families. This chapter analyses exemplars of the visual coded people-types and it focuses upon specific and prevalent categories that are populated by a significant number of brand examples and that evidence fictitious people brand icon examples. It does not consider those categories where fictitious brand icons are less prevalent but it does highlight that further sets of wider people-types do appear across packaging.<sup>2</sup> Discussion of such is located in Appendix B (Children), C (Founders and Product Originators) and D (Workers and the chef).

This thesis's identification of categories and their membership is not exclusive yet cannot be all-inclusive. People-types can sit across a number of different

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<sup>1</sup> Wider non-food product examples were also collected as comparative reference but are not core to this study.

<sup>2</sup> For example celebrity category is highlighted to identify the comparative grouping but is not discussed in relation to fictitious brand icon types.

categories as their role and visual characteristics relate to different category traits. For example the grandmother can be located in the class of family but also, depending upon her specific attributes, can sit as founder. Therefore the categories' boundaries are not definite, static or exclusive and may be considered as "fuzzy": as Kemp's "fuzzy category theory" confirmed "The notion of fuzziness in set and group theory has been developed to cope with situations in which absolute definitions, inclusions, and exclusions cannot be made."<sup>3</sup> Thus this thesis's taxonomy categories and their membership are distinct, yet remain open to embrace further examples.

### 6.2.1. Established taxonomies

A number of researchers, for example Phillips and Gyoerick<sup>4</sup>; Sacharow<sup>5</sup>; Morgan<sup>6</sup>; Delis Hill,<sup>7</sup> and marketing practitioners such as Altschul<sup>8</sup> have identified advertising/brand icon types' categories. Morgan's historical overview of US trademark symbols provided valuable visual collation of brand icon and character types, as "personalities of the product", and identified a range of categories, though not exclusively people.<sup>9</sup> Morgan identified "famous faces", presidents, heroes, military leaders, pioneers, cowboys and race types that offer some valuable cross reference for this study. However Morgan's categories were particularly American-specific and do not readily map against this study's collated examples.<sup>10</sup> Likewise Dotz and Husain<sup>11</sup> and Dotz and Morton<sup>12</sup> collation of American advertising examples indicated theme types however these groupings were not formally structured or rigorously interrogated and they

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<sup>3</sup> Martin Kemp, *Christ to Coke: How Images Become Icons* (Oxford: OUP, 2012) 350.

<sup>4</sup> Barbara Phillips and J. Gyoerick, "The Cow, the Cook, and the Quaker: Fifty Years of Spokes-Character Advertising," *J & MC Quarterly* 76.4 (1999):713-728.

<sup>5</sup> Stanley Sacharow, *Symbols of Trade*. (New York: Art Direction Book Company, 1982).

<sup>6</sup> Hal Morgan, *Symbols of America*. (New York: Viking Penguin Inc., 1986).

<sup>7</sup> Daniel Delis Hill, *Advertising to the American Woman 1900-1999* (Ohio: Ohio State U. Press, 2002).

<sup>8</sup> David Altschul, Telephone interview, 19 Mar. 2006.

<sup>9</sup> Morgan 13.

<sup>10</sup> Morgan 43.

<sup>11</sup> Warren Dotz and Masud Husain, *Meet Mr. Product: The Art of the Advertising Character* (San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 2003); Dotz and Husain, *Ad Boy: Vintage Advertising with Character*, (Berkeley: Ten Speed Press, 2009).

<sup>12</sup> Warren Dotz and Jim Morton, *What a Character: 20<sup>th</sup> Century American Advertising Icons*. (San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 1996).

remain as a general visual mapping of advertising characters and do not consider examples of particular appearance on packaging. Likewise Mullen's consideration of advertising characters identified key types including the "Domestic Goddess"<sup>13</sup> as home economist. Whilst key points and visual examples were highlighted this category and types remained concisely considered. Mullen's consideration of cigarette packaging however provided further consideration of people-types which this study can be cross referenced to.<sup>14</sup> Hill's focus upon the representation of women in advertising identified specific women-types including "Real women"; "Created historical characters"; "Maids"; "Ethnic stereotypes"; and "„Little Girls."<sup>15</sup> Hill provided reference to categories within the wider context of marketing in which this study's focus can be positioned and some of the categories also identified by Hill are included within this study. Likewise Maasik and Solomon identified real people who may be celebrities; corporate spokes persons or „person- in- the street" (who offer testimonials); created characters represented by actors; the unnamed; and still and animated cartoon characters: category-types different to the focus of this study yet valuable to the fuller understanding of the representation of people in marketing.<sup>16</sup>

Phillips<sup>17</sup> and Callcott;<sup>18</sup> Callcott and Lee<sup>19</sup> and Callcott and Alvey<sup>20</sup> provide the most valuable frameworks relating to the categorization of brand characters, although their studies predominantly focused upon examples in advertisements and notably cartoon types primarily. Whilst their studies are important to the

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<sup>13</sup> Chris Mullen, n.d. *Brand Characters: In the Kitchen, The Visual Telling of Stories*. Chris Mullen, n.p. Web. 13 Oct. 2006.

<sup>14</sup> Chris Mullen, *Cigarette Pack Art*. (London: Hamlyn,1979).

<sup>15</sup> Hill.

<sup>16</sup> Sonia Maasik and Jack Solomon, *Signs of Life in the USA: Readings in Popular Culture*. (Boston: Bedford Books,1994).

<sup>17</sup> Barbara J. Philips, "Defining Trade Characters and their Role in American Popular Culture," *Journal of Popular Culture*. 29:4. (Spring, 1996):143-158.

<sup>18</sup> Margaret F. Callcott and Wei-Na Lee, ""Establishing the Spokes-Character in Academic Enquiry: Historical Overview and Framework for Definition." *Advances in Consumer Research*. Eds. Frank, R. Kardes and Mmita Sujana. 22. Provo Association for Consumer Research, (1995):145-151.

<sup>19</sup>Margaret F. Callcott, and Wei-Na Lee. "A Content Analysis of Animation and Animated Spokes-Characters in Television Commercials." *Journal of Advertising*. (23 Dec.1994):1-12.

<sup>20</sup> Margaret F. Callcott and Patricia A. Alvey, "Toons Sell.....And Sometimes They Don't: An Advertising Spokes Character Typology and Exploratory Study." *American Academy*. Ed. Rebecca Holman (1991):43-53.

understanding of the history and operation of brand icons it is believed that their identification and classification methodologies and resultant frameworks are (naturally) dated and incomplete as they focused on the presence of certain characters, predominantly within advertising contexts, and thus some types (and international dimensions) are omitted.

Importantly Calcott and Lee provided a “multi-dimensional framework”<sup>21</sup> as important guidance to help define and identify “spokes-characters”. The authors set “four parameters” for identifying examples: “the physical Appearance of the character, the Medium it appears in, advertising or non-advertising Origin and spokes-character Promotion of the product (AMOP).”<sup>22</sup> Their framework provided necessary determinants to aid the consideration of example’s identification and the different types that exist. This study has utilised this framework in the identification and selection of its examples, notably as this study’s focus is the *Appearance* of examples within the focused *Medium* parameter of packaging which can thus be considered to be what Calcott and Lee considered to be “passive” Promotion.<sup>23</sup>

The physical appearance of brand icons, and especially people-types, is important to a brand’s identity. That examples embody and communicate *visually* key human traits and values, is critical to an understanding of how they personify and physically represent the brand, and how and why they are read and accepted. In consideration of the “human characteristics that are associated with a brand,” what Aaker defined as “Brand personality”,<sup>24</sup> this study draws upon and utilises such characteristics in its identification and grouping of brand icons. The brand icon’s human characteristics are essential to the determination of their persona, their perceived identity and commercial role. Aaker’s “Dimensions of Brand Personality” framework identified five “core facets and their core dimensions” to identify a brand’s personality: “*Sincerity* (Domestic, honest, genuine, cheerful); *Excitement* (Daring, spirited, imaginative,

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<sup>21</sup> Callcott and Lee 144.

<sup>22</sup> Callcott and Lee 144.

<sup>23</sup> Callcott and Lee 144.

<sup>24</sup> Jennifer. L. Aaker, “Dimensions of Brand Personality,” *Journal of Marketing Research*, (34, 1997):347-356.

up-to-date); *Competence* (Reliable, responsible, dependable, efficient); *Sophistication* (Glamorous, pretentious, charming, romantic); *Ruggedness* (Tough, strong, outdoorsy, rugged)<sup>25</sup> This study's taxonomy has identified further core facets and dimensions in relation to its selected examples. It is also informed by and cross references Aaker's work as human characteristics identified in relation to people-types are essential to the profile, perception and position of brand icons and their identification and categorization. Aaker's dimensions are plotted in part in relation to this study's identified visual characteristics to provide a fuller identification and understanding of examples (Table 1. where Aaker's "Dimensions of a Brand Personality" "core dimensions" are identified in shaded boxes, are mapped in relation to the defining characteristics identified by this study).<sup>26</sup>

Thus human characteristics are used by brand icons to both differentiate them from, yet they also can make them comparable with, others. The taxonomy confirms that examples can share comparable traits which are communicated visually and can be grouped together. However whilst some icons share traits and visual looks their personalities can be distinct as their brands manage and ensure their identity as unique. Brand icons may evidence further characteristics in addition to those identified by Aaker and that the understanding of certain traits may alter depending upon cultural and social shifts that change or challenge established connotations. As Aaker identified, such human traits can be positioned and understood differently across cultures and thus this study recognises that its positioning of people-type brand icons within set categories as determined by their visual characteristics cannot be permanent.

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<sup>26</sup> Aaker 347-356.

Type	Personality traits	Appearance	Brands	Context of use	Associative qualities
<b>Family members</b>	loyal reliable responsible dependable efficient domestic honest genuine cheerful	photograph portrait	<i>Indicative examples</i>  Uncle Ben Aunt Jemima Aunt Bessie Abuelita	across marketing channels potentially including packaging	home-made tradition family love caring
<b>Founder-Company /Brand &amp; Product originator</b>	heroic noble trustworthy responsible dependable efficient reliable daring, spirited, imaginative glamorous; charming	photograph  usually formal portrait with signature	<i>Indicative examples</i>  <i>Caesar Cardini</i>  <i>Jack Daniels</i>  <i>Paul Newman</i>	packaging advertising- but not usually television	history heritage creator owner prestige quality family
<b>Maid</b>	purity honesty sincerity domestic spinster reliable old & wise safe young & pretty cheerful loyal trustworthy romantic	illustration  possibly a photograph  smiling	<i>Indicative examples</i>  Sun Maid  Ovaltine Maid	across marketing channels potentially including packaging	heritage old fashioned  quality & authentic  tradition  nationality-specific  consistent truth
<b>Workers</b>	hardworking committed professional experienced trustworthy helpful genuine reliable				dedication skilled loyalty tradition pride accountability

**Table 1. Brand icon People-types: their characteristics, contexts of use and associative qualities.**

Type	Personality	Appearance	Brands	Context of use	Associative qualities
<b>Expert/ Professional</b>	experienced reliable hardworking heroic trustworthy quality strength masculine rugged dependable				tradition skilled tradition
<b>Celebrity:</b> Spokes-person  Celebrity: own brand	popular successful expert professional confident daring, spirited, imaginative, cheerful	photograph portrait signature	<i>Indicative examples</i>  <i>Gary Rhodes</i>  <i>Loyd Grossman</i>	Endorser across marketing channels and publishing; restaurants etc packaging	popular desirable success authority quality honest
<b>Cartoon/ Fantasy</b>  Anthro-pomorphic characters  Licensed characters	cheerful  fun playful humorous	Various  illustrated cartoon animated	<i>Indicative examples</i>  Green Giant  Poppin" Fresh Pillbury Doughboy	across marketing channels potentially including packaging	fantasy excitement children
<b>Fictitious – unreal people</b>	elusive honest genuine cheerful	illustration  possibly a photograph	<i>Indicative examples</i>  <i>Aunt Bessie</i>  <i>John Bullers</i>	across marketing channels potentially including packaging	tradition  unity depending upon nuances of character-type

Table 1. continued

**Brand icon People-types: their characteristics, contexts of use and associative qualities.**

Altschul presented identification of character-types: “live founder character”; “live celebrity character”; “fictional character”; “purely fictional character”.<sup>27</sup>

Such categorisation provides wider umbrella themes that this study can sit its examples beneath. However it is surprising that whilst brand icons have a long history and significant presence within our histories and cultures, research has evidenced the established literature has not generally interrogated the visual appearance of examples and that no complete and authoritative taxonomy of brand people-types exists. This study’s taxonomy aims to address in part this apparent gap.

This taxonomy presents a fresh collation and analysis of marketing examples. It is not intended to be exhaustive but provides an initial indicative approach and system that enables the identification, comparative analysis and cross reference of visual codes that are evident across packaging design and indeed wider marketing contexts. As Williams observed “it is with the discovery of patterns of a characteristic kind that any useful cultural analysis begins”<sup>28</sup> and thus this study identifies a scheme of visual characteristics that shape a particular visual phenomenon. The taxonomy offers a scheme that can be applied in the consideration of wider product ranges and commercial spheres to advance the understanding of the use and significance of visual symbols. It provides an enhanced appreciation of packaging design through the consideration of the visual components used to structure distinct commercial and cultural messages that operate cross culture. It provides consideration of the relationship between established social and cultural constructs and contexts and marketing, how consumers understand commercial messages through visual codes that relate to established conventions, to facilitate further appreciation of the crossover between marketing, society and culture.

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<sup>27</sup> Altschul, Telephone interview, 19 Mar. 2006.

<sup>28</sup> Raymond Williams (qtd. in Carolyn Kitch, *The Girl on the Magazine Cover: The Origins of Visual Stereotypes in American Mass Media* (Chapel Hill: U. of North Carolina, 2001) 16.

### 6.3. People-types on Food Packaging: Visual Characteristics as Codes

The graphic symbols used to represent and communicate brand identity are referred to as “hieroglyphics of communication” by Lupton and Miller: commercial signs that whilst the exclusive property right of the brand, operate as a shared cultural language.<sup>29</sup> People on food packaging, and notably related brand icons, work as coded graphic symbols; they operate through the use of shared visual vocabularies in their “intercultural communication”<sup>30</sup> Within certain food categories packaging is populated by people that appear to share comparable roles and similar visual characteristics to communicate certain generic messages. However, whilst they may communicate readily with wide audiences, it is recognized that cultural differences do mean that examples do not necessarily travel across countries and some types will not be pertinent to certain commercial markets. The reading of symbols cannot be fixed as their meanings can change depending upon the context of their use and existence. To understand the meaning of symbols it is necessary to consider their use and the context/s of their existence. In its analysis of examples the thesis addresses this important consideration.

Investigation of contemporary food packaging has identified distinct patterns in the visual formulae used in people’s identity: their faces, gestures, clothing and locations. Through scrutiny of historical examples it is evident that such categories have existed over a significant time and indeed it is because they sustain that they remain relevant for contemporary use: they are symbols embedded within culture that have pre-packed meaning. For example, as discussed later, the country maid may be considered to be an outdated or mythic figure yet her idyllic, nostalgic connotations live on through her image on packaging. Thus certain people-types appear as stereotypical: a repeat visual formula. They offer established meaning as Perkins comments “The strength of a stereotype results from a combination of three factors; its „simplicity“; its

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<sup>29</sup> Ellen Lupton and J. Abbott Miller. “Critical Wayfinding.” *The Edge of the Millennium*. Ed. Susan Yelavish. New York: Whitney Library of Design, 1993: 220-232. Web. 5 May 2010.

<sup>30</sup> Gunthe Kress and Theo van Leeuwen, *Reading Images: Grammar of Visual Design* (London: Routledge, 1996).

immediate recognisability (...), and its implicit reference to an assumed consensus about some attribute or complex social relationships. Stereotypes are in respect prototypes of “shared cultural meanings”<sup>31</sup> This taxonomy therefore identifies that fictitious brand icons“ use of and existence as stereotypes has created category-types. The following discussion of the taxonomy”s categories focuses upon specific fictitious brand icon examples within each category to illustrate the existence of archetypes and to explore how they relate to comparable examples. Specific examples are analysed to make explicit the identification, evaluation and categorisation of brand icons. Supporting discussion of additional examples is contained within Appendix B (Children), C (Founders and Product Originators), D (Workers and the chef) and F (Sun-Maid brand icon).

In many instances certain images of people, such as a grandmother on a pack of biscuits, can appear as anonymous: a stereotype that lacks specific distinctiveness and personality but offers certain associations. For example the illustration of a granny cooking, such as the depiction on Riding Lodge”s Yorkshire Puddings packaging in 2006, can suggest, perhaps rather basically, the product as home-cooked (fig. 6.1). This brand used this image to mimic brand leader Aunt Bessie (fig.6.2). The copy lacked substance in terms of narrative and quality of the visual however; the figure remained general and hollow as it appeared without personality. Such examples relate to Lupton and Miller”s observation that the graphic symbol “visually categorizes experience into tidy packages, often reducing it to a flattened cliché.”<sup>32</sup> Such images, a weak pastiche of a strong stereotype, are so formulaic and generic that they offer token meaning and value to the brand. By comparison images of people that use a stereotype but are given a specific identity and character by the brand, for example a name, particular look and potential provenance, such as with the Aunt Bessie brand icon, can be seen as giving greater meaning, veracity and personality to their brand. In certain cases these people can be seen to exist in their own right; they can appear as real.

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<sup>31</sup> T. E. Perkins, “Rethinking Stereotypes.” *Ideology and Cultural Production*. Eds. Michele Barrett, Philip Corrigan, Annette Kuhn and Janet Wolff. (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1979) 141.

<sup>32</sup> Lupton and Miller.

This latter point will be considered in relation to the case study examples as discussed in the following sections.

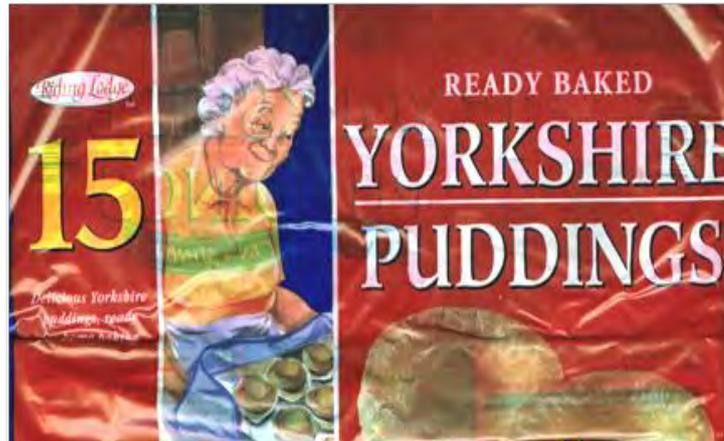


fig. 6.1



fig. 6.2

#### 6.4. People-types and Brand Icons

The study identifies a number of people-type categories: family; founder; maid; workers; celebrity; historical figure; anonymous and expert/professional/advisor (Table 2) that have been determined by the author as being most distinct and prolific in terms of their population by brand icon and character people-types. The categories have been determined by this author and have been informed and positioned through consideration of the practice and perspectives, predominantly relating to advertising, branding, graphic design and packaging, provided by brand creators, brand icon owners, advertising companies and established literature.

Whilst this study focuses upon *fictitious brand icons*, this discussion places icons in relation to their *brand character* peers to highlight the comparable people-types that exist. In certain categories subgroups are identified that evidence the specifics of character type that are used to communicate particular messages and values (Table 2.). For example the category of family is divided in to member types and the subgroups of grandmother, mother, aunt, uncle and children: each type has specific nuances, sets of meanings and attributes -as communicated visually. The categories also identify that examples can sit within and across a number of groups. Thus the category boundaries are not obdurate and indeed some categories indicate wide membership: for example that identified as *professionals* embraces a range of career-types – which again can cross over into the domains of founder; worker and family for example, as Maasik and Solomon observed, examples can cross and share category types and even transcend or blur the category boundaries and identifiers. It is recognised that some liberty with identification of examples can be taken when packaging does not give reference to people beyond their visual presentation and the viewer is required to identify and interpret the person. For example some brands, such as Mrs. Adler<sup>33</sup> identify their icon by name without necessarily anchoring the person"s exact status/role.

The initial identification of each category is presented as an overarching codification grid (Table 2). Within each category range of people-types examples exist. The following section explores specific categories to evidence the visual characteristics of specific people-types and notably fictitious-people examples that illustrate the use of visual codes. The consideration of additional categories and subcategories are located in Appendix B (Children), Appendix C (Founders and Product Originators, Appendix D (Workers and the chef) and Appendix E (Celebrities).

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<sup>33</sup> Mrs. Adler"s brand is owned by Manischewitz Company.

Family	Founder	Maid	Celebrity	Workers
<b>Grandmother</b> <b>Mother</b> - Housewife - Wife <b>Aunt</b> Uncle <b>Children</b>	<b>Company/ brand founder</b> or Owner <b>Product Originator</b> Creator Celebrity <b>Historical figure</b>	<b>Country</b> <b>Domestic</b> <b>Traditional/ National</b> - Historical - Commercial - Assistant <b>Anonymous</b>	<i>Own Brand Endorser</i> - Sports - Pop Music - Television - Film <b>Expert/Professional</b>	Employee Producer - Farmer - Grower - Butcher <b>Fisherman:</b> Butcher <b>Chef/Cook</b> Baker Military Doctor Scientists Retailer - Grocer - Home Economist
Baby	National figure Poet Explorer Adventurer Legendary Royalty – King/Queen	Beautiful women Generic family Groups Children Individuals Consumer Services Retail assistant	<b>Home Economist</b> Individuals Consumer Services Retail assistant	<b>Fisherman:</b> Butcher <b>Chef/Cook</b> Baker Military Doctor Scientists Retailer - Grocer - Home Economist

**Table 2. Indicative People-types Categories & Members.**  
Categories highlighted (boxed) are discussed within the text.

### 6.4.1. Family

To make brands appealing, trustworthy and memorable family members can be used as brand icons. Such figures, whether real or fictitious, are important and unique selling points for the brand: they can be the face and the name of the brand. Placed upon the packaging their image helps the product to compete with neighboring brands. The smiling face offers a reassuring identification that consumers can relate to as Goffman observed “Visual representation of the members can nicely serve as a symbolisation of the family's social structure.”<sup>34</sup> Their status, whether grandmother, mother, aunt or uncle, is understood by consumers. Their related qualities can transfer associative connotations from wider social and cultural experiences and contexts to imbue the brand with ready-made meaning.

In some instances brands create *pseudo family members* to present a traditional identity. The fabrication of a fictitious person based upon the stereotypical traits of a family member relies upon the consumer transferring the associate qualities and values to the brand accordingly. Identified by Lear as “pseudotraditionalists” these characters suggest notions of the past and represent traditional values, family and home through their smiling aged faces.<sup>35</sup> They suggest pseudo personal relationships based upon trust, love and memories. They imply that they are our relatives and invite us to take them into our homes.

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<sup>34</sup> Erving Goffman, *Gender Advertisements* (London: Macmillan, 1976) 37.

<sup>35</sup> Jackson T. J. Lears, *Fables of Abundance: A Cultural History of Advertising in America*. (New York: Basic Books, 1994).

Family Member	Associative values/qualities	Visual characteristics	Identity components	Indicative Food Product Types
<b>Grandmother</b>	Traditional; old fashioned; heritage Matriarch; home Home cooking: home made Loving; caring; kind; sharing Skilled; experienced; own methods Knowledgeable; own recipes Reliable; sincere; trustworthy Generous	White/grey hair Wrinkles; elderly Smiling Glasses; bonnet Apron; bowl and spoon Old fashioned clothing Kitchen – cooking utensils; cooker;	Photograph/ Illustration Name in type Signature potentially	Biscuits Cakes Meals Pies Family meals; Sunday lunch Puddings Traditional food
<b>Mother</b>	Matriarch; Maternal; Nurturing Loving; caring; kind; generous Skilled; Experienced; Trustworthy Knowledgeable; Reliable; sincere. Family orientated; Home; cooking Traditional Wife; housewife Domestic; shopper	Smiling Kitchen – cooking utensils; cooker; Housewife; apron Young; handsome Working in home Benign	Photograph /Illustration Name in type Signature	Meals Family meals; Sunday lunch Baby/ children"s" food Milk; dairy Vegetables & fruit
<b>Aunt</b>	Reliable Friendly Helpful Family support Generous Fun Sincere	Smiling Apron Kitchen – cooking utensils; cooker; Basket – as she visits	Signature Photograph/ Illustration Name in type	Biscuits Cakes Extras for a meal - custard Condiments
<b>Uncle</b>	Reliable Friendly Helpful Family support		Signature Photograph/ Illustration Name in type	Meal items
<b>Children</b>	Happy; fun Healthy; friendly; confident	Smiling; young; healthy Good looking	Photograph/ Illustration	Confectionery; cereals; dairy Cakes; puddings

**Table 3. Category: Family member types on food packaging:** indicative associative values, qualities and characteristics.

### 6.4.1.1 Grandmother

Female-types on packaging are many and can be categorised in various ways. Lopata's typology of women within the family identified types by their social and cultural position.<sup>36</sup> This study has grouped examples by age and role type within the family and starts with the family matriarch: the grandmother. The grandmother is a female stereotype that endures and proliferates as a brand icon in food marketing. The appeal of a well-loved, respected and experienced matriarchal figure offers food companies the ability to imbue their products with the character's associative qualities. In particular, the grandmother-as-cook is associated with home-cooking; skilfully and lovingly prepared good food. This association is a valuable cue that manufacturers can transfer to their mass produced products.

The esteemed status of grandmother is one shared across many cultures. Whilst particular cultural nuances may shape the image of the grandmother, an archetype exists and operates visually trans-culturally.<sup>37</sup> The stereotypical iconography of an elderly woman with smiling wrinkled face, white or grey hair, spectacles, an apron and staid clothing<sup>38</sup> has come to represent traditional values, nostalgia, family-focus, knowledge, experience, wisdom and love; meanings that transfer from the grandmother to the context and objects that she is placed in relation to. She may be situated in a kitchen with key symbols that readily communicate cooking; a mixing bowl, rolling pin and apron that are classic cues that denote home-made cooking. As Neubauer remarked "Grandma's apron, scalloped doily edge, and gingham tablecloths continue to be used on the package to sell food products and to signify old fashioned goodness to the consumer."<sup>39</sup> Such images provide a visual shortcut that can connote heritage, trust, generosity, home, family values and authenticity.

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<sup>36</sup> Lopata 64-65.

<sup>37</sup> The dress of a grandmother may reflect national identity.

<sup>38</sup> Parkin similarly observes the visual characteristics of the depiction of the grandmother in her study of advertising examples. She notes that the image of the grandmother has remained „static throughout the [twentieth] century.“ Katherine. J. Parkin, *Food Is Love: Advertising and Gender Roles in Modern America*. (U. of Philadelphia: Pennsylvania Press, 2006): 47.

<sup>39</sup> Robert G. Neubauer, *Packaging the Contemporary Media* (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold Company, 1973).

Used historically as a figure of trust, as Neubauer observed, the “Grandmother was both a product pioneer and teacher,” and she continues to be used in food brand identity.<sup>40</sup> As Parkin observed “Advertisers granted mothers and grandmothers a central role in creating meaningful, historic association with food” and “Grandmothers exceeded mother’s power because they had taught the mothers.”<sup>41</sup> Whilst many brands have used mother-type brand icons, the imagery and title of grandmother remains particularly prolific in food marketing. The grandmother can be equated with the past; consumers can relate to this, even if it is not their past but one they enjoy as a popular collective memory.<sup>42</sup> The figure draw upon its nostalgia association and suggests traditional food that can be trusted. A number of brands utilise their actual family’s great/grandmother as name and image, depicted either as an illustrated impression or photograph. For example, Grandma Singleton’s cheese (UK) presents Duillia Singleton (fig.6.3)<sup>43</sup> and the Michelina’s brand (USA) features the founder’s mother Mama Michelina Paulucci (fig.6.4).<sup>44</sup>



fig. 6.3



fig. 6.4

<sup>40</sup> Neubauer 12.

<sup>41</sup> Parkin comments upon the commercial use of the grandmother in relation to her study of 1940’s American magazine advertisements. Parkin 47. This marketing approach continues today across brand identity and food advertising.

<sup>42</sup> In popular culture, for example film, television and children’s literature, the iconography of the grandmother is well established and many examples carry comparable positive values and associations that marketing utilise.

<sup>43</sup> Grandma Singleton’s cheese has existed since 1934.

<sup>44</sup> Michelina’s, “Your Mama has a History” n.d. Michelinas, n.p. Web. 12 Dec. 2010.

Loved by generations, the grandmother is identified by various terms in different countries and cultures. The words identify family status as well as being terms of endearment, for example *Bubbie* (Jewish); *Abeula* (Spanish); the Afrikaans *Ouma* (Afrikaans); *Omi* (German); *Nonna* (Italy) and *Babcia* (Poland). Some brands target their home market and thus use their native language and hence the vernacular term for grandmother as their identity. For example Omi brand (Germany) helps identify traditional food products and the photograph of a white haired lady appears on the can label front (fig. 6.5). Omi is the brand's granny and relates to the company's long history.<sup>45</sup> The company's website states "Grandma's traditional recipes bring warm memories to your table" and thus the image of the grandmother is used to encode such association.<sup>46</sup> That the grandmother appears to be generic (anonymous) rather than specific (named) does not detract from the brand apparently. It is the power of the visual and the colloquial name that helps position the brand intentions.



fig. 6.5

American Bubbies brand (pickles) present a Jewish grandmother as icon. The monochrome photographic portrait upon the jars' labels to centre the consumers' attention. The decorative framing of the portrait and dropshadow type presents a traditional feel; the overall design suggests a distinguished past; a sense of history borne out by its friendly figurehead. As Gray commented "The image was selected, in part, to help (non-Jewish) people understand that

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<sup>45</sup> The company was founded over 70 years ago according to its website.

<sup>46</sup>Buss, "Omi" n.d. Buss. n.p. Web. 12 Jun. 2011.

Bubbie means grandmother”<sup>47</sup> and added “She’s the essence of the kindly Jewish grandmother who happens to be passionate about things like cooking and pickling. She stands for all Old World grannies who pamper their family with wonderful foods they’ve had made using authentic ingredients and traditional recipes.”<sup>48</sup> The company utilised the President’s wife’s mother, Mary Levi, as icon.<sup>49</sup> Gray noted that “We changed our label to this image from what might be called a portrait of ingredients. We had an immediate dramatic increase in sales and a number of people who actually said things like „this product did not do that well for us before, but with this new label, I’ll have to give it another try”.<sup>50</sup> The design succeeds as Bubbie evokes key qualities that transfer to the product and the brand.<sup>51</sup> This use of a real person as brand icon, but who is not directly related to the product’s origins or history, evidences a different approach to icon use. The *borrowed* person gives face and value to the company and its products however any deeper historical link to the brand is fictitious

The South African Ouma© brand (snack rusks) uses the Afrikaans name for identity.<sup>52</sup> An illustration, based upon the product’s real creator, Ouma Greyvensteyn, is placed centrally across the brand’s packaging. The stout grandmother features on the packaging and suggests a friendly and confident cook.<sup>53</sup> The rusks were created by Greyvensteyn in 1939 and manufacturer Nola claimed that her “unique and time-honoured family recipe, and her baking talents, have provided Ouma with her reputation as South Africa’s most famous baker” and that she is a “true South African icon, which is sought after in many

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<sup>47</sup> John Gray, “Bubbies,” Message to the author, 4 May 2009. E-Mail.

<sup>48</sup> *Bubbies Story*. n.d. Bubbies. n pag. Web. 8 Jan 2009.

<sup>49</sup> The original Bubbies brand was established in 1982 and the company was purchased by John and Kathy Gray in 1989. Mary Levi had died prior to becoming brand icon.

<sup>50</sup> Gray 45.

<sup>51</sup> The stereotypical traits of a Jewish grandmother - loving, caring and protective - can be associated with the Bubbie icon. The jar’s back label adds to this character by including a fun brand message “Eat My Pickles. Wear Clean Underwear. Marry a Doctor” suggesting matriarchal advice.

<sup>52</sup> The Ouma brand is owned by Nola, South Africa.

<sup>53</sup> The packaging’s information is in both Afrikaans and English. Text explains the product and its history.

countries around the world.”<sup>54</sup> Interestingly Trapido observed that this “South African national institution - the local equivalent to Betty Crocker” is “gradually changing colour” and that “She used to be white but she is gradually getting browner on the biscuit packets.” If this is so, then it suggests that a fictional aspect of the icon is in development.<sup>55</sup>



fig. 6.6.

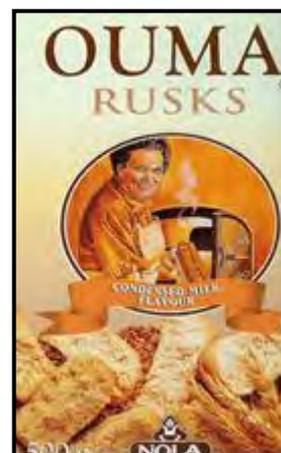


fig. 6.7

In many instances the status of grandmother is suggested by the image rather than title. For example American brand Mrs. Renfro’s® sauces have used the photograph of the founder’s wife since 1963.<sup>56</sup> As Mrs. Renfro’s granddaughter explained “Her picture was used so that people would know that there really was a Mrs. Renfro.”<sup>57</sup> Here Mrs. Renfro greets the consumer on opening the jar and provides a homely personal touch to a brand that is clearly proud of its relative (fig. 6.8).

An example of a *real woman as grandmother* is Nestle’s Abuelita® Mexican hot chocolate brand. Abuelita is represented by the photograph of Sara García, one of Mexico’s most famous film stars (fig. 6.9).<sup>58</sup> Garcia, known as *Mexico’s Grandmother* for the key role she played in a number of films, presents a well-

<sup>54</sup> Ouma Rusks Condensed Milk flavour packaging, Randfontein: Nola, 2005.

<sup>55</sup> Anna Trapido, Message to author, 25 Sep. 2004. E-Mail.

<sup>56</sup> *The brand is owned by Renfro Foods.* The company was founded in 1940. “Renfro Foods: Our Story”. n.d. Renfro Foods. n.p. Web. 25 Mar. 2011.

<sup>57</sup> Becky Renfro Borbolla, “Mrs. Renfro,” Message to the author, (6 Sept. 2011. E-mail.

<sup>58</sup> Sara Garcia’s image has graced the packaging since 1973. The image has been presented as illustration from a photograph and currently is a photograph.

loved *celebrity- as-grandmother* brand icon.<sup>59</sup> The mix of real person with mythic granny status endures and appeals to the primarily Hispanic market targeted.<sup>60</sup>

However the authenticity of the grandmother is not always clarified and on occasion a basic stereotype as token image is used thus evidencing the different levels of sophistication in the images used. Thus the grandmother offers a popular symbol that works effectively across many cultures; although different in name her general appearance is often common. In some instances the grandmother and mother image and status are combined.

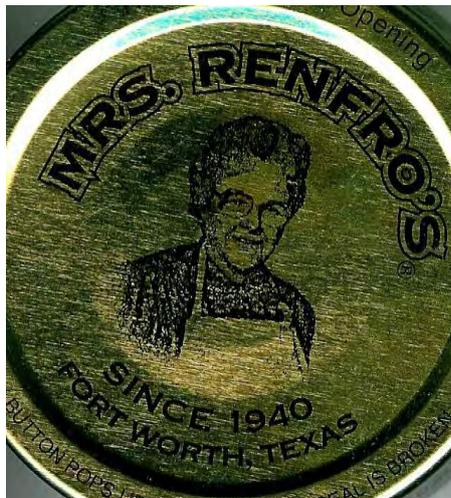


fig. 6.8

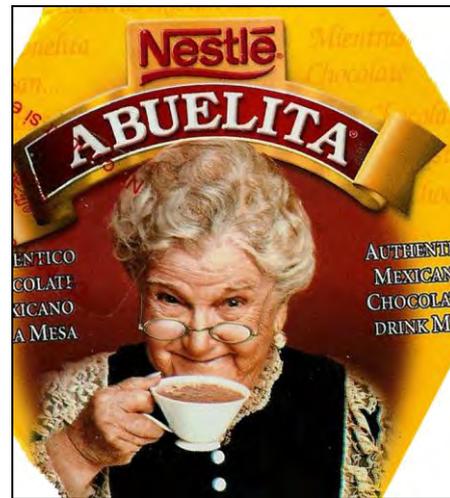


fig. 6.9

#### 6.4.1.2. Mother

The portrayal of certain traditional women-types persists in food marketing and the mother remains a brand icon archetype that is well evidenced across cultures. As Pakin observed, traditionally domestic food shopping and cooking have been considered to be the responsibility of women and hence the iconography of woman as mother, wife, cook, homemaker, and housewife have been used to sell food.<sup>61</sup> Commercially and culturally women's traditional roles have been referenced and perpetuated within food marketing: the visual representation of such roles has been visually coded, repeated and reinforced.

<sup>59</sup> Although Garcia died in 1980 the Abuelita® brand still uses her granny image.

<sup>60</sup> The product was originally created in Mexico in 1963.

<sup>61</sup> Parkin 1.

For example the Philipino Mama Sita brand has presented their brand icon proudly on pack fronts. In 2003 her smiling face appeared plainly with a simple scroll frame. Her photograph identified her as real. By comparison the 2004 revised pack design evidenced a more ornate design where Mama's almost passport-style image was updated and appeared in gold.<sup>62</sup> Here mama was presented as little bit special - where mama was repositioned as glamorous as the brand required that her image was more appealing.

fig. 6.10. and fig. 6.11 This material is unavailable due to copyright restrictions.

A number of international brands fondly operate through their mother status. Cultural stereotypes such as the Italian mamma, a generous cook and powerful matriarch, can offer established associations that help reference place of origin and provide authoritative endorsement for certain food brands. Whilst the title of mother may vary depending upon cultural preferences and language, a generic type and a formulaic visual design approach is apparent. For example in Thailand mae means mother or elder female and the term adds a sense of authority and familiarity when used by a brand. However whilst many brands use this title and their specific mae icon to make distinct and different their identity, the range of mae icons that exist appear to evidence a generic design-type formula: ironically creating brand identities very similar in name and design

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<sup>62</sup> The frame includes geographical mapping reference and tree and plant details to add a national identity to this Philippines based company.

- a sisterhood not dissimilar to the Betty Crocker clones of the 1940's and 1950's discussed in Chapter 8.<sup>63</sup>

For example the Maekrua® brand uses the photograph of a woman cooking with its product as identity. The label's droste effect design reinforces the brand's packaging identity. The brand name is literally translated by this image: Ma Krua in Thai means female cook, a female household servant. Whilst non-Thai consumers may be unable to understand the written language of the label, the icon gives meaning and illustrates the product's use. Further Thai brand mother icons include, Mae Pranom, Maepranom brand,<sup>64</sup> original owner and creator of many Thai food recipes depicted photographically on all packaging and advertisements since 1957.<sup>65</sup> Suchart Pasaprates, the company's Chief Executive, observed that the brand's packaging continues to be the most important aspect of the products' promotion<sup>66</sup> and claims "Back in those days, none of [the] manufacturers used "their own photograph" as an image in their brands" and states that the uniqueness of Maepranom's face is important to the company's identity and the consumer's awareness of the brand's "pioneer."<sup>67</sup>

The image of mother, a symbol of domesticity, communicates trust, tradition, love, care and reliability: valuable positive connotations for a brand. As "loving protector"<sup>68</sup> mother is a natural provider, a nurturer and feeder of families. As Dichter observed "(...) people look back with nostalgia at the days when things were done for you with thoughtfulness and care. The long hours that our mothers used to spend in the kitchen signified to us how much she loved us. The greater amount of personal effort she used to exert, the greater we felt her

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<sup>63</sup> Thai brands that use mae in their identity as name and image include Maesri; Maepranom; Maekrua® and Mae Ploy.

<sup>64</sup> The Maepranom Brand is owned by the Thai Chili Paste Co. Limited, Thailand. The brand's products are available internationally and notably sold in all the countries in Asia. The company design their own packaging.

<sup>65</sup> Suchart Pasaprates Executive Director: Phiboonchai Maepranom Thai Chili Paste Co. Limited. Srimar Lisawad, Message to author, 6 May 2006. E-mail.

<sup>66</sup> Pasaprates, Message to author.

<sup>67</sup> Pasaprates, Message to author.

<sup>68</sup> Goffman 5.

love for us.”<sup>69</sup> Such nostalgia is perhaps elicited by the mother-type brands that offer food ready for easy cooking: traditional reliable food by a generous family figure that is to be trusted. Such figures are used by a number of brands internationally.

#### **6.4.1.3. Aunt**

Aunt, often used as a term of endearment, is example of an other matriarchal figure that features as brand icon. The Aunt title works as an indicator for respect and sign of friendly authority. She gives her name to the brand – no wedding ring perhaps suggests her spinster status; no surname suggests her open friendly role. She offers support to home cooking; but does not take role as head cook. Her food offers helpful contribution and her depiction provides reassurance. She can be read as a benevolent character who can be accepted as our family member. Her depiction may vary but she remains smiling and ready to cook. The Aunt’s image is perhaps younger than the grandmother to delineate her different responsibilities. She shares certain traits with mother but she takes a different role. As aunt she can relate to everyone; a freer agent not bound by marriage or her own family perhaps, she is the family member that can pop in to the home when needed rather than being the continuous housewife, mother or wife. The aunt could be read as the one that adds the extra; a time-honored figure that is respected and loved and can bring to the home traditional food that is as good as mother’s. The different social constructs and relationships of family membership across cultures however does mean meanings can shift and be angled differently. The term Aunt can have different connotations which can position differently the understanding of related images. For example Jewell discussed the term „auntie“ or „aunty“ in relation to the consideration of representations of black womanhood and noted that in America the term was first used in 1792 (prior to the use of the term mammy) and held the connotations of “affection”, a “mild and pleasant manner” and “an old

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<sup>69</sup> Dichter and IMR, “A Psychological Research Study on the Sales & Advertising Problems of Betty Crocker Crustquick.” 4, submitted by Knox Reeves Advertising, Minneapolis n.d. IMR Dichter qtd. in Parkin 43.

nurse”.<sup>70</sup> Whilst some meanings may still be held, the term Aunt, like others, can shift in definition and association over time.

Perhaps the most distinct and successful Aunt brand icon is the fictitious Aunt Jemima (USA); the image of a black woman that has generated mixed readings and much criticism of her visual depiction. This thesis recognises that a number of established studies have interrogated this example with significant rigour and have provided distinct scrutiny of her visual representation.<sup>71</sup> For example, Jewell’s analysis of the “visual development” of Aunt Jemima, as a stereotype and as “a symbol of black womanhood”, offered perceptive consideration and significant criticism of this charged symbol.<sup>72</sup> Therefore this thesis does not attempt to duplicate established literature but does acknowledge its contribution to the understanding of the coded readings of people-types and does take reference from established findings accordingly.

The examination of Aunt Jemima evidences the importance of the consideration of the reading of examples in relation to their social, cultural and historical contexts. Created in 1890 in America and originally represented as a mammy-cook, and then revised in 1989 to appear as a more contemporary business-like figure, consumers outside of the immediate culture and historical period may not recognise or understand the particular issues of her representation. Jewell concluded that early images of Aunt Jemima were of an “erroneous conceptualization and distorted perspective” and were “detrimental” to images of black women.<sup>73</sup> The negative connotations of a race stereotype with the associations of slavery and prejudice are perhaps better understood by, or bear greater relevance to, American audiences who culturally can relate to the specifics of the mammy image. However wider audiences will

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<sup>70</sup> Karen Sue Warren Jewell, *An Analysis of the Visual Development of a Stereotype: the Media’s Portrayal of Mammy and Aunt Jemima as Symbol of Black Womanhood* (Ohio: Ohio State U., 1976).

<sup>71</sup> For discussions see: Jewell; M.M. Manring, *Slave in a Box: The Strange Carer of Aunt Jemima*. (Charlottesville: U. Press of Virginia, 1998); Marilyn Kern-Foxworth, “Kitchen to American Icon: Aunt Jemima.” *Public Relations Review*. 16.8. (1990): 55-67; Marilyn Kern-Foxworth, *Aunt Jemima, Uncle Ben, and Rastus: Blacks in Advertising, Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow*. (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1994); Donald Bogel, *Donald. Toms, Coons, Mulattoes, Mammies and Bucks*. (New York: Viking Press, Inc., 1973).

<sup>72</sup> Jewel 2.

<sup>73</sup> Jewell 2.

make sense of such connotations although their standpoint experience may be less direct. Thus the visual codes of images are stacked with connotations that have significant social and cultural ramifications that can spin the understanding of an icon in to different contexts for consideration.

Jewell equated the mammy-styled Aunt Jemima with the characteristics of the mammy stereotype: “(...) very sentimental, loving, caring, productive and a vital force (...)” “[yet] comical in nature, inept, overbearing and lacking wisdom and intelligence.”<sup>74</sup> The multiple readings that can be made of this brand icon must be noted when other examples are decoded therefore. Whilst the apron, plate and cake (in one of the many historical images of Aunt Jemima) may communicate cook and mother, the roots of the image may give far greater and more concerning reference. People-types therefore carry significant social and cultural baggage that can shape their meaning.

#### **6.4.1.4. Fictitious brand icon example: Aunt Bessie**

The Aunt Bessie's brand, established in the UK in 1995, provides contemporary example of *Aunt* and *cook-housewife* as fictitious brand icon.<sup>75</sup> This successful frozen foods brand presents its illustrated matriarchal icon as name and image across its marketing. Her image features upon the packaging is featured in press and television advertisements.<sup>76</sup> This cheerful, friendly, middle aged woman is depicted cooking.<sup>77</sup> The icon presents her food to us accompanied by her name in script as if her signature. Referred to as their „character“, the company explains that Aunt Bessie was created to represent a cook, though not by profession, who provides meals for her family at home.<sup>78</sup> As McColl, Assistant Brand Manager, explained, within the brand she's developed a personality as a reliable “care giver, nurturer, who is “very much into looking

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<sup>74</sup> Jewell 8.

<sup>75</sup> Aunt Bessie's Limited is part of the William Jackson Group. The brand was formerly owned by Tryton Foods Limited.

<sup>76</sup> Aunt Bessie's marketing includes advertising, packaging and sponsorship of Yorkshire organisations. The current television advertisements feature nosey neighbours Margaret and Mabel as characters.

<sup>77</sup> Aunt Bessie was identified as 55-60 years old by Rachel McColl, Assistant Brand Manager. Rachel McColl, Message to author, 9 Apr. 2009 E-mail.

<sup>78</sup> McColl.

after the family.”<sup>79</sup> The traditional image of woman-as-cook is used to identify the traditional foods manufactured.

Bessie’s title as Aunt reinforces the brand’s family values as this friendly old-fashioned name communicates a potentially comfortable relationship with the consumer. The term commonly used as an acknowledgement of a close relative allows Bessie to operate as a generic friend who can be part of our family, through her food, if we choose. It appears that the fictitious Aunt Bessie plays a very real part in the lives of her consumers; wider than just the sale of her products. Her friendly openness, and thus that of the brand, is further enhanced by her wider, apparently altruistic, activities. As sponsor of local organisations Bessie’s aunt-qualities are extended across her local communities.<sup>80</sup>

The original illustration of Aunt Bessie (fig.6.12) suggested a slightly older woman (potentially grandmother) compared with her revised depiction on the redesigned packaging in 2007 (fig.6.13).<sup>81</sup> Both the original and the updated Bessie present an apron-clad woman cradling a bowl.<sup>82</sup> In the revised design she is positioned within a kitchen, as McColl commented “to pop her in a bit of context” where before she had none.<sup>83</sup> This imagery enhances the icon’s profile and story. The illustration depicts a traditional kitchen with what can be viewed as classic cooking accoutrements: (potentially) a non-electric kettle; Cornish ware jars and traditional scales. As cooking indicators the items appear to evidence that Aunt Bessie’s foods are traditional and homemade by her. This fiction was further played out through the company’s website which was presented as Aunt Bessie’s cookbook with entries made by her.<sup>84</sup>

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<sup>79</sup> McColl.

<sup>80</sup> In 2009 Aunt Bessie also worked with Help the Aged and Age Concern on the Great Sunday Lunch campaign 2009.

<sup>81</sup> The new Bessie had the Peter Pan collar and sleeve trim of her top clipped away to appear more modern. Her position upon the packaging moved from pack top left to pack top right whilst her name remained relatively central to ensure its prominence.

<sup>82</sup> The original version of Bessie depicted a classic Cornish-ware bowl which was then replaced by a white bowl, thus suggesting more modern cook ware and a more contemporary character perhaps. The Aunt Bessie image appears upon five of the 6 box surfaces in some products.

<sup>83</sup> McColl. In 2007 the logo was revised. It abandoned the classic ribbon scroll motif formerly used and presented Aunt Bessie’s name in a more modern type style upon what appears to be a plate.

<sup>84</sup> The website depicted this in 2009. The website has subsequently been updated and the personal diary approach has been dropped in favour of real aunts featured as brand endorsers.

Aunt Bessie is positioned to provide family meals and she communicates the brand's convenience message to busy consumers across international markets too as her products are now sold in numerous countries.<sup>85</sup> It can be taken that her name and the classic iconography of housewife-cook-family member work successfully across cultures: the symbol enables effective translation of the food brand. Whether real or fiction, Bessie appears to exist successfully as McColl reported, the company receives many letters from customers thanking Bessie for their food and a few write to her as if she is real. Globally audiences can recognise her role and draw meaning and nourishment from her guise. Advertised as „a helping hand” she is positioned to support the family but does not claim or threaten to take the place of the household cook.<sup>86</sup> Aunt Bessie can perhaps be seen to play on nostalgic association through the use of a stereotype. She suggests mother-like qualities and offers food ready for easy cooking ...traditional reliable food by a generous and trusted family member.

The maternal images of grandmother, mother and aunt cannot be divorced from the established social and cultural constructs of gender representation and the associated meanings and indeed tensions that such images reflect and present. Whilst homely, welcoming images, these symbols of domesticity perpetuate associated meanings and indeed tensions. They may be seen to reflect certain ideologies that some consumers may find dated or inappropriate. The location of woman-in-kitchen could be a core message read, suggesting a particular „ social status, however in a number of instances their position as company founder or product originator could elevate their social standing.

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<sup>85</sup> Mc Coll confirmed that the Aunt Bessie's product range is sold in the UK; Republic of Ireland; Canada; Middle East; Far East Asia; Australia and Europe.



fig. 6.12 .



fig. 6.13

Thus Cooke's observation of the "timeless appeal" of maternal-like figures used to promote food products is borne out and confirmed through this study's investigation of contemporary examples across wider cultural contexts.<sup>87</sup>

Contemporary brand icons such Aunt Bessie draw upon and perpetuate the use of historically entrenched gender and social stereotypes to create meaning and transfer value to their products. Not only timeless, the use of such icons suggests that they are perhaps tireless; that companies and consumers accept the continuation of this marketing strategy.

#### **6.4.2. Founders and Product Originators**

Traditionally many food brands have used the name of their company's founder or product originator as their identity. These eponymous brands operate through the names and faces of people who in many instances are historic yet live on brand in name and also, on occasion, through their signature, portrait and biography upon the packaging design. Company founders' faces can provide unique identity and bestow important associative qualities and values to their brands and "namesake products".<sup>88</sup> A brand's founder and history can convey meanings of quality, success, trust – an established product.

The company founder/product originator as brand icon featured upon packaging is a well-established marketing strategy that dates back to the 1870's when

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<sup>87</sup> Nathalie Cooke, "Getting the Mix Right for the Canadian Home Baker," *Essays on Canadian Writing*. 78 (Winter 2003):192-219.

<sup>88</sup> Joseph F. Fucini and Suzy Fucini, *Entrepreneurs: the Man and Women Behind Famous Brand Names and How They Made It* (Boston: G.K. Hall, 1985) 131.

manufacturers aimed establish their company identity and make distinct their products. Today this tradition continues as brands old and new proudly present their founder's portraits as key brand identity.

As examples within this category have been found to be predominantly real people and then a tangent to the thesis focus the consideration of this area is not pursued here. (Discussion and Table 5 is provided in Appendix C).

### **6.4.3. Maid**

Traditionally within food marketing, and notably upon food packaging, a range of maids have existed as brand characters and icons.<sup>89</sup> The generic maid is an established stereotype that is usually understood as a servant, domestic worker or unmarried female and has commonly been identified by her particular uniform.<sup>90</sup> As Hill observed "Maids and cooks were popular representations of the working woman in early-twentieth-century ads"<sup>91</sup> as their imagery communicated help and care. Today the notion of maid is somewhat dated as social and cultural shifts in attitudes to gender roles have changed and the traditional servant role has diminished significantly. Interestingly however a variety of maid brand icons exist as brands continue to use their established maid imagery as important identity of their origin and product type.

This study identifies and differentiates three distinct categories of traditional maid-types through its consideration of the visual representation of their costume and location: the *country maid* located in rustic setting (and within this category the *dairy maid* can be positioned too); the *domestic maid* located in the home; and the *national maid* that relates to, and represents, her country of origin. The following discussion considers the visual nuances of examples and how their meaning relates to brands. It provides consideration of particular brand icon examples to illustrate the distinct differences yet enduring existence of key examples – all of which are fictitious.

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<sup>89</sup> Hill 181.

<sup>90</sup> "Definition of maid in English", Oxford Dictionaries, 2004, Oxford University Press. n.pag. Web. 2 Jan.2004.

<sup>91</sup> Hill 181.

The *country maid* is depicted upon food packaging: wearing apron, bonnet and blouse her dress connotes work, tradition and potentially nostalgia. She is usually represented with an outdoor backdrop as such imagery helps to frame the context of her work and to suggest the natural source of her products.<sup>92</sup> Generally depicted as youthful and beautiful, the country maid's smiling face gives reassurance of the fruits of her happy labour that she usually presents proudly to us on a tray or in a basket. These visual cues suggest a rich and bountiful harvest of fresh ingredients or homemade produce. Notably the maid is rarely empty handed: she always holds her food or its natural ingredients. For example Elovena (Raisio, Finland) oats maid has appeared upon packaging since the 1920's and she gleefully clasps her basket (fig. 6.14).<sup>93</sup> The company stated "The harvesting girl was, and is, a symbol of the pure Nordic nature"<sup>94</sup> and "Our Elovena girl is an iconic presentation of the brand".<sup>95</sup> The Elovena maid is comparable with the Ovaltine maid featured upon the malt drink brand's packaging (fig. 6.15) and advertising from c. 1950's to the c.1980's.<sup>96</sup> Ovaltine's Swiss origin was referenced by the maid's costume and her sheaf of barley and basket of eggs related to the product's ingredients. Her image emphasised the brand's claim of "natural country goodness" and her look was typical of comparable brand maids.<sup>97</sup>

Across different cultures the generic country maid is made nation-specific through particular dress characteristics: the iconography of national dress. Ultimately the maid remains easily identifiable in role type owing to established and shared cross-cultural visual language and understanding. As ethnic indicator, this maid communicates tradition and the handmade across a range

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<sup>92</sup> The 1980's Ovaltine drink label used the Ovaltine Maid brand icon and the packaging identified that the drink's taste came from „the natural country goodness“ of the ingredients.

<sup>93</sup> The maid was originally dressed in a regional costume and was a brunette. In 1958 she became a blonde in a national costume. Raisio. "85-year-old Elovena fostering the art of wise eating." n.d. Raisio, n.p. Web. 2 Jan. 2012.

<sup>94</sup> Raisio, Web. 2 Jan. 2012.

<sup>95</sup> "Elovena History. n.d. Raisio, n.pag. Web. Web. 21 May 2011.

<sup>96</sup> Ovaltine was created in 1904 by Dr. Wander in Switzerland. The Ovaltine company's current owners have been unable to confirm when the Ovaltine maid was first introduced. The company's website confirms that the "Ovaltine „Lady“ was reintroduced on new packaging in 1974." Ovaltine. "Once Upon a Time" n.d. Ovaltine. n.p. Web.12.Dec. 2009 In the UK the brand was acquired by Twinings in 2003 and the Customers Services Team confirmed that the archival material from the previous owners is not held by the new owners. Customers Services Team. "Ovaltine," Message to author, 2 Feb. 2012 E-mail.

<sup>97</sup> The maid was absent upon the back of the packaging however the product's ingredients are referenced visually in the context of a harvest scene.

of food types, for example the *dairy maid* has been widely used to represent cheese upon packaging where country of origin is indicated by her costume. The maid appears as fresh and healthy and, depending upon the brand's personality and cultural stereotypes may be presented in a particular way. For example some Mediterranean brand maids appear as sultry, buxom beauties: pure yet quietly seductive. For example the Italian *La Palma* brand<sup>98</sup> presents a Sophia Loren-type beauty, complete with big gold hoop earrings, to add peasant glamour (fig. 6.16). Likewise the Italian De Cecco pasta brand presents its maid embracing the source of the brand's pasta; and in earlier promotion, she was depicted holding the brand's very packaging (fig 6.17).

In comparison their Scandinavian *sisters* often appear more cool and restrained, as illustrated by the „Primula girl“ icon that operated as the brand's identity from 1929 to 2004.<sup>99</sup> The brand's distinct semi-circular box with the dairymaid (holding primula flowers) and a mountain backdrop were important representation of the brand's values. As Ridley (Kavli Assistant Product Manager) commented, the Primula girl offered a “friendly, soft approach” to the brand.”<sup>100</sup> However as Ridley confirmed “Consumers identified the „dairy maid“ as being a major factor in considering the brand as “old fashioned“ (...) Many thought the brand was Dutch or Swiss and was certainly foreign.”<sup>101</sup> Subsequently, owing to consumer perceptions and changing markets the brand's image was redesigned to meet contemporary consumer tastes. Like the Ovaltine maid that disappeared, the Primula maid was removed in 2004 and was replaced by a cartoon mouse character.<sup>102</sup> Whilst the Primula identity has changed the Primula girl may be fondly remembered by some and may be seen as always synonymous with the brand (fig. 6.18).

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<sup>98</sup> La Palma brand Boiled butter beans can (Franzese s.r.l., Italy, 2009).

<sup>99</sup> Kavli's cheese brand *Primula* was founded by Olav Kavli in Norway in 1924. It featured the „the *Primula* girl“ on its packaging and advertisements.<sup>99</sup>

<sup>100</sup> Emma Ridley, “Primula Maid,” Kavli Ltd., UK. Message to the author. 4 Aug. 2009. E-mail.

<sup>101</sup> Ridley Message to the author.

<sup>102</sup> The Ovaltine company were unable to confirm when the maid was removed as its identity.



This material is unavailable due to copyright restrictions.

fig. 6.14

fig. 6.15



fig. 6.16



fig. 6.17

fig. 6.18 This material is unavailable due to copyright restrictions.

The iconography of the maid that we understand through our wider social and cultural experiences has been used in food marketing across countries and timespans. In many instances the maid makes reference to the past and the brand's history and national and geographical location to garner additional

meaning. For example the American *Land O'Lakes* brand presents its Indian *Maiden* icon in reference to the company's historical location: her indicative provenance presents patriotic and historic association that the brand relates to accordingly.<sup>103</sup> The *Indian Maiden* is slightly different to the maids of other countries: her indigenous identity has perhaps more complex connotations of history and race. She kneels and presents her goods as if trading with us and her Indian dress communicates key messages. As Parkin observed the use of "Native American Indian stereotypes provide reference to American heritage, [and] romantic imagery (...)"<sup>104</sup> and Hale, designer of the maiden's most recent packaging (c.2003), observed "[She] is truly part of the heritage of the land and is presented with reverence and respect" and her image "instantly tells a story without using words."<sup>105</sup> Thus this maiden has strong cultural associations that make the image potentially emotionally and politically charged and she is a powerful cultural symbol used for commercial work.<sup>106</sup> (fig. 6.19)



fig . 6.19

Some maid icons have been used when brands have developed mythic histories, drawing upon wider cultural tales and events. For example *Baker Chocolate Company's La Belle Chocolatière* brand icon (USA) relates to the supposed true 18<sup>th</sup> century tale of a maid that worked in a chocolate shop who

<sup>103</sup> Land O'Lakes brand was founded in 1921 in Minnesota and the Indian Maiden was created in 1928. She relates to the indigenous people of the company's location. Today she appears across the brand's dairy product range. Her image was revised in the 1930's, 1950's and c. 2003.

<sup>104</sup> Katherine. J. Parkin, *Food Is Love: Advertising and Gender Roles in Modern America* (U. of Philadelphia: Pennsylvania Press, 2006) 71.

<sup>105</sup> Bruce Hale, "Land o'Lakes packaging design." Telephone interview, 7 June 2013.

<sup>106</sup> Parkin 71.

married an Austrian Prince.<sup>107</sup> This romantic history, although not of the brand's family, has been referenced by the domestic maid's image upon the packaging since 1883: a maid serving chocolate upon a tray. This image endures and is claimed by the company as the "oldest product trademark in America" although today a more flattened maid silhouette is used.<sup>108</sup> Interestingly this *domestic maid* inspired the Dutch confectionery brand Droste's 1900 trademark; the recursive image of a nurse holding a tray with a Droste cocoa tin (fig. 6.20).<sup>109</sup>

Similarly *Rowntrees*® Cocoa trademark (Nestlé), as featured on the brand's packaging since c.1945, echoes La Belle Chocolatière image.<sup>110</sup> The image of the „serving girl" with chocolate pot on tray was taken "(...) from "The White Rose of York" 1891 painting by Walter West"<sup>111</sup> that referenced the company's location as Hutchinson confirmed "The painting is meant to be a metaphor for York serving the nation cocoa."<sup>112</sup> This maid has appeared in different versions, for example as illustration in c.1925-1965's and as original painting (fig. 6.21 and 6.22).<sup>113</sup> The 2011 packaging featured the original portrait subtly on the side of its canisters although its presence and symbolic reference may not be recognised by consumers.<sup>114</sup> Thus competing brands use very similar images to sell very similar products. In most instances the maids indicate brand heritage and the successful use of people trademarks that have endured for decades even though the very notion of maid is now somewhat dated.

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<sup>107</sup> The Walker Baker Chocolate Co. (founded in 1880) maid trademark was registered in 1881 and has been used upon its packaging since 1883. The trademark is the portrait of a waitress by Swiss artist Jean-Étienne Liotard. Sammarco.

<sup>108</sup> "Bakers Chocolate: Story," n.d. Walker Baker Chocolate Co. Kraft Brands. n.pag. Web. 21 Jan. 2011.

<sup>109</sup> This is most probably invented by the commercial artist Jan (Johannes) Musset, who had been inspired by a pastel of the Swiss painter Jean-Étienne Liotard (...). Droste. "1863 -1918 From Confectioner to Chocolate Producer." n.d. Droste. Web. 5 Nov. 2010. The Droste recursive design has become known as the Droste effect.

<sup>110</sup> The product was introduced in 1910.

<sup>111</sup> Alex Hutchinson "Rowntree's Cocoa," Message to author, 11 June 2013. Email.

<sup>112</sup> Hutchinson 2013.

<sup>113</sup> Tin of cocoa: "Rowntree's half pound cocoa", 2011, Hackney Council, n.pag. Web. 13 Dec. 2012.



fig. 6.20



fig. 6.21



fig. 6.22

Thus a bevy of maids operate across international markets, distinguished by their visual appearance and brand name. The maid image apparently works effectively with audiences that can recognise the visual coding and social nuances of its status. Although their costumes may perhaps now appear as dated, as Hill noted, they have enabled brands to avoid updating their characters to have to make them look contemporary;<sup>115</sup> the maid continues to serve. Some maids, such the Sun-Maid (See Appendix F)<sup>116</sup> and the Ovaltine

<sup>115</sup> Hill 76.

<sup>116</sup> Appendix F discusses fictitious case study Sun-maid and comparable brand maids.

Dairy Maid,<sup>117</sup> have operated as *brand icon*; their image core to the brand's identity, whilst others have provided decoration and visual *character* to enhance the brand's appeal. However, as evidenced, brand maids appear to have no personal name: they take the brand's name as it appears that their servile role that takes precedence over their own persona. Thus this category differs from other people-types that are given individual recognition. However for many brands their maid is an enduring icon that operates as a cultural and commercial symbol.

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<sup>117</sup> The British Ovaltine brand was established in 1909 and the maid was created in the 1920's. She appeared on brand packaging from 1974. "Ovaltine" n.d. Kings Langley Local History & Museum Society. n.p. Web. 4 Feb. 2007. Research contact with the Ovaltine Customer Services and Marketing teams identified that the company (current owners Twinings Group) cannot confirm when the Maid was removed as brand identity. Customer Services. (Telephone Interview 15 Jan. 2011).

<b>Maid</b>	<b>Associative values/qualities</b>	<b>Visual characteristics</b>	<b>Identity components</b>	<b>Indicative Food Product types</b>
<b>Traditional / national</b>	Tradition; National dress; National identity; Customs; values Purity; Honesty; truth; value; dance Heritage; Old Fashioned; spinster Reliable; Consistent; old & wise; safe Quality & authentic; young & pretty; Happy; smiling; loyal; trustworthy	Face – serious or smiling  Old fashioned Clothing  Apron  Long skirt  Bonnet Tray  National costume	Illustration Potential inclusion of national emblem Product also featured to make specific the maid from others	Dairy Produce Fruit & Vegetable Produce Natural produce
<b>Country</b>	Tradition; heritage; Old Fashioned National dress; Regional identity Skilled; Customs; Traditional values Purity; Honesty; diligent; reliable Vitality; freshness; untainted; simple	<b>As above and:</b> Basket Natural foods Mountains Fields, lakes Sky, sun Scenery	Potential inclusion of national emblem Field/rural /outside location/items Holding ingredients of produce	Dairy Produce Fruit & Vegetable Produce Natural produce
<b>Domestic Servant</b>	Purity; Honesty; diligence; reliability Subservient; Professional; spinster; unmarried Trustworthy; young; formal; jovial	Apron Bonnet Tray Cup Face – serious or smiling	Image only – not necessarily identified by name	Drinks – eg. hot chocolate
<b>Commercial Assistant</b>	Honesty; diligence; reliability Subservient; pleased to serve Professional; skilled	Uniform Face – serious or smiling	Name Signature	Potentially any product
<b>Historical</b>	Honesty; diligence; reliability. Subservient; pleased to serve; Tradition; heritage; old fashioned National dress; National identity. Customs; traditional values; Quality and authentic	National dress Lace Hat, basket, tray Period costume Face – serious or smiling	Image only – not necessarily identified by name	Potentially any product

**Table 6. Category: Maid People-type on food packaging: indicative associative values and qualities and characteristics.**

#### **6.4.4. Workers**

The depiction of company workers on packaging can communicate a brand's heritage, an established loyal workforce, and staff pride and commitment to the brand. The employees (usually) anonymous and smiling, either individuals or teams, pose in uniforms that help to identify their role. Their image emphasises the origin and manufacture of the product, indicating the human element with potential handmade connotations and the idea that the business is friendly and family-like. Different to the company founder as they have no claims to the creation of the brand or product, the workers can be seen as stakeholders; their investment in the brand is their hard work and commitment to its quality and success. Their images therefore operate as a personal and professional indication and reassurance of value.

It has been found that the depiction of workers is usually that of real people therefore discussion and supporting Table 7 is located in Appendix D.

#### **6.4.5. Expert/Professional**

The expert or professional are used to imbue the product with their professional experience, qualifications and judgment. They bring to the brand their authority and provide endorsement of its quality and worth. The types of professionals that appear on packaging depend upon the context of the food type. For example chefs may be evidenced on meal products, cake mixes and products that make meals – sauces and condiments for example. As professionals they are assumed to have the skill to advise us. If they present their own brand product our expectations will be raised in terms of the product's quality.

The expert may be a celebrity or the brand icon may take the guise of expert status by donning their stereotypical dress. For example the fictitious chef may communicate their professional credentials through the chef hat. Some professionals, such as the home economists discussed in Chapter 8, do not rely upon uniform codes but may operate their status through identified title.

The consideration of experts is addressed in Chapter 7 and Chapter 8.

Discussion of the Chef and the Celebrity as expert and Table 8 that identifies the expert/professional characteristics is placed in the Appendix D and E.

## Summary

This chapter has examined key people-types brand icons and characters on contemporary food packaging as identified by their specific visual idiosyncratic characteristics. It established that distinct shared visual codes are used by brand icons to communicate key messages that are understood by consumers, across time, cultures and countries. This chapter presented an initial taxonomy of people-types and considered particular category types and group members that evidenced their own identifying visual characteristics.

The chapter's findings identified that through the formulaic coded names and appearance of people on packaging, consumers can derive meaning from images which can then be applied to a brand and its product/s. Consumers have learnt the process by which people's images operate and communicate, in part through their knowledge of the use of such imagery historically, and also from their experience of such images across further marketing contexts and wider cultural and social experiences.

The taxonomy helps to confirm that people types as visual symbols can work across cultures when their meaning is understood: that their visual identities carry meaning, cultural and commercial values, which can transcend historical and cultural boundaries of language and identity. Whilst sharing comparable looks examples can retain their particular individualism through specific differences. This taxonomy presents an original framework that does not purport to be exclusive or complete in its identification of people-types. The taxonomy could be used to develop further research into the use of the identified categories of people in relation to wider product ranges and additional people types. The findings of this chapter relate to the previous chapters' consideration of people on packaging and the representation and meanings of people on packaging. Chapter 8 builds upon the findings of this chapter to address its consideration of the specific category of fictitious female home economist.

## CHAPTER 7

### CROSS CULTURAL BRAND ICONS: CASE STUDIES

#### 7.1. Introduction

This chapter considers two specific fictitious brand icons: frozen food hero Captain Birdseye (1967- , Permira, UK)<sup>1</sup> and the enigmatic Elsa's Story (c. 2002- , Elsa's Story, Israel). The examination of these two very different examples is provided to consider the existence of enduring enigmatic icons and to evaluate how the visual identity of some brand icons can enable them to travel across historical and international spheres and to transcend cultural boundaries of language. Captain Birds Eye relates to the taxonomy's category of Expert/Professional (Table 7) and Elsa can be seen to work across key categories or, in true enigmatic fashion, can be seen to transcend or elude all categories. Uniquely Elsa is a fictitious brand icon that changes her identity visually across the brand's packaging and as such offers distinct case study for this investigation.

#### 7.2. Fisherman, Sailor and Sea Captain: Captain Birds Eye

This study's taxonomy identified the categories of Worker (Table 6) and Expert/Professional (Table 7) that are populated by people-types that visually communicate distinct associated roles and can be identified as having related character traits: skilled; reliable; hardworking; trustworthy and loyal. The additional associations identified, such as heroic and strong may be seen to relate to particular jobs, for example the manual worker. In both categories further characteristics may straddle a range of roles and members of each category may be considered to represent shared attributes such as experience and workmanship: tradition and quality. The status of the work, the person's career ranking, can define the particular traits that a brand icon embodies and their visual representation. In some instances the worker illustrates the food type and origin, for example the farmer or factory worker, whilst the

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<sup>1</sup> This icon exists with different names across different countries.

<b>Expert/ professional</b>	<b>Associative values/qualities</b>	<b>Visual characteristics</b>	<b>Identity components</b>	<b>Indicative Food Product Types</b>
<b>Sea Captain;  Fisherman</b>	Skilled; experienced; reliable hardworking; heroic; trustworthy tradition; fresh; quality; Strength; masculine; older; rugged	Beard; ship; wheel; Captain's cap with badge Pipe; Smiling or serious sou'wester tattoo; anchor;	Captain status - name	Seafood  Strong tasting  (Alcohol – rum)
<b>Chef;  Cook;  baker;  butcher</b>	Skilled; tradition; quality Hand selected Best quality Confident Trustworthy; reliable	Smiling Key clothing/uniform Cooking utensils/tools Kitchen location With produce	Name potentially  Illustration or photograph	Any food – but not fruit and vegetable
<b>Retailer/ Grocer</b>	Professional advice; direct; male; trustworthy; reliable; knowledgeable; Friendly; busy; talkative; cheery	Rotund; older; apron; overcoat; hat; Male; Shelves; counter; scales	Illustration or photograph	Any food
<b>Home Economist</b>	Professional; trained; qualified; skilled; experienced Sound advice; reassurance Best practice; female;	Woman's face	Image of woman: illustration  Name potentially	Any – but potentially large company/  mass produced.

**Table: 7** Category: Expert/Professional people-types on food packaging: indicative associative values and qualities and characteristics.

experienced and qualified expert can operate as key brand authority; the definitive professional who is responsible for and leads the brand.

As workers and experts the familiar faces of the generic fisherman, sailor and sea captain continue to be used across seafood-related brands internationally.<sup>2</sup> Such images can be viewed as figureheads that reference the specific roles and values equated with key maritime work. The images generally represent skill and heroic endeavor and imply integrity, reliability and dependability; key qualities that may be associated with the product and brand accordingly. The nautical characters perpetuate a traditional image of professional seafarers evident in many cultures. Specific signifiers are used in their visual depiction. For example the moustache and beard communicate masculinity, maturity and a certain ruggedness; perhaps suggesting a traditional outdoor worker. The archetypal bearded sailor has connotations of a salty sea dog: a strength, tradition and history that can season a brand accordingly, for example the bearded sailor icon for Player's Navy Cut cigarettes remains a marketing classic (fig.7.1).<sup>3</sup> Key dress codes add further symbolic value to characters' identification. Generally there appears to be two approaches where role and rank are depicted through specific uniform costumes. The fisherman's sou'wester and polo necked seaman's jersey are synonymous with sea fishing in many cultures and communicate *fisherman*, such as depicted upon the Fisherman's Friend lozenges tin in c.2000 (fig.7.2). A naval uniform (or pseudo-costume) indicates *a captain* where his rank and superiority give command to the brand.<sup>4</sup>

A range of fisherman and sea captain icons have featured proudly upon food packaging. Some, such as Sifta Sam the Sailor of Sifta Salt brand, were created as fictitious cartoons;<sup>5</sup> others exist as real people, though not brand icon. For

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<sup>2</sup> Non-seafood brands also use such figures.

<sup>3</sup>The logo was created in c.1891 by John Player and Sons. "Navy Cut" cigarettes and HERO." n.d. Naval Marine Archive: The Canadian Collection. n.p. Web. 12 Dec. 2013.

<sup>4</sup> On occasion characters can relate to the image of a pirate for example the Captain Morgan rum brand icon (Diageo). His visual depiction, bandanna, hoop earring and lengthy locks, alludes to a less restrained seafarer and his character is based upon the real 17<sup>th</sup> century buccaneer Captain Henry Morgan.

<sup>5</sup> The Sifta brand was owned by Palmer Mann and Company Limited, UK. Sam the Sailor featured on Sifta packaging and advertising from c.1950's through to the 1970's. Sifta Sam

example the Waitrose frozen cod fillet packaging in 2009 featured the photograph of an old fisherman working on a boat to suggest freshly caught fish and to add a personal connection to the pack's food shot (fig. 7.3). Likewise the REAL™ potato crisps packaging in 2010 used the illustration of a bearded fisherman prominently on its sea salt flavour packs. The archetypal image provided quick reference to the flavour yet whilst offering visual taste of the brand he was not its icon (fig. 7.4).

Many seafood brand icons endure as fictitious people: plausibly real. For example, the American frozen fish company Gorton's Inc., has a fictitious fisherman icon.<sup>6</sup> He wears a sou'wester and yellow jacket and steers a traditional ship's wheel which suggests qualities of control and endeavor. He sports the generic beard and looks out to sea with determination from his vantage points on frozen food packaging, the company website and all advertising material (fig.7.5).

The Canadian frozen seafood High Liner brand (High Liner Foods) has used Captain High Liner as its icon (fig. 7.6).<sup>7</sup> As the company's website explained "The term "High Liner" was first used in the 1850's to describe a fishing captain with a reputation for bringing home the best fish."<sup>8</sup> The Captain therefore represents best quality and he features across the brand's packaging, website and advertising. Upon the packaging his illustrated head and shoulder portrait is framed by the brand logo: a simple white outline of a fish (which also features upon his cap). This logo is positioned top right on the pack front. The middle-aged bearded Captain wears the identifying seafaring uniform; cap, navy peacoat and turtleneck sweater. The Captain's blue eyes emphasises the logo which further reflect a blue sea association; fresh and natural. The coat and cap

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wore a cap with anchor symbol upon it, smoked a pipe and held a telescope under his arm. His name was clearly featured upon his blue top.

<sup>6</sup> Gorton's Inc., USA, was established in 1849. According to the company, the fisherman, the company's official trademark, was inspired by the painting „Man at Wheel" purchased by the founder's son in 1905.

<sup>7</sup> High Liner Foods was founded in 1899 and its High Liner brand was founded in 1926. High Liner. n.d. n.p. Web. 8 Feb. 2009.

<sup>8</sup>High Liner. Captain's Message. n.d. High Liner. n.p. Web. 8 Feb, 2009.

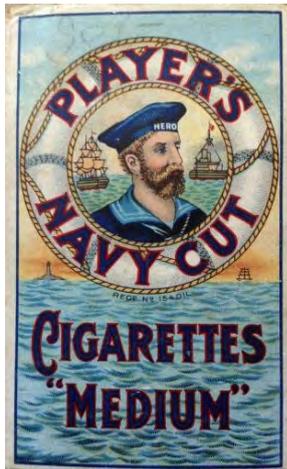


fig. 7.1



fig. 7.2

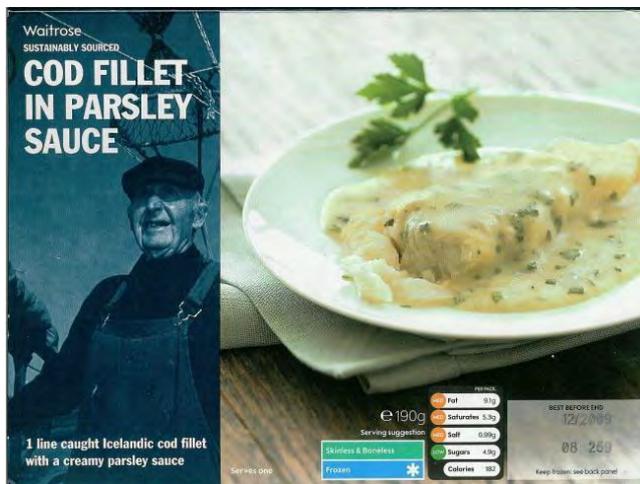


fig. 7.3

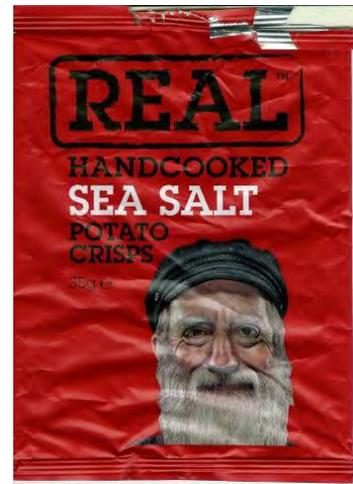


fig. 7.4

fig. 7.5 This material is unavailable due to copyright restrictions.

do not identify specific badged status but allude to the skipper who is responsible for the brand. The brand claimed that their Captain is popular and noted “Almost every kid in Canada is familiar with High Liner, and its famous Captain High Liner ad campaigns, with most having eaten fish sticks from the company's familiar blue package. It has made this Nova Scotia company a very successful brand name.”<sup>9</sup>

The fictitious Captain smiles gently and has appeared on the company's promotional material in various designs. On the website he is positioned both within the fish logo and outside it; he also appears as the brand's quality guarantee design: a woodcut-style illustration, framed by a life ring. A large illustrated Captain, based upon a photograph, is also featured. The inconsistency of the Captain's visual appearance appears not to be problematic. Upon the packaging he retains a uniform link and makes visual the brand's identity.<sup>10</sup>

fig. 7.6; fig 7.7 and fig. 7.8 This material is unavailable due to copyright restrictions.

### **7.2.1. Fictitious Brand Icon Captain Birds Eye.**

Captain High Liner has strong visual similarities with the icon of the pan-European Birds Eye Frozen Foods brand icon Captain Birds Eye and both play comparable roles in their brand's identity and promotion. Captain Birds Eye is a

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<sup>9</sup> Highliner foods.

<sup>10</sup>In 2010 the High Liner premier product range packaging was redesigned by Anthem Worldwide. Anna Rudenko. Anthem Worldwide Packaging Design for High Liner Foods. n. p. 20 Jan. 2010.

classic example of an enduring icon that is recognised widely internationally.<sup>11</sup> This fictitious icon relates to Clarence Birdseye, an American scientist who invented frozen food in the 1930"s and fish fingers in 1955 and was not a sea captain. This icon was created to communicate fresh fish connotations and he has existed across the brand"s Fish Fingers television and print advertisements and packaging, on and off, since 1967. As Knowles commented "The Captain is shorthand for the brand; an important visual equity for Birds Eye. The Captain enables the consumers to locate and find Birds Eye products quickly."<sup>12</sup>

Captain Birds Eye was created in 1966 by Lintas advertising agency as Birds Eye Fish Fingers had experienced significant competition from a number of companies and the brand aimed to make distinct its products aimed at a children"s market and to communicate to parents the quality of its fish. The classic sea captain"s image was created with the familiar characteristics associated with such professional status; an older man, jovial, with beard and uniform: "The character, wearing full-dress British Merchant Navy uniform, and with a West Country accent, was a kindly figure [sic] authority, a „charming maritime Father Christmas". Jolly and intrepid, he instantly captured the loyalty of the nation"s children."<sup>13</sup>

The icon incorporated appropriate reference to the products" origins; fish from the sea and a professional, experienced seafarer who it could be assumed catches the fish, or at least commands the fleet that does. The nautical figurehead provided an assuring spokesperson as Owen-Edwards commented "In an era when processed foods were viewed with suspicion the campaign needed to appeal to children, but the character and the commercials had to be structured to speak to the adult consumer – the parent who would actually buy the product."<sup>14</sup> The Captain"s depiction identified his profession and rank and his length of service was suggested through his age communicated by his white

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<sup>11</sup> The Birds Eye brand is owned by Perima. It was previously owned by Unilever Ice Cream and Frozen Foods 2003-2006. The brand operates across Europe as part of the Iglo Company.

<sup>12</sup> Andrew Knowles is Senior Designer at Jones Knowles Ritchie, the agency responsible for the redesign of Birds Eye packaging in 2007.

<sup>13</sup> Lesley Owen-Edwards, "Archive collections," Unilever Corporate Archives, UK. Message to the author, 11 Feb. 2005. E-mail.

<sup>14</sup> Owen-Edwards.

beard and wrinkled face. His smile suggested a happy demeanor that was played out by the actor in the television advertisements. The Captain's West Country accent offered a distinct tone; locating the character in a traditional British fishing context. His look communicated tradition, expertise and experience.

For many years Captain Birds Eye starred in "one of the most iconic advertisements in British television advertising history"<sup>15</sup> giving voice to the brand and playful personality to the product. The Captain was played by various actors including John Hewer who was the face of the icon across the brands promotional material.<sup>16</sup> Featured upon the packaging, the face of the Captain became an important marketing tool and the packaging was positioned regularly at the end of advertisements to prompt purchase. However In 1971 the icon was considered to be dated and no longer commercially attractive and the image was removed from all promotion. The decision was made not to just retire the Captain but to kill him off. His death was formally announced and, true to the nature of the mythic reality of a fictitious brand icon, an obituary was placed in *The Times* newspaper on 7 June 1971. It announced "Birds Eye, Captain - On June 7<sup>th</sup> 1971, after long exposure, life just slipped through his fingers. Celebrity and gourmet."<sup>17</sup> The illusion of the Captain's authenticity was thus continued in his obituary. However in 1974 the Captain was recalled for duty and took the wheel once more to steer the brand as the company realised it needed his help to encourage consumers to purchase their fish fingers.<sup>18</sup> To publicise the Captain's reappearance Birds Eye placed an announcement in *The Times* newspaper which read "Birds Eye, Captain: now returned to the

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<sup>15</sup> Anthony Hayward, "John Hewer: Icon of TV advertisements." Obituaries in *The Independent* 20 Mar. 2008:51. The Captain Birds Eye advertisements traditionally offered a storyline where the Captain ensured that the children were fed at his table. The advertisements featured a happy Captain and children in various locations such as a mythical island and on-board his ship. In recent years, as noted by Chiappinelli (2006) the advertisements placed him in more realistic environments.

<sup>16</sup> John Hewer played the Captain from 1967 to 1971 and 1974 to 1998. Other actors that acted as Captain include Thomas Pescod in 1998.

<sup>17</sup> Simon Farquhar, "Obituary: John Hewer," 20 Mar. 2008, *The Guardian*. n.p. Web. 20 Mar. 2008.

<sup>18</sup> Fierce competition and inflation had resulted in Birds Eye fish fingers sales levelling off for the first time and the company recognised the important role their icon could play in developing sales.

shores, a revitalised man. All faculties intact. Wishes to deny premature reports of his demise previously recorded in these columns. We will shortly address the nation re-affirming that his fingers are the ones.”<sup>19</sup> The promotional message, telegram style, offered a firm reassurance that the Captain was back and that his disappearance as previously reported was actually incorrect. Interestingly the statement positioned the Captain as taking issue with his reported demise, thus he was given voice rather than an admission of error by the company. The union of company and their icon was reinforced by the use of „we“ in the statement of proposed action. This clever marketing ploy suggested to consumers that their Captain had been at sea rather than dead. Any potential concern of the Captain’s frailty was dismissed as new life was breathed into the resurrected icon. In this way storytelling as a marketing tactic enabled the company to bring back their icon. The life of the Captain was told through the newspaper text and the new television advertisement “Welcome home Cap’n Birds Eye” that celebrated the Captain’s return.<sup>20</sup> The commercial narrative was therefore developed to re-launch the icon and to create his ongoing adventures.<sup>21</sup>

In 1997 the Birds Eye logo was revised to help update the brand’s identity. As part of this face lift the old Captain was replaced by a more youthful Version. A dark haired attractive designer-stubbled Captain, reportedly his nephew, featured within the television advertisements and the packaging as “Birds Eye’s extensive market research showed that he would appeal more to families”<sup>22</sup> (fig. 7.9 and 7.10) The television advertisement presented the younger Captain, hero-like with his gang (replacing the old *crew*).<sup>23</sup> The retirement of the old Captain (illustrated by Peter Garland) and the introduction

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<sup>19</sup> The Times newspaper on July 22 1974: extract sourced from Unilever Archives 2006.

<sup>20</sup> The Captain was played by John Hewer

<sup>21</sup> The extent of the Captain’s existence is evidenced by his wider marketing activities for example his first radio advertisement was in 1979 and his own story book and tape set „Captain Birds Eye and the Zirdars“ was published in 1988. The Captain was also personified by actor John Hewer at public events. By the early 1980’s Captain Birds Eye’s product range had developed as the Captain’s fayre extended beyond his Fish Fingers. Under the product line *The Captain’s Table* (launched 1984 by Birds Eye Walls Limited) the Captain appeared in the promotion of over 30 fish products and his marketing role was significant. Owen-Edwards.

<sup>22</sup> Unilever Archives, 2006.

of the new was not successful however. As Chiapinelli, Senior Brand Manager, Captain Birds Eye Frozen Foods, commented “(...) consumer trust of the Captain was lost through the new nephew.”<sup>24</sup> The new Captain did not appear to embody the same qualities as his predecessor: he was not trusted by British audiences who had grown up and were familiar with the older character.”<sup>25</sup> The nephew was therefore removed in the UK in 2002 and the older Captain came out of retirement again. The packaging was updated, to be more user-friendly and re-branded with an image of the new Captain, actor Martyn Reid (fig. 7.11 and 7.12).<sup>26</sup>



fig. 7.9



fig. 7.10



fig. 7.11



fig. 7.12

<sup>23</sup> The television advertisements was created by Ammirati Puris Lintas/ Lowe Lintas and the Captain was played by actor played by Thomas Pescod. The potential sensitivity or impropriety of showing the older Captain with children may have been a concern for the brand at a time when social attitudes regarding child welfare were heightened.

<sup>24</sup> Chiapinelli, 2006.

<sup>25</sup> As Prior, Birds Eye Account Manager, Jones, Knowles Ritchie commented “the younger Captain was not popular; people didn’t trust him. The history and connotations relating to the older Captain are important. The younger Captain was pulled – he was seen as appealing more to mothers than children.” Rachel Prior, Telephone interview, 2 Nov. 2007.

<sup>26</sup> Unilever. Web. 19 Apr. 2006.

In 2004 design company Carter Wong Tomlin designed the new Europe-wide identity for Birds Eye.<sup>27</sup> The traditional bird logo was replaced by a red and orange fish-styled emblem to give warmth to the brand. Brewer Riddiford design consultancy re-designed the packaging for the UK<sup>28</sup> and created a revised fresher faced Captain calling out from a porthole to enable “instant recognition and easier range navigation” (fig. 7.13).<sup>29</sup> The Birds Eye Shepherd’s Pie packaging in 2004 evidenced the updated illustrated Captain upon the pack’s front however upon the pack back he appeared as real. The photograph of the actor was used to communicate authenticity, reassurance and truth as the brand proclaimed its commitment to healthy and nutritious food (fig.7.14).<sup>30</sup> The presentation of a digitally created Captain and the real actor’s face is an unusual use of the icon not evidenced in other packs studied within this investigation.



fig. 7.13

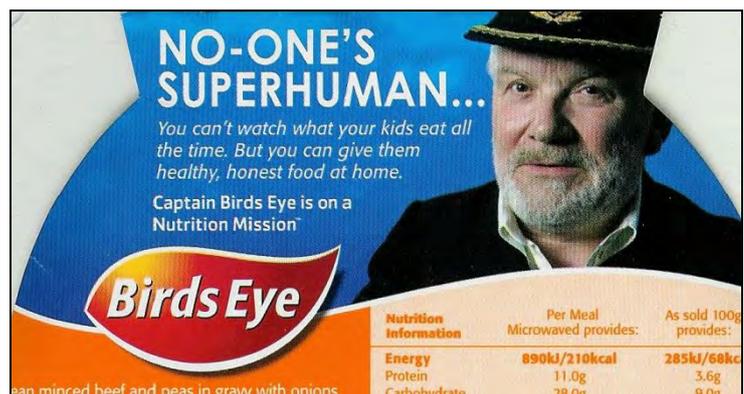


fig. 7.14

In 2007, following consumer concern regarding frozen foods, Birds Eye was overhauled to reposition the brand more competitively within the frozen food market and to enhance the image of frozen food. The redesign included new packaging, website and television campaigns. The new design of the Fish Fingers packaging, by Jones Knowles Ritchie (JKR) depicted the Captain in full body shot for the first time. Knowles commented that to have the Captain

<sup>27</sup> Philip Chadwick, “New look Birds Eye in packaging revamp,” PrintWeek 2004: n.pag. Web. 5 Feb. 2009.

<sup>28</sup> Brewer Riddiford design consultancy London is now BrandMe (BR&Me).

<sup>29</sup> Brandme.n.p. Web. 5 Feb. 2009.

<sup>30</sup> The brand’s commitment to good food was communicated through the Captain’s „Nutrition Mission” message.

standing was “to address a way of integrating him into the pack better; to make him part of the brand not just as a stick on. The design presented the partnership with the brand – further reassurance of the brand.”<sup>31</sup> The Captain was depicted standing squarely, embracing the Birds Eye logo presenting it proudly to the consumer.<sup>32</sup> It is suggested that the Captain appeared more authoritative, his height an important indicator of power, which indicated his greater responsibility for the brand.<sup>33</sup> The happy wave of the Captain’s hand in his previous depiction was replaced with a more formal pose representative of the more serious brand message (fig. 7.15). From 2007 the Captain changed to represent a healthier children’s range with his important *Nutrition Mission* focus.<sup>34</sup> He worked as a visual cue to attract consumer attention and as a real marketing agent to promote healthy eating. The new packaging design presented a crisper, cleaner overall look to the brand. The logo was redesigned as a transparent lens to draw consumers’ eyes to the source of the ingredients.<sup>35</sup> The fish packaging presented a central seascape focus with white wave and a white sun on the horizon. It anchored the source of the product to provide clear connotations of nature, the natural and the healthy; key qualities intended to be transferred to the product accordingly.<sup>36</sup> The Captain Birds Eye range was presented as being good for you; a message that the Captain almost guaranteed with his revised positioning. Interestingly the packaging featured the Captain in hyper real illustration. As Prior noted “The image is from a photograph of the model and then is molded using illustration (...) the use of illustration changes the facial features (...) it allows the addition of a twinkle in the Captain’s eye”.<sup>37</sup> The merging of the real and unreal create a distinct identity and audiences perhaps may consider the Captain as plausible.<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> JKR began working with Birds Eye in 2005. Andrew Knowles, Senior Designer, JKR. Telephone interview with author 2 Nov. 2007.

<sup>32</sup> The new fish-shaped logo cleverly dots the *i* in Birds Eye lettering to give the fish its eye.

<sup>33</sup> Goffman.

<sup>34</sup> Chiapinelli.

<sup>35</sup> Barrett.

<sup>36</sup> The redesign of the packaging reinforced the revised brand message that states the Fish Fingers as made with 100% Fish Fillets and a being a natural source of Omega 3. Similarly the brand’s Chicken Burgers packaging uses the same positioning of the Captain but he is presented on land near the sea.

<sup>37</sup> Rachel Prior, Account Manger Birdseye, Telephone interview, 2 Nov. 2007.

<sup>38</sup> The morphing of real and unreal image echoes the approach taken in the creation of the 1996 version of Betty Crocker (See Chapter 8).



fig. 7.15

Company records claim that Captain Birds Eye is the longest running brand personality since food advertising began<sup>39</sup> and he remains a successful icon: with “Integrity, authority (...) and is “a symbol of trust.”<sup>40</sup> The 2011 version was again revised and the packaging updated. This Captain was the latest in a line-up of at least six different versions that have been presented as a brand icon that truly exists but is fictitious. The Captain has weathered well the choppy seas of the frozen food market but now appears on the Fish Fingers packaging only and is not evident within wider advertising. In 2010 Birds Eye advertising introduced a new brand icon to advertise its products; Clarence the talking polar bear who has featured as advertisement on some Birds Eye packaging.<sup>41</sup> The development of Birds Eye marketing through the use of another brand icon perhaps underscores the importance of such visual characters whilst indicating that established characters are not static or permanent features.

Captain Birds Eye is reported as “The most significant cross-border brand in the children's frozen foods market in Europe....”<sup>42</sup> and he operates in

<sup>39</sup> Lesley Owen-Edwards, Unilever archive, 2006. The Captain is now presented as a “helping hand to mum” as key decision maker, and „doesn’t talk to kids.” Chiapinelli.

<sup>40</sup> Prior 2007. In 2007 the Birds Eye product range has been further revised to address developments in contemporary markets and consumer perceptions of food. With increased public attention focused upon the quality of food and a growing concern for children’s healthy eating, Birds Eye, like many food brands, has reviewed its promotion to address such issues in the attempt to retain and gain consumers.

<sup>41</sup> The television advertisements were created by AMV BBDO advertising agency. The talking polar bear can be compared with the brand icon Meerkat success of recent years.

a number of countries by alternative names: in France Captain Iglo; Germany Kapt'n Iglo; Italy Capitan Findus and Spain Capitán Frudesa. Chiapinelli, (2006) noted that Birds Eye is a local- pan European brand and that there are local differences in each of the Captains: each means slightly different things in different countries, however throughout, the archetypal captain is an important visual identity. Likewise the Finnish-Estonia frozen fish producer AS Paljassaare's (Viciunai Group) ESVA brand has a Captain identity.<sup>43</sup> Two versions of the Captain have existed upon ESVA packaging; one dark haired and one white haired. This icon perpetuates the sea captain stereotype using key visual cues closely comparable with his Birds Eye counterpart.

Fishermen, sailor and sea captain icons types exist upon the packaging of a range of brands internationally. Their visual characteristics are firmly anchored and appear to continue to offer key connotations that a brand can navigate its products by. Such icons are evident across a number of fish brands and they work primarily from the depths of the frozen food cabinets to hook consumer attention and direct purchase. The enduring existence of Captain Birds Eye, despite his numerous reincarnations, appears to evidence the strength of his appeal to the company and consumers. The brotherhood of fictitious seafaring food icons provides evidence of a visual type that is used across time and cultures.

### **7.3. Elsa's Story**

The *Elsa's Story* luxury baked goods brand launched in 2002 provides an original and intriguing example of a fictitious person brand icon.<sup>44</sup> The brand presents an unusual and apparently unique example of a fictitious brand icon that appears as real. This icon is particularly elusive as her image constantly changes in terms of age, historical context and looks. Elsa is not one person but is, in essence and overall identity, the embodiment of many. The company

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<sup>42</sup> Lindsay Partos, "Study warns food makers not to 'overlook' kids market," Meat Process.Com. 18 Feb. 2005 n.p. Web. 2 Oct. 2007.

<sup>43</sup> The Viciunai Group was founded in 1991. Its frozen food products are sold across Europe.

<sup>44</sup> The brand is sold internationally and in the Israeli home-market is sold as "Lachmi" brand. Michael Aaronson, "Elsa's Story, Message to author, 22 Sep. 2011. E-mail.

states “Her story is our story; the one we wish to tell”.<sup>45</sup> The inference is that Elsa is a real relation and she is presented as the brand’s family member. Elsa’s many faces present an original twist on the established marketing concept of the fictitious brand icon.

The packaging states “Taste, enjoy, remember” and suggests that the product will evoke memories; memories which are personified and played out through Elsa’s image and the poetic-like text that communicate the brand’s story:

The aroma of fresh baking plays on the sea breeze, bare feet leave imprints on the warm sand, and starched sheets reflect the afternoon sun. Trees cast blue shade in the yard and in the distance the sound of creaking floorboards and the rustle of leaves can be heard. Collecting seashells on the shore in the morning light, embroidering initials on white pillowcases, sipping tea from tall glasses, chatting idly with no need to rush anywhere and watching the world gently turning, this is the best of all days-sitting with Elsa on the balcony and enjoying the quiet rhythms of life.<sup>46</sup>

The text positions and paces the product as leisurely. It creates a vision for the product; sounds, tastes, sights, and smells are spelt out for us should we take the time to read the package. It elevates the product from the mundane to a treasured, spiritual, emotional experience. Elsa is introduced but only as a presence.

Monochrome historic photographs of groups or pairs of people, family photograph album-style, appear on the packaging to suggest Elsa is real. A hand drawn red circle rings her face to identify her. However a reading of the various designs identifies Elsa’s many faces. The photographs upon the packaging across the product range change; Elsa changes; her name doesn’t. It is short and potentially culturally non-specific to avoid national associations and the absence of title and surname leave her identity free. Therefore Elsa’s Story provides a case study of a truly enigmatic character; an example of what may be identified as a multifaceted brand icon; one that remains constant in name but shifts in form, face and time in her depiction upon the packaging.

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<sup>45</sup>Elsa’s Story. n.d. n.p. Web. 23 April 2007.

<sup>46</sup> “Elsa’s Story” Strawberry Filled Butter Cookies box, Elsa’s Story, 2006.

*Elsa's Story* cleverly offers the consumer the opportunity to interpret the messages on the packaging. They may interpret who they wish Elsa to be; they construct their own meaning. As Jonathan Burrell, Brand Manager, commented "Everyone knows an Elsa. Elsa is interchangeable with people we know; relatives or friends. Elsa is a sign."<sup>47</sup> The photographs portray a real female; sometimes a child, sometimes an adult. Text tells her story:

Elsa's Story sends you back to a time and place when you were young and carefree; When time was unspoken and tastes were simple. It is about a memory, a hint of nostalgia, captured in the scents and tastes of warm cookies baking in the oven, summer evenings and the innocence of childhood. Elsa's kitchen was always open, her recipes remaining a well-kept secret. She was a mystery in her time and has become a legend in our collective memories. Elsa's heritage is now relived through the goodness of quality ingredients and care that remind us of tastes long forgotten.<sup>48</sup>

This story alludes to a real Elsa and the grand claim that she "„has become a legend in our collective memories"<sup>49</sup> indicates that the brand wishes the consumer to reflect upon their own past. Elsa is enigmatic; a nostalgic figure, an emblem and evocation of times past and a catalyst for our memories. The ethereal overtones of the website's text and the various photographs have created the marketing myth of Elsa. Interestingly in 2006 the product range's packaging featured a number of different Elsa photographs simultaneously and Elsa could be read as friend, mother, aunt or sister accordingly (fig.7.16). Each image suggested a different time period and a different age for Elsa, for example an Edwardian mother (fig.7.17) and a c.1940's child (fig.7.18). The *Crisp Baked Crackers* (2007) packaging presented an Edwardian Elsa entertaining a group and the text spoke of times past, friends and fond memories (fig. 7.20 and fig.7.21). Whilst Elsa changes her personality remains constant - happy and always surrounded by her family and friends. She is evocative of happy family lives; she lives in and lives out a number of different families as evidenced in the packaging examples.

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<sup>47</sup> Jonathan Burrell, *Elsa's Story* Brand Manager, Petty Wood and Co. Ltd., UK. Jonathan Burrell, "Elsa's Story." Personal interview. (17 Sept. 2004).

<sup>48</sup> Elsa's Story assorted cookie box, Elsa's Story, 2006.

<sup>49</sup> Elsa's Story.

The packaging for the *Sweetheart Butter Cookies* (2006) can be read across its numerous indicators/ message levels; the product title; the short prose and the image (fig. 7.22). The text on the side of the box, nostalgic in its reflection and intimate in its message, offers multiple meanings regarding who or what its message is actually addressing. It suggests a love for the product; a love of Elsa and perhaps Elsa's love of another. This ambiguity offers personal interpretation and likewise the portrait of *Elsa* offers multiple readings too. The packaging depicts what appears to be an authentic photograph of a seated couple dressed in early 20<sup>th</sup> clothing. With reference to the product's name the intimate positioning of the seated couple suggests potential sweethearts and who we assume as Elsa resplendent and happy.

However the authenticity of the image and indeed Elsa is questioned when study is made of the *Chocolate Chip* and *Nut* packaging (2006) (fig. 7.23). Here part of the *Sweetheart* photograph was used but it was digitally altered to tell a different tale. The same couple are depicted but two figures, potentially their daughters, sit between them. Elsa has swapped position and likewise the meaning of the *Sweetheart* photograph is repositioned too. Elsa can be read as potential mother, rather than lover. The veracity of the photograph of twin girls on *Elsa's Story Assorted Cookies* (2006) therefore may be questioned.<sup>50</sup> One girl is circled as Elsa however was this a duplicate image? *Elsa's Story* design can be viewed as the manipulation of the meaning of images on three levels; the fabrication of a person, the fabrication of time and the fabrication of place. Reality is ultimately manipulated.

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<sup>50</sup> The image depicts the girls skiing in outfits that suggest c.1950's.



fig. 7.16



fig. 7.17



fig. 7.18



fig. 7.19

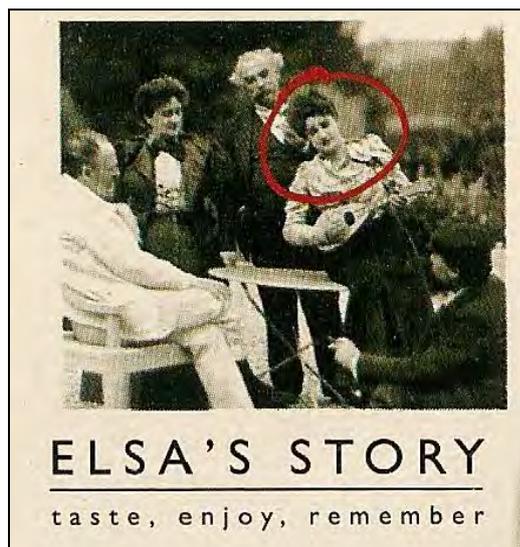


fig. 7.20



fig. 7.21



fig. 7.22

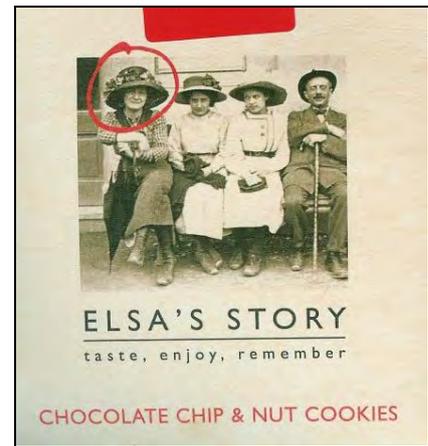


fig. 7.23

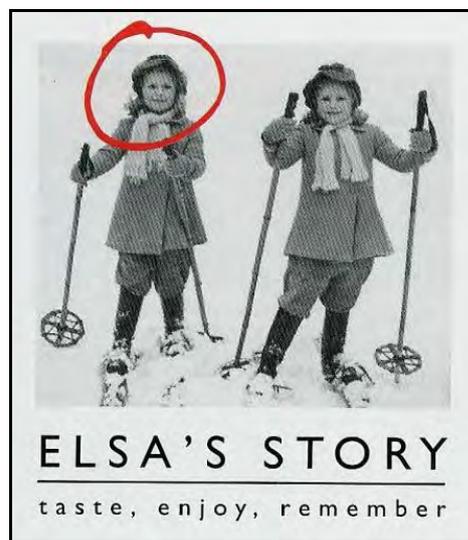


fig. 7.24

Whilst the packaging's text states "Elsa's kitchen was always open, her recipes remaining a well-kept secret" Elsa is not depicted in the usual gendered domain of the kitchen, despite the story that tells of her cooking prowess. She represents a happy woman free of the traditional stereotypical roles that other brand icons play. The potential Jewish associations of the company's heritage are absent; the suggestion of family photographs sourced from a pre-holocaust time provide an unsaid history perhaps. The images are not referenced however as Aaronson, Managing Director (UK), revealed "Most of them are from family albums of the workers of the company - A few are bought."<sup>51</sup> An

<sup>51</sup> Aaronson.

initial wonder or disappointment that Elsa is not real is balanced by the surprise that the packaging offers a multitude of Elsas. The extent to which consumers recognise this marketing twist is not known; they are to make sense of her identity through the packaging's visual references and text prompts. *Elsa's Story* creates and cherishes a false memory that could be true. Elsa is used as an icon to suggest and represent our own shared memories. She travels in time; a spirit guide to the reminiscence processes. Elsa is elusive and is the unreal made meaningful.

## **Summary**

This chapter has examined the role and representation of two very different fictitious brand icon types. In both instances the icons are not evidently fictitious and can be regarded as enigmatic. The examples illustrate the narrative that the respective brands have developed to give life to their icon where its visual appearance is central to the brand's identity and core to the consumer's interest. Captain Bird's Eye's existence under different names and appearances across Europe evidences the effectiveness of this professional-type to work across brand names. By comparison Elsa can be regarded as a unique example of an icon whose depiction is deliberately not fixed but is played out by many different females- across age ranges and time periods - to communicate the essence of everywoman. The different marketing strategies offer valuable consideration for the development of future brand icons.

## CHAPTER 8

### THE FICTITIOUS FEMALE COMMERCIAL HOME ECONOMIST BRAND ICON

#### 8.1. Introduction

The fictitious female commercial home economist is a specific brand icon type that has existed in food marketing in Canada, America and the UK, notably in the early to mid-twentieth century, and is still evident, to a degree, in contemporary food branding. Focus upon this category evidences how different fictitious brand icons and characters of comparable role and often of competing brands have appeared similar visually through the use of established visual codes. This category evidences the existence of a host of examples that are comparable visually and have on occasion mimicked each other. Examples have existed across various companies and have operated across a variety of marketing contexts, including food packaging, where their visual appearance has been particularly important and notably the visual formulae that they appear to have used has influenced the look of other brand icons from other food and non-food areas.

This chapter considers the role and visual representation of specific comparable historical and contemporary American, Canadian and British examples in relation to wider commercial experts that have been employed by companies to promote their brands to establish the particular responsibilities that such figures have undertaken and represented. The study is positioned with reference to culinary history and home economics and draws upon relevant perspectives accordingly to consider how the fictitious home economist brand icon is presented visually and how she relates to key gender roles. The study considers how these brand icons reflect and perpetuate complex social and cultural attitudes and developments relating to gender that shape and give meaning to their appearance.

Betty Crocker (General Mills Inc., USA) is examined as a *truly enigmatic* brand

icon exemplar, as Slotnick commented ironically, Betty is “one of the most famous Americans who ever lived.”<sup>1</sup> This chapter examines Betty’s visual identity in relation to comparable international examples to consider the existence of a cultural and commercial paradigm: the “sisterhood”<sup>2</sup> of enigmatic fictitious female commercial home economists. This study offers fresh examination of this theme through its evaluation of the visual representation of examples and also other non-food examples to assess the wider use of this marketing approach. Supporting information relating to examples discussed and wider examples is provided within Appendix G.

This study relates to the contexts of branding, food history, gender and food and makes contribution to food studies and branding accordingly. Interestingly there is significant interest in food and its production and consumption currently and whilst supermarkets, advertising and television programmes avidly promote all things food and the public appears to have a keen appetite for such, increasingly a wealth of research evidences the wider and deeper interests of academic and professionals in their study of food.<sup>3</sup> Whilst food scholar Innes remarked that “the field of food studies tends to be belittled as trivial and has no true „home“ in academe”<sup>4</sup> evidence disputes this. Food Studies and Culinary History as respected academic disciplines increasingly offer important consideration of food.<sup>5</sup> As food and food culture interconnect and intersect various contexts increasingly studies are positioned within and across different disciplines. Such interconnection increasingly witnesses the braiding of interdisciplinary perspectives as observed by Ashley, Hollows, Jones and Taylor.<sup>6</sup> The increased prevalence of cross discipline investigation is further evidenced by key publications such as *Food, Culture and Society: Journal of*

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<sup>1</sup> Bonnie Slotnick, „Betty Crocker.“ A.F. Smith. Ed. *The Oxford Encyclopaedia of Food and Drink in America*. (Oxford: O.U., 2004) 87.

<sup>2</sup> Karal Ann Marling, *As Seen on TV: the Visual Culture of Everyday Life in the 1950’s*. Cambridge: Harvard U. Press, 1996) 206.

<sup>3</sup> For example the work of the Culinary Historians of Canada organisation.

<sup>4</sup> Sherrie A. Inness, ed. *Kitchen Culture in America: Popular Representations of Food, Gender and Race* (Philadelphia: U. of Penn. Press, 2001).

<sup>5</sup> Reay Tannahill, *Food in History* (London: Penguin, 1988); Harvey Levenstein, *Paradox of Plenty: a Social History of Eating in Modern America*. (Berkeley: U of California Press, 2003); James L. Watson Melissa, L. Caldwell, eds. *The Cultural Politics of Food and Eating: a Reader*. (Oxford: Blackwell, 2005).

<sup>6</sup> Bob Ashley et al, *Food and Cultural Studies* (London: Routledge, 2004) Preface.

Multidisciplinary Research<sup>7</sup> and international conferences.<sup>8</sup> As such this study makes contribution to established bodies of knowledge.

## 8.2. Home Economics

Home Economics,<sup>9</sup> sometimes also referred to as domestic science, is a field of professional and domestic activity and academic study. As a distinct professional discipline Home Economics emerged during the mid-nineteenth century in North America and Britain as interest in household issues and food production and consumption developed and opportunities for women to pursue work in this field advanced.<sup>10</sup> As Humble observed “The domestic-science movement in Britain can be traced back to a congress on domestic economy held in Manchester in 1878”<sup>11</sup>. Better’s informative report, relating to the history of the US government’s Bureau of Home Economics, confirmed that the 1862 Morrill Act introduced home economics training as the American government aimed to address key issues regarding the population’s health.<sup>12</sup> The late nineteenth century saw “the professionalisation of domesticity”<sup>13</sup> and in 1908 the American Home Economics Association was founded.<sup>14</sup> In the 1870’s in the UK, as confirmed by Driver,<sup>15</sup> cookery was taught in schools, a “new mass market in cookery books”<sup>16</sup> emerged and women trained and were employed in related professional work. Home Economics developed as a professional discipline which resulted in the creation of company test kitchens as food manufacturers, and manufacturers of other household related goods, harnessed the expertise of professionally qualified Home Economists to

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<sup>7</sup> First published in 1997 this is the journal of the Association for the Study of Food and Society.

<sup>8</sup> For example the annual Oxford Symposium on Food and Cookery.

<sup>9</sup> Better’s confirmed the term in 1930. Paul V. Better, *The Bureau of Home Economics: Its History, Activities and Organisation* Service Monographs of the United States Government. 62. (Washington D.C: Institute for Govt. Research of the Brookings Institution, 1930).

<sup>10</sup> Nicola Humble, *Culinary Pleasures: Cookbooks and the Transformation of British Food*. (London: Faber, 2005)15.

<sup>11</sup> Humble 27.

<sup>12</sup> Paul V. Better, *The Bureau of Home Economics: Its History, Activities and Organisation* Service Monographs of the United States Government. 62. Washington D.C: Institute for Govt. Research of the Brookings Institution, (1930) 4.

<sup>13</sup> Grace Lees-Maffei, “Modern Living? Domestic Advice Literature and Design Discourse in Post-War Britain.” Ph.D. Diss., U. of Portsmouth, (2005).

<sup>14</sup> Carolyn. M. Goldstein, *Home Economists in the Twentieth Century* (Chapel Hill: U. of North Carolina Press, 2012).

<sup>15</sup> Elizabeth Driver, *A Bibliography of Cookery Books Published in Britain 1875-1914* (London: Prospect Books, 1989).

<sup>16</sup> Driver, *A Bibliography of Cookery Books Published in Britain 1875-1914*:13.

develop and promote their goods. The commercial Home Economist undertook a range of marketing activities and, whether real or fictitious, operated in various contexts to inform and advise consumers.

By the 1970's the role and image of the professional home economist had declined as a result of changes in social attitudes, consumer markets and gender roles.<sup>17</sup> In commercial contexts the home economist as spokesperson became less relevant as consumer lifestyles and shopping and eating experiences changed and consumers became less interested in an authoritative advisor. Today the term home economist is perhaps dated and to some extent the equivalent commercial professionals undertaking comparable roles could perhaps be more neutrally termed as Customer Care advisors.

### 8.3. Frames of reference

Literature relating to Home Economics covers a range of contexts. Established studies of the historical development of the discipline, positioned within the contexts and perspectives of gender studies; food studies and culinary literature and history, provide valuable context for this study.<sup>18</sup> Investigations have often focused upon a particular country or a particular issue, for example Goldstein's comprehensive history of American Home Economists. This thesis does not duplicate such historical consideration however it is noted that the majority of established literature relating to such is predominantly American and Canadian focused which has helped this study's consideration of such examples but emphasises the paucity of information relating to comparable UK examples.

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<sup>17</sup> For discussion see: Carolyn M. Goldstein, *Home Economists in the Twentieth Century*. (Chapel Hill: U. of North Carolina Press, 2012); Driver 2008.

<sup>18</sup> For example see: Marjorie East, *Home Economics: Past, Present and Future* (Boston: Allyn, 1980); Janice Williams Rutherford, *Selling Mrs. Consumer: Christine Frederick and the Rise of Household Efficiency*. (Athens: U. of Georgia Press, 2003); Susan Strasser, *Satisfaction Guaranteed: The Making of the American Mass Market* (Washington D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1989); Laura Shapiro, *Perfection Salad: Women and Cooking at the Turn of the Century* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1986); Glenna Matthews, *Just a Housewife: The Rise and Fall of Domesticity in America* (New York: OUP, 1987); Katherine. J. Parkin, *Food Is Love: Advertising and Gender Roles in Modern America* (U. of Philadelphia: Pennsylvania Press, 2006); Mary Drake McFeely, *Can She Bake a Cherry Pie: American Women and the Kitchen in the 20th century* (Amherst: U. of Massachusetts Press, 2001); Barbara Ehrenreich and Diedre English, *For Her Own Good: 150 Years of the Experts' Advice to Women* (New York: Doubleday, 1989); Ruth Schwartz Cowan, *More Work for Mother* (London: Basic Books, 1983.) and Elizabeth Driver, *Culinary Landmarks: a Bibliography of Canadian Cookbooks 1825-1949* (Toronto: U of T Press Incorporated, 2008).

A plethora of food-related publications (cookery books) have existed throughout the twentieth century to satisfy apparently ever hungry audiences with a voracious appetite for recipes and cookery advice. Thus rich evidence of the work and existence of historical commercial home economists, long time retired, may be located within historical cookery publications and food advertisements and cookery columns in women's magazines. Within these pages the examples still live although their marketing messages are long since redundant. Such food-related examples are valuable social and cultural documents, as recognised by Murcott,<sup>19</sup> and offer useful insight into the original context of home economists and their roles: how they appeared, how they communicated - their choice of message, tone of voice - and the extent of their authoritative profile. Whilst Humble cautioned that a "history-through-the-cookbook" approach does not provide a straight and historical view, as cookbooks "are not simply clear windows into the kitchen of the past",<sup>20</sup> the very issues she indicated as troublesome regarding the particular biased or agendas of their content, for example a publication's intent to promote a particular brand, are particularly pertinent for the interrogation of commercial figures. Notably through the examination of such brand-related publications the appearances, and very lives (and lifespans) of brand characters/icons may be tracked, as evidenced by Driver's chronological mapping of cookbooks that perhaps has provided to date the most thorough identification of historical Canadian fictitious home economists.<sup>21</sup>

Some few studies have addressed the existence of fictitious home economists<sup>22</sup> possibly because this marketing approach was particularly specific in terms of food promotion primarily and that examples were particular to certain

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<sup>19</sup> Anne Murcott, *The Sociology of Food and Eating: Essays on the Sociological Significance of Food* (Gower, 1983)34.

<sup>20</sup> Nicola Humble, *Culinary Pleasures: Cookbooks and the Transformation of British Food* (London: Faber, 2005).

<sup>21</sup> Driver, *Culinary Landmarks: a Bibliography of Canadian Cookbooks 1825-1949*.

<sup>22</sup> Key studies include: Driver, *Culinary Landmarks: a Bibliography of Canadian Cookbooks 1825-1949*; Roland Marchland, *Advertising the American Dream: Making Way for Modernity 1920-1940* (Berkeley: U. of California Press, 1985); Shapiro, *Perfection Salad: Women and Cooking at the Turn of the Century*; Laura Shapiro, *Something from the Oven: Reinventing Dinner in 1950's America*, (New York: Viking Penguin, 2004); Marling; Susan Marks, *Finding Betty Crocker: the Secret Life of America's First Lady of Food*. (New York: Simon. 2005) and Goldstein.

companies, countries and timeframes. The discussion of examples has often exposed a familiarity and potential fondness in the author's comments, for example Forsythe and Brownefield referred to the flour company's brand icons as the "First Ladies of Flour."<sup>23</sup>

Marchand discussed key examples in relation to an advertising context: what he considered as advertising's "re-personalization of American life"<sup>24</sup> Cooke considered examples in relation to consumerism and women's role, a pertinent focus however one that did not embrace wider examples. In some instances studies have tended to highlight examples (generally listed key names) and made reference to the existence of comparable examples without further examining their use and design, for example whilst Marks provided biography/company history of Betty Crocker, consideration of wider examples was kept surprisingly concise. Driver<sup>25</sup> and Cooke<sup>26</sup> have provided valuable identification of characters although their studies have focused upon the characters' role within advertising and cookery books<sup>27</sup> primarily and no or little analysis of the examples visual representation was addressed. Johnson<sup>28</sup> and Driver<sup>29</sup> considered the Canadian Vancouver Sun newspaper fictitious home economist Edith Adam, and focused upon one specific creation however without cross reference consideration of wider examples.<sup>30</sup>

Throughout marketing and culinary related literature the terms used to identify such characters has varied. Cooke referred to examples as "cooking and homemaking personalities"<sup>31</sup> and "pseudonymous personalities"<sup>32</sup> whilst the Mill City Museum's show of examples referred to them as "household helpers"

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<sup>23</sup> Tom Forsyth and Ann Brownefield, and Anne Brownefield, eds. *General Mills 75 years of Innovation, Invention, Food and Fun*. General Mills Inc. 2003) 11.

<sup>24</sup> Marchand 352.

<sup>25</sup> Driver, *Culinary Landmarks*.

<sup>26</sup> Nathalie Cooke, "Consuming Fictions: Cooking Personalities and the North American Imagination" Web. 22 Jan. 2004.

<sup>27</sup> Driver only considered Canadian and some American pre-1950's examples.

<sup>28</sup> Eve Johnson, *Eating My Words* (North Vancouver: Whitecap Books, 2003).

<sup>29</sup> Elizabeth Driver, *Edith Adams Omnibus*. (North Vancouver: Whitecap Books, 2005).

<sup>30</sup> Edith Adam was created in 1924 and worked as homemaker advisor until 1999. Interestingly in 2012 the Vancouver Sun launched its Edith Adam website in honour of this popular icon. "Edith Adams" *Vancouver Sun*. Web 12 Jan. 2013.

<sup>31</sup> Nathalie Cooke, "Getting the Mix Right for the Canadian Home Baker." *Essays on Canadian Writing*. 78 (Winter) 2003):192-219.

<sup>32</sup> Nathalie Cooke, "Fictitious Home Economists." Canada, Personal interview 4 May 2009).

and “spokespersons.”<sup>33</sup> To date established literature has focused upon American and Canadian commercial home economists (Cooke 2004; Driver; Shapiro 2004). No comparison has been made between American, Canadian and other international examples: this thesis therefore addresses an apparent gap in established literature. It also provides comparative evaluation of the visual representation of a host of historical and contemporary examples that have previously not been brought together for scrutiny in such a way. This thesis also provides more extensive mapping and profiling of examples than has previously been documented.

In recent years there has been a marked increase in the number of academic studies that have considered Betty Crocker. Interestingly studies from across a range of countries evidence the international relevance and popularity of brand icons. Examples have examined Betty from a variety of perspectives that sit differently to this thesis focus. Freisen’s<sup>34</sup> *Historicist Feminist Analysis* is one of the few that focus solely on Betty’s visual depiction and considered Betty as reflection of “the popular ideologies of ever-changing America”<sup>35</sup> and as “historical description of female idealism”<sup>36</sup> implying Betty was subservient to social perceptions. Ai Hisano’s<sup>37</sup> consideration of Betty as advisor to American housewives evidenced a popular consideration of this icon whilst Calcott provided some concise discussion of Betty in the context of “product personification/authority figure.” This provided some interesting observations that I am able to develop further. Marks, one time guide at General Mills Inc., provided valuable contribution to the disparate studies of Betty however it remains perhaps a rather general biography of the brand icon.<sup>38</sup> Some original historical detail is documented and information is interesting although concise and written with no theoretical framework reference. No discussion of Betty’s packaging presence is made as the book focuses upon the television,

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<sup>33</sup> Mill City Museum Minneapolis, (Minnesota, USA, 2006).

<sup>34</sup> Calle A W. Freisen, “The evolution of Betty Crocker: America’s Favourite Fictional Feminist Follower A New Historicist Feminist Analysis,” Storm Lake: Buena Vista University. 2005. Web. 12 April 2011.

<sup>35</sup> Freisen

<sup>36</sup> Freisen,

<sup>37</sup> Ai Hisano, Home Cooking: Betty Crocker and Womanhood in Early Twentieth-Century America in *The Japanese Journal of American Studies*, 21. Web. 20 Feb. 2011.

<sup>38</sup> Marks, *Finding Betty Crocker*.

advertising and radio contexts of Betty's existence. Surprisingly the book has no conclusion and whilst reference is made to comparable fictitious characters that are noted as "would – be Bettys" the examples identified are only listed.<sup>39</sup> This study does however recognise and shares Marks reference to the "sisterhood" of examples.

#### **8.4. The Home Economist**

The home economist can be identified in two profiles - *the domestic*: the housewife, wife, mother, friend or neighbour that undertakes domestic activities with the home, and *the professional*: a cookery expert who has undertaken formal training (qualification) and works, potentially publicly and commercially, for organisations and companies to develop and test food and/or to educate audiences regarding aspects of cooking, the home and housework. Assorted terminology exists in the identification of the home economist and terms and their associations change over time.<sup>40</sup>

##### **8.4.1. The Housewife as Domestic Home Economist**

Whilst this chapter focuses upon commercial home economist examples, reference to the *domestic home economist – the housewife* – is important as the visual representation of such upon food packaging has, and continues to be a particular category-type that may add to this study's taxonomy. Notably the concept and symbolism of the housewife with associations of home, housekeeping, family and femininity<sup>41</sup> relate to commercial brand economists, as such connotations transfer to the visual presentation of some examples and may be seen to reference the status of the consumers targeted. Many companies have used key visual cues to present a stereotypical housewife in to target the consumer and make clear the product's relevance and use. For

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<sup>39</sup> Marks 108.

<sup>40</sup> As discussed by Goldstein.

<sup>41</sup> The role of the housewife in relation to these concepts is discussed by Helen Znaniecki Lopata, *Occupation: Housewife*, (New York: OUP, 1971); Mathews; Stephanie Coontz, *The Way We Never Were: American Families and the Nostalgia Trap* (New York: Basic Books, 1992) and Susan Strasser, *Never Done: A History of American Housework* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1982).

example images of a woman cooking in a kitchen to depict the housewife and domesticity and their wooden spoon, rolling pin, mixing bowl apron<sup>42</sup> and oven operate as classic symbols of traditional home cooking. For example the British Revo Electric Company Limited, 1936 recipe book<sup>43</sup> (fig. 8.1), Orlox c. 1940"s packaging<sup>44</sup> (fig. 8.2) and the 2002 Chinese flour brand (fig. 8.3) presented apparent domestic home economists: anonymous smiling housewives happy in their work.

fig. 8.1 This material is unavailable due to copyright restrictions.



fig. 8.2



fig. 8.3

In many instances the anonymous housewife appears to give quick reference and attractive appearance and may be read as wife and mother (young), mother or aunt (middle-aged) or as grandmother (older). The housewife can carry connotations of nostalgia, tradition, culinary heritage and family history and some brands use the housewife image to transfer such qualities to their identity. The simple use of a woman in kitchen with cookery book, bowl and apron still appears to suffice as an image readily understood and relevant to contemporary consumers.

<sup>42</sup> The white apron as a symbol of domestic endeavour is a recurrent sign that operates across time periods and cultures. The connotations of cleanliness and hygiene provide valuable association with efficient and careful work. Interesting red and white (gingham) is also frequently used in food packaging and branding as the colours attract attention and have connotations of food and "old-fashioned reliability." James Pilditch, *The Silent Salesman: How to Develop Packaging that Sells*. (London: B.T. Batsford Limited, 1961): 70.

<sup>43</sup> *Good things to cook and eat instructions and recipes for Revo Electric Cookers*, London: Revo Electric Company Limited, 1936.

<sup>44</sup> Orlox Shredded Beef Suet (2oz) packaging, Orlox, (Shredded Suet) Ltd., UK, c.1940"s.

Throughout culinary literature, women's magazines and advertising a host of terms have been used to describe the work of the domestic home economist, for example homebuilder; housekeeper; home-crafter or/and homemaker. The *housewife*, as cook, cleaner and manager of household budget, is the popular term that identifies key activities and appears to be interchangeable with the term domestic home economist. The role of the domestic home economist, traditionally recognised as female, was historically often presented as a career,<sup>45</sup> both positively and negatively over time, and one that was illustrated and advocated by and through the media. For example the 1930's Daily Express *The Housewife's Book* depicted the smiling hard working housewife and reassured that "housekeeping" was a "profession".<sup>46</sup> However scrutiny of the role and representation of women in the context of the historical, social, cultural and political developments and perspectives has resulted in the housewife often being considered as a negative and degrading role and term as connotations of female subjection, lack of independence, unequal gender status and social and cultural stereotyping have presented this gender role, and its visual representation, as highly subjective and indeed problematic: as unrealistic and non-representative of women.<sup>47</sup> However despite such criticisms, as this thesis evidences, the concept of the housewife is utilised and perpetuated in food branding, and is evident in food packaging, where the stereotypical iconography of the housewife appears. However changing attitudes and perceptions of, and towards women, and in particular their position within the domestic sphere of the home and related environments, are important factors as they influence and reflect media representations and interpretations via the brand character construct.

#### **8.4.2. Commercial Expert Advisors**

By the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century in Canada, America and the UK the food industry developed and expanded considerably and a significant number of companies operated in highly competitive markets. In Canada and America

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<sup>45</sup> Goldstein.

<sup>46</sup> Daily Express, *The Housewife's Book*, (London: Syndicate Publishing Company Limited, c.1937) 9.

<sup>47</sup> See Betty Freidan, *The Feminine Mystique* (Harmsworth: Penguin Books, 1979) and Lopata.

wheat, beef and meat companies proliferated and a host of companies operated within the extensive flour industry.<sup>48</sup> To differentiate and promote their products and to compete with rival brands, companies targeted consumers through a variety of marketing methods and an increased use of advertising.<sup>49</sup> Tonelli commented “Vigorous competition and a new mass audience created a wealth of original graphic work and promotional items during this boomtime for American business. Astute managers grew aware of the need for capturing the imagination of the American consumer, who then had more choices, more mobility, and more money to spend.”<sup>50</sup>

As primary food buyers, cooks and household managers, women as consumers were targeted by companies.<sup>51</sup> To aid them in their choice and use of new mass produced products and food brands that were increasingly available in competitive retail markets,<sup>52</sup> some companies employed advisors, usually women, as friendly professionals and spokespeople to provide information and advice to reassure customers of their products’ worth and that their brand could be trusted. An authoritative figure was used across marketing channels to endorse the brand and encourage sales and their name (signature) and face presented a friendly expert that the consumer could recognise, relate to and supposedly depend upon.<sup>53</sup> They aimed to develop a personal relationship with the consumer and spoke directly to them, often with smiling face and with friendly words, as guide and confidant. As Lees-Maffei identified, the “tension between authoritative advice (which should be neutral and objective) and commercial persuasion”<sup>54</sup> was a key consideration for brands. In many instances customers were invited to write to the expert, who in turn would

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<sup>48</sup> Elizabeth Driver, “Home Economists” Canada, Message to the author. 10 Mar. 2006. E-mail.

<sup>49</sup> Peiss identified that “modern American consumer culture arose after 1890.” Kathy L. Peiss, *American Women and the Making of Modern Consumer Culture*. *The Journal for MultiMedia History*, 1:1, 1998. Web 12 Sep. 2006.

<sup>50</sup> Exhibition press release: Edith A. Tonelli “*An American Dream: the Art of Free Enterprise*.” The “*An American Dream*” Exhibition of American Advertising from 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century. (Lincoln: DeCordova Museum and Sculpture Park, 1977).

<sup>51</sup> Daniel Delis Hill, *Advertising to the American Woman 1900-1999* (Columbus: Ohio State U. Press, 2002) vii.

<sup>52</sup> Strasser.

<sup>53</sup> Mary Drake McFeely. *Can She Bake a Cherry Pie: American Women and the Kitchen in the 20th Century*, (Amherst: U. Massachusetts Press, 2001) 46.

<sup>54</sup> Grace Lees-Maffei, “Modern Living? Domestic Advice Literature and Design Discourse in Post-War Britain.” Phd. Diss. (U. of Portsmouth, 2005).

respond, and “The simulation of one-to-one personal conversation between personalized emissaries of the corporations and individual consumers steadily gained favour among advertisers.”<sup>55</sup> Companies employed real advisors and as the success of expert figures developed, and notably from the 1920’s through to the 1950’s, fictitious advisors were also used to fulfill this increasingly important role that helped to personalise brands.<sup>56</sup> Today this marketing approach is less evident as celebrity endorsers and professionals’ own brands evidence what appears to be a preferred type of authoritative figure, however some expert advisors do exist and on occasion feature as brand icon upon packaging, as discussed in the following sections.

#### **8.4.2.1. Woman to Woman: The Female Advisor**

The female advisor, an authority employed to offer information and advice to female consumers primarily is a well-established „professional“ role that has existed across a number of commercial contexts historically. Although perhaps now somewhat dated, this role does continue to exist and in some instances, as discussed later, the character is an important representative for a company and on occasion operates as the brand icon. For example as agony aunt or cooking expert in women’s magazines and as company advisor within advertisements, this expert figure, usually identified by name and presented as a friendly point of contact, has been used to advise female consumers and address their potential queries and problems - from woman- to-woman- in a way that may appear as friendly, firm intimate conversation. The female advisor has appeared in certain women’s magazines for many years as agony aunt or cooking expert and as company advisor as depicted in advertisements.<sup>57</sup> For example named professionals headed the cookery columns and problem pages in British, North American magazines in the 1940’s and 1950’s, as Keeble noted they were used

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<sup>55</sup> Marchand 356.

<sup>56</sup> Marchand 355.

<sup>57</sup> The first agony aunt column in a women’s magazine was in *The Ladies’ Journal* in 1693. Tanith Carey, *Never Kiss a Man in a Canoe: Words of Wisdom from the Golden Age of Agony Aunts*. Hackney’s PhD study of women’s magazine offers insight also. Fiona Hackney, “*They Opened Up a Whole New World: Feminine Modernity and Women’s Magazines, 1919-1939.*”

as “quality reassurance devices”.<sup>58</sup> In some instances a fictitious figure was used, as evidenced by the implausibly named Vanity Fayre beauty expert of *Home Chat* magazine<sup>59</sup> (fig.8.4), and the aptly named Sarah Hope, problem page advisor of *Home Notes*<sup>60</sup> (fig. 8.5). Examples often appeared in illustrative or photographic form and were presented as real. Their positive and professional appearance, often with friendly names penned as signature, suggested care, support and interest in the consumer. The image of a professional that readers were invited to write to offered companies valuable personal contact with their audiences however the true identity of the advisor was often kept discrete.<sup>61</sup>

The authoritative role and appearance of the commercial advisor, and in particular the brand home economist examples, can be seen to have drawn from the established practice of the advisors of women’s magazines and they have echoed certain aspects of their publishing sisters’ activities. In some instances the brand professionals have appeared as advisors in women’s magazines, for example Betty Crocker’s own cookery column, and on occasion examples have appeared agony aunt-style in their brand advertisements. Interestingly the visual representation of fictitious commercial home economists was on occasion similar to their publishing counterparts, for example the illustration of “The Editress” in *Woman and Home* magazine 1956 (fig. 8.6.)<sup>62</sup> looked like brand advisor Betty Crocker of the same era (fig. 8.7.). In some instances brands depicted an expert without identifying their name, for example the anonymous “new knitwear designer” of Ladyship wool (fig. 8.8.)<sup>63</sup> who competed with the fictitious Don Maid of Don Maid wools in the 1950’s<sup>64</sup> (fig. 8.9). Their illustrated appearance in advertisements evidenced the perceived importance of the visual cue. Thus fictitious experts in magazines and brand

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<sup>58</sup> Trevor Keeble, “Woman Magazine and the Modern Home.” Jeremy Aynsley and Kate Forde Eds. *Design and Modern Magazine* (Manchester: Manchester UP, 2007):97.

<sup>59</sup> Vanity Fayre, “Letter by Letter.” *Home Chat*, 12 May, (London: Amalgamated Press, 1951):37.

<sup>60</sup> “Sarah Hope’s Help Page.” *Home Notes*, 5 Jan. (London: Amalgamated Press, 1951):44.

<sup>61</sup> For example The Editress in *Woman and Home*. May (London: Amalgamated Press Limited, 1956):128. Her illustration changed slightly over the years. For example her depiction in April 1950: 76 presented her gaze as more wistful.

<sup>62</sup> The Editress 128.

<sup>63</sup> Ladyship advertisement, *Woman’s Own* 16 Oct.,(London: George Newnes Limited, 1952):5.

<sup>64</sup> *Woman’s Weekly*. LXXXIV: 2185. 19 Sep. (London: Amalgamated Press, Ltd.1953):5.

advisors shared a communication approach and a visual formula that consumers have been familiar with and have appeared to have accepted which has led to the duplication of this formula across a range of commercial contexts across time.

fig.8.4 and fig. 8.5 This material is unavailable due to copyright restrictions.

fig.8.6 and fig. 8.7 This material is unavailable due to copyright restrictions.

fig.8.8 and fig. 8.9 This material is unavailable due to copyright restrictions.

### 8.4.3. Fictitious Commercial Expert Advisors

During the 1920"s to the early c.1960"s in North America and the UK some companies, and notably food brands, created their own fictitious advisors that often were presented as personalities. Examples existed across a range of contexts and characters endured in the main until c.1970"s when the particular role became dated and the appearance of advisors subsequently diminished. Traditionally the fictitious expert enabled companies to present a central identity and contact for consumers and real experts operated as, and acted out, the character. The fake professional offered a safe employee that could be controlled: one that could operate uniformly across time without aging, being paid or resigning, as Driver observed

The advantage of companies having a fictitious character representing the brand was that changing women or multiple women at one time could do the work. It didn"t matter if an employee got married (...) or had a baby and left. The fictitious character provided consistency and reliability in how the company presented itself to the public.<sup>65</sup>

The pseudo professionals often appeared visually in magazine and newspaper advertisements/advice columns and also within their own brand-related books and promotional literature as Marchand identified "Personal advisers gave advertising an opportunity to use conversational copy, establish a personal "face", and dispense sympathetic advice."<sup>66</sup> For example fictitious *Clare Collins*, Director of Sunbeam Advisory Bureau, appeared as illustrated portrait in Sunbeam Food mixers advertisements (late 1940"s/early 1950"s) and competing brand Dormeyer created *Ethel Allison* as Home Economist (1950"s) (fig. 8.10).<sup>67</sup> These characters existed to advise consumers in the use of new white goods that were increasingly available by the 1950"s and offered valuable connection between brand and the consumer potentially.<sup>68</sup> Whilst many appeared in cooking demonstrations, press advertisements and cookery books, few appeared upon company packaging as their role was as brand character

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<sup>65</sup> Driver "Home Economists."

<sup>66</sup> Marchand, 354.

<sup>67</sup> Dormeyer eclectic mixer [advertisement] The American Home, Philadelphia: Curtis Publishing, 1947:149. Allison was based upon the wife of Marvin Allessee, the company"s Vice President of Sales and Marketing.<sup>67</sup> Sand McLendon. n.d. WACEN.Yahoo.com. n.p. Web. 25 May. 2012. Mr. Alesee wrote the brand"s cookery books. Obituary Marvin E. Allessee. n.d. *Daily Herald*. n.p. Web. 12 Jan.2010.

<sup>68</sup> Shapiro, *Something From The Oven: Reinventing Dinner in 1950's America*, 178.

advisor/spokes-person rather than brand icon (Appendix G).<sup>69</sup> The fiction of such characters appeared not to deter consumers and it can be questioned the extent to which examples were recognised as unreal, notably as many were depicted photographically thus suggesting their authenticity. Some companies, such as General Mills, were protective of their icon's true identity and did not make explicit the fiction as the enigmatic quality of the figure was powerful.

fig. 8.10 This material is unavailable due to copyright restrictions.

#### **8.4.4. Commercial Home Economists**

During the 1920's to the 1960's in North America and the UK some companies employed qualified home economists as cookery expert to offer consumers advice on cooking, nutrition and other food-related issues and "to develop recipes using their products and advise on marketing strategies that would attract consumers."<sup>70</sup> As Cooke observed "The need for such authority figures, as well as advice about using their products, was driven by two paradoxical sociocultural shifts: one was the reality of women's diminished role as sole food

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<sup>69</sup> By the mid 1950's non-food company examples existed in a similar way to food counterparts.

<sup>70</sup> Drake McFeely 46.

producer in the home; the other, ironically enough, was the increased emotional investment in that role.”<sup>71</sup>

The status of the Home Economist had become more pronounced and their skills and knowledge were valuable to companies. As Cooke confirmed “home economics was professionalized in Canada in 1939, and home economists took up positions as not only teachers and dieticians, but also as corporate and public spokespersons.”<sup>72</sup> These experts that traditionally have worked within company Domestic Science Departments or test kitchens communicated through advertisements, television and radio broadcasts, live cookery demonstrations, cookery columns in magazines and newspapers, cookery publications and occasionally packaging (see Appendix G).<sup>73</sup> For example Margaret Sheppard Fidler’s recipe book (1953) proudly identified her status as qualified “cookery expert” and “housewife” so reader’s would appreciate the pedigree of her advice<sup>74</sup> (fig. 8.11). The role, identity and importance of such experts was often emphasised within promotional material where their name, and often their visual identity was presented. For example Campbells Soup Company (USA) *Cooking with Condensed Soups* 1952 advertisement introduced Anne Marshall, Director of Home Economics as “She is your point of view in our kitchens and an important part of the Campbell organization” (...) “Her job is to think constantly of you and your home (...)”<sup>75</sup> (fig. 8.12). This fictitious character was used in advertisements and company publications from 1949 to 1958”.<sup>76</sup> Interestingly in 1958 she was replaced by the “youthful but mature home economist”<sup>77</sup> Carolyn Campbell who existed until 1970. This character was named more directly to the company, suggesting a company relative not merely a company employee (fig. 8.17).

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<sup>71</sup> Nathalie Cooke, “Getting the mix right for the Canadian Home Baker.” *Essays on Canadian Writing* 78 (Winter 2003): 201.

<sup>72</sup> Nathalie Cooke, “Cookbooklets and Canadian Kitchens.” *Material Culture Review*. n.p. 2009. Web. 23 Apr. 2010.

<sup>73</sup> Companies advertised their products through branded radio cooking programmes.

<sup>74</sup> Margaret M. Sheppard Fidler, *Basic recipes*. London: Spring Books, c. 1953). The illustration of an aproned cook appeared on its cover.

<sup>75</sup> Anne Marshall, *Cooking With Condensed Soups*. (Camden: Campbell Soup Company, 1952: n.p.)

<sup>76</sup> Carol Carey, “Campbell’s,.” UK, Message to the author, 5 June 2006. E-mail.

<sup>77</sup>Carey.

The face of the character was important to personalise and make sincere the brand's communication. The professionals often appeared as matriarchal figures: "women whose authority was derived from their domestic, reliable, and maternal natures"<sup>78</sup> were presented as figures of trust and role models that consumers could relate to. Their images were presented as photographs and/or illustrations and their signatures were clearly legible for easy recognition. These characters were more distinct than the many images of anonymous cooks and housewives that also appeared in food marketing at this time as their name and identity gave them specific professional status (fig. 8.13).<sup>79</sup>

fig. 2.11 and fig. 8.12 This material is unavailable due to copyright restrictions.

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<sup>78</sup> Strasser 193.

<sup>79</sup> Images of cooks and housewives to communicate food and food-related products is an established marketing approach. The images provided a visual shorthand for home, the kitchen and cooking. Image presents a collation of images of women from key food and food appliances promotional and cookery books.

Some brands employed real Home Economists that appeared in marketing material as themselves to provide professional guidance and brand endorsement. Their pre-existing popularity offered valuable connotations that could be transferred to the brand. For example BBC cookery expert Marguerite Patten endorsed Symington's soups in advertisements in the 1950's. This approach is still evident today and on occasion a food expert, often a celebrity chef, appears on brand packaging as endorser.

#### **8.4.5. Fictitious Commercial Home Economists/Advisors**

To make distinct their brands and to speak directly to consumers many food companies, from the 1920's onwards, created their own professional Home Economist. In markets where competition was particularly fierce and products were literally bland, such as yeast and flour, the attractive face of a character helped to distinguish the brand. By the mid-twentieth century a range of examples operated simultaneously and many became popular as Cooke commented, audiences "consumed the images and personalities of the cooking icons as much as they consumed the products that the icons promoted".<sup>80</sup> Some examples only existed in their own country whilst others worked simultaneously in America and Canada and on occasion a different character was used in each country to address the cultural nuances of national audiences.<sup>81</sup> For example Anna Lee Scott worked solely in Canada for the Maple Leaf Milling Company Limited in the 1940's whilst Betty Crocker (General Mills) appeared in both countries.<sup>82</sup>

A strong relationship existed between the commercial creations and the real professionals that worked within the company test kitchens. Often real home economists worked as the fictitious experts<sup>83</sup> and as Shapiro remarked "The real women who stood behind each name enjoyed far more authority as fictional figures than most of their colleagues did as living, breathing home

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<sup>80</sup> Cooke, „Getting the mix right for the Canadian Home Baker.“ 192.

<sup>81</sup> As identified Driver, "Home Economists."

<sup>82</sup> Driver, "Home Economists."

<sup>83</sup> Some personalities live performances were acted out by real people.

economists.”<sup>84</sup> For example Beth Bailey McLean at Swift and Company (USA)<sup>85</sup> worked as fictitious Martha Logan (1937-1957): her photograph appeared as Martha in advertisements and publications, but not on packaging.<sup>86</sup> For example a 1946 advertisement proclaimed “We call her America’s busiest homemaker!” evidenced the competitive nature of such characters as company’s vied for consumer attention.<sup>87</sup> However some fictitious examples operated in name and signature only with no related image such as Martha Lee Anderson, for the American Arm and Hammer Baking Soda brand in the 1930’s and 1940’s. Sometimes fictitious home economists were created for non-food companies for example Edith Adams, food columnist for *The Vancouver Sun* newspaper.

fig. 8.13 This material is unavailable due to copyright restrictions.

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<sup>84</sup> Shapiro 178.

<sup>85</sup> „Twentieth Century Women of Iowa State: Beth Bailey McLean. n.d. Iowa State University. n.p. Web 13 Jan. 2008.

<sup>86</sup> Driver identified McLean’s photograph used as Logan and confirmed that Swift Canadian Company employed their own real Home Economists to be Martha Logan. Driver. *Culinary Landmarks*, 852.

<sup>87</sup> „Meet Martha Logan.“ *Life*. 29 Jul. 21:5. (New York: Time Inc., 1946):55-56. The advertisement presented Logan’s illustrated portrait as a seal of quality.

fig. 8.14 This material is unavailable due to copyright restrictions.

#### **8.4.6. Enigmatic Home Economists: Variations on a Theme**

Led by the success of Betty Crocker, the fictitious commercial home economist brand icon who was created in 1921 (as discussed later), increasingly from the 1920"s competing companies developed their examples as influenced by Crocker"s role and look. As a result a host of fictitious female commercial home economists as advisors have existed across a variety of countries, and were notably prolific in the mid-twentieth century in North America (fig. 8.14 and Appendix G). It is proposed that such icons can be considered to be a myth; an "(...) exemplary symbol that people accept as a shorthand to represent important ideas".<sup>88</sup> This marketing strategy is long established in food promotion and some icons may be considered to be legendary. Like their real home economist sisters, fictitious examples were employed to be friendly advisors: their fictive being was presented as believable and their help credible. Such examples can be seen to illustrate Patai"s observation of fictitious advertising characters: "Since we, in general, are wont to accept advice only from people whom we believe to be more knowledgeable than ourselves, here can be little

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<sup>88</sup> Douglas B. Holt, *How Brands Become Icons: the Principles of Cultural Branding* (Boston: Harvard Business School Press, 2004) 1.

doubt that the Madison Avenue magicians have succeeded not only in creating mythical figures and bringing them to life, but also making us believe that they are indeed persons whose advice is worth listening to, people who know more than we do.”<sup>89</sup>

The women were usually depicted in posed colour portrait fashion: illustrative faces that were usually detailed and smiling – welcoming and apparently happy to serve - and they looked directly at the consumer. Some appeared as sketch-like portraits, such as Mary Hale Martin (Libby, McNeill Libby, USA, 1950’s) (fig. 8.15) whilst others appeared photographic-like, notably to give credence to their supposed existence, for example Virginia Roberts, Occident Flour, USA, 1940’s (fig. 8.15) and Mary Baker, Shredded Wheat, UK, 1950’s (fig. 8.15). They appeared well groomed and their image suggested control, care and professionalism; their costume and make-up was appropriate to the era of their use so they did not appear dated. Their femininity was often reinforced by jewellery, often a pearl necklace as a symbol of certain maturity, sophistication and formality. Some appeared visually as young professionals (e.g, Beatrice Cook; whilst others appeared as older, more matronly, serious characters whose authority was underlined by the experience their age inferred: where their image connoted role as older family member - mother or grandmother potentially too, for example Martha Logan and Aunt Jenny, Spry (see Appendix G ).<sup>90</sup> In many examples it appeared that certain cultural and social attitudes towards notions of age, gender and femininity were perpetuated by the women’s appearance. Their faces reflected the social and cultural norms of their time and referenced female stereotypes, for example Virginia Roberts’ high collar, centre-parted hair and serene face appeared reminiscent of Disney’s 1937 animated film *Snow White* character, a face that was popular at the time of her creation (fig. 8.15). These women appeared as generally familiar, safe and trustworthy and thus believable.

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<sup>89</sup> Raphael Patai, *Myth and Modern Man* (Eaglewood cliffs: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1972) 264.

<sup>90</sup> Shapiro quotes an article in Tide business magazine) that identified “Ideally the corporate character is a woman, between the ages of 32 and 40, attractive, but not competitively so, mature but youthful-looking, competent yet warm, understanding but not sentimental, interested in the consumer but not involved with her.” “The Current State of Live Trademarks”, *Tide*, Mar. 22 1957:28-30. Qtd. in Shapiro, “I Guarantee: Betty Crocker and the Woman in the Kitchen”.

The fictitious characters appeared in press advertisements and cookery books and were often depicted in kitchens that either referenced the company's test kitchen - to prove and reinforce their professional veracity - or in domestic kitchens - where homely accessories perhaps enabled the consumer to position themselves in relation to the person depicted. Predominantly however characters appeared as head and shoulder portraits, concise symbols that were formulaically placed within marketing materials as cues to capture consumers' attention and to make personal the brand. Their signatures, the name important to give identity and apparent authenticity to the character, were part of their graphic identity, presented as if penned by their owners and clearly legible, the script type names were a sign and guarantee of product quality.

The fictitious experts shared facial features and as Shapiro noted it was difficult "differentiate who was real and who was fictitious" and that examples were "(...) authorities in a surreal universe that left purely optional the distinction between fiction and reality."<sup>91</sup> Whilst Driver observed that there was a difference between US and Canadian home economists, that Canadian examples were more personal, "housewife-like, down to earth and „homey“",<sup>92</sup> examples often looked remarkably similar. Their visual appearance - dress and facial expressions and apparent age - indicated a formulaic design approach to their creation. Their shared purpose and presence presented a „sisterhood" of fictitious advisors.<sup>93</sup> For example fictitious Beatrice Cooke of Beatrice Foods Company (USA) featured in a variety of cook books and advertisements in the 1940's and 1950's.<sup>94</sup> Two illustrations existed and both appeared to be a cross between the faces of the c.1954 Betty Crocker (General Mills) and Frances Barton, Home Economist, General Foods Limited (USA, 1950's) (fig.8.15). Interestingly Beatrice's image is used today by Beatrice Companies, Inc. as the

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<sup>91</sup> Laura Shapiro, *Something From The Oven: Reinventing Dinner in 1950's America*, 177.

<sup>92</sup> Driver, Telephone Interview with author, 17 Apr. 2006.

<sup>93</sup> Marks 111 - referred to the examples as sisters.

<sup>94</sup> The company was originally founded in 1894 as a diary based manufacturer and by 1990 had a diverse range of food brands. Two versions of Beatrice appeared in advertisements.

company draws upon her role and association; however the image is a passive symbol rather than active brand icon.<sup>95</sup>

This material is unavailable due to copyright restrictions.

fig. 8.15

In the UK a number of comparable fictitious home economist/advisors were created however the extent of their existence is difficult to confirm.<sup>96</sup> In the late 1950s and early 1960s Janet Johnson was depicted in McDougall's flour brochures (fig. 8.17) and Susan Sinclair's portrait featured in Cadbury's advertisements; neither appeared upon packaging however (fig. 8.18).<sup>97</sup> In comparison Mary Baker, with rather obvious surname, appeared on cake mix boxes and advertisements for the Shredded Wheat Company Limited in the 1950's.<sup>98</sup> Her name was identified as trade mark and her face presented a smiling middle-aged motherly/wifely brand image. With benign expression she appeared well-groomed, conservative and respectable; her portrait was uniformly presented upon the packaging. (fig. 8.19) Thus Mary's portrait was specifically used to enhance the product and the cake mix boxes appeared to have featured within all advertisements. The brand name was declared as title feature and repeated beneath her image too: the repetition reinforced the identity of the product and linked its association.

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<sup>95</sup> This company operates a range of activities and uses Cooke's image in relation to its food brand.

<sup>96</sup> Companies were unable to confirm the duration of the examples' existence

<sup>97</sup> Cadbury's advertisement, *Woman's Weekly*. 9 Dec. London: Amalgamated Press, 1961:45.

<sup>98</sup> The 1956 television advertisement by McCann Erickson Advertising featured actress Rosamund John with the product.

In 1957 a cake mix advertisement<sup>99</sup> featured Elizabeth Craig, one of the most popular British food writers and home economists of the time, as brand endorser. Craig added valuable support to the Mary Baker brand with her statement “I agree with Mary Baker (...)” helped heighten the profile of the brand whilst contributing to the plausibility of Baker’s existence. The endorsement added the reassurance that Mary Baker was to be trusted. As both professionals endorsed the brand they also reinforced the myth of Mary Baker. Ultimately Mary’s smiling face offered gentle reassurance to British housewives who perhaps were troubled by using cake mixes rather than applying their own culinary skills. Her packaging appearance evidenced the importance of this professional to the brand’s identity and her image was comparable with Canadian and American contemporaries although the extent of her role was significantly less.<sup>100</sup>

fig. 8.16; fig.8.17 and fig. 8.18 This material is unavailable due to copyright restrictions.

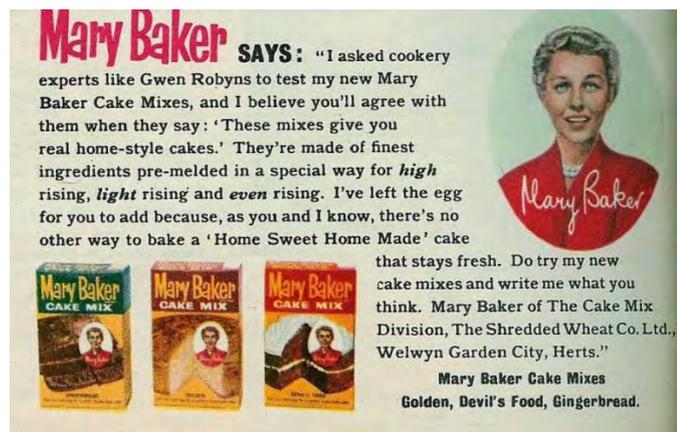


fig. 8.19

<sup>99</sup> Mary Baker cake mix advertisement, *Home* 1957, 57.

<sup>100</sup> It is unclear over what timespan Mary Baker operated.

The visual representation of fictitious brand characters and icons was an important aspect for some brands although Driver noted their names were more important than their “cardboard faces.”<sup>101</sup> The formulaic approach of press advertisements evidenced the appearance of characters as small head portraits positioned to the side of a central food image, and on occasion, they were featured next to the brand packaging to reinforce its identity. Sometimes characters from different brands appeared in the same advertisement as companies adopted a co-branding approach. For example a 1954 Swift’s Chicken and General Mills Inc., Bisquick advertisement<sup>102</sup> (fig. 8.21) featured Martha Logan (Swift Meat packing) and Betty Crocker (General Mills Inc.,); another featured fake experts Betty Crocker, Beatrice Cooke (Meadow Gold Butter) and Frances Barton (Log Cabin syrup, General Foods)<sup>103</sup> The consumer was encouraged to take expert advice from the combined message of the professionals and it was heartening to see these colleagues operating in a complementary way.



fig. 8.20

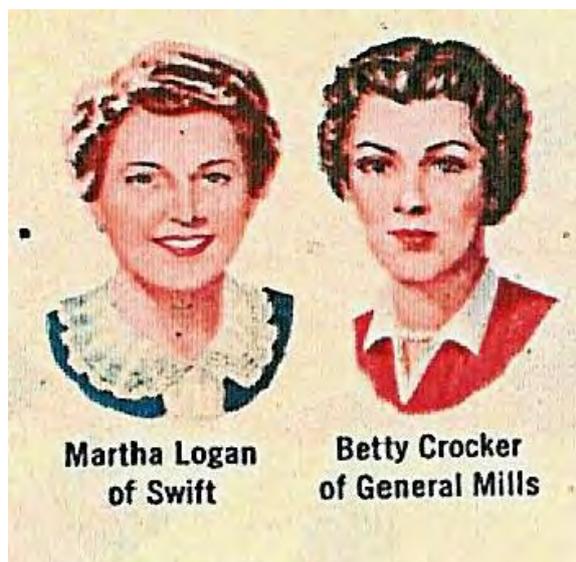


fig. 8.21

Some fictitious experts appeared on packaging as brand’s recognised that their icon provided valuable identity and competitive edge. For example Brenda York,

<sup>101</sup> Driver, Telephone interview with author, 17 Apr. 2006.

<sup>102</sup> *Saturday Evening Post*, June, (Indianapolis: Curtis Publishing Company, 1954): n.p.

<sup>103</sup> *Saturday Evening Post*. Oct, (Indianapolis: Curtis Publishing Company, 1954): n.p

Home Economist Canada Packers Limited (1947-c.1965) appeared as illustrated portrait on *Margene* margarine packaging and also the brand's cookery books.<sup>104</sup> Her yellow blouse carefully reflected the food's colour, her white teeth suggested health association and her ample, brown hair suggested a vitality and youthfulness. York's signature, in red to emphasise the packaging's brand colours, was positioned beneath her portrait as her endorsement of the brand. Interestingly her smiling endorsement of the product gave important reassurance to customers at a time when margarine was considered with caution as it had only recently been legalised in Canada.<sup>105</sup>

However few examples appeared upon the food packaging as brands chose to position their experts visually in the more traditional contexts of the cookery book and magazine advertisement: here their role was more instructional rather than the hard sell commercial symbol upon pack fronts. Thus Fictitious Commercial Home Economists often operated as brand characters rather than as brand icons.

### 8.5. Betty Crocker

Soon after her 1921 debut, Betty Crocker found herself among friends as dozens of spokeswomen appeared in food companies' ads and cookbooks. Fictional household experts who emerged in the 1920's included Virginia Roberts of Occident Flour, Rita Martin of Robin Hood Flour, Pillsbury Mary Ellis Ames, and Kay Kellogg, named after the famed cereal she promoted. Last but certainly not least was Ann Pillsbury. She presided over a real Home Service Center (...).<sup>106</sup>

Betty Crocker is the registered trademark of General Mills Inc. (USA) and can be regarded as the most successful fictitious commercial home economist that influenced the creation and look of many brand characters and icons throughout the twentieth century.<sup>107</sup> Created in 1921 by Washburn Crosby company (forerunner of General Mills) as a fictitious home economist used to respond to consumer enquiries, as Mayer observed she was "[the] understanding friend of

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<sup>104</sup> Driver 918.

<sup>105</sup> As explained by Driver 919.

<sup>106</sup> 'A bevy of household helpers,' Mill City Museum [display panel], (2006).

<sup>107</sup> Advertising Age's 1999 Top Ten list of icons of the twentieth century placed Betty Crocker in 4<sup>th</sup> position.

the lonely housewife”<sup>108</sup> this icon initially existed as a penned signature until (after some unofficial illustrations were used in publicity material) the initial portrait by Neysa McMein was commissioned in 1936. Created as a friendly authoritative figure to communicate with consumers, Betty operated across the company’s marketing in a variety of roles: in press advertisements, live cookery demonstrations and Betty Crocker Cooking Schools, in radio and television broadcasts and „self-penned” cookery books and newspaper food columns. The extent of her activities has been well documented by authors Marks, Gray and the Betty Crocker website so this thesis does not attempt to duplicate this information.<sup>109</sup>

Betty Crocker has existed in eight official portraits (fig. 26-32), and a number of unofficial images, and historically was used across a wide range of marketing platforms. Her visual representation attempted to relate to and reflect social and cultural ideals, attitudes and contexts and consumer expectations whilst providing brand identity in competitive retail markets. The first portrait was positioned upon the brand’s 1936 Softasilk cake flour box,<sup>110</sup> a mild appearance that could have been read as housewife, mother or cook. Betty was identified in a company press release as “an ageless 32”<sup>111</sup> and commentators subsequently have determined her appearance as “serious”<sup>112</sup> and “prim, if not a little stern” as Betty appeared unsmiling.<sup>113</sup> Gray, General Mills historian, claimed that Betty had “(...) a fine Nordic brow and shape of skull. A jaw slightly Slavic resolution and features that might be claimed contentedly by various European groups – eyes, Irish; nose classic Roman – the perfect composite of the twentieth-century American woman.”<sup>114</sup> Her image appeared across the brand’s marketing and upon the backs of food mix boxes her face offered consumers reassurance of their ability to gain “marvellous results” in their home

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<sup>108</sup> Martin Mayer, *Madison Avenue USA* (London: Penguin, 1961) 67.

<sup>109</sup> For further information see Marks; James Gray, *Business without Boundary: The Story of General Mills* (Minneapolis: U of Minnesota Press, 1954); “Betty’s History.” Betty Crocker. n.d. General Mills Inc. n.pag. Web. 12 Jan. 2010.

<sup>110</sup> Andrew F. Smith, ed. *The Oxford Encyclopaedia of Food and Drink in America*. 2. (Oxford: OUP, 2004) 87.

<sup>111</sup> Marks 215 and 218. Marks referred to a company press report that identified Betty’s age.

<sup>112</sup> Marks 218.

<sup>113</sup> Bethany Kandel, “Betty Crocker is No One’s Grandmother Now.” *Spokane Chronicle*. May 23. 1986: 19. Web. 21 Jan. 2011.

<sup>114</sup> James Gray, General Mills historian, Marks 215 and 218.

baking.<sup>115</sup> (fig.8.22). This generic image thus provided a palpable figure to guide housewives in their cooking.



fig. 8.22

During the 1940"s and 1950"s a number of different and unofficial images of Betty in different attire and contexts appeared in promotional material. For example in 1948 Betty appeared in green (fig.8.23)<sup>116</sup> and in 1957 a relaxed Ma Walton-type figure in homely apron was evident (fig. 8.24). However it was a slightly different Betty that appeared upon the *Devils* [sic] *Food Cake* Mix box in c.1957 as she appeared ready to cook whilst a 1959 advertisement revealed Betty baking in her „Gdden Valley" test kitchen; a location rare to see made so explicit by the brand<sup>117</sup> (fig.8.25). However the consistent appearance of this important icon was secured, the corporate red dress was made uniform and the use of official portraits was anchored.

<sup>115</sup> Betty Crocker Devils Food Cake box, General Mills, Inc., 1949.

<sup>116</sup> Betty Crocker Picture Cookery Book.

<sup>117</sup> "Good News About Food" *Saturday Evening Post*. 12 Sept. Indianapolis: Curtis Publishing Company, 1959): n.p. Figure 8.25 is a proof for Family Circle magazine March and Everywoman's magazine April 1957 created by advertising agency Dancer-Fitzgerald-Sample Inc. Accessed at General Mills Archive.

fig. 8.23 This material is unavailable due to copyright restrictions.

fig. 8.24 This material is unavailable due to copyright restrictions.

fig. 8.25 This material is unavailable due to copyright restrictions.

fig. 8.26; fig. 8.27 and fig. 8.28 This material is unavailable due to copyright restrictions.

fig. 8.29; fig. 8.30 and fig. 8.31 This material is unavailable due to copyright restrictions.

fig. 8.32 This material is unavailable due to copyright restrictions.

Examples of artists' portrait submissions in the 1954 General Mills Inc., Betty Crocker portrait competition: fig. 8.26 Norman Rockwell; fig. 8.27: E.W. Greene; fig. 8.28: unidentified; fig. 8.29 Louise Altson; fig. 8.30 Spreter; fig. 8.31 Freudemann; fig. 8.32 Hilda Taylor. All photographs are from materials at the Betty Crocker Archive, General Mills Inc.

In 1954 seven artists were commissioned to create an image of Betty (fig. 8.26–Fig. 8.32). Interestingly the range of portraits created, and invariably still not made public, revealed the artists’ interpretations of the ideal Betty. The Norman Rockwell portrait appeared grandmotherly, another appeared regal and in one instance the depiction bordered on potentially ugly. Hilda Taylor’s portrait was chosen by consumers in 1995: a grey-streaked hair Betty that appeared older and friendlier.<sup>118</sup> This portrait appeared upon packaging and denoted happy homemaking and appeared warm, friendly and homely.

By the mid-1950’s the Betty Crocker range had extended beyond her initial cake mixes and in 1954 the “Red Spoon” logo (with white Betty Crocker script) was introduced to unite the brand’s identity (designed by Lippincott & Margulies, Inc.) As a symbol of cooking the logo offered the promise of quality. This sign subsequently has been used consistently and prominently upon all packaging<sup>119</sup> and General Mills Inc. observed “Its obvious tie-in with the kitchen made it a valued logo. With just minor modifications over the years, it is the most recognizable symbol of Betty Crocker today.”<sup>120</sup> (fig.8.33) As a result of its success this symbol has been echoed by other cooking product brands, such as Super Cooks” (fig. 8.34) identity (which featured their name in white text upon a red chef’s hat) and its direct appropriation by an anonymous Cake Decorating Kit (c. 2011) (fig.8.35).

fig. 8.33; fig. 8.34 and fig. 8.35 This material is unavailable due to copyright restrictions.

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<sup>118</sup> Taylor’s model for the portrait was her neighbour Muriel Wadsworth. The portrait featured in three versions: “smiling closed mouth; smiling with show of teeth; ¾ profile sidelong glance”

<sup>119</sup> The 2012 Betty Crocker promise upon packaging (USA) stated „tested and Approved by Betty Crocker® Kitchens „each Betty Crocker product promises delicious homemade taste every time.” The 2012 UK packaging stated “The red spoon promise: With Betty you get perfect icing every time. Love Betty.”

<sup>120</sup> “Betty’s History”. 2010. Betty Crocker. General Mills Inc. Web. 12 Jan. 2010.

Whilst the red spoon gave powerful identity, the importance of updating Betty's image to keep pace with changing fashions and gender representations was recognised and in 1965 Betty was revised and illustrator Joe Bowler's portrait presented a younger gently smiling Betty with brown hair and pearls (fig. 8.38).<sup>121</sup> Whilst used in advertisements this Betty was rarely used on food packaging at this time. In 1969 Bowler further updated Betty: her hairstyle and dress changed and her eyes became more prominent (fig. 8.39). Betty's image was thus important to the brand. Consumers' familiarity with her depiction underscored her enduring presence which operated with significant nostalgic appeal: audiences has often grown up with the motherly Betty and were accustomed to her place in their home and it was apparent that General Mills were loyal to their employee. However in 1972 Betty's profile was reviewed and her status repositioned as artist Jerome Ryan "depicted a more business like Betty Crocker, symbolizing American women's newly significant role outside the home"<sup>122</sup> however this Betty was not used extensively on packaging (fig. 8.40). In 1980 Betty's portrait was revised again notably with hair restyled to make Betty more fashionable (fig. 8.41)<sup>123</sup> however in 1986 Marketing Consultant Faith Popcorn advised General Mills that Betty needed to change as "She's been a little too grandmotherly looking. She's got to look more like the woman she's talking to."<sup>124</sup> Artist Harriet Pertchick, who had previously worked on portraits for other brand icons,<sup>125</sup> was commissioned to create the new portrait (fig. 8.42)<sup>126</sup> Pertchick represented Betty as "more relevant" to the times and used two models and her daughter as reference for her creation.<sup>127</sup> This Betty was identified by the artist as "warm, outreaching and intelligent"<sup>128</sup> and was referred to by General Mills as "a professional woman, approachable, friendly, competent and as comfortable in the boardroom as she is in the dining room."<sup>129</sup> The new Betty appeared more sophisticated with fancier blouse and

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<sup>121</sup> James Bowler worked for McCall's magazine, USA.

<sup>122</sup> Betty Crocker, "The Portraits" n.d. General Mills. n.p. Web. 12 Feb. 2012.

<sup>123</sup> The portrait was created by a New York agency.

<sup>124</sup> Kandel.

<sup>125</sup> Nabisco's Blue Bonnet Sue and Quaker Oats Mama Celeste.

<sup>126</sup> Kandel.

<sup>127</sup> Bob Greene, „No Virginia, There's No Betty Crocke," *Boca Raton News* 13 June 1986. n.d. Google News. n.p. Web. 21 Sept. 2009.

<sup>128</sup> Pertchick explained her version. Greene.

<sup>129</sup> Marks 238.

gold hoop earrings. Her green eyes and bob hairstyle presented a modern look. This portrait was used in advertisements and cookbooks but not on packaging as the red spoon was the preferred brand device in this context.

A new portrait, and indeed the last portrait, appeared in 1996 identified as “the wildest face lift in the history of American marketing.”<sup>130</sup> Commissioned to celebrate Betty’s platinum anniversary, General Mills created the “Spirit of Betty Crocker” competition and invited consumers “to submit a short essay that expressed Betty’s values (commitment to home, family, community and cooking)”<sup>131</sup>, their photograph and their choice of a Betty Crocker recipe.<sup>132</sup> Seventy five submissions were selected and a percentage of each person’s appearance contributed to a digital composite (created by Lifestyle Software Group) from which artist John Stuart Ingle created Betty’s portrait. This Betty appeared with darker skin as the company attempted to make her more ethnic, to appeal to and reflect “everywoman”.<sup>133</sup> She appeared across the company’s marketing and was positioned upon the side of cake mix boxes accompanied by the question “Who is Betty Crocker?” to attract consumer’s attention and to inform them of the icon’s importance (fig.8.43). Interestingly however, Betty’s fiction was not revealed: after 75 years Betty’s true identity appeared to remain elusive.

By 2004 General Mills acknowledged that Betty Crocker’s face was no longer required upon its packaging.<sup>134</sup> The brand’s diverse product range, effectively identified by the Crocker name and Red Spoon logo, and changing consumer attitudes and commercial markets led to Betty’s visual absence in the brand’s marketing. The removal of Betty’s image on packaging appeared to mark her retirement and the withdrawal of specific reference to her on UK and USA company websites suggested that this move was permanent. It appeared that the Home Economist as brand icon was no longer feasible or fashionable in food marketing.

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<sup>130</sup> “Search Is On For New Betty Crocker: General Mills Says It Wants A More Ethnically Diverse Spokeswoman For Its Products.” 12 Sept.1995. Orlando Sentinel. n.p. Web. 12 May 2009.

<sup>131</sup> Kathleen Parker, „Multicultural Face Lift Brings Betty Into '90s.“ Orlando Sentinel, 18 Oct.18, 1995. Web.1 May 2009.

<sup>132</sup> Marks 241.

<sup>133</sup> Marks 244.

<sup>134</sup> The brand was re-launched in 2002 in the UK .Simon Pollock, “Betty Crocker.” Marketing, General Mills, UK, Telephone interview 12 Apr. 2006.

Designer Bruce Mau questioned why Betty Crocker remained “consistent and integral as a branded personality even as her image changes over the years”<sup>135</sup> and proposed Betty as “a barometer of changing gender expectations and opportunities” and that she represented “a rapidly changing series of domestic ideals.”<sup>136</sup> Such observations may be agreed with as Betty’s changing image and indeed the removal of her image can be seen to reflect social and cultural issues that influence and impact upon brands. Betty’s long life however is testament to the success of a powerful marketing strategy: the use of a fake professional presented visually as real – where consumers may not recognise of indeed care if the personality is authentic. Betty’s success as an enigmatic fictitious brand icon provides powerful example that corporate fiction can be efficacious and that some creations can become much loved by consumers.<sup>137</sup>

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<sup>135</sup> Bruce Mau, *Life Style* (London: Phaidon, 2000) 230.

<sup>136</sup> Mau 230-233.

<sup>137</sup> Apparently one consumer wrote a marriage proposal to Betty Crocker.



fig. 8.36 (1936)



fig.8.37 (1955)



fig. 8.38 (1965)

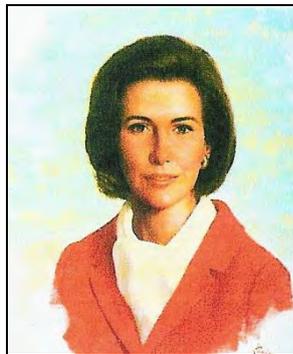


fig. 8.39 (1969)



fig. 8.40 (1972)



fig.8.41 (1980)



fig. 8.42 (1986)

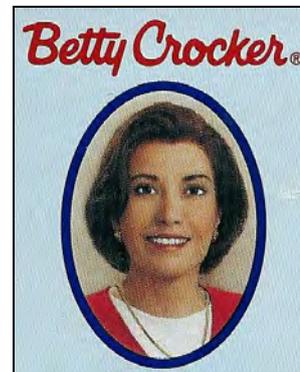


fig. 8.43 (1996)

The official Betty Crocker portraits: fig.8.36 Neysa McMein 1936; fig. 8.37 Hilda Taylor1955; fig. 8.38 Joe Bowler1965; fig. 8.39 Joe Bowler 1968; fig. 8.40 Jerome Ryan1972; fig. 8.41 anonymous 1980; fig. 8.42 Harriet Pertchick1986; fig. 8.43 John Stuart Ingle1996. All images are from the Betty Crocker Archive, General Mills Inc. USA and are the copyright of General Mills Inc.

### 8.5.1. Betty Crocker 2012

In 2012 the Betty Crocker™ brand was re-launched in the UK to target a new generation of female consumers that were keen to cook but perhaps did not have the skills or confidence to bake from scratch. Betty Crocker™ now competes in a cake mix market that had evidenced significant growth in recent years as a result of increased interest in traditional domestic skills including home making and baking. As chef Will Torrent proclaimed “„The UK’s Gone Baking Mad!”<sup>138</sup> and the recent and persistent cup-cake-culture has seen the sales of cake mixes rise.<sup>139</sup> The Betty Crocker brand refers to this as a “Baking Renaissance” and proclaims “With more Mums at home, 56% of Mums say they bake more frequently than they did five years ago.”<sup>140</sup> Such interest in baking has been stimulated by television programmes such as *The Great British Bake-Off* and is potentially a consequence of the recession where consumers opt to make their own cakes rather than buying more expensive pre-made options.<sup>141</sup>

The Betty Crocker brand character statement – “playful, reassuring and feminine” – has shaped the brand’s new nostalgic look. Its packaging, by The Collaborators brand consultancy,<sup>142</sup> presents a “modern retro-interpretation” of the brand.<sup>143</sup> Cath Kidston-esque pastel colours and a polka dot pattern present a vintage, kitsch, fun and feminine feel (fig.8.44).<sup>144</sup> The brand’s red spoon logo remains prominent whilst the packaging appears more frivolous and delicate than previously.

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<sup>138</sup> Will Torrent, “The UK’s Gone Baking Mad.” 27 Feb. 2013. Huffington Post. n.p. Web. 1 Feb 2013.

<sup>139</sup> In 2007 Waitrose supermarket reported a 40 % increase in the sale of baking mixes and a 25 % year-on-year increase in cake mixes. “Cake-mix sales rise as mum puts the yum into summer.” 27 Aug. 2007. The Scotsman. Web. 12 Jan 2012. In 2009 UK supermarket Morrisons reported “a 54% increase in sales of cake mix.” Jessica Fellowes, “50 Ways the Recession is Changing Our Lives.” 14 Mar. 2009. The Telegraph. n.p. Web. 12 Jan. 2010.

<sup>140</sup> “The Betty Story”, Betty Crocker, n.d. General Mills Inc., n. p. Web. 12 Jan. 2013.

<sup>141</sup> Amateur baking competition television programme by Love Production screened annually on the BBC since 2010.

<sup>142</sup> Betty Crocker - UK Relaunch, n.d. The Collaborators. Vimeo. n.p. Web. 14 Mar. 2013.

<sup>143</sup> Emily Gosling, “A New Look for Baking Brand Betty Crocker.” Design Week. 13 Dec. 2012. n.p. Web. 4 Jan. 2013.

<sup>144</sup> Cath Kidston is a UK designer associated with nostalgic home designs.

Importantly, after nearly a ten years absence from UK packaging, a new image of Betty is present and confirms that her visual appearance is once more important to represent “a meaningful baking experience” (fig.8.45).<sup>145</sup> Betty appears as a simplistic line drawing of a pretty, young 1950’s-style female with the message “love Betty” in script beneath. Designed by Mary Lewis, the creation was inspired by Betty’s post-second world war heritage as Wood, Director of The Collaborators, confirmed Betty’s first cake mix was launched in 1947 and her association with the vibrant 1950’s is significant.<sup>146</sup> Wood identified that Betty’s image was based upon the real Adelaide Hawley that appeared as Betty on American television in 1949-1964.<sup>147</sup> The brand’s new retro-look links with the recent popularity of vintage and the retro trends evident in popular culture<sup>148</sup> and Ed Culf, Betty Crocker Marketing Director, commented “Our new look has been introduced in response to extensive consumer research to ensure that our products deliver maximum appeal and proactively showcase Betty Crocker’s rich heritage and personality.”<sup>149</sup>

Betty now appears lighter, brighter and younger than her previous monolithic portraits, however, this visual incarnation does not indicate a real person and Betty appears more as a decorative symbol (fig. 8.44 and 8.45). Her wink suggests a cheerful hello: a confident sign of the product’s quality, perhaps a knowing nod to her history or as Wood observed, it can suggest that she communicates reassuringly to the consumer “we have done all the hard work for you” or “you can do it.”<sup>150</sup> The packaging makes no reference to Betty’s identity beyond the face and brand name. For British audiences, that may be

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<sup>145</sup> Wood, Rachel. “Betty Crocker.” Director, The Collaborators, Telephone Interview. 14 Mar. 2013.

<sup>146</sup> Wood Telephone Interview.

<sup>147</sup> „Adelaide Hawley Cumming, 93, Television’s First Betty Crocker.” 25 Dec. 1998, n.p. The New York Times. Web. 11 May 2008.

<sup>148</sup> Interest in vintage fashions, objects and styles has developed significantly recently as evidenced by the “*Vintage* at Goodwood” festival (inaugural event 2010), nostalgia lifestyle magazine *Pretty Nostalgic* (launched 2012, Pretty Nostalgic Ltd.) and *Homemaker* magazine (launched 2012, Aceville Publications Ltd.). Kasprzak confirmed the popularity of vintage. Emma Kasprzak. “Vintage Style: the Rise of Retro Fashion.” BBC News. 17 Apr. 2012. n. p.

<sup>149</sup> „Betty Crocker refreshes its packaging and launches two new products.” 18 Oct. 2012. The Food and Drink Innovation Network. n.p. Web. 12 Nov. 2012.

<sup>150</sup> Wood Telephone Interview.

new to Betty Crocker, her heritage may be unclear and less relevant.<sup>151</sup> The consumer may relate her image to the classic „style icon“ 1950“s housewife stereotype.<sup>152</sup> This association in part may be a result of a recent revival in the use of housewife imagery and references across contemporary culture where the housewife is popular and, despite being an “unglamorous, dated term, associated with drudgery”,<sup>153</sup> has become a nostalgic image, a symbol used to suggest the past with connotations of mother, home and home cooking, that has contemporary appeal and domestic and cooking connotations that are novel and attractive to new consumers. In some instances the housewife on packaging has been used in reference to a company“s history. For example the 2012 UK Flash „Vintage Edition“ cleaning wipes packs<sup>154</sup>(fig. 8.46) and the 2012 Italian Trispuma® Puro Cocco laundry detergent packaging both featured an illustrated 1950“s-style housewife as core selling point (fig. 8.47).<sup>155</sup> Thus at a time when retro and vintage styles have flourished across popular consumer culture, Betty“s re-emergence has a nostalgic aesthetic appeal. In the context of the brand“s claim that “57% of women dream of quitting their job to stay at home with their children” it appears that connotations of female stereotypes - the traditional housewife and mum - are implicit in Betty“s image.<sup>156</sup>

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<sup>151</sup> As Wood confirmed, UK consumers had little understanding and engagement with Betty prior to 2012. The brand“s UK website explains Betty“s history.

<sup>152</sup>Felicity Capon, “Why is the 1950s Housewife Making a Comeback?” 28 Feb. 2013. The Telegraph. n.p. Web. 23 Feb. 2013.

<sup>153</sup> Capon.

<sup>154</sup> Flash“s 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary packaging.

<sup>155</sup> Trispuma® is manufactured by Saponerie Mario Fissi Spa. The housewife image in both examples connotes cleaning and nostalgia.

<sup>156</sup> Betty Crocker „The Betty Story.“ *General Mills*. n.d. n.p. Web. 3 Jan. 2012.



fig. 8.44



fig.8.45



fig. 8.46



fig. 8.47



fig. 8.48

The brand's UK website launched in 2013, designed by Omni Digital, presents "Betty's Story" through archival material that explains her history and many faces. However on the brand's American packs Betty has no face; photographs of anonymous family members baking are depicted on pack back: different races and ages but always an adult and child baking together, for example grandmother and granddaughter; father and daughter (fig. 8.49) and mother and daughter.<sup>157</sup> As Wood confirmed, in America Betty Crocker has a far wider range of products than in the UK and American audiences' understanding of

<sup>157</sup> Each cake mix has a different people image to present a more balanced race and gender representation.

Betty is very different to that of UK consumers. It appears that for UK audiences the Betty icon is of some value to distinguish the brand in a competitive market and the visual representation of Betty has been positioned as important to the brand's identity once more.

Betty Crocker's visual identity over the years has provided distinct associations and meanings that have enabled efficient interpretation of her visual representation. Comparable commercial food characters have used her successful visual codes and associated meanings to operate. As similar typical types have been created, using the tried and tested marketing approach, a collective of fictitious home economists has evolved. From the range of examples that existed it is evident that the fictitious commercial experts were accepted by and popular with consumers and their fiction was either not recognised by audiences or was accepted. As Cooke stated "[...] substantial corporate investment evident in fictional food folk who embody the unchanged ideal at the heart of women's role in the kitchen is testimony to consumer desire for such a figure".<sup>158</sup>

As Cooke confirmed, by the late 1960's many fictitious female brand icons disappeared as market developments, consumer needs and attitudes and marketing approaches changed.<sup>159</sup> The removal of the face of Betty Crocker from the brand's products and promotional materials in c. 2004 evidenced that the icon's visual appearance was less relevant and less viable in changing competitive markets where new consumers' attitudes and experiences perhaps did not equate with or relate readily to the traditional female stereotype and the fakery of the Betty-type commercial characters and icons. The Betty Crocker™ Red Spoon trademark was more effective brand device.

A range of factors have contributed to why Betty Crocker endured for so long. As an easily recognisable name and face, Betty has appeared and appealed to generations of consumers globally who have become familiar with her identity. In America, Betty's extensive marketing, from radio shows and live demonstrations through to television advertisements and newspaper columns,

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<sup>158</sup> Nathalie Cooke, *Getting the mix right for the Canadian Home Baker*, 196.

<sup>159</sup> Cooke 209.

across an extensive time period has resulted in today's consumers' "98% spontaneous awareness of the brand"<sup>160</sup> Through use of her products her brand promise of success is borne out and Betty has proved to be reliable.

A "content assessment" of Betty's visual identity, across the various portrait versions has identified the components of this archetype that make her distinct and distinguished and, as a consequence, have been used by other competing characters in their attempts, ironically, to appear unique and to secure customer trust and loyalty.<sup>161</sup> As Kitch identified, a "visual vocabulary of womanhood"<sup>162</sup> exists and visible signs<sup>163</sup> are used to communicate the meaning of woman. Woman is a cultural construct and "media imagery works to create, transform, and perpetuate certain cultural ideals".<sup>164</sup> As a result the images of Betty and the other women created by companies, their faces, names and costumes, communicate key social and cultural values and particular gender roles that reflect and are associated with particular moments in time: as Gombrich observed "an image cannot be divorced from its purpose and requirements of the society in which the given visual language gains currency." Thus Betty's portraits and her comparable „sisters“ are shaped by, reflect and are to be read in relation to the society and contexts in which they function. It is our competence to read and understand the images and their function in the context of their existence that enables them to work and be understood at the time of their use and subsequently.

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<sup>160</sup> Wood, Telephone Interview.

<sup>161</sup> Marion Marzolf identified this as "reading, sifting, weighing, comparing and analysing the evidence in order to tell the story."

<sup>162</sup> Carolyn Kitch, *The Girl on the Magazine Cover: the Origins of Visual Stereotypes in American Mass Media* (Chapel Hill: U. of North Caroline Press, 2001) 3.

<sup>163</sup> David Crow, *Visible Signs: An Introduction to Semiotics* (AVA Publishing, 2003).

<sup>164</sup> Kitch 3.

## 8.6. Contemporary Female Fictitious Customer Service Advisors

Interestingly Wood claimed that in Betty the “Noble art of the homemaker” continues<sup>165</sup> however the notion of the domestic home economist or housewife is one that is appealing perhaps on a level of stylistic fancy or nostalgic idealism rather than an actual social and cultural reality. However the use of fictitious home economist-like customer service advisor brand icons does endure, as evidenced by Carol Stevens of RED STAR Yeast Company, USA<sup>166</sup> who was created in 1975 “(...) when the company, then Universal Foods Corporation, hired Food consultants, Barbara R Thornton Associates who suggested that the name copied the Betty Crocker icon.”<sup>167</sup> Today Carol Stevens continues to provide consumer service. Her seal of approval and guarantee of quality is given visually through her portrait and signature upon the packaging and website (fig. 8.49). Since 1975 two visual versions of Carol have existed: a photograph of company employee *Glenna Vance* and subsequently an illustration.<sup>168</sup> The current illustration provides a distinct image of a smiling woman: Vance confirmed “Carol Stevens is not necessarily any specific age of person. She is the Consumer Service person who knows a lot about baking bread”<sup>169</sup> She invites consumers “To speak with me personally”; to “Ask Carol”.<sup>170</sup> The text is written in the first person and no indication is given that Carol is unreal.

However the reality of the icon is that she is based upon the *real* Glenna Vance, the company’s President and author of numerous cookery related books. This particular commercial twist is perhaps not known by customers who may assume Stevens actually exists or is fictitious. This fictitious advisor continues a marketing tradition that is well established although it is not common today. Stevens appears to have endured and has not retired despite marketing trends and the demise of her many commercial sisters.

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<sup>165</sup> Wood.

<sup>166</sup> „The RED STAR Yeast Company was created in 1892. The first mention of the company referred to as RED STAR Yeast is an article from the Milwaukee Sentinel on May 12, 1887.” Glenna Vance, Glenna. “Carol Stevens.” Director, Red Star Yeast. Lesaffre Yeast Corporation, USA. Message to the author. 17Jul. 2006. E-mail.

<sup>167</sup> Vance, Message to the author.

<sup>168</sup> Vance reported „At one time my picture was used, but now it is a drawing.”

<sup>169</sup> Vance, Message to the author.

<sup>170</sup> “Ask Carol” RED STAR. n.d. Lesaffre Teast Corporation, n.p. Web. 8 Apr. 2006.

By comparison Rita Martin, an icon that has endured since c.1938, features on packaging today however her role as brand icon home economist has been reduced to the symbol of her face that appears on Brodie® XXX Self-Raising Flour packaging only (Robin Hood Floor brand, Smucker Foods of Canada Corp.<sup>171</sup> Martin originally appeared in cookbooks and magazine advertisements and on the brand's packaging from the 1950's.<sup>172</sup> She existed as colour portrait (fig.8.50) or as line drawing portrait (fig. 8.51 and fig. 8.52).<sup>173</sup> Like her fictitious contemporaries, for example Martha Logan of Swift Canadian Company; Jeannette Frank of Adolph's Ltd. (Meat), USA, and Kay Kellogg of Kellogg company, USA, Rita appeared reserved, dignified and authoritative. Today her appearance upon the packaging evidences the legacy of the icons of the mid-twentieth century yet she may appear incongruous to contemporary consumers unfamiliar with her heritage.



fig. 8.49

<sup>171</sup> Brodie XXX self-raising flour was created by James Parkin in 1863. The flour later became Brodie and Harvie brand (Montreal). Driver 177. Rita was initially Director of Robin Hood Flour Test Kitchens, International Milling Company Inc., USA.

<sup>172</sup> Debbie W, Consumer Relations Representative, Smucker Foods of Canada Corp., 15 Mar. 2013, E-mail.

<sup>173</sup> Driver confirmed that the portrait was created in the mid-1940's by Canadian artist Rex Wood who also created designs for various magazine covers. Driver, Telephone interview.



fig. 8.50



fig. 8.51



fig.8.52

Brand icons beyond the home economist area are also comparable with Betty Crocker. For example “The Contadina Woman”, Contadina brand (tomato products, Del Monte Foods, USA)<sup>174</sup> is a fictitious icon created in 1918 that endures today and is similar in look to Betty.<sup>175</sup> She features across the brand’s marketing<sup>176</sup> and whilst the brand questioned “Who is she?”<sup>177</sup> and then explained “Contadina” in Italian means “country woman” and thus represents the brand’s Italian heritage, her identity has not been specified and potentially she can be read as real. The illustrated Contadina (2012) is framed by a rural landscape that helps tell the brand’s story and suggests the natural quality of the companies’ produce (fig. 8.53).<sup>178</sup> Contadina may be seen to embody traditional matriarchal qualities such as care and generosity -*mother-as-domestic provider*- and thus is comparable with other mother brand icons. She could be read as a stereotypical Italian (Italian-American) „mama” comparable with the Ragú (Symington’s pasta sauce) brand character, Mrs. Cantisano , the

<sup>174</sup> The brand has been owned by various companies since 1963.

<sup>175</sup> An Italian immigrant family founded a tomato canning business in the USA in 1916 and created the Contadina brand in 1918. “Contadina Woman.” n.d. Del Monte Foods. n.p. Web 7 May 2006.

<sup>176</sup> Rhonda Lesinski, “Contadina,” Del Monte Foods Inc., Message to the author, 7 June 2006. E-mail.

<sup>177</sup> Contadina “Frequently Asked Questions.” n.d. Del Monte Foods. n.p. Web 7 May 2006.

<sup>178</sup> Contadina’s location is comparable with the Green Giant’s and the Sun Maid’s depiction as they too live in the prime fertile domain where produce, product and icon are propagated.

brand's co-founder,<sup>179</sup> whose illustrated portrait features upon the brand's packaging.<sup>180</sup> Whilst Contadina references the product's ingredients and Mrs. Cantisano suggests its use,<sup>181</sup> both communicate visually their brand's heritage and share visual characteristics comparable with other brand examples, thus illustrating the important visual language of people on food packaging.

Such examples perpetuate visual codes that are read by consumers who are familiar with their connotations and who are able to distinguish between the characters even though the faces may appear similar. Contadina (2012) is comparable with the 1996 Betty Crocker. Both have similar hairstyles, poses and smiles (fig. 8.43 & fig. 8.53). These icons have presented a generic-face to appeal to consumers from across different cultures. Contadina appears to be potentially Italian but could also be representative of a number of nationalities and cultures; she uses a distinct yet comparable identity to Betty.

8.53 This material is unavailable due to copyright restrictions.

For over eighty years Betty Crocker lived as fictitious home economist brand icon and her image and narrative created a powerful identity that in part influenced the creation and look of other characters in the early to mid-twentieth century across North America and the UK. Key defining visual characteristics have been shared by a number of brand icons across a number of countries, cultures and historical periods and it appears that many examples, especially in the mid-20th century, closely followed or copied Betty's look and

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<sup>179</sup> The Ragú® brand was established in 1937 in the USA by Italian immigrants Mr. and Mrs. Cantisano and was acquired by Symington's in 1988. *Ragú*®. Symington's Limited, 2011. Web. 12 Feb.2012.

<sup>180</sup>The character's apron references the kitchen. Path. n.d. *Ragú*. Path. n.p. Web. 2 Jan 2013.

<sup>181</sup> The apron suggests cooking.

marketing approach: they used a set visual formula to gain a commercial profile and character.

The role of the commercial home economist waned in profile and marketing presence by the late twentieth century owing to changes in consumer attitudes and the “(...) cut backs in company expenditure. As staff numbers were reduced and centralised, customer care departments were reduced and the fictitious characters were made redundant.”<sup>182</sup> However the concept of using a fictitious person as brand identity has continued. The Betty Crocker image can be seen to have continued to influence, or at least is comparable with, the depiction of wider brand characters and icons present on food contemporary packaging, as this study has evidenced. Many contemporary examples may be read as domestic cooks and mothers rather than commercial home economists as their depiction better reflects contemporary social and cultural contexts and preferences and gender roles and lifestyles that do not require the more authoritative figures that appeared traditionally.

## Summary

This chapter has examined the role and visual representation of the fictitious female home economist as food brand icon and identified that in the early to mid- twentieth century, at a time when the Home Economics profession had secured a reputable status and the trained home economist was a valued gender role, food manufacturers employed professional home economists, both real and fictitious, to promote their brands in competitive markets. The discussion evidenced that these professionals offered advice and support and were presented, usually visually, as friendly authorities and were presented in a style similar to the agony aunt of women’s magazines. Through examination of Betty Crocker as exemplar it is concluded that fictitious home economists traditionally mirrored and represented the work of their real counterparts and that although most of the examples considered worked as *brand characters* but on occasion some examples were positioned as *brand icon*. This thesis

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<sup>182</sup> Driver, Telephone interview.

confirms that some brands deliberately positioned their characters as real and that generally their fiction was accepted by consumers who valued their advice. Evaluation of examples and has found Betty Crocker as enigmatic brand icon archetype that provided an important model from which comparable brand characters and icons were inspired by, or indeed cloned from. Discussion has identified visual characteristics shared by examples and it concludes that a common visual formula has been used by brands: that resulted in a sisterhood of fictitious examples. It concluded that the coded visual language used has endured across time and culture as evidenced by the historical and contemporary international examples. Interestingly whilst fictitious examples were identified as being depicted, to varying degrees, across a range of marketing contexts, it was found that few appeared upon food packaging. It is proposed that brand icons succeeded in such visual positioning and that brand characters were positioned in supportive role, with the product but not on it. This study confirmed that this expert-type decreased in use as social and cultural attitudes changed and thus they reflect social and cultural attitudes and gender-specific roles. They and are an important part of culinary, social and marketing history and they can be seen to part inform the development of contemporary brand icons.

## CHAPTER 9

### CONCLUSION

#### 9.1. Summary conclusion

This thesis aimed to interrogate the visual representation of people, and in particular fictitious people brand icons, on contemporary international food packaging. It has substantiated its hypothesis that common visual formulae operate across time and cultures in the creation and enduring omnipresence of images of people on food packaging. It has determined the terminology of *brand icon* to identify a specific role type used in brand identity.

The study considered the use of images of people on packaging and evidenced that people's faces, attire and signatures are important graphic devices used to attract consumer attention and to identify the brand and to communicate its key messages. Through empirical comparative analysis of packaging examples the study identified that shared visual codes are used in the representation of people from which people-types can be identified; it thus presented a taxonomy of people-type brand icons - examples grouped in relation to their visual representation and their particular role type.

In particular the thesis related the visual codes to the identification of fictitious brand icons that *appear* as real. It evidenced that such examples operate commercially and culturally by using visual signs that are established and understood by their target markets; that consumers may recognise the fictive representation of examples through their prior understanding of commercial paradigms and their wider social and cultural knowledge and experience of images of people. The thesis demonstrated that some fictitious brand icons may be obviously artificial; others may appear as plausibly real but are evidently fictive, whilst some may be enigmatic. The thesis identified that fictitious examples, like their cartoon and anthropomorphic brand icon relatives, relate to the wider historical, social and cultural traditions and contexts of storytelling where consumers may recognise the artificiality of examples, but can suspend

their disbelief and may buy into commercial tales where fictive people appear and appeal as „real“ and may attain mythic and legendary status beyond their original commercial role and intent.

The examination in the thesis of fictitious brand icons case studies in comparison with wider icon types evidenced that brands use fictitious examples in comparable ways to real people-types although fictitious icons offer distinct and unique benefits that can go beyond and outlive the values offered by real people. The thesis’s interrogation of the fictitious home economist as archetype of fictitious people brand icons, through consideration of historical and contemporary international examples, evidenced an established commercial tradition, demonstrated across a number of countries and time periods, where visual codes and role types are used to communicate to consumers; where fictitious people have been presented as real.

Whilst the thesis has focused upon food brand icons it was established that non-food visually coded people-types exist across a variety of contexts. It is concluded that consumers’ understanding and acceptance of examples is established through their experience of various examples across time and a variety of contexts. The visual codes used by food icons are important sign systems that communicate brand identity and wider social and cultural messages.

The thesis has presented a content analysis of a number of key brand icons case studies, selected from an extensive collection of examples on the basis of their distinctive visual identity. It concludes that the unique visual characteristics of archetypal fictitious-people brand icons relate to, and can provide formulae for, the design and development of others.

## **9.2. Assessment of Research Objectives**

### **9.2.1. Chapter 2**

The review of established literature within the fields of branding, packaging and culinary history resulted in the collation and interrogation of a wealth of diverse material relating to the foci of the thesis. The review demonstrated that there is a relatively limited range of established research that has focused specifically upon critical analysis of the visual representation of fictitious people brand icons. It also established that studies to date have largely been American based and have considered predominantly anthropomorphic characters in advertising rather than the focus of this study. Existing literature and taxonomies and informed this study accordingly.

### **9.2.2. Chapter 3:**

The study's interdisciplinary and mixed research approach was by necessity diverse in scale and scope. Empirical research was essential as packaging's ephemeral nature determines that its availability can be limited and its designs can frequently change. The collation and content analysis of international packaging examples, from the private collection amassed and with reference to museum and company archive examples, provided the particular samples selected for interrogation. Semiotic methodology enabled the critical reading of packaging design and brand icons. Established literature and perspectives secured from industry professionals provided essential understanding of established theoretical approaches and frameworks and insights regarding branding, marketing, packaging design and wider social and cultural contexts. The consideration of fictitious brand icons was undertaken in part through the consideration of myths and storytelling drawn the perspectives offered in established literature from the disciplines of narratology and folklore studies. Culinary and Food Studies informed the interrogation of fictitious home economist food icons and the use of women's magazines enabled an appreciation of the female commercial advisors.

### 9.2.3. Chapter 4

This thesis considered the role of people in brand identity. It identified brand icon as a specific visual symbol used to personify and promote a brand and determined that examples provide a reassuring familiar face to welcome the consumer and that they can generate goodwill and instil and maintain consumer trust and brand loyalty. Brand icons are invested with meanings which are communicated by visual codes that are read and positioned by consumers and the thesis evidenced that their visual characteristics relate to consumers' wider cultural and commercial experiences.

Consideration of cartoon and anthropomorphic examples established the wider examples that people-types relate to. The examination of fictitious people brand icons identified their fictive and often enigmatic presence in relation to their narrative appeal and the brand story within the contexts of myth and storytelling (narratology) to establish their wider cultural and social meaning and commercial value. The importance of the brand icon's ability to present a brand story was evidenced by the interrogation of key examples.

Through consideration of a range of examples the thesis determined three types of fictitious representations: *the totally fictitious*; *the fictitious but with believable elements* and *the truly enigmatic* and that their fiction may not necessarily be revealed by the brand or recognised the consumer

### 9.2.4. Chapter 5

The role of packaging and the appearance of people and brand icons was discussed utilising established literature and fresh insight secured via empirical research into industry practice and the content analysis of packaging examples. The investigation identified that a range of people-types are used to address a variety of brand requirements. The use of established visual devices and coded symbols enable brands to communicate their messages efficiently and quickly. The positioning and presentation of people-images on packaging determines how meaning is both denoted and connoted. In particular the representation of the face as key communicative device enables brands to attract consumers and to generate their potential emotional connection with the brand.

### **9.2.5. Chapter 6 and Chapter 7**

The analysis of the visual identity of key people-type examples identified that meaning is imbued within and derived from their graphic forms: that visual characteristics operate as codes shared across cultures. These findings provided identification of a related visual vocabulary that informed the development of the thesis's taxonomy as a framework for the visual identification and reading of people- types and the differentiated classification of examples. The taxonomy presented specific categories and referred to established comparable taxonomies/classification approaches to position, draw from and compare with accordingly. Key fictitious brand icons case studies were discussed to identify how certain icons use a generic visual code shared by others, yet still operate as distinct individuals: that the generic type is made specific through their particular characteristics and brand identity.

### **9.2.6. Chapter 8**

The fictitious home economist has operated successfully, notably historically in America, Canada and to a lesser degree in the UK, as an important visual food brand identity. Prevalent particularly in the mid-twentieth century as brands employed invented professionals to help sell their products in competitive markets, this icon type has evidenced the visual personification of a fictitious person presented as real used to communicate with consumers.

Betty Crocker (General Mills Inc., USA) is considered as fictitious brand icon archetype in relation to a range of comparable international brand characters and icons. Her successful use across marketing platforms (including packaging) inspired competing companies and wider brands to follow this marketing strategy and her appearance was mirrored by corporate examples. Thus Betty is considered as an exemplar fictitious brand icon that inspired commercial clones: examples that may be considered as her relatives within this commercial sisterhood of fictitious food brand icons and characters – important figures in culinary, cultural and branding history.

Whilst social, cultural and commercial changes resulted in the role of commercial home economist becoming somewhat dated and largely untenable by the late twentieth century, and the majority of brand characters and icons have long since retired, Betty's legacy in part continues through the visual representation of contemporary fictitious food brand icons. Whilst the extent of such characters' roles are less prolific today, their visual presence evidences the on-going appeal of fictitious entities, and the value and continuity of use of visual cues, to brands and consumers. That the character's fiction may not be recognised by, or is an issue for, consumers is testament to the power of these commercial devices and the reappearance of a Betty face in 2012, albeit a pale version of the classic icon, suggests that the visual representation of people on packaging remains an important consideration for food brands.

### **9.3. Reflections on main results**

Five core research questions were defined in order to meet the overall aim of this study. The main findings are discussed separately as follows:

#### **9.3.1. Why do brands use images of people on food packaging?**

The thesis concluded that images of people, and in particular their faces, often identified by accompanying name and signature, have been used in various countries upon packaging since food mass production and consumer markets first evolved. It established that images of different people are used in different ways to communicate brand messages: that people can communicate social, cultural and historical meanings that consumers may relate to and that these messages may be shared and understood across time and cultures. The thesis concluded that various people-types are visually represented upon food packaging as identified by its taxonomy which presented consideration of their use and appearance in relation to visual codes.

People symbols operate as valuable social and cultural signs where their meanings and associations are used commercially by brands to encourage consumers' brand recognition, purchase and loyalty. Consumers decode the images to extract meanings which may then be transferred to, and associated

with, the brand accordingly. Images of people can offer friendly faces, expressions and reassuring gestures that welcome us to the brand and give us confidence in its efficacy. People-images can make personal the brand's message. Individual people can offer particular meanings dependent upon their name, attire, age or role. A group of people, such as families, can communicate social inclusivity, harmony and happiness, important attributes that may be associated with the brand.

In particular the thesis confirmed that people as brand icons are an important part of a brand's identity and can be a vital asset. They may feature across a brand's marketing platforms or they may operate solely upon its packaging. Whilst Leterman claimed in 1957 that "The relationship of salesman and customer is so human and personal that no mechanical substitute for the salesman will ever be found; nothing can mechanize selling,"<sup>1</sup> subsequent developments in retailing and consumerism have evidenced that this personal relationship has indeed been changed. In the context of this study it is asserted that the brand icon on packaging operates in part as salesperson and whilst it can be viewed as a „silent“ salesperson it must visually speak to give identity to the brand and to communicate with the consumer.

### **9.3.2. How do images of people on food packaging relate to and reflect social and cultural contexts beyond their packaging presence?**

The success of a brand's use of people-types and in particular the construction of their fictitious icon is dependent upon the consumer's ability to recognise and understand the social and cultural contexts in which the examples function, are drawn from, relate to and operate within. Consumers relate to the images of people and interpret their appearance; they read and attribute meaning to their visual depiction based upon their wider social experiences and cultural conventions. The images may reflect social stereotypes to operate as easily interpreted signs.

Initially, such images of people generally reflect the socio-cultural status, roles and representations of people that are understood by and relevant to the

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<sup>1</sup> Elmer G. Leterman, *The New Art of Selling* (New York: Harper, 1957) 15.

consumers, period and context in which they were created. The social status of family members, company founders and professionals may be used to draw upon connotations and associated values: valuable references that can be both swiftly visually communicated and understood. The use of people-images may require revision or removal if, in their continued use, their appearance may become outdated or irrelevant. In some instances people-images may be deliberately historic in appearance to communicate brand heritage or to suggest associative traditional qualities and contexts.

### **9.3.3. What terminology and classification can be used to define and position the use of images of people on packaging, and particularly those used to identify and promote a brand?**

A range of terms exist to identify characters used in brand identity and promotion. The thesis recognised the need for clarity and consistency in the use of appropriate terminology as it recognised that some terms, such as trade character, may be considered to be outdated whilst others such as brand character can be ambiguous. A spokes-person was identified as being an brand advertising device, potentially as an endorser, but a character that may not necessarily be directly part of the brand or one that endured. The thesis proposed brand icon as the definitive term to identify characters that are used explicitly and exclusively by brands as personification of their identity and as marketing devices.

### **9.3.4. How are examples of people on packaging visually represented and read? and Do they share coded visual characteristics that can be understood across time and culture?**

The thesis demonstrated that patterns of visual images are evident across comparable historical and contemporary packaging examples internationally. Findings evidenced that systems of coded visual signs appear to be used across time and cultures in the representation of people-types, and in the creation of fictitious people brand icons. Examples indicated that generic people-types exist that share similar looks: that they may be shaped by certain

gender or professional role/ type characteristics, for example, that are imbued with meaning that is communicated visually. The thesis confirmed that consumers decode the graphic cues of face, attire and body language for example, and take and transfer meaning to the brand. It mapped the taxonomy accordingly and presented identification of how images can be read.

However, the thesis also recognised that individual visual symbols do not have permanent meaning and the reading of symbols cannot be fixed. As Gombrich<sup>2</sup> and Panofsky<sup>3</sup> identified, symbols acquire meaning in terms of the context of their existence and position and meanings can change. As such, the thesis discussed the continuity of visual cues across time and cultures where certain symbols endure and are widely or universally understood; and the converse when signs are culture -and time- specific and meaning does not necessarily transcend such boundaries. This study evidenced that food packaging when located in contexts different to that intended its messages may perplex audiences and the intended meaning may not be extracted. Examples may work and are known only, or mainly, within the context of their immediate location. Thus the thesis concluded that some examples are iconic within a limited sphere, and relevant, important and available to a limited audience, whilst others operate globally and trans-culturally. However this thesis also confirmed that people-images, as universal symbols, can generally communicate broad messages as consumers experience and understand the overall nuances of their use on food packaging. The thesis also recognised that the personality and credibility of the brand can lie in the visual appeal of the face upon the packaging and, on occasion, its culture-specific significance can become the example's commercial attraction.

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<sup>2</sup> E. H. Gombrich, *Symbolic Images: Studies in the Art of the Renaissance* (London: Phaidon, 1972).

<sup>3</sup> Erwin Panofsky, *Studies in Iconography; Humanistic Themes in the Art of the Renaissance* (New York: Icon Edition, 1972.).

### **9.3.5. Why do fictitious people as a brand marketing tool exist and endure visually upon food packaging?**

This thesis confirmed that the use of fictitious people brand icons is a well-established marketing strategy evidenced by a distinct range of brands across time and cultures. Their enduring presence, demonstrated by the significant array of examples available internationally can be seen as indicative of their success. The fictitious icon, distinct and unique to the brand, can offer particular qualities and strengths: they provide valuable identity and can make brands distinct in competitive markets. They can make identifiable and memorable the packaging and potentially can persuade consumers to purchase the product.

The creation of a fictitious person icon enables the brand to own, operate and control its identity through a personable symbol, often a trademark, which embodies and gives human character to its values and commercial messages. The icon's personality can be constructed and controlled to ensure that key attributes relevant to the brand's identity are communicated effectively so that consumers may relate to the character and find meaningful, pleasing and relevant its appearance and presence.

The fabricated icon operates as visual cue, brand ambassador and sales device within the marketing contexts of their use. Like comparable *real people* icons, such as celebrity examples, the fictitious counterpart can operate as a brand spokes-person depending upon the extent of their commercial role. For example they may be given movement and voice within the context of television advertisements and websites or may only exist as static images upon packaging.

As brand creations, the icons' relative flexibility in their use and appearance gives freedom to their owners in how they are positioned and presented. They can be shaped and located depending upon commercial, social and economic contexts and the needs of a brand. The fictitious icon is controlled by the brand and therefore the risk of adverse associations and negative connotations that can occur with real-people's (and particularly celebrities') behaviour/activities

are avoided. The icon offers certain flexibility as it may be worked across a variety of contexts and time periods without necessarily aging or changing: its visual appearance may be kept consistent, revised or indeed removed depending upon the brand's needs. In this way fictitious icons can offer a certain reliability and continuity to a brand's identity.

The thesis confirmed that the established tradition of fictitious people brand icons contributes to their enduring use and appeal. Our familiarity with examples over a prolonged period enables us to accept their roles, potentially without questioning their fiction. Our wider social and cultural experiences of storytelling and myths help us to understand the fiction that commercial examples utilise.

Upon food packaging fictitious people brand icons operate primarily through name and face. Their true identity may not be revealed and their existence may not be interrogated by consumers. Their relationship with the product is further enhanced with the visual depiction of the food next to them. Despite being unreal, the inference is that they are responsible for the food's creation and this is accepted by consumers who therefore can be seen to validate their existence.

This thesis concluded that some food brands continue to use people-type brand icons on packaging however the extent to which icons enhance sales is unclear. The longevity and popularity of some suggests that consumers and brands value their function. The recent creation of new examples indicates that this established marketing approach is valued. However whilst Callcott and Lee observed their existence is "indicative of an appeal that transcends changing consumer lifestyles and advertising trends"<sup>4</sup> this study has evidenced that their use and appearance is determined by social, cultural and commercial changes. Brands may remove icons when their role is deemed irrelevant: retired icons

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<sup>4</sup> Margaret F. Callcott and Wei-Na Lee, "Establishing the Spokes-Character in Academic Enquiry: Historical Overview and Framework for Definition," *Advances in Consumer Research* Eds. Frank, R. Kardes and Mita Sujan. 22 (Provo Association for Consumer Research, 1995): 150.

may reappear revitalised, perhaps to make more youthful and relevant their appeal to new consumers. Some may lose their face but endure in name.

### **9.3.6 *Are fictitious people brand icons represented and interpreted as fictitious?***

The thesis evidenced that how examples are represented and understood as fictitious varies. Their fiction may be particularly appealing as consumers enjoy these symbols that relate to, and are typical of, wider myth making and storytelling experiences. Consumers' prior encounters with fictive characters in cultural contexts (eg. film, literature) help their understanding and interpretation of commercial icons. Consumers may suspend their disbelief and buy into these distinct marketing myths. This study identified that fictitious types can be considered and categorised in relation to the degree of their fabrication: the nature of their visual identity in relation to the brand's intent of their representation and existence. The thesis identified three types of fictitious representations:

1. *totally fictitious*: icons that are obviously invented: their appearance, for example an illustrated portrait, a contrived or corny name or a clichéd stereotype image, is fiction - the brand makes no claim of their authenticity and the consumer has little doubt that they are other than unreal.
2. *fictitious but with believable elements*: icon's appearance, potentially as a photograph, their individual name and distinct character makes plausible their existence. The brand may not identify their icon as unreal and, potentially, may deliberately create their illusion of an authentic being. However the icon may be questioned though, as elements of their representation may be incomplete or unconvincing.
3. *the truly enigmatic that appears real and not readily proven to be otherwise*: an elusive person that appears authentic yet no evidence of their origin is offered and their fiction is not confirmed by the brand. In some instances explanation of their reality may be proffered but not proven leaving the consumer to determine whether they take the example as real. The ambiguity of

such icons is important to their success and their authenticity and sincerity is may not readily be questioned by consumers. .

Specifically the thesis has identified brands" well-established practice of using enigmatic fictitious-type brand icons where the identity of an individual can be taken as real. On occasion, as discussed in relation to Betty Crocker, the mysteriousness of the icon is deliberate and this quality adds value to the brand.

### **9.3.7 What roles do fictitious people brand icons play and how do they relate to each other?**

Fictitious people brand icons can undertake a variety of roles and can operate across range of contexts. Some examples may appear visually upon food packaging and related advertising and have no voice or activity in other contexts. By comparison, others, as spokes-characters may speak and move via their websites, television programmes and cookery books and, on occasion, they may even appear live: performed by a real person.

The thesis"s taxonomy identified genres that fictitious brand icons populate where examples share particular titles and profiles and associated attributes and visual characteristics that it identified as shared visual codes. Through examination of the fictitious commercial advisor the study evidenced that specific role-types can determine in part the visual representation of the icon; that traditionally some brands have used a visual formula to identify their icon as distinct but not too dissimilar to their competitors so that their icon may operate effectively within a certain product area or context shared with others.

## **9.4. Main implications of research findings**

This thesis provides a new perspective and wider understanding of the key foci of its investigation. It findings provide original insight and analysis of branding and packaging design examples to develop further established awareness and understanding of the commercial and cultural role and relevance of images of people and the use of brand icons on food packaging.

As ephemera, “the minor transient documents of everyday life”,<sup>5</sup> food packaging offers valuable resource for the investigation of social and commercial practices and cultural attitudes. As such, this thesis offered consideration of food packaging and its findings provide valuable insight into the social, cultural and economic relationships of visual codes and sign systems in relation to historical and contemporary contexts. The thesis presented investigation of contemporary vernacular examples. It provided compositional interpretation and semiotic analysis of people-type images across a sample of food packaging designs. It identified a range of international examples that represent particular moments in time across a specific time period. It is recognised that food packaging does not remain static and operates in fluctuating markets that experience significant changes in food production, promotion and consumer preferences. This study therefore offered the consideration of a range of international examples that were brought together for the first time in comparative analysis. In many instances the packaging examples may not endure or be readily available to others for further reference outside of this study so this thesis offers a unique body of work and collation and examination of examples for future reference.

#### **9.4. Pertinence to disciplines**

This thesis is pertinent to a range of disciplines:

Business and Brand specialists could take advantage of the insights and considerations presented regarding the use of the term brand icon so that a more coherent and uniform language is better understood across industry. The taxonomy and the reading of people-type brand icons’ visual characteristics could inform the creation and development of examples. It may also develop further an understanding of brand icons use across wider product ranges internationally. The insights offered could help inform brand owners and brand agencies’ use of fictitious people brand icons; to provide a better understanding of icon efficacy.

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<sup>5</sup> Maurice Rickards, *Collecting Printed Ephemera* (Oxford: Phaidon, 1988) 7.

Schroeder remarked that “Consumption is inherently visual, yet consumer researchers have seemed reluctant to embrace art history and visual studies as critical fields for study.”<sup>6</sup> This thesis, and notably its interpretative analysis of contemporary brand images, therefore offers example that consumer researchers may draw from. The study’s findings may develop further designers’ appreciation of the visual codes that exist in food packaging design cross-cultures.

The findings contribute to culinary historians understanding of the relationship between food and food marketing. The findings enable the development a more detailed understanding of how food marketing often mimics and adopts the profile and appearance of culinary professionals. In particular this thesis provides distinct findings to advance the established studies relating to fictitious home economists that to date have largely overlooked the interrogation of their visual identity.

Narratologists and folklorists could take advantage of the insights presented regarding the specific fictitious brand icons discussed and the commercial myths and icons’ stories that draw from and interrelate to established cultural myths and folklore. The braiding of commercial and cultural storytelling, as considered in this thesis, signposts important opportunity for future study.

## **9.5. Research Limitations**

The research foci and research approach mean that the study has certain limitations. An initial restraint was the selection of food packaging examples: the range collated and the identification of pertinent examples to determine and support the taxonomy and case studies. The collection of contemporary packaging examples was extensive but it was determined mainly by financial and logistical factors (including travel) and led to the research being focused upon examples available in specific countries. Whilst attempts were made to secure wider international comparative examples, and to some considerable and significant extent this study has succeeded in securing such, it is

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<sup>6</sup> Jonathan. E. Schroeder, *Visual Consumption* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2002) 25.

recognised that the study is in part determined and bound by the specific geographical nature of examples.

Whilst the foci and interdisciplinary nature of the study demanded extensive research this resulted in certain opportunities, challenges and drawbacks. The discussion of sources utilised in research is not exhaustive owing to the scale of the work. The wealth of examples, materials and ideas secured through the investigation of the foci using a multidisciplinary approach was both liberating and in part restricting. The research provided extensive material however obviously not all could be worked into the study and thus a rich collection of examples and findings necessarily remain outside of this thesis but clearly are poised and pertinent to future research.

Whilst in significant part it considered and synthesised a variety of views and perspectives from icon creators, company owners and packaging designers, it did not above all aim to pursue and position the study in relation to consumers' attitudes. It is acknowledged that this standpoint is important to future study of the foci.

The thesis considered brand icons as valuable commercial tools and important cultural artefacts that are both enduring and endearing. From this perspective the study can in part be viewed as a celebration of a phenomenon. However, it is recognised that herein sits a limitation: this study does not contemplate the failings of brand icons and does not relate their existence to the wider criticisms of corporate cultures through consideration of anti-branding perspectives.<sup>7</sup>

Whilst the study does not address such discussions, it is recognised that the critical scrutiny of the manipulative strategies of these brand icons is important to consider in future work.

The ephemeral nature of food packaging and fluctuating food markets, shaped increasingly by significant economic situations, has evidenced notable changes in brands and their packaging throughout the study's duration, for example the

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<sup>7</sup> Naomi Klein, *No Logo: Taking Aim at the Brand Bullies* (London: Flamingo, 2000) and *Adbusters* anti-consumerist organisation.

demise and the redesign of examples. Within this fluid context, this study has evidenced brands' responses to changing contexts and how brand icons are positioned accordingly. However, it was not viable to discuss all changes across the examples identified within the study.

### **9.6. Recommendations for Future Research**

- Research has confirmed that comparative analysis of international food packaging design still remains neglected in terms of academic enquiry. Investigation of international packaging merits further attention.
- The thesis's taxonomy is based upon the interpretive analysis of examples and is therefore open to further scrutiny. It can be used and developed to inform future research into people-types/categories from wider commercial areas.
  - The wider visual representation of race stereotypes on international food packaging merits attention: the examination of visual codes and the extent to which examples reinforce clichéd and outdated cultural stereotypes.
  - Exploration of further fictitious brand icons and their fabricated narratives could be pursued to establish a more comprehensive understanding of this marketing approach.
  - This thesis has found that established academic research is often positioned away from, and separate to, industry practice and business history. Whilst this study has succeeded in bringing together perspectives from different stakeholders future work could develop this further.
  - The thesis identified fictitious-people corporate portraits: some never used and many, retired from their commercial role and public view, now reside in archives. Future research could investigate such portraits as commercial and cultural artefacts.

## 9.7. Research Contributions and Final Conclusion.

This thesis contributes to the study of packaging and branding through its original investigation of the role and visual representation of fictitious people *brand icons* on international food packaging and the visual codes and formulaic visual approaches used in their design. It identifies that brand icons' visual identities carry meaning, cultural and commercial values which can transcend historical and cultural boundaries. It has presented distinct perspectives and examination of examples to produce a body of knowledge that in part fills a particular gap in the studies of packaging and branding.

The thesis's heuristic approach of an interdisciplinary nature, that has engaged with and drawn from several disciplines to blend and integrate different perspectives and practices, has produced consideration of food packaging design and branding in a distinctly different way. It has woven the viewpoints and experience of industry professionals with academic perspectives and established studies to secure original findings that provide fresh understanding of the core research areas.

The thesis advances the understanding of how brand icons work and advocates the importance of empirical investigation of packaging examples. Its collation, comparative analysis and visual reading of international food packaging examples provide valuable research model and methodological approach that can inform the practice of other researchers.

The thesis substantiated its hypothesis that visual formulae exist in relation to brand icons that share coded visual characteristics with wider people-types on packaging and relate to people in wider social and cultural contexts. Its taxonomy, whilst not exhaustive, provides a new framework for future research. It complements and contributes to established comparable models and its identification of visual types contributes fresh perspective to the consideration of brand icons.

The thesis's comparative analysis of the visual appearance of fictitious commercial home economists/consumer advisors has advanced the consideration of examples. Whilst key studies have considered examples

within the contexts, and from the perspectives of, culinary history, gender studies and advertising, limited interrogation of their visual representation has been evidenced to date. The thesis therefore contributes a body of knowledge to existing awareness and understanding of this practice.

The thesis provides fresh insight and analysis of a range of examples which have been united and interrogated in a way previously not evidenced. The thesis transforms our established understanding of such matters from narrative and assertion into analysis and understanding. It presents the basis for further study.

## GLOSSARY

Key sources have helped to inform and compile this glossary. In particular branding organisations Lippincott Mercer, brandchannel and the American Marketing Association have provided many important definitions. This thesis recognises that some branding terms have various definitions and interpretations as Mitchell (Strategy Director, ctrl-shift market analyst and consulting company) identified “[...] many people end up using the same words to mean different things. Sometimes these meanings overlap. Sometimes they can be used together; sometimes they take you in opposite directions.”<sup>1</sup> Therefore this glossary provides key and indicative definitions prevalent and pertinent at the time of this thesis” completion and notably from branding and marketing perspectives.

**Avatar** - a visual figure, often depicted as a person or iconic figure, used to provide a visual identity and personality (or alter ego) of/for its user, in digital arenas such as computer games, websites and social network sites.

**Brand** – “A brand is a mixture of attributes, tangible and intangible, symbolised in a trademark, which, if managed properly, creates value and influence.”  
brandchannel. n.d. n.p. Web. 7 Feb. 2013.

“a name, term, design, symbol, or any other feature that identifies one seller's good or service as distinct from those of other sellers [...] A brand may identify one item, a family of items, or all items of that seller.” “Definition of Brand”  
marketingpower.com. n.d. *American Marketing Association*. n.p. Web. 22 May 2009.

**Branding** – “A manufacturer makes a product; a purchaser buys a brand. The difference is the value added by advertising, the pack, history, associates, etc. The product may be changed, by a new formulation for example, but the character or personality of the brand may be the same, or alter more slowly. The task of advertising is often to sustain or enhance or create a brand.”  
Simon Broadbent, ed. *The Leo Burnett Book of Advertising* (London: Business Books Limited, 1984) 192.

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<sup>1</sup> Alan Mitchell, „The Great Brand Engagement Myth.“ 30 Jan. 2012. Marketing. n.p. Web. 6 March 2012.

**Brand agent** – “an entity (person, place or thing) used to represent a brand e.g. celebrity, founder – speaks uniquely to the narrative of the brand it represents” Brian Lanaham, “Top of Mind Perspectives and Commentary: Keeping your Brand Icon Alive and Well.” *Brandweek* (19 May 2003): 25.

**Brand anthropomorphy model** – “this model builds upon our tendency to personify inanimate objects in human terms and to ascribe attitudes and values and even behaviour to brands”. Hamish Pringle, *Celebrity Sells* (Chichester: John Wiley, 2004) 79.

**Brand associations** – “The feelings, beliefs and knowledge that consumers (customers) have about brands. These associations are derived as a result of experiences and must be consistent with the brand positioning and the basis of differentiation.” Glossary” n.d. *branchannel*. n.p. Web. 2 Jan. 2008.

**Brand Endorser** - A person or character used to recommend and to promote a brand through their associated skills, expertise or particular qualities that are attractive to consumers.

**Brand equity** – “the power of a brand – through successful creation of a positive image - to shift demand and change customer behaviour”. “Branding Glossary.” n.p. Lippincott Mercer. n.d. Web. 18 Jul. 2005

“The sum of all distinguishing qualities of a brand, drawn from all relevant stakeholders, that results in personal commitment to and demand for the brand; these differentiating thoughts and feelings make the brand valued and valuable.” “Brand glossary.” n.p. *brandchannel*. n.d. Web. 22 Apr. 2009

“The emotional attachment a consumer has toward a brand [...]; - A market asset created over time by marketing, which may be valued differently by different parties, but represents a reservoir of future cash flows.”

Alan Mitchell, „The Great Brand Engagement Myth.“ 30 Jan. 2012. Marketing. n.p. Web. 6 March 2012.

**Brand icons** - commercial symbols: “[...] embodiments of a brand, [and] highly memorable symbols.” Mary Cross, ed. *A Century of American Icons: 100 Products and Slogans from the 20th Century* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 2002) xvi

**Brand identity** – “The visible elements that can be used to identify a brand (name, logotype, symbol, product configuration,, service offering and packaging).” “Branding Glossary” n.p. Lippincott Mercer. n.d. Web. 18 Jul. 2005

**Brand image** – “the complete bundle of thoughts a customer has in his or her mind about a company, product or service developed through communications and experience, including the distinguishing „human” characteristics of a brand personality (e.g., warm and friendly, strong and reliable).” “Branding Glossary.” n.p. Lippincott Mercer. n.d. Web. 18 Jul. 2005.

**Brand loyalty** - consumers’ trust and satisfaction in a brand that results in their commitment to the brand and their repeat and continuous purchase of its products.

**Brand narrative** - a story, usually entertaining, created or used by a brand to communicate a marketing message and to engage consumers’ interest in and understanding of the brand.

**Brand personality** – “This is the psychological nature of a particular brand as intended by its sellers, though persons in the marketplace may see the brand otherwise (called brand image). These two perspectives compare to the personalities of individual humans: what we intend or desire, and what others see or believe.” “Definition of Brand Personality,” n.p. *American Marketing Association*. n.d. Web.12 May 2011.

**Brand promise** – “a statement of enduring, relevant and distinctive benefits customers associate with a product, service or company.” “Branding Glossary.” n.p. Lippincott Mercer. n.d. Web. 18 Jul. 2005

**Brand property** - Barry Day, Vice Chairman of McCann-Erickson Worldwide defined brand property as an element that is “unique, memorable and dissolubly linked to that brand and no other..... [and] lies not in what the product is but what it does and that the advertising suggests.” Eric Clark, *The Want Makers: Inside the World of Advertising* (London: Penguin, 1990) 25.

**Brand spokes-character** - can be a real person, possibly a celebrity, who promotes the brand; whose image is used to suggest/ transfer associative meaning to the brand as added value but they may have no further direct

involvement with the brand. The duration of their association with the brand may be temporary.

“Spokes- characters are animate beings or animated objects that are used to promote a product, service, or idea.” Barbara J. Phillips, “Defining Trade Characters and their Role in American Popular Culture,” *Journal of Popular Culture* 29:4. (Spring, 1996):15.

**Brand Strategy** – “A plan for the systematic development of a brand to enable it to meet its agreed objectives. The strategy should be rooted in the brand's vision and driven by the principles of differentiation and sustained consumer appeal. The brand strategy should influence the total operation of a business to ensure consistent brand behaviors [sic] and brand experiences.” “Branding Glossary.” n.p. Lippincott Mercer. n.d. Web. 18 Jul.2005

**Brand territory** – “the mental space that the brand occupies in customers” minds and represents the essence of the corporate, product or service promise that constitutes the brand.” Hamish Pringle, *Celebrity Sells*. (Chichester: John Wiley, 2004)79.

**Brand tone of voice** - how a brand speaks to its audiences.

**Brand/trade character** - the use of a real or fictitious character/person to represent/ endorse/promote a brand/product. Human dimensions – identify product/company uniqueness.

**Brand values** – “The code by which the brand lives. The brand values act as a benchmark to measure behaviors [sic] and performance.” “Brand glossary.” n.p. brandchannel. n.d. Web. 22 Apr. 2009

**Celebrity** – “means primarily a person who is well known for his well-knownness” Daniel J.Boorstin, *The Image* (1992) 57.

**Celebrity endorsement** - the use of a well-known person to promote/endorse a product, company, brand.

**Co-branding** - or **Brand tie-up** - where brands come together in their marketing. The brands” partnership enables both brands to benefit from the

relationship in terms of each brand contributing a particular value or benefit that the single brand alone does not have.

**Cookbooklet** – Usually free publications “Often known as advertising booklet or, more generally “corporate ephemera,” product cookbooks are a subset of what is generally called ephemera. Cookbooklets are distinguished from their culinary cousins by virtue of their size and their explicit product affiliation – both primary characteristics.” Nathalie Cooke, “Cookbooklets and Canadian Kitchens.” n.p. *Material Culture Review* 70 Fall. 2009. Web. 23 Apr. 2010.

**Corporate identity** - visual elements that are used to identify a company (eg. logo, symbols, advertising, letterheads, packaging etc). The visual identity programme for a company.

**Corporate image** – “The perception that people have of a company , based on a combination of various communications and personal experience”. “Branding Glossary.” n.p. Lippincott Mercer. n.d. Web. 18 Jul. 2005.

**Emotional Selling Proposition** - based upon the personality and image attributes of the brand for example friendly, relaxed, happy. Related to the emotional or psychological attributes benefits that surround/are associated with the brand -term used by advertising agency Bartle, Bogle and Hegarty (in Hamish Pringle, *Celebrity Sells* (Chichester: John Wiley, 2004) 82.

**Enigma** – “puzzling thing or person.” Collins Dictionary and Thesaurus, 2002 (2<sup>nd</sup> ed) (London Harper Collins).

**Eurobrands** - brands that operate and advertise across Europe.

**Female trademarks** - use of well-known female established faces for brand identity of (new) goods - fictitious friends

**Generic positioning** - “Often many products can all make very similar claims: they all belong to the same product group. Sometimes a brand will make one of these claims pre-emptively; it is not really a great advantage over other products in this respect, but it stakes out an area in its positioning(q.v.) and advertising which other brands would be seen as imitative of followers if the

repeated.” Simon Broadbent, ed. *The Leo Burnett Book of Advertising* (London: Business Books Limited, 1984)192.

**Halo effect** – the emotional equity is borrowed or inherited from another

**Housebrands** - private label

**Home Economics** - management of the household; home-making. Vocational education.

**Housewife** – “A housewife is a woman responsible for running her home, whether she performs the tasks herself or hires people to do them for her.” Helen Znaniecki Lopata, *Occupation Housewife* (New York: OUP, 1971) 3.

**Icon** - “a person or thing regarded as a representative symbol or as worthy of veneration.” Roobina Ohanian, “The Impact of Celebrity Spokespersons” Perceived Image on Consumers” Intention to Purchase,” *Journal of Advertising Research* 31.1 (1991): 46-53.

**Image Attributes** “Help define the tone, manner personality and style of a brand, often the differentiating factor between similar products and services.” “Branding glossary.” n.p. Lippincott Mercer. n.d. Web.18 July 2005

**Image criteria** – “The desired „personality” attributes of a company, product or service that guide name and design development”. “Branding glossary.” n.d. Lippincott Mercer. n.p. Web.18 July 2005

**Integrated Marketing Communication** – “a holistic communications strategy that integrates all communications activities – such as public relations, advertising, investor relations, interactive or internal communications – to manage the company”s most precious asset – its brand. Since Integrated Brand Communications flows from Brand Value Management, it is central to the notion of managing brands to optimize value.” Carolyn Ray, „Integrated Brand Communications: A powerful new paradigm.” brandchannel. n.d. Web. 7 Feb. 2013.

**Interpretative analysis** - “detailed visual description with interpretation and cultural criticism” Jonathan E. Schroeder, *Visual Consumption* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2002)116.

**Legend** – “n.1. traditional story or myth. 2. traditional literature. 3. famous person or event. 4 stories about such a person or event”. Collins (2<sup>nd</sup> edition). *Paperback Dictionary and Thesaurus* (Glasgow: HarperCollins, 2002).

“Legends, in the popular vernacular, are notable people who attract a lot of attention”. Laurence Vincent, *Legendary Brands: Unleashing the Power of Storytelling to Create a Winning Market Strategy* (Chicago: Dearborn Trade Publishing, 2002) 7.

**Legendary Brand** – “projects a sense of celebrity within its consumer base. It takes on a persona, and attracts a following in much the same way that human celebrities do”. Vincent, Laurence. *Legendary Brands: Unleashing the Power of Storytelling to Create a Winning Market Strategy* (Chicago: Dearborn Trade Publishing, 2002) 7.

**Marketing** – “Marketing is the activity, set of institutions, and processes for creating, communicating, delivering, and exchanging offerings that have value for customers, clients, partners, and society at large.” „Definition of Marketing.“ n.p. American Marketing Association. n.d. Web. 23 May 2009.

**Myth** – “traditional story of ostensibly historic events that serves to unfold part of the worldview of a people or explain a practice, belief, or natural phenomenon”. Vincent, Laurence. *Legendary Brands: Unleashing the Power of Storytelling to Create a Winning Market Strategy* (Chicago: Dearborn Trade Publishing, 2002) 25.

**Packaging** – “In general terms the word packaging refers not merely to a container but to a commercial container of identifiable content and design, produced as part of a multiple sales operation”. Maurice Rickards, *Collecting Printed Ephemera* (Oxford: Phaidon, 1988) 217.

**Packaging design** - pack format and graphics for a product, brand

**Packaging premiums** – tie in collectables that can be obtained through the purchase of the product pack e.g. dinner service pieces

**Spokes-characters** – “animate beings or animated objects that are used to promote a product, service, or idea.” Phillips, Barbara J, “Defining Trade

Characters and their Role in American Popular Culture.” *Journal of Popular Culture* 29.4. Spring (1996):15.

**Symbol** – “A non-typographic element of an abstract or representational nature”. “Branding glossary.” n.d. Lippincott Mercer. n.p. Web.18 July 2005.

**Testimonial endorsement** - a formal statement of support of how good something that is usually provided by someone of note/celebrity.

**Tradedress** - a way a package is designed.

**Trademark** – “A sign capable of being represented graphically which is capable of distinguishing goods and services of one understanding from those of another understanding”. (UK Trade Marks Act 1994).

**USP - Unique Selling Proposition** – a specific benefit of a product (brand etc) and one that is not offered by a competitor (Mayer, Martin. *Madison Avenue USA*. London: Penguin, 1961. Print.) A term coined by American advertiser Rosser Reeves in the 1950’s. Rosser Reeves, *Reality in Advertising* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1961) 46-48. (See also Emotional Selling Proposition)

**Visual identity** – “What a brand looks like - including, among other things, its logo, typography, packaging and literature systems.” “Branding glossary.” n.d. Lippincott Mercer. n.p. Web.18 Jul.2005

**Visual vocabulary** - in the context of branding: “A company's visual vocabulary consists of the secondary design elements that are used in conjunction with your logo to form your brand identity. The visual vocabulary is composed of font styles, colors, shapes, layout conventions, backgrounds, photographic library, text treatments (such as taglines) and even the type of paper you choose.” “The 9 Advantages to Using a Visual Vocabulary in Brand Identity Design” *BrandStyleDesign*. n.p. Web. 20 Feb. 2013.

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**Appendix A: Indicative examples of research records  
Packaging Archive Records**

<p><b>No.</b>     <b>729</b></p>	<p>Date of Purchase : July 2003  Place of Purchase : Asda  Date photographed : 21 July 2003</p> <p align="center"><b>Archive folder/location</b> : all packaging + people on packaging</p>
<p><b>Title</b> : San Miguel x4 pack lager premium beer</p>	
<p><b>Product</b> : San Miguel x4 pack lager</p>	
<p><b>Manufacturer</b> : San Miguel lager</p> <p align="center">HP Bulmer Limited, Hereford HR4 OLE UK</p>	
<p><b>Size in cm</b> : Cardboard wrap around x4 glass bottles  <b>Height</b> : 23.5  <b>Width</b> : 12  <b>Length</b> : 12</p>	
<p><b>Materials</b> : Cardboard - printed in colour</p> <p><b>Design</b> : Colour photograph of bull fight</p>	
<p><b>Company/product information</b> :</p> <p>Text on top of pack : San Fermin is the patron saint of Pamplona in the province of Navarra. Pamplona is most famous for the 'Running of the Bulls' which evolved into an event after a few dare devils decided to run alongside the bulls as they headed through the streets to the bullring. 'Spanish passion for life'</p>	
<p><b>Comments</b> :</p>	
<p><b>See also</b> : no.</p>	

**Appendix A: Indicative examples of research records**  
**Packaging Archive Records - continued**

<p><b>No.</b>     <b>730</b></p>	<p>Date of Purchase : June 2003  Place of Purchase : Waitrose  Date photographed : 21 July 2003</p> <p><b>Archive folder/location</b> : all packaging + people on packaging  Celebrity chef</p>
<p><b>Title</b> : Loyd Grossman Green Thai with coconut dressing vinaigrette</p>	
<p><b>Product</b> : as above</p>	
<p><b>Manufacturer</b> : Chivers Hartley, Bridge Road, Long Sutton, Spalding, Lincs. PE1 9EQ</p>	
<p><b>Size in cm</b> : Cardboard wrap around x4 glass bottles  <b>Height</b> : 16.5  <b>Width</b> : bottle varies in widths  <b>Length</b> : base diameter = 5.5    250 ml</p>	
<p><b>Materials</b> : paper label x2 on glass bottle with metal screw cap</p> <p><b>Design</b> : Colour photograph of Loyd Grossman</p> <p style="text-align: center;">No signature</p>	
<p><b>Company/product information</b> :  See above  www.loydgrossmansauces.com</p>	
<p><b>Comments</b> :</p> <p>Contacted company x 3 – no reply.</p>	
<p><b>See also</b> : Loyd Grossman packs 2005/2006/2008/2009 &amp; Celebrity file &amp; Chef file</p>	

**Appendix A: Indicative examples of research records**  
**Packaging Archive Records – continued**

<b>No. 731</b>	Date of Purchase : July 2003 Place of Purchase : Uni. shop
Date photographed : <b>21/7/03</b> <b>Archive folder/location</b> : all packaging + people on packaging + music packs	
<b>Title</b> : Pepsi can Ms Dynamite can	
<b>Product</b> : Pepsi	
<b>Manufacturer</b> : Pepsi Britvic soft drinks ltd, Chelmsford, CM1 1TU	
<b>Size in cm</b> : <b>Height</b> : 11 <b>Width</b> : base diameter = 6.5 <b>Length</b> :	
<b>Materials</b> : metal <b>Design</b> : photograph – colour of ms dynamite on blue background with pepsi logo	
<b>Company/product information</b> : See above <a href="http://www.pepsi.co.uk">http://www.pepsi.co.uk</a>	
<b>Comments</b> :  One of range of Pepsi examples using contemporary music stars	
<b>See also</b> : no. 733	

**Appendix A:** Indicative examples of research records  
Packaging Archive Records – continued

<b>No.</b> 732	Date of Purchase : July 2003 Place of Purchase : Charminster
Date photographed : <b>21 July 2003</b> <b>Archive folder/location</b> : all packaging + people on packaging	
<b>Title</b> : Mahbouba	
<b>Product</b> :	
<b>Manufacturer</b> : Product of Tunisia www.siak-mahouba.com Siak	
<b>Size in cm</b> : <b>Height</b> : 7.3 <b>Width</b> : base diameter 5.5 <b>Length</b> :	
<b>Materials</b> : tin <b>Design</b> : illustration of smiling woman in headscarf and large hoop earrings and apron ' Harissa du cap bon' – bottom illustrations of pimentos	
<b>Company/product information</b> :	
<b>Comments</b> :  49P	
<b>See also</b> : no.	

**Appendix A:** Indicative examples of research records  
Packaging Archive Records – continued

<b>No.</b> 733	Date of Purchase : July 2003 Place of Purchase : Waitrose
Date photographed : <b>21 July 2003</b> <b>Archive folder/location</b> : all packaging + people on packaging + music packs	
<b>Title</b> : Pepsi Max	
<b>Product</b> : 2 litre plastic bottle	
<b>Manufacturer</b> :        Pepsi Britvic Soft Drinks Limited, Chelmsford,  <a href="http://www.pepsi.co.uk">http://www.pepsi.co.uk</a>	
<b>Size in cm</b> : <b>Height</b> : 34 <b>Width</b> : base diameter 7 <b>Length</b> :	
<b>Materials</b> : plastic <b>Design</b> : photograph of blue standing on blue background with pepsi logo	
<b>Company/product information</b> : ‘party with blue’	
<b>Comments</b> :	
<b>See also</b> : no. 731	

**Appendix A: Indicative examples of research records**  
**Packaging Archive Records - continued**

<p><b>No.</b> 734</p> <p>Date photographed : <b>21/7/03</b></p> <p><b>Archive folder/location</b> : all packaging + people on packaging + Aunt Jemima</p>	<p>Date of Purchase : July 2003</p> <p>Place of Purchase : emailed J.Worsley</p>
<p><b>Title</b> : Aunt Jemima syrup bottle</p>	
<p><b>Product</b> : Aunt Jemima syrup bottle</p>	
<p><b>Manufacturer</b> : Aunt Jemima usa</p>	
<p><b>Size in cm</b> :</p> <p><b>Height</b> :</p> <p><b>Width</b> :</p> <p><b>Length</b> :</p>	
<p><b>Materials</b> : Plastic bottle – paper label</p> <p><b>Design</b> :</p>	
<p><b>Company/product information</b> :</p>	
<p><b>Comments</b> :</p> <p>Emailed from James Worsley from USA</p>	
<p><b>See also</b> : Aunt Bessie folder</p>	

## Appendix B: Children on Food Packaging

Images of children on food packaging provide reference to product type and market, for example to indicate children's food, and are used traditionally to target mothers. Children's faces attract attention and work as quick visual cues, often to communicate happiness, health and vitality. A number of brands internationally use a baby or young child as brand icon. Positioned upon packaging, their faces often smile: a cue that the product is enjoyable and reassuring sign of a correct product choice. Some brands use the classic image of intimate loving care: a generic mother and child.<sup>2</sup> The „parent/child relationship“ offers a 'Common fund of experience' that consumers can draw meaning from.<sup>3</sup> Notably a contemporary representation of parents is illustrated by the 2011 Betty Crocker cake packaging (USA) that showed the „unity“<sup>4</sup> of mother and daughter baking on some pack backs and father and daughter on others.<sup>5</sup> Sometimes the generic image suffices to give particular identity, for example the Malaysian Mummy and Daddy Keropok brand use a baby to complete the brand's family connotations (fig.1).

Some companies use the identity of a child - a relation of the company's founder whilst others have created a child image, one that often remains with the brand and does not grow up. For example British brand Gerber's baby food illustrated baby trademark has appeared upon its packaging and promotional material since 1928 (fig. 2) and, likewise, the Cow and Gate baby food brand used its "Smiler" baby from 1930 to 1965 (fig. 3).<sup>6</sup> The faces remain memorable whilst their identity beyond the brand name is elusive.

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<sup>1</sup>Children often appear on children's confectionery.

<sup>2</sup> For example the Ülker Hero Baby's baby biscuits, Turkey, 2011, incorporated such a portrait.

<sup>3</sup> Goffman. 5.

<sup>4</sup> Goffman 38.

<sup>5</sup> Both the Betty Crocker® Super Moist® Carrot Cake mix and the Cherry Chip Cake mix packaging (2011) featured photographs of parents on their back panels to illustrate the brand's message „Let's Bake a Moment Together!. The Carrot Cake mix features a man and girl (father and daughter) whilst the Cherry Chip Cake mix features a girl and woman (daughter and mother). Other packs depicted grandmother and granddaughter and also different races as the brand attempted to appeal to and reflect its target audiences.

<sup>6</sup> The "Smiler" trademark was registered in 1930 but "his identity remains a mystery". Margaret Moles, Message to author 4 June 2013 E-mail.



fig. 1. Mummy Daddy brand, keropok wrapper, India, 2004.  
 fig. 2. Gerber® jar of Apple Dessert, Néstlé, 2011.



fig. 3. "Smiler" powdered milk tin, Cow & Gate, UK, c.1956  
 fig. 4. Parle-G Original Gluco® Biscuits packaging, Parle, India, 2011.

Some brands use a particular child look that becomes the typical image of the brand. For example the world's best-selling biscuit brand Parle-G® (India) is known by the illustrated girl on its packaging (fig. 4).<sup>7</sup> The German brand Brandt Zwieback - Schokoladen GmbH + Co. KG has featured a child's face on its biscuit packaging since 1929 and whilst the face changed in 1952, 1973 and 1983, a blonde child remains as brand icon (fig.5). Some companies use

<sup>7</sup> Ratna Bhushan, „Parle-G world's No 1 Selling Biscuit: Nielsen." The Economic Times. 3 March 2013. Web. 12 May 2013.





fig. 7. Liver pâté tin, Stabburet, Orkla Foods, Norway, 2009.

Some brands have created fictitious characters that are recognised and revered by numerous generations. They have become established cultural symbols that go across countries and time periods. For example the Campbell Kids;<sup>11</sup> The Morton Salt Girl;<sup>12</sup> the Cerebos Salt Boy;<sup>13</sup> the Bisto Kids;<sup>14</sup> are illustrated icons that have secured popular recognition beyond their brand role.<sup>15</sup> A child with no identity other than the brand can secure widespread recognition.

### **Fictitious brand icon example: Tunnock's Boy**

The Tunnock's brand has featured the smiling Tunnock's Boy in its marketing since the mid-1950's.<sup>16</sup> Douglas Haggarty, Tunnock's Purchasing Manager, observed "We believe, at the time, it was an imaginary nice clean image to have and it certainly [has] been an eye catcher."<sup>17</sup> The head of the unnamed boy

<sup>11</sup> The chubby illustrated girl and boy of the Campbell's Food company were created in 1904 (USA). They have appeared in the company's advertising regularly since they were first created.

<sup>12</sup> The Morton Salt Girl was created in 1914 and has appeared upon the American brand's packaging ever since (USA).

<sup>13</sup> The Cerebos trademark of a boy chasing and pouring salt upon a chicken illustrates the brand's slogan *See How It Runs* and has been used upon its packaging for many years. The Cerebos canister states that the trade-mark has been used for over half a century. Cerebos was originally founded in the UK in 1894 and the brand was registered in 1897. Cerebos. Web. 24 Dec. 2009.

<sup>14</sup> The illustrated raggedy girl and boy were created in the UK in 1919. They have appeared upon the brand's packaging.

<sup>15</sup> The girl has appeared upon the packaging for many years. The Morton Salt Consumer Affairs Department observed that their Salt girl is 'considered an American icon.' Rose, Consumer Affairs, "Morton Salt," Message to author 28 Jul. 2005, E-mail.

<sup>16</sup> Thomas Tunnock Limited is a family owned company and was established in Scotland in 1890.

<sup>17</sup> Douglas Haggarty, "Tunnock's," Message to author 28 Jan. 2005, Letter.

appears upon the point of sale boxes, some packaging and the website. Alan Cameron, designer at Randak, the company responsible for the packaging observed „[he] provides a solid point of difference to other mainstream biscuit products“ and that the brand style is an asset to the company.<sup>18</sup> The Boy remains well recognised internationally as an emblem of Scottish history and culture: an icon with both brand and nation association (fig. 8). Ultimately children’s happy faces provide positive identification of the product and brand.



fig. 8. Tunnock’s Caramel biscuits point of sale box, Thomas Tunnock Limited, UK, 2011.

The use of images of family members offers easy codes for brands to use. Consumers can relate to member-types and read examples as respected, friendly and safe. Consumers may accept the invention of fictitious family members and excuse their fakery as they take - and adopt - the reality of their offer of good food. The coded messages of the extended family members offer an endearing quality.

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<sup>18</sup> Alan Cameron, “Tunnock’s” Message to author 18 Feb. 2005, Letter.

## Appendix C: Founders and Product Originators

Traditionally many food brands have used the name of their company's founder or product originator as their identity. These eponymous brands operate through the names and faces of people who in many instances are historic yet live on brand in name and also, on occasion, through their signature, portrait and biography upon the packaging design. Company founders' faces can provide unique identity and bestow important associative qualities and values to their brands and "namesake products".<sup>1</sup> A brand's founder and history can convey meanings of quality, success, trust – an established product. Brands proudly present their founder's portraits often with accompanying history to help make the brand distinct and to secure credibility as being the original in a competitive market. As Fucini and Fucini observed, the founder's name can enjoy continued use and success even after their company is acquired by another.<sup>2</sup> Whilst these authors researched into brands focused upon real people and not "fictitious personae", their work considered how brands and products can be identified and known through their founder's name but not necessarily in relation to the actual person.<sup>3</sup> A product originator can operate as a recognised company spokesperson and appear on the packaging, their name endures, yet their identity remains unknown to the consumer. In this way, it is evident that like their fictitious brand icon counterparts, real brand icons can exist without true identification; their authenticity and credentials may not be important to the success of the brand.

Walker Laird observed that in the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century a common marketing approach by manufacturers was to profile individuals and "The names, and often the faces, of the men (and rarely, women) who founded and/or operated the firms presided over nearly every advertisement on display."<sup>4</sup> The names, portraits and signatures were used as commercial motifs to communicate who was responsible for the product or service; their portraits

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<sup>1</sup> Joseph F. Fucini and Suzy Fucini, *Entrepreneurs: the Men and Women Behind Famous Brand Names and How They Made It* (Boston: G.K. Hall, 1985) 131.

<sup>2</sup> Fucini and Fucini.

<sup>3</sup> Fucini and Fucini xv. The authors do not consider the use or importance of the visual appearance and recognition of product founders in relation to brand identity.

<sup>4</sup> Pamela Walker Laird, *Advertising Progress: American Business and the Rise of Consumer Marketing* (Baltimore: John Hopkins U. Press, 1998) 2.

prompting Davis to refer to this period as the “heyday of the drooping moustache”.<sup>5</sup> Importantly faces and names were used as devices to identify and distinguish brands in increasingly competitive markets where manufacturers produced similar products or imitated the names and brands of others. The real, and one and only, company or brand could be established through an individual’s name or face. Advertising materials, including packaging, “,featured manufacturers as heroes of progress.”<sup>6</sup> Their portraits communicated the founder’s personal sense of pride, ownership, authority and success.

From 1870, as business culture progressed internationally through developments in transportation, new goods, new printing technologies and the development of an advertising profession, changes to marketing approaches occurred. Laird noted the change from “producer-oriented style of advertising [...] emphasizing a production ethos and notions of progress [...] to consumer-oriented styles[...] which gave greater importance to consumption as the driving force of progress”.<sup>7</sup> Increasingly images were added to packaging to attract consumer attention. As Morgan observed the use of picture symbols on packaging was well established by the 1890’s.<sup>8</sup> Advertising messages and designs developed accordingly and increasingly the value of the brand was advertised rather than the success of the individual manufacturer as Walker Laird comments “...when advertisements proclaimed brand names rather than owner’s names, and advertising specialists rather than owners created commercial messages, the messages changed.”<sup>9</sup>

Whilst Fucini and Fucini claimed “Products bearing the names of their creators have become a rarity, they do appear now and again...”<sup>10</sup> this study confirms that this is not now the case. Today a range of food companies, brands and products use their founder’s name as a key selling device. For example Carr’s Table water biscuits packaging proudly presents the brand’s founder, Jonathan

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<sup>5</sup> Alec Davis, *Package and Print: the Development of Container and Label Design* (London: Faber, 1967).

<sup>6</sup> Laird 6.

<sup>7</sup> Laird 5.

<sup>8</sup> Hal Morgan, *Symbols of America* (New York: Viking Penguin, 1986) 7.

<sup>9</sup> Laird xii.

<sup>10</sup> Fucini and Fucini xiii.

Dodgson Carr. His signature features prominently across the top of three of the packs main faces; his engraving-like illustrated portrait is presented on the pack's back side and concise copy anchors the history of the brand. Identified as "Biscuits of Distinction" (sanctioned by reference to the Royal Warrant of Appointment) the founder clearly identifies the brand. Likewise Roger's chocolate brand, established in 1885, notes that it is "steeped in tradition and a rich history that has earned us our reputation as one of Canada's premiere chocolate makers."<sup>11</sup> Its packaging and wider marketing portrays founder Charles „Candy“ Rogers and interestingly one of its products is named „Founder's Bar" in homage his success (fig. 1 ).

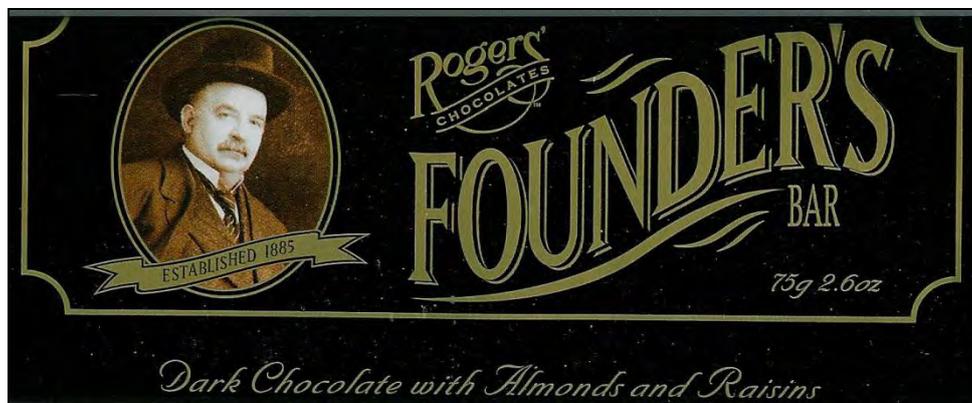


fig. 1. Roger's Chocolates Founder's Bar. Roger's Chocolates, Canada, 2006.

In some instances the founder's family are featured on the packaging too. For example, Whitakers confectionery (UK) presented family members as their heritage is important to the brand.<sup>12</sup> For example, the Whitakers Plain Chocolate Strawberry Cremes packaging (2008) featured a photograph of Victorian founder John Whitaker and his wife, Rebecca. The formal portrait identified the brand whilst suggesting a certain classic and sophisticated elegance that can be associated with the confectionery. Likewise, Jules Destrooper biscuits (Belgium) operates under the name of its founder; a colonial spice trader who created his biscuit company in 1886. His photograph, used in „about a ¼ „of its product range"s packaging has identifying text.<sup>13</sup> The company's Marketing Manager Frederik Van Nuffel explained that the portrait provides „extra identification of the brand"and that "the image emphasises the

<sup>11</sup> Roger's Chocolates, *History*. n.d. Rogers' Chocolates. n.pag. Web. 24 Dec. 2006.

<sup>12</sup> The company website provides a detailed family history to identify and geographically locate the brand. "Whitakers Chocolates".n.d. Whitakers, n.pag. Web. 15 Mar. 2009.

<sup>13</sup> Frederik Van Nuffel, Message to the author, 12 May 2009 E-mail.

authentic character of the Jules Destrooper biscuits and the fact that the recipes have never changed and are still secret today".<sup>14</sup> For example the brand's *Belgian Apple Thins* packaging (fig. 2) incorporated a photograph of Destrooper reading (on the back panel).<sup>15</sup> The image perhaps suggests wisdom and presented a more relaxed depiction of the founder than comparable examples and it contrasted with the depiction of his female company workers featured photographically on the box front.<sup>16</sup>

Canadian Uncle George's brand has owner George Haddad as *founder-as uncle* identity.<sup>17</sup> His authority is perhaps softened by the title of uncle. Mr. Haddad confirmed that the term uncle was adopted to provide an intimate feel and trade mark. He revealed "lots of people in my business call me uncle (...) as a sign of familiarity and respect. The advertising people heard me called this and thought it was a good idea to carry it through."<sup>18</sup> Haddad confirmed that the term gives a family touch and an intimate reference to the brand he owns and undersigns. Haddad commented that he has received many comments from the public about his portrait. In this example the brand owner uses his own identity with the embellishment of the friendly, family connotations of uncle, to attract audiences.

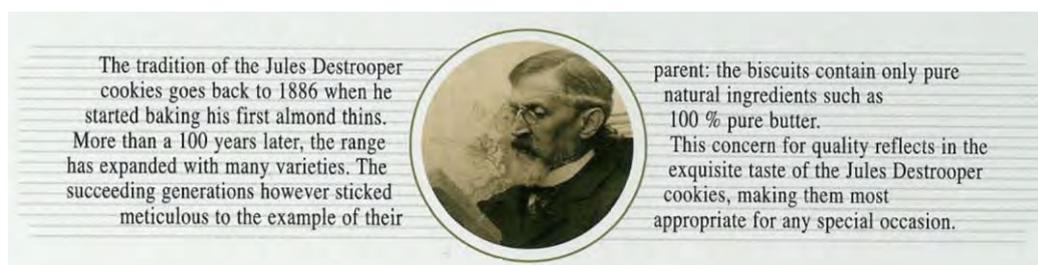


fig. 2 Jules Destrooper Belgian Apple Thins packaging, Jules Destrooper, Belgium, 2008. Permission to reproduce this image has been granted by Destrooper.

A variety of newly created brands also continue the tradition of using their founder's name, or in the case of Lily O'Brien's confectionery, using the founder's daughter as name whilst incorporating a mother and daughter

<sup>14</sup> Van Nuffel.

<sup>15</sup> Van Nuffel.

<sup>16</sup> The late 19<sup>th</sup> century photograph of the first company employees offers further historical reference to the product.

<sup>17</sup> The brand was established in 2005 and is currently only available in Canada and USA.

<sup>18</sup> George Haddad, Telephone interview 18 Aug. 2009.

photograph.<sup>19</sup> Here the intertwining of category-types evidences the subtle ways that brands communicate their identity. In some instances a brand is created with use of a founder's ancestor's identity rather than their own. This enables a brand to draw upon an associative value of tradition, history and nostalgia; it suggests that the brand and its products have a heritage even though the reference extends beyond the reality of the company's existence. For example The Real Jam & Chutney Co., founded in the UK in 2004 uses the image of Constance Hall, the grandmother of company's founder Hazel Southam, as its identity. A sepia portrait of a young Constance Range is used to recreate and transfer the feel and values of the early 20th century to a contemporary market.

In some instances the visual depiction of brand founders on packaging can change over time. Once the brand is established or where it is decided that the image of the founder is no longer necessary, the packaging is redesigned with potentially other design devices used to identify the founder. For example, The Parkinson Banger sausage brand, Kerry Foods Limited, depicted brand founder celebrity photographer Norman Parkinson on its launch packaging in 2002. Text on the back panel explained who Parkinson is and revealed how he created the product. The original brand packaging included a line drawing of Parkinson. On its front Parkinson's portrait was framed above a cut out of large bow tie; the celebrity's signature symbol. As JKR design company observed "The flamboyant bowtie design embodies Parkinson's quintessentially English personality while providing great standout and navigation on shelf."<sup>20</sup> In 2006 the packaging was redesigned and Parkinson's face was removed; the founder's bow tie (smaller) remained as reference. In 2009 Parkinson's face returned to the as the brand realised it had "lost its association with its creator."<sup>21</sup> Thus the continuity of the founder does not necessarily mean their consistency in the brand's visual identity.

The Founder category is therefore an important one within food packaging and the images of mainly real founders upon packaging has is an established

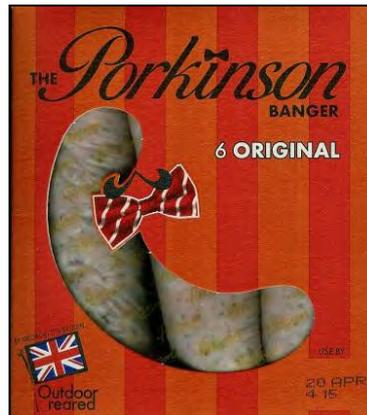
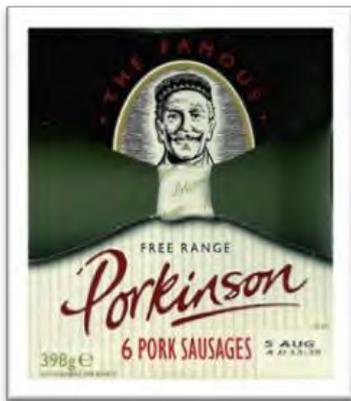
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<sup>19</sup> The founder of Lily o' Brien's is Mary-Ann O'Brien.

<sup>20</sup> JKR. "Parkinsons Brings its Bowtie Back to Life", 28 Sept. 2010, JKR. n.pag. Web. 22 Jan. 2011.

<sup>21</sup> JKR.

marketing approach. Today many established brands continue to use their originator's name and in many instances the celebrity-as-founder is key to the commercial appeal, for example Henry Weston; Caesar Cardini ;<sup>22</sup> George's Monin;<sup>23</sup> Harry Ramsden; and Paul Newman brands all feature the founder on the labels. (fig. ). Newman's Own® brand features the registered illustration of the American actor on its label.<sup>24</sup>



- fig. 3 The Porkin' Banger brand packaging, Kerry Foods Limited, 2002.  
 fig. 4 The Porkin' Banger brand packaging, Kerry Foods Limited, c.2006.  
 fig. 5 The Porkin' Banger brand packaging, Kerry Foods Limited, 2009.

Many established brands use their originator's name and in many instances the celebrity-as-founder is key to the commercial appeal, for example Henry Weston; Caesar Cardini ;<sup>25</sup> George's Monin;<sup>26</sup> Harry Ramsden; and Paul Newman brands all feature the founder on the labels. (fig. ). Newman's Own® brand features the registered illustration of the American actor on its label.<sup>27</sup>

<sup>22</sup> Caesar Cardini created the Ceasar Salad;

<sup>23</sup> Georges Moin founded his syrup company in France in 1912.

<sup>24</sup> The different labels used to feature the celebrity wearing different hats/accessories to make the products distinct. In recent years images of the ingredients change and Newman's face remains the same.

<sup>25</sup> Caesar Cardini created the Ceasar Salad;

<sup>26</sup> Georges Moin founded his syrup company in France in 1912.

<sup>27</sup> The different labels used to feature the celebrity wearing different hats/accessories to make the products distinct, however it is noticed that more recently it is the images of the ingredients that change and Newman's face remains the same.

<b>Founder</b>	<b>Associative values/qualities</b>	<b>Visual characteristics</b>	<b>Identity components</b>	<b>Indicative Food Product types</b>
<b>Original company or brand founder/owner</b>	Heritage History Tradition Pride Success; achievement; dedication; commitment Uniqueness Original; originality Authenticity Business sense; no nonsense Individual Honesty; reliability History Creator/ Owner Prestige Quality Family Heroic Noble	Face – serious or smiling  Old fashioned clothing  Shirt and tie	Name made bold Signature Sepia/Monochrome Photograph Illustration Scroll device – suggesting age Frame Text confirming history	Any food product potentially
<b>Product creator</b>	As above	As above	As above	Any food product potentially
<b>Celebrity Founder</b>	Success; achievement Notoriety Popular Authenticity Uniqueness	As above	As above	Any food product potentially

**Table 5. Category: Founder People-type on food packaging: indicative associative values and qualities and characteristics.**

## Appendix D: Workers

Through the examination of packaging it has been found that the depiction of workers is usually that of real people. Therefore this thesis positions its discussion of such as appendix material to ensure that the its focus on fictitious people is not skewed.

A range of contemporary brands present historical photographs of their staff thus evidencing a marketing formula that is repeated internationally. In some instances the workers relate to the founding of the company. For example the American family owned Benzel's Bretzel Bakery features a portrait of five bakers on its packaging (fig. 1).<sup>1</sup> Designed in 1981 by Bill Benzel, grandson of the original founder Adolph Benzel, the Pennysticks® Pretzel packaging uses a 1912 photograph of „The Pretzel Men“ who were identified by the company's president Ann M. Benzel as being „the original pretzel bakers.“<sup>2</sup> The packaging does not include any details regarding the company's history: the photograph anchors the company's heritage and is important to those consumers who recognize and remember the company and to others who wish to identify and place the brand. As Benzel explained the original bakers provide strong identity for the brand and trigger emotional responses in consumers that have experienced the products. Likewise the Canadian Schneiders meat company, founded in 1890, depicts an illustrated blonde maid as brand logo upon its Smoked Ham packaging (2008) and a c.1930's photograph of a group of factory workers (fig. 2). As the company explains, the maid “first appeared in 1936 on Schneider's packaging capturing the Pennsylvania Dutch and German ancestry of the community of Waterloo Region; the home of the founder of Schneiders Meats.”<sup>3</sup> The workers are depicted to suggest company friendliness, comradeship and heritage.

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<sup>1</sup> Benzel's Bretzel Bakery was founded in 1911 in Pennsylvania.

<sup>2</sup> Ann M. Benzel, “Benzel's Pennysticks,” Message to the author 9 Jan. 2009, E-Mail.

<sup>3</sup> Antoinette Gentra, “Schneiders,” Message to author 6 Sept. 2011, Email.

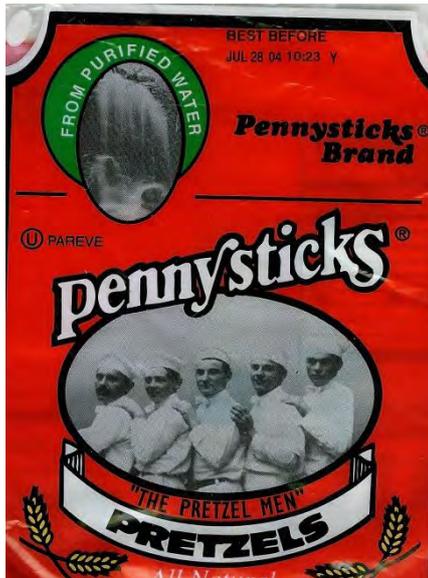


fig. 1 Penysticks pretzel packaging, Benzel's Bretzel, USA, 2008.

fig. 2 Schneiders Smoked Ham packaging, Schneiders, Canada, 2008.

The visualisation of the work ethic is a valuable addition to a brand. The image of a worker can be generic – the job-type communicates location, ingredients whilst giving flavour to the product. For example Collier's Welsh Cheese depicts photographically a collier – a Welsh miner (fig. 3). Here the connotations of heritage, and tradition are matched with the suggestion of a masculine strength. The dirty miner indicates a quiet strength which could perhaps be taken as the taste of the cheese. On occasion the worker is presented upon the packaging with name and position identified. This approach can be seen as a personal welcome to the brand and a real person that we may take as responsible for the product. For example Border® Biscuits packaging included photographs of its staff smiling on pack fronts suggesting a happy, professional reassurance of the quality of the product. For example its 2011 Spicy Ginger Crunch biscuits<sup>4</sup> packaging (fig. 4) featured the factory manager in labeled uniform, whilst its Viennese Whirls packaging featured a baker. This brand uses its staff to differentiate the product range whilst adding its trust in their promotional capabilities.

<sup>4</sup>Manufactured by Border Biscuits Limited, Scotland.

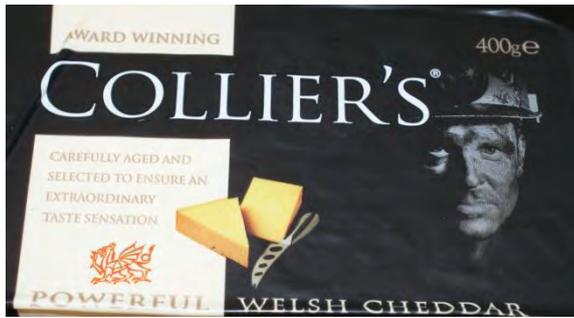


fig. 3 Collier's Cheese packaging, Colliers, Wales, 2009.

fig. 4 Border Spicy Ginger Crunch biscuits, Border® Biscuits Limited, Scotland, 2011.

Workers	Associative values/qualities	Visual characteristics	Identity components	Indicative Food Product types
<b>Employees</b>	Loyal; trust Hardworking; commitment Evidence of work; contribution Personally produced for consumer Respected by company Part of company Pride Helpful	Smiling Groups posed Uniforms; workwear Company location in background Holding product or holding work tools/equipment Happy At work Machinery Tools In factory	Photographs – as evidence; authenticity; suggestion of company archives; monochrome Not necessarily named	Potentially any food
<b>Food producer: eg. Farmer Grower</b>	Natural Authentic Reliable Professional; committed; experience Original Not mass produced Trust; pride; accountability	Standing pose Smiling or serious Possibly more mature character Work clothing  In field  By animals  Holding product	Named workers Photograph Supporting text to provide more text about company and manufacturing process.	Dairy Fish Meat Fruit & Vegetables Biscuits; cakes

**Table: 6. Workers People- type on food packaging:** indicative associative values and qualities and characteristics

## Expert Professional Brand Icon: the Chef

The following discussion relates to Chapter 6 (section 6.3.5) and provides supplementary consideration of Expert/Professional brand icons.

The iconography of the chef as food connoisseur is one well worked across food cultures. This expert is usually associated with being male, as Levy observed, social and cultural attitudes tend to determine that “Women should be good cooks by their maternal nature; but the highest art and science of cookery paradoxically tend to be attributed to male chefs.”<sup>5</sup> A variety of contemporary brands feature their indigenous chef who may be recognised in name and reputation by home audiences but wider consumers may have to rely upon the figure’s title and attire for appropriate identification. For example contemporary Malaysian Chef Wan is identified by chef uniform and name (fig. 1). However on occasion some chefs prove more challenging to read on packaging if the visual clues are not readily provided. For example the celebrity Indonesian chef Marlon „Lonny“ Gerungan appears upon his own-brand packaging in what reads as traditional national costume rather than chef dress. (fig. 5).

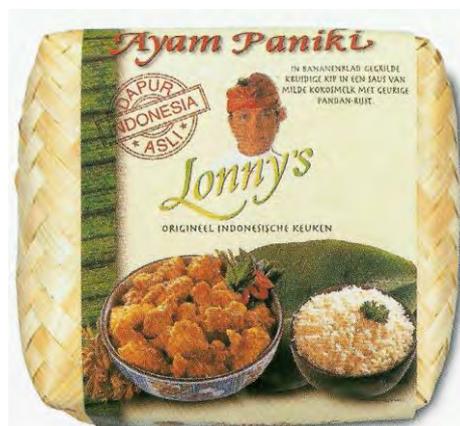


fig. 5. Chef Wan, Malaysian Stir Fry Sauce packaging, Malaysia, 2006.

fig. 6. Lonny's Ayam Paniki packaging, Hola Indonesia BV, HolaIndonesia BV, 2006. Permission to reproduce this image has been granted by Hola Indonesia BV, 2006.

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<sup>5</sup>Sidney. J. Levy, “Interpreting Consumer Mythology: A Structural Approach to Consumer Behaviour” *Journal of Marketing*, 45 (1981): 56.

The traditional attire of the western chef - chef's whites - provide standard visual identity. The continuity of the visual cues of chef's hat (toque), jacket and apron, across time and cultures, enable the fast identification of this professional-type and its association with quality food. Chefs, "the ultimate food authorities,"<sup>6</sup> often appear on food packaging (usually males) and operate as immediate indicator of cooking and suggest that the product is created professionally. Chef brand icons, both real and fictitious, exist across time and cultures. For example historically the fictitious icon Tubby Trex chef of Trex brand (UK) (vegetable fat )<sup>7</sup> and the Chef Sauce brand (UK) (fig.7) featured upon the respective packaging. Today historic baker icon Horace Green, Green's (UK), strides with large spoon and hat (fig.8) and the anthropomorphic icon Poppin' Fresh the Pillsbury Doughboy appears all but naked in all his doughy glory, but for his chef's hat and neckerchief: his attire elevates him from food to eat to food that bakes.



Fig. 7 This material is unavailable due to copyright restrictions.

fig. 7. Chef Sauce advertisement, *Woman's Own*, 27 Feb. (London: George Newnes Limited, 1952) 40.

fig. 8. Greens of Brighton cake mix pack, Greens, UK, 2010.

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<sup>6</sup> Katherine. J. Parkin, *Food Is Love: Advertising and Gender Roles in Modern America* (U. of Philadelphia: Pennsylvania Press, 2006) 131.

<sup>7</sup> Tubby Trex appeared across the brand's marketing but not upon its packaging. Trex was originally launched in the 1930's. The current brand owners, Princes, were unable to confirm when Tubby was dropped as icon but suggested that it was prior to 1983 when Princes acquired the brand. Customer Care, "Tubby Trex" Trex, UK, Message to the author 4 Jan. 2012. E-mail.

The anonymity of a character can suffice and endure where the image and status of chef prevails. For example Paxo brand (stuffing) (UK) (fig.9) and Manzoor's A-1 brand (Pakistan, 2009) have used their unidentified chef. (fig. 10) Likewise the Croatian Vegeta (Podravka d.d.) food seasoning brand's chef has featured as a "sign of quality" upon its packaging since the brand's launch in 1959.<sup>8</sup> As Lana Pekić, marketing manager, commented "the smiling character, [a] charming and satisfying chef which [sic] hand gesture suggests excellent taste of all meals" represents the tradition and the company's pride in its successful product.<sup>9</sup> (fig. 11). The chef's ok hand gesture, also used by the Manzoor's A-1 chef, operates as a sign of good food. Thus these chefs draw from wider cross cultural signage to attribute meaning whilst reinforcing the stereotype of the jovial professional.

Some chef brand icons are named, for example the fictitious Rastus the Cream of Wheat® chef (USA) features upon the brand's packaging: posed as confident gourmet, he appears pleased to serve (fig. 12) and Chef Boyardee® brand uses real chef Hector Boiardi as its identity.<sup>10</sup> Whilst distinct in name, the chef's attire is generic. Real celebrity chefs continue to be popular and prolific and guide us in our culinary activities through various media channels that celebrate and promote their skills.<sup>11</sup> Many chefs have their own brands, or endorse others, as they capitalise upon and develop further their celebrity success.<sup>12</sup> Accordingly in the UK between c.2003 and 2008 a plethora of celebrity chefs appeared on food packaging.<sup>13</sup> Whilst labeled chef, each has distinct personality, attributes and values that they bring to a brand through their name and face. For example celebrity chef Anthony Worrall Thompson commented on his celebrity

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<sup>8</sup> Lana Pekić, marketing manager, Podravka d.d., Croatia, Message to author, 6 Jan 2013. E-mail.

<sup>9</sup> The packaging has had six designs over the years - 1959; 1961;1966;1972;1984 and 2005 and the chef always features.

<sup>10</sup> Boiardi manufactured his food from 1928 onwards and a likeness of his face still appears in the brand's marketing.

<sup>11</sup> The celebrity chef, made popular notably by television, is not a new phenomenon. Past examples include Fanny Craddock and Philip Harben.

<sup>12</sup> Celebrity chefs promote food products but also on occasion endorse cooking related products such as kitchen electrical goods.

<sup>13</sup> Contemporary UK celebrity chefs that appear on food packaging include Ken Hom; Ainsley Harriott; Gordon Ramsay; Jamie Oliver; Anthony Worrall Thompson; Rick Stein; Paul Rankin. International examples include Chef Paul Prudhomme (USA); Michel Bras (France); Wolfgang Puck (USA); Emeril Lagasse.

colleague, “chef”s like Jamie Oliver can be seen as cool. His name for food products for Sainsbury”s adds a trendiness that appeals.”<sup>14</sup> The chef”s status is emphasized through their appearance, for example Chef Wan (Malaysia) and Rick Stein (UK) both indicate their chef uniforms on their packaging. However once a chef”s success is assured many shed their chef clothes as their name and face takes precedence in identifying their status and it is their personality that becomes a major selling point in competitive markets.

fig. 9 - 12 This material is unavailable due to copyright restrictions.

fig. 9 Paxo packaging, c.1998. Permission to reproduce this image has been granted by MoDiP, Arts University at Bournemouth.

fig. 10 Manzoor”s A-1 brand pomegranate seeds, packaging, Manzoor”s A-1, Pakistan, 2009.

fig. 11 Vegeta® condiment, 50 years anniversary pack, Podravka, Croatia, 2010.

fig. 12 Cream of Wheat® Enriched Farina cereal box, Nabisco, Kraft Foods North America, Inc. USA. 2004.

In addition to the celebrity chef there also exist celebrity pseudo-chefs. These examples relate to celebrities that have affiliations with food but are not trained chef. Examples include gastronome and television presenter Loyd Grosman (UK) and actor Terence Stamp (UK) who established their own food brands and appeared upon the packaging accordingly. Interestingly the popular Italian jockey Frankie Dettori appeared on his own food range sporting chef hat. Here the image of chef was tenuous as Dettori”s association is based upon his nationality and love of Italian food.

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<sup>14</sup> Anthony Worrall Thompson, Telephone Interview, 27 June 2006.

### **Fictitious brand icon example: John Bullers – totally fictitious.**

Fictitious brand icons can act as comparable professional chef or cook. For example John Bullers premier frozen pastry pie brand (Green Isle Foods Limited, Ireland) created “A modern chef/ baker type fictional character” as brand identity<sup>15</sup> in 2003. As Brand Manager Tim Ryan explained, “the John Bullers name is very important as it's "real" and evokes [a] northern UK image which was important in developing “pie” credentials.”<sup>16</sup>

The photograph of a chef in uniform behind the main image of the product was used “to add credibility and emotional brand values” and to communicate “integrity, honesty. Down to earth simple things well done.” (fig.10). John Bullers was presented upon the packaging as convincingly real; no hint was given to his fiction.<sup>17</sup> As Ryan commented “John Bullers is familiar and conveys an honest and genuine personality, traditional in many ways yet contemporary”.<sup>18</sup> His photograph, name and status all appeared plausible, in part as a result of a wide culture that has regularly presented the image of a chef as authentic and valid.



fig. 13. John Bullers Chicken and Mushroom Pie packaging, Green Isle Foods Limited, Ireland. 2006. Permission to reproduce this image has been granted by Green Isle Foods Ltd.

<sup>15</sup> Tim Ryan, “John Bullers,.” Message to author.16 May 2005, Letter, Tim Ryan Brand Manager, Green Isle Foods Limited, Ireland.

<sup>16</sup> Ryan.

<sup>17</sup> The packaging was created by Tim Ryan and Mesh Design.

<sup>18</sup>Big Portions of Profitable Pies. The Grocer. 9 Oct. 2004. Web. 5 May. 2005.

The category of chef is thus a distinct people-type that operates transculturally. The associated visual codes are firmly established historically and provide fast identification of a professional type that can offer a valuable brand icon identity where associated attributes can be transferred to and communicated through the packaging.

<b>Expert/ professional</b>	<b>Associative values/qualities</b>	<b>Visual characteristics</b>	<b>Identity components</b>	<b>Indicative Food Product Types</b>
<b>sea Captain;  fisherman</b>	Skilled; experienced; reliable Hardworking; heroic; trustworthy Tradition ; fresh; quality; Strength; masculine; older; rugged	Beard; ship; wheel; Captain's cap with badge Pipe; Smiling or serious sou'weter tattoo; anchor;	Captain status - name	Seafood  Strong tasting  (Alcohol – rum)
<b>chef;  cook;  baker;  butcher</b>	Skilled; tradition; quality Hand selected Best quality Confident Trustworthy; reliable	Smiling Key clothing/uniform Cooking utensils/tools Kitchen location With produce	Name potentially  Illustration or photograph	Any food – but not fruit and vegetable
<b>retailer/ grocer</b>	Professional advice; direct; male; trustworthy; reliable; knowledgeable; Friendly; busy; talkative; cheery	Rotund; older; apron; overcoat; hat; Male; Shelves; counter; scales	Illustration or photograph	Any food
<b>Home Economist</b>	Professional; trained; qualified; skilled; experienced Sound advice; reassurance Best practice; female;	Woman's face	Image of woman: illustration  Name potentially	Any – but potentially large company/  mass produced.

**Table: 7** Category: Expert/Professional people- types on food packaging: indicative associative values and qualities and characteristics.

## Appendix E: Celebrities as Professional food brand endorsers

Discussion of the role of celebrities on food packaging helps to identify further the contexts in which the study's core foci of fictitious brand icons exist and relate, notably as some fictitious brand icons have achieved celebrity status beyond their original commercial role. This discussion is further considered in relation to fictitious brand icon Betty Crocker, as discussed in Chapter 8, who may be considered to be a fictitious celebrity.

A celebrity, "a famous person",<sup>1</sup> a personality, with exceptional qualities, a successful reputation, with acknowledged skill and achievement, can be seen as an object of adoration and respect. Their associated attributes, status and appeal can be used by brands. As brand endorser – "an individual who is known by the public (...) for his or her achievements in areas other than that of the product class endorsed"<sup>2</sup> – the celebrity's name and face can operate across a range of commercial platforms including television advertising and packaging. Like their fictitious brand icon neighbours, the celebrity's packaging appearance can encourage consumers' quick recognition of the brand and hopefully immediate purchase. As they vie for attention on supermarket shelves, celebrities' packaging presence positions them in direct competition with their fictitious counterparts as they share comparable roles.

However celebrity status has been scorned as a vacuous presence where celebrities have achieved significant rank and excessive adulation that goes beyond their real merit and worth.<sup>3</sup> Boorstin alleged that many celebrities, what he termed as "human pseudo-event"<sup>4</sup> have secured artificial fame; "Their chief claim to fame is their fame itself. They are notorious for their notoriety."<sup>5</sup> Yet whether authentic or artificial, celebrities' fame is a key attraction that brands use. Celebrities' omnipresence in contemporary culture has drawn extensive attention and debate in recent years. A wealth of academic studies have

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<sup>1</sup> Oxford English Dictionary. Web. 3 Sept. 2009.

<sup>2</sup> Hershey H. Friedman and Linda Freidan, "Endorsers Effectiveness by Product Type," *Journal of Advertising* 19 (Oct. 1979):63-71.

<sup>3</sup> Daniel Boorstin, *The Image: A Guide to Pseudo Events in America* (New York: Vintage Books, 1992); Joshua Gamson, *Claims to Fame: Celebrity in Contemporary America* (London: U of C Press, 1994); Stuart Ewen, *All Consuming Images: the Politics of Style in Contemporary Culture* (London: Basic Books, 1988).

<sup>4</sup> Boorstin 157.

<sup>5</sup> Boorstin 60.

investigated the phenomenon of celebrity and provide valuable reference for this study.<sup>6</sup> Examination of the notion of celebrity therefore draws upon key studies accordingly, notably Lahr;<sup>7</sup> Ohanian;<sup>8</sup> Schickel;<sup>9</sup> Boorstin; Kotler, 1987<sup>10</sup> Brady;<sup>11</sup> Marshall;<sup>12</sup> McCracken;<sup>13</sup> Twitchell;<sup>14</sup> Swerdlow and Swerdlow;<sup>15</sup> and Gamson.<sup>16</sup>

Internationally a plethora of celebrities are food brands endorsers. Their appearance communicates their brand approval and their reassurance of its worth. Their image is used to transfer associative meanings, that are understood by consumers, to the brand as borrowed equity and thus they offer significant cultural and commercial currency: as Marshall observed “The celebrity as a public individual who participates openly as a marketable commodity serves as a powerful legitimation of the political economic model of exchange and value.”<sup>17</sup>

A celebrity may be a spokes-person and/or a name and face-symbol. They help position and amplify brand’s identity and appeal however they must be congruent with the brand’s values and identity to ensure effective communication. They can add character, currency, credibility, popularity and

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<sup>6</sup> Further examples of key publications that have investigated the notion of celebrity include: Hershey, H. Fiedman, Michael J. Santeramo and Anthony Traina. “Correlates of Trustworthiness for Celebrities.” *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*. Fall. 6.4, Academy of Marketing Science. (1978): 291- 299. B. Z. Erdogan. *Celebrity Endorsement: A Literature Review*. *Journal of Marketing Management*, 15 (1991): 291 – 314; B.Z. Erdogan and Philip Kitchen, “Getting the Best Out of Celebrity Endorsers,” *Admap*, April: 1998, 17- 20. Marketing Intelligence. *Celebrity Endorsement in Food and Drink*. July. London: Mintel International Group Ltd.,(1999); B.Z. Erdogan “*Selecting Celebrity Endorsers: The Practitioners Perspective*, *Journal of Advertising Research* 8 (2001): 47- 89. Chris Rojek, *Celebrity* (London: Reaktion, 2001); Hamish Pringle, *Celebrity Sells* ( Chichester: John Wiley, 2004).

<sup>7</sup> John Lahr, “Notes on Fame: The Machinery of Celebrity Provides the Faith Americans Seek.” *Harper’s* (Jan.1978):77-80.

<sup>8</sup> Ohanian, Roobina. “The Impact of Celebrity Spokespersons” Perceived Image on Consumers” Intention to Purchase,” *Journal of Advertising Research* 31:1 (1991): 46-53.

<sup>9</sup> Richard Schickel. *Intimate Strangers: The Culture of Celebrity* (New York: Doubleday and Company Inc.,1985).

<sup>10</sup> Philip Kotler, “Semiotics of Person and Nation Marketing,” *Semiotics and Marketing: New Directions in the Study of Signs for Sale*, Jean Umiker-Sebeok. (Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter. X 1987) 3-12.

<sup>11</sup> Leo Brady, *The Frenzy of Renown: Fame and its History* (New York: Vintage, 1997).

<sup>12</sup> P. D. Marshall, *Celebrity and Power: Fame in Contemporary Culture*. (Minneapolis: U. of Minnesota Press. 1997).

<sup>13</sup> McCracken, Grant. “Who Is the Celebrity Endorser? Cultural Foundations of the Endorsement Process,” *Journal of Consumer Research*, 16.3, (1989): 310-321.

<sup>14</sup> Twitchell.

<sup>15</sup> Swerdlow and Swerdlow. Web. Jan. 2011.

<sup>16</sup> Gamson 16.

<sup>17</sup> Marshall.

interest to the brand. They can offer trust and expertise to the consumer through the brand. They can appeal to specific markets and target audiences; they can engender affection and make the brand desirable; they can help differentiate the brand and give it competitive advantage. Thus the fame by association that celebrities can bring to a brand can be important.<sup>18</sup>

Contemporary culture appears to be absorbed by the concept of celebrity as Meades observed there is a „collective appetite for idolatory“<sup>19</sup> and Gamson identified the “celebrification” of contemporary culture.<sup>20</sup> In marketing, the symbiotic relationship of brand and celebrity is firmly established and widespread and there is a long tradition of celebrities employed in food promotion. Whilst Gamson noted that celebrity image was established in the 17<sup>th</sup> century,<sup>21</sup> celebrities have been used in marketing increasingly notably from the late nineteenth century.<sup>22</sup> Advertisements from the nineteenth century onwards often evidenced a variety of celebrities: their name, image and written testimonial used as product endorsement. The celebrity image has subsequently developed in stature in direct relation to, and as a result of, advancements in mass communication: various mass media channels and arenas enable the celebrity to take centre stage and enjoy extensive public attention.<sup>23</sup>

Some celebrities may only appear upon packaging and some press advertisements – and sometimes only for a limited period: they are not personally invested or responsible for the brand and its products.<sup>24</sup> A celebrity’s fame may be momentary. The transient celebrity with temporary notoriety may have a short shelf life: as their popularity shifts or wanes their brand value is diminished.<sup>25</sup> For example pop music celebrities offer significant financial

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<sup>18</sup> Pringle xxii.

<sup>19</sup> Jonathan Meades, “The Adjective of the Age,” *Intelligent Life* (Spring, London: Economist Group Business, 2009) 71.

<sup>20</sup> Gamson 16.

<sup>21</sup> Gamson 16.

<sup>22</sup> Historical contexts are discussed by Swerdlow and Swerdlow; McCracken; and Braudy.

<sup>23</sup> Boorstin 13 and Schickel discuss historical context to this area.

<sup>24</sup> Boorstin (13) observes that „Endorsement advertising not only uses celebrities; it helps make them“ Celebrities may prosper from the exposure and promotion that marketing opportunities create.

<sup>25</sup> For example pop star Michael Jackson was spokes-person for the Pepsi soft drink brand in 1983 -1984 and 1987-1988. Controversies surrounding Jackson’s personal life made him a non-viable endorser from 1993 onwards. Subsequently, a host of pop celebrities, including the Spice

potential for brands although the stars’ cultural and commercial best-before dates may be shorter than other celebrity-types. Their idol status can attract significant adulation where a large loyal fan base will consume ardently the products endorsed by or featuring the name and face of their object of worship. The appearance of a celebrity may persuade purchase in its own right regardless of the actual brand or product. Thus many brands are fast to position their products in relation to such success and ride on the celebrity’s wave of popularity. For example *Toblerone* (2009) confectionery packaging featured pop celebrity Alesha Dixon to attract a youth audience. Her popularity and seductive image was potentially used to make the brand more current and appealing to a demographic that may otherwise not have considered the product<sup>26</sup> (fig. 1).

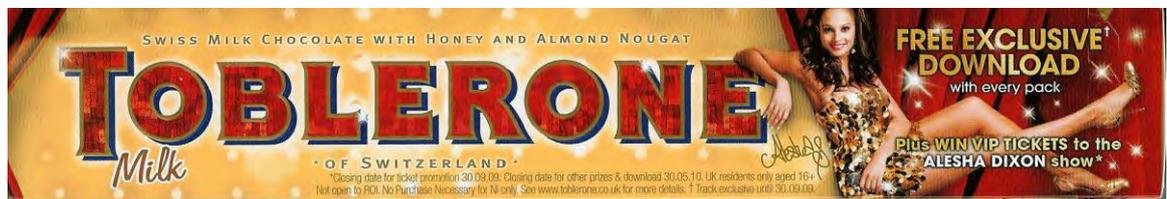


fig. 1 Toblerone pack, Kraft Foods, 2009.

The image and reputation of a pop idol is commercially charged; the stars become a “commodity to sell the product” and may produce their own brand as well as endorsing another.<sup>27</sup> Kotler’s termed this “person marketing”:<sup>28</sup> where an individual will promote their “visibility and fame” that can develop their brand status<sup>29</sup> As Klein observes, some pop stars can be seen as “band as brand”<sup>30</sup> or as Johnson observed they can be regarded as “entertainment brands”.<sup>31</sup> For example in 2000 boy band Westlife launched their *Cool and Minty Bubblegum*<sup>32</sup> and endorsed Cadbury’s 2002 official Westlife chocolate (fig. 2), and targeted a

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Girls 1997; Beyonce 2002; Shakira 200, have acted as Pepsi brand spokes-people to reflect the brands aim to be seen as youthful, cool and popular.

<sup>26</sup> The celebrity appeared on two out of the three main panels of the product’s packaging.

Toblerone is an established confectionery product in a competitive chocolate market where brand types are often associated with specific demographic types in terms of age and gender.

<sup>27</sup> “The Importance of Being Famous.” Dir. Richard Guard. 25 Nov. Carlton Television, 2003. Television.

<sup>28</sup> Kotler 3-12.

<sup>29</sup> Armstrong, Gary, Michael Hardker. Philip Kotler and Ross Brennan. *Marketing: an Introduction* (Harlow: Pearson Education Limited. 2009) 234.

<sup>30</sup> Klein.

<sup>31</sup> Branwell Johnson, “Pop Idolatory” *Marketing Week*, 21 Feb. (2002): 22-25

<sup>32</sup> This product was manufactured by Zed Candy for Leaf.

primary audience of 10-15 year old girls<sup>33</sup> at the height of their chart success. Their own brand utilised their identities as the selling points for fans who loyally consumed the image as product. As Healey noted “The use of photographs of celebrities on the packaging gives instant brand recognition”<sup>34</sup> and a potent reason for purchase for some consumers.



fig. 2 Westlife chocolate bar, Cadbury's, 2002.

Television celebrities also offer topical, popular and fleeting consumer attention for brands to draw and benefit from. For example the Spar supermarket utilised the stars from the popular Australian television soap opera *Neighbours* on their snack range in 1998 (fig.3). Rather than depicting the real actors (photographically) the packs presented the soap characters (illustratively) as played by the actor; each snack type featuring a different character to encourage fan purchase. By comparison key sporting celebrities are signed up for transfer to new sporting arenas when they are employed as brand endorsers of health-related food brands that aim to create sporty/sporting and healthily/health conscious connotations. The associative values of celebrities’ sporting prowess, health and vitality, are communicated by their photographs that aim to persuade the consumer to go for the winning option that has no substitute. In the competitive breakfast cereal market, where boxes jostle for consumer selection, the sport celebrity can offer valuable shelf stand out. Their links with key sporting events and successes potentially add kudos to the brand. For example Kellogg’s cereals have used Olympic cyclist Jason Queally<sup>35</sup> and

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<sup>33</sup>The secondary audience targeted was 6-9 year old males and females. This information was sourced from Zed Candy presentation pack, c.2000.

<sup>34</sup> Sharon Healy, “Westlife,” Message to author, 29 July 2003, Letter.

<sup>35</sup> Jason Queally, gold medal winner at the 2000 Olympic Games, was contracted in 2001 by Kellogg’s as the spokes-person for its sports cereal *Start*. His image presented on the pack front promoted the idea of a healthy cereal.

England footballer Robbie Fowler (c.2001).<sup>36</sup> their photographs closely positioned next to the pack to maximise product and personality connection (fig. 4 & fig. 5).



fig. 3. Spar Neighbours Spicy Spuds Savoury Snack, Spar, UK. 1998.  
 fig. 4. Kellogg's Start cereal, Kellogg's, UK, c.2001.  
 fig. 5. Kellogg's Strike cereal, Kellogg's, UK, c.2001.

On occasion a celebrity may endorse a number of brands and appear on different packaging, sometimes simultaneously. A global celebrity can make familiar packaging internationally whilst an indigenous celebrity may suffice for home-focused brands.<sup>37</sup> Celebrities that are country, culture or time/period specific may be more challenging to identify. For example the c.1950's Synthetic Syrup label from India (fig. 6) portrayed Tamil film star Sivaji Ganesan. For audiences outside of the product's country of origin identification of the actual person is difficult.<sup>38</sup> Thus Erdoğan's scepticism regarding the extent to which celebrities can operate across national boundaries and different cultural contexts can be seen as accurate.<sup>39</sup> The commercial use of celebrities may not be effective or appropriate in some contexts.

<sup>36</sup> Robbie Fowler is depicted eating the cereal and thus further suggests his support of the product.

<sup>37</sup> Erdoğan.

<sup>38</sup> The actor was a popular in films from the 1960's through to the 1980's.

<sup>39</sup> Erdoğan 17-20.

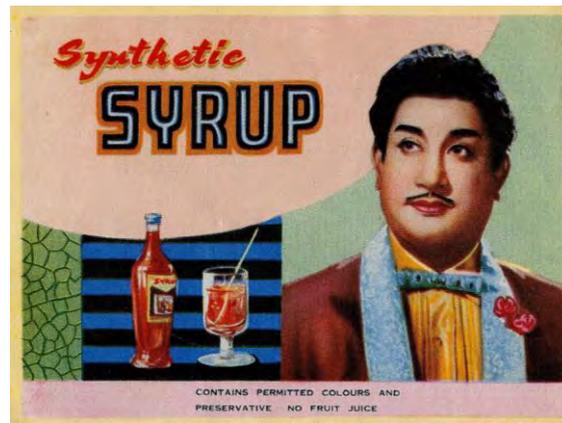


fig.6. Synthetic Syrup label, c. 1950's, India.  
Permission to reproduce this image has been granted by MoDiP, Arts University at Bournemouth.

The potential commercial benefits of harnessing a celebrity to a brand can be significant though, as research by Dyson & Turco; Agrawal & Kamakura; Ohanian<sup>40</sup> has evidenced. Interestingly Ohanian and Erdoğan<sup>41</sup> have indicated that the celebrity is not necessarily an influence on consumer purchase decisions. Furthermore Swedlow reported that celebrity trustworthiness and expertise is not of great importance to consumers' purchase decisions yet in many instances the celebrity is specifically employed to communicate these very qualities.<sup>42</sup> Further questioning of the validity of the celebrity endorser is provoked by Mintel report that indicated the growing practice of the use of celebrities in food and drink endorsement, thus suggesting there was capital gain.<sup>43</sup> Mintel's subsequent report in 2005 further highlighted the use of celebrity chefs in branding and the extent of their popularity with consumers.<sup>44</sup> Whilst both reports discussed the range of celebrities engaged in food promotion and their own brands (notably celebrity chefs) they indicated that their popularity would not extend beyond their immediate niche markets and specific target consumer groups. However in recent years with the increased number of celebrities evident in food marketing, often fronting their own brands, it is suggested that the popularity and success of celebrity food promotion is strong,

<sup>40</sup> Ohanian 46-54.

<sup>41</sup> Erdoğan 17-20.

<sup>42</sup> R.A. Swedlow, Star studded advertising: Is it worth the effort? *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science* 12 (1984):89-102.

<sup>43</sup> Marketing Intelligence. "Celebrity Endorsement in Food and drink," July. London: Mintel International Group Ltd., 1999.

<sup>44</sup> Marketing Intelligence "The Impact of Celebrity Chefs on Eating Habits." (*Market Intelligence*. UK.) Jan. Mintel International Group Ltd., 2005.

fuelled by the popular media that promotes a celebrity culture. Consumers appear to have an unremitting appetite for celebrities and food brands appear to continue to feed this as they employ celebrities in their marketing.

Pringle stressed that advertising and brand characters created specifically by companies for promotional purpose cannot be considered as celebrities.<sup>45</sup> Referring to the popularity and “likeability” of characters such as the Jolly Green Giant he notes that they “become extremely well-known brand ambassadors and even quasi-celebrities in their own right” but believes that they cannot be deemed pure celebrity as “„their celebrity is entirely a function of what they do for their particular brand and they have no values beyond those bestowed on them by the advertising and marketing communications in which they feature” and “rarely move beyond the world of the brand that created them and thus, unlike true celebrities, they do not have a life of their own.”<sup>46</sup> However issue could be taken with Pringle’s view as many brand icons do achieve celebrity status as they step up and out of their marketing contexts and gain wider cultural roles and value. In some instances additional values are conferred upon examples as wider audiences embrace their look, such as the popularity of Green Giant’s Little Sprout who whilst dropped within brand advertising decades ago still lives on within popular culture as a lively, likeable personality in his own right. Thus the power of created brand icons cannot be totally segregated from the concept of celebrity as Pringle suggests.

It is suggested however that generic celebrity-*types* appear to operate successfully. As brands work in new markets, county/culture specific celebrities may not be known to audiences in different countries; however an appreciation of their assumed professional role or status may be understood. It is proposed that international consumers may recognise the face and positioning of certain character types on food packaging and potentially read these as generic signs for celebrity-*types*.

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<sup>45</sup> Pringle xxiii.

<sup>46</sup> Pringle xxiii.

<b>Celebrity</b>	<b>Associative values/qualities</b>	<b>Visual characteristics</b>	<b>Identity components</b>	<b>Indicative Food Product types</b>
<b>Own Brand</b>	Qualities transferred from celebrity's established reputation Success; Value Additional skills and expertise	Face of person: smiling	Name; signature  Photograph	Any
<b>Endorser</b>	Qualities transferred from celebrity's established reputation	Face of person: smiling	Name; signature  Photograph	Any
<b>Sports</b>	Qualities transferred from celebrity's established reputation Success; power; fan following Health; power; competitive; team player; strong Committed;	Face of person: smiling	Name; signature  Photograph	Any
<b>Pop</b>	Qualities transferred from celebrity's established reputation; fan following Attractive; youth appeal;	Face of person: smiling	Name; signature  Photograph	Any
<b>Television/ film</b>	Qualities transferred from celebrity's established reputation; fan following Wide popularity success	Face of person;  Potential image from tv/film	Name; signature  Photograph	Any

**Table 8 Category: Celebrity People-Type on Food Packaging:** indicative associative values and qualities and characteristics.

## Appendix F: Fictitious Brand Icon Case Study Sun-Maid

*This case study supports the discussion of maids in section 6.3.3.*

To illustrate the evolution and enduring appeal of a maid icon, discussion of the Sun-Maid Girl, icon of Sun-Maid California raisins and dried fruits producer, identifies the importance of her visual components and how the brand has ensured their icon remains relevant to contemporary consumers. The Sun-Maid brand, founded in 1912, has used its Sun-Maid Girl trademark icon since her creation in 1915. Throughout the brand's history her image has been an important selling point across all packaging and advertising. Within advertisements the packaging is featured to help anchor brand recognition. The icon is an illustration of a young, smiling girl, who wears a red bonnet and white blouse, and who holds a tray of grapes. Cleverly named, although without a personal name, she is radiant and happy: the dual connotation with reference to the product – fruits that are natural and are literally, „sun made“.<sup>1</sup>

The Sun-Maid Girl is a created icon whose image is based upon the portrait of a real company worker Collett Peterson.<sup>2</sup> Sun-Maid is represented through her central portrait framed by a sun that radiates behind, almost halo-like, presenting her figure in a glow of yellow. Her red sunbonnet, her signature look, is an important brand symbol. The bonnet frames her face and anchors the brand's corporate colour. Whilst reflecting popular head ware of the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century, the bonnet also suggests work-wear protection from the sun; a functional hat that was used when picking fruit in the sunny fields of California.<sup>3</sup> This symbol helps to further reinforce the relationship of the Sun-Maid Girl to the company's products.<sup>4</sup> It suggests tradition and that the she

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<sup>1</sup> The Sun-Maid Girl character is based upon the real Collett Peterson who was discovered locally in California, USA, by Sun-Maid raisin management in 1916

<sup>2</sup> The Sun-Maid Girl is based upon the real Collett Peterson who was discovered locally in California, USA, by Sun-Maid raisin management in 1916. The Sun-Maid portrait that created the company's trademark was painted by artist Fanny Scafford. Versions of this image have featured in Sun-Maid packaging and advertising since 1916.

<sup>3</sup> Rachel Worth confirms that sun-bonnets first appeared in the UK in 1840's and were „worn, in the main, for work“ and „mostly confined to the country and were for outdoor work although they were not limited to field work.“ She adds comment that the bonnets were „considered picturesque.“ Rachel J. Worth, *Representation of Rural Working-Class Dress 1840-1900* (London: Courtauld Institute of Art, U. of London: 2002).

<sup>4</sup> Like the Sun-Maid, the icon for *Blue Bonnet* margarine brand (ConAgra Foods, USA) wears a traditional bonnet. Her blue bonnet, more stylish and expensive than that of the Sun-Maid's, is

handpicks, happily, the natural fresh fayre that she then presents to us in a laden basket; as positioned in the foreground of the portrait.

The Sun-Maid Girl has been refreshed visually four times since 1916; in 1923, 1956, 1970 and 2006. Today the core visual symbols remain; the sunburst is now stylized, the portrait appears more flattened (and Sun-Maid Girl is now free of her bracelet that appears in earlier portraits, so there can be no distraction to her grape-filled tray). The dated yet hallmark symbol of the bonnet remains. The shadow cast by the bonnet's brim in the earlier portraits of 1923 and 1956 is lifted however, to emphasise a clear, ever smiling face. The pose and overall identity are preserved on the packaging as the Sun-Maid Girl remains true to her original identity.

In 2006 however, to reflect a more contemporary character, the Sun-Maid Girl was modernised (fig.1). As the company's press release stated "Set to turn 90, the Sun-Maid Girl deserves a new look for a new century (...) We are excited with the resulting television commercials, which put a modern spin on our message that raisins are "just Grapes and Sunshine."<sup>5</sup> The two animated television advertisements gave a voice to the icon for the first time.<sup>6</sup> They presented her moving, full bodied, through the vine yards, picking grapes and talking to the viewer, with sun rays shadowing behind, positioning her in the natural field of her marketing context. Here the gentle voiced computer animated Girl now appears with almost Barbie doll-like beauty with a prominent glowing smile and a more plasticised face, slightly tanned from the sun's rays perhaps. She was further updated as a t-shirt-styled top replaced the traditional peasant-style white blouse of the earlier portraits. The red sunbonnet remains, thankfully; the use of a contemporary hat has been resisted as the traditional bonnet provides an identifying feature for this brand icon and thus she remains generally the same as ever.

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decorated and suggests a fashion hat rather than a work bonnet. However, both hats are powerful visual symbols; their colour and style communicate key brand values

<sup>5</sup> Press Release quoted Barry Kreibel, Sun-Maid Growers of California president. *Grapes + Sunshine = Fountain of Youth as Sun Maid Girl turns 90 and Launches New Television Ads*. Sun-Maid Growers of California, 2006. The Sun-Maid's new campaign was announced in a full-page color ad in USA TODAY on 15 Mar. 2006.

<sup>6</sup> The television advertisements were created by created by Synthespian Studios, Massachusetts, USA. The updated icon was based upon the consumer research undertaken by the advertising agency McCann Erikson, California

In comparison with the brand's traditional marketing contexts of print advertisements and packaging, the Sun-Maid now also lives in the new, more contemporary and wider context of the company website.<sup>7</sup> Within the website's recipe section, she is featured at home, within her kitchen as a mid-afternoon sun streams through the window behind, from which a view of the vineyard is framed. The Sun-Maid is almost Betty Crocker-like as she gleefully holds out her product pack and presents the food that she has made, suggesting a home-made quality (fig.2). In updating her existence the designers have used a classic recipe for food-related brand depiction that is synonymous with history of food and the depiction of food brand icons – the kitchen. The location of the kitchen presents an almost timeless environment; a safe domain for home cooking. The Sun-Maid in the kitchen is also used in print advertisements (fig. 3).<sup>8</sup>

By comparison to the Sun-Maid's more traditional depiction and location, the webpage for „Healthy Living“ depicts her upon a beach, exercising. Incongruously not shedding her red bonnet, she sports contemporary leggings, having removed her skirt and apron accordingly, she is freed also of any reference to her produce.<sup>9</sup> In this way the brand gains balance, to position the icon as a symbol of tradition but also in pace with the times (fig. 4).<sup>10</sup> However, despite the new Sun-Maid, upon current packaging it is the older (1970) version that appears (fig. 5). Here the familiar, traditional face is used to engage consumers, possibly suggesting that the new version could confuse or dissuade

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<sup>7</sup> The website was created in collaboration with New York based global advertising, design, interactive and production agency, Marsteller.

<sup>8</sup> Here the website image is duplicated, blurred at the edges to emphasise the strength of the sun's rays beaming out of the advertisement, and the packaging is centrally positioned.

<sup>9</sup> Sun-Maid."Healthy Living". n.d. Sun-Maid. n.pag. Web. 4 Apr. 2006.

<sup>10</sup> Comparisons can be made with the updating of the *Coppertone girl* brand icon. The Coppertone suntan lotion brand was created in 1944 and in 1959 the brand icon was introduced. The revised girl (c.2006) saw a more flattened image. Like the Sun-Maid she was presented in a more modern context; riding a jet ski, wearing a life jacket, with her dog. The marketing message aimed to encourage consumers to wear their sunscreen when enjoying summertime sports and also repositions the brand icon as a modern miss; safety conscious, healthy, fun loving and active - moving with today's lifestyles.

consumers. This continuity is important as the icon remains central to the packaging design both for Sun-Maid core and brand-licensed products.

fig 1; fig 2 and fig. 3 This material is unavailable due to copyright restrictions.

- fig. 1 Animated version of Sun-Maid. 2006. Sun-Maid.n.p. Web. 4 Apr. 2006.
- fig. 2 Sun-Maid advertisement. *Better Homes and Gardens* (USA). Dec. 2006: 217.
- fig. 3 Sun-Maid Oatmeal Raisin Cookie Mix packaging, Gem Pack Foods Limited. 2009.

fig. 4 This material is unavailable due to copyright restrictions.

- fig. 4 Recipes Sun-Maid. "Healthy Living". n.d. Sun-Maid. n.pag. Web. 4 Apr. 2006.

fig. 5 This material is unavailable due to copyright restrictions.

- fig. 5 Sun-Maid. "Healthy Living". n.d. Sun-Maid. n.pag. Web. 14 Mar. 2007.

Comparisons with the Sun-Maid Girl's image can be made in relation to wider members of the maid category that share visual components. For example the American food company, Frito-Lay, Tortilla Chips Santitas brand icon Santitas - a young, attractive maid (no wedding ring) adorns the packaging.<sup>11</sup> The Santitas girl shares a similar dress style and pose to the Sun-Maid and other generic country maids. The Mexican flavour of the product is represented by her name and also in part through her costume: her white blouse is similar to the traditional peasant-style blouse, although lower neckline, perhaps more provocatively cut, than the Sun-Maid's. This blouse can be read as a symbol of traditional folk/country or peasant dress; a visual *local accent* with national dress connotations that can be used as a signifier of tradition across cultures and countries. The California based Juanita brand of Juanita's Foods, international manufacturer and distributor of Mexican foods, features the beautiful fictitious Mexican girl to attract consumer attention (fig. 6).<sup>12</sup>

Juanita personalises the brand as "the symbol of authentic, ready-to-serve home cooked Mexican food".<sup>13</sup> Her image is well detailed; she too wears traditional dress - a white blouse, with traditional Mexican embroidered detail, and a skirt in national colours: the brand's corporate colours used also on its packaging. Juanita's sombrero is worn across her back and her jaunty stance - left hand on hip and the right hand lifted, pointed skyward - suggests a certain liveliness. Juanita smiles, her image like Santitas, is pin-up-like, reminiscent of Hollywood icons Dorothy Lamour and Rita Hayworth. In full body pose she is used on the packaging to entice consumers.<sup>14</sup> Likewise brand icons Rosarita (ConAgra) and Dolores (Dolores Canning Company, USA) use visual cues to make Mexican connections. Dolores is a particularly beautiful maid in traditional dress that has appeared on packaging since 1954 (fig. 7). The image whilst appearing as a fictitious stereotype is claimed by the brand as the image of the original

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<sup>11</sup> The brand was launched in 1995.

<sup>12</sup> Jaunita's, n.d. Juanitas Foods, n.pag. Web. 4 Jul. 2005.

<sup>13</sup> Jaunita's.

<sup>14</sup> Interestingly Juanita's Foods also produces the *Tai Anita's* brand which is represented by the illustrated image of a young woman wearing a sombrero and decorative jewellery. This brand *relative* is depicted as a head portrait only.

founder Dolores Muñoz.<sup>15</sup> In these instances the beauty of the character is as important to their national identity. Therefore a maid subgroup is identified: *the Mexican maid* – a recurrent type evident across Mexican-based/ styled food brands. The costume is key communicator of country association, important to the products. For example Mexican hot sauce Tapatío brand (USA) presents a Mexican man as brand icon.<sup>16</sup> The Tapatío man's sombrero, mariachi (or charro) suit and large moustache presents a stereotypical Mexican that is used as visual shorthand for easy reading upon food packaging (fig.8).<sup>17</sup>

fig. 6; fig7 and fig. 8 This material is unavailable due to copyright restrictions.

fig. 6 Brand logo, "Juanita's" n.d. Juanita's Foods, n.pag. Web. 4 Apr. 2006.

fig. 7 Dolores brand identity, "Dolores" n.d. Dolores Canning Company. n.pag. Web. 21 Apr. 2008.

fig. 8 Tapatío „Sals Picante" Hot Sauce bottle label, Tapatío, USA, 2006.

Thus brand icons share visual codes that are recognisable and travel across products without direct competition of the brands. These maids smilingly offer their produce and suggest happiness and heritage through their visual depiction; reinforcing the relationship between person and food. Key clothing and accessories are used to provide a taste of the suggested or actual origin of the products. Youthfulness and fecundity are also communicated through the images of the maids; these meanings are transferred to the product and the consumer. The iconography of the maid is thus used by many brands internationally. The romantic, feminine connotations of her depiction make attractive her image.

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<sup>15</sup> Michael Quintanilla, Dolores, "The Original Spice Girl" Dolores Canning: About the Company." n.d. Dolores Canning. n.pag. Web. 22 May 2005. "The logo is based on a 1930's carnival painting of Dolores, flirtatiously fanning her face.", Jenn Garbee, "A Family Business Built on Chili Bricks." Los Angeles Times. 4 Feb. 2010. Web. 5 Jan. 2013.

<sup>16</sup> Tapatio signifies a person originating from the Mexican city of Guadalajara.

<sup>17</sup> Some brands use such visual reference to highlight the Mexican food-type. For example supermarket Asda's own-brand Mexican Burrito Dinner Kit (2007) depicts a Mexican stereotype.

**Appendix G: Table 9 - Food-Related Commercial Fictitious Home Economists and Customer Advisors**

Name	Joan Abbott	Ann Adam	Edith Adams	Mary Alden	Jane Ashley
<b>Visual representation</b>	Signature and Illustrated portrait.	Pseudonym of Kathleen Mary Frances Bayley – owner of Ann Adams Homecrafters. Bayley’s own image used as Ann Adam and Anna Scott Lee.	Signature  This material is unavailable due to copyright restrictions.   Fig. 2. Marianne Linnell as Edith Adams. Driver, Elizabeth. <i>Edith Adams Omnibus</i> (North Vancouver: Whitecap. 2005)2.	This material is unavailable due to copyright restrictions.   Fig. 1. Mary Alden, <i>My 40 Favourite Recipes</i> . The Quaker Oat Com.(1959) 2.	This material is unavailable due to copyright restrictions.  Fig. 2. <i>Jane Ashley Recipe book</i> . Karo, (1952).
<b>Role</b>	Home Economist	Home Economist	Food cooking columnist	Home Economist	Home Economist
<b>Company</b>	Canadian Cannery Ltd.	- Maple Leaf Milling Co. - Ann Adam Homecrafters - Standard Brands	<i>The Vancouver Sun</i> newspaper	The Quaker Oat Company	Karo corn syrup products -The Corn Products Refining Company
<b>Country</b>	Canada	Canada	Canada	USA	USA
<b>Dates</b>	1950’s	1950’s	1924 - 1999	1943 -	1950’s
<b>Contexts of work</b>	Magazine articles	Radio: Ann Adam Cooking School of the Air on CFRB for approximately 30 years (Driver, (2008)789. Cookery books Newspapers.	Recipe books. Food editor & newspaper column - <i>The Vancouver Sun</i> . Live demos. Cottage home at office (from 1947),	magazine ads. cookery books	magazine ads. cookery books
<b>On packaging</b>	No	No	No	No	No

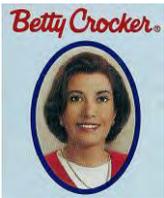
**Appendix G: Table 9 - Food-Related Commercial Fictitious Home Economists and Customer Advisors (continued)**

Name	Mary Baker	Aunt Hattie Baker	Frances Barton	Mary Blake	Helen Burke
<b>Visual representation</b>	Signature & illustration  Fig. 3.Detail: Mary Baker [advertisement] <i>House Wife</i> Apr. (London: Hulton Press Limited, 1956 ):160.		Signature & illustration This material is unavailable due to copyright restrictions. Fig. 4. Detail: Frances Barton recipe. <i>Chatelaine for the Canadian woman</i> . Oct.. (1955) 52.	Signature & photograph?  This material is unavailable due to copyright restrictions. Fig.5. Mary Blake recipe, Carnation Co. Ltd. <i>Chatelaine for The Canadian Woman</i> .Oct.15 (1951):91	fictitious? signature only  Fig.6. Detail: Helen Burke signature. <i>Albatross Recipe Book</i> , Spillers Limited, (London c.1947):3.
<b>Role</b>	Home Economist	Home Economist	Home Economist	Home Economist	Home Economist
<b>Company</b>	<i>Mary Baker</i> cake mixes: Shredded Wheat Co. Ltd.1955-.	Lake of the Woods Milling Company	General Foods Limited. Domestic Science Dpt. in Milwaukee.	Carnation Milk Products Co. 1915 -.	Albatross flour, Spillers Limited (National Proprietaries)
<b>Country</b>	UK	Canada	USA	USA	UK
<b>Dates</b>		c.1930s	1950's	1924 -1950s	1940's
<b>Contexts of work</b>	magazine advertisements cookery books	Newspaper column cookbooks	Advertisements Cookbooks	magazine advertisements cookery books	Recipe books
<b>On packaging</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>

**Appendix G: Table 9 - Food-Related Commercial Fictitious Home Economists and Customer Advisors (continued)**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Carrie Blanchard</b>	<b>Marie Callender</b>	<b>Carolyn Campbell</b>	<b>Beatrice Cooke</b>	<b>Mrs. Crisp</b>
<b>Visual representation</b>	<p>Photograph &amp; illustration</p> <p>This material is unavailable due to copyright restrictions. Fig. 7. Detail: Carrie Blanchard. <i>How I Make Postum</i>. Battle Creek: Postum Cereal Company, Inc. (1925)n.p..</p>		<p>Signature &amp; illustration</p> <p>This material is unavailable due to copyright restrictions.</p> <p>Fig. 8. Detail: Portrait of Carolyn Campbell: detail from „Cooking for a Busy Day“ cookbook by Carolyn Campbell c.1975</p>	<p>Signature &amp; illustration</p> <p>This material is unavailable due to copyright restrictions. Fig. 9.</p>	<p>Illustration</p> <p>This material is unavailable due to copyright restrictions. Fig. 10.Detail: Detail Mrs Crisp in Weetabix advertisement. 1952. <i>Good Housekeeping Picture Cookery</i>. London: The National Magazine Company.</p>
<b>Role</b>	Food demonstrator	Home Economist	Home Economist	Home Economist	Home Economist
<b>Company</b>	Postum Cereal Company Inc.	ConAgra brand		Meadow Gold	Weetabix
<b>Country</b>	USA	USA	USA & UK	USA	UK
<b>Dates</b>	c. 1920-1930's.	1940s - date	1958-1970		1950's
<b>Contexts of work</b>	Magazine & newspaper advertisements. Promotional leaflets/publications		Cookery books Advertisements	Ads.	Press Ads.
<b>On packaging</b>	<b>Yes packaging</b> = anthropomorphic bottle shaped as in grandmother-type image.	No	No	No	No

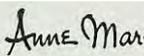
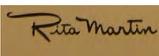
**Appendix G: Table 9 - Food-Related Commercial Fictitious Home Economists and Customer Advisors (continued)**

Name	Betty Crocker	Jeannette Frank	Mary Hale Martin	Aunt Jennie	Aunt Jemima
Visual representation	Signature & illustration    Fig. 11 Detail: Betty Crocker. Betty Crocker Devil's Food cake box, General Mills Inc, USA, (2003).	Signature & illustration  This material is unavailable due to copyright restrictions.  Fig.12. Detail: Jeannette Frank recipe. In <i>Chatelaine: The Canadian Home Journal</i> . Oct: (1958):76	Signature & illustration  This material is unavailable due to copyright restrictions.  Fig.13. Detail Mary Hale Martin, Libby's home economist. In 1959. <i>Chatelaine: The Canadian Home Journal</i> . Feb. (1959):.46.	Signature & photograph  This material is unavailable due to copyright restrictions.   Fig. 14. Detail: Aunt Jenny portrait and signature. <i>10 Cakes Husbands Like Best</i> . Spry. Lever Bros. Company. n.d. (c.1932). inside cover page.  Aunt Jenny image c.1950's from Lileks, James. <i>The Gallery of Regrettable Food</i> . (New York: Crown. 2001):149.	Illustration & signature  This material is unavailable due to copyright restrictions.  Fig. Aunt Jemima logo from Aunt Jemima Pancake and waffle mix box. Chicago: The Quaker Oats Company. (2005).
Role	Home Economist	Consumer Services	Home Economist	Home Economist/ Housewife	Home Economist
Company	General Mills	Adolph's Ltd. (Meat)	Libby Mc Neil, Libby	Spry. Lever Bros. Company.	
Country	USA	USA	USA & Canada	USA	USA
Dates	1921 -	1950s	1950's	C.1930's-1950's	
Contexts of work	magazine ads Cookery books <b>packaging</b> radio; demos.	magazine recipes	cookery books ads	magazine ads. cookery books	magazine advertisements cookery books packaging
On packaging	<b>Yes</b> Until c.2004	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Yes</b>

**Appendix G: Table 9 - Food-Related Commercial Fictitious Home Economists and Customer Advisors (continued)**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Aunt Kate</b> (Helen Greig Souter)	<b>Kay Kellogg</b>	<b>Martha Lee Anderson</b>	<b>Anne Lee Scott</b> also known as Marthe Miral	<b>Aunt Sammy</b>
<b>Visual representation</b>		Signature & illustration  This material is unavailable due to copyright restrictions.  Fig. 15.Detail: Kay Kellogg recipe. <i>Chatelaine for the Canadian woman</i> . Oct.. (1955): 68.  This material is unavailable due to copyright restrictions.  Fig. 16. Detail: Kay Kellogg, 2003 website	signature	Signature & photograph	?
<b>Role</b>	Home Economist	Home Economist, Canada & UK	Home Economist	Home Economist	Food advisor
<b>Company</b>	<i>The People's Journal</i>	Kellogg Company 2003 illustrated Kay Kellogg™ on UK website.	Church and Dwight Co., Inc.	Maple Leaf Mills	Bureau of Home Economics
<b>Country</b>	UK	Canada; UK	USA	USA & Canada	USA
<b>Dates</b>	c.1910-1920's	1950'S: 2000'S	Canada	c. 1940s-1950's	1920's – 1940's
<b>Contexts of work</b>	Home page in <i>The People's Journal</i> ; books	Recipe publications website	Recipe books advertisements	Magazines columns radio cookery books	Radio show; cookery books
<b>On packaging</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>

**Appendix G: Table 9 - Food-Related Commercial Fictitious Home Economists and Customer Advisors (continued)**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Mary Lee Taylor</b>	<b>Martha Logan</b>	<b>Anne Marshall</b>	<b>Rita Martin</b>	<b>Martha Meade</b>
<b>Visual representation</b>	Signature & illustration	Signature & illustration This material is unavailable due to copyright restrictions.  Fig. 17. Detail: Martha Logan, 1962. <i>Our best cookery tips</i> . Swift and Company. p.1. This material is unavailable due to copyright restrictions. Fig. Martha Logan recipe. 1955 <i>Chatelaine for the Canadian woman</i> . Oct. (1955):54	Signature & illustration This material is unavailable due to copyright restrictions. BY   Fig. 18. Detail: Anne Marshall	<b>Signature &amp; illustration</b>  This material is unavailable due to copyright restrictions.  Fig. 19. Detail: Rita Martin portrait from <i>Good Eating Morning, Noon and Night</i> , International Milling Company, 1950. Image from Exhibition panel, Mill City Museum, Minneapolis. (2005).	Signature & illustration  This material is unavailable due to copyright restrictions.  (real name = Ruth Ellen Church) Fig. 20. Detail: Martha Meade
<b>Role</b>	Home Economist	Director of Home Economics	Home Economist	Director of the Home Service Department	Home Economist
<b>Company</b>		Swift Canadian Company Ltd. Name, photograph and text = illusion of a real Martha; = Beth Bailey McLean. (Driver, 2008):852.	Campbell Soup Company Originally <i>Anderson and Campbell</i> in 1869. 1897 = Campbell Soup Company. British Company, Campbell's Soups Ltd.1933	Robin Hood Flour Mills. Robin Hood Flour had home service directors and test kitchens in Canada (Montreal) and American (Minneapolis).	- The Chicago Tribune - Electric Blender. Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill Company, Inc
<b>Country</b>	USA	USA	USA	USA & Canada	USA
<b>Dates</b>		1920's-1960's.	1949 -1958	c.1938 -1961	1936 - 1974
<b>Contexts of work</b>		Advertising; recipe books magazine ads. Recipe & cookery books	Radio cookery books magazine advertisements	magazine advertisements cookery books	cookery books magazine columns ads.
<b>On packaging</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>

**Appendix G: Table 9 - Food-Related Commercial Fictitious Home Economists & Customer Advisors (continued)**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Marthe Miral</b>	<b>Louise Ogilvie</b>	<b>Ann Pillsbury</b>	<b>Virginia Roberts</b>	<b>Susan Sinclair</b>
<b>Visual representation</b>	also known as <b>Anna Lee Scott</b>	Signature & illustration  This material is unavailable due to copyright restrictions. Fig. 21. Detail: Louise Ogilvie recipe 1958. In <i>Chatelaine: The Canadian Home Journal</i> . Oct. (1958):5	Signature – photograph  This material is unavailable due to copyright restrictions. Fig. 22. Detail: Ann Pillsbury recipe, Pillsbury Mills, Inc.. <i>Chatelaine for the Canadian woman</i> . Oct. (1955):81.	Signature & illustration This material is unavailable due to copyright restrictions. Fig. 23. Detail: Virginia Roberts. <i>Home Baking Made Easy</i> . Minneapolis: Russell-Miller Co. (1944).	Signature & photograph This material is unavailable due to copyright restrictions. Fig 24. Detail: Susan Sinclair: <i>Cadbury's Practical Recipes</i> . [Recipe booklet]. Birmingham: Cadbury Bros. Limited. N. d.
<b>Role</b>	Home Economist	Home Economist	Home Economist	Director of Occident Home Baking Institute	Home Economist
<b>Company</b>	Maple Leaf Milling Company Limited Kay Bailey was the real woman behind Anna Lee Scott.	Ogilvie Flour Mill.	Pillsbury Home Service Center, Pillsbury Flour	Occident Flour, the Russell-Miller Company	Cadbury Bros. Limited. Cadbury's used fictitious boys Colin and Jonathan to lead its children's club in the 1940's - 1960's
<b>Country</b>	USA	Canada	USA	USA	UK
<b>Dates</b>	1940's	1950s	c.1944/1950s	c.1940s - 1950's	1950s - 1960's
<b>Contexts of work</b>	cookery books radio Newspapers	Magazine recipes	cookery books radio	magazine ads cookery books	magazine ads cookery books
<b>On packaging</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>

**Appendix G: Table 9 - Food-Related Commercial Fictitious Home Economists & Customer Advisors (continued)**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Carol Stevens</b>	<b>Helen Stewart</b>	<b>Sue Swanson</b>	<b>Mary Tracy</b>	<b>Mary Lynn Woods</b>
<b>Visual representation</b>	Signature & photograph then illustration This material is unavailable due to copyright restrictions.  Fig. 25. Detail: Carol Stevens. Read Star Yeast website, (2007).	Signature & illustration  This material is unavailable due to copyright restrictions.  Fig. 26. Detail: Helen Stewart recipe. <i>Chatelaine for the Canadian woman</i> . Oct. (1955):70.		Name & illustration  This material is unavailable due to copyright restrictions.  Fig. 27. Detail: Mary Tracy. <i>Cooking for Fun: a Kraft cookbook for you to keep</i> . London: Kraft Foods Limited, (1955).	Signature & illustration  This material is unavailable due to copyright restrictions.  Fig.28. Detail: Brenda York on <i>Margeen</i> cookbook
<b>Role</b>	Customer Service	Home Economist	Home Economist	Home Economist	Home Economist
<b>Company</b>	RED STAR Yeast Company, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, USA, was created in 1892.	Shirrif's Food Products Limited	C.A. Swanson and Sons This company was acquired by Campbell Soup Company in 1955	Kraft	Canada Packers Limited. A number of real home economists worked behind name including Kathleen Hodgins
<b>Country</b>	USA	USA	USA	UK	Canada
<b>Dates</b>	1975 – date	1950's	? -1955	1950s	1947 -
<b>Contexts of work</b>	Ads. Packaging Website	Magazine recipes			<i>Margeen</i> margarine <b>packaging</b> recipe books
<b>On packaging</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Yes</b>

Also: Mrs. Paul; Marcia Camp, Camp Marshmallows; Jean Brodie 5 Roses Flour; Nancy Haven Western Beet Sugar and Marie Gifford, Armour.

**Appendix H: Indicative examples of General Mills Inc., archival materials accessed at General Mills Archive, General Mills, Inc., Minneapolis, 2006.**

**General Mills Inc, Intra-company Correspondence**

Anderson, Sydney. To Harry A. Bullis re: Fictional Character as Trade Name. 14 Sep. Minneapolis: General Mills Inc., 1945. Print.

Ball, Marion H. To General Mills, July 13 1955.

Berman, Richard M. To Ed Nehring: re: Registration of Betty Crocker trademark, 1975.

Crocker, Betty re: Fall registration for the Fall Radio Cooking School, 1935.

Fish, Jim (Director of Advertising and the Betty Crocker Kitchens). To Jeannette Kelly. Dec. 7. 1955.

Fish, Jim. To Jeannette Kelly: Re: Betty Crocker portrait and Signature Manual, June 14 1954 .

Fish, James. S. To Joe Bowler re: commissioned Betty Crocker portrait, 1965.

Haas, James R. To General Mills re: Jeannette Kelly House. Nov. 24, 1992.

Juettner, Anthony A. To Mrs. Sigrid H. Pederson: re: Use of Betty Crocker. Apr.6 1956

Kirwan. Tom J. *Betty Crocker portrait*. Apr. 02 1986.

To J. Griffin re: commissioned Betty Crocker portrait, Dec. 03. 1986.

*Your responsibility as a Betty Crocker Girl*. 1960. Print.

From Roger E. Conhain (Assistant Marketing Manager.) to Mr., Peter T. Hill re: Chile registration, Minneapolis: General Mills Inc., 1969. Print.

To W.R. Barry from E.K. Thode re: Betty Crocker value. Minneapolis: General Mills Inc., Oct. 26. 1951. Print.

Press Release. Minneapolis: General Mills, Inc., 1971. Print.

To C.H. Bell from E.K. Thode re: exclusivity of Betty Crocker. Dec. 16, Minneapolis: General Mills Inc., 1953. Print.

**Reports**

*Building Betty Crocker Equity Project*. Jan 12. Minneapolis: General Mills Inc., 1989. Print.

*Betty Crocker Equity: Strength in a Name.* Minneapolis: General Mills Inc., 1995. Print.

The Consumer Image of Betty Crocker. General Mills Marketing Research Department. [report] 8 June, Minneapolis: General Mills, Inc., 1979. Print.

*Betty Crocker Policy.* 4 Apr. Minneapolis: General Mills, Inc., 1962. Print.

Betty Crocker Trade Name Study Report, Aug. Minneapolis: General Mills, Inc., 1963. Print.

Burston Marsteller. *Betty Crocker Equity Building Recommendations*, 5 Oct. Minneapolis: General Mills Inc., 1989. Print.

Campbell Mithun Advertising. Betty Crocker Image Research Reports, 1987. Print.

Future Marketing Inc. *Proposal to Develop Brand Image Strategies and Policies for Betty Crocker Brand Image.* Future Marketing Inc., Mar. 1986. Print.

General Mills 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Annual Report. Minneapolis: General Mills, Inc., 1947/8. Print.

Leveraging the Betty Crocker Equity Report. 2 June, Minneapolis: General Mills Inc., 1988. Print.

Market Research Project, Mar. 1954.

*Policy for Betty Crocker.* 20 Feb. Minneapolis: General Mills, Inc., 1953. Print.

Summary of Betty Crocker Research. Marketing Research Department., Feb, Minneapolis, General Mills, 1969. Print.

### **Company Articles**

1952. Jan. 30. [memo] from John W. Mooty of Morley, Cant Taylor, Haverstock and Beardsley. Re: use of service personality.

Betty Crocker Kitchen Tours Leaflet, Minneapolis: General Mills In., 1982. Print.

### **Leaflets**

*A visit with Betty Crocker.* Betty Crocker Learning Aids Unit, c. 1950"-60"s. Print.

Betty Crocker Kitchen Tours information sheet.

*Careers in Food with Betty Crocker.* c. 1963. Print.

## **Radio Scripts**

The Gold Medal Hour; Betty Crocker Service Programme, Fri. Jan. 14. 1938,  
Print.

The Gold Medal Hour; Betty Crocker Service Programme, Fri. Oct. 14. 1938.  
Print.