How brands craft national identity

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Abstract

Drawing on cultural branding research, we examine how brands can craft national identity. We do so with reference to how brands enabled New Zealand's displaced Pākehā (white) majority to carve out a sense of we-ness against the backdrop of globalization and resurgent indigenous identity claims. Using multiple sources of ethnographic data, we develop a process model of how brands create national identity through we-ness. We find that marketplace actors deployed brands to create and renew perceptions of we-ness through four-stages: reification, lumping, splitting, and horizon expansion. From this, we make three primary contributions to the consumer research literature: we develop a four-part process model of how brands become national identity resources, explore the characteristics of the brands that enable the emergence of and evolution of we-ness, and explore how our processes can address a sense of dispossession among displaced-majorities in similarly defined contexts.

Keywords: brands, we-ness, national identity, New Zealand, cultural branding

INTRODUCTION

"The Buzzy Bee Toy is a New Zealand icon, a wooden toy that was first manufactured in the mid-1940s, Buzzy Bee has delighted generations of New Zealanders ever since. For a child, Buzzy Bee is an intriguing blend of bold colors, buzzing sound, quivering antennae, and spinning wings. For the 2007's America's Cup Challenge, Emirates Team New Zealand has chosen the distinctive Buzzy Bee design for NZL84's keel bulb. Every New Zealander can identify with Buzzy Bee. Grant Dalton [CEO, Emirates Team NZ] says, "It seems fitting that a simple wooden New Zealand toy should grace the bulb of a hi-tech America's Cup class yacht."" (Press Release, Emirates Team New Zealand, 2007)

In 2007, Emirates Team New Zealand (NZ) were set to compete in the Louis Vuitton Cup in the Spanish port of Valencia, the event used to select the challenger for the America's Cup. Amid lackluster support from the NZ public, Emirates Team NZ sought to leverage a sense of national pride and connect with those back in NZ. The press release above describes how a children's brand, Buzzy Bee, would adorn the keel bulb of boat NZL84 as a means of getting the NZ public to support them. Fast forward to the 2013 America's Cup, and Emirates Team NZ were again keen to cement support at home. They unveiled their 'secret weapon' – a colorful collection of 'Kiwiana' on the hull (presented in figure 4), featuring some of NZ's most loved Kiwi icons (Jandals, sheep, kiwifruit, koru's, number 8 wire, and rugby) alongside a set of brands that had come to represent a sense of "us" (Buzzy Bee, Jet Planes and Pineapple Lumps confectionary, Wattie's ketchup, Hokey Pokey ice cream, and the logos of Frosty Boy and Four Square).

How and why did these brands come to represent a NZ national identity? In contrast to traditional analyses of how national identity arises, with its focus on deliberate top-down programs via education policy or references to intrinsic notions of character formed by the environment (Edensor 2002), we highlight the role brands played in crafting national identity via creating a sense of "we-spirit" (Brunk, Giesler and Hartmann 2018). We use the term "we-ness," since the collective self is synonymous with the terms "we" and "us", and it accurately distinguishes collective identity from other forms of social identity (Ashmore, Deaux & McLaughlin-Volpe 2004). We also make a distinction between two forms of national identity – identity as process versus identity as ideology. National identity as process produces and maintains a shared sense of conscious belonging to the nation state (Anderson 1983), and this is very much the sense in which we use it in this article. In contrast national identity as a political ideology (i.e., nationalism) is insular, and promotes the interests of a particular nation (Billig 1995). National identity as process has been strengthened in post-modernity (Brunk et al. 2018), remains an "indispensable building block" of global capitalism (Castelló and Mihelj 2018, 559; see also Anderson 1983), and "in a globalizing world, the nation remains the pre-eminent entity around which identity is shaped" (Edensor 2002, p.xi).

Although the interplay between national identity and commercialism has been identified (Dong and Tian 2009; Varman and Belk 2009), we expand on this by asking how brands craft a national identity to address, for the majority population of a nation, a "shattered [collective] identity project" (Luedicke 2015, 111). We extend a lineage of articles utilizing data solely from brand creators addressing how consumer culture is created (Cayla and Eckhardt 2008; Kover 1995; Peñaloza 2001; Thompson and Tian 2008), rather than examining how consumers interpret brands. Drawing on a range of ethnographic data sources, we show how the yearning for identity

among a *displaced majority* - NZers of Anglo-Saxon descent or Pākehā[1] - saw marketplace actors shape a collective sense of "we-ness" via a group of brands. Initially, specific brands enjoyed a sense of connective authenticity (Beverland and Farrelly 2010), resulting from their ubiquity and enduring presence that cut across class, race, and geography. These brands and their associated assets are locally known as 'Kiwiana' (Bell 2012) because of their widespread adoption within households and across generations.

Our central contribution is the development of a four-part process model of how brands create national identity through we-ness. In doing so, we make three contributions to the literature. First, we add to the emerging brand-as-culture perspective, or how "brands infuse culture with meaning and brand culture provides the necessary cultural, historical, and political grounding to understand brands in context" (Schroeder and Salzer-Mörling 2006, p.1). We respond to calls to examine the ways in which brands shape the content and subsequent everyday expression of national identity (Askegaard 2006; Eckhardt 2015), and for a greater emphasis on the context that shapes (and is shaped) by marketplace actors seeking to enact collective identity projects (Askegaard and Linnet 2011). Second, we advance our understanding of how brands create a sense of connective authenticity, focusing on the types of brands and cues that play a role in enabling reterritorialization via authoritative performances (or acts that rebuild collective bonds; Arnould and Price 2000). Third, we explore how our findings transfer to other contexts, and offer a form of branded national identity to majority populations suffering a sense of dispossession or displacement against the background of globalization and societal change.

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[1] Pākehā is the Māori term used to refer to NZers of European descent (derived from pakepakehā or "fair-skinned folk"). Although once controversial, a recent survey found no evidence that the term was offensive to non-Māori although the term "New Zealander" was preferred (NZ Herald 2013, Feb 5th).

BRANDS AND NATIONAL IDENTITY

Brand-as-Culture and National Identity

The brand-as-culture perspective emerged as a counterpoint to discussions regarding the strategic implications of national culture that typically focus on adaptation-standardization trade-offs (Schroeder, Borgerson, and Wu 2016). Although more of a perspective than a theory *per se,* brand-as-culture emphasizes how marketplace intermediaries experience the local, national, or global, identifying a much more dynamic interplay between brands and national identity (Dong and Tian 2009). Schroeder et al. (2016, 155-6) define brand culture as the "cultural codes of brands – history, images, myths, art, and theatre – that influence brand meaning and value in the marketplace". In this perspective brands are "cultural, ideological, and political objects" (Eckhardt 2015, 107) that are both actively shaped by, and shape, the wider socio-economic, historical, and ideological environment (Amis and Silk 2015).

Researchers have identified how brands enable users to reframe a troubled collective past (Brunk et al. 2018; Thompson and Tian 2008), reinvigorate past traditions to compete globally (Schroeder et al. 2016), provide the basis for an imagined community (Cayla and Eckhardt 2008; Peñaloza 2001), enable consumers to reinforce communal-identity roles (Holt 2004), and assert nationalistic identities in the face of globalization (Dong and Tian 2009; Luedicke 2015; Varman and Belk 2009). Brand-as-culture examines the potential for brands to shape, or even create, national culture as "increasingly, the meaning of things, places, and people is created through their linkage to brands" (Askegaard 2006, 93) and "objects play an active role in constructing

images of collective futures because they represent aspirations and create directionality" (Dong and Tian 2009, 41).

Some of the studies taking this approach are consumer-focused, continuing a tradition that shows how consumers use symbolic resources to manage a national level identity into their consumer level identity projects (Belk 1988; Arnould and Thompson 2005). For example, Dong and Tian (2009) show how Chinese consumers appropriate global brand meanings and how they selectively rework these meanings by drawing on different ideologies of East-West relations. They find that some Chinese consumers see Western brands as imperialist and oppressive while others see Western brands as a sign of China's economic progress. Similarly, Varman and Belk (2009) show how Indian consumers in a rural village resist the influence of global brands, in their case Coca Cola, by invoking nationalist discourses and casting Coca Cola as oppressive.

Luedicke's (2015) examination of the experiences of Austrian indigenes provides further evidence of how brands can shape consumer's perceptions of collective identity. He found that Austrian indigenes experience a sense of displacement arising from an influx of migrants, the consumption practices of these migrants, and the reactions of local retail brands to migration. For indigenes, shifting economic circumstances, changes in the immigration status of Turkish workers, and perceived shifts in fortunes of themselves versus the 'other', resulted in a "shattered identity project" (Luedicke 2015, 111). Here, the adaptations of local retail brands to the Turkish minority fueled tensions with indigenes who struggled to reconcile conflicting value systems.

Additionally, Brunk, Giesler and Hartmann (2018) examine of the role of brands in enabling Germans from the former GDR to reclaim their collective identity following the triumph of capitalism. Examining the ways in which previously hated GDR brands became reframed in nostalgic terms, they identify how the continued presence of these brands had a

therapeutic effect, enabling East Germans to balance the defeat of socialism with a sense of pride in a collective identity previously subject to ridicule.

Other studies focus on the fact that, prior to any interpretive work, consumers require symbolic resources to work with. This approach foregrounds the role of various marketplace actors and their specific practices in the production of symbolic resources (e.g. brand managers, advertising agencies, marketing managers, etc.). One of the first studies on the role of brands and collective identity draws on the concept of an imagined community (Anderson 1983) to examine how marketplace actors created a transnational, East-Asian identity (Cayla and Eckhardt 2008). They show how branding, advertising and marketing managers and consultants imbue their brands with modern, contemporary tropes of cosmopolitanism and urbanism that reflected East Asia's growing global economic and cultural significance, to express and represent an emerging East Asian confidence. Highly stylized advertisements, for example, draw on a multi-cultural collage of shared iconography and myths that provide consumers with symbolic resources to imaginatively transcend national identities and embrace a pan-Asian collective identity.

In a similar vein, Thompson and Tian (2008) focus on how a range of marketplace actors from brand strategists, advertisers, magazine editors and tourism marketers, created an image of the "New South", and explore the ways in which these commercial myths enable those within the former Confederacy to overcome historic stereotypes and reclaim ownership over collective memory. They propose that commercial myths, which downplayed ideology and historic truths, enabled consumers to make sense of their lives. They identify the dynamic nature of tradition and regional identity and the role marketplace actors played in reclaiming ownership over a stigmatized collective identity within a wider national narrative.

Crawford's (2010) study of the emergence of a distinctive 'Aussie' approach to advertising identifies the role of marketers in shaping a sense of national pride. Rejecting the more global approach of the times, Crawford tracks how agency Mojo MDA uses local everyman celebrity Paul Hogan (later of Crocodile Dundee fame) in a campaign for Winfield cigarettes. Hogan's easy charm and working-class roots reflects how many Australians saw themselves, and reshaped advertising practice and beliefs about national identity. This agency's subsequent campaigns generated a sense of imagined community, with the jingle 'C'mon, Aussie, C'mon,' becoming a de facto national anthem that resonates to this day. This success was then channeled into selling both the nation and brands, such as Foster's lager, globally.

We follow in the tradition of studies that focus on how marketplace actors create cultural resources by examining how brands craft national identity. We go beyond and extend existing studies by investigating the process of how marketplace actors craft brands which enable a displaced majority, the Pākehā, to find a collective sense of self against a backdrop of globalization and home-grown identity tensions. We build directly on previous research by focusing on the ways in which brands are used to create a shared historical narrative within a globalized economic system. We address our research question of how brands craft national identity through the lens of we-ness.

We-ness

To inform our study, in this section we draw on the collective identity literature, and in particular the concept of we-ness. With its sociological origins in Durkheim's collective conscience, Marx's class consciousness, and Tonnies' Gemeinschaft (Cerulo 1997), collective identity is also drawn on in a variety of disciplinary contexts, from politics and international

relations, to social psychology and consumer research. For example, from a social psychological perspective, collective identity is when the locus of self-identification shifts from "I" to "we" (Thoits and Virshup 1997). To be consistent with a CCT and a brand culture perspective, we adopt a social constructionist approach to understanding collective identity where "[c]ollective identities are seen as invented, created, reconstituted, or cobbled together rather than being biologically preordained or structurally or culturally determined" (Snow and Corrigall-Brown 2015, 176). This cobbling together is evident in the literature, in multi-cultural collages (Cayla and Eckhardt 2008) and re-mythologization (Brunk et al. 2018; Thompson and Tian 2008), and directs our attention to the dynamic nature of collective identities over time.

We-ness is "shared with a group of others who have (or are believed to have) some characteristic(s) in common" (Ashmore et al. 2004, 81). We define we-ness as a sensibility, an emotional response to similarity and belongingness that exists 'in relation or contrast to actual or imagined sets of "others"' (Snow and Corrigall-Brown 2015, 175). For example, citizens who identify with their nation state, say through cultural level rituals (Rook 1985), feel connected to others who do the same, without actually knowing them personally. This is the sensibility that informs Anderson's (1983) notion of an imagined community. We-ness can be seen in studies of brand communities (Muñiz and O'Guinn 2001) and the emphasis on consciousness of kind as the sensibility that brand community members feel towards one another and the difference they feel towards those not in the community. This draws on Cova's (1997) concept of linking value, or the ability of consumption experiences to establish and/or reinforce we-ness.

Particularly relevant to our study is that we-ness becomes more salient during periods of change, breakdown, or renewal in the social order (Swidler 1986). During unsettled times people can struggle to make sense of their place in the social order, and the performance of rituals and

taken for granted traditions take on greater meaning. Narratives that define who we are and connect past, present, and future are believed critical to rebuilding we-ness following periods of social upheaval (Ashmore et al. 2004). We draw on Cerulo (1997), who identifies a number of practices that enable this rebuilding, including the formation of symbolic boundaries, the use of culturally relevant material artefacts, and practices that help ground symbols of identity.

In summary, national identity is a dynamic social construct that requires renewal to maintain its relevance. The glue that binds people into a shared national identity is we-ness. However, to date, the focus of previous research has explored the cues that signal we-ness, either with reference to shared cultural codes, myths or nostalgic products, or identified how displacement can arise from globalization when links to a shared past are broken. In contrast, our research question is: how do brands craft national identity? To investigate this, we examine the processes that marketplace actors engage in to help displaced majorities rebuild a sense of we-ness. In the next section we identify the national identity tensions experienced in post-WWII NZ.

Post-WWII New Zealand National Identity Tensions

"If you need to ask yourself who you are, you're probably a Pākehā" (Musician Tim Finn performing his show 'White Cloud,' about growing up in New Zealand, 13/1/17)

The main factors which led to NZ's post-WWII identity crisis were weakening cultural and economic ties to Europe, and in particular the UK, a resurgent, indigenous Māori identity, and economic decline. These factors combined to contribute to a collective "shattered identity project" (Luedicke 2015, 111). This led to a yearning for new identity anchors amongst this

displaced majority of NZers of European descent. A compressed historical timeline of NZ history relevant to this article is contained in figure 1. Figure 1 identifies the slow institutional decoupling of NZ from Britain; whose influence began to wane after WWII (Carlyon and Morrow 2013). Post-WWII, non-Māori NZers struggled for a collective sense of self. From 1984, a Māori term, 'Pākehā' was imposed upon the majority of the population, but they did not relate to this term from an identity perspective. It was this vacuum that brands helped fill.

During the 1970s, ideological tensions and economic decline all contributed to a crisis of Pākehā identity. The delayed "60s revolution" – feminism, environmental protests, and the anti-apartheid movement (Horrocks 2016) all challenged the comfortable conformism that characterized daily life in the 1970s to early 1980s. Challenging long-held authority ranking relationships (Luedicke 2015), the Māori land rights protests in the late 1960s morphed into a Māori-renaissance in the 1970s, culminating in a shift of political power following the election of the reform-minded Fourth Labour government who made Māori an official language of NZ and gave the 1840 Treaty of Waitangi formal recognition, triggering a raft of claims among tribes for redress of past wrongs. These claims were troubling for Pākehā:

> Some Pākehā who watched the waxing of the Māori cultural renaissance began to question the basis for their own presence in the country. If Māori were tangata whenua, indigenous people with whom the Crown had to consult, who or what were Pākehā? … Did Pākehā belong in New Zealand, or were they destined to be forever tauiwi or strangers in the country of their birth? (King 1999)

Insert figure 1 here

Identity challenges were also influenced by economic decline, culminating in the government instigating a vast economic reform program from 1984 (Easton 1997). These

reforms challenged the veracity of taken-for-granted identity myths including a flair for

innovation, pragmatism, and egalitarianism (Horrocks 2016). In particular, the centrality of rural

life to NZ identity was undermined. Although NZ had been founded in cities, Keith (2008)

identified 'metrophobia' as central to the on-going valorization of rural life.

Cultural branding would propose that addressing I-We schisms involves constructing

restorative identity myths culled from the nation's collective imaginary (Holt 2004). However, of

the three possibilities – sport (especially rugby union), rural life, and art – none met Holt's

criteria for compelling identity myths. The first, rugby union, was tainted by the divisive 1981

South African tour (Bell 1996). The second, rural life, failed on the basis of the post-1984

"value-adding" economic imperative. The third, art, had long tried to create a national

sensibility, but had failed (Carlyon and Morrow 2013; Pound 2009) with the public

overwhelmingly preferring European 'high art', and British and American popular culture

(Horrocks 2016).

Nor could it be said that marketers, suffering from a cultural cringe, embraced localism.

Desperate to reflect a fresh identity, brands such as Weet-Bix dropped their nationalist appeal

"Kiwi kids are Weet-bix kids" in favor of modern slice of life campaigns (Bell 1996), and

acclaimed social realist photographer Marti Friedlander's photograph (figure 2) was rejected by

Saatchi & Saatchi for being too "down-home."

Insert figure 2 about here

During the 1980s such everyday authenticity was inconsistent with notions of 'coolness

and youth appeal' (Idealog 2006, 96). Exporters also went out of their way to avoid country-of-

origin associations, with leading wine producers choosing ambiguous brand names such as

Montana or Villa Maria, and the premier beer export was branded 'Steinlager.' Other brands

drew on iconic flora and fauna to signify indexicality, as Roger Shepherd, founder of iconic indie music label Flying Nun stated:

By 1985, we felt we had more than enough material for a multi-band compilation. We finally settled on *Tuatara,* an endemic reptile. It didn't feel too 'naff Kiwiana' at the time because naff Kiwiana didn't really exist yet. That would come later when we started to manufacture nationalistic pride (Shepherd 2016, p.158).

Eventually, a nascent- or proto- brand culture did provide the basis for shared Pākehā identity. "Kiwi" as a term of national identity eventually became widely adopted in the 1970s, with Kiwi flags and blow-up Kiwi birds first appearing at sporting events in the 1980s (Palenski 2012). A new wave of local pop-culture artists also helped create the basis for brands as carriers of we-ness. Many of these artists worked concurrently in advertising, creating the logos and images for a number of the brands discussed in our findings (Alsop and Stewart 2013). The most influential advertising creative was Dick Frizzell. Frizzell identifies the moment his artistic outlook shifted from mimicking international styles to embracing the local. The passage below describes meeting with American realist artist Neil Jenney while visiting the US:

When I got there, he didn't even want to talk, he just picked up a newspaper. He said, "You're just bloody kidding yourself, you think you're going to be an American painter? Don't try and tell me about my culture." … He asked me, "Do you know what artists are meant to do?" I hadn't really thought about that, but he went on to give me a lecture about the artist's responsibility to open people's eyes to their immediate environment, to help people see the things that they don't notice, the things that become invisible through repetition and familiarity. He told me to get back to NZ and help this country define its identity. So, that is what I did - I looked around and came up with this idea of isolating the

common and ordinary, like the Wettex sponge cloth, Lux dishwashing liquid, the stuff that

we use and trust, it's part of our identity. (Dick Frizzell, interviewed 2010)

The brands selected by Frizzell were objects that would be found in any Kiwi home.

Frizzell's first post-Jenney show (1980) was "Home is Where the Art Is" and featured works

such as "Kitchen Detail Number One" with Lux dishwashing liquid and Para rubber gloves. The

follow-up show in 1982, "Everybody's Business," focused on commercial streets, giving

prominence to the Four Square logo (see figure 3) (described by NZ essayist Hamish Keith in

2012 as synonymous with "us").

Insert figure 3 about here

In 1988, the NZ pavilion at the Brisbane World Expo won plaudits from international

critics and was voted most popular by visitors for its mix of pop culture and food. The objects

featured in the pavilion included Tip Top Hokey Pokey ice cream, Lemon and Paeroa (L&P)

soda, and Weet-Bix. The pavilion generated enormous pride in NZ (Bell 1996). These events

were part of a movement to shape a uniquely Pākehā identity (that of the "New Zealander") that

took root in the early 1990s (Moon 2013), and we explore in more detail the role of marketplace

actors that led to this identity renaissance via an ethnographic approach, described next.

RESEARCH METHODS

Data were collected between 2009 and 2019, with passages dated to earlier points in time,

extracted from pop culture and other historical material including magazine and newspaper

articles. Table 1 offers an overview of our data source material. To address our research

question, we focused our data collection on materials most relevant to studies of brands and

national identity (Brunk et al. 2018). This included: ethnographic (Geertz 1975) (including

attendance at tradeshows, popular culture events, design forums, marketing events, ex-pat

parties, and sporting fixtures) and on-line (Kozinets 2015) observations (e.g., pages dedicated to

particular brands or focusing on re-launching defunct brands (e.g., *Georgie Pie, Tangy Fruits*)

and Kiwi heritage (e.g., *Good Old Days NZ*); interviews with key actors; government reports;

popular culture; the press (*The New Zealand Herald, The Listener*, *Metro*, *North & South,*

Idealog, *Marketing Magazine*, *Unlimited*); and where relevant, the marketing materials of

particular brands (including book length accounts). Our analysis of this archival material

incorporated tenets of an historic interpretive approach (e.g., Golder 2000), and is in line with

marketing scholarship that develops theoretical insight from the study of branding campaigns

over extended time-horizons (e.g., Fournier and Eckhardt 2019). We were able to build up

archives of specific campaigns, advertisements, and creative briefs for many of the featured

brands. We complemented this with interviews that sought to understand the decisions made by

the marketplace actors at the time, seeking out advertising creatives to provide insights.

The first and third authors, who are Pākehā NZers, interviewed marketplace actors such

as brand managers, and authors of popular books and television documentaries about the brands,

and members of the creative sector who had played a key role in the creation of the aesthetic of

these brands. We interviewed a total of 28 respondents, consisting of cultural producers (artists,

musicians, politicians, Kiwiana authors) and brand actors (brand managers, advertising creatives,

and brand strategists), to uncover how these marketplace actors use brands to create national

identity. While most consumer research studies examine the way consumers use and engage with

brands for identity purposes, less attention has been paid to the role of marketers in creating the

brands in the first place. Notable exceptions include Kover (1995); Cayla and Eckhardt (2008),

and Thompson and Tian (2008). As Peñaloza (2001) notes, it is important that consumer

researchers do not lose sight of the ways in which marketers produce cultural meanings. Interviews were recorded and transcribed producing 320 A4 pages. Interviews were conducted at various locations in NZ and in a few cases over the phone.

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Insert table 1 here

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Emerging insights and the specific role of each informant drove interview questions. For example, with the artists, the focus was on what led them to use everyday brands and objects within their works, and the critical and popular response. Interviews with commercial creatives focused on the motivation behind their own campaigns or products, identifying when and how local identity became a factor in their process. All interviews followed the long interview protocols (McCracken 1988). Data were analyzed by all authors, employed open, axial, and selective coding (Spiggle 1994), with the second and fourth authors providing an outsider perspective. Open coding was undertaken by the first and third authors, with both discussing passages and adding insights gleaned from an understanding of the historical sociocultural context, personal experience, and on-going fieldwork. Emerging findings and theory were discussed with the other authors who provided etic views. We followed best practices in qualitative analysis, such as triangulation across data sources and researchers to ensure trustworthiness (Wallendorf and Belk 1989). All four authors agreed upon the final four processes that we feature in the findings as providing the deepest insights into how brands craft national identity.

HOW BRANDS CRAFT NATIONAL IDENTITY

Informed by Cerulo's (1997) formation of symbolic boundaries, the use of culturally relevant

material artefacts, and practices that help ground symbols of identity, Table 2 presents the four

interrelated processes of how brands gave rise to we-ness (reification, lumping, splitting, and

horizon expansion) along with illustrative examples. The first step involves reification, whereby

marketplace actors anoint a set of ubiquitous brands as cultural representations of Pākehā. This

practice occurs at the meso level, driven by creatives and marketers, with national institutions

such as the postal service, national tourism boards, and museums legitimizing these brands and

cues as markers of national identity much later. For we-ness to take hold, reified content needs to

be embraced and located in an enduring narrative of everyday life. We identify this process as

lumping. Lumping involves marketers (1) celebrating the enduring history of their brands in

daily life, or (2) embedding themselves in communal rituals from the past, giving their brand

greater prominence in a shared historical narrative. Together these two processes give meaning

to the preferred identifier among Pākehā of "New Zealander".

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Insert Table 2 here

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However, the expression of what it means to be a 'real' New Zealander shifted in

response to wider cultural pressures. This gives rise to two further processes, one aimed at

refining the definition of an authentic NZer, the other, at expanding who and what counted as

representative of NZ. The first of these processes, splitting, we observe in two periods, one

defined by immigration, the other, by migration. As a result, splitting involves distinguishing

generational proximity and spatial-temporal proximity. The fourth process, horizon expansion, involves encompassing former outsiders into a wider definition of NZer, including ethnic and subcultural groups, to ensure we-ness moves with the times, and helps to put further distance between NZers and external others. Here, marketplace actors mashed up content, but did so in a way that was acceptable to the now once again dominant Pākehā majority. Material flowing from splitting and horizon expansion then became resources for further reification. We expand upon each of these processes next and following Cayla and Eckhardt (2008), for each of the four processes we focus on an exemplar brand.

Reification: This is 'We'

Reification involves identifying potential we-ness markers and elevating them to the status of culture. In NZ, cultural producers reified a set of widely shared brands by using them as indexes to everyday lived experience (cf. Billig 1995). The first example of this occurred between 1980-82 with Frizzell's aforementioned shows. The decision of artists such as Frizzell and Judy Darragh to leverage popular brands for cultural effect triggered a sense of we-ness amongst Pākehā precisely because they highlighted common experiences and were non-challenging (Arnould and Price 2000; Beverland and Farrelly 2010).

 Brand actors sought to leverage opportunities to attach themselves to everyday collective memory (cf. Brunk et al. 2018; Thompson and Tian 2008) through a range of practices including product placement, marketing communications, sponsorship, licensing, partnerships, and so on. Three brands in particular played a role in reification: Four Square (the motives behind their long-running 2004 "How Convenient" campaign is described by Patrick in table 2); Tui beer

with their "Yeah…right" billboard campaign (launched in 1994, and representative of a 'second round' of reification); and Buzzy Bee, which we examine in more detail.

Insert figure 4 about here

Buzzy Bee (figure 4), a wooden toy, has become the quintessential marker of we-ness in NZ (used by 42 Below in their "Story of 42 Below" ad covered in *Horizon Expansion*), and as described in the opening vignette, is one of the go-to icons to enhance localness (McDonald's 1995 NZ retro-themed campaign for their Kiwiburger featured Buzzy Bee in the jingle, for example). Walter (brand manager, interviewed 2010), responsible for Buzzy Bee's licensing, described how during the 2000's interest in the brand picked up among global brands seeking to enhance their local connections: "Hyundai wanted us, Mitsubishi, don't have any NZ credibility, they're not getting beneath the skin of NZers in terms of meaning, so they went after NZ icons". By 2013 a giant Buzzy Bee became a feature throughout Christmas parades in NZ.

Buzzy Bee has been a staple in NZ homes since its mass production in 1948, usually 'handed down' within an extended multi-generational family setting. The toy is decidedly low-tech, made of wood, string, and plastic. The reification of Buzzy Bee began in 1983, appearing in a photo of newly born Prince William during the first royal visit of Charles and Diana. Walter, part of Buzzy Bee's marketing team at the time describes the impact of the marketing team's decision to provide a Buzzy Bee to the wife of the then governor general Sir David Beattie to pass to the royal couple:

"Passing from regular life into things that are proudly NZ. With Buzzy Bee it was a very, very common occasion when Prince William and Princess Diana sat on the lawn of

Government House with a Buzzy Bee, and that catapulted it irrevocably to iconic status."

(Walter, brand manager, interviewed 2010)

Historically, royal visits were important events for Pākehā, representing an on-going connection with the 'mother' country. These state occasions are also used to present an official image of NZ, with gifts chosen carefully to reflect national identity. Royal tours provide opportunities for commercial exploitation (Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983) and over time, branded objects became more prominent. By the late 1990s, with NZ's national identity more firmly established, royal visits were now viewed as opportunities for brands to exploit due to the worldwide media coverage (brands such as Buzzy Bee remain prominent, with one given to Prince George in 2013). Reification therefore enables one to balance territorialization with globalization by presenting a distinctive local voice on a global stage (Ashby 2013).

Since the gift to Prince William in 1983 (figure 4), Buzzy Bee's status as an icon of we-ness has become taken-for-granted. For example, stamps, being official markers of the nation, represent markers of imagined we-ness (cf. Anderson 1983). In our examination of releases between 1970s and the present, two trends become clear: from the 1990s, ubiquitous local brands appear and become increasingly prominent, featuring alongside releases of commemorative events, famous people, royal celebrations, fauna and flora and Māoridom; and, the content becomes more nationalistic, celebrating NZ-ness in all its forms, from inventors, colloquial expressions, important sporting events, and local art. Throughout this period, Buzzy Bee regularly featured in NZ stamps (selected, according to NZ Post representative we interviewed (2010) due to its sustained ability to resonate with NZers), including the three Kiwiana collections, the 1997 'Cartoonist' series, and the personalized stamp collection from 2006-2014.

In 1999, Buzzy Bee's status was reified further with the repositioning of North Island farming town Otorohanga as 'Kiwiana Town' (we interviewed the marketers of the Kiwiana Festival, which is held there). In visiting the 2011 Kiwiana Festival, the third author noted the prominence of the brand: Buzzy Bee featured on murals, posters, and show bags, and was also a common prize on the day. Driven by a local marketer keen to make the largely non-descript town a tourist destination for all things NZ, Otorohanga is adorned with a series of permanent murals and features celebrating NZ history. On closer inspection, Buzzy Bee is the most prominently featured brand (the others are Marmite, Edmund's baking powder, and unsurprisingly for a dairy producing area, Chesdale Cheese - the cartoon mascots Ches and Dale were created by Dick Frizzell) selected to represent Pākehā we-ness. Buzzy Bee takes its place alongside historical icons including Sir Edmund Hillary, the ANZACS, the so-called 'greatest All Black' Colin Meads, images of sheep shearing, the national dessert (pavlova), Māori culture, key historic events such as the 1891-93 Votes for Women campaign, and sporting and musical heroes.

Furthermore, Buzzy Bee flags fly at sporting events and was the toy given to ex-Prime Minister Helen Clark in 2008 for her New York office (she was the head of the UN Development program 2009-2017) to remind her of 'home' (voted on by viewers of Paul Henry's top-rating show *Breakfast*). Clark stated in 2009 that the choice was perfect to adorn her desk as a representation and reminder of NZ because everyone had grown up with the brand, reinforcing Clark's spatial connection to 'home' (Ashby 2013). In 2019, with a Rugby World Cup looming, the brand was elevated to possibly the ultimate status *vis-à-vis* we-ness, an All Blacks edition.

In sum, reification involves the elevation of enduring, ubiquitous brands to cultural status, thereby reimagining popular memory. Brands such as Buzzy Bee are viewed by marketplace actors as latent forms of national identity and offered as iconic forms of Pākehā we-ness. These

were successful precisely because they mirrored the enduring imagined lived-experiences of the

majority (i.e., they were unchanging) (Billig 1995). In so doing, cultural producers created an

imagined shared history via brands such as Buzzy Bee that enabled we-ness to occur in response

to external and internal turbulence, with institutional actors such as national postal services,

museum curators, educators, and NZ tourism marketers very much lagging behind with 'official'

releases of Kiwi life. These were successful precisely because they mirrored the enduring

imagined lived-experiences of the majority (i.e., they were unchanging) (Cerulo 1997).

Lumping: I to We

To make the transition from I to we, social psychologists identify the need for depersonalization,

or seeing oneself as part of a larger collective (Ashmore et al. 2004). A set of brands helped in

this regard as they provided a common frame of reference for NZers of European ancestry to

identify with the term 'NZer'. This category had emerged as a popular identifier for the displaced

majority to rally around (rather than the increasingly institutionalized term 'Pākehā', which was

incorrectly, viewed as meaning "other"; King 1999). Brand managers played a role in giving

meaning to and shaping this emerging category of we-ness, which then acted as a vehicle for

national identity.

Creating the basis for people to associate with a shared label or mental category is a

process we call 'lumping' (Zerubavel 1996). Lumping involves transcending the wide variety of

differences in political views, lifestyles, and wealth in favor of relatively homogeneous "mental

fields" (Zerubavel 1991), or an imagined 'us' (Thoits and Virshup 1997). Lumping occurs

through a range of practices including using brands and products to teach children to read, using

branded signifiers within the home (figure 5), as seen in the post-1990 marketing campaigns by

soft drink brand L&P, and the programs of The Kiwiana Project (TKP). Brand managers and their creative teams did this through harnessing common rituals and reframing them as celebrations of we-ness in their marketing activities. Through lumping, brand managers enable authoritative performances that strengthen collective bonds (Arnould and Price 2000) via the creation of an enduring narrative of we-ness. The ethnographic note in table 2 describing a visit to a 2011 festival highlights this, referring to the live re-running of popular show *The Money or the Bag*. Three brands were identified as exemplars of this practice: Nestle's Maggi "Kiwi Dip"; Edmonds 'sacred' (Chamberlain 1990) cookbook (which was featured as the letter E in the 2008 "A to Z" of NZ Stamp Collection); and soft-drink Lemon and Paeroa (in 2011 a London-based poster campaign for a money transfer juxtaposed this brand over a picture of Mt. Aoraki as a signifier of 'home'), colloquially known as L&P, the brand we explore in depth here.

Insert figure 5 about here

The drink was created in 1907 in the small town of Paeroa, when the local spring water was mixed with a slice of lemon, and subsequently trademarked and marketed in the 1940s as L&P. Although no longer manufactured in Paeroa, a large statue of the bottle exists on the original factory site, while a L&P-themed café is run by the brand team. The brand's famous 1993 tagline (generated by Saatchi & Saatchi for new owners Coca Cola Amatil), "World Famous in NZ," connected directly with locals' penchant for understatement. Interviewed in 2017, Erik, lead creative for the campaign, described how the campaign ran counter to the cultural cringe among advertisers at the time:

"The entire 'World famous in NZ since ages ago' campaign was very refreshing at a time when lots of brands were striving to mimic overseas trends. It was one of the first

campaigns to truly embrace Kiwi quirks instead of shying away from them." (Erik, interviewed 2017)

This long-running campaign focused on parodying the brand's birthplace. Actors cheekily mock aspects of Paeroa life with "it ain't famous for its [surf, Hollywood mansions, harbor bridge …]" and ending with a group of locals in a car (in front of the big L&P bottle) exclaiming "But, it is famous!" The campaign ran for over a decade and is considered a classic local advertisement that ensured the revival of the brand. The tagline itself crossed over into local vernacular, being used to bring those making large claims down to earth and more affectionately, refer to objects loved by locals (Bardsley 2013), and has subsequently been used as a title for a local music compilation and a popular book celebrating NZ's world-class companies.

In February 2005, the campaign was replaced by a series of advertisements mocking cringeworthy slices of life from the recent past. One focused on the lack of fashion consciousness among NZ men, zeroing in on everyman clothing brand Stubbies (ironically the brand is Australian). In the 1970s and early 1980s the brand was to summer what Levi's jeans were to winter, a ubiquitous hard-wearing pair of shorts, worn by many NZ men. The ad mocks the shorts' too-tight fit, which ensured sunburnt legs, an unflattering look, and a "workman's butt". The unique small key pocket was also featured, with *Flight of the Conchords*' Jermaine Clement making it clear that no key could fit in it, but that this was beside the point since one could simply leave one's car unlocked with the keys it the ignition 'back then' (a common refrain for "the good old days"). The ad finishes with a group of men at a classic Kiwi BBQ and the claim that "you were there, and so was L&P", before ending with the "World Famous in NZ" tagline.

The emic term for this style of humor deployed by L&P is "daggy". This tone and content became the defining style for many brands during the period studied, and flowed over into the other practices of splitting and horizon expansion. Daggy is both uncool and lovable, a little bit shabby but in a human, endearing way, and has been identified as quintessentially part of NZ's national identity (Rose 2019). Daggy is cringe-worthy but comforting; 'dags' stick to their guns regardless of social condemnation, and are viewed as unpretentious and natural, key markers of authenticity (Beverland and Farrelly 2010). Daggy cues enabled brands to ground themselves and users in place and time (Ashby 2013; Swidler 1986).

Stubbies was replaced in 2008 with "Bombs", referring to summer fun in the school swimming pool. The voiceover, again by Clement, was as follows:

"Back in the day the place to be all summer was the school pool. Luckily your mum was on the PTA [Parent Teachers Association] and had the pool key. So as long as Mr. Moore the caretaker hadn't done the chlorine in that morning you could do some choice bombs. Depth charges were the best 'cause you always got to soak Theresa McKee who had forgotten to take her glasses off and just sat on the steps. And wearing your boardies meant not only could you chuck out your man skins you could make a paper bag popping sound when you hit the water. And after that you gulped some L&P and cheese and tomato sandwiches which you ate and drank too quickly which meant you couldn't go swimming for at least an hour. Which was rad 'cause you needed to heat up in the sun before going in anyway. You were there and so was L&P, world famous in New Zealand since ages ago."

In 2009, L&P launched a non-TV multi-channel 'Backyard Cricket' campaign (see figure 5), in which the brand reframed a long-practiced summer ritual (involving an *ad hoc* collection of family and friends playing cricket using a collection of ramshackle gear such as beer crates for

wickets and tennis balls for bowling) as a brand centric competition. The aim of such campaigns

was depersonalization (Turner et al. 1987), whereby individuals from all walks of life saw

themselves as part of a wider, collective whole, defined by unbroken shared traditions (Swidler

1986). The creatives on the campaign, describe their choice of cultural source material:

> "L&P is an iconic Kiwi brand, and they wanted to align themselves with other iconic
>
> New Zealand pastimes, in this case it was backyard cricket. The two go hand in hand. I
>
> simply wrote about relatable and authentic Kiwi experiences and insights." (Sadie, L&P
>
> campaign creative, interviewed 2017)

> "Backyard cricket is something every Kiwi can relate to. It is an iconic game that is a part
>
> of our DNA – it's "world famous in NZ" – just like L&P. We felt there was a natural
>
> connection because L&P is the perfect refreshing drink for such an iconic summer
>
> game." *[[I]: How were the images used selected?].* "We used classic 80s characters,
>
> those from the days when we grew up and people that reflected that era. This was a
>
> conscious choice to remind people of the good times they had had. *[I: What process did*
>
> *the team go through in determining the language used?]:* "We wanted a colloquial NZ to
>
> deliver the brand's tone of voice." (Jeffrey, L&P campaign creative, interviewed 2017)

The reference to "the good times they had had" is an attempt to reframe the reality of a

turbulent and ideologically contested decade into culturally stable rituals, symbolic practices and

mythology (Swidler 1986). Although the NZ cricket team, with heroes such as Richard Hadlee,

were world-beaters at home, the first part of the 1980s (1980-1984) was marked by economic

decline, the divisive Spring Bok tour, violent police responses to Māori land protests, and a wage

and price freeze. From 1984, economic reforms resulted in increased unemployment, a decline of traditional working-class jobs, rapid increases in inflation (addressed through sharp increases in interest rates), a scaling back of state housing programs (Curtis and Galic 2017), and the 1987 share-market crash (Easton 1997). Changes in employment laws saw NZers begin to work some of the longest hours in the OECD (Carlyon and Morrow 2013), leaving little time for backyard cricket or long summer vacations. Nonetheless, the retro inspired campaign and competition was embraced as it enabled consumers to conform to long cherished myths that one traded in economic success for 'lifestyle' in choosing to live in NZ (Moon 2013), a narrative increasingly common in the 2000's to counter the widening wage gap with Australia.

By 2017 the brand, with a new creative agency behind it, again focused on local quirkiness in the award winning "On the lamb" campaign, whereby a bunch of sheep drink L&P, escape the paddock, and enjoy a day engaging in classic small town Kiwi pastimes such as arcade games, visiting the local Four Square, and swimming at the beach before returning home to a female Māori farmer. That sheep were proxies for people was no accident. The ratio of sheep to people in NZ is often the basis of many jokes leveled at the country. In this sense, featuring animated sheep in the advertisement reclaims one of the most enduringly cringeworthy aspects of NZ life, while reframing pastoral life in idealized terms (one at odds with reports of high suicide rates, spousal abuse, and industrialized farming; Bell 1996).

In sum, lumping involves the use of everyday brands to create a sense of national identity through the (re)creation of shared traditions. Through reimaging the role of brands in past rituals, lumping helps gives rise to the consciousness of kind that underpins notions of community (Muñiz and O'Guinn 2001). Although not the act of defiance described by others, lumping both enables calm conformity (cf. Karababa and Ger 2007) and also a general sense that "everything

turned out alright", i.e., that cherished nationalist myths survived globalization (Brunk et al. 2018). Far from rejecting the cultural cringe (Thompson and Tian 2008), marketplace actors embraced it, locating their brands in shared outlooks, language, and rituals. Lumping helps ensure a sense of shared history by representing an idealized reterritorialized slice of life that transcends differences of class, location, and race (cf. Cayla and Eckhardt 2008), and reaffirms the constancy of cherished myths (and the primacy of indigenes traditions; Luedicke 2015).

Splitting: Refining We

The third process is 'splitting'. Splitting involves "widening perceived gaps between clusters, thereby reinforcing their mental separateness" (Zerubavel 1996, 424). In contrast to lumping, splitting requires that seemingly small differences be inflated to signal greater degrees of national identity. Indexicality was signaled via splitting in two ways: spatial-temporal and generational proximity. The former involved the use of 'sons of soil' markers, typically initially from the 1970s, whereas the latter involved insider cues from the present. We identified that splitting emerged out of the lumping process. Challenges to an emerging identity stability (Swidler 1986) emerged in the form of Asian immigration in the 1990s and a widening wealth gap with Australia in the 2000s, that required finer points of distinction to signal insider-ness.

Splitting was driven primarily by brand licensees, although more recently has involved advertising creatives drawing on insider cues to generate buzz around iconic brand such as Nestle's Kiwi Dip. Two brands we studied were street fashion houses Mr. Vintage and Huffer. Huffer (founded in 1997) broke new ground by being the first significant street brand to put love of NZ on a t-shirt with the "I Huff NZ" design (a play on New York's iconic logo) that was subsequently made famous by actor Orlando Bloom (of *Lord of the Rings*). Reflecting on the

brand's founding years, Robert (Brand manager, Huffer, re-interviewed in 2018) stated that at the time the fashion sector "didn't really back our country" when it came to content (rather than materials), so the choice reflected a new-found confidence among young designers. The brand, along with Mr. Vintage, popularized a range of NZ themed shirts and caps.

Insert figure 6 about here

The early ranges involved brands and campaign slogans, largely from the late 1960s-1970s. These included some obvious markers of place that could be easily read on a surface level by outsiders, while certain NZers could only read others. Examples include the Keep NZ Beautiful logo with the accompanying slogan, 'Be a Tidy Kiwi' from the late 1960s to combat littering (the program and slogan remain in operation today), to a range of local brands such as Fresh Up (apple juice), 3 Guys (discount food chain), Spaceman cigarettes (candy), Play School (children's TV), L&P, and the Giraffe serving the Longest Drink in Town (milkshakes) (see figure 6). Tim, the founder of Mr. Vintage, describes his collections and evolving approach:

> *[I: Keep NZ Beautiful, that's obviously NZ, but The Longest Drink in Town…]* When you're travelling overseas it doesn't scream 'hey I'm a NZer', whereas NZers see it and they get the subtle reference and that bond. […] Obviously the designs will have to change, but I think this will be part of NZ culture […] What we've done recently is commenting on what's going on in the media and actually they're the most popular t-shirts like the Paul Henry, David Bain. (Tim, brand manager, Mr. Vintage, interviewed 2011)

Tim's passage contains references to both generational and spatial-temporal proximity. Both the Keep NZ Beautiful and Longest Drink in Town shirts signal generational proximity (they can also help with lumping too), as to read them correctly (and in the case of the second

shirt, at all), one needs to have been present in NZ for a certain amount of time. Keep NZ Beautiful is a campaign that runs in various media outlets but is primarily experienced at school, with children in the 1970s being awarded a 'Be a Tidy Kiwi' sticker for picking up rubbish during school hours. The Longest Drink in Town refers to a pre-McDonald's era whereby the ice-cream shop, fast food joints (known as 'takeaways') or in some cases the corner store (known as a 'dairy') sold milkshakes, always in the branded Giraffe container (the subsequent entry of global brands reduced the number of these outlets). The confectionary brands were typically those from the era including Spaceman Cigarettes and the local range of Cadbury confectionary products including Pinky and Moro and the universally loved chocolate fish.

During the 1990s, the formation of NZ national identity via brands occurred at the same time as large-scale immigration from South East Asia. Initially, many NZers viewed South East Asian immigrants as outsiders (in contrast to the more established Pasifika groups who arrived in the 1970s). In 1993, this gave rise to an explicitly nationalist political party, NZ First, calling for reduced Asian immigration (the party entered government as a junior coalition partner in 1996). These older brands were useful for displaying one's generational proximity, setting indigenes apart from more recent arrivals (Ashby 2013). Older brands, such as those used by Tim communicate little to non-NZers - the brands are meaningless without local knowledge and there are no obvious country-based signifiers - but at the time, to indigene NZers, they communicate we-ness. To those more recent arrivals, localness would be communicated through more overtly national wear such as All Black jerseys or caps, flags, or stylized kiwi birds.

Tim's passage however also refers to more recent ranges that signal spatial-temporal proximity. Although the brand retains formal brand partnerships with the likes of L&P, during the 2000s, to enable lumping, these classic Kiwiana brands gave way to new local content,

including the aforementioned Paul Henry and David Bain ranges (see figure 6). Broadcaster

Henry (co-host of TV One's *Breakfast* show between 2004-2010) is known for being "un-PC,"

and *Mr. Vintage* leveraged a number of his cringeworthy slogans. Bain was wrongfully

convicted of five counts of murder in 1995 and spent 16 years fighting for his freedom and

subsequent compensation for wrongful imprisonment. During the 2009 retrial, NZers showed

their allegiance to Bain by wearing their own versions of his home knitted woolen jumpers,

designs quickly replicated by *Mr. Vintage*. Further examples include heavyweight boxer David

Tua's 1992 *Wheel of Fortune* faux pas "Give me an 'O' for Awesome" (t-shirt launched in

2009), the traffic control officer on *Police Ten 7* (promoting 'safer communities together') who

became instantly famous in 2009 when his "You must always blow on the pie" (subsequently

made famous by Paul Henry) warning to a young driver he'd pulled over went viral on YouTube.

The use of these more current local references splits NZers along spatial-temporal lines.

Such references would be readable to anyone who was living in NZ, but make little sense to ex-

patriates (cf. Caldwell 2002). Thus, these references transcend generational proximity in favor of

a present-day, tight indexical connection to NZ. To read them, one must be an actual insider,

embedded in everyday social reality, as opposed to relying on signals from previous eras for

one's identity (cf. Ashmore et al. 2004). During the 2000's concerns over outward migration of

skilled NZers to Australia increased, following a 2005 report identifying the true extent of

income differences for even relatively low-skilled work. An economic downturn under the three-

term Labour government heightened concerns about the ability to retain skilled talent, with the

incoming 2008 conservative government pledging to reduce the gap by 2025.

A counter narrative also emerged that stressed the lifestyle benefits of living in NZ,

presenting them as the trade-off for less financial reward (e.g., Akoorie 2014). This was also

coupled with increasing concern over Australia's refugee policy, resulting in a more strident set of political distinctions among NZers, who have long sought to present themselves as the more enlightened, liberal, nation (e.g., The Listener 2018). Embracing up-to-date local references enabled those NZers who remained at home to distinguish themselves from expatriates who had left to pursue better economic opportunities in Australia. While expatriates can easily read the retro-themed brands, their status as "true NZers" is questionable because they put commercial motives (Beverland and Farrelly 2010) ahead of fealty to the nation (Ashby 2013).

Emphasizing spatial-temporal connections via splitting became more common with the emergence of social media, including by Kiwiana icons such as Kiwi Dip (owned by Nestlé). In the late 2000s, social media generated content emerged as a cultural resource that brand managers leveraged to signal insider-ness. The 2019 billboard and social media "The Makings of a Classic" campaign for Kiwi Dip (now sold as "The Original") features social media personalities behind popular memes, including the aforementioned traffic control officer, and skate-boarder Levi Hawken's 2011 "Nek minute" YouTube video (1.5 million views by the end of 2011, 4.4 million in 2018). Created by local agency FCB, the campaign was described by creative director Tony Clewett:

> "I love that it so blatantly appeals to my Kiwiness. If you're not from New Zealand, you just won't get it – just like the dip. Big-ups to Nestlé for doing such an unconventional FMCG campaign. Most advertisers would take a photo of a glistening bowl of dip next to some celery and go, 'Job done!' To trust us to change their packaging, and then create something that doesn't show the end product – something that credits the audience with the intelligence to join the dots – is both smart and brave." (Harvey, 2019)

Splitting involves the use of symbols, sayings, myths, and stories to signal insider-ness to other 'true' locals (Cerulo 1997), and deliberately eschews the iconic brands more often used in lumping. Thus, splitting enables one to communicate to outsiders one's generational-proximity, and more recently to insiders one's spatial-temporal proximity, and therefore indexicality (Grayson and Martinec 2004). Whereas lumping primarily references the past, splitting is more dynamic, involving as it does distinctions between degrees of authentic insider-ness through spatial-temporal connections to place (Ashby 2013) that oscillate between markers of childhood and more recently, up-to-date, everyday memes and signs that distinguish between those who are physically present versus expatriates.

In sum, splitting therefore enables one to signal true insider-ness, and thus enables "true locals" to engage in authoritative performances (Arnould and Price 2000). Together with reification and lumping, splitting allows locals to transcend the cultural cringe, as brands reappropriate the humdrum and stereotypical as quintessential exemplars of national identity. In updating cultural references, splitting also provides locals with cultural resources to makes we-ness more robust because it reinforces and renews connections between like-minded others (Zerubavel 1996), while drawing clearer distinctions with less authentic others (Caldwell 2002).

Horizon Expansion: Reframing We

Although splitting enables displays of 'true' insider status, the final practice renews we-ness by expanding the definition of NZer through embracing the cultural material of non-Pākehā. Such practices could involve both cultural material from other ethnic groups and/or subcultures previously excluded from definitions of NZ-ness. We call this practice 'horizon expansion', and identify it as a practice that embraces others and widens the definitions of we-ness. Horizon

expansion enables we-ness to shift with the times, ensuring NZ-ness reflects societal,

demographic and political norms. For this practice to work, challenging outsider content must be

reframed in ways acceptable to the majority (i.e., Pākehā).

Insert figure 7 about here

Within NZ this first saw Pākehā embrace Māori cultural content, before engaging with

Pasifika and then South East Asians (e.g., Hello Tiki – figure 7; "Chinese NZers" by 42 Below in

2006). Horizon expansion was not, however, a unidirectional process; Māori and Pasifika also

created their own content, offering representations of NZ life from their point of view (often

through self-deprecating humor), and/or appropriating the icons of Pākehā for their own ends.

What resulted was a constant mashing up of cultural material to offer a reshaped view of what a

NZer could be, providing a refreshed shared history that lessened the chance of sustained insider-

outsider tensions, which were chronicled in Luedicke (2015).

During the 1980s, debates over Māori land rights and Treaty of Waitangi led to greater

sensitivity as to how Māori culture was represented. Many kitsch Māori commercial artefacts

including Poi dolls (sold to tourists), green plastic tikis, Koru embossed cocktail stirrers and salt-

and-pepper shakers used by Air NZ, were discontinued. For many, such actions and the belief

that Māori culture was off limits to Pākehā was controversial, with artist Dick Frizzell narrating

in his interview with us that this "meant a part of everyday life was simply removed". However,

through the 1990s this began to be reversed. In their interviews in 2010, Kiwiana historian

Claudia Bell and pop-artist Judy Darragh iterated how younger NZers unexposed to the political

and identity battles of the 1980's viewed what they called Māori-ana as sources of we-ness.

Through the 2000's younger NZers began to embrace Māori culture, often through the use of tribal tattoos and Māori-influenced music. Māori-ana influences crossed over into branding, advertising, and design. A new generation of start-up brands, such as Misery Guts and Huffer, mashed up styles, with the former reinventing Poi dolls and Māori warriors in a line of children's products (see figure 7). Founded by Tanya Jade, Misery Guts' cultural mash-up was used in products for early childhood including growth charts (reified when given as a gift to Princess Charlotte in 2016), tools to learn the alphabet, calendars, and felted craft toys.

One high-profile brand that played a key role in horizon expansion is 42 Below Vodka. Reflecting a newfound commercial confidence in NZ-ness, the brand, founded in 1999 by two ex-Saatchi executives, mined a rich vein of NZ cultural capital to build an upmarket vodka brand (before selling it to Bacardi in 2006). Without the traditional markers of vodka authenticity (Russian iconicity) the brand emphasized quality, and built its reputation through awards, clever public relations events, cultural insider-ness among the LGBT community, and satirical and provocative online campaigns. The first of these, launched in 2003, was "Story of 42 Below." The advertisement mashed up a large number of cultural codes, effectively representing an updating of Kiwiana. The voiceover is as follows:

"Each morning the Māori people of NZ, which is part of Australia, rise at dawn, cook some eggs, put on their grass skirts and go out to the fields to make 42 Below vodka. There they trade with the fierce All Black tribes that live in the hill country for raw ingredients and ship them down the Shotover in traditional Americas Cup yachts to the 42 Below factory. Then using only stainless-steel distilleries carved from ancient kauri trees they create the world's smoothest vodka which they give to the white man in exchange for blankets, muskets and hobbits. And as the day turns to night, the tribes come together, drink large

amounts of 42 Below, carve plastic tikis for Air New Zealand and tell the traditional Māori

joke which goes like this: Knock knock. Who's there? Statue. Statue who? Statue bro? 42

Below Vodka – made right here in Sydney, New Zealand."

The advertisement is peppered with insider 'daggy' jokes, reclaimed kitsch such as plastic

tikis and stylized Māori humor (the voice track drew on the tone and style of much-loved Māori

comedian Billy T James), and mixed them with pop culture. For example, the mention of "raw

ingredients" involves a Buzzy Bee flying over (manuka honey is a flavor in the 42 Below range),

while the Māori trade vodka with the "white man" (anachronistically attired in English Civil War

garb).

Like all of 42 Below's ads, it was designed to deliberately provoke and draw complaints as

a means of raising the brand's profile further. Indeed, the Advertising Standards Complaints

Board upheld numerous accusation against the advertisement made by the public including the

encouragement of excessive drinking, poor taste, and racial stereotyping of Māori. CEO Geoff

Ross, writing in the brand's biography *Every Bastard Says No: The 42 Below Story* (Troy and

Ross 2011), responded to complaints that the ad deliberately updated NZ's long tradition of

laughing at themselves, drawing on a range of icons from the past to do so. David, former 42

Below marketing manager, describes their approach to the creative:

"All the creative was very particular, very funny and irreverent. It resonated with NZers,

and that was intentional. It was offbeat and very much aligned with the Kiwi willingness to

'take the piss out of themselves'. To this end it was a conscious decision and the entire

Story of 42 campaign was about connecting to that underlying Kiwi humor. The intention

was to instill that sense of Kiwi irreverence within the brand." (David, brand manager, 42

Below, interviewed 2017)

Much of this reframes a grittier reality into more palatable cultural content. Alan Duff's novel *Once Were Warriors* was a bleak commentary on the broken *mana* (or pride) of Māori, who, stripped of their culture and lands, existed in a never-ending life of family violence, drunkenness, and anti-intellectualism. The "cook some eggs" scene referred to jokingly in the Story of 42 Below was the prelude to a brutal violent assault by Jake "the Muss" on his wife Beth that set the tone for the globally successful film based on the book. Likewise, references to early trade with "the white man" for blankets and muskets glossed over the injustice of land appropriation (that fueled the Treaty claims of the 1980s), but is also a refrain used by those Pākehā who reject land claims, arguing that if Māori want their land back, then the goods should also be returned. However, in mashing up the deadpan humor with updated cultural content, historic brand icons, and common everyday jokes, this contentious content is sanitized, while Māori are framed as jokers and entertainers, role identities, which along with sport and military, had long been accepted by Pākehā.

Subsequent campaigns mined cultural content further, adding in updated lumping campaigns that took light-hearted digs at mother country Great Britain, (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pLSql1CPXGI) and 'rival' Australia (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hNDIbBpxoBA). However, the brand's 2003 campaign focused on expanding the meaning of being a NZer to include the LGBT community. Long discriminated against (male gay relationships were only decriminalized in 1986), the LGBT community had become increasingly accepted in what had long been an overly masculine culture (Moon 2013). Since its founding, the 42 Below brand had sought alignment with the LGBT subculture (see https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zlrxF0IwNMY), partly to gain access for their vodka in the 'hottest' clubs. Legitimacy building activities included sponsorship of pride

events and paying staff to visit LGBT clubs to socialize and learn (straight owner Geoff Ross was photographed in compromising positions with male colleagues as part of this push).

The 2003 web-campaign drew on this insider status in its largely camp advertisement featuring a range of daggy stereotypes involving LGBT icons (e.g., George Michael, Madonna, the Village People and Freddie Mercury), backless leather chaps, man bags, and fluffy poodles. These images were placed into everyday settings that rendered the jokes more cringeworthy, with the voiceover representing the management of the brand stating they wanted "the mighty pink dollar" before ending with "at 42 Below Vodka, greed comes before conservatism". The 2006 follow-up mined local stereotypes of things that were "gay" (with an overtly camp voiceover), before declaring that the "totally gay 42 vodka would be sponsoring the Hero Party, because 42 Below is F***KIN GAY!". Both ads generated relatively few insider complaints.

In sum, horizon expansion enabled non-Pākehā to encompass other cultural influences within an emerging NZ identity, while also enabling groups such as Māori and Pasifika to connect to this larger 'we', renegotiating their own inside-outside boundaries (Ashby 2013). Horizon expansion also enables outsiders to elaborate their stories of group membership and increase their prominence (Ashmore et al. 2004). They also enable Pākehā to expand their own story, ensuring their collective ideology mirrors societal shifts. This also provided the basis for reimaging core cultural myths and stories. For example, in 2015, the film *When We Go to War* reimagined the ANZAC myth, giving much greater emphasis to Māori, conscientious objectors, feminist protests against the war, gay servicemen, racial discrimination, and wartime profiteering by the cream of Pākehā society. The dominant 'man alone' myth discussed at the 2016 launch of the film *Hunt for the Wilderpeople* (that we attended) mashed up with Māori central cast members and Pasifika-influenced humor, and is NZ's highest grossing film to date.

This process differs from Cayla and Eckhardt's (2008) multi-cultural collage in which material is distilled down to shared iconic symbols. Instead, marketplace actors re-appropriate previously profane content (e.g., Māori-ana), and reframe it in seemingly non-ideological terms. Such a process has a number of outcomes. First, it rewrites authority ranking relationships in ways that reinforce Pākehā dominance, as the timing of such adaptations, their tone and content, reflect what the majority will accept. Second, despite reinforcing Pākehā dominance, the category of NZer is reshaped, and through absorbing new cultural material into a shared history, ensures we-ness does not break down. Third, horizon expansion enables NZers to negotiate globalization and maintain a local identity through updating enduring myths (Brunk et al. 2018) and collective memory (Thompson and Tian 2008).

DISCUSSION

In this article we extend an emerging tradition of research that explores how brands impact national identity (Askegaard 2006; Brunk et al. 2018; Castelló and Mihelj 2018; Cayla and Eckhardt 2008; Eckhardt 2015; Luedicke 2015; Varman and Belk 2009). In response to calls for further theorization in this area (Thompson and Tian 2008), we have developed a process model by which marketplace actors create, shape and use we-ness in their branding and related marketing activities. In drawing on we-ness, we extend the identity giving roles of brands from the level of micro-social group (e.g. brand centric non-geographical communities), to the collective whole (nation state) (Ashmore et al. 2004). To this end, we make three interrelated contributions beyond what has been identified in the literature to date: (1) introducing a four-part process model of how brands become resources for and shape national identity, (2), identifying

the nature of the brands and the underlying processes that enable we-ness, and (3), identifying transferable insights to other contexts in which sizeable population groups are seeking to overcome feelings of displacement. We expand upon each of these next.

A Process-model of Brand-driven We-ness

Our first contribution is the development of a four-part process model in which brands give rise to a sense of we-ness at the national level. We-ness is created first through the reification of enduring, ubiquitous, accessible brands as reflections of us. Following reification, lumping enables people to transcend the 'I' to see themselves as part of a larger 'We,' as brands locate themselves in enduring shared rituals, thereby creating a sense of ongoing collective history. Lumping gives way to both splitting and horizon expansion. Splitting involves updating notions of we-ness to enable more fine-grained distinctions between locals. Horizon Expansion updates we-ness differently, appropriating sanitized variants of outsider culture to refresh and expand notions of we-ness, reflect an updated notion of national identity, without challenging pre-existing authority-ranking relationships. The material arising from splitting and horizon expansion then feeds into a further round of reification and so on, in a circular manner, over time. This ensures that national identity evolves, opening up opportunities for new brands, requiring older markers of we-ness to change, and resulting in those that do not change becoming viewed as kitsch.

We have unpacked how marketplace actors craft we-ness resources from brands by reinscribing them with symbolic meaning, and subsequently re-circulating them as cultural expressions of a new, national identity. The manner in which this four-step process unfolds is dynamic and complex. The symbolic meanings of local brands are re-signified, whereby existing

cultural branding codes are reimagined through processes of reification, lumping, splitting, and horizon expansion, enabling we-ness to emerge and evolve. In prior research on national identity and brands, a hegemonic / counter-hegemonic process is at play, whereby the forces of globalization threaten national identities and in response, a resistant form of nationalistic expression emerges (Dong and Tian 2009; Varman and Belk 2009). In contrast to these consumer level narratives that treat brands as ontologically discrete categories, we highlight the role of other marketplace actors in the re-signification process, envisioning a new, collectively negotiated national identity that repairs the social fabric for the displaced majority while creating resources to compete locally and globally.

Thus, the major contribution of this article is uncovering the process of how brands can be utilized to create national identity. While others have examined the role of brands in creating an imagined community, the focus has been on the use of particular cues or mythic stories in advertising and branding campaigns, and the ways in which they project a new (Cayla and Eckhardt 2008) or more appealing (Thompson and Tian 2008) collective vision. In contrast, we identify the mechanisms by which these outcomes take hold, and more importantly, how such a collective vision expands and renews. This process therefore encompass the myths, cues, and cultural codes and consumer practices (e.g., Brunk et al. 2018) identified in previous research, but also the outcomes of their use, thus providing a more complete theory of how national identity can form, take hold, and evolve through brands.

This process model enables us to interpret and understand previous findings in new ways. For example, Caldwell (2002) describes how in post-Soviet Russia, consumers divide food brands into 'nash' (ours) and 'ne-nash' (not ours) categories. Food brands go out of their way to signal 'nash' status, as it is considered responsible consumption to buy 'nash.' This process of

brands focusing on being perceived as 'nash' is an example of lumping: transcending differences in political views, lifestyle and wealth in favor of an imagined 'us' – in this case, creating a brand which creates a sense of we-ness as a Russian who wants to do the responsible thing and support the economy by buying local. Similarly, Manning and Uplisashvili (2007) describe how Georgian beer brands have developed in the post-Soviet era as having a dual lineage: representing authentic Georgian brewing traditions as well as modern European technology. Thus, beer brands have helped to shape the modern social imaginary in Georgia, as this mix of tradition and modernity is what the nation aspires to be. In viewing this through the lens of our model, the process they describe, of how Georgian breweries brought advanced European technology to brewing traditions from the mountains, is an example of horizon expansion. That is, it widens the cultural material that can be used to create we-ness, and consequently expands the horizon of what it means to be Georgian.

We also build upon and extend Cayla and Eckhardt's (2008) study of imagined community. Those authors describe how brands can be used to create an imagined community; in their case, of an urban, modern, and deterritorialized East Asia. Brand managers achieve this via their use of collages of multicultural referents. This approach allows the brands to increase their appeal across borders in the region. Ultimately, what Cayla and Eckhardt (2008) show is how brands can be used to expand the identities that people use to think of themselves beyond the nation, and their contribution lies in understanding the role of brand construction in the globalization of consumer culture. In contrast, we demonstrate how brands can be used to create a sense of national identity for a displaced majority within a country. In our case, this is done via using brands that people use in their daily lives, and which exhibit shared character traits of the nation, which give them the power to create a national sense of identity as a NZer. This allows us

to build upon Cayla and Eckhardt (2008) by reaffirming their insight that brands can be used in ways similar to print media to build identities, but extends their work by demonstrating that when this happens within one country, a specific set of processes are needed to (re)build national identity.

The Nature of We-ness Brands

The internal focus on collective identity among a displaced majority leads us to our second and third contributions. We identify the power of a specific set of brands in giving rise to, invigorating, and shaping the evolution of national identity. Drawing on the brand-as-culture perspective, we identify that for brands to craft national identity, they must enable an authoritative performance in order to ensure contemporary consumer culture does not degenerate into atomized expressions of identity without regard for connections to the wider whole (Luedicke 2015). Essential to these authoritative performances are experiences in common (Arnould and Price 2000) or a shared history. The everyday brands prominent in our data set are difficult to categorize using existing frameworks. They do not engage in the type of cultural myth making necessary for iconic status (Holt 2004), nor do they fit easily into Coupland's (2005) invisible brand classification. And, in contrast to the *ostalgie* brands covered by Brunk et al. (2018), they were never regarded with derision.

Based on our analysis, we propose that we-ness enabling brands have certain characteristics. They are enduring. All the brands, and any subsequent branded expression of national identity (via official stamps or market-based products), are living brands that are still in existence. Heritage or nostalgic brands that were 'brought back,' such as fast food outlet Georgie Pie, which was relaunched by owner McDonald's before being permanently removed in

September 2020 due to lack of demand (Ivey 2020), do not feature as markers for we-ness in our data set. Finally, living brands that lacked marketing support, such as older styles of confectionary or toys, rarely enabled we-ness, as awareness of them was declining across generations. Thus, in order for brands to engender we-ness, the brands need to be enduring and part of daily life.

The brand rituals, cues, daggy humor, and cultural content leveraged by marketplace actors to shape we-ness were also widely shared, and therefore indexically local. Bell (2012, p.421) distinguishes Kiwiana objects by their ordinary-ness, calling them 'modest', 'humdrum,' and 'ugly but lovable and ours', a status that may have meant their potential for we-ness had been overlooked by officialdom (cf. Marcoux 2016). These brands cross geographic (rural/urban), generations, class, race, and political boundaries. A mix of low price, mass marketing, and wide distribution ensures these brands were always available to all. Much like coffee shops in Ottoman Turkey (Karababa and Ger 2007), brands such as Buzzy Bee, Lemon and Paeroa (L&P), and Four Square are great levelers. Beverland and Farrelly (2010) identified how certain brands enabled connective authenticity because of their enduring presence in communities. They noted that the high uptake of cultural products led to shared "water cooler conversations", a facet of the lumping, splitting and horizon expansion processes. We extend their analysis, identifying the nature of brands and subsequent processes that shape connective authenticity, and theorize it via we-ness. Thus, in other countries beyond NZ, the brands that will have the capacity to achieve a sense of we-ness are those that are indexically local and enable connective authenticity.

Branded We-ness and Displaced Majorities

How our model might work in other contexts, and the political dimensions thereof, underpins our third contribution. Beverland and Farrelly (2010) identify how linking value is provided by ubiquitous, enduring brands. We identify how, in NZ, these brands provided the raw material for an imagined community of NZers. The situation facing the displaced majority of NZers, post-1984, has echoes in the present. The rise of nationalist populism is often expressed using terms such as the terms of "the left behind" or "the silent majority." Identified as a state of mind rather than as attributes of a social class, underpinning these identifiers is a sense of dispossession (Sanders 2016). Similar feelings of dispossession characterize indigene consumer responses to brands adapting to globalization (Luedicke 2015), the triumph of neoliberal capitalism (Brunk et al. 2018), or the lack of ownership over collective memory (Thompson and Tian 2008). We go beyond this by identifying that brand-created we-ness represents a form of populism that both changes the nature of what is regarded as "us" and reinforces pre-existing authority ranking relationships (Luedicke 2015).

We can use our process model to understand branding approaches that seek to pull from ideology. Recent campaigns by Nike (with Colin Kaepernick) and Gillette ('Is this the best a man can get') demonstrate this, generating support and backlash in varying amounts, and even when financially successful (Nike), increase polarization (Kim et al. 2020). Such campaigns are strong on splitting, but low on lumping. Similarly, nostalgic retro campaigns aimed at encouraging people to transcend current political division in favor of shared heritage often fail because they are reifications of a past, but lack the relevance provided by lumping and horizon expansion to achieve their goal. For example, Hovis bread re-used their famous 'Boy on the Bike' advertisement in 2019 to bring together a British public divided over Brexit. However, it potentially reminded those who voted to remain in the EU of just how little they had in common

with those who voted to leave and their nostalgic desire for an imagined golden age that no longer exists (Beverland 2019). These strategies, we argue, place too much emphasis on one aspect of we-ness to generate the connective authenticity to overcome feelings of dispossession. Multiple elements of our model need to be utilized to overcome these feelings.

Critical Reflections on Brand-driven We-ness

Like others, we have noted how everyday symbols resonate as we-ness markers because they are *seemingly* non-divisive (Brunk et al. 2018). Marcoux (2016) has identified the power of ubiquitous objects to subconsciously structure everyday life, while writers on national identity identify how everyday action is structured by a nationalist habitus that is taken-for-granted (Billig 1995). They are also reflective of taken for granted utopian ideals that are central to NZ identity: tolerance, egalitarianism, pragmatism, and nature (Moon 2013). Critically, we therefore ask whether the brand processes identified in this article have addressed entrenched disadvantage and reduced social division, or merely creatively reframed collective memory to mask these concerns and reinforces existing power structures (Thompson and Tian 2008)? And, can this form of branded national identity produce the sense of moral responsibility believed essential for community (Muñiz and O'Guinn 2001)?

The egalitarian nature of branded we-ness does obscure problematic realities regarding sharp inequity within NZ society in terms of access to housing, social support, healthcare, and education. Despite mythologizing egalitarianism, inequality within NZ rose sharply from the 1980s-onwards (the Gini coefficient rose from 0.27 in 1982 to .40 in 2015), with the poorest households barely better off than they were 30 years ago (concern over this was cited as one of the reasons for a change in government in 2017). Despite the horizon expansion of we-ness,

substantial gaps in health, crime, and unemployment between Pākehā and Māori and Pasifika remain (Curtis and Galic 2017). The co-optation of cultural content in horizon expansion has also led to emboldened claims about "the PC-brigade" by opinion writers, as well as counter narratives such as film director Taika Waititi's claim that NZ is "racist as f**k" (2018). However, the government's plan to make the colonial history of NZ compulsory in schools by 2022 possibly suggests horizon expansion may have progressive outcomes. Can this branded we-ness be further used to stimulate conversations about equity, racism, and domestic violence?

CONCLUSION AND FUTURE RESEARCH

While our four-phase process model of how brands craft national identity emerged emically from the context of post-WWII NZ and the need for a renewed national identity in a time of upheaval, we see the process we have identified as applicable in contexts defined by a sense of dispossession among previously dominant majorities, and call for future research examining how the four processes manifest themselves in other contexts in which divides are more sharply defined in terms of identity politics. Also, how consumer groups in NZ such as the Māori and Pasifika, as well as the Pākehā themselves, interpret and use the cultural resources developed by the brand actors should be studied in the future. And, how do the Māori feel about their culture and symbols being culturally appropriated and used in horizon expansion? We remain aware that, overall, the story we have told here is a relatively positive one, but we recognize that brands in other cultural contexts may well be co-opted to develop forms of we-ness that are in stark contrast to the ones depicted here, more closely related to populism (and indeed, we observed examples of this in NZ, particularly at sporting matches and in attitudes towards Australia).

Future research should examine the various ways in which the process we have identified can be used, for better and worse.

We also encourage research into the relationship between we-ness via brands and nation branding. Ståhlberg and Bolin (2016) critique this practice, particularly stressing the difficulties in rallying locals around a commercially, imposed identity. They contend that any resulting brand lacks connection to the "collective soul" of the nation. While NZs external identity during the period examined papered over many of the realities of local life (in particular, environmental purity), since 2007 greater synergy between global and local began to occur (Pan, Tsai and Lee 2011), suggesting the possibility of an incremental, ground-up approach to national branding that can engage locals and those abroad. Future research into how alignment between inside and outside identities is achieved and maintained, and the benefits or otherwise of doing so, would provide insights into the development of more local nation brands.

Finally, we call for further examination of the distinction between national identity and nationalistic expressions in our understanding of branding and consumption, especially in relation to how the nation is enacted and renewed through consumption practices, both in times of crisis and stability and the interplay between the two. The story outlined here is one in which local brands renew and reinvigorate national identity, heralding the decline of a cultural cringe in relation to locally made goods. We suggest exploring this interplay further, especially in the context of emerging economies such as China whereby global brands can be signifiers of local success and pride (Dong and Tian 2009) and are often preferred to local brands. Although indigenous brands such as Shanghai Tang draw on China's long heritage of luxury production as a means of inspiring local pride (Schroeder et al. 2016), we wonder if connective brands, such as the ones we have described here, have a greater role to play in shaping national identity?

Data Collection Paragraph

Data were collected primarily by the third author between 2010 and 2018. The first author collected some interview and ethnographic data over the same period. Data were collected in New Zealand, and in a handful some cases, Australia. Interviews were mostly collected via face to face, with some phone interviews and email follow ups in the latter stages of writing up. Data were recorded and transcribed, while ethnographic notes, archive, and photographic data were collected via notebooks, screen shots, and disposable film and later on, digital cameras. Both authors undertook the data analysis together and shared their insights with the other two authors. Data were eventually combined into a Dropbox folder accessible to the entire authorial team.

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Table 1. Types of Data Sources Collected Over the Period 2009 to 2019

Source	Type	Purpose of usage
Interviews	28 in-depth, semi-structured interviews with marketplace actors over the period 2009 to 2019. ▪ 11 cultural creator interviews (ranging between 34 and 124 minutes) across a range of artists, authors, musicians, politicians, radio DJs. ▪ 17 brand managers/ creatives (ranging between 30 and 124 minutes) across Kiwiana brands/ actors (incl. Buzzy Bee, Four Square, NZ Post, Huffer, Mr. Vintage) and advertising campaign creatives (incl. L&P backyard cricket, NZ wine brands, Keep NZ Beautiful).	▪ Understand how culture creators and brands draw on daggy brands in reflecting 'we-ness'.
Ethnography	▪ Including attendance at tradeshows, popular culture events and festivals, design forums, marketing events, ex-pat parties, and sporting events.	▪ Understand how Kiwiana brand reflect 'we'. ▪ Trace we-ness through consumption.
Netnography	▪ Non-participant observation between 2012 and 2019 of online brand fan pages (i.e. Kiwiana brands) and 'bring back' campaigns (i.e. Georgie Pie, TVNZ's Goodnight Kiwi).	▪ Trace Kiwiana brands, nostalgia, and we-creation.
Pop culture and historical material	▪ Newspaper articles. ▪ Magazine articles. ▪ Films and TV shows. ▪ Advertisements. ▪ History, art, books. ▪ Music.	▪ Trace Kiwiana through history.

Table 2: Reinforcing and Renewing National Identity Goals: Four Processes

Practice	Reification	Lumping	Splitting	Horizon Expanding
What is it?	Making the 'We' real.	Moving from 'Me' to 'We'.	Defining and redefining authentic we-ness (kiwi-ness).	Embracing 'others' cultural material.
Description	▪ Identify potential we-ness markers and elevate to status of culture. ▪ Draw on these markers as indexes to everyday lived experience. ▪ Marketplace actors anointed ubiquitous brands as cultural representations of us.	▪ Reified content is embraced and located in enduring narrative of everyday life. ▪ Transcend differences (political, status, etc.) in favor of an imagined 'us'.	▪ Pressure from within gives rise to splitting. ▪ Emerges from the need to narrow definitions of NZ-ness. ▪ Splitting emerged out of lumping. ▪ Enabled displays of true insider status.	▪ Pressure from without gives rise to horizon expanding. ▪ Involves encompassing former outsiders into a wider definition of NZer.
Occurs through	Bottom-up, driven by creatives and marketers.	▪ Range of practices including teaching children to read with Kiwiana themed products. ▪ Using brand signifiers in the home.	Inflating seemingly small differences: ▪ Generational proximity ▪ Spatial-temporal proximity	Marketplace actors mash-up content.
Exemplar Brand(s)	Buzzy Bee (Toy)	L&P (Soft drink)	Huffer (Fashion) Kiwi Dip (Snack food)	42 Below (Vodka) Misery Guts
Illustrative images	Figure 4	Figure 5	Figure 6	Figure 7
Illustrative Passages	"The latest Four Square advertising campaign "How Convenient" tended to tie it [NZ culture] all in. It was very much tied into nostalgia. It portrayed the small Four Square grocery store as something that had values in the past that had moved forward into the present with the same values." (Patrick, brand actor (Four Square), interviewed 2010) "I've been signed up for the Rugby World Cup branding, to locate it in	"You often see elements of Kiwiana delivered in very interesting ways. With a beer brand like Tui, we are discussing it very much in the sense of Kiwiana and Kiwi expressions or idioms, things insiders get as a way of positioning its brand etc. Kiwiana tends to be the leveler from the perspective of connecting with Kiwi's, if you're looking for that point of view." Bryce (Leading local commercial design and brand consultant) (2015)	Geographic-temporal: "In local government politics, my first iconic stand was towing the concrete mixer behind the mayoral car, and because the concrete mixer symbolized the home handy man, do-it-yourself, we really struck a nerve. […] I had it with Mitre 10 ran an ad for a concrete mixer that just began recently, and they're following up now. Kiwiana's a fairly modern	"Like there's Māoriana but there's something happening at the moment which is Pasifikana. The Pacific festival that's over there is phenomenal, the biggest Pacific Island event in the Pacific. … and then there's Indian communities. That's why I think Kiwiana may be redundant because we are growing with all these other cultures and they just want to fit in … I mean who's driving the Kiwiana thing, I mean is it all still 'white boys', possibly, I

New Zealand geographically and culturally with a range of designs and images. So, we're talking Kiwiana on a grand scale. To do it, I'm going to go through my repertoire, the signage work, the landscape work, the grocer and brand stuff, the tikis - and engage, I can see a way of turning that, the existing rugby ball logo into a tiki if I manipulate it. So now I have to bring everything I know about art and branding and Kiwiana altogether in a body of work that will be to exploit right through to toothbrush holders." (Dick Frizzell, Culture creator (Artist), Interviewed in 2010)

The Kiwiana Festival is held at the town's rugby field and consists of stages and stalls offering entertainment and food. The town is permanently sign posted as the home of Kiwiana, or "Kiwiana Town", with murals featuring iconic footwear ("Jandals"), Buzzy Bees and other confectionary, Mr Whippy vans sell ice cream, and "Be a Tidy Kiwi" signage. The entertainment consists of reproductions of the classic 1970's television games show "It's in the Bag" [this show asked contestants three questions and in the case of the right answers they got to choose the 'money or the bag', the latter of which featured an unknown prize, sometimes valuable, more often daggy]. A previous presenter runs the festival game, reusing original host Selwyn Toogood's famous catch phrases ["By hokey, what should she do NZ?" and "The money or the Bag?"]. All the prizes are daggy, typically confectionary or Buzzy Bee toys. Attendees, mostly families, identify the festival with 'community spirit' and 'growing up in simpler times when there seemed to be less cares in the world'." (Ethnographic note, The Kiwiana Festival, 2011)

cultural thing, we knew we were Kiwis, but we never quite realized how much that meant, and how wide a scope that was." (Mahu, high profile 1980s Mayor, and go to spokesperson for demonstrating local-ness for 'male' brands). (2013)

Spatio-temporal: "Kiwiana is history to a lot of people, it shows where we came from and it could develop to where we are gonna go as a nation […] this one [t-shirt] a take-off of the old stagecoach buses we had in Auckland, we changed the logo to 'Staying Dope', NZ slang, and its destination is Watane St, Watane is one of our skaters that used to skate for ABC, and the number 123, so ABC is 'easy as 123', and the bombing is done by a NZ graffiti artist Phat One" (Robert, brand actor (Huffer), interviewed 2013)

don't know. Is Kiwiana the reserve of the Pākehā, is it something that they want to discuss because it's something they can have because it's jandals and ice creams. I mean what multi-culture would identify with Kiwiana, I don't know." (Judy Darragh, original Kiwiana / Māori-ana reifier). (2010)

"From an advertising perspective, you can tell an ad that's made in Australia. And you know you can tell because there's just something about NZ that is synonymous with us, I can't even put a finger on it, what they talk about does not relate to how we talk. The whole Kiwiana thing, because we've got this infusion of Māori cultures and Pacific Island cultures and lots of different cultures now, I think that sort of sense of humor or not sense of humor depending on how you look at it, is all related." (Jan, cultural producer (Musician), interviewed 2013)

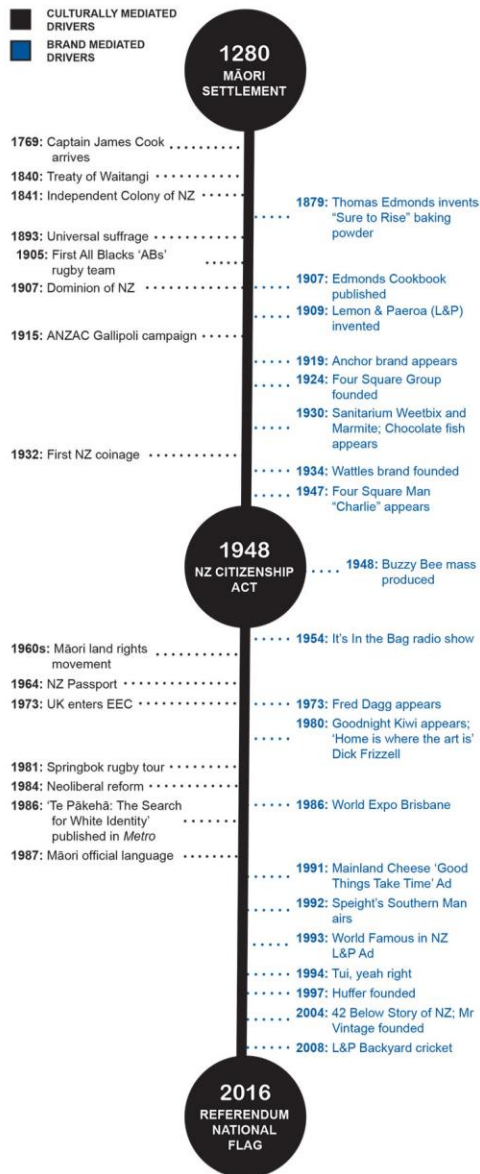Figure 1. The Emergence of Post-colonial New Zealand

CULTURALLY MEDIATED DRIVERS
BRAND MEDIATED DRIVERS

1280 MĀORI SETTLEMENT

1769: Captain James Cook arrives
1840: Treaty of Waitangi
1841: Independent Colony of NZ

1879: Thomas Edmonds invents "Sure to Rise" baking powder

1893: Universal suffrage
1905: First All Blacks 'ABs' rugby team
1907: Dominion of NZ

1907: Edmonds Cookbook published
1909: Lemon & Paeroa (L&P) invented

1915: ANZAC Gallipoli campaign

1919: Anchor brand appears
1924: Four Square Group founded
1930: Sanitarium Weetbix and Marmite; Chocolate fish appears

1932: First NZ coinage

1934: Wattles brand founded
1947: Four Square Man "Charlie" appears

1948 NZ CITIZENSHIP ACT

1948: Buzzy Bee mass produced

1960s: Māori land rights movement
1964: NZ Passport
1973: UK enters EEC

1954: It's In the Bag radio show

1973: Fred Dagg appears
1980: Goodnight Kiwi appears; 'Home is where the art is' Dick Frizzell

1981: Springbok rugby tour
1984: Neoliberal reform
1986: 'Te Pākehā: The Search for White Identity' published in *Metro*
1987: Māori official language

1986: World Expo Brisbane

1991: Mainland Cheese 'Good Things Take Time' Ad
1992: Speight's Southern Man airs
1993: World Famous in NZ L&P Ad
1994: Tui, yeah right
1997: Huffer founded
2004: 42 Below Story of NZ; Mr Vintage founded
2008: L&P Backyard cricket

2016 REFERENDUM NATIONAL FLAG

Figure 2: Marti Friedlander's Rejected Saatchi and Saatchi Photo for Telecom

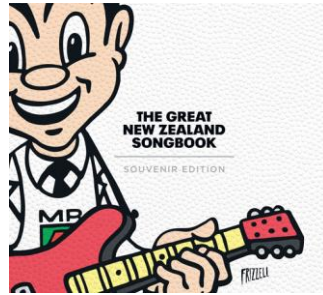Figure 3: 'Charlie' – the Four Square Logo
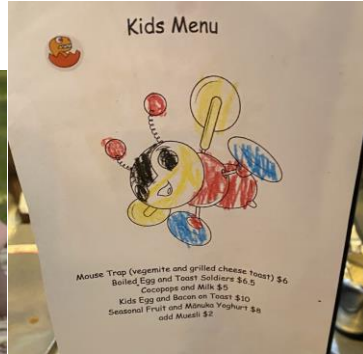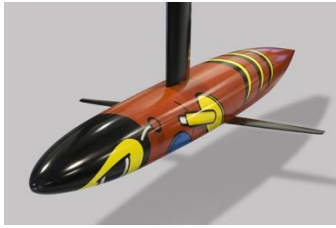
Figure 4: Reifying the Buzzy Bee

Figure 5: Lumping practices

Figure 6: Splitting: Mr. Vintage T-shirts (Longest Drink & David Bain Sweater)

Figure 7: Horizon Expansion: Hello Tiki & Misery Guts Poi Doll

Headings List

INTRODUCTION

BRANDS AND NATIONAL IDENTITY

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We-ness

Post-WWII New Zealand National Identity Tensions

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Lumping: I to We

Splitting: Refining We

Horizon Expansion: Reframing We

DISCUSSION

A Process-model of Brand-driven We-ness

The Nature of We-ness Brands

Branded We-ness and Displaced Majorities

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