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NARRATING THE BODY SHOP: A STORY ABOUT CORPORATE IDENTITY

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SASHA GRANT

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ABSTRACT

The narrative turn in organisation studies locates organisations as authors of their own identities. Organisations in all sectors are talking about values, engaging in ongoing conversations with the larger society and telling their story to multiple audiences in their never-ending construction of meaning. Today, modern organisations are entwined in a constant struggle to remain distinctive from their competitors and articulate their identities in the marketplace of discourse and images. While some organisations work to personalise their identities through visible characters, others position themselves in terms of values such as environmental awareness and social responsibility.

The purpose of this research was to examine how the identity of The Body Shop has been expressed and transformed through an ongoing corporate narrative of which the founder, Anita Roddick, has been the primary storyteller. Specifically, the thesis examined the relationship between the founder's (charismatic) leadership and the organisation's identity in a value-driven company. Within this context, the founder's narrative, as well as supporting and competing narratives by other characters, were crucial to understanding the development of a corporate identity so closely tied to the values, goals, and identity of a person. In this study, narrative is treated as a perspective on human communication that emphasises *the story as more than merely an artefact of language* but as a dominant mode of appeal and influence. In relation to the 'narratives' examined in this thesis, I adopt Czarniawska's (1995) use of the term to refer to a sequential account of events, usually chronologically, whereby sequentiality indicates some kind of causality, and action-accounted for in terms of intentions and deeds and consequences and is commonly given a central place. From an organisational communication perspective, stories reinforce the development of identity and create meaning for the organisation. In this way, organisational identity has a narrative character that persists – usually through the leader or founder's ability to narrate the organisation's life. The analysis of organisational stories thus serves to

provide a better understanding of the influence of individuals in the construction and management of corporate identity.

Data for this chronological case study consisted of narratives which were collected through extensive documentary analysis and an in-depth interview with Anita Roddick and the two New Zealand Body Shop Directors. The narrative analysis then progressed through three distinct levels, beginning with a thematic analysis and moving ultimately to a critical-interpretive approach that drew especially on concepts from rhetorical criticism and critical discourse analysis.

The findings from this research highlighted the influence of Roddick's personal identity and values on the identity of The Body Shop, which resulted in the organisation personifying its founder. The unity and uniqueness of The Body Shop's identity was achieved through the process of narrativity as Roddick conceived her own, as well as The Body Shop's existence, as a *special story*.

In the early years of The Body Shop's history, Roddick linked her own personal identity to the corporate identity of The Body Shop through the retrospective narrative construction of the self in autobiography and other Body Shop texts. Roddick used her first autobiography, *Body and soul*, in 1991, to document the organisation's evolution, and to connect the past to the present. This idea of the Self as socially constructed - in interactions between individuals within the social worlds relevant to them - is exemplified through Roddick's storied reactions to those who questioned the authenticity of The Body Shop's identity. Roddick's (2000a) second autobiography, *Business as unusual*, saw Roddick reinvent both her personal and organisational identity against alternative plots, augmenting the existing epic as constructed by Roddick in *Body and soul*. Her discursive strategy involved reconstructing the original characteristics that set The Body Shop apart from the others and revisiting her original stories which negotiated boundaries for, and with, the rest of the business community.

In 1998, traces of a more conventional business discourse found its way into The Body Shop narrative, augmented with the arrival of a new management team. Consequently, several authorised and unauthorised versions of the corporate story coexisted at The Body Shop, all of them struggling for dominance and recognition. More recent Body Shop narratives actually expose a significant fracture in the relationship between individual and organisational identity, signalling the end of the founder's era. In fact, the irony only confirms the linkage of individual and organisational identity in that as Roddick distanced herself from The Body Shop, the organisation no longer spoke through her voice. Roddick's conversations with the larger community no longer served to affirm the identity of The Body Shop but her own. What was once one, *unified* identity ('Anita Roddick *of* The Body Shop') became two distinctly separate identities ('Anita Roddick *and* The Body Shop').

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT	ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	v
CHAPTER 1	1
INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY	1
Background to this study	1
Theoretical Perspectives of this study: Identity and narrative	2
Rationale for this particular analysis	5
The Body Shop	5
Narrating Values: Social responsibility, corporate citizenship, and corporate image	7
Anita Roddick: The person and the leader	9
Methodology.....	12
Organisation of the thesis	13
CHAPTER 2	17
THE BODY SHOP IN CONTEXT:	
SETTING THE SCENE OF THE STORY	17
Introduction.....	17
Relevant contexts.....	17
Anita Roddick: The entrepreneur	20
The Body Shop in the context of the cosmetics and beauty industry	24
The Body Shop in the context of Feminism.....	28
The Body Shop in the context of environmentalism	31
The Body Shop in the context of corporate social responsibility.....	38
The Body Shop approach to corporate communication	45
Conclusion	51
CHAPTER 3.....	53
THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES OF IDENTITY AND NARRATIVE	53
Introduction.....	53
Identity.....	55
An historical tracing of the concept of human identity	55
Major twentieth-century theorists on identity	57
The paradox of identity: W J Mackenzie's "sameness" vs "uniqueness"	61
Identity and the modern organisation	64
Managing multiple identities	64
Identity: Corporate and organisational	66
Corporate identity	66
Organisational Identity.....	69

An Integrated Approach	70
Positioning identities	71
Identity and (organisational) values	74
Positioning values: The quest for distinctiveness	74
Values and Leadership	76
Ethical values and charismatic leaders	77
Communicating values	80
The value of social responsibility in business	82
Narrative	86
The story of narrative inquiry	86
Narrative and communication	89
Kenneth Burke's dramatism	90
Walter Fisher's theory of narrative	93
Narrative and identity	96
Nietzsche and Freud on narrative and the self	97
Philosophical narratives of identity	100
Psychological narratives of identity	103
Jerome Bruner's alternative mode of knowing	104
Donald Polkinghorne's interdisciplinary approach	106
Sociological narratives of identity	108
Erving Goffman's dramatic approach	108
Positioning narratives: The discursive production of selves	110
Narratives, identity and organisations	111
The narrative-identity connection as applied to corporate discourse	113
Conclusion	116
CHAPTER 4	119
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND METHOD	119
Introduction	119
Methodology	120
Key elements of interpretivism	120
Limitations of interpretivism	126
Insights from critical theories	128
Limitations of critical theory	130
Critical discourse analysis	131
Rhetorical Criticism	133
Narrative inquiry	135
Defining narrative	135
Narrative Inquiry: Paradigmatic and narrative cognitions	136
Narrative rationality	138
Narrative analysis and the study of corporate identity	140
Method	141
The intrinsic case study	141
Methods of data collection	144
Company documentation	144

Advantages of the analysis of company documentation.....	146
Disadvantages of the analysis of company documentation	147
Collecting Body Shop documents.....	148
Interviews	149
Advantages of interviews.....	152
Disadvantages of interviews	152
Conducting the interviews	153
Selection of participants.....	153
The individual interviews	154
Interview structure	156
Data analysis.....	157
Thematic analysis	158
Level one: Conducting thematic analysis	160
Cluster criticism	161
Level two: Conducting cluster criticism	162
Critical narrative analysis	163
Level three: Conducting critical narrative analysis.....	164
Conclusion	167

CHAPTER 5..... 169

STORIES OF ORIGIN: THE CREATION OF THE BODY SHOP'S CORPORATE IDENTITY 169

Introduction.....	169
Constructing autobiographies: Retrospective narratives on life and The Body Shop	173
Roddick as self-conscious storyteller	173
Autobiography and the construction of the retrospective narrative	176
Foundation myths: Storytelling tales of identity	179
Strategic identities: The development of The Body Shop's corporate self	182
The story of a personal vision	182
Narrative influences: Context and ideology surrounding The Body Shop narrative.....	185
Brand associations and related discourses.....	188
The paradoxical nature of identity: Managing a sense of 'difference' at The Body Shop	197
The evolution of The Body Shop style and image	200
Fashioning identities through affordable aesthetics	200
'Green' storylines: A Body Shop trademark	204
The 'natural' myth.....	208
The internal organizational use of language: Key characters in The Body Shop story	211
The internalization of Roddick's narrative	211
Identification strategies at The Body Shop	213
The conscious use of language: Managing meaning at The Body Shop	219
Conclusion	222

CHAPTER 6.....	224
THE LEADING STORY: A MODEL NARRATIVE OF CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY.....	224
Introduction.....	224
Language, leadership and values	226
The language of persuasion	230
Controlling values: Governing The Body Shop world.....	234
Narrating a new business story.....	238
Rhetorical strategies: Engaging the audience in The Body Shop stories	241
Writing values: Reporting The Body Shop narrative.....	245
Challenging The Body Shop narrative	254
The harsh realities of the stage	254
Defending The Body Shop narrative.....	258
Auditing performances at The Body Shop: a hard act to follow	265
The Body Shop approach to sustainability values reporting.....	265
Environmental Audits	268
Values Report 1995	271
Values Report 1997	274
The institutionalisation of The Body Shop narrative	278
Conclusion	281
 CHAPTER 7.....	 283
SHIFTING STORIES AND EMERGING THEMES: FROM SPIRITUAL IDEALISM TO MANAGERIAL REALISM	283
Introduction.....	283
Managing The Body Shop: New voices and conflicting stories.....	284
From ‘grand’ story to multiple narratives: A rhetoric of change At The Body Shop	290
Internal changes	299
Authorising the change: Roddick’s remix of usual and Unusual business	299
The end of a new marketing paradigm: Promoting The The Body Shop brand	300
Internal reflections.....	305
External challenges	309
Natural copycats and popular values: The growing threat of competition	309
E-narratives: The Body Shop Direct and The Body Shop Digital	311
The Body Shop’s discursive positioning of others: Re-categorising Business as unusual	314
Corporate globalisation and the global market.....	316
Global poverty	318
The blind ‘world government’	319
‘Unfree’ trade	321
Entrenched greed	323

The beauty industry	324
The Body Shop's discursive positioning of itself: How Roddick characterised the body shop as different (business-as-unusual)	327
Reaffirmations	327
Communicating social change: The Body Shop as activist	327
The Body Shop as key player in the responsibility revolution	330
The Body Shop as community: Nurturing an old view of business	333
New inflections	335
Spirituality at a deeper level	335
Conclusion	337
 CHAPTER 8.....	340
CONCLUSION	340
Introduction.....	340
Key conclusions.....	341
Constructing identity: Autobiography.....	341
The narrative-identity connection.....	343
Situating identity: Context.....	345
Reinventing identity: Change	346
Implications for values-based business organisations	349
Implications for studies of organisational identity and narrative	352
Opportunities for theory and method	352
Opportunities for further research	355
 LIST OF APPENDICES	362
REFERENCES	446

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

Background to this study

In recent years, there has been a growing interest in the role of narrative, storytelling and identity in organisations (Czarniawska, 1995, 1997, 1998, 2001; Polkinghorne, 1988; Brown, 1990; Bruner, 1990; Christensen & Cheney, 2000; Albert & Whetten, 1985; Hydén, 1997; Kitchell, Hannan & Kempton, 2000). Theorists from a range of academic fields - such as Walter Fisher (1987), Alasdair MacIntyre (1981), Donald Polkinghorne (1988) and Barbara Czarniawska (1997, 1998, 2001) - have been instrumental in advancing an interdisciplinary approach to studying narrative in the everyday lives of both individuals *and* organisations. From a methodological standpoint, such cross-borrowing of rhetorical figures and textual strategies have enriched other disciplines and can equally benefit organisational studies. For instance, the storytelling perspective now permeates a large part of organisational studies (Boje, 1991; Gabriel, 2000).

One approach to analysing storytelling in the study of organisations has been in the investigation of corporate identity (Czarniawska, 1997; Ashforth and Mael, 1996; van Riel, 2000; Gardner, 1995). Nietzsche's theories of the self and identity have lent support to Czarniawska's (1997) interdisciplinary approach to the development of the narrative character of organisational identity. In fact, Ashforth and Mael (1996) go so far as to claim that identities of organisations *are* narratives. In this way, organisational identity has a narrative character that persists – usually through the leader or founder's ability to narrate the organisation's life. Indeed, it has been said that “stories of identity-narratives...constitute the most powerful weapon in the leader's arsenal” (Gardner, 1995, p. 43). In this sense, stories are a part of organisational rhetoric. By rhetoric, I mean the ‘saosory’ or persuasive dimension of all language and other symbol systems (Burke, 1969a). Rhetoric is the designed to be persuasive, to win hearts and minds and discourse is organised to that end. It is through this approach to rhetoric that I refer to stories as rhetorical devices by which

founders increase the impact of their messages. For the purposes of this study, I define organisational stories as identifiable episodes and plotlines that come to represent an organisation's experiences. These may be told by founders, leaders, managers, or others. Certain stories, will achieve archetypal status for an organisation.

This thesis explores how one organisation – The Body Shop – was founded on storytelling. In 2001, The Body Shop celebrated its 25th birthday. So, it seemed fitting to examine its identity over a period of 25 years in the context of a conversation between the company and the larger society. I wanted to study the changing narrative and evaluate the significant discursive shifts that have taken place in both Roddick's personal and organisational stories over the last 25 years. The study analyses how the organisation has embraced storytelling as the preferred sensemaking currency of its relationships among internal and external stakeholders. Additionally, it examines how Anita Roddick, as leader *and* founder of The Body Shop, adopted the literary genre of autobiography to construct not only her personal identity but also the identity of her organisation. The analysis also examines how Roddick, through the conscious use of language, told and retold The Body Shop story, over a period of 25 years, in an attempt to preserve the organisation's original narrative. In this way, Roddick's actions established meaning by acquiring a place in a narrative of life, or, as it will be called in this thesis, in a 'narrative of identity'.

Theoretical perspectives of this study: Identity and narrative

A principle concern of this study is to emphasise the heterogeneity of language in an ongoing effort to illustrate the dynamics of individual and collective identity construction. The overarching research question of the thesis is: *How has the identity of The Body Shop been expressed and transformed through an ongoing corporate narrative of which Anita Roddick has been the primary storyteller?* While there is a tendency for social psychologists to theorise identity in terms of fragmentary images or concepts (e.g. Tajfel, 1982), there are analytic advantages in locating identity in individuals' (and organisations') self-narratives. These narratives are authored impositions in which peoples' self-conceptions and experiences are emplotted

(Ricoeur, 1984, 1985, 1991), and which facilitate self-understanding, the achievement of a mature identity and individuation. *The focal point of this analysis is therefore to examine how The Body Shop identity in large part, was created through narrative.*

In this thesis, narrative analysis is applied to investigating and theorising the corporate identity of The Body Shop. My interest is in the dynamics by which Roddick, as founder of The Body Shop, sought acceptance for the organisation's identity narratives regarding what was fundamental (central), uniquely descriptive (distinctive), and persistent (enduring) about The Body Shop. *A second objective of this analysis is to establish how Anita Roddick, the founder of The Body Shop, employs storytelling to establish and maintain a position of leadership, both personally and organisationally.* This objective seeks to address a growing concern in the literature examined in this study which traces the importance of organisational identity in the modern western world. Here, an emphasis is placed on uniqueness rather than sameness. Today, modern organisations are entwined in a constant struggle to remain distinctive from their competitors. It is on the battlefield of advertising and commerce that they try to promote their identity in terms of values such as social responsibility and environmental awareness.

The theories of Burke (1966, 1969a, 1969b) and Fisher (1984, 1987, 1990) and their contribution to theoretical perspectives on narrative inform this research. The importance of narrative in terms of identity, draws on the writings of Nietzsche (1954, 1982) and Freud (1959). The discussion on narrative moves to a more detailed examination of Czarniawska's (1994, 1997, 1998, 2000) views on organisations, identity and narrative. As organisational researchers, this approach permits us to account better for identities, as continuously constituted and reconstituted through discursive practices (Burke, 1966), and enables us to better place individuals' beliefs regarding what they believe to be most significant about themselves in a historical context (McAdams, 1985, 1997).

More significantly, the narrative perspective enables researchers in corporate identity to move away from the traditional approach of studying the visual elements of an organisation's identity and image to a more *discursive approach* of examining texts in the form of narrative which illustrate how the organisation presents its self to its publics. . In line with contemporary communication studies, I use the term 'discourse' to mean broad patterns of expressions, manifesting certain 'centres of gravity,' values, and ideologies (in line with Foucault, 1980). For instance, by using language, organisations endow their action (and inaction) with meaning. Consequently, as Czarniawska (1994) explains, "understanding organisations calls for an understanding of meanings ascribed to and produced by a given set of actions. Both actions and their meanings are socially constructed in exchanges. Human beings are social *constructors* and organisations are social *constructions*" (p. 194, emphasis in original). In this sense, the discourse form that is most appropriate for describing human (and organisational) action and understanding the construction of both personal and organisational identity, is narrative (Ricoeur, 1984).

As Czarniaswka (1997) asserts, not only is narrative the main source of knowledge in the practice of organising, but just like individuals, organisations need a coherent narrative, and identity may be appropriately conceptualized as a continuous process of narration where both the narrator and the audience are involved in formulating, editing, applauding, and refusing various elements of the ever-produced narrative. There are, of course, constraints imposed on any person's capability to author organisational identity narratives, notably because leaders need, to an extent, to meet the expectations of multiple internal and external stakeholders (Pratt & Foreman, 2000). *The third intent of this study therefore is to investigate the identity challenges that The Body Shop faced and examine how these challenges were reflected in the organisation's narrative.* This assessment aims to demonstrate how identity narratives that characterize organisations are complex and evolving, perhaps containing multiple inconsistencies and incongruities (Brown, 1985).

The focus on narrative in this thesis is threefold: First, it is not only theoretical, but it also implies method. By this I mean, narrative offers exciting alternatives for connecting the lives and stories of both individuals and organisations (Czarniawska, 1997). Second, it is also important practically in terms of organisational storytelling because stories reinforce the development of identity (Brown, 1990). Third, narrative is used in numerous ways in this study to illustrate identity. These include Anita Roddick's self-narrative; The Body Shop's official, formal narrative; and the self-conscious use of language by Anita Roddick and The Body Shop in the telling and retelling of the organisation's story.

Rationale for this particular analysis

The Body Shop

The Body Shop International, PLC, is a values driven, high quality skin and body care retailer operating in 50 countries with over 1,900 outlets (The Body Shop, 2000). The Body Shop was founded by entrepreneur Anita Roddick who, in 1976, started retailing homemade naturally inspired products with minimal packaging. The Body Shop rapidly evolved from one small shop based in Brighton on the South coast of England, with only around 25 hand-mixed products on sale, to a worldwide network of franchise shops. In the year 2000, it was estimated that The Body Shop sold a product every 0.4 seconds with over 77 million customer transactions worldwide. Today, The Body Shop sells over 600 products and than 400 accessories. In 2000, The Body Shop enjoyed worldwide retail sales that totalled £634.6m and a pre-tax profit of £31.5m (The Body Shop, 2000).

Franchising allowed for rapid growth and internal expansion as hundreds of entrepreneurs worldwide bought into Roddick's vision. The Body Shop's ethics are rooted in Roddick's personal beliefs and agenda and are fundamental to the way the organisation operates. As their maxim affirms: 'We've always believed that profits and principles can and should go hand in hand' (Roddick, 1996a). Consequently, many of Roddick's core values are reflected in The Body Shop's operational and managerial systems and practices. She was specific in explaining the connection: "We

take seriously our product development, the ingredients we use, how we source them, and then how we educate our customers” (Roddick, cited in Garfield, 1995, p. 7).

In 1999, The Body Shop brand was voted the second most trusted brand in the UK by the Consumers Association. According to the 1997 Interbrand survey criteria, the company was named 28th top brand in the world, second in the retail sector. In 1998, a survey of international chief executives in *The Financial Times* ranked The Body Shop the 27th most respected company in the world.

The Body Shop is also recognized as an “international symbol of corporate social responsibility” (Garfield, 1995, p. 5). Relationships with communities in need through The Body Shop Community Trade Programme, and campaigns for the environment, animal protection, and human rights make The Body Shop distinct from its competitors (Burlingham, 1990). Social and environmental auditing and reporting presented The Body Shop with a powerful rhetorical vehicle for establishing and building upon value premises. The Body Shop Values Reports in 1995 and 1997 were recognised by the United Nations Environmental Programme and Sustainability, as ‘trailblazing,’ and ranked highest in their reviews of international corporate environmental reports. In 1994, Roddick started the New Academy of Business about which she states: “Our vision is to help build the next generation of business education based on responsibility, accountability and respect for diversity” (Roddick, 2000a, p. 257).

The Body Shop has consistently maintained a very public identity. However, it chose free media publicity over marketing and advertising when other cosmetics companies adopted a more conventional approach. For example, The Body Shop was one of the first companies to use corporate social responsibility as a branding tool for marketing its image. In particular it publicized value-related terms ‘community,’ ‘care,’ and ‘transparency,’ to affirm its identity and position itself in mainstream discourse. But The Body Shop’s policy on transparency and open communication provided the template for imitators and competitors to position their identities on The Body Shop

image, threatening the organisation's position as a leader in its field (see Bittar, 1999). As a leader in the business for social responsibility movement, The Body Shop is an excellent example of an organisation that has both adapted to outside changes and been the subject or agent of change itself, at times unwittingly, since its evolution in 1976. Consequently, The Body Shop's identity, in both a public and internal sense, has both endured and shifted in emphasis over a quarter century.

Not only was The Body Shop's identity constantly constructed and reconstructed, it became the subject of much contest and criticism (e.g. Entine, 1994a): it represented a 'conversation' between the company and the larger society over a period of time. For instance, The Body Shop was one of the first cosmetic companies to challenge, and even go as far as to publicly reject, the cultural conceptions and dominant stereotypes of femininity as constructed and portrayed by the western 'beauty' industry. Roddick consistently worked to change these stereotypes through The Body Shop's discursive practices. However, in becoming a leading cosmetic retailer, The Body Shop itself often became the target of criticism and speculation in terms of whether it actually supported patriarchal discourses on 'femininity.' The interactions between the company and the public, customers, competitors, professional disciplines, and like-minded companies are valuable narratives which allow researchers to gain insight into how these 'conversations' shaped The Body Shop's corporate identity.

In 1998, the turn to more conventional business professionals resulted from the growth in size of the company, the need to improve financial performance, and the need for more experience in conventional business operation. Internally, this decision led to the organisation's first round of redundancies, a shift towards conventional marketing, and a new Chief Executive Officer.

Narrating Values: Social responsibility, corporate citizenship, and corporate image

While internal changes in the organisation tested its identity, so too did external challenges. For instance, the movement for social responsibility spread internationally

predominantly by a western media, fuelled a growing critique of private corporations, greater media attention to scandals and hypocrisy, and new demands from so-called political consumers (Wheeler & Sillanpää, 1997; Pringle & Thompson, 1999). Consequently, The Body Shop's philosophy of social responsibility which was communicated through public discourse, received increasing attention from competitors, cynics and academics in the field of corporate social responsibility.

Academic interest in corporate social responsibility can be traced back to the 1960s and 1970s, otherwise known as the 'era of social protest' (Castells, 1997). In 1960, social responsibility was described as businesses' decisions and actions taken for reasons at least partially beyond the firm's direct economic or technical interest (Davis, 1960). Similarly in 1971, the Committee for Economic Development, based in New York, made the following statement in regards to corporate social responsibility:

Today it is clear that the terms of the contract between society and business are, in fact, changing in substantial and important ways. Business is being asked to assume broader responsibilities to society than ever before and to serve a wider range of human values. (p. 12)

Although the topic of corporate social responsibility has been widely discussed and debated in many national contexts (Wartick & Cochran, 1985), it has long been recognised as a point of tension for many organisations. There were those such as Friedman (1962), who argued that the sole aim of business was to maximize profits. Similarly, others agreed that "capitalist societies actually accepted Marx's materialistic view of history and his assertion that their conduct was governed solely by self-interest and profit" (Gailbraith & McClland, cited in Votaw & Sethi, 1973, p. 41). On the other hand, there were those such as Frederick (1960), who asserted that the resources available to business should be "utilized for broad social ends and not simply for the narrowly circumscribed interests of private persons and firms" (p. 60).

The Body Shop supported a similar view and went on to help shape definitions and understandings of corporate social responsibility in the later half of the twentieth century. From the beginning, the company focused on being socially responsible (Garfield, 1995) and in these terms, the company's stated mission is "to dedicate our

business to the pursuit of social and environmental change” (The Body Shop, 2000). According to Bryan Weaver, a spokesperson from the company’s US home office, “Early on in forming it, Anita Roddick wanted to establish a business that was socially responsible. The cornerstone of the company is that she was able to have business with ethics” (cited in Rosenthal, 1994, p. 15). Roddick herself once said: “I’d rather promote human rights, environmental concerns, indigenous rights, than promote a bubble bath (Entine, 1995a, p. 54).

It is for these reasons that this thesis focuses its attention on one company and indeed one person because of the position of both in the cosmetics industry, in the wider corporate social responsibility movement and in the public consciousness. The Body Shop’s philosophy of social responsibility received increasing attention from those in the social responsibility movement (see Robbins & DeCenzo, 1998); and this attention was mostly of a positive nature. Throughout the 1980s, “prosperity and a penchant for publicity made those iconoclastic founders heroes” (Gardner, 1995, p. 648). *The Body Shop was upheld as a model of social responsibility and ethics in business* (Kurschner, 1996; Lennon, 1997). In fact, some claimed that Roddick “successfully established herself and her company as *leaders* in the arena of social responsibility” (Gardner, 1995, p. 649, emphasis added). Others, however, claimed that such strategies were merely a public relations ploy and shrouded Roddick and The Body Shop from serious scrutiny based on the self-promotion of their ‘good intentions’ (Moberg, 1994; Entine, 1996).

Anita Roddick: The person and the leader

The significance of Roddick’s leadership of The Body Shop is twofold. There has been a lot of interest – both media and academic – in Roddick as a corporate leader (e.g. see Gendron, 1990; Conger & Kanungo, 1998; Bartlett & Jones, 1997), particularly because the politics she associated herself with – feminism, ecology and social justice, were not just random pieces of effective advertising. Instead, they were complex, social issues (Klein, 2001). Nevertheless, Roddick, an innovative entrepreneur, told her stories to a wide audience. Appropriately contextualized, her

discourse engendered a dramatic narrative that allowed readers to gain insights into her heart, mind and motivations. Through this very public identity, Roddick enjoyed a certain celebrity-status as the UK's best-known female entrepreneur (Lennon, 1997). Furthermore, her explosive rise from obscurity to quirky green crusader and feminist icon has revolutionised the way cosmetics are sold (Entine, 1995a).

Of particular interest to this study are the value orientations of leaders behind values-led business organisations. The notion of the values-led business is based on the idea that business has a responsibility to the people and the society that make its existence possible (Pruzan, 1998, 2001). More all-encompassing and therefore more effective than philanthropy alone, values-led business seeks to maximise its impact by integrating socially beneficial actions into as many day-to-day activities as possible. In order to do that, values must lead and be right up there in a company's mission statement, strategy, and operating plan (Pruzan, 2001). As a direct result of its founder's personal values, The Body Shop's corporate identity was strongly constructed as values-based.

Studies confirm that the ethical orientation of the manager is a key factor in promoting ethical behaviour in the organisation (Carlson & Perrewé, 1995; Posner & Schmidt, 1992). Others confirm that the CEO is often seen as the individual primarily responsible for creation of the ethical orientation of the organisation (Hanson & Valasquez, 1988; Agle, 1996). However, this study addresses an undeveloped area in leadership and values (Hood, 2003). *Specifically, the thesis examines the relationship between the founder's (charismatic) leadership and the organisation's identity in a values-driven company.* Within this context, the founder's narrative, as well as supporting and competing narratives by other parties, become crucial to understanding the development of a corporate identity so closely tied to the values, goals, and identity of one person. The Body Shop's identity was linked to a strongly personalised image, that of its founder, Anita Roddick. In fact, Roddick created the company's values largely from her own values, discursively disseminating her philosophies and vision for The Body Shop.

As a case study, The Body Shop provides an opportunity to explore the significance of (charismatic) leadership and the role of personal values and ethics to corporate identity theory. It enables an investigation of the leader's value commitments and ethics as, in a certain sense, constitutive of the organisation, its position, its distinctiveness, and its success. The thesis goes further in that it seeks to examine the influence of the founder's values and leadership style on ethical practices in the organisation and how this might be carried through to succeeding leaders. In the case of The Body Shop, the thesis explores how Roddick, as founder, will have to make certain that both the values and the leadership styles of the top management team ensure that ethical principles are observed within the organisation, raising issues of succession.

In line with Kuhnert's (1993) suggestion that the study of leadership should pursue the examination of personal values that leaders hold and pursue, rather than focus on skills and performance, the thesis sets out to examine the foundation of Roddick's personal values. It is here that the role of narrative in the construction of identity is most significant.

Value-based leaders (Bass, 1985) are said to inspire others to follow them through the use of symbol or images. A central literary genre that emerged to provide explanations for the success of certain founders and businesses was the autobiography (Czarniawska, 1997). Published autobiographies provide us with ready-made devices, legitimized by the success of their authors' lives. Indeed, organisational autobiographies construct the relationship between individual identity and organisational identity for many companies (Czarniawska, 1997; Lucius-Hoene & Deppermann, 2000; Wortham, 2000). The autobiographical text and the world in the text have the same creator, and by the same token, create the author's identity. But if it is useful to treat identity-as-narrative, that is, as "lives under construction" (Czarniawska, 1997, p. 53), Anita Roddick's autobiographies illustrate how she tried to narrate The Body Shop's identity as intricately linked and entwined with her own identity. Further, from an identity standpoint, Roddick's autobiographies provide an

illustration of how language is self-consciously used to tell and retell an organisational story.

Methodology

From a methodological standpoint, life events build life stories which, in turn, build identities – episode by episode – telling people who they are. Identities thus stem from people's attempts to construct selves that accord with present circumstances and previous life stories. From this perspective, identities are knit together through the various accounts people tell about the events and circumstances in their life – informing both others and themselves who they are and, perhaps equally important, who they want to become.

Since identity is an accomplishment, the way it is accomplished is in itself an important question. In a sense, Alvesson and Deetz (2000) argue that the accomplishment – the identity produced – will become less important as a subject of study. Rather, it is the ways and means deployed by people in constructing their identities that becomes important – the stories told, the beliefs expressed, the plots cherished, the storylines chosen, the explanatory themes favoured, and overall, the processes of knitting these elements together into a sense of self. Such processes of identity work are more accessible for study than narratives that are fixed texts or frozen states of subjectivity (Alvesson & Deetz, 2000).

The relationship between individual and organisational identity with respect to The Body Shop generates interesting issues relating to the organisation's identity. The narrative approach is used to gain deeper understanding into how founders of organisations narratively construct the identity of their organisations through the narration and 'management' of their own personal identity. The close relationship between founders and their organisations has serious implications for everyone involved in the organisation. Burke's (1969a) theory of identification is useful in analysing the rhetorical strategies Roddick employed to persuade her employees to identify with both her personal and organisational values. His theory also provides a

way of understanding how founders use language symbolically in forming and altering the attitudes of both internal and external audiences.

This study of the corporate identity of The Body Shop is a critical-interpretive analysis of narratives selected from organisational texts about key moments in the organisation's history. In-depth interviews with the founder of the organisation, Anita Roddick, and owners of The Body Shop franchise for New Zealand were analysed for their reflection of both implicit and explicit values, attitudes and beliefs concerning identity, the organisation's ideology, leadership, and the role of business in society. Internal elements to the narratives such as the characters in the stories, differences among the characters, power as it is expressed in the narratives, and communicative, persuasive, and leadership strategies were also examined.

Data for this chronological case study consisted of narratives which were collected through an extensive analysis of corporate documents and an in-depth interview with Anita Roddick and the two New Zealand Body Shop Directors. The narrative analysis then progressed through three distinct levels, beginning with a thematic analysis (Owen, 1984), and moving ultimately to critical-interpretive approach that draws especially on concepts from rhetorical criticism (Burke, 1966, 1969a, 1969b) and critical discourse analysis (Fairclough, 1992, 1995).

Organisation of the thesis

This thesis is organised in such a way so as to outline the theory used to guide the investigation and the method of research before moving into a discussion of the research findings. Chapter two provides the reader with a detailed history of Anita Roddick and The Body Shop, in order to elucidate the case and its social, political and economic contexts. Specifically, the chapter locates The Body Shop's unique position in the context of the cosmetics and beauty industry, feminism, environmentalism and social responsibility. It also describes the organisation's unconventional approach to communication.

The theoretical perspectives which underpin this research are identified and discussed in chapter three. Specifically, it introduces and highlights the key concepts of identity and narrative. The increasing importance of identity in the western world - and more recently - in organisations, is traced in an attempt to explain how organisations try to promote their identity particularly in terms of values. The general importance of narrative in terms of perspectives and theories of communication is also outlined. More specifically, the significance of narrative to theories of identity and more so, theories of corporate identity is described. The chapter concludes with an explanation of the narrative-identity connection as applied to corporate discourse.

Chapter four describes the philosophy behind the critical-interpretive approach and details the methodological framework chosen to investigate the narrative-identity connection in The Body Shop case. The research design and method are also outlined. Here, the procedures used in the multiple strategy approach to the collection of data, such as document analysis and in-depth interviews are presented. The advantages and disadvantages of each method are also discussed. The three-level narrative analysis, which begins with a descriptive thematic analysis and then moves to a more critical-interpretive approach utilising concepts from rhetorical criticism and critical discourse analysis, is then described.

The findings of this research are presented in three chapters. The first presents the analysis of the *narrative construction* of The Body Shop's corporate identity. Key narratives in this chapter were obtained from Roddick's first autobiography, *Body and soul*, and an in-depth interview with Anita Roddick. The chapter begins with an analysis of Roddick's *use* of storytelling as a rhetorical strategy for identity-building and self-presentation. Through a critical-interpretive analysis of specific corporate narratives which account for the *origins* of the organisation's identity, this chapter demonstrates *how* Roddick, as chief storyteller, *retrospectively* constructed and managed The Body Shop's corporate identity. The elaborate history is told primarily from Roddick's standpoint, but with breaks that introduce others' perspectives.

The second analysis chapter examines the *communication* of *values and ethics* as central to The Body Shop's identity. In particular, it investigates the role of values in leadership and social responsibility. Key narratives in this chapter were collected from official corporate narratives such as annual reports and social reports. The chapter outlines the introduction of values and ethics to business and explores the relationship between both individual and organisational identity, image, and values. Furthermore, it seeks to analyse past, present and future trends with specific reference to value-led businesses. The chapter concludes by posing questions about the role of leadership and the leader's values commitments and ethics as constitutive of the organisation, its position, its distinctiveness, and its success.

The investigation of how *change* affected The Body Shop's identity is detailed in the third analysis chapter. Here, the introduction of new characters and plots in The Body Shop story illustrate how different voices constructed The Body Shop story. Shifts in The Body Shop narrative as a result of internal changes and external challenges are identified and examined in an attempt to reveal how Roddick – in an attempt to reaffirm discursively positioned The Body Shop and other businesses in relation to business as [un]usual. Here, reaffirmations and new inflections of The Body Shop are identified and analysed in terms of how they served to reposition the organisation and reconstruct its identity. The chapter then considers the mix of business as usual and business as unusual and exposes the contradictions and inconsistencies in Roddick's narratives. The chapter concludes by evaluating the accuracy of Roddick's positioning of usual business and determining how such positioning (re)invented The Body Shop's identity.

The final chapter summarises the key conclusions of this comprehensive case study. In doing so, the chapter analyses the future of The Body Shop's identity and image in the context of it being a successful values-based organisation but one that faces the prospect of losing its leader and consequently undergoing an identity crisis. It then highlights the implications of these conclusions for Roddick and The Body Shop, outlines practical lessons and useful insights for values-based organisations and

explores opportunities for theory and method in studies of organisational identity and narrative.

CHAPTER 2

THE BODY SHOP IN CONTEXT: SETTING THE SCENE OF THE STORY

Introduction

This chapter comprises a necessarily selective and unavoidably interpretive history of The Body Shop's evolution. It illustrates how The Body Shop built a reputation as "the west's most caring cosmetics company" (Fombrun, 1996, p. 129). It sets the account in the context of shifting attitudes towards business, social issues and marketing. Specific contexts that help define the case include the cosmetics and beauty industry, feminism, environmentalism and the green movement, and the business for social responsibility movement. The historical location of The Body Shop in relation to these larger social, cultural, political and economic issues prevalent in the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s aim to provide the reader with a good sense of how The Body Shop's identity was created. Further, the chronological history of the organisation presented in this chapter also serves to help the reader understand how key moments shaped, strengthened and challenged The Body Shop's identity.

The data used in this chapter consists primarily of information written on The Body Shop obtained from a collection of secondary sources. These include articles from a wide variety of academic journals, case studies, and popular literature such as newspapers and business and industry magazines. These sources of data, while purely descriptive in nature, provide the reader with multiple viewpoints on the development of The Body Shop and on Anita Roddick's narrative.

Relevant contexts

The success of The Body Shop is remarkable when considering the Small Business Association statistics that show that nearly 80 per cent of new businesses fail (Fryer, 1994). The global expansion of The Body Shop was also remarkable. Between 1978 and 1982, new shops were opening at a rate of two per month. In 1989, Anita Roddick, to quote *The Economist's* description, remains "the best publicised of the

new self-made success” (*The Economist*, 1989, p. 13). In 2000, every two seconds, someone in the world bought a product from the firm (Brabazon, 2001). As demonstrated in this chapter, today, The Body Shop is cited as an economic and social phenomenon by both academics and practitioners (Brabbazon, 2001). While the foundation of Roddick’s philosophy is explored later in the thesis (see chapter 5), this chapter locates The Body Shop’s unique position in relation to Britain’s socio-cultural, political and economic environment from the 1970s – the ‘era of social protest’ (Castells, 1997) through to 2001, when the organisation became a international leader in the natural cosmetics industry. Key moments in the history of the organisation are presented in Table 1 below.

Table 1: The Body Shop: A chronological history (1976-2001)

1976	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 26th March - The first Body Shop opens in Brighton.• The benefits of previously unheard of natural ingredients (aloe vera, jojoba oil and cocoa butter) are brought to the high street.
1978	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A kiosk in Brussels becomes the first overseas franchise.
1982	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• New shops are opening at a rate of two per month.
1985	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Body Shop becomes a public company.
1986	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• An Environmental Projects Department is established.• First major campaign with Greenpeace (‘Save the whales’).• The first Community Trade product - the footsie roller - is produced in southern India. This trade in footsie rollers evolved into the current trade with Teddy Exports in India.
1989	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• ‘Stop The Burning’ campaign, calls for the Brazilian Government to bring a halt to the mass burning of the tropical rainforests.• The Body Shop launches in the USA.
1990	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Body Shop trades in 39 countries.• The establishment of The Body Shop Foundation, a charity which funds human rights and environmental protection groups.
1991	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Big Issue homeless paper - a project of The Body Shop Foundation - begins circulation.
1992	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The introduction of The Body Shop Tour at the UK Head Office for the general public.
1993	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• An international campaign to raise awareness of the plight of the

	Ogoni people and their leader Ken Saro-Wiwa, persecuted for protesting against Shell and the Nigerian dictatorship over exploitation in their homeland begins.
1994	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Body Shop At Home, the direct-selling arm, is launched in the UK.• The Body Shop invested a 15% stake in a wind farm in Wales to help offset electricity used in its UK operations.
1995	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The New Academy of Business, an initiative of Anita Roddick, is established at The University of Bath. The innovative management degree, addresses social, environmental and ethical issues.• The Body Shop At Home is launched in Canada.
1996	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 'Against Animal Testing' campaign success.
1997	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• First international cosmetics company to sign up to the Humane Cosmetics Standard.• The Body Shop Values Reports 1995 and 1997 were recognised by United Nations Environmental Programme and SustainAbility, as trailblazing, and ranked highest amongst International Corporate Environmental Reports.• New flagship store design wins the Retail Week Store Design of the Year Award.• The Body Shop At Home is launched in Australia.
1998	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Joint worldwide campaign - 'Make your mark' - with Amnesty International.• The Big Issue is launched in Los Angeles.• Animal testing on cosmetic products and ingredients is banned in the UK.• Patrick Gournay, a new CEO is appointed.
1999	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A loyalty scheme for customers is introduced to the UK• New business units in the UK, Europe, the Americas and Asia, shifts operational and management structure out to the regions.
2000	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• In February, The Littlehampton manufacturing business is sold to Creative Outsourcing Solutions International Ltd (COSi).• The Body Shop Human Rights Award is launched to media, non-governmental organisations and the public in June.• Over £5 million worth of natural ingredients and accessory items is purchased through the Community Trade Programme including nearly 400 tonnes of natural ingredients.
2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Body Shop branches into South Africa.• March 26th The Body Shop turns 25.• The Body Shop At Home is launched in Ireland and the USA.• Joint campaign with Greenpeace: 'Choose Positive Energy'.

When The Body Shop entered the world of business in 1976 as a skin and hair care retailer, numerous social movements were challenging the status quo of society's institutions on the grounds of alternative principals and beliefs. Perhaps the most significant in terms of productivity and its impact on cultural values and society's institutions was the multifaceted environmental movement (Castells, 1997). In fact, environmentalism "also nurtured some of the countercultures that sprang from the 1960s and 1970 movements" (Castells, 1997, p. 116). These included animal liberation, (eco)feminism and social responsibility.

While the position of The Body Shop in the context of the cosmetics and beauty industry, feminism, environmentalism and social responsibility is detailed below, the following section opens with an interpretive history of Anita Roddick, the founder of The Body Shop. It briefly outlines Roddick's personal and professional background and describes why her ideas for The Body Shop proved successful in 1970s Britain. Additionally, it traces the origin of some of the key features of The Body Shop's identity – such as the use of natural ingredients in Body Shop products – providing the reader with a better understanding of how these features went on to make the organisation a global success, with an identity and image distinct from usual business.

Anita Roddick: The entrepreneur

Born to Italian-immigrant parents, Roddick (née Perella) grew up working in the family-owned café in Littlehampton, West Sussex. Trained in education, Roddick taught briefly in a local elementary school before accepting a position as a library researcher for the *International Herald Tribune* in Paris (Harvard Business School, 1994). Next, she moved to Geneva, where she joined the United Nations International Labour Organisation to work on issues of Third World Women's rights (Conlin, 1994). On fact-finding trips she had made for the United Nations to study women in the Third World, she learned that for centuries "women in underdeveloped countries had used organic potions to care for their skin" (Conlin, 1994, p. 29).

Returning to England, she met Gordon Roddick, a Scottish poet and adventurer who shared her love of travel. The birth of two daughters forced the Roddicks to settle

down, and the couple decided to convert a Victorian house in Brighton into a hotel (Conlin, 1994). In 1976, however, they sold their business so Gordon could fulfil a lifelong dream of riding on horseback from Buenos Aires to New York City – a journey that would take up two years (Davidson, 1996). Anita agreed to the plan and, at 33, undertook to support the family. She decided to open a cosmetic shop that would sell “natural products in cheap containers” (Conlin, 1994, p. 30).

Roddick decided to produce and sell skin creams, shampoos and other lotions made from fruit and vegetable oils rather than from animal fats. She used the hotel as collateral for a £4,000 loan (Chatzky, 1992). With the money, she hired a local chemist to concoct animal-fat-free lotions and began selling them from a little shop located in Brighton (Chatzky, 1992). There was no money to advertise (Seward, 1990). It happened that a lack of capital forced Roddick to “turn necessity into an asset by selling recyclability and plain packaging” (Lennon, 1997, p. 39). Further, upon his return, Gordon Roddick hit upon the idea of franchising as a way to continue expansion despite limited capital (Kearins & Kljyn, 1999). When the first two franchises in nearby towns both succeeded, the Roddicks began receiving calls from other interested parties (Simpson, 1986).

The Body Shop experienced phenomenal growth through the 1980s. In April 1984, when the stock was floated on London’s Unlisted Securities market, it opened at 95 pence and closed that afternoon at 165 pence (Arbose, 1986). In January 1986, The Body Shop obtained full listing on the London Stock Exchange and stock was selling at 820 pence. The Body Shop was cited as “one of Britain’s most glamorous growth stocks (Wallace, 1996, cited in Kearins & Kljyn, 1999, p. 286). By February 1991, the company’s market value stood at £350 million (Arbose, 1986).

In 1981, the Roddicks opened their first London high street store in Covent Gardens (Entine, 1994b). Around the same time, *Cosmopolitan* did a feature on The Body Shop, “that was one of their breakthroughs. They were suddenly getting the attention of the mainstream press...her eccentricity, her energy and her enthusiasm...attracted a

lot of attention” (Entine, 1994b, p. 14). By 1989, worldwide sales generated \$143 million, still without advertising (Seward, 1990).

So why was The Body Shop so popular? Entine (1994b) explains:

We are in the late 1970s, the environmental movement is getting hot. The Green movement was catching on in England., The Green parties were developing across Europe. People perceived a need for products that were outside the mainstream. Many women were disgusted with the hype and sense of exploitation that they felt from cosmetic companies. Anita Roddick intuitively sensed this niche out there which was – be honest, be straight and pitch directly to women who are average and who are not going to be taken by the façade of the glitzy cosmetic companies. (p. 14)

And so, The Body Shop inherited Roddick’s character as an organisation that “dispenses with tradition” (Chipperfield, 1988, p. 51). In fact, Siler (1994) goes so far to suggest that “The Body Shop’s personality has been shaped by the larger-than-life image of Ms Roddick” (p. 4). The Body Shop was born in the 1970s, when most companies’ approach to business was a far cry from management approaches used today (Lander, Nourse, Swift, & Lennox, 1993). Management techniques that are now considered *au courant*, such as “employee empowerment, sharing prosperity and doing the right thing ‘even when no one is looking’, would have been quite out of place in the hierarchical large corporation of the 1970s” (Lander, et al. 1993, p. 11).

The Body Shop’s image as a company with “an aversion to lavish packaging, a refusal to advertise and a loudly proclaimed commitment to social causes” fit well with the counterculture of the 1970s (Siler, 1994, p. 4). Roddick’s audience consisted of individuals who opposed dominant paradigms, who were disillusioned with traditional business practices and who explored new cultures and practices (Jagtenberg & McKie, 1997). But as Jagtenberg & McKie, (1997) point out, many of the “early traditions of the counterculture that engaged the feelings, emotions, the body, spirituality, healing, and alternative technology were ahead of their time” (p. 108). Shrivastava (1996) refers to Roddick’s plan for The Body Shop in the 1970s as “visionary” in the cosmetics industry (p. 76).

In the 1980s, Roddick expanded her 'green' brand image by "associating herself with social causes including opposition to animal testing, recycling, promoting AIDS awareness, and human rights" (Entine, 1996, p. 19). She believed that "business should blend the pursuit of honest profits with social awareness" (Oates, 1988, p. 64). Roddick set up an Environmental Projects Department in the organisation in 1986, a Fair Trade Department, and an Against Animal Testing Department (Murphy, 1994). The bill paid by The Body Shop, for example, to screen suppliers and enforce its animal-testing ban "runs more than \$100, 000 a year" (Murphy, 1994, p. 51). Furthermore, "The Body Shop allocated promotional monies to environmental and social causes such as work in the Rain Forest and supporting nurseries in Romania" (Freeman, 1991, p. 61).

While the organisation continued its commitment to numerous social and environmental projects, its sales and profits also continued to grow "on average of 50% a year. For the 12 months preceding February 1990, pre-tax profits were 14.5 million on sales of 84.5 million, despite the onset of a recession in retailing" (Burlingham, 1990, p. 83). Along the way, The Body Shop was voted UK Company of the Year in 1985, and UK Retailer of the Year in 1989. In addition, Roddick had been the Veuve Cliquot Businesswoman of the Year in 1985, and Communicator of the Year in 1987. In 1988, she was awarded the prestigious Order of the British Empire by Queen Elizabeth (Wallace, 1990). In fact, Anita Roddick emerged as "the UK's best-known female entrepreneur" (Lennon, 1997, p. 39), and was called the "Mother Teresa of capitalism" (Entine, 1996, p. 19).

In sum, Roddick's idea was "to put politics before product, selling customers the promise of a greener, cleaner life." (Rushe, 2001, p. 8). Rushe continues: "The idea was in fact, ahead of its time and caught the world's imagination" (p. 8). The Body Shop became known for its passionate environmentalism, symbolising business' new ecological consciousness" (Burlingham, 1990). Its environmentalism went on to create a viable market niche. This niche expanded into the mainstream cosmetics industry, with The Body Shop "firmly established as a leader" (Shrivastava, 1996, p. 85).

The Body Shop in the context of the cosmetics and beauty industry

When The Body Shop opened for business, Faberge's Babe was the world's best-selling fragrance and everyone wanted to look like the leggy blonde with flicked back fringe, Farrah Fawcett (Faludi, 1990). There was a return to a highly glamorous female identity in some mainstream fashion sites in the 1970s with examples of soft-focus and airbrushed images of fashion photography and advertising campaigns, such as that of Revlon (Buckley & Fawcett, 2002). Vogue was predicting scientific breakthroughs in skin care and Estee Lauder launched the first 'cosmeceutical' Night Repair Cellular Recovery Complex (Faludi, 1990). Roddick took a different approach: "The Body Shop goes against every basic tenet of the cosmetics industry...It has never spent a single cent on advertising, in an industry that spends nearly 25 cents of each sales dollar on advertising" (Shrivastava, 1996, p. 77). Roddick built her empire by selling "ordinary skin-care products for ordinary women; in short, unglamorous products in a business traditionally associated with glamour" (Queenan, 1994, p. 66). Roddick believed, contrary to much of the cosmetics industry, that trying to "seduce women into buying over-packaged, over-hyped, and over-priced cosmetics was an insult to their intelligence" (Hamel & Prahalad, 1994, p. 66).

It has been frequently argued, especially by feminists that, over the years, the industry consistently aggravated women's low self-esteem and high anxiety about a 'feminine' appearance. "The beauty industry, of course, has *never* been an advocate of feminist aspirations" (Faludi, 1991, p. 239, emphasis added). Since the rise of the women's movement in the 1970s, cosmetics and fragrance companies suffered a decade of flat-to-declining sales. In 1981 Revlon's earnings fell for the first time since 1968; by the following year the company's profits had plunged a record 40 per cent (Faludi, 1991). The industry hit back by persuading women that they were the ailing patients. Faludi (1991) explains the industry's tactic: "Beauty became medicalised as its lab-coated army of promoters, and real doctors, prescribed medically endorsed potions, injections for the skin, chemical 'treatments' for the hair, plastic surgery for virtually every inch of the torso" (p. 240).

The 1980s saw an increase in eating disorders, cosmetic surgery, and a fear of aging (Lopiano-Misdorn & De Luca, 1994; Wolf, 1990). Mannequins set the beauty trends – and real women were expected to follow. The Body Shop initiated a revolution and eschewed the fashion industry's definition of beauty in favour of a more healthy and realistic perspective (Gattuso & Neal, 1994). For The Body Shop, the buzzword was 'self-esteem' (Wilson, 1999). In stark contrast to the thinning of the feminine ideal, The Body Shop promoted "a large, pink, computer-generated woman named Ruby" as a "hero" (p. 36). According to Wilson (1999), The Body Shop:

declared war on beauty; that is, on the particular brand of beauty espoused by their competitors. You know the type. It sneers at you from the pages of fashion mags. It pouts from billboards. It causes the vulnerable to quietly disgorge their lunches into water closets and waste-paper baskets around the globe. Representations of the slim and symmetrical, says The Body Shop, are unreal and destructive. (p. 104)

Nonetheless, the beauty industry boomed in the 1980s thanks to what Wolf (1990) claimed to be "conscious market manipulation" (p. 6). In 1985, Prescriptives launched a new 'line preventer'. The promotional material was the first to mention 'free radicals' (Faludi, 1991). As pointed out by Faludi (1991), this was the year of a social shift away from seeing ageing as natural and chronological to something behavioural and avoidable. The cosmetics industry exploited universal fears of mortality in the huge aging baby-boom population (Faludi, 1991). Faludi (1991) provides an example:

'Time waits for no man (but it can for a woman),' promised Boots No. 7 in its ad' for Replenish skin cream. 'With each daily application, you're helping slow down the ticking of the clock.' The accompanying photograph showed a woman desperately trying to hold back the minute hand on a giant clock face. (p. 246)

By the late 1980s, cosmetics departments resembled 'stylish sanatoriums' (Faludi, 1991). Sales assistants were wearing white nurses' uniforms and the treatments were costly and time-consuming regimens with medicinal names and packages accompanied by "physicians' endorsements. Glycel, an 'anti-aging' cream, boasted the support of heart surgeon Dr Christiaan Barnard (Faludi, 1991). In 1987, Dior launched 'Capture' containing the wonder ingredient liposome. Estee Lauder followed with 'Future Perfect', promising that it would 'take skin care as far as our advanced technology would go', thanks to microsomes. Clairol's 'Biological

Tightener' came in a twenty-day treatment rack lined with test-tube shaped 'ampoules' (Faludi, 1991). The cosmetics industry, aided with advances in technological sophistication even set out to convince younger women to fight the aging process; to not grow old gracefully, but to fight it every step of the way.

According to Faludi (1991), the beauty industry's impact was "destructive – to both female bodies and minds" (p. 240). Trends of the 1980s literally made women ill. Anti-wrinkle treatments exposed them to carcinogens. Acid face peels burned their skin. Silicone injections left painful deformities. 'Cosmetic' liposuction caused severe complications, infections, and even death. The "decade's beauty dictates played a role in exacerbating an epidemic of eating disorders. And the beauty industry helped to deepen the psychic isolation that so many women felt in the 1980s" (Faludi, 1991, p. 240).

The successful marketing of unconscious anxieties contributed to the \$32 billion diet industry, the \$20 billion cosmetics industry and the \$300 million cosmetic surgery industry (Wolf, 1990, p. 6). In the cosmetics industry the average percentage of net sales spent on advertising is 20% (The Kline Report, 1995). In fact, for most cosmetics manufacturers, selling their products without mass media advertising would be unthinkable. But as Wallace (1990) explains, "for Anita Roddick, however...this has become a way of life" (p. 81). The Body Shop, a pioneer in the cosmetics industry, went against trends in the cosmetics industry in the 1970s and 1980s. In an industry built around selling fantasy, "Body Shop prides itself on selling 'well-being'. These policies reflect more than the personal feelings of Roddick; they form the basis of the company's marketing strategy" (Burlingham, 1990, p. 85). The Body Shop's marketing strategy focuses on "health rather than glamour. To that end it promotes, via retail outlets and mail order operations, shampoos, soaps, lotions and creams with a minimum of the hype and packaging often associated with the cosmetic industry" (Cooperman, 1992, p. 36). Additionally, The Body Shop also moved beyond the conventional beauty rituals, into "publishing *Mind body soul: The Body Shop book of wellbeing*" which "traverses the terrain of qi gong, shiatsu, crystals and aromatherapy" (Brabazon, 2001, p. 193).

Much of the cosmetics industry was reshaped in the 1990s by the success of firms like The Body Shop. Although specialty beauty stores account for less than 5% of the \$12 billion toiletries business, these stores comprise one of the few fast-growing segments of the industry” (Freeman, 1991, p. 60). In fact, it was estimated that “private label toiletries and cosmetics stores will average annual growth of 20% through the 1990s, compared to single-digit growth for sales of beauty aids through drug and department stores...The Body Shop is the most visible of this new breed of specialty retailers” (Freeman, 1991, p. 60). Freeman (1991) goes on to point out that “The Body Shop overall experienced 50% compound growth during the 1980s” (p. 60).

The success of The Body Shop in the 1990s helped to stimulate a new trend, one closer to The Body Shop’s stance of enhancing and enjoying those things we like about ourselves (Wilson, 1999). The modern mantra of the day is “*feel* good, look better” (Walter, 1999, emphasis in original). The late 1990’s ‘miracle’ ingredients were more likely to be vitamins and enzymes, with a growing emphasis to activate the body’s natural processes for looking better. We have also seen a growing concern, lead by consumer demand, for the environment and animal protection. They have become major debating points in the cosmetics industry.

In their research on the impact of environmentalism on the UK cosmetic industry, McDonagh and Prothero (1997) state that “some BAUV [British Union for the Abolition of Vivisection] companies were confusing customers by adopting the five year principle of the BAUV organisation” (p. 361). By this they mean that organisations may use cruelty-free products themselves but either they do not know about their suppliers activities over the last five years or if they do are not saying anything about them because their suppliers activities may be less favourable than their own (McDonagh & Prothero, 1997).

Lopiano-Misdorn and De Luca (1994) explain: “Animal testing has been a major issue in the beauty and health care industry, and we all know how successful Anita Roddick was at letting us know that The Body Shop’s products were cruelty-free and socially conscious” (p. 141). The Body Shop was the first cosmetics company to have its

Against Animal Testing supplier monitoring systems independently audited and successfully certified against the ISO 9002 quality assurance standard (Lopiano-Misdorn & De Luca, 1994). “The Body Shop affirms a high standard of excellence in animal protection and the environment. Its first Ethical Policy was released in 1995, and was available on the Web in 1997” (Brabazon, 2001, p. 191). Brabazon (2001) continues, “That such pronouncements came from a cosmetics company are extraordinary and should be welcomed” (p. 191). The Body Shop’s stance on the issue led to it become “the first international cosmetics retailer to be endorsed by leading animal protection groups under their Humane Cosmetic Standard” (Grove, 2000, p. 7). According to McDonagh and Prothero (1997), others followed The Body Shop:

Beauty Without Cruelty has grown by an astonishing 1, 100 per cent during the past decade, increasing its retail turnover from 430 000 to 5.5 million (although pre-tax profits halved from 500, 000 to 250, 000 in 1991 mainly due to the recession). (p. 370)

Still, as Grove (2000) points out, “no cosmetics company emulates her [Roddick’s] political activism” (p. 7). The UK government banned tests on cosmetic products and ingredients in November 1998. Roddick continued to engage The Body Shop in numerous social and political struggles and worked more directly with feminists who were “connected to the daily problems of working women” in 1970s Britain (Castells, 1997, p. 188).

The Body Shop in the context of feminism

As a leader in the cosmetics industry, The Body Shop’s approach fit well with the dramatic social changes in gender relations that arose in the course of the 1960s and 1970s (Urla & Swedlund, 2000). In *The feminine mystique*, Betty Friedan (1963) condemned the myth of the happy housewife as pernicious in encouraging women to be passive and superficial, dedicated to the empty pursuit of consumerism, and absorbed by producing babies and supporting men. Friedan’s book attracted a huge response and “sold a million copies in the USA and Britain by 1970” (Pugh, 2000, p. 316). At the same time, the women’s movement in Britain gained strength in the 1970s, achieving a clutch of political and legislative victories (Meehan, 1990). When Mrs Thatcher became the first woman party leader in 1976 and then Britain’s first

female Prime Minister in 1979, much discussion ensued as to whether her success was good for women. For some, even a symbolic victory for feminism was a triumph. Others agreed with the anecdotes that she ‘owed nothing to feminism’ and was the ‘best man’ to lead the Conservative government (Meehan, 1990). On the face of it, Mrs Thatcher’s success represented the climax of female advance in twentieth century Britain. The impact of Mrs Thatcher’s long premiership on younger women and girls, many of whom grew up in the knowledge that their country was dominated by a woman, was intangible but surely profound and lasting (Pugh, 2000).

Additional, yet contrasting role models found a voice in 1970s Britain. There is no doubt that “Roddick has offered a powerful voice and presence for women in British business” (Brabazon, 2001, p. 192). When The Body Shop opened for business in 1976:

Roddick presented a fascinating antithesis to Thatcher, performing an alternative model of feminine success. It was not unusual for that “such a presence arose from the beauty industry...selling beauty has been a way for women throughout the twentieth century to attain financial independence. (Brabazon, 2001, p. 192).

Indeed many women such as Helena Rubenstein, Elizabeth Arden and Estée Lauder, have made their fortune through cosmetics (Brabazon, 2001). But as Brabazon points out, “what made Roddick distinct from these powerful women is that her opinions were and are tempered by a second-wave feminism” (p. 192).

Second-wave feminism allowed many to “examine the problems for women inherent in the existing fashion system, with its emphasis on slimness” (Buckley & Fawcett, 2002, p. 124). Throughout the 1970s, an engagement with issues of fashion and female representation continued as a theme in popular and academic feminism (Buckley & Fawcett, 2002). Idealised images were becoming “increasingly thin in the 1960s and 1970s while the ‘average’ woman’s body was in fact getting heavier” (Urla & Swedlund, 2000, p. 413). The Body Shop’s plot to repair the self-esteem of women was in direct contrast to the portrayal of women in mainstream media (Brabazon, 2001). As second-wave feminism continued to gain fortitude in the 1970s, the media and popular culture felt the impact of a growing self-consciousness about sexist

imagery of women (Urla & Swedlund, 2000). For instance, many feminists preferred to bypass the male controlled press altogether by launching their own magazines for women. By far the “most influential was *Spare Rib* (1972), an immediate success whose sales reached 30,000 by the mid 1970s” (Pugh, 2000, p. 322). Women were reported as saying: “I began to enjoy eating again” (Buckley & Fawcett, 2002, p. 124).

The late 1970s and early 1980s saw continued revolution. In 1981, the US organisation, Women Against Violence Against Women, organised a conference of eight hundred women to debate the issue of violence within and outside marriage (Faludi, 1990). The Body Shop also contributed towards the debate as explained by Brabazon (2001) who states that “They affirm transparency in their social and environmental activities and a strong feminist directive through programmes to stop the violence against women” (p. 191). Conquests continued with women exceeding men in the British labour force. The Body Shop’s human resource principles also supported the development of women in the workplace: “women are 65 per cent of The Body Shop’s employees” (Brabazon, 2001, p. 192). More women pursued university, and gained full-time employment (Wolf, 1990). However, while Prime Minister John Major promised to improve opportunities for women in the British work place in 1991, the central dilemma for women lay in balancing employment opportunities against their domestic role (Wolf, 1990; Pugh, 2000).

Inadequate childcare provision in Britain remained the major factor limiting women’s employment (Walter, 1999; Meehan, 1990; Pugh, 2000; Wolf, 1990; Faludi, 1991). Walter (1999) spoke of childcare in Britain in the nineties: “women in Britain still have to struggle with a ridiculously low and patchy level of childcare provision” (p. 245). Tax disincentives discouraged women from using facilities subsidised by employers. Cuts in expenditure and privatisation of health and social services reduced traditional sources of work for women (Meehan, 1990). These were some of the adverse effects that socialists warned would be the consequence of merely removing formal barriers to equal treatment at work. However, as Meehan (1990) points out, the feminist movement found allies among some employers who recognised the twin

problems of social injustice and labour market irrationalities. The Body Shop, as a case in point, supported numerous women's organisations in their calls for better employment law and practice for proper childcare, and equality and fairness in every aspect of life, including politics (Conlin, 1994).

As an employer, The Body Shop walked the talk. The Body Shop worked to 'protect the family' and its efforts were consistent with its practices (Conlin, 1994). For instance, it aimed to provide childcare facilities in the workplace, to upgrade part-time work, and to re-design the working world to become more family-friendly (Conlin, 1994). In 1990, it opened a workplace Child Development Centre in Littlehampton "open to the 50 children of parents with the greatest need" (Conlin, 1994, p. 30).

By the end of the 1990s, it had become fashionable to portray the women's movement as confused and uncertain as to its direction. Natasha Walters (1999), author of *The New Feminism*, regarded feminists such as Germaine Greer as having been obsessed with sex and the body. For younger women, feminism had become essentially materialist, more pragmatic and politically focussed by the 1990s. Without minimising the obstacles, Walter (1999) and others were inclined to believe that it was now within women's grasp to attain economic and political equality by adopting an optimistic and focused approach. For instance, Roddick, among others, wanted to positively bring more 'feminine values' to bear in the public sphere, especially in business (Walters, 1999; see also Varey, 2001). Even the Institute of Directors declared that feminine values, such as compassion, were needed in business (Grove, 2000, p. 7). Elements of the feminine principle, such as "continuity between the human and the natural" (Shiva, 1989, p. 40) were also central to the environmental cause. Shiva (1989) goes so far as to claim that every area of human activity marginalises and burdens both women and nature.

The Body Shop in the context of environmentalism

It was women who fuelled the environmental debate (Shiva, 1989). For instance, in 1962, Rachel Carson published *Silent spring* to warn the world about the potential

hazards of pesticides. According to Welford (1995), the publication of *Silent spring* can properly be seen as the beginning of the modern environmental movement.

The harm that economic growth may do to the environment was an important theme of the environmentalism of the early 1970s (Cairncross, 1991). Governments worldwide responded with new forms of comprehensive environmental legislation (National Association of Attorneys-General, 1990; Bhat, 1996). The Environmental Protection Agency was established in 1970, in large part because of the concerns and consciousness that Rachel Carson had raised (Welford, 1995). In the UK, new environmental legislation included a Clean Air Act in 1968, a Water Act in 1973 and the Control of Pollution Act in 1974 (Beder, 1997). As well as the strict enforcement of environmental laws, there were other pressures on companies to be greener such as the growing population, rising deficits, public opinion, increasing tort liabilities, and effects of the environment on competitiveness (Bhat, 1996). Environmental organisations gained members and their operating budgets grew (Welford, 1995). The concerns of environmentalists in the early 1970s were over issues of domestic pollution, dirty water and toxic waste (Beder, 1997; Schumacher, 1974; Welford, 1995; Hawken, 1994; Cairncross, 1991). Since the 1970s, companies have been increasingly required to justify their activities, not only to shareholders, but to society as a whole.

But corporations put large amounts of money into advertising and sponsorships aimed at improving the corporate image and putting forward corporate views. During the late 1970s, protest activities by environmental and other public interest groups were “mostly either unreported or dismissively reported as being a hangover from the past” (Beder, 1997, p. 21). However, a few companies extended their concern for the local community to a broader concern for the local environment (Welford, 1994). The Body Shop was one such company as Wheeler (1994) explains:

The Body Shop differs a great deal from those commercial enterprises which seek to exploit the environmental sympathies of the consumer. From its very beginnings in 1976, the Company adopted an ecological stance, developing products based on natural ingredients, avoiding cruelty to animals, maximising opportunities for the re-use and recycling of its packaging and striving to minimise waste in every

aspect of its operations. The Company was committed to high standards of environmental performance well before this became fashionable. (p. 392)

Additionally, The Body Shop collaborated with certain environmental organisations that emerged in the 1960s and 1970s (Welford, 1994). Among these were Greenpeace and Friends of the Earth. For instance, The Body Shop's association with Greenpeace led to the initiation of a joint campaign in 1986 to "Save the Whales". The link was a natural one – after all, Body Shop products used jojoba oil, a plant-based product that could be substituted for the sperm whale oil used elsewhere in the cosmetics industry (Simpson, 1986). Towards the end of the 1980s, public concern about the environment rose again, reinforced by scientific discoveries regarding phenomena such as ozone depletion and weather patterns that seemed to indicate that global warming had already begun (Beder, 1997). While continuing conversations with Greenpeace and other environmental groups, The Body Shop Projects were launched to campaign for acid rain prevention and protection of the ozone layer (Wheeler, 1994). An on-going in-house programme of 300 'environmental advisers' was formed, drawing on employees who volunteered to annually audit the company's performance in energy efficiency, water usage and waste management (Wheeler, 1994).

Anger at the apparently relentless increase in pollution continued into the 1980s (Cairncross, 1991). A key character who challenged the idea of the traditional bottom line of business was sustainability cofounder, John Elkington. In the late 1980s and early 1990s, the concept of 'sustainable development' became an accepted agenda for reconciling environmental protection with economic development. The term emerged from a series of UN studies and commissions, culminating in the oft-quoted 1988 Brundtland Commission, *Our common future*, and the 1992 UN Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro (World Commission of Environment and Development, 1988). Elkington (1999) proposes that in order to effect sustainable development, accounting systems need to take into account not only economic prosperity, but also environmental quality and social justice. This is articulated in different ways but a popular concept is the notion of the "triple bottom line."

The Body Shop's success and creation of its green corporate image set the standard among conventional business to adopt an environmentally-responsible orientation throughout its policies, strategies and operations. For instance, Seward (1990) explains:

each piece of plastic used is audited in an effort to control waste. The Body Shop regularly orders pesticide tests on the natural ingredients used in its products. Roddick also commissions labor studies to ensure that her wares are produced under fair work conditions. (p. 97)

Consequently, its "unyielding commitment to the environment that goes beyond lip service to popular issues" (Seward, 1990, p. 97), saw The Body Shop become a leader in the field of environmentally-friendly products and strengthened its financial, strategic and competitive position (Seward, 1990). In particular, The Body Shop's adoption of product stewardship policies also set it apart from its competitors. Such policies included responsibility for products from 'cradle to grave' (Gladwin, 1993, p. 45), and were based on the concept of clean design and minimal environmental impact. Additionally, The Body Shop "has also created an environmental department, built its own plastics-recycling facility, and reduced fluorocarbon emissions with state-of-the-art machinery" (Mirvis, 1994, p. 89). Such tangible investments in infrastructure were a sure sign of a company's seriousness about environmentalism (Pettigrew, 1989).

Another measure of a company's commitment to environmentalism was its willingness to measure its environmental performance and report the results. The Body Shop undertook its first environmental audit in September, 1989 (Hopfenbeck, 1993). The Body Shop continued to conduct annual environmental audits which were certified by recognised experts. Its annual Green Report, made available to investors, customers and the general public, celebrated achievements but also criticized the firm's shortcomings (Mirvis, 1994). While Welford (1994) points out that "environmental auditing has a very high profile at The Body Shop" (p. 97), it was "not yet compulsory in business" (p. 98). In fact, this relatively new approach was based on the process of auditing for sustainability. It was a "holistic approach predicated on a clear world view and an understanding of the need for a paradigm shift in business culture" (Welford, 1994, p. 100; see also Commoner, 1990; Wheeler,

1993). In 1992, Roddick was described by the International Chamber of Commerce as 'the inventor of sustainable retailing' (Willaims & Goliike, 1992, cited in Welford, 1994).

The Body Shop's stand on various social and environmental causes was also evident in its advertising practices, such as its unconventional displays in shop windows (Welford, 1994). But this decision to advertise its protest invited both negative and positive reactions. For instance, Klein (2001) provides us with an example of a negative response to the organisation's actions by stating that: "The Body Shop – though it may well be the most progressive multinational on the planet – still has a tendency to display its good deeds in its store windows before getting its corporate house in order" (p. 361). Other were more supportive of The Body Shop as pointed out by Vidal and Brown (1994, cited in Kearins & Klȳn, 1999) who claimed that it was certainly a lot better than many other companies. Vidal and Brown (1994) justified their claim by stating that:

Last week, several thousand acres of far eastern rainforest was offered for clear-felling on the London stock exchange and no-one batted an eye-lid. Other multinationals doubtless polluted waterways or spilt their toxics, ram-raided poor communities or locked whole communities into debt. Yet Body Shop was hauled over the coals for spilling 30 gallons of fuzzy peach shower gel some years ago. (cited in Kearins & Klȳn, 1999, p. 293)

Indeed, close and merciless public and media scrutiny, frightened many companies away from adopting higher ethical and environmental criteria of performance (Drummond, 1994). Many companies were concerned about setting themselves up as 'social crusaders' since they may face public criticism if their actions were seen as being self-serving (Svendsen, 1998). Capitalising on good eco-performance in search of competitive advantage was also made difficult by the attitude of the media. For example, Peattie (1999) states that: "Companies such as The Body Shop...have found that the media is more inclined to attack relatively good companies for their absolute shortcomings, than to highlight the poor environmental performance of conventional companies" (p. 65). Critics were noted as saying: "She [Roddick] has little time for business people, seeing them as money-grubbers and enemies of the environment. But that has never stopped her taking their money" (Ratner, cited in Rushe, 2001, p. 8).

The Body Shop's highly publicised image as a cosmetics company with 'green' products meant that the organisation stood out in the crowd and at times, struggled to reach its ideals. For example, many questioned the need for green products at all (Beder, 1997; see also Eden, 1990; Plant & Albert, 1991; Irvine, 1991). Kearins & Klÿn, (1999) provide an example of such contention when they remark that: "The low rate return [of bottles], coupled with The Body Shop's staggering growth rate, surely outweighs many of the company's environmental initiatives by the sheer volume of waste it creates" (p. 291).

Additionally, in 1991, the *Economist* reported that cosmetics sales were declining, partly because of the rise of the healthy natural look (Beder, 1997). The green concerns of consumers forced many British organisations to re-evaluate all their environmental-related activities (Vandermerwe & Oliff, 1990). But the fact that The Body Shop was going against the trend of declining sales because of its emphasis on biodegradable, non-animal-tested products was not missed (Klein, 2001). Roddick's passionate commitment to the environment and abhorrence of the idea of animal testing gave her cosmetics chain a *raison d'être* way beyond the provision of beauty treatments. Green consumers were not just purchasing efficacious shampoos, nor were they simply acquiring aspirational fashion and image values through colourful and stylish cosmetics. They were voting with their wallets for an ethical stance. In fact, while The Body Shop continued to endorse such values, it recognised the potential of publicizing these values by strategically but tactfully, marketing a green image (Kearins & Klÿn, 1999).

The nineties saw a change in business attitudes towards environmentalism (Dechant, Altman, Dowining & Keeney, 1994; Karliner, 1997). Corporations such as Johnson & Johnson, The Body Shop, Procter & Gamble, Lever Brothers, Pitney Bowes, IBM, Olin, Colgate-Palmolive presented the rest of the business community with the ideas, success stories, problems and even setbacks involved in their efforts to make environmentalism a part of the overall process of doing business and to link green objectives with profit goals. It seemed that these firms had moved past the "why are you telling me what to do?" attitude of the 1970s when companies' environmental

efforts were driven primarily by government regulation and a desire to avoid significant legal and financial liabilities (Dechant, et al. 1994, Karliner, 1997). This has resulted in what Clifton and Buss (1993) see as “greater acceptance that far-reaching internal policy and action on environmental issues must always precede external communication if the latter is to succeed” (p. 241). Worker contentment, commitment and solidarity were hallmarks of the green organisation (Ford, 1993).

Indeed it is said that many employees increasingly wanted to work for more environmentally responsible companies, and make a genuine corporate commitment to the environment (Charter, 1992). In fact, The Body Shop selects employees, and the employees choose to work for the organisation, in large part because of their mutual agreement on environmental values (Shrivastava, 1996). More specifically, as pointed out by Shrivastava (1996), The Body Shop makes such personal environmental projects a part of employees’ formal job contract. Further, others suggest that The Body Shop’s pioneering role in greener retailing appears to be well received, being mentioned by both managers and notably, graduates, well ahead of other companies on environmental responsibility (see Charter, 1992). Mirvis (1994) describes the meaning and motivation for employees at The Body Shop:

At The Body Shop, employees are paid up to ten hours per week to work in social and environmental campaigns...Meanwhile, employees are exposed to a variety of stimuli about social and environmental issues and what their company is doing about them. Roddick acknowledges that this too has a commercial benefit...[employees] expect better environmental performance from their companies and, according to Roddick,...internalise these expectations and expect more of themselves in this regard. (p. 92)

In 1991 The Body Shop was presented with the Award for Employee Volunteering in recognition of its support for employee activity in the community (Charter, 1992).

The Body Shop’s growth was a “result of its exploitation of the niche market for cosmetics made from natural ingredients (Arbose, 1986, p. 37). The Body Shop and Sebastian International of the United States, both beauty-products retailers, positioned themselves as environmentally friendly companies, using all-natural ingredients in their products (Dechant, et al., 1994). But many green products, once in niche

markets, became part of the general merchandise found in all sorts of stores. In fact, the number of new green product introductions proliferated (Ottman, 1993; Banerjee, Gulas & Iyer, 1995; Beder, 1997). Undeniably, marketers discovered a trend and exploited it. These trends, according to Beder (1997) resulted in green imagery being used to sell products and caring for the environment has, unfortunately, become a marketing strategy.

Indeed the promotion of a green corporate image was the most common theme of advertisements in the 1990s (about 40% for television and 31% for print) (Banerjee, et al, 1995). Organisations set out to portray an image of corporate environmental responsibility as a part of their overall company image enhancement. The need to project a public image of environmental responsibility indicated the influence that the environmental movement had on corporate image advertising.

But being green saw some companies pricing their products out of the market resulting in them losing profits and competitiveness. Shrivastava's (1996) writings on the 'missionary' aspects of greening at The Body Shop, explained that environmental protection and environmental sustainability were part of the mission and vision of a company. "This is often attributed to Anita Roddick herself and while many of the principles are hers, the truth is that commitment in the organisation exists not only at board level but throughout the whole organisation" (Welford, 1994, p. 93) For many organisations, the "most important and perhaps the most difficult leadership task may be that of creating and maintaining green values within an organisation" (Shrivastava, cited in Gladwin, 1993, p. 53). It was here that Shrivastava (1996) saw the need for charismatic leadership like that supplied by Anita Roddick of The Body Shop: "She not only created a new retail category, she also anticipated the rise of socially and environmentally concerned businesses. Roddick saw as her greatest accomplishment the combination of business and social responsibility (Wilson, 1998, p. 118).

The Body Shop in the context of corporate social responsibility

The Body Shop has approached ethical management on a much broader basis than just environmental issues (Varey, 2001). The Body Shop is a frequently cited example of a

company which seeks to gain a competitive edge in the crowded toiletries market by displaying a commitment to its responsibilities to society (Harrison, 1997, p. 134). Its crusade included upholding social and ethical responsibility in business and encompassed fair trade, human welfare and social justice issues. “Its high-profile stance on social issues” was yet “another thing that made The Body Shop stand out from its competitors” (Burlingham, 1990, p. 34). Many acknowledged Roddick’s role in “creating a global community whose members believe that companies should help solve major social problems – not by contributing a percentage of their profits to charity, but by using all of their resources to develop effective solutions” (Burlingham, 1990, p. 34).

Indeed, many activities of management had a moral dimension; even if business was deemed to be about maximising shareholders’ wealth, it had an ethical underpinning (Beumont, Pedersen & Whitaker, 1993). But traditionally, in business and marketing, it was held that the major responsibility of business was to produce goods and services and to sell them for a profit. The traditional view of business was stated some years ago by management theorist Oliver Sheldon (1923), who argued that management derived its legitimacy from applying scientific principles to the running of corporate organisations. A more modern statement of the same view was put forward by economist Milton Friedman (1962), one of the most forceful exponents of the traditional ideology:

There is one and only one social responsibility of business – to use its resources and engage in activities designed to increase profits so long as it stays within the rules of the game, engages in open and free competition, without deception or fraud. (p. 33)

From a purist economic standpoint, business was for business, the shareholders came first and last, and talk of other stakeholders such as customers, suppliers and employees was not only confused but deluded (*The Dominion*, 1998). But Roddick challenged the traditional view of business by espousing “two basic values of work and love. These values have fostered a strong sense of commitment to and from employees, customers, suppliers, the natural environment, and humanity” (Shrivastava, 1996, p. 78). Furthermore, the Body Shop continued to thrive and expand. Harrison (1997) explains:

Clearly, The Body Shop has found its adoption of corporate social responsibility to be a highly profitable strategy, and possibly even Friedman would see that the bottom line can be served by companies who prefer to discharge their responsibilities to society. (p. 134)

But a concern with social responsibilities raised serious questions about this view of ethics and business. The problems that social responsibility advocates addressed, such as pollution and unsafe workplaces, were in large part created by the drive for efficiency in the marketplace. Thus, according to Buchholz (1993), it began to be argued that there was a divergence between the performance of business in the marketplace and its performance as far as the social aspects of its behaviour were concerned. However, Welford (1994) argued that “The Body Shop has proved that we can reshape the way in which we do business and that we do not have to continue to degrade the planet, be cruel to animals and exploit people with less power than they deserve” (p. 109).

Organisations faced growing pressure to consider their responsibilities. The rise of consumerism, the increasing public awareness of environmental and ethical issues assisted by sophisticated pressure groups, the understanding by business that a competitive edge can depend on reputation and not simply on products, price or services all led to the conclusion that companies could not afford to ignore corporate social responsibility (Harrison, 1997). It was at these points of intersection between the economic performance of business and changing social values of society that ethical questions began to surface. Business increasingly became to be viewed as a social as well as an economic institution. Social responsibility advocates in the late 1980s strongly argued that management needed to take the social impacts of business into account when developing policies and strategies and much effort was devoted to convincing management to take its social responsibilities seriously (Buchholz, 1993). The Body Shop was regarded as a leader in this context. At least, according to Buchholz (1993):

There is little doubt that The Body Shop leads the business community in coming to terms with many of these issues and delivering workable strategies which can make a difference to the world in which they live...The Body Shop is pushing forward the frontiers of doing business ethically and sustainably. (p. 109)

There were also other entrepreneurs who believed that business has a responsibility to society. For example, others acknowledged their contribution:

Socially responsible super founders like the two real guys in Vermont...or Yvon Chouinard of Patagonia, or Paul Hawken of Smith & Hawken have become irresistible apologists for the notion that you can do the right thing – care for employees, suppliers, customers, and indeed, the planet – and still turn a profit to please the most capitalist of pigs. (Murphy, 1994, p. 47).

Many of these companies provided lessons to the rest of the business community and proved that “you don’t have to sacrifice social involvement on the altar of maximised profits” (Cohen & Greenfield, 1998, p. 268). But as Murphy (1994) points out, these companies have shown no reluctance to crow about their rectitude and have benefited enormously from media exposure and increased profits. In this way, these companies proved that “social responsibility need not come at the expense of the bottom line” (Schlegelmich, 1998, p. 142). Many cited The Body Shop as “living proof that a company thoroughly committed to social responsibility can also be financial success” (Garfield, 1992, p. 5). According to Garfield (1995), “Roddick believes that a company can both make money and make ethical and moral decisions” (p. 6). The Body Shop is not only a phenomenal economic success but also an international symbol of corporate social responsibility, waging campaigns that have ranged from saving the whales to rescuing the rainforests (Garfield, 1995).

It is not that profits were unimportant to The Body Shop, Levi Strauss, Working Assets, and other socially concerned companies; “it’s just that they are not the central priority” (Garfield, 1992, p. 5). The shift in corporate values mirrored other shifts in the more traditional paradigms of management. The end of the 1990s saw businesses adopting more values of good corporate citizenship (Ray & Rinzler, 1993). For instance corporations provided funding for community-development projects, emphasised employee involvement, and shared decision-making indicating stronger values around humanitarianism (Ray & Rinzler, 1993). But the shift was slow and many within the corporate world resisted *detailed* consideration of social responsibility. (Deetz, 1995). Those companies who did embrace corporate social responsibility early on were often criticised and viewed with suspicion. Lennon

(1997) cites The Body Shop as example of one of the few more progressive companies who integrated social responsibility into their business philosophy:

Terms like 'social audit', 'values-aware management', and 'the moral duties of management' became part of Roddick's daily vocabulary and this continues to irritate more conventional businessmen. Sir Stanley Kalms, head of giant electrical retailer Dixons, criticised her 'frenetic, self righteous approach' adding that she is 'the master' of the broad and sweeping generalisation. (Lennon, 1997, p. 40)

Efforts were also made to regulate corporate social performance with the rise of social accounting, auditing and reporting (Hess, 2001). Gray, Owen & Maunders (1987) define corporate social reporting as:

...the process of communicating the social and environmental effects of organisations' economic actions to particular interest groups within society and to society at large. As such, it involves extending the accountability of organisations (particularly companies), beyond the traditional role of providing account to the owner of capital, in particular, shareholders. Such an extension is predicated upon the assumption that companies do have wider responsibilities than simply to make money for their shareholders. (p. ix)

While regulatory approaches in the area of social responsibility was on the rise in the 1960s and 1970s, the 1980s did not see a continuation of this movement (Hess, 2001). In the 1980s and 1990s, social reporting continued to remain low on the corporate agenda. There were widespread corporate qualms about possible adversarial use of any social reports including critical commentary (Hess, 2001). On the other hand, environmental audits were more widespread and in a short period of time, emerged as accepted and common place in the business world (Hess, 2001). Encouraged by the success of environmental auditing, there was a resurgence of the social reporting movement in Europe: "Social reports conducted by The Body Shop International and Ben and Jerry's Homemade have also brought recent attention to this field" (Hess, 2001, p. 312).

Indeed The Body Shop provided the business community "with a path along which we should expect other businesses to tread" (Welford, 1994, p. 109). The 1990s saw organisations begin to consider the importance of corporate social responsibility. For instance, in a survey carried out by Loughborough University for *The Economist* in

1991, 1,800 British business people were asked what qualities contributed to a good, positive corporate reputation. They came up with a list in which community and environmental responsibility ranked the highest (Harrison, 1995). In 1993, another survey was carried out among opinion leaders in the City of London. The top six qualities of the 'ideal' company could all be said to reflect corporate social responsibility (Opinion Leader Research, 1993). More and more companies were committing themselves to what was being termed 'enlightened capitalism' (Richards, 1995). "These companies realise that by supporting causes or community projects relevant to their corporate or product brands, they can bolster their image and improve bottom lines at the same time. At The Body Shop, brand and cause are intertwined" (Richards, 1995, p. 24).

The latter half of the 1990s saw the emergence of a network of environmental, labour and human rights activists determined to expose the damage being done behind the slick veneer. Dozens of new organisations and publications have been founded for the sole purpose of 'outing' corporations that are benefiting from repressive government policies around the globe (Klein, 2001) reflecting a growing interest in and a more critical attitude towards the consequences and actions a company has on society. As a result, Jensen and Rud (1995) suggested that "the justification for the company's existence is therefore no longer merely associated with its profit levels and its economic significance for society" (p. 13). In contrast to the past, it became important for the company to abide by the institutionalised norms and values formed by society and to be seen as socially responsible.

The concept of corporate social responsibility became ever more closely associated with public relations, particularly at a strategic level. Speakers with success stories to tell were also in demand. According to Walloga (1994), many of these role models were CEOs who had set a standard of excellence by turning corporate responsibility into an advantage rather than a burden. In these terms, public relations became involved in social responsibility because of its representational role and responsibility for managing relationships (Jensen & Rud, 1995). Jensen and Rud (1995) offered the following definition of public relations in relation to corporate social responsibility:

“Today the aim of public relations is to generate understanding and acceptance of the company’s actions in society, which means building a bridge between the company and the surrounding world” (p. 13). In fact, Grunig and Hunt (1984) concluded that public relations *is* the practice of social responsibility.

The Body Shop has been cited as a well-known example of using public relations and sponsorship for marketing purposes instead of advertising (Jacob, 1992). Jacob (1992) explains: “Roddick admits manipulating the press to get free publicity”, especially for The Body Shop’s campaigns (p. 63). It was the aim of the Values and Visions Department to wage campaigns: against the Nigerian government for its execution of Ken Saro-Wiwa, an environmental activist among the Ogoni people; against nuclear testing in the South Pacific (Kochan, 1997). In addition to Roddick’s more original concepts was community trade where The Body Shop established trading relationships with indigenous tribes. This initiative was set up “to ensure that her company is paying a reasonable price to the small and sometimes impoverished developing-world suppliers of The Body Shop’s raw materials” (Kochan, 1997, p. 46).

Easterhouse in Scrathclyde (Scotland) and Nepal in the Himalayas are just two communities which have seen The Body Shop’s involvement in community affairs projects. In 1987, the company embarked on a local project to refurbish an old factory in Easterhouse, a community in north-east Glasgow suffering from severe economic and social problems (Shrivastava, 1996). The cornerstone of The Body Shop involvement is the ‘Soapworks’, a soap factory. The factory was a considerable success employing almost 100 people and producing almost five million bars of soap (Cannon, 1992, p. 42). In 1988, the company launched a paper-making project in Nepal (Shrivastava, 1996). This project provides employment for dozens of people, many of them women. It has revived the dormant traditional craft of homemade paper. Local craft workers have bought their own factory with the income generated by this project. The company also established a travelling medical clinic to treat the eye diseases widely prevalent in Nepal (Shrivastava, 1996). In the Amazon rain forests, the company has established trade links with the Kayapo Indians (Jacob, 1992). The

Kayapo community harvests and processes Brazil nuts for use in The Body Shop products (Jacob, 1992).

In sum, The Body Shop operated in a variety of political, social, cultural and economic contexts. As a company committed to the pursuit of social and environmental change, The Body Shop ran counterculture to the dominant institutions of British society. When it opened its doors in 1976, the feminist movement was gaining momentum, the environmental movement was experiencing global success, and the Business for Social Responsibility movement was enjoying increasing attention from organisations, politicians and the media. The 1970s presented The Body Shop with the opportunity to form strategic alliances with activists and social movements and thus position itself as a company that was different to the conventional cosmetics industry.

The following section outlines how The Body Shop, once it had established its position as a leader in the cosmetics and beauty industry, as an advocate of the feminist cause, as a role model in corporate environmentalism and as a pioneer in the Business for Social Responsibility movement, set out to communicate its distinct characteristics to relevant stakeholders. In contrast to the rest of the cosmetics industry, and in line with its unusual position in the marketplace, The Body Shop's approach to corporate communication was unique, innovative and often contentious. A description of The Body Shop's communicative strategies is outlined below.

The Body Shop approach to corporate communication

Communication, especially in relation to the environment and social issues, is viewed not just as a trendy add-on, but as a cultural and educational enterprise at The Body Shop:

Anita Roddick built the Body Shop into a major brand with no advertising. Instead she travelled the world on a relentless quest for publicity, pushing her ideas about the environment. It was the endless torrent of newspaper and magazine articles, plus radio and television interviews, that literally created The Body Shop brand. (Ries & Ries, 1998, p. 26)

If a company was urged to view everything it does, from its letterheads to its packaging, trucks and most random comments, as a potential marketing opportunity, The Body Shop has put that practice into play dramatically.

Many organisations sell themselves as much as they sell their product. For instance, as stated by Welford & Gouldson, (1993): “when one thinks of The Body Shop it is difficult not to think of their stance on environmental issues and animal testing” (p. 157). In this way, Smith (1994) points out that the strategic use of philanthropy and other social responsibility activities has “begun to give companies a powerful competitive edge” (p. 105). Roddick’s promotion of social responsibility increased the visibility of her company, influenced consumers’ perceptions and helped The Body Shop maintain a positive public image. It also proved to be a winning formula that helped The Body Shop become one of the most successful companies in the 1980s by the criteria of a strong position in the marketplace, being recognisable, being consistent with the company’s goals and values and by communicating openly and honestly with stakeholders (Argenti, 1998).

One of the most important vehicles for communications with stakeholders is the publication of The Body Shop’s annual environmental audit statement. The Body Shop sufficiently committed to the principle of full public disclosure of environmental information to publish its 1991/92 audit in line with draft EC regulation (Wheeler, 1994). In this way – by a combination of full disclosure and independent validation – “The Body Shop ensures that honesty and integrity characterises every aspect of environmental communications with its customers, its staff, environmental interest groups, regulatory bodies and the rest of industry” (Wheeler, 1994, p. 405).

The communicative strategies aimed more specifically at customers and staff of The Body Shop comprised a new improved marketing with added public relations. Roddick did not reject marketing completely but instead selected techniques that she then made distinctive to her business including face-to-face, word-of-mouth, and creative approaches to selling. Take for example the sprinkling of poupourri along a footpath to attract customers to her shop. Additionally, The Body Shop was often

referred to as a company “built up without a lot of advertising, relying primarily on PR” (Miller, 1995, p. 6). But taking a stance against advertising did not mean Roddick had anything against the media. In fact “one company source estimated The Body Shop gets about \$US3.5 million per year in free publicity from press articles and TV and radio appearances” (Mandow, 1991, p. 56). Roddick courted the media, inviting them into the company, making herself available for interviews and speaking freely about the company’s progressive causes. The Body Shop also has a vigorous programme of “promoting talks to schools and colleges” (Wheeler, 1994, p. 401).

It is said that The Body Shop’s customer base is loyal – demanding a relationship not just with the products, but with the company (Gattuso & Neal, 1994, p. 9) and that through creative but effective public relations, The Body Shop also established “credibility with its customers by educating them” (Burlingham, 1990, p. 34). Arbose (1986) explains:

it offers documentation on labels and fact sheets about ingredients in its products. Anita Roddick maintains that consumers are sceptical of extravagant product claims, which Body Shop avoids. The chain also shuns market research, relying on customer feedback instead. (p. 37)

Haggin & Kartomten (1992) claim that for The Body Shop’s “sophisticated, educated customers, using a straightforward approach to communicating its philosophy and unique selling proposition is what works” (p. 91) Also, it very clearly sends a message of the “company’s commitment to ethics and the environment” (Haggin & Kartomten, 1992, p. 91). Thus, The Body Shop provided information, made everything clear from its product ingredients to its values and let customers make informed decisions about whether they wanted to do business with the company (Burlingham, 1990, p. 34). For example, “the label on one of her first products, a henna hair treatment, announced bluntly that it smelled like manure but was great for the hair” (Jacob, 1992, p. 63).

The tell-all tradition survives today with a constant educational effort on issues of daily operational importance to the company. “Leaflets and broadsheets available to customers are supplemented by promotional posters, shelf cards and educational messages on till receipts and carrier bags” (Wheeler, 1994, p. 400). Complex information is given to customers through talks held by The Body Shop managers at

local community meetings, through factory tours, or through detailed *Values Reports* which can be ordered by mail or read via the Internet (Varey, 2001). The Body Shop's innovative communicative practices were the topic in many management journals (see Oates, 1988; Arbose, 1986; Seward, 1990; Wallace, 1990; Freeman, 1991) and had "business schools round the world wondering if they hadn't been wrong all along" (Mandow, 1991, p. 56).

Some marketers referred to The Body Shop's early tactics as classic marketing techniques (see Chipperfield, 1988). Indeed, more recently shop fronts, catalogues, postcards, net sites and mail order services all resemble more standard marketing strategies. Other tactics were not so customary. Roddick looked for unconventional, low-cost tactics to get attention (Mandow, 1991). At The Body Shop, "external education and communication activities are organised centrally and the main outlets for environmental messages are the shops" (Wheeler, 1994, p. 400). The Body Shop also regarded design as an important part of its packaging and promotional materials. "It places emphasis on powerful, shocking window displays" (Simpson, 1986, p. 24). Roddick regarded the shop as political theatre. There are no advertising photographs of glamorous models. "Instead her stores (she prefers to think of them as social-action stations) are decorated with posters" denouncing the use of animals for cosmetics testing, urging women to become politically active in their communities and lobbying customers to speak out on issues that affect them. (Kochan, 1997, p. 47). "She clearly knows that the majority of her target audience (90 percent of whom are women) want social principles attached to the products they buy" (Kochan, 1997, p. 47).

In line with the company's commitment to educate, communicate, and inform, it set out to help employees realise their own potential. The Body Shop ran seminars and workshops on numerous social and environmental issues such as drug and alcohol abuse, homelessness and unemployment (Prickett, 1997). Learning is delivered in a variety of ways. But the common factor that unites all methods of delivery is empowerment. Managers do not send staff on courses. Instead, individuals at The Body Shop are encouraged to identify the learning they need and ask for it (Prickett, 1997, p. 43). A further popular initiative has been the 'learning is of value to

everyone' (LOVE) initiative, in which "employees are given £100 to spend on non-vocational programmes" (Prickett, 1997, p. 43).

Another vital component of corporate and international communication was The Body Shop's own Body Shop TV (BSTV) company, Jacaranda Productions, set up in 1987 (Wheeler, 1994). Every week in the UK and every month internationally, Jacaranda produces a 15-20 minute news video which covers all the major items of relevance to staff around the world (Wheeler, 1994). BSTV features "new product information, campaigns, merchandising tips, and coverage of a plethora of general interest items, including the environment" (Wheeler, 1994, p. 403). Whether it is publication of an environmental audit report, progress on The Body Shop's wind farm investment, or campaigns on packaging, BSTV is there and the information is relayed direct to staff in 45 countries (Wheeler, 1994).

Information was also directed towards external audiences. For instance, Body Shop vehicles became moving billboards "carrying out onto the highways messages that inform, educate or entertain the public" (Mandow, 1991, p. 56). One such campaign involved painting the faces of four missing persons onto the trucks with the number of a telephone helpline. The Body Shop saw this as an opportunity not to increase sales of a specific product but to link itself to the community (Mandow, 1991). The Body Shop certainly demonstrated that taking a high profile in the community was a far better marketing strategy than trying to outspend the competition on advertising. Put simply, "Roddick has learned that soap and social action sell" (Kochan, 1997, p. 46)

In relation to the shift in corporate thinking and conventional marketing in the 1980s, The Body Shop provided valuable lessons to both mainstream business and conventional marketing. When invited to speak at the Direct Marketing Association's 77th Annual Conference and Exhibition in San Francisco, Roddick discussed how her passion for retailing goes beyond the cash register. "Roddick told attendees that the best marketing strategy is the one that one's competitor is unwilling or unable to follow" (Gattuso & Neal, 1994, p. 10). Kearins and Klȳn (1999) explain how The

Body Shop has contributed to the marketing of social and environmental issues in business:

The Body Shop has certainly raised the profile of green consumerism and boosted other environmental causes, but whether its actions will stimulate people to examine critically both their own lifestyles and society as a whole requires further evaluation. The key lesson from The Body Shop case is that marketing can, and probably should have, a far broader focus around principles and values than just changing people's perceptions around products. (Kearins & Klȳn, 1999, p. 298)

Thus, the conversation between marketing and The Body Shop was insightful for both The Body Shop and the marketing profession as ideas were exchanged, borrowed and taught. According to futurist Faith Popcorn, "it is a delicious paradox that The Body Shop, with no marketing department and no advertising, is now being cited as a paradigm for how to sell in the nineties" (cited in Jacob, 1992, p. 63). It was believed to work because typical Body Shoppers were a sceptical group who distrusted advertising and sales hype, demanded more product information, and were loyal to companies they considered responsible corporate citizens (Popcorn, 1996). Kotler (1999) calls the 'old marketing' 'Neanderthal Marketing' because it "equated marketing with selling, it emphasised customer acquisition rather than customer care and it sold the product rather than trying to understand the real needs of the customer" (p. 13). The future relies on companies that "invent new ways to create, communicate, and deliver value to their target audience" (Kotler, 1999, p. 13). In Kotler's list of 30 marketing visionaries, Anita Roddick of The Body Shop is ranked as number one.

The Body Shop's approach to communication was one built on creativity, disclosure, and relationships. The unconventional tactics of The Body Shop's communicative strategies in the 1970s and 1980s proved successful at a time when British society began to re-examine the dominant ideologies in the business world and challenge accepted social, cultural and political wisdoms (Welford, 1995). The Body Shop's corporate communication was designed to be non-stereotypical, non-exploitative and open to public scrutiny (Welford, 1995). However, the 1990s saw a dramatic increase in concerns about whether The Body Shop, along with other progressive businesses, were "oversimplifying complex moral issues and exaggerating positive corporate

behaviour” (Entine, 1995, p. 104). Welford (1995) argues that “the context in which the business operates has been changed because of a growing public familiarity with environmental issues” (Welford, 1995, p. 150). This continued throughout the 1990s as the consumer became “more sophisticated in what he or she believes from the corporate message” (p, 150). In other words, the public demanded companies preach *only* what was practiced.

Conclusion

The social, political, and economic contexts out of which The Body Shop grew illustrate the growing importance of ‘relationships’ between business and the environment and business and society. The Body Shop, a skin and hair care retailer, entered the business world at a time when social movements were fighting hard for change. Management practices were devoted to maximising profits and little else (Lander, et al. 1993). The notion of dedicating one’s business to the pursuit of social and environmental change was truly innovative, yet controversial, particularly in the cosmetics industry, in 1976. The Body Shop’s approach to ethical management encompassed environmental issues, fair trade, animal rights, feminine principles, human welfare and social justice issues. The credibility of communication was also established along more unconventional lines as The Body Shop ran counterculture to the traditional cosmetics industry.

Several decades later, conventional business is now trying to win customers by claiming to be ethical social institutions. But with perhaps a somewhat tarnished identity and a more diluted image, The Body Shop is still a role model for other companies. While still maintaining a caring-for-the-world approach, The Body Shop survived a rough period during the early 1990s when a number of other retailers went under (Lennon, 1997). It is clear that sound business practice underlied The Body Shop operation. For all her crusading zeal, Roddick was no less a businesswoman with sharp commercial sense. The Body Shop continues to be commended for attempting to implement procedures to deal with ethical and environmental issues that are not even considered by some. “The challenge for The Body Shop is to stay ahead

of the pack and show that being socially responsible can also be a profitable business” (Rushe, 2001, p. 8).

As an identity that has both endured and shifted in emphasis over a quarter century, The Body Shop is a fascinating case. Not only does it provide the context of a conversation between the company and the larger society, it contributes to the wider understanding of the relationship between both individual and organisational identity and narrative, particularly in value-led business organisations. Additionally, it offers insight into the role of leadership and the leader’s values commitments and ethics as constitutive of the organisation, its position, its distinctiveness, and its success. The concepts of narrative and identity which situate the relevant domains of this research are explored in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 3

THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES ON IDENTITY AND NARRATIVE

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to outline the theoretical concepts that are used to frame the analysis of The Body Shop's corporate communication. It discusses the concepts of individual and organisational identity as well as narrative and explores their relevance to corporate communication in a values-led business organisation. Accordingly, the role of (organisational) values in corporate narratives of identity will also be investigated.

I am interested in a variety of approaches to narrative and identity but especially interested in how narrative and identity might play out together with respect to an organisation such as The Body Shop. Consequently, a different kind of lens is placed on those particular elements of narrative, or particular applications of narrative, than we would ordinarily find in literary theory. Likewise, this study assumes a very dynamic perspective on identity in the context of an organisation. This is one that privileges discourse, one that privileges storytelling, and one that sees an organisation's identity as unfolding over time in negotiation between multiple parties

The first part of the chapter, *Identity*, traces the development of the study of identity in the twentieth century. It details political theorist, W. J. M. Mackenzie's (1978) thoughts about the transformation and increasing ambiguity of the term 'identity'. Specifically, the discussion highlights the emphasis of identity in relation to uniqueness rather than sameness. Mackenzie (1978) draws heavily on Kenneth Burke in his exploration of the rhetoric of identification and what this means for modern organisations. Also drawing on Burke, organisational communication theorists argue the growing need for organisations to manage their identities in their quest for visibility and credibility (Christensen & Askegaard, 2001; Christensen & Cheney, 1994; Cheney & Christensen, 2000). In an effort to position themselves as *distinct from others*, many organisations promote their identity in terms of values and

strategically adopt these values in their organisational and corporate discourse.

Christensen and Cheney (1994) explain:

Today, we witness all sorts of organisations struggling to articulate their identities in the marketplace of discourses and images. Some corporations, for example, work to personalise their identities in various ways, including the use of visible representatives...or characters...Other organisations...“ground” themselves in key values or concerns. (p. 224)

Christensen and Cheney (1994) highlight the paradoxical nature of identity, particularly in relation to organisations, which reveals certain contradictions and struggles present in corporate identity discourse. For instance, many organisations use very similar bases and discursive techniques to advocate their ‘distinctness’. The proliferation of the Business for Social Responsibility movement is an excellent illustration of this. Values-led businesses such as The Body Shop have built their identity differences out of unique combinations of sameness, linking themselves with like-minded organisations and distancing themselves from others.

In the second part of this chapter, *Narrative*, I look at the importance of narrative in terms of perspectives on, and modes of, communication. Here, the ideas of Kenneth Burke (1966, 1969a, 1969b) and Walter Fisher (1984, 1985, 1987, 1989, 1990) figure predominantly in the examination of how people use narratives to create meaning. The section also focuses on the importance of narrative in relation to identity. Friedrich Nietzsche’s (1982) writings on the self and identity and Sigmund Freud’s (1959) theory of identification support the linkage of identity to narrative, particularly from a rhetorical standpoint. Not only are their ideas closely related in terms of rhetoric, such as the telling of self-stories, their treatment of identification opens the way for a deeper understanding of the origins and applications of theories of identification. Inspired by the early theories of identification, many organisational communication theorists have explored the narrative character of identity in modern organisations (Albert & Whetten, 1985; Cheney, 1983a, 1983b, 1991, 1992; Cheney & Tompkins, 1987; Tompkins & Cheney, 1985; Cheney & Vibbert, 1987; Czarniawska, 1997, 1998, 2000, 2001). Of particular interest to the concerns of this thesis is Barbara Czarniawska’s (1997) approach, which builds on Fisher’s claim that “narratives are a natural form of organisational communication” (p. 28) and stresses

the importance of the organisation's narratives in the actual development of its identity.

Identity

For more than a century, 'identity' has been a key problematic in western social inquiry. In his seminal work, *Political identity*, Mackenzie (1978) eloquently describes the obscure nature of 'identity' by illustrating the shift from its referring to 'sameness' becoming a reference to 'essence.' In other words, as Cheney (1985) points out, we "express our uniqueness or individuality only by aligning ourselves with *other* individuals, groups, or social categories" (p. 55, emphasis added). Cheney (1985) goes on to illustrate the strategic ambiguity surrounding the term 'identity': "sameness and difference mutually implicate one another, exist in ongoing dialectical tension, and provide the formative context for what we call our 'identity'" (p. 55)

It was not until the early nineteenth century that the term 'identity' came into popular usage-in terms of a stress on *uniqueness*. In his study on rhetoric, identity and organisation, Cheney (1991) explains that "Identity is a preoccupation of contemporary Western society, and the *management of multiple identities* is a preoccupation of contemporary organisational life" (p. 23, emphasis in original). Given the significance of identity to the management of organisations it is important to review the major theoretical formulations of human identity which ultimately contribute to the perspective being advocated in this thesis: that *both* identity and narrative are essential to understanding organisational life.

An historical tracing of the concept of human identity

In his attempt to trace the lexicographic origins of identity, Mackenzie (1978) explains: "The word 'identity' appears to mirror the Latin word *identitas*. But there is no such word in classical Latin. If there were such a word it would have come either from *idem* 'the same', or from *identidem*, 'repeatedly'" (p. 19). Further development of the word came from Aristotle, who coined the abstract term *tautotes*, "rendered exactly into Latin by *identitas*, except that the Latin is a word simply for 'sameness' without any aura of 'selfhood'" (Mackenzie, 1978, p. 19). Tompkins and Cheney

(1985) suggest that perhaps the homogeneous or univocal nature of society in Athens in 400B.C. led Aristotle to believe that it was quite appropriate to stress *sameness* rather than difference. After all, here was a society that was far simpler in social organisation than that of contemporary western society; One “shared education, cultural premises, and his few basic allegiances with his fellows” (Cheney, 1985, p. 52). In *Nicomachen Ethics*, Aristotle (1925) wrote:

And brothers love each other as being sprung from the same; that is, their sameness (tautotes) with the common stock creates a sameness with one another...In fact they are the same in a sense, even in the separate distinct individuals. (p. 231)

While Mackenzie (1978) points out that the “word owes its origin to Aristotle, who uses it in a sense which is quite familiar though difficult, that of ‘shared identity’” (p. 26), he traces the term “identity” through late Roman and Medieval thought, when it was “concerned primarily with the central mystery of Christianity, three persons who are one person” (p. 26). Debated conversations on whether the members of the Trinity are the same or simply alike in substance further highlighted the “‘strategic’ ambiguity surrounding the very concept of identity” (Cheney, 1985, p. 55).

Romantic conversations continued to transform notions of identity. Mackenzie suggests that in early nineteenth century Britain, “the romantic poets gave us the first written examples of identity as *essence*” (Cheney, 1991, p. 12). Mackenzie (1978) provides us with examples from the Romantic period. William Blake wrote, “States change, but individual identities never change or cease” (cited in Mackenzie, 1978, p. 22). While watching the death of his brother, John Keats wrote, “His identity presses upon me” (cited in Mackenzie, 1978, p. 23). This shift to this more modern usage of the term - where ‘identity’ is understood in terms of individual uniqueness - was recounted from the words of Irving Washington in the *Oxford English Dictionary* in 1820: “He doubted his own identity and whether he was himself or another man” (cited in Mackenzie, 1978, p. 23). The early use of the verb “to identify” reported by Mackenzie (1978) also foreshadowed modern usage of the term ‘identity’. Not only did it highlight the concept of a “man’s crisis of identity”, it constituted “a logical bridge between individual identity and a shared social identity” (p. 23).

The association between individual identity and collective identity is best captured by Mackenzie who notes that around 1900, the words “‘identity’, ‘identify’, and ‘identification’ acquired a bureaucratic colour” (p. 25). The rise of the organisational society and the development of the bureaucratic state saw it become more common to identify individuals by their papers, files, numbers, fingerprints, etc., and other “classificatory techniques which took on even greater sophistication with the computer age” (Cheney, 1991, p. 12). The rise of the organisational state also revealed society’s turn to classification as yet another way “in which we tell others ‘who we are’” (Cheney, 1985, p. 56). The insightful observations of Kenneth Burke in 1937, provides further evidence of this shift in his statement that “In America, it is natural for a man to identify himself with the business corporation he serves” (p. 140).

Major twentieth-century theorists on identity

The twentieth-century saw discussions of identity take two major forms in the West: psychodynamic and sociological (Marshall, 1998). A central thrust of both traditions has been to challenge essentialist understandings of the concept. Essentialism assumes a unique or core essence of identity – the ‘real me’- which is coherent and remains more or less the same throughout life. In contrast, the emphasis within both sociological and psychoanalytic theories has been, to varying degrees, on investigating the invented and constructed nature of identity.

The psychoanalytic tradition emerges with Sigmund Freud’s (1959) theory of identification, through which the child comes to assimilate (or introject) external persons or objects, usually the superego of the parent. For instance, “a little boy will exhibit special interest in his father; he would like to grow up like and be like him, and take his place everywhere” (Freud, 1959, p. 60). According to Cheney (1985), Freud “was the first observer of social life to give systematic attention” to the term ‘identification’ (p. 58). Psychodynamic theory stresses the “inner core of a psychic structure as having a continuous (though often conflicting) identity” (Marshall, 1998, p. 293). The psycho-historian Erik Erikson, while heavily influenced by Freud, saw identity as a process ‘located’ in the core of the individual, and yet also in the core of his or her communal culture, thereby (along with earlier theorists), making a connection between community and individual (Marshall, 1998). In fact, Erikson

“was perhaps the first theorist to use the verb ‘to identify’ in its fullest contemporary sense” (Cheney, 1985, p. 60). It was also Erikson (1968) who developed the term ‘identity crisis’ during the Second World War, in reference to patients who had “lost a sense of personal sameness and historical continuity” and he subsequently generalised it to a whole stage of life (p. 16). For Erikson (1964), identity development is viewed as proceeding from series of struggles, each focusing upon new life problems.

Discussions of identity have also been prominent in sociology and have spawned a huge literature in which the quest for identity or the breakdown of the ‘self’ are primary themes. The sociological tradition of identity theory is linked to symbolic interactionism and emerges from the pragmatic theory of the self discussed by William James (1890) and George Herbert Mead (1934). Both James and Mead see the self as a process with two phases: the “I”, which is “knower, inner, subjective, creative, determining, and unknowable; and the “Me”, which is the more known, outer, determined and social phase” (Marshall, 1998, p. 294). Inspired by Burke and Mead, Anselm Strauss (1977) in *Mirrors and masks: The search for identity*, declares that language is central to identity. In his discussion on the social creation of meaning, Strauss went on to highlight the power of identifying as naming, which he viewed as an “act of social ‘placement,’ of ‘locating’ one socially” (cited in Cheney, 1985, p. 71).

Developments in social theory associated with structuralism and post-structuralism share James, Mead and Strauss’s concern about understanding the role of language in the formation of identity. Structuralism and post-structuralism, however, more assertively emphasise the deeply formative role of language *and representation* in the making of identity. Underpinning both structuralism and post-structuralism are the insights of Swiss structural linguist Ferdinand de Saussure (1966), who emphasised the way meaning in language was produced, not through the intention of the speaking or writing subject, but by the interplay of signs. Saussure’s (1966) account of language has been used to argue that all social and cultural meanings are produced within language or systems of representation more generally. By this he means that

who we are, our identity, is shaped by the meanings attached to particular attributes, capacities and forms of conduct.

The French philosopher Michel Foucault, building on the broad thrust of Saussure's arguments, took this account of identity further through his work on discourse. This was an important development in theorising identity because of how it positioned the concept in terms of broad movements of thought, talk, architecture, and everyday practices. Discourse, for Foucault, shaped ways of talking about or representing or knowing a particular object. In his work on the growth of the modern prison, for example, he argued that penal discourses (such as criminology) produced a distinct set of ways of talking about and knowing the criminal and criminal mind (Foucault, 1977). Importantly, for Foucault, these discourses furnished positions for agency and identity. They did so both for the knowing subject (the expert criminologist) and for the known (the criminal). The raw material for identity, then, was formed within discourses taken up and inhabited by an individual, shaping and forming a sense of identity in the process.

Foucault's (1977) work also introduces an element which has become central to recent accounts of identity. This is the insistence that we, as individuals, inhabit *multiple identities*. There are two key dimensions to this assertion. The first, and most important to Foucault (1977) himself, is that different discourses generate particular and often divergent positions for agency and identity. Discourses associated with religion, the state, sport, or consumption produce discrete and often contradictory versions of the self. From this perspective, we are each addressed by a range of possible versions of ourselves: as devout believer, as taxpayer, human rights supporter, activist for examples. The second dimension is that the multiple identities we inhabit in relation to a range of social practices are themselves linked to larger structures of identity (Foucault, 1977). That is to say that the principal symbolic resources for our various identities derive from broad social patterns and trends. What is usually cited here are structures like class, ethnicity, gender, and sexuality. It is important to note here that these different identities are not discrete; they interact with one another. In his investigation into the shared nature of identity, Cheney (1991)

adds to these larger structures of society by including modern organisations as a key source of identity in contemporary western society, a theoretical move which will be explored further below.

In his original contribution to American social theory, David Riesman (1961) explored how psychological, political, and economic structures impacted on the notion of individual identity in contemporary American society. He states that:

The current preoccupation with identity in this country (notable in the great impact of Erik H. Erikson's work) reflects the liberation of men from the realm of characterological necessity. The power of individuals to shape their own character by their selection among models and experiences was suggested by our concept of autonomy; when this occurs, men [sic] may limit the provinciality of being born to a particular family in a particular place. To some, this offers a prospect only of rootless men and galloping anomie. To more hopeful prophets, ties based on conscious relatedness may some day replace those of blood and soil. (p. xvii)

As is indicated by Riesman's quotation, accounts of identity tend to divide into two main camps; an optimistic and a pessimistic version. Put simply, for the optimists, the modern world has brought with it increasing individuality and choice in relation to a wider range of identities. Thus, people are more likely to self-actualise: to discover an inner-self which is not imposed by tradition, culture or religion; and to embark upon quests for greater individuality, self understanding, flexibility, and difference. By contrast, pessimists portray a mass society of estrangement. For example, the psychodynamic tradition highlights the loss of boundaries between self and culture, and the rise of the narcissistic personality (see Lasch, 1980); while the sociologists see a trend towards fragmentation, rootlessness, and meaninglessness, and bemoan the loss of authority in the public world through the growth of self-absorption and selfishness (see Weber, 1905).

It should also be stressed that despite the extensive theoretical attention that it has received, there remains *no clear concept of identity* in modern sociology. The term is now used widely and loosely in reference to one's sense of self, and one's feelings and ideas about oneself, as for example in the terms of 'gender identity' or 'class identity'. It is sometimes assumed that our identity comes from the expectations

attached to the social roles that we occupy (see Sarbin & Scheibe, 1983; Tajfel, 1981; Devereux, 1975), and which we then internalise, so that it is formed through the process of socialisation. Alternatively, it is elsewhere assumed (see Meyer, 1986; Cheney, 1992) that we *construct* our identities more actively out of the materials presented to us during socialisation, or in our various roles. However, a symbolic interactionist of the dramaturgical tradition, sociologist Erving Goffman (1959), looks at the complex ways in which we present ourselves to other people, a process which might be termed identity or impression management (Goffman's contribution to the study of narrative and identity is discussed below). His work on *The presentation of self in everyday life*, raises the crucial issue of whether or not there is an 'authentic self' or core identity behind the various masks which we present to others. Additionally, Goffman's ideas challenge the assumption that organisations can also be falsely represented and have a true or immutable self. Thus, Goffman helped to question whether there was any true or core self, preferring to stress *multiple representations* and further highlighting the growing debate surrounding the meaning of identity.

In sum, the twentieth century saw theorists identify, acknowledge, and explore the ambiguity surrounding the term 'identity'. But Mackenzie's close examination of such ambiguity offers an elaborate insight into the paradox of identity.

The paradox of identity: W J Mackenzie's "sameness" vs "uniqueness"

To be nobody - but yourself in a world which is doing its best, night and day, to make you everybody else - means to fight the hardest battle which any human being can fight; and never stop fighting.

E.E. Cummings, "Letter", 1995

(cited in Snyder & Fromkin, 1980, p. 175)

As men [sic] grow alike, each man feels himself weaker in regard to all the rest; as he discerns nothing by which he is considerably raised above them, he mistrusts himself as soon as they assail him

Alexis de Tocqueville (cited in Davis, 1971, p. xvi)

These two quotations clearly demonstrate how issues of identity extend to questions of uniqueness. The most insightful observation made by Mackenzie in his review of

identity is that of the “transformation of the term ‘identity’ from its ‘sameness’ meaning to its ‘essence’ meaning” (Cheney, 1991, p. 13). Cheney (1991) states that:

This shift is important not just because it represents the partial replacement of one conception with another, but because it puts us in touch with the profound ambiguity surrounding “identity”: we are able to express our uniqueness (our individuality) principally by aligning ourselves with other individuals, collectives, or social categories. Just as estrangement or alienation from one social unit often implies identification with another, so does individual difference with respect to some other person imply sameness with regard to a third party. Thus, similarity and difference mutually implicate one another, exist in ongoing dialectical tension, and provide the formative context for what we call our ‘identity.’ We are in this way charged with building our differences out of unique combinations of “sameness,” linking ourselves with some groups and organisations and distancing ourselves from others. (p. 13)

As Foucault (1984) correctly observes, this idea is central to modern western society. Cheney (1991) further examines the paradox of identity – making differences out of sameness and vice versa - in terms of collective as well as individual identity. Mackenzie argues that there has been an amount of unreflective theorising of identity in the social sciences and humanities and that there was a need to specifically examine “the treatment of identity *in terms of shared interests or interests that are perceived to be shared*” (Cheney, 1991, p. 13, emphasis in original). It is after all, through symbolic means - means common to some group - that individual ‘uniqueness’ is constructed of ‘sameness.’

Building on Burke’s theory of human communication, Cheney (1991) extends Mackenzie’s thoughts to the notion of collective (i.e., organisational) identity. According to Mackenzie (1978), “those who share an interest share an identity; the interest of each requires the collaboration of all” (p. 124). He continues: “The community of communicators, vague though it is, is yet sharper in definition than community of interest or contiguity of space” (p. 165). At this point, Mackenzie quotes Edmund Burke, who in a speech on economical reform in 1780 said: “let us identify, let us *incorporate* ourselves with the people” (cited in Mackenzie, 1978, p. 23, emphasis added). Acknowledging Burke’s insights, Mackenzie (1978) claims that such usage ‘to identify with’ constitutes a “logical bridge between an individual

identity and a shared social identity and it harks back to the classical tradition of rhetoric” (p. 24). Thus, we can see the contours of a truly communicative theory of identity, one that privileges linguistic bridges between terms and which can provide insights into human relations. The implications for the study of organisations are important.

It is precisely because of the shared nature of identity, and the connection between the individual and the social, that Burke insists on “treating individuals as members of a group” (Cheney, 1991, p. 17). In other words, our sociality defines who we are. According to Burke (1937), peoples’ identities are also related to the identifications they hold within social companies: “One identifies himself [sic] with some corporate unit (church, guild, company, lodge, party, team, college, city, nation, etc.) and by profuse praise of this unit he praises himself. For he “owns shares” in the corporate unit...” (p. 144). Burke (1973) explains that the divisions of society lead individuals to identify with some targets or think of themselves as “belonging to some special body” (p. 268). It is through these associations that an individual comes to have a variety of “corporate identities” that are sometimes concentric and sometimes in conflict (p. 268). Burke’s words highlight yet again, the social aspects of individual identity: “The so-called ‘I’ is merely a unique combination of partially conflicting ‘corporate we’s’” (p. 140). The conflict among our ‘corporate we’s’ and elements of self, explains Burke, requires management, and it is through this continuous state of flux (of an identity), that we experience both continuity and change.

Finally, the individual-collective connection is tied to yet another paradox of identity: the fact that an individual or a group must fashion something distinctive out of symbolic resources that are socially shared. In this way, as Cheney and Vibbert (1987) point out, “identity (and, we would add, images) are both individually held and socially accomplished, whether that “individual” be a person or a collectivity” (p. 185). The conclusions of Cheney and Vibbert (1987), together with those presented above have become a fundamental concern of contemporary organisations who are “in the business of identity management” (Cheney, 1991, p. 14).

Identity and the modern organisation

Managing multiple identities

The paradoxical nature of identity presents both opportunities and challenges for the study of the modern organisation. At the turn of the century, the “management of identities and images has become a central undertaking by many organisations of today” (Christensen & Askegaard, 2001). Organisational theorists argue that in today’s cluttered corporate landscape, organisations face challenging questions of identity as they struggle to remain distinct in a world of sameness (Christensen & Askegaard, 2001; Christensen & Cheney, 1994; Cheney & Christensen, 2000; Czarniawska, 1997). Christensen and Cheney (1994) explain:

The quest for identity remains a significant challenge to individuals and institutions...Organisations today are pursuing their own identities. They believe that identities are things they must have. Identity in this sense has become a common point of reference for organisational leaders and spokespersons in all sectors of society. (p. 233)

In this sense, “much of what organisations do is rhetorical” (Cheney, 1991, p. 2), in that they engage in and rely on a whole range of activities that are persuasive forms of communication concerned with establishing and assessing organisational identity.

Cheney (1991) argues that organisational rhetoric is concerned with the management of multiple identities, both individual and collective. For organisational theorists this requires examining a further issue in relation to identity – that of asking what does it mean to “speak with a collective voice” and how do we, as organisational researchers, “interpret a collective or ‘corporate’ message” (Cheney, 1991, p. 2). Organisation theorists also have to ask what do we do when confronted with such basic elements of a communication/rhetorical situation as speaker, message, and audience when these terms are construed within the context of ‘corporate’ communication? (Cheney, 1992).

Cheney (1992) uses the term ‘corporate’ to refer to “a body or group of natural persons” (p. 166). In his contribution to our understanding of corporate public

communications, messages by, from, and for organisations, Cheney (1992) points out that:

an individualistic bias (taken in a specific sense) has hindered rhetorical criticism in explaining, understanding, and evaluating the rhetoric of organisational life, particularly the external corporate messages in public relations and related activities (i.e., identity/image advertising, issue management, corporate advocacy. Simply put, rhetorical critics (like the lay public) seem unable to grasp the meaning of the '(good) organisation speaking (well)'. Thus, the critical assessment of corporate rhetoric is a notable lacuna in contemporary rhetorical criticism. (p. 167)

Cheney goes on to explain that it was only in the 1980s, with the growing influence of Marxism, poststructuralism, and Burkean criticism, that rhetorical critics "began to embrace the possibilities for the analysis of various organisations" (p. 168). The movement towards the study of corporate communications such as public relations, advertising and marketing, allows organisational researchers to examine how the organisation speaks to/with various publics (Cheney & Dionisopoulos, 1989; Cheney & Vibbert, 1987; Cheney, 1992). Those organisational scholars (Cheney, 1983a; Crable, 1986; McMillan, 1987; Tompkins, 1987; Tompkins & Cheney, 1985), who view the modern organisation from an explicitly rhetorical perspective and consider the activities of organisations as persuasive efforts, or as Cheney (1992) puts it, see "the organisation as a rhetor" (p. 168) have played a key role in enabling the consideration of the "corporate, collective nature of much contemporary rhetoric while avoiding the danger of reifying the organisation" (p. 178)

Central to the concerns of this approach is Cheney's (1992) claim that some "corporate messages become identified with individuals and those individual speakers become the embodiment of the organisation" (p. 178). Thus, the appropriation of identity, both individual and collective sees corporations rely on personalized faces. For example, "for many of the stakeholders of the Chrysler Corporation, Iacocca *is* Chrysler" (Cheney, 1992, p. 178, emphasis in original). By taking a critical perspective on that process of appropriation, Cheney (1992) provides further insight into the significance of the decentering of the individual as a "perspective we should apply to the ways both natural and corporate persons come to be defined in today's

society. We must understand better how organisations “speak” and how their messages operate in practice” (p. 178).

Identity: Corporate and organisational

The multidisciplinary nature of the theorising of identity provides organisational researchers with a rich variety of perspectives and approaches on which to draw. However, within organisational communication literature, the term ‘identity’ is used in sometimes quite different ways and to refer to different means by which identity is communicated. In the marketing literature the focus is on *corporate* identity. The marketing approach, according to Hatch and Schultz (1997), has specified more fully the ways in which management expresses this key idea to external audiences (e.g. through products, communications, behaviour and environment...while the organisational literature has been more concerned with the relationship between employees and their organisation. What follows is a definition of corporate and organisational identity in the terms provided by their respective disciplinary origins.

Corporate identity

The ‘professionalised’ concept of corporate identity refers to how an organisation expresses and differentiates itself in relation to its stakeholders (Alvesson, 1990; Olins, 1995; van Riel & Balmer, 1997). For example, Olins (1995) wrote that a corporate identity “can project four things: Who you are, what you do, how you do it and where you want to go” (p. 3). Corporate identity as defined by Black (1993) “is the composite personality of the company derived from its philosophy, history, culture, strategies, management style, reputation and the behaviour of employees, salesmen [sic] and other company representatives” (p. 87). Selame and Selame (1988) suggest that corporate identity gives every business the ability to determine for itself the kind of face or image it wants to project to its various publics, both inside and outside the organisation, at home and abroad. Their definition perhaps explains the more recent move to include internal stakeholders as part of the audience for corporate identity programmes. But what most corporate identity theorists agree on is that the *clear and precise communication* of a company’s corporate identity has become increasingly essential to a company’s success in today’s competitive

environment (Laundy, 1993; Black, 1993; Gorman, 1994; Van Riel, 1995; Hornick, 1995; Bayley, 1995).

Much of that success today depends on the distinctiveness of the projected and sustained corporate identity. From an economic standpoint, a recognised corporate identity offers added value to share prices and to products in the form of premium prices and enhanced sales volumes (Greyser, 1996). Marketers and strategists argue that, “as products and services become increasingly indistinguishable, corporate identity carries a bigger share of the responsibility for sustaining the margins” (Hatch & Schultz, 2000, p. 13). Others believe that *organisational identity* is the foundation of this distinctiveness (Abratt, 1989; Olins, 1989; Barich & Kotler, 1991; Upshaw, 1995; Aaker, 1996; Fombrun, 1996; Baker & Balmer, 1997; van Riel & Balmer, 1997). For example, marketers may concentrate on promoting the natural ingredients in a company’s *products* to women concerned about the environment or their inner well being through cutting-edge imagery. Yet others believe that it is the company itself, such as its philosophy and core values, rather than its products, that make the company unique.

While the key element of distinctiveness remains central in the corporate identity literature, clear divisions remain among those from the visual and strategic schools of corporate identity (Balmer, 1995). The visual school focuses on the visible and tangible manifestations of what the organisation is and the implications of these manifestations for leadership behaviour and organisational structure. Balmer (1995) traced the roots of the visual school to the graphic design community, which traditionally concerned itself with the creation of a company name, logo, colour, house style, trademarks, and other elements of the visual identity programme. Olins (1995) and Argenti (1998) identify the tangible aspects of corporate identity as buildings, corporate architecture, design, and décor of retail outlets, as well as ritualized behaviour. Recently, the term ‘look and feel’ of the organisation has been added to the corporate identity literature by those who argue that sound, touch, and smell are an intrinsic part of the identity mix (Schmitt & Simonson, 1997). These theorists, (see Schmitt & Simonson, 1997; Balmer, 1995; Argenti, 1998; Olins, 1995;

Mollerup, 1997), while much more concerned with the practicalities of corporate identity than with theorizing it, refer to retail outlets such as The Body Shop as a company that has constructed an identity through a visual design approach.

In contrast to the 'visual' understanding of the construction of corporate identity, the strategic school focuses on the vision, mission, and philosophy of the company (Olins, 1989, 1995; van Riel, 1995). Here, the strategic role of corporate identity is defined in terms of integrated communication, issue management, and public relations (see Argenti, 1998; Cheney & Christensen, 2000). Hatch and Shultz (2000) go on to suggest that the strategic school is "shifting the intention of corporate identity programmes from helping organisations to define 'who they are' to helping them project a vision of 'what they will become'" (p. 14). This shift acknowledges the importance of corporate stories in the internal marketing of the corporate vision (see van Riel, 2000, Czarniaswka, 1997, 1998; Gardner, 1995; Martin, 1982; Brown, 1990; Georges, 1987; Kreps, 1990; Scholes, 1981; Bantz, 1993).

A final framing of the corporate identity literature focuses on "identity structure and the ways in which corporate identity influences how companies communicate about themselves" (Hatch & Schultz, 2000, p. 14). In this framework, van Riel and Balmer (1997) distinguished between graphic design and integrated communications approaches to corporate identity. The graphic design approach focuses on three types of identity structures: (1) monolithic identity, where companies use one name and a consistent visual identity to promote a distinctive idea about themselves; (2) endorsed identity, where companies use a combination of an overall company identity and a series of business line names; and (3) and branded identity, where companies manifest their identity only at the product level (Olins, 1989, 1995; van Riel, 1995; Aaker, 1996; Mollerup, 1997). For my purposes, special attention is paid to the monolithic identity which is built on by the integrated communication approach. Here, a combination of mediated and interpersonal communication channels is directed towards external stakeholders *and* organizational members. For example, impressions of corporate identity are carried into the lives of organizational members and

compared to their understanding of organizational identity as they experience it. This process is the focus of organisational identity.

Organisational Identity

Most views of organisational identity are built upon a version of social identity theory (Albert & Whetten, 1985), which emphasises social interaction as the site of individual identity formation processes (Goffman, 1959; Erickson, 1964). That is to say, this approach views identity as processual, context-dependent, and grounded largely in the individual's relationship with others. By extension, then, organizational identity is seen to have the same features. Unlike the theorising of individual identity theories discussed above, the theorising of organisational identity only began in 1985 with Albert and Whetten, at a time when organisations recognised the need to position themselves as distinct from others. Their definition of organisational identity consisted of a type of question: 'what kind of organisation is this?' Here, they refer specifically to the core, distinctive and enduring features which reveal the identity of the organisation. In their definition of organisational identity, Albert and Whetten (1985) emphasise three important defining attributes: claimed central character, claimed distinctiveness, and claimed temporal continuity. Of particular interest to this study, are the first two attributes.

By claimed central character, Albert and Whetten (1985) mean that an organisation's identity must focus on an attribute or attributes of a firm that are fundamental in understanding why a firm exists, its purpose or mission. Ashforth and Mael (1996) refer to central character as an internally consistent system of beliefs, values and norms. By claimed distinctiveness, Albert and Whetten (1985) argue that, whatever these fundamental attributes are, they must be perceived as *unique*. This perception of distinctiveness suggests that organisations actively seek to distinguish themselves from other comparable organisations (Messick & Mackie, 1989). The potential contribution of Albert and Whetten's (1985) attributes has direct significance to how organisations currently frame their identities in terms of values – which is explored in more depth below.

Albert and Whetten (1985) go on to address the issue of multiple identities, and more recently, Whetten and his colleagues have made distinctions between ‘identity *of*’ and ‘identification *with*’ the organisation in their research (see Whetten, 1997; Whetten & Godfrey, 1998). A key issue in ‘identification with’ the organisation is the interrelationship between personal and social aspects of identity construction (Ashforth & Mael, 1989, 1996; Mael & Ashforth, 1992; Brewer & Gardner, 1996). Dutton and Harquail (1994) define organisational identification as “the degree to which a member defines him - or herself by the same attributes that he or she believes define the organisation” (p. 239). Concern with the ‘identity of’ the organisation while related to identification focuses on how organisational members see themselves as an organisation. In other words, its “perspective lies internal to the organisation and is rooted in organisational members’ perceptions and understandings” (Hatch & Shultz, 2000, p. 16).

An Integrated Approach

Although the issue of identity as it relates to organisations simultaneously developed along two relatively distinct paths, it is important to “pursue insights from both the corporate and organisational identity literatures, since...they are addressing the same phenomenon, even though they do so from different perspectives” (Hatch & Shultz, 2000, p. 12). In their analysis of both corporate and organisational identity, Hatch and Shultz (2000) offer three key arguments as to why they believe identity is both corporate *and* organisational. Firstly, managerial and organisational perspectives on identity are not independent of one another. For instance, “management’s contributions to identity, such as via corporate identity programmes, become part of organisational identity when members of the organisation use these preferred corporate symbols in their everyday organisational lives” (p. 18). Secondly, the distinction between recipients of identity messages as external and internal stakeholders is increasingly “being muddled by the amount of overlap between these groups” (p. 18). Thirdly, if organisational members also belong to various external stakeholder groups, organisational members “receive mediated communications of corporate identity just as other external stakeholders do” (p. 19). Therefore, it is impossible to maintain a clean distinction between mediated and direct

communication. These issues of ‘representation’ of an organisation have methodological implications. For instance, as researchers in organisational communication, our access to organisations “are always mediated by representations, these being not only carefully designed – and sometimes superficial- symbols, but also values, narratives, and corporate behaviours” (Christensen & Cheney, 2000, p. 267; see also Christensen & Askegaard, 2001).

My use of the term ‘identity’ for large organisations therefore combines concepts from corporate and organisational identity. I agree with Hatch and Schultz (2000) when they say that to articulate the theoretical domain of identity, different perspectives must be combined and defined at the “organisational level of analysis” (p. 19). In this regard, I take their view of identity, a view “that encompasses the interests of all stakeholders including managers (strategy), customers (marketing), organisation members (organisation studies), and all other stakeholder groups (communication)” (p. 19). Further, I adopt Cheney’s (1992) use of the term ‘image’ as the broader impressions that are projected by organisations, the perceptions held by various publics” (p. 174).

Positioning identities

Corporations such as Exxon, and other large organisations, now invest huge sums of money in *creating* images and identities for themselves and pay careful attention to their self-presentation (Cheney, 1992). They do this through public relations, advertising, and marketing communications. Consequently, today we are literally *surrounded* by corporate identities and images that represent a struggle for distinctiveness. Organisations are becoming increasingly aware of the fact that to be a source of sustainable competitive advantage, not only must an organisation’s identity be central to the organisation, it must also be rare and costly to imitate (Barney, 1991). Indeed, the condition of rareness is closely associated with Albert and Whetten’s (1985) notion of claimed distinctiveness. But Barney and Stewart (2000) go further to assert that organisations must move “beyond ‘claimed’ distinctiveness to *actual* distinctiveness” (p. 39, emphasis added).

The proliferation of corporate consulting firms specializing in ‘image’ or ‘identity’ management further reflects this trend. The preoccupation with identity and its management means corporate consulting professionals are largely involved in contemporary organisational rhetoric (Cheney, 1991). Here, they “select”, “create”, “handle”, and “present” identities for organisations and aim “to establish an identity that will *become* what internal and external publics perceive as the organisation” (Cheney, 1991, p. 22). Identity consultants also design corporate identity programmes in an attempt to help “guarantee that what the company represents is identified with the company and no other” (Bernstein, 1986, p. 161). Thus, the programme helps position the company. Ray (1982) defines positioning as the “combination of the appeal and the competitive considerations that give a company a distinctive perspective or position in the consumer’s mind” (p. 97). A corporate identity programme therefore helps a company in its identification and differentiation.

The fundamental concern with identity also paved the way for corporate communication gurus who promised to help organisations build a successful identity, project its image, and remain distinct from competitors. For example, in *How to build a corporation’s identity and project its image*, Tom Garbett (1988) leads the reader step-by-step through the entire universe of corporate communications, offering “hundreds of tips and field-tested strategies for dealing with virtually any communications problem” (inside cover publicity blurb).

Garbett’s (1998) book clearly attempts to capitalize on and promote the growing belief in the need for organisations to manage their identities. So too did those in the marketing industry. Marketing professionals equally advocate the claims that a strong identity creates consumer loyalty, expands market share, attracts high quality personnel, adds value to increasingly similar products and builds employee motivation (Christensen & Askegaard, 2001; Balmer, 1995; Fombrun & Shanley, 1990; Olins, 1989; van Riel & Balmer, 1997; Barney & Stewart, 2000). This has led organisational communication theorist Christensen (1995) to explain how in a turbulent environment, “marketing becomes an important management practice” through which organisations position themselves as “distinct identities” (p. 667). More specifically,

marketing helps organisations in their efforts to constantly engage in self-referential activities as well as the provisional interests of its various constituencies (Christensen, 1995; Cheney, 1991; Albert & Whetten, 1985).

However, Christensen (1995) also critiques the role of marketing in the new corporate 'identity game':

Embedded in a social context in which identities are founded on fragile and ever-changing images and in which these images are primarily handled and exchanged through marketing, contemporary organisations have difficulties envisioning other solutions to their most existential problems. Although this situation is closely related to the ubiquity of commercial signs and the quick turnover of the identities and values they express, we witness an increasing demand for marketing that is, nevertheless, assumed to endow the organisation with a sense of identity and stability. Through an intensive engagement with marketing, organisations, in other words, hope to develop and bolster a set of unique characteristics that defines their culture and differentiates it from their competitors. (p. 653)

There is no questioning that marketing plays a crucial, albeit paradoxical role in this planned articulation of identity led by contemporary organisations. For instance, organisations must balance their urge for *uniqueness* with the need to remain flexible to social, political and economic changes in a turbulent world (Christensen, 1995). According to Christensen (1995), communication conveys important organisational values to its various stakeholders while at the same time acts as a vehicle by which organisations seek to manage changes in their environment. A more recent shift towards reaching both these objectives is illustrated with marketers paying more attention to integrated communications. Because corporate advertising is most often integrated with public relations efforts, but is frequently integrated with product advertising and internal communications, many organisations have adopted the new approaches such as 'marketing public relations' (Harris, 1991) and 'integrated marketing communications' (Schultz, Tannenbaum & Lauterborn, 1994).

Identity and (organisational) values

Positioning values: The quest for distinctiveness

As outlined above, the desire for distinctness in the marketplace of today, has led to new efforts to invent and communicate organisational identity. Yet a very specific move by organisations has been to emphasise values and ethical codes as being related to grand social principles. As Cheney (1999) puts it: “To be ‘competitive’, organisations have to talk about values” (p. 28). In the world of corporate identity management, the articulation and attempted shaping of values is seen as fundamental to the expression and control of organisational identity:

Values are all the rage in today’s organisations. They are centrepieces of mission statements. They are seen in terms of positioning a company in its market. They are employed as inspirational tools. They are widely seen as lacking and therefore in need of promotion and earnest quest. Values are also framed in strategic terms, thus linking the notion of ‘added value’ to the promotion and perhaps internalisation of values by groups of stakeholders, including employees. (Cheney, 2002a, p.7)

From an organisational standpoint, values also tell us what the company stands for, and in many cases, to what it is opposed (Sarros, Densten & Santora, 1999). In fact, organisational identity is values based (Ashforth & Mael, 1996). It reflects what is central, distinctive, and enduring about the organisation (Ashforth & Mael, 1989). According to Deal and Kennedy (1982), values are the bedrock of any corporate culture. They are the company’s philosophy for attaining success and they provide guidelines for day-to-day behaviour. Additionally, the authors believe that organisations have gained great strength from shared values because if employees know what their company stands for, if they know what standards they are to uphold, they are more likely to make decisions to uphold those standards. In other words, for those who hold organisational values, those shared values define the fundamental character of their organisation and create a sense of identity for those *in* the organisation (Deal & Kennedy, 1982).

There are many ways that values are ‘used’ by organisations. For example, a focus of many recent corporate advertising campaigns has been on company programmes and

activities designed to address environmental issues and communicate social responsibility (Keller, 2000). Other ways a company can promote its values is through green advertising, ecologically responsible sales promotion, green packaging, ethical public relations selling, environmental public relations sponsorship, community involvement, internal marketing, corporate philanthropy, and cause-related marketing.

The international leaders of Johnson & Johnson, Boeing, Hewlett Packard, GTE and Xerox position corporate success as based on an ethical approach to business that rests on key values such as social responsibility, environmental commitment, and shared outcomes highlight such value positioning (Keller, 2000). As a result, much of the organisations' rhetoric is saturated with value-laden terms. Xerox corporation maintains a set of core values which reflects its social responsibilities, enhances the participation of its employees and strives to retain market dominance. The six core values are the following: success through satisfied customers; excellent quality service; premium return on assets; use of technology to deliver market leadership; valuing of employees; and responsible behaviour as a corporate citizen (Keller, 2000). Consistent with its social conscience, Xerox has created the Xerox Foundation for the pursuit of philanthropic goals, and the Xerox LifeCycle Assistance Programme to address the professional, social, and personal needs of its employees (Keller, 2000).

Heskett and Schlesinger (1996) assert that "organisations with strong cultures and clear values increase their chances of success and longevity" (p. 11). Here, values are stated in terms intended to both capture the essential nature of the business, and to identify long-term objectives like those illustrated in an increasingly popular genre of corporate communication: mission statements (Fairhurst, Jordon & Neuwirth, 1997). According to Swales and Rogers (1995), mission statements stress "values, positive behaviours, and guiding principles within the framework of the corporation's announced belief system and ideology" (p. 227). Organisations are designing mission statements emphasising core values and ethical codes and stressing social responsibility in efforts to assert their identity (Christensen & Cheney, 2000). But Fairhurst, et al (1997) go so far to say that in the absence of frequent communication

of mission, vision and values, an “organisation’s identity cannot take hold” (p. 245). One of the ways organisations achieve their objectives is through leadership.

Values and Leadership

Top management is considered to play an important role in shaping an organisation’s identity and culture and in embedding shared values in organisational culture (Schein, 1985). For example, Selznick (1957) emphasises the role of the leader in the sharing of these values:

...the art of the creative leader is the art of institution building, the reworking of human and technological materials to fashion an organism that embodies new and enduring values...to institutionalise is to infuse with values...Wherever individuals become attached to an organisation or way of doing things as persons rather than as technicians, the result is the prizing of the device for its own sake. From the standpoint of the committed person, the organisation is changed from an expendable tool into a valued source of personal satisfaction...The institutional leader, then, is primarily an expert in the promotion and protection of values. (p. 152)

In fact, companies which consistently perform well are usually notable for powerfully rooted shared values and a steadfast vision or purpose beyond the purely commercial (Wheeler & Sillanpää, 1997). Leaders maintain control by embedding and transmitting the basic assumptions of the organisation through these values. As Enz (1985) suggests:

The personal and work values and beliefs of a founder guide and selectively direct the development of the organisation and its culture. Top management’s actions emerge from their values and influence how things are done in the enterprise. (p. 44)

Bresnen (1995) further highlights the importance of values in leadership:

Leadership [is] associated with the capacity to instil vision, secure commitment to organisational values, and transform the organisation...Such an approach has proven itself valuable in directing attention once again to the importance of values and norms as central to any attempt at specifying what leadership is all about. (p. 496)

Kuhnert (1993) claims however that only when leaders understand their value orientations can they begin the process of building organisations that respect and

uphold the values of their workers as much as they promote the strategic mission of the company. This suggests that researchers in organisational studies also need to pay attention to the values behind the people who drive business at a more meaningful level. Because leadership is fundamentally about human values, Kuhnert (1993) suggests that the study of leadership should pursue “the study of emotions and personal values that leaders hold and pursue, rather than focus on skills and performance” (p. 194). His ideas fit well with those who argue that leadership is about setting the values for the organisation as captured in the company’s mission and vision statements, and as articulated in the way things are done and the way people are treated. Because values emanate from individuals and reflect their leadership skills, they perform a major function in guiding behaviour and creating corporate culture.

Schein (1985) also highlights the relationship between personal values and leadership by pointing out that leaders communicate strong messages to their employees about their values through their own actions. In their earlier work, England and Lee (1974) examined how values can affect leaders in different ways. They found that (personal) values influence leaders’ perceptions of situations and problems, decisions and solutions, other people, what is right and wrong and valid organisational goals. These influences also “contribute to sustainable corporate cultures that work harmoniously with strong values-based leaders” (Sarros et al., 1999, p. 150). However, while some authors suggest a significant relationship between values and leadership, Sarros, et al. (1999) stress that much work needs to be done to fully understand the role of values in management (and organisational) success.

Ethical values and charismatic leaders

In their research on values and leadership, Sarros et al. (1999) discovered that “values are emerging as key components of leadership, which seems to be taking on more moral perspectives” (p. 22). Sims (1992, 2000) goes further to suggest that leadership is important to establishing an ethically-oriented culture. The idea that corporate leaders are responsible for organisational ethics is not a new one (Paine, 1997). In 1938, management theorist Chester Barnard described the executive’s role in creating

morals for others. Since then, many others have acknowledged the importance of leadership to organisational ethics (Sims, 1992, 2000; Posner & Schmidt, 1992; Trevino & Nelson, 1995; Stern, 1992; Chen, Sawyers & Williams, 1997; Howell & Avolino, 1992; Carroll, 1992; Reidenbach & Robin, 1991; Victor & Cullen, 1988). Mendonca (2001) goes so far to say that “the organisation’s success, in fact its very survival, over the long term is dependent on ethical leadership” (p. 267).

It is clear then, that leadership cannot exist independently of values that drive behaviour and influence outcomes. It is the “type of values that lie at the basis of leadership behaviour that count” (Sarros, et al. 1999, p. 45). In his revealing analysis of business ethics and values, Badaraco (1998) states that understanding core personal values is the key to understanding effective leadership:

The most satisfied business leaders are the ones able to dig below the busy surface of their daily lives and refocus on their core values and principles. Once uncovered, those values and principles renew their sense of purpose at work and act as a springboard for shrewd, pragmatic, politically astute action. By repeating this process again and again throughout their work lives, these executives are able to craft an authentic and strong identity based on their own, rather than on someone else’s understanding of what is right. (p. 116)

It has been found that leaders develop these concerns as a result of their past experience, training and other forms of socialisation (Kanungo, 2001) and that through socialisation practices in family, educational, religious, and other institutions, leaders acquire self-concepts (Conger & Kanungo, 1998; Kanungo, 2001). Internal values resulting from socialisation are a part of leaders’ self-concepts. Early work on charismatic leadership revealed that charismatic leaders also seek to cultivate a collective identity in their followers’ self-concepts, in an attempt to create and maintain a unified identity (see Kelman, 1958; French & Raven, 1959; Cartwright, 1965; Katz & Kahn, 1978; Csikszentmihalyi & Rochberg-Halton, 1981; Kinder & Sears, 1985; Prentice, 1987; Snyder & Ickes, 1985; Shamir, 1992). The role of the personal power base in influencing others thus became a central issue in the study of leadership.

The catalyst for the shift from traditional to transformational perspectives of leadership resulted from an awareness of strong leadership forces such as charisma (see Burns, 1978; Conger, 1989, 1991; Conger & Kanungo, 1988). Studies of identifiable charismatic individuals indicate that charismatic types are often rejecting of formal authority and willing to take personal risks because of their strong convictions (Vecchio, Hearn & Southey, 1996). For instance, some charismatics may even have “ideological biases against ‘professional management,’ fearing that it may stifle creativity or the company’s values” (Conger & Kanungo, 1998, p. 233).

As is becoming evident, then, the image of an organisation well known for being “different” often stems from a leader’s self-concept (Conger & Kanungo, 1998). Take for instance Richard Branson and Virgin and Herb Kelleher at Southwest Airlines who both help distinguish their organisation’s unique identity. Their visions are so unique and by stressing that the vision is the basis for the group’s identity, these leaders distinguish their followers, as well as their organisation, from others. The power and influence of such charismatic leaders raise important questions about issues surrounding succession, institutionalisation, and the organisation’s identity, once the original leader departs the organisation. One recent example of a charismatic leader who has been highly effective in preparing for succession is Henry Schact, the recently retired CEO of Lucent Technologies (Nadler, 1997). In contrast, it is claimed that Steven Jobs of Apple Computer was not so successful in his attempt to prepare for succession largely because he created “antagonistic relations with peers and superiors” (Conger & Kanungo, 1998, p. 32).

Charismatic leaders often use unconventional strategies to strategically position and differentiate their company from competitors. For example, Southwest Airlines is today known for its remarkable productivity, which consistently breaks industry standards and for its leader, Herb Kelleher – which suggests a strong interlinking of the organisational identity with that of the charismatic leader. It is also argued that charismatic leaders often possess a self-promoting personality and experience very little internal conflict. For instance, Welford (1995) suggests that those companies who are only concerned with green values are driven by dominant personalities, who

appear to have a personal stake in corporate green policies. Furthermore, they are visionary because they are “keen to grasp tomorrow’s environmental issues today” (Ford, 1993, p. 170) and they “offer an exciting image of where the organisation is headed and how to get there” (DuBrin, 1998, p. 59). Perhaps most important is that charismatic leaders have been identified as having masterful communication skills and have the ability to inspire trust. As a result, they have “extraordinary influence over their followers, who become imbued with moral inspiration and purpose” (Bass, 1990, p. 184).

Communicating values

Research suggests that communicating a vision to followers may well be the most important act of the transformational leader¹ because the more effective the communication, the more compelling the vision will be. Hackman and Johnson (1996) argue that transformational leaders are masterful communicators able to articulate and define ideas and concepts that escape others. Furthermore, they claim that transformational leaders can transmit their visions, ideas, and goals through images, metaphors and models that organise meanings for followers. Hackman and Johnson’s (1996) belief that extraordinary leadership is a product of extraordinary communication fits well with Burke’s theory of identification explored earlier in the chapter because identification is increased through communication. For example, as identification increases, shared meaning increases, thereby improving understanding. Because it is so important to successful communication, “people adopt certain strategies of identification with which they interact with others” (Littlejohn, 1996, p. 169). For instance, charismatic leaders use “language to create meaning and a shared identity and community vocabulary” in the influence process (Conger & Kanungo, 1998, p. 172).

¹ The term ‘transformational’ was coined by James McGregor Burns to describe the type of leadership that creates high moral purpose. Burns (1978) compared traditional leadership, which he labelled as ‘transactional’, with a more complex and potent type of leadership he called ‘transforming.’ According to Hackman and Johnson (1996), “transformational leaders are creative, interactive, visionary, empowering, and passionate” (p. 64).

Specifically, political scientists and behaviourists recognise the importance of the “charismatic leader’s command of rhetoric and persuasion, the charismatic’s creation of a self confident, competent image, and the link between symbolic myths and goals and charismatic emergence” (Hackman & Johnson, 1996, p. 265). In fact, it is through the use of rhetoric, that the vision of charismatic leaders appears more credible. For instance, persuasion theory suggests that leaders build credibility in their moral character through the “sheer strength of their convictions and the types of virtues and values they advocate in their communication” (Conger & Kanungo, 1998, p. 186). Persuasion is then said to occur when people see good reason for adopting the advocated point of view, thus creating a shared or common identity.

Conger (1989) also goes on to say that the ability to communicate and persuade, especially on an emotional level, is an important feature of the charismatic leader. From his research, Conger (1989) has found that charismatics tend to be more effective and powerful speakers. From descriptions by some subordinates, he saw how charismatic leaders “present their ideas in truly visionary ways, create engaging dialogues with their audiences, structure their talks like symphonies, and use their personal energy to radiate excitement about their plans” (p. 69). After conducting 200 interviews with successful corporate leaders, Kanter (1983) identifies the leaders as having a number of communication skills in common. They continuously sought out new information by their active soliciting of ideas and had the ability to communicate *persuasively* to others. Kanter’s (1983) findings fit well with Kanungo’s (2001) views on the transformational mode of leadership, where the leader’s objective is to “change the follower’s core attitudes and values consistent with the leader’s vision for the organisation” (p. 262).

While the content of a leader’s vision is said to be important, so too is the process by which it is communicated. “Rhetoric spellbinding and the charismatic effect are produced by the style of verbal communications” (Conger, 1989, p. 73). However, apart from their appeal to emotions and ideals, charismatic leaders are said to use other rhetorical techniques to ensure that their message has a profound impact on their audience. A well-chosen analogy or metaphor appeals to the “intellect, to imagination,

and to values” (Conger, 1989, p. 64). Furthermore, the use of stories and corporate narratives are additional rhetorical strategies employed by charismatic leaders in their attempt to promote and position their organisation’s identity in terms of their own and their organisation’s values.

Research conducted on organisational stories and the management of meaning in organisations all emphasise the strong relationship between stories and organisational values (Jones, 1983; Deal & Kennedy, 1983; Dandridge, Mitroff & Joyce, 1980; Myrsiadis, 1987; Brown, 1985; Mitroff & Kilmann, 1975, 1976; Trevino, 1987). For instance, Dandridge, et al. (1980) emphasise this point when they say that symbolism, such as stories, and metaphorical imagery, expresses the values of an organisation. For instance, a leader may plan a strategy to include such communicative devices which appear particularly effective in creating and reinforcing meaning (Karathanos, 1998). A ritual might include a brief recognition ceremony relating the “best success story” of the week. The “success story” could include a number of metaphors which depict the organisation’s core values. The role of storytelling in organisations is examined in more detail below.

In summary, then, the literature on charismatic leadership suggests that leaders’ self-concepts play a significant role in shaping the identity of their company, especially in terms of values. In many cases, the leader’s (or founder’s) personal values become the organisation’s values and these are communicated to both internal and external audiences through numerous symbols or persuasive, rhetorical strategies. But organisations must do more than communicate these values; they must ‘walk the talk’ through specific actions. A popular tactic employed by many leaders and organisations who wish to further distinguish themselves from others is to create ‘corporate image associations’ (Keller, 2000, p. 121). Such associations serve to influence consumer perceptions of the personality and credibility of an organisation.

The value of social responsibility in business

In his work on business ethics, Moses Pava (1999) calls for organisations to give heed to the significance attached to their behaviours, in part because it is these very

behaviours that construct the organisation's identity. From an academic standpoint, Pava's (1999) ideas reflect the recent burgeoning attention to organisational identity, as well as the relationship between business ethics and organisational theory. Additionally, organisations have begun to realise the importance of acting with integrity. For instance, corporations are beginning to recognise that the effects of social and environmental discord lay squarely on business's doorstep (Tichy, McGill & St. Clair, 1997).

Although slow and arduous in its process, a quantum leap is taking place in the relationship between corporations and the general public. In the past, companies tried to dictate to consumers what they should buy. But in the 1980s, it was found that concern for the environment was reflected in the attitudes and behaviour of consumers (Alwitt & Pitts, 1996; Menon & Menon, 1997). For example, one survey found that 83 per cent of American consumers said they prefer to buy environmentally safe products (Dagnoli, 1991). Another survey found that 23 per cent of American consumers now claim to make purchase based on environmental considerations (Joseph, 1991). Social and environmental investors are also now taking good corporate citizenship into account when evaluating a company's stock (Gauntlett, 1993).

While profitability has been the most important force in driving businesses to adopt environmentally sound practices, other factors helped shaped the new corporate ideology (Gauntlett, 1993). Individuals who grew up in the sixties and seventies are now assuming leadership positions in businesses and corporations. These new leaders belong to the same generation that created the environmental movement. The shift in corporate values also mirrors other shifts in the basic paradigms of management, such as corporate social responsibility.

In an attempt to advertise their efforts in the improvement of human and environmental conditions, many organisations encapsulate basic notions of stakeholder inclusivity, corporate citizenship, environmental awareness and social responsibility directly into company mission statements or mission marketing

strategies. For instance, many executives believe that “successful corporate identity today is about expressing the vision, purpose, values and personality of a company” (Duncan & Moriarty, 1997, p. 130). It is through such mission marketing that companies hope to provide themselves with essence and integrity. Other methods of promoting organisational values can be found in annual reports, corporate advertising campaigns, speeches and internal publications such as company newsletters.

Organisational values are not only represented formally in written communications but also in the form of strategic alliances or associations with interest groups such as Greenpeace, Friends of the Earth, and social movements such as the Business for Social Responsibility movement and Non-Government Organisations. The complex environments in which the company operates and the demands these groups make can be explained in terms of the “link between the concept of values of the interest groups, and their social platform and the authority associated with it” (Jensen & Rud, 1995, p. 14). By creating associations with appropriate interest groups and social movements, organisations not only establish a point-of-difference, but they also ‘talk the talk’ and ‘walk the walk’ by communicating to consumers as well as backing up their claims with concrete programmes that consumers can easily witness, understand or even experience.

For many organisations desperate to promote their identity in terms of values, another means of demonstrating their good corporate citizenship lay in cause related marketing, a positioning strategy that proliferated during the 1980s (see Pringle & Thompson, 1999). Pringle and Thompson (1999) define cause related marketing as a strategic planning tool which links a company or brand to a relevant charity or cause in a partnership for mutual benefit. At its best, cause-related marketing is helpful in that it uses marketing dollars to help fund social ills. At its worst, it has been linked to ‘greenwashing’- using philanthropy to convince customers that company is aligned with good causes, so the company will be seen as good, too, whether it is or not (Pringle & Thompson, 1999; see also Klein, 2001; Varadarajan & Menon, 1988; Keller, 1998).

Cause related marketing comes in many forms. Notable programmes include American Express's 'Charge against hunger', Avon's 'Breast Cancer Awareness Crusade', and WalMart's 'Good Works' programme. Some firms have used cause marketing very strategically to gain a marketing advantage. Keller (2000) cites The Body Shop as his example of a company which has adopted cause related marketing as the "essence of its brand positioning", along with Timberland (p. 122). Ben & Jerry's is another firm that has created a strong "association as a 'do-gooder' through various products and programmes- such as its rainforest crunch ice cream - and by donating 7.5 per cent of pre-tax profits to various social causes (from anti-nuclear campaigns to gay rights)" (Keller, 2000, p. 122). Through such carefully planned programmes, these organisations demonstrated to the rest of the business world, including their competitors, that such identity-positioning strategies were effective. Keller (2000) explains: "some marketers feel a strongly held *point-of-difference* on the basis of community involvement and concern may in some cases be the best way and perhaps the only way to *uniquely position* a product" (p. 123, emphasis added).

Another benefit of cause related marketing is that, by humanising the firm, consumers may develop a strong, unique bond with the firm that transcends normal marketplace transactions (Keller, 2000). Such relationships may also help the organisation maintain its credibility and reputation in times of crisis, especially in relation to unfavourable media coverage (Keller, 2000). For instance, many organisations faced the danger of being criticised by the public who may have seen the firm as being self-serving and exploitative. Similar to the goals of green marketing, cause related marketing was, and continues to be, employed to strike a chord with constituents and improve the image of the organisation. But once again, the paradoxical nature of identity means that in their efforts to distinguish themselves as unique organisations with a distinct set of values, many organisations merely mirror each other in both their formal and informal value associations. Consequently, organisations are ever evolving in their quest to identify new ways to say 'this is who we are'; 'this is how we are different'. One of the developments that has become a recent focus in the literature on organisational identity has been on the use narrative form in organisational

communication. Organisations are now telling stories to identify themselves to and from others.

Narrative

The story of narrative inquiry

Understanding experience as lived and told stories, otherwise known as narrative inquiry, has become a significant focus in qualitative research across a wide range of disciplines (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000) including, importantly to this thesis, within organisational study (see Christensen & Cheney, 2000; Czarniawska, 1997, 1998). A comprehensive survey of the history of narrative is beyond the scope of this study. Nevertheless, it is important to at least sketch the history of narrative theory in the twentieth century to explain the historical influences that have helped shape the approach to narrative adopted in this thesis. In an attempt to understand the social history of narrative, it is fitting to start the story with a quote from French critic, Roland Barthes (1977) who made claims for the social centrality of narrative. He stated that:

The narratives of the world are numberless. Narrative is first and foremost a prodigious variety of genres, themselves distributed amongst different substances...Able to be carried by articulate language, spoken or written, fixed or moving images, gestures, and the ordered mixtures of all these substances, narrative is present in myth, legend, fable, tale, novella, epic, history, tragedy, drama, comedy, mime, painting...stained glass windows, cinema, comics, news item, conversation. Moreover, under this almost infinite diversity of forms, narrative is present in every age, every society; it begins with the very history of mankind and there nowhere is nor has been a people without narrative. (p. 79)

Barthes's (1977) played a pivotal role in explaining the significance of narrative to social and individual life. He believed that narratives perform several important functions. At the individual level, people use personal narratives to construe what they are and where they are going. At the cultural level, narratives serve to give cohesion to shared beliefs and to transmit value. Barthes's (1977) writings which - greatly influential in literary and cultural studies - were characterised by a concern with conditions of meaning. His seminal work *Mythologies* (1972) focused on objects and

events of everyday life as narratives replete with meaning and thick with a mythical discourse.

During the period from 1945 until the late 1950s, prose narrative study largely focused on the content of individual novels and on the techniques an author used to produce a work. However, Northrup Frye (1957) then made the influential case for the transition from theories of the novel to theories of narrative. He argued that “we have no word for work of prose fiction, so the word ‘novel’ does duty for everything and thereby loses its real meaning as the name of a genre” (p. 13). Other American critics (Scholes & Kellogg, 1966) followed in their criticism of the prevailing practice of judging all narrative literature by standards appropriate only to the contemporary realistic novel.

After 1960, narrative theory became an international and interdisciplinary subject of study (Martin, 1986). The development of French structuralism revolutionised the study of narrative and led to the creation of the literary science ‘narratology’ (Martin, 1986). Many features of French structuralist theories of narrative are inspired by anthropology. For instance, modern French structuralist analysis of narrative began with the pioneering works of French structural anthropologist, Claude Lévi-Strauss (1978) on myth. For Lévi-Strauss, all myths are versions of basic terms and the narrative structures of individual myths relate to a universal structure which underpins all of them (Payne, 1996). In their attempts to theorise the fundamental structure of all narrative, Lévi-Strauss (1978) and narratologist, Greimas (1966; 1988), take binary oppositions as the basis of developing a theory of the operation of narrative from the work on myths.

Structuralist literary critics interpret texts into terms of codes which are composed of multiple binary oppositions, classifying the meanings they produce. For instance, based on the relationship of opposition and mutual exclusion between two elements such as black/white or masculine/feminine, structuralists argue that legitimate meanings are those which are constructed in terms of such oppositions. In other words, we cannot conceive of ‘good’ if we do not understand ‘evil’. Thus, in relation

to language, the meaning of the lexical item (or sign) depends on what it is not (Payne, 1996). Narratives, too, have deep structures that consist of binary oppositions (Lacey, 2000). But because Greimas was interested in tales of greater length, he needed a more accommodating theory and found another model for narrative analysis in a work by Russian folklorist, Vladimir Propp (1958). Propp (1958) attempted to define the narrative elements common to all folk tales in a manner similar to Levi-Strauss. However, his premise was that it was a mistake to try and categorise all folktales, or indeed narratives, by their content because the task is far too large. His work on plot construction was considered an important contribution to narratology.

Propp endeavoured to show how folktales are linked by a common structure, and this structure can be applied to any old or, theoretically, new folktale. His ideas were soon recognised by academics in the 1960s as applicable to *all* narrative texts (Lacey, 2000). However, among those who opposed Propp's theories was Roland Barthes. According to Barthes, a particular narrative cannot be read as the manifestation of a single structure and the elements of narrative cannot be given fixed definitions (Lavers, 1982). For my purposes, Propp's theories are useful in suggesting similarities between narratives rather than giving particular insights into individual texts. The application of his general and conventional narrative structures can, at times, be very revealing in the analysis of narratives. Additionally, like Levi-Strauss, Propp's work propelled a movement away from readings which operate in terms of simple representation. Both Levi Strauss and Propp provided inspiration to many - across a range of disciplines - who went on to explore, and further develop, theories of narrative and the resulting interdisciplinary nature of narrative theory has come to be of particular value in the context of organisation studies. For instance, many organisational researchers (Brown, 1990; Martin, 1982; Mumby, 1987; Pacanowsky & O'Donnell-Trujillo, 1982; Gabriel, 1998, 2000) argue that stories are a dominant narrative form in organisational discourse. In their studies, they draw largely on those scholars who have advanced the importance of narrative in human communication.

Narrative and communication

Interpretive theories of communication try to discover meanings in actions and texts and emphasise language as the center of experience. In other words, language creates a world of meaning within which the person lives and through which all experience is understood (see chapter 4 for an overview of the interpretive approach). Such theories of communication share an affinity with certain interactionist theories, such as dramatism and narrative, in that both suggest that reality is constructed socially through communication. More specifically, they support the notion that narratives are “among the most universal means of representing human events” (Bennet & Edelman, 1985, p. 156). In this sense, narrative is a form of knowledge (Bruner, 1986, 1991; Fisher, 1987; Lyotard, 1979), a form of social life (Freud, 1959; Nietzsche, 1982; MacIntyre, 1977, 1981; Gergen, 1982; Goffman, 1959), and a form of communication (Fisher, 1987; Polkinghorne, 1988).

Kenneth Burke’s dramatism and Walter Fisher’s narrative paradigm both reference the dramatic conventions of plot lines, characterisation, and scenes in which action takes place. Fisher even *privileges* narrative expression, in an effort to overcome or at least counter the long-standing dominance of logical-rational modes of expression. The philosophy of “life as social drama” makes these approaches similar (Rybacki & Rybacki, 1991, p. 126). Because language is central to the production of meaning and social reality, researchers can study the discourses which result from the creation of such meaning.

Theories of dramatism and narrative deal with one of the most important ways people use symbols and create meaning: the story. In his work on the narrative paradigm, Fisher (1984) declared a close connection with dramatism, that is Burke’s method of treating “language and thought primarily as modes of action” (Burke, 1969a, p. xxii)².

²Narrative theory, like dramatism, features language use and treats that as a primary source of human action – as opposed to the lay conception of “talk as cheap.” In this way, Burke’s dramatism, Fisher’s narrative paradigm, and other similar approaches (including symbolic interactionism which heavily influenced Burke) are part of the same *Zeitgeist* with the British linguistic philosophers (Wittgenstein,

While the narrative approach shares elements of dramatism in its emphasis on plot, characterisation, and setting, it puts a different emphasis on what you do with these elements in analysing and evaluating rhetorical acts. The difference between dramatism and narrative lies principally in how you examine the rhetorical act. In dramatism, the rhetor's strategies are crucial; Narrative is concerned with the rationality of an act, how a story functions as an argument about good reasons (Rybacki & Rybacki, 1991). Each approach offers insights into how people use stories as an important means of communication.

Kenneth Burke's dramatism

Hailed as one of the twentieth century's most revolutionary scholars in literary criticism and as a giant among theorists of language, Kenneth Burke has been instrumental in the development of the theory of human communication and the revival of rhetoric³. Burke (1966), a prolific writer, translator, poet, short-story writer, and novelist, defined his own project as one that "constituted an investigation into symbolic motivations and linguistic action in general" (p. 494). By concentrating much of his attention on the effects of texts on their audience, he both expanded and refined the art of rhetoric. In surveying Burke's theory of communication, I begin with a summary of his concept of 'action' and then turn to his central ideas on symbols, language and communication.

In his seminal work on language as symbolic action, Burke (1966) poetically states that:

Man is
The symbol-using (symbol-making, symbol misusing) animal
Inventor of the negative (or moralised by the negative)
Separated from his natural condition by instruments of his own making

1958; Austin 1962; & Searle, 1969), whose central point has been that talk is action. For instance, Austin's (1962) classic example is making a promise.

³ More than anyone else, Burke has been responsible for reviving and expanding the study of rhetoric. See Cheney (1985) for a detailed review of Kenneth Burke's theory of human relations. In his extensive overview of Burke's approach, Cheney explores the interconnections between issues of identity, rhetoric, and social organisation.

Goaded by the spirit of hierarchy (or moved by the sense of order)
And rotten with perfection. (p. 16)

Here Burke is clearly demonstrating his view that verbal symbols are meaningful acts from which motives can be derived. Dramatism is the label Burke gives to this study of human motivation – a term clearly derived from the study of drama. At the heart of dramatism, is Burke's assumption that language use constitutes action not motion. His view of human action is consistent with Mead (1934) and Blumer (1969), theorists from the interactionist movement. Specifically, Burke (1973) distinguishes between action which consists of purposeful, voluntary behaviours and motions which consist of nonpurposeful, nonmeaningful behaviours. According to Burke, objects and animals possess motion, but only human beings have action and the individual is distinguished by symbol-using behaviour, the ability to act. For Burke, people are symbol-creating, symbol-using, and symbol-misusing animals. They create symbols to name things and situations and most importantly, they use symbols for communication. People filter reality through the symbolic screen. Reality is mediated through symbols. Here, Burke agrees with Mead (1934) that language functions as the vehicle for action. Because of the social need for people to corporate in their actions, language shapes behaviour.

For Burke, the analysis of the human condition must begin with and center on language because of the overwhelming way in which our "symbolicity defines us, as individuals and as social 'actors'" (Cheney, 1985, p. 94). Language, as seen by Burke, is always emotionally loaded. No word can be neutral. Consequently, one's attitudes, judgements, and feelings invariably appear in the language one uses. Indeed "language is by nature selective and abstract, focusing attention on particular aspects of reality at the expense of other aspects" (Littlejohn, 1996, p. 167). Burke uses several terms: persuasion, identification, consubstantiality, communication, and rhetoric. In this way, Burke's 'identification' broadens rhetoric's concern with persuasion to include all sorts of attachments and connections.

First, consubstantiality is achieved when individuals communicate and cooperate with others who share the same interests. People have substance and each person possesses

separate substance; however, the substance of any two persons always overlap to some extent. The overlap is never total, making perfect communication impossible (Burke, 1968). Whatever communication occurs between individuals is a direct function of their shared, or common, substance, called consubstantiality:

Here are the ambiguities of substance. In being identified with B, A is 'substantially one' with a person other than himself. Yet at the same time he remains unique, an individual locus of motives. Thus he is both joined and separate, at once a distinct substance and consubstantial with another. (Burke, 1969b, p. 21)

Burke's paradox of substance strongly resembles Mackenzie's ideas on the paradox of identity discussed earlier. Here, "identification links individual and society in the way that 'I' often slides to 'we.'" (Cheney, 1985, p. 110). The shared nature of identity leads us to examine perhaps the most important concept in Burke's (1969b) theory: identification:

'Identification' at its simplest is also a deliberative device, as when the politician seeks to identify himself with his audience...But identification can also be an end, as when people earnestly yearn to identify themselves with some group or other. Here, they are not necessarily being acted upon by a conscious agent, but may be acting upon themselves to this end. (p. 63)

Thus, as Tompkins and Cheney (1983) point out, an "individual may spontaneously identify himself/herself with...an organisation...When an organisation member is so inclined he or she is open to persuasive communication by the organisation" (p. 127). In their analysis of the relationship between cultural values and organisational values, Cheney and Frenette (1993) adopt Burke's theory of identification to examine the joint process between the individual and the organisation which results in individuals acting on "perceived common interests, the value and factual premises of the organisation (Simon, cited in Cheney & Frenette, 1993, p. 52). Thus, when an employee *identifies* with the organisation, he or she is "likely to *accept* the various premises, factual and value-oriented, of his or her employer" (p. 52, emphasis added). But more importantly as Cheney (1983a) points out, the term identification also "points to conceptual and methodological tools for the study of organisational rhetoric" (p. 145).

While similar to consubstantiality, “identification is compensatory to division” (Burke, 1969b, p. 22) in that “as an individual response to the divisions of society, a person *acts* to identify with some target(s)” (Cheney, 1983a, p. 145, emphasis added). Such associations often result in an individual collecting a variety of “corporate identities” (Cheney, 1983a, p. 145). For example, peoples’ identities may be related to the identifications they hold with various organisations (Burke, 1961). Heath (1994) further expands on Burke’s ideas in claiming that: “Who people think themselves to be is a product of and results in a variety of identifications with specific companies and industries” (p. 235). From this perspective, consubstantiality may be regarded as a product of identification that leads an individual to see things from the perspective of a target, or in this case, an organisation, through the communication of its identity, values, and goals.

To emphasise this point further, Cheney (1983a) recalls what Burke wrote in 1937: “In America it is *natural* for a [person] to identify [himself or herself] with the business corporation [she or he] serves” (p. 158). Consequently, Cheney (1983a) claims that “Burkean criticism and the study of organisational communication should be mutually informed activities” (p. 158). He goes on to confirm the importance of Burke’s theory of communication to organisation studies: “In examining communication by organisations (i.e. managers and administrators), we can observe the strategies and tactics that help foster...identification with the organisation” (p. 158). Burke’s attempt to analyse such strategies and tactics is offered in his most basic method for analysing the rhetorical event: the dramatistic pentad.

Maintaining a focus on Burke’s influence in narratology, I now turn to explore how his theories and perspectives of communication went on to enrich further studies in narrative and communication, namely, Walter Fisher’s (1987) views of narration as a paradigm of human communication.

Walter Fisher’s theory of narrative

For Fisher (1984), narratives are more than simply a type of communication; they represent a *fundamental* means of communication and are, broadly, evidence of the

way we commonly perceive and structure our world. Thus, human activity is largely constituted and directed through narratives, as stories work “to give order to human experience and to induce others to dwell in them to establish ways of living in common” (Fisher, 1984, p. 6). For Fisher (1984, 1987) not only do narratives give order and meaning to human society, they suggest how people should act within society (Brown, 1990; Kirkwood, 1992; Mitroff & Kilman, 1976).

Fisher’s rhetorical theory is explicitly post-Aristotelian. He starts with the assumption that “humans as rhetorical beings are as much valuing as reasoning animals” and that central to this process is the giving of “good reasons”, “those elements that provide warrants for accepting or adhering to advice fostered by any form of communication that can be considered rhetorical” (Fisher, 1984, p. 57). He goes on to argue that “the narrative paradigm can be considered a dialectical synthesis of two traditional strands that recur in the history of rhetoric: the argumentative, persuasive theme and the literary, aesthetic theme” (p. 58). After relating narrative to dramatism, fantasy theme analysis, and language action, Fisher (1984) sets forth the presuppositions of the narrative paradigm:

- (1) Humans are essentially storytellers.
- (2) The paradigmatic mode of human decision-making and communication is “good reasons” which vary in form among situations, genres, and media of communication.
- (3) The production and practice of good reasons are ruled by matters of history, biography, culture, and character along with the kinds of forces identified in the Frenztz and Farrell language action paradigm.
- (4) Rationality is determined by the nature of persons as narrative beings-their inherent awareness of narrative probability, what constitutes a coherent story, add their constant habit of testing narrative fidelity, whether or not the stories they experience ring true with the stories they know to be true in their lives.
- (5) The world as we know it is a set of stories that must be chosen among in order for us to live life in a process of continual re-creation. (p. 64)

While many reject Fisher’s view that narrative is a paradigm in the Kuhnian sense, his work makes a strong case for the interdisciplinary value of narrative analysis (Brock, et al., 1990).

Narrative analysis is especially useful to researchers seeking to pay close attention to the “*forms* in which knowledge is cast and the effects that these have on an audience,

scientific or otherwise” (Czarniawska, 1997, p. 6). Yet narrative knowledge has struggled to claim the legitimacy awarded to scientific knowledge as “only scientific discourse was productive of true knowledge, because it was the only form of discourse in which reasoning could be apodictic, that is, necessarily valid” (Fisher, 1987, p. 7). Not surprisingly, science refused to give legitimacy to Fisher’s alternative to the conventional model of formal rationality. His response echoed Toulmin’s (1982) sentiments which suggested that “a decent respect for each kind of knowledge is surely compatible with conceding the legitimate claims of the other” (p. 244).

Fisher (1987) was not alone in his quest to claim narrative as central to knowledge. Jean François Lyotard (1979), and later, others (Bruner, 1986; Polkinghorne, 1988), took up the debate surrounding the legitimization of narrative knowledge. According to Lyotard (1979), “narration is the quintessential form of customary knowledge, in more ways than one” (p. 19). For instance, narrative knowledge alerts us to the ways in which the stories that rule our lives and our societies are constructed. In other words, “narratives allow the society in which they are told, on the one hand, to define its criteria of competence and, on the other, to evaluate according to those criteria what is performed or can be performed within it” (Lyotard, 1979, p. 20). While the narrative form lends itself to a great variety of language games, what is transmitted through narratives is the set of pragmatic rules that constitute the social bond of a community (Lyotard, 1979). Finally, Lyotard (1979) refers to narrative knowledge and its effect on time concluding that:

There is, then, an incommensurability between popular narrative pragmatics, which provides immediate legitimation, and the language game known to the West as the question of legitimacy-or rather, legitimacy as a referent in the game of inquiry. Narratives, as we have seen, determine criteria of competence and/or illustrate how they are to be applied. They thus define what has the right to be said and done in the culture in question, and since they are themselves part of that culture, they are legitimized by the simple fact that they do what they do. (p. 23)

In sum, Fisher’s examination of narrative as a paradigm for human communication is amplified in the works of many theorists who view individuals as storytellers who form and evaluate stories in real life as well as in literature. Moreover, Fisher (1985)

notes that institutions and organisations, continually supply the grist for storylines that communicate (organisational) meaning. Indeed, organisations generate their own sets of stories which ultimately are offered as “proof of the unique quality of an organisation as a whole” (Brown, 1990, p. 178). In this way, narratives reinforce the development of (organisational) identity and reflect (the organisation’s) fundamental values and beliefs. In fact, Larsen (2000) goes so far to claim that for many organisations, narratives “may even become the primary vehicle for differentiation” in a few years (p. 197). While these views have exciting implications for future studies on the identity of organisations, it is important that we trace the relationship of these concepts to fully appreciate the narrative-identity connection.

Narrative and identity

Narrative presupposes and draws on the human competence to understand action. Self identity becomes linked to a person’s life story, which connects up the actions into an integrating plot. In fact, it is argued that “identity is the story that the modern ‘I’ constructs and tells about the ‘me’” (McAdams, 1997, p. 66). But “personal stories are not merely a way of telling someone (or oneself) about one’s life; they are the means by which identities may be fashioned (Rosenwald & Ochberg, 1992, p. 1). Not only do we tell our lives as stories; there is also a significant sense in which our relationships with each other are lived out in narrative form. According to White and Epston (1990), “persons give meaning to their lives and relationships by storying their experience” (p. 13). The ideal life, Nietzsche proposed, is one that corresponds to the ideal story; each act is coherently related to all others with nothing to spare (Nehamas, 1985). Perhaps more compelling is Hardy’s (1968) explanation: “we dream in narrative, daydream in narrative, remember, anticipate, hope, despair, believe, doubt, plan, revise, criticize, construct, gossip, learn, hate and love by narrative” (p. 5). MacIntyre (1981) elaborates on Hardy’s view by proposing that enacted narratives form the basis of moral character. In a significant sense then, we “live by stories-both in the telling and the realising of the self” (Gergen, 2001, p. 248).

The role of narrative in the construction of identity has received increasing attention from scholars representing a variety of disciplines such as sociology, philosophy,

psychology, and more recently, organisation studies. But several theorists in particular have provided fundamental insights into the study of the relationship between the self, identity, and narrative. In the following sections, I outline the fundamental contributions of Friedrich Nietzsche (philology) and Sigmund Freud (psychoanalysis) and the twentieth century contributions of Erving Goffman (sociology), Alasdair MacIntyre (philosophy), Paul Ricoeur (philosophy), Jerome Bruner (psychology), and Donald Polkinghorne (psychology). More importantly, I explain how elements from each theorist's perspective provide an interdisciplinary theoretical framework for a narrative approach to studying corporate and organisational identity.

Nietzsche and Freud on narrative and the self

That which differentiates a person from all other persons is a construction as well as a discovery, for the person's story is open-ended, not finished (Polkinghorne, 1988). In other words, life is not merely a story text; life is lived, and the story is told. But in the process, the story is open to editing and revision and can be changed. As perhaps the first to observe that narrative becomes identity and is not just about identity, Nietzsche's (1982) linkage of text and identity are of particular relevance to this study. Nietzsche thought that the kind of story one generated from his life events had a moral quality and could be judged as more or less worthy. According to Nietzsche, the self is not a constant, stable entity. Rather, it is something one becomes, something one constructs (Nehamas, 1985). The self does not know itself directly, it knows itself only indirectly through signs and symbols of self-interpretation. The self, then, is a figured or represented ego, and it comes into being the configuration it gives itself. This was a radical notion in the nineteenth century which is now becoming an accepted way of conceiving identity.

Nietzsche believed that a person worthy of admiration is one whose thoughts, desires, and actions are not haphazard but are connected to one another in "the intimate way that indicates in all cases the presence of style" (Nehamas, 1985, p. 7). Nietzsche held that an 'admirable self' consists of a large number of powerful and conflicting tendencies that are controlled and harmonised. However, Nietzsche argued that the admirable person could give these harmony simply by creating her own style of

coherence. Nietzsche's model for life was literature, and he emphasised the idea that life is something to be fashioned in the way a work of literature is shaped. He held that although past events cannot be changed, "one can alter the narrative that is used to connect them to the present, and in this way even the accidents in our past can be turned into actions" (Polkinghorne, 1988, p. 155).

The events of a person's life can indeed be read from different perspectives, and they are amenable to various kinds of emplotment (Polkinghorne, 1988). However, as Polkinghorne (1988) explains: "the number of different readings is limited and must fit given events" (p. 155). Nietzsche's (1982) concern is that people will simply adopt a culturally given plot line - such as that of the Christian plot line of gaining salvation through good works or faith. Nietzsche wanted the plot of personal identity to be a creative work of quality and style, a unique construction of the self. Nietzsche's writings have had a significant impact on philosophy, literature, critical theory, and even theology. Figures as diverse as Freud, Adorno, Derrida and Lyotard have all been subject in one way or another to his influence. Many shared, and later developed, his belief that the self is not immutable.

Freud (1959) has also made a significant contribution to narrative theory. Psychoanalyst Donald Spence (1984) opens his book *Narrative truth and historical truth*, with this statement:

Freud was a master at taking pieces of the patient's associations, dreams, and memories and weaving them into a coherent pattern that is compelling, persuasive, and seemingly complete, a pattern that allows us to make important discoveries about the patient's life and to make sense out of previously random happenings. Freud's most impressive achievements...are lasting accomplishments of innovative synthesis...Freud made us aware of the persuasive power of a coherent narrative – in particular, of the way in which an aptly chosen reconstruction can fill the gap between two apparently unrelated events and, in the process, make sense out of non-sense. There seems no doubt but that a well-constructed story possesses a kind of narrative truth that is real and immediate and carries an important significance for the process of therapeutic change. (p. 21)

Freud accepted a close relationship between psychoanalysis and literature and he drew from literature both stimulation and confirmation. He also often presented his theories

through case studies in narrative form (Polkinghorne, 1998). He contributed two important conclusions about narrative of general significance. The first, one in accordance with historians, was that the meaning of an event can be radically dependent on what happens later. It may be true that an event was meaningless and inconsequential when it happened, and it may also be true that it later became all-important (Freud, 1959). The second conclusion is an extension of the first. The fact that a patient may not have actually experienced a crucial experience elicited by a psychoanalyst does not alter its importance (Freud, 1959). Polkinghorne (1988) explains: The “retrospective character of all narrative and the inseparability of the self from its story, the event is a necessary hypothesis for understanding, regardless of whether it is factual or not” (p. 120).

Schafer (1983) argues that, in general, Freudian theory makes narrative the preferred mode of explanation. He says that Freud’s “major misconception was that psychoanalysis is a new natural science” (p. 240), that psychoanalysis is not primarily about scientific laws of the form “if X, then Y” (p. 240). Psychoanalytic understanding involves reconstructing a story, tracing a phenomenon to its origins, and seeing how one thing leads to another. Freud’s case histories were narratives with ‘reconstructed’ plots. Each one presented a proposed sequence in the patient’s life, but the episodes of that life were presented in the order in which they appeared in Freud’s conduct of the case. A case study, like a narrative, “leads to the revelation of a decisive event in a patient’s life which, when placed in the true sequence of events, can be seen as the (narrative) cause of the patient’s present situation” (Polkinghorne, 1988, p. 120).

Freud’s (1959) conclusions support the notion of power in the realm of meaning in human existence. Human beings are not simply constructions based on past events; they are also products of narrative structures. They exist in narrative creations and are powerfully affected by them. Humans unavoidably rely on narratives to understand their world and their place in it. These insights of Freud continue to influence many scholars’ ongoing explorations of narrative and identity despite the fact that Critics of Freud’s theory point out that the narratives Freud attributed to his patients were very

much *his* own reconstructions and very much influenced by *his* own Victorian identity. However, that narratives are a matter of construction and interpretation has been widely acknowledged by many narrative theorists.

Philosophical narratives of identity

Philosophers from various backgrounds also stress the importance of narratives in human life and present the notion of narrative as an alternative to individual consciousness (MacIntyre, 1981; Ricoeur, 1981). They stress that narratives are more than tales about human existence, because human life itself is narratively organised. For them, narratives do not reflect reality; human reality itself takes the form of a narrative. Widdershoven (1994) explains: “People interpret reality by telling stories, both in everyday life and in science and philosophy. Human knowledge is an interpretation of reality, it gives meaning to reality, it is a story about reality” (p. 105).

Every human activity is in a sense narrative in that it expresses a way of being, of experiencing the world as meaningful. Alasdair MacIntyre (1977, 1981), a writer dedicated to moral philosophy, developed this argument claiming that human actions can be regarded as enacted narratives. Among the first to extend the use of the notion of narrative beyond literature, MacIntyre (1981) develops a neo-Aristotelian account of virtues, cultivating a narrative concept of the selfhood: our actions and selves are intelligible only because of the stories we tell. In other words, social life is a narrative and narrative and storytelling acts as a means of shaping, organising, and understanding human experience. But if one was to conceive a human action as behaviour, one must also consider human intentions and the settings in which they make sense (Schütz, 1973). Indeed such settings may be institutions, sets of practices or other contexts created by humans.

MacIntyre (1981) claims that “human beings can be held to account for that of which they are the authors; other beings cannot” (p. 209). Thus, the centrality of human action is an intentional human act taking place between actors in a given social order. Such a concept of action has links with numerous traditions of thought. Additionally, MacIntyre (1981) is explicit in supporting the narrative view of human decision

making and action and claims that the essential genre “for the characterisation of human actions is enacted dramatic narrative” (p. 200). This view is also compatible with Fisher’s (1984) narrative paradigm and Burke’s (1969b) dramatist analysis of human conduct discussed above.

To understand the relationship between individual narratives and societal ones, MacIntyre (1981) suggests that one needs to return to the practice of storytelling. He claims that the chief means of socialisation in premodern societies was the telling of stories in a genre fitting the kind of society whose story was being told. Individuals were helped to attribute meaning to their lives by relating these to the legitimate narrative of the society (or organisation) to which they belonged or *identified* with. For instance, the stories “we tell of ourselves in interaction (or posit with respect to interaction) with others is the essence of identification” (Scott, Corman & Cheney, 1998, p. 305). That is, the act of storytelling involves not just the expression of identity but its ongoing construction. Such commonly shared narratives include personal stories about our cultural and family backgrounds. Additionally, identification with organisations can be attributed to the telling of traditional stories of ‘who we are’, stories often told by organisational founders in their attempts to build member-identification with the organisation (Czarniawska-Joerges, 1994; Hatch & Schultz, 2000).

MacIntyre (1981) and Taylor (1989) argue that the creation of identity through narrative typically involves the “establishment of some sort of moral stance – an implicit perspective on the good – from which the individual can judge the quality of his or her own life and the lives of others” (McAdams, 1997, p. 67). In line with this idea, most modern stories may be viewed as suggesting an ideological setting. The ideological setting refers to the “person’s religious, political, and ethical beliefs and values as they are instantiated in the story, including the individual’s accounts of how those values and beliefs came to be” (McAdams, 1997, p. 67). McAdams ideas can also be related to organisations and their founders in their stories of identity. For instance, organisational founders often promote their own personal values and beliefs in their corporate narratives and in their quest for distinctness.

A related, though somewhat different, position is taken by Paul Ricoeur (cited in Valdés, 1991). According to him, human experience shows a primordial narrativity. It embodies a quest for meaning, which is made explicit in stories. In this regard, Ricoeur introduces the notion of a prenarrative structure of experience. According to MacIntyre and Ricoeur, the relation between life and story is hermeneutic, in that the implicit meaning of life is made explicit through stories:

I would say, borrowing Wittgenstein's term, that the 'language-game' of narration ultimately reveals that the meaning of human existence is itself a narrative. The implications of narration as a retelling of history are considerable....the meaning of human existence is not just the power to change or master the world, but also the ability to be remembered and recollected in narrative discourse, to be *memorable*. These existential and historical implications of narrativity are very far-reaching, for they determine what is to be 'preserved' and rendered 'permanent' in a culture's [and in this sense, organisation's] sense of its own past, of its own 'identity.' (Ricoeur, cited in Valdés, 1991, p. 464)

Like MacIntyre, Ricoeur, too, discusses the consequences of a narrative view of human action for the concept of personal identity. In a discussion of MacIntyre's views, Ricoeur introduces the notion of a 'global plan of life', which structures separate practices and is modified by them (Widdershoven, 1994). Contrary to MacIntyre, however, he stresses the difference between the (prenarrative) organisation of life itself and the (narrative) structure of novels. He argues that MacIntyre underestimates the importance of a refiguration of life in fiction, and says that a "detour through fiction" may help us understand the relations between action and person (Ricoeur, 1991, p. 187). Although Ricoeur disagrees with MacIntyre on the relevance of the distinction between literature and real life, they both agree that "personal identity is related to the activity of structuring one's actions and presenting them as part of a lived narrative" (Widdershoven, 1994, p. 106).

In sum, the philosophical discussion on narrative and its place in human life is that narrative is fundamental to human existence in two ways. First, human existence is narratively reconstructed into an organised totality. Human life is presented as a lived story that can be understood. Second, this lived unity may be expressed in narratives which make the implicit 'story of life' explicit, and thus contribute to the

organisation of life. A narrative perspective on human life entails that “life is a meaningful totality, which can be expressed in stories and is enriched as it is expressed in stories” (Widdershoven, 1994, p. 106).

Psychological narratives of identity

As we have seen, recent philosophical attention on narrative has explored the contribution that it makes to establishing personal identity. Yet, psychologists have also used the concept of narrative to explain central aspects of human behaviour (Sarbin, 1986). In particular, narrative psychology has examined the employment of self-narratives and their place in the formation of self-identity (Sarbin, 1986; Scheibe, 1986; Crites, 1986). In agreement with Giddens’s (1991), Scheibe (1986) writes:

Human identities are considered to be evolving constructions; they emerge out of continual social interactions in the course of life. Self-narratives are developed stories that must be told in specific historical terms, using a particular language, reference to a particular stock of working historical conventions and a particular pattern of dominant beliefs and values. (p.131)

Scheibe’s thesis is that people undertake adventures in order to construct and maintain satisfactory life stories. One’s life story needs to include a series of progressive and regressive periods repeating over time – that is, it needs adventures followed by the return to repose. Polkinghorne (1988) elaborates on Scheibe’s ideas by explaining that narrative enrichment occurs when one “retrospectively revises, selects, and orders past details in such a way as to create a self-narrative that is coherent and satisfying and that will serve as a justification for one’s present condition” (p. 106). Thus, narrative constructions are the “socially derived and expressed product of repeated adventures” (Scheibe, 1986).

Stephen Crites (1971, 1986) further emphasises the importance of appropriating the past in one’s life. However, he is careful to distinguish between narrative strategies for stories of the past and stories of the future. For Crites (1986), one’s personal story or personal identity is a recollected Self in which the more complete the story that is formed, the more integrated the Self will be. Thus, self-knowledge is an appropriation of the past. According to Crites (1986), identity, recollected out of the past, is the

depth dimension of the Self that gives the Self-character. The significance of Crites' (1986) view for the study of organisations and their identity narratives will be addressed later. But identity also includes the construction of a future story that continues the "I" of the person. This is highlighted by McAdams (1985) who defines identity as an internalized narrative integration of past, present, and future that provides life with a sense of unity. As narrative forms, then, as Polkinghorne (1988) explains, "stories draw together and configure the events of one's life into a coherent and basic theme. One's future is projected as a continuation of the story, as yet unfinished" (p. 107). So, if life stories are a way of fashioning identities, we are forever telling our own story.

Jerome Bruner's alternative mode of knowing

While the psychological theorists introduced above have used the concept of narrative to explain central aspects of human behaviour, the greatest contribution on the discussion of the importance of narrative is given by Jerome Bruner (1990), a pioneer in the study of cognition. He distinguishes a narrative from a paradigmatic mode of thought. According to Bruner, the narrative offers an alternative mode of knowing as it is incorporated in the life it recounts. In an attempt to make clear the relative advantage of using this mode, Bruner (1986), went on to argue that narrative is the natural mode through which human beings make sense of lives in time. In particular, he claimed that the power of the narrative as a story lies in the temporal order of events or its sequentiality. While narrative discourse produces stories whose subject matter is human action, Bruner (1991) attributes a much more basic role to narrative than mere storytelling. For instance, he saw the narrative form as a basic trait of all forms of cognitive processing of social information: "how we go about constructing and representing the rich and messy domain of human interaction" (Bruner, 1991, p. 4).

Bruner (1986) compared the narrative mode of knowing with the logico-scientific or paradigmatic mode, noting that we know "precious little" about how narrative processes work and that this meager knowledge stands in stark contrast to the extensive knowledge we have of paradigmatic processes used in formal science.

Bruner further explained that the two processes function differently and each mode uses a different type of causality to connect events. According to Bruner (1986), the paradigmatic mode searches for universal truth conditions, whereas the narrative mode is specifically directed to understanding human action (Bruner, 1986; Mitchell, 1981; Ricoeur, 1984) and looks for particular connections between events. Thus, the narrative mode of knowing consists of organising experience with the help of a scheme assuming the intentionality of human action: “we organise our experience and our memory of human happenings mainly in the form of narrative – stories, excuses, myths, reasons for doing and not doing, etc” (Bruner, 1991, p. 4).

In relation to the narrative mode of thought, Bruner (1991) sees the two terms *thought* and *discourse* as practically indistinguishable, although one is mental, the other language-based. He claims that narrative accounts do not provide causal explanations but a basis for interpreting why a character acted as he or she did: “Interpretation is concerned with ‘reasons’ for things happening, rather than strictly their ‘causes’” (Bruner, 1991, p. 7). The act of constructing a narrative is considerably more than simply selecting events and then placing them in an appropriate order. The events themselves need to be constituted in the light of the overall narrative (Bruner, 1991). Yet, as Taylor and van Every (2000) point out, narration also has an argumentative dimension. “The listener has to, in turn, not only listen but also interpret-reconstitute the events for him - or herself, and if necessary, contribute to the telling” (Taylor & van Every, 2000, p. 44). Therefore, “the facts of the social world are attributions, not determinations of causes. Narrative and rhetoric thus have much in common” (Taylor & van Every, 2000, p. 44).

Both paradigmatic and narrative cognition generate useful and valid knowledge in qualitative research. In fact, the significance of Bruner’s contribution is his expansion of ways of knowing beyond the singular mode advocated by the received tradition to include the narrative mode. An explanation of how narrative inquiry of both the paradigmatic and narrative type is used in this study will follow in the next chapter.

Donald Polkinghorne's interdisciplinary approach

Donald Polkinghorne (1998), a professor in psychology and a practising psychotherapist, provides another perspective on narrative. Polkinghorne (1988) espoused narrative as the basic configuration process that produces human experience and meaning and posited that through narrative, researchers can yield information about being human as we experience it as embodied, historical, and integral. After all, the central idea of narrative analysis is that stories and narratives offer especially translucent windows into cultural and social meanings, an important contribution in the study of organisational life.

Polkinghorne (1988) also developed the role narrative plays in the creation of identity. Speaking of Self, he remarks:

The tools being used by the human disciplines to gain access to the self-concept are, in general, the traditional research implements designed for formal science to locate and measure objects and things...We achieve our personal identities and self-concept through the use of the narrative configuration, and make our existence into a whole by understanding it as an expression of a single unfolding and developing story. We are in the middle of our stories and cannot be sure how they will end; we are constantly having to revise the plot as new events are added to our lives. Self, then, is not a static thing or a substance, but a configuring of personal events into an historical unity which includes not only what one has been but also anticipations of what one will be. (p. 150)

Narratives or stories, then, have the capacity to integrate the individual's reconstructed past, perceived present, and anticipated future, rendering a life in time sensible in terms of beginnings, middles, and endings (McAdams, 1985; Polkinghorne, 1988). Giddens (1991) reiterates this point further by saying: "a person's identity is not to be found in behaviour, nor-important though it is-in the reactions of others, but in the capacity to *keep a particular narrative going*" (p. 54, emphasis added).

In his discussion about the function of narrative meaning for human existence, Polkinghorne (1988) proposes three organizing themes of narrative: plot, explanation

and communication. The first organizing theme that identifies the significance and role of the individual events, the plot:

Is able to weave together a complex of events to make a single story. It is able to take into account the historical and social context in which the events took place and recognise the significance of unique and novel situations. (Polkinghorne, 1988, p. 19)

Together with its attention to context, plots, the literary term for narrative structure, allow us to configure events into stories, some of which are passed on as myths. But most of all, plot analysis is the comparative anatomy of narrative theory: it shows us the structural features shared by similar stories (Martin, 1986). The influence of both stories and myths is evident in everyday conversation and communication and aids in our understanding of both personal and organisational life. For example, popular organisational stories which become enduring myths are evident in tales of identity.

Both the construction and the understanding of plots draw on the human ability to understand human activity as actions (Polkinghorne, 1988). Ricoeur (1981) extends this notion by suggesting that understanding can be reconciled with explanation (the second organising theme), in an interpretation of a text in the same way as motives can be reconciled with causes in an interpretation of human action. Consequently, and in slight contrast to Bruner (1990), Polkinghorne (1988) asserts: “narratives exhibit an explanation instead of demonstrating it” (p. 21). In other words, the narrative mode offers explanation by configuring a “set of events into a causal nexus” (p. 21), whereby it explains a complex set of events by tracing its intrinsic relations to other events and locates it in its historical context.

The third organising theme of narrative – communication - is particularly relevant to this thesis in its aim to understand, interpret, and explain the communicative strategies employed to construct, communicate, and maintain organisational selves through narrative. By ‘communication’ Polkinghorne (1988) means narrative *presentation*. He uses the term to refer to three different kinds of story presentation:

The first is the presentation of the original story to personal awareness. This story is constructed by the narrative meaning (cognitive) structure and displays a world in which human actions cohere according to plots. The second kind of story presentation is the representation of the

experience in a language message directed to others. The third kind of presentation is involved with the reception-including interpretation and understanding - of a story by hearing or reading. (p. 22)

The first kind of story presentation, presentation directed towards oneself, cannot be witnessed by anybody; thus, organisation research usually, concerns, and consists, of these last two (Czarniawska, 1997). Polkinghorne (1988) incorporates Goffman's theatre metaphor to build his argument that organisations indeed engage in self-presentations in their quest for identity.

Sociological narratives of identity

Erving Goffman's dramatic approach

Inspired by Burke, Sociologist, Erving Goffman analyses human behaviour with a theatrical metaphor, in which "the ordinary setting is a stage and people are actors who structure their performances to make impressions on audiences" (Littlejohn, 1996, p. 169). In other words, Goffman (1959) takes a storytelling approach in his studies of human relations, with a focus on the presentation of self and impression management. His fundamental achievement was to "establish that social interaction is a form of social organisation in its own right" (Heritage, 2001, p. 48). Social interaction, he argued, embodies a distinct moral and institutional order that can be treated like other social institutions such as the family, education, religion etc. The interaction order, claimed Goffman, comprised a "complex set of interactional rights and obligations which are linked both to 'face'" and "more enduring features of personal identity" (Heritage, 2001, p. 48).

Goffman's (1974) social approach to communication views communication activities in the context of frame analysis in which he "blurs the distinction between theater and everyday life" (Czarniawska, 1997, p. 31). Frame analysis consists of "examining the ways experience is organised for the individual. The frame allows the person to identify and understand otherwise meaningless events, giving meaning to the ongoing activities of life" (Littlejohn, 1996, p. 170). Indeed, as Czarniawska (1997) suggests, his pragmatic treatment of theater fits very well with the "spirit of Burkean dramatisic analysis" (p. 31). People in face engagements take turns presenting dramas

to one another. This idea of presenting dramas is central to Goffman's (1974) overall theory:

I am suggesting that often what talkers undertake to do is not to provide information to a recipient but to present dramas to an audience. Indeed, it seems that we spend most of our time not engaged in giving information but in giving shows. And observe, this theatricality is not based on mere displays of feelings or faked exhibitions of spontaneity or anything else by way of the huffing and puffing we might derogate by calling theatrical. The parallel between stage and conversation is much, much deeper than that. The point is that ordinarily when an individual says something, he is not saying it as a bold statement of fact on his own behalf. He is recounting. He is running through a strip of already determined events for the engagement of his listeners. (p. 508)

According to Goffman (1974), speakers present a particular character to the audience when engaging others. Similar to an actor on stage, the individual presents a character in a particular role, and the listener "normally accepts the characterisation being portrayed. Goffman claims that the self is determined by these dramatizations. He explains:

A correctly staged and performed scene leads the audience to impute a self to a performed character, but this imputation-the self-is a product of a scene that comes off, and is not a cause of it. The self, then, as a performed character, is not an organic thing that has a specific location, whose fundamental fate is to be born, to mature, and to die; it is a dramatic effect arising diffusely from a scene that is presented and the characteristic issue, the crucial concern, is whether it will be credited or discredited. (Goffman, 1971, p. 244)

Goffman's ideas about self-presentation as dramatisation are best explained about the many situations in which one presents a certain image of oneself in an attempt to provide the narrative with a distinctive feel. For instance, authors choose the right kind of imagery to convey the unique quality of their experiences. Such imagery can include metaphors and symbols. These metaphors and symbols "are reflective of what his or her identity is all about" (McAdams, 1997, p. 66). Goffman argues that in attempting to define a situation, the person goes through a two-part process – first, to get information about the other people in the situation and, second, to give information about oneself. Through observing how others behave, one is able to structure one's own behaviour to "elicit impressions in others" (Littlejohn, 1996, p.

171). Self presentation is very much a matter of *impression management* as Goffman (1971) explains:

He may wish them to think highly of him, or to think that he thinks highly of them, or to perceive how in fact he feels toward them or to obtain no clear-cut impression; he may wish to insure sufficient harmony so that the interaction can be sustained, or to defraud, get rid of, confuse, mislead, antagonize, or insult them. (p. 15)

While Goffman's theory applies specifically to individuals, his ideas about self-presentation and impression management can be applied directly to organisations who wish to project a certain image of themselves to the public. Indeed, organisations face similar issues when managing their identities, image, and reputation (the application of Goffman's ideas to organisational identity is described below). Another form of self-presentation or image projection relevant to this discussion on identity and the self is through what Davies and Harré (1990, 1999, 2001) term *positioning*.

Positioning narratives: The discursive production of selves

'Discursive practice' has been referred to as "all the ways in which people actively produce social and psychological realities" (Davies & Harré, 2001, p. 262). From this perspective, a discourse is to be understood as an "institutionalised use of language and language-like sign systems" (p. 262). Davies and Harré (1990, 1999, 2001) claim that the constitutive force of each discursive practice lies in its provision of subject positions. A subject position "incorporates both a conceptual repertoire and a location for persons within the structure of rights for those that use that repertoire" (Davies and Harré, 2001, p. 262). The relevance of narrative appears when a person in a particular subject position sees the world in terms of the "images, metaphors and storylines... made relevant within the particular discursive practice in which they are positioned" (p. 262). Who we are thus depends on the subject positions available in shifting stories often located within different discourses.

Davies and Harré (2001) claim that our "development of our own sense and of how the world is to be interpreted from the perspective of who we take ourselves to be" involves several processes (p. 263). Among them are "learning the categories which

include some people and exclude others”, “participating in the various discursive practices through which meanings are allocated to those categories” which include the “story lines through which different subject positions are elaborated; and positioning of self in terms of the categories and story lines involves imaginatively positioning oneself as if one belongs in one category and not in the other” (p. 263) (e.g. as girl and not boy, or a principle-driven company and not a profit-driven company).

Davies and Harré (2001) approach positioning as:

the discursive process whereby selves are located in conversations as observably and subjectively coherent participants in jointly produced story lines. There can be interactive positioning in which what one person says positions another. And there can be reflexive positioning in which one positions oneself. (p. 264)

Davies and Harré (2001) take conversations as their starting point for positioning. Here, positions are identified in part by identifying the autobiographical aspects of a conversation. It can then be possible to find out how each “conversant conceives of themselves and of the other participants by seeing what position they take up and in what story, and how they are then positioned” (p. 264). Additionally, a person can also be positioned by another speaker.

Not only does what a person say position another or oneself, organisations too position themselves and others in their storylines (Davies & Harré, 2001; Christensen & Cheney, 2000; Czarniawska, 1997, 1998). Each storyline may focus on key moments in the organisation’s life or may be organised around various characters, events and change. Indeed ‘positioning’ is a key term in advertising and marketing, and its practical meaning in those domains is not dissimilar to what is being discussed in this study. By this I mean that organisations often position others, such as their competitors, in their narratives of identity. A closer examination of the role of narrative in issues of organisational identity follows.

Narratives, identity and organisations

Many researchers in organisational studies have *addressed the importance of narrative* in understanding *issues of identity in organisational life* (Albert & Whetten, 1985; Hydén, 1997; Christensen & Cheney, 2000; Czarniawska, 1997, 1998; Bruner,

1991; Polkinghorne, 1987). For instance, organisational theorist, Barbara Czarniawska (1997, 1998, 2000, 2001; see also Czarniawska-Joerges, 1994) asserts that organisational identity, like individual identity, has a “narrative character that persists through an ability to narrate one’s life, formulate it into a narrative composed of terms that will be accepted by the relevant audience” (Czarniawska-Joerges, 1994, p. 196). However, the narrative is neither pre-determined nor univocal. From an organisational communication standpoint, Czarniawska’s approach shares elements of a rhetorical perspective on identity described above. For Czarniawska, different aspects of identity are highlighted at different moments depending upon who is speaking and who is listening, what speakers and listeners communicate in their exchanges and how they react to and thus influence the tale as it is told (Hatch & Shultz, 2000)

Ashforth and Mael (1996) go so far as to claim that “identities of organisations are narratives – that is idealised accounts or stories about organisations and their self-perceived role in the marketplace of today” (Christensen and Cheney, 2000, p. 256). Some even suggest that organisations adopt a narrative approach to their corporate communication as “stories are hard to imitate, and they promote consistency in all corporate messages” (van Riel, 2000, p. 157). Although the study of the relationship between narratives, identity, and organisations is relatively new as Mishler (1997) explains: “Narrative is both a framework for, and a source of, research topics in a wide range of disciplines” (p. 223). Thus, the narrative turn reflects an interdisciplinary approach for organisational researchers as they draw on both traditional and contemporary views on narrative.

Fisher, MacIntyre and Bruner opened up a floodgate of ideas and possibilities with their attention to the links between narrative and life; however, they do not offer a method for actually *doing* narrative analysis. Much like Polkinghorne, Czarniawska offers us the possibility of borrowing theories, metaphors, and terms from other disciplines as a way to bridge research with practice. In her interdisciplinary search, Czarniawska (1997) turns to anthropology, literary theory, and the institutional school

within sociology. For Czarniawska (1997, 1998), narrative is a heuristic device, a metaphor useful for understanding organisations.

While the theoretical assumptions of issues surrounding narrative and the self are reflected in this study, the key emphasis lies in my attempt to bridge the gap between the individual and the organisation or more specifically, to connect personal identity to corporate identity, in an effort to examine the corporate identity- narrative connection. In doing so, I draw heavily on the work of Cheney (1991, 1992) and Czarniawska (1997; 1998; 2000).

The narrative-identity connection as applied to corporate discourse

In the narrative version, an identity is created not by any action but by a self-narrative (Bruner, 1990). This notion goes back to Bakhtin's idea of a "dialogical self" (Kelly, 1992), whereby the self is to be understood in relation to an audience, whose real or imaginary responses constantly shape self-presentations. While the fact that "every action acquires meaning by acquiring a place in a narrative of life", (Czarniawska, 1997, p. 14), is especially relevant to individuals, so too is it relevant to organisations:

The idea of the socially constructed self that acknowledges its institutional origins facilitates noticing the analogy between the individual and the organisation because the notion of accountability is still in place, only the rules of accounting them seem to be different. (Czarniawska, 1997, p. 45)

Much of Czarniawska's (1997) work centers around issues of organisational identity. In particular, she pays attention to the importance of narrative in the construction of identity, for both individuals and institutions. Czarniawska (1994) treats "identity as a narrative-or more properly, identity construction as a continuous process of narration where both the narrator and the audience formulate, edit, applaud, and refuse various elements of the ever-produced narrative" (p. 198). In her most interesting work, Czarniawska concentrates on the literary genre of autobiography which is especially significant given that organisational autobiographies are becoming increasingly important for organisations that want to manage their corporate identity (Ramananstoa & Battaglia, 1991, cited in Czarniawska, 1997). In her treatment of identity-as-

narrative, Czarniawska claims that the most appropriate literary genre is that of an organisational autobiography. The significance of Czarniawska's perspective is that it enables researchers in corporate identity and corporate image to move away from the traditional approach of studying the visual elements of organisation's identity and image to a more discursive approach of examining texts in the form of narrative which illustrate how the organisation presents its self to its publics.

Czarniawska (1997) refers to individuality as an institution and identity as narrative to lend support to the notion of "organisation as super-person" (p. 46). In conceptualising identity as a social institution, she explains: "An identity can thus be usually conceptualised as a legitimate prescription (or prescriptions) for identity construction typical for a given time and place" (2000, p. 273).⁴ Czarniawska (2000) grounds her argument for the institutional and constructed view of identity in a comparison between a prescription for modern identity and that for a premodern one and suggests that there are both premodern and modern elements of identity to be found in actions and self presentations of both people and organisations. Her claims strengthen the analogy between organisations and individuals which she traces back to the concept of *legal persona* (Meyer, 1986). Relating her argument to the modern institutions of the market, the state, and the individual, Czarniawska (2000) claims that the invention of the legal persona "simply apportions accountability to a collective" (p. 272), or an organisation, "on the same principle as it would to an individual" (p. 272). After all, an organisation makes decisions, behaves, learns, fails and of course, 'has' and 'exhibits' identities (Czarniawska, 2000). Take the following example of organisations are personified:

As an organisation gets older, it learns more and more about coping with its environment and with its internal problems of communication and coordination. At least this is the normal pattern, and the normal organisation tries to perpetuate the fruits of its learning by formalizing them. (Starbuck, 1983, p. 480)

⁴ Of course, part of the idea of a "super-person" is supported by Western laws that treat literal corporations as legal persons and therefore as new kinds of entities. Extending this idea metaphorically, we can apply it to all sorts of organisations "speaking" and telling their stories (see Cooren & Taylor, 1997 and Cheney, 1992).

Along with Czarniawska (2000), other organisation scholars discuss the identities of organisations by taking a “term that in Western thought was typically associated with the individual persona and applying it to collectivities” (Christensen & Cheney, 1994, p. 223). Since the Enlightenment, one’s identity has been taken to mean that which distinguishes him or her and that which makes that ‘self’ unique. Christensen and Cheney (1994) point out that:

in the “domain of organisation, especially that of legal corporations, firms have gradually attained the status of juristic, artificial, or legal persons ...In the language of advanced capitalism, the corporation *is* a person with attendant rights and to a lesser extent ascribed responsibilities. (p. 224)

Indeed, the organisation, “which was originally created to *increase* the power of the individual has effectively usurped much of that power to become in many cases the individual’s voice, source of authority, and resource for identity” (Cheney & McMillan, 1990, p. 97). Such is often the case with organizations and their founders. In fact, the synonymy of the two increases the complexity and ambiguity, of the traditional speaker-audience configuration. For instance, just *who* is doing the talking? In giving the organisation a personal face, founders appeal to the common desire to identify messages with individual, natural persons, yet, as Cheney and McMillan (1990) point out, the speeches “represent the organisation and they are addressed to the partially overlapping audiences of employees, consumers, competitors, stockholders, and the government” (p. 103). The personalization of organisational identity may be attributed to the metaphor “quest for an identity” (Czarniawska, 1994, 1997), as organisations struggle to articulate their identities in the saturated marketplace of discourses and images (Christensen & Cheney, 2000).

The contribution of Nietzsche’s ideas on the self and identity also support Czarniawska’s (1997) development of the narrative character of identity. Currie (1998) further develops the idea of self and narrative stating “The only way to explain who we are is to tell our own story, to select key events which characterize us and organise them according to the formal principles of narrative...for the purpose of self-representation” (p. 17). For instance, the telling of one’s own story, particularly when an identity is challenged or in crisis, becomes an important contributor to identity

itself (Christensen & Cheney, 1994). Many organisations are indeed aware of this, as Christensen and Cheney (1994) point out, and so present detailed and dramatic tales of their triumphs.

Conclusion

As demonstrated in this chapter, the meanings surrounding the terms ‘narrative’, ‘story’ and ‘identity’ are contested and often used in ambiguous ways across different disciplines. However, the importance of these terms to this thesis in its case study of The Body Shop is that, in combination, they offer a way of understanding how this organisation sought to position and differentiate itself as a values-led company in the retail beauty industry.

The use of narrative in this study is threefold. First, the focus on narrative is theoretical. Barthes, who claimed the social centrality of narrative, influenced the development of narrative theory in the twentieth century. The writings of Frye, Levi-Strauss, Greimas, and Propp all reflected the shift to further develop the theories of narrative which demonstrated the pivotal role of narrative in individual and social life. In fact, MacIntyre (1981) went so far as to claim that the most typical form of social life is an enacted narrative. While this is not an ontological claim, conceiving of it as such provides a rich source of insight. Among those who took up, and elaborated on, the suggestion were Kenneth Burke (1969a, 1969b), Clifford Geertz (1980), Victor Turner (1982) and many others. Furthermore, the interpretive theories of communication supported the notion that narratives represented the all-embracing means of portraying human events (Burke, 1961, 1966, 1969a, 1969b, 1973; Bormann, 1972, 1982, 1983; Fisher, 1984, 1987). These theories and perspectives of narrative also shaped early theories of identity which were later adapted to address the importance of narrative in understanding issues of organisational identity. This has led to Polkinghorne’s (1988) assertion that “the narrative is a basic form of coherence for an organisation’s realm of meaning, just as it is for a person’s realm of meaning” (p. 123). Thus, *in the understanding of human existence – both individual lives and organisational “lives” – narrative has a central role.*

Second, the focus on narrative also implies method. In relation to method, narrative inquiry refers to a subset of qualitative research designs in which narratives are used to describe human action (Polkinghorne, 1995). Narrative offers exciting alternatives for connecting the lives and stories of both individuals and organisations to the understanding of larger human, social, and organisational phenomena (Czarniawska, 1997, 1998). If indeed identities of organisations are narratives (Christensen & Cheney, 2000; Czarniawska, 1997; Ashforth & Mael, 1996), the methods of data collection and analysis used in this research serve to examine how narrative texts create and carry meanings of identity for organisational members and organisational founders. These will be the focus of attention in the next chapter.

Third, the focus on narrative is also important practically because of organisational storytelling. Stories offer researchers a powerful instrument for carrying out research. In *Storytelling in organisations*, Yiannis Gabriel (2000) explains:

By collecting stories in different organisations, by listening and comparing different accounts, by investigating how narratives are constructed around specific events, by examining which events in an organisation's history generate stories and which ones fail to do so, we gain access to deeper organisational realities, closely linked to their members' experiences. In this way, stories enable us to study organisational politics, culture, [identity], and change in uniquely illuminating ways, revealing how wider organisational issues are viewed, commented upon, and worked upon by their members. (p. 2)

Traditionally, the relationship between academic research and storytelling has been ambiguous but the current interest of organisational studies in stories is prolific (see Gabriel, 1998, 2000; Morgan, 1989, Bantz, 1993; Brown, 1986, 19990; Brown & McMillan, 1991; McMillan, 1990; Browning, 1992; Cooper, 1989; Martin, Feldman, Hatch & Sitkin, 1983). The practical nature of storytelling incorporates theories of the self, showing how coherence is achieved in life stories. In the organisational context, "life stories acquire two variations: career stories and organisational identity narratives" (Czarniawska, 2001, p. 36). The significance of both organisational and corporate stories in issues of identity is best described by Brown (1990), who claims that "stories reinforce the development of identity" (p. 179) and create meaning for the individual and the organisation. The realisation that strategic stories serve to

influence both internal and external publics is also pertinent (Christensen & Cheney, 2000; Shaw, 2000). Thus, the narrative-identity connection offers exciting possibilities in the analysis of corporate discourse in an attempt to better appreciate and understand the power of rhetoric and the influence of individuals in the construction and management of corporate identity.

Clearly, an examination of a values based organisation brings special aspects of the narrative-identity connection to the fore. Moreover, the communication of values indicates powerful rhetorical resources and strategies as stated in chapter one and described above. As demonstrated in this chapter, the development of the study of narrative in organisations provides rich insight into organisational life and in particular, organisational identity. After all, organisational identity has been described by Bormann (1988) as a story, including “the shared group fantasies, the rhetorical visions, and the narratives of achievements, events, and the future dreams of the entire organisation” (p. 396). In this study, I use narrative in several ways to illustrate identity and demonstrate the theory’s applicability to the case at hand. For instance, I examine Anita Roddick’s autobiographical narrative. I also examine The Body Shop’s official narrative and the self-conscious use of language by Anita Roddick and The Body Shop in telling and retelling the organisation’s story.

In sum, corporate narratives are part of the fabric and life of all organisations and enable us to understand, identify, and communicate the identity of the organisation-its ambitions, conflicts, and peculiarities. Furthermore, stories open valuable windows into the emotional and symbolic lives of organisations and their leaders.

The next chapter comprises a discussion of how the theoretical concepts introduced in this chapter frame the study and considers important issues of research design and method. In particular, it examines specific methodological implications of narrative and how these are applied in this study to address the research questions.

CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND METHOD

Introduction

The previous chapter introduced the key concepts of identity and narrative which will be applied in the analysis of the corporate discourse of The Body Shop. This chapter outlines the methodological and conceptual framework used to investigate the connection between narrative and identity in the organisation's corporate discourse. The theoretical perspective adopted for this research suggests that organisational identities are socially produced and maintained largely through corporate narratives.

The first part of this chapter outlines the theoretical foundations of interpretivism which underpin the thesis. The outlining of the limitations of an interpretive perspective is then used to explain why critical theory - in particular, rhetorical criticism – was drawn on to investigate how corporate narratives are embedded in ideology. Given that the development of narrative theory, its growing popularity in organisational research and my approach to narrative was described in the previous chapter, in this chapter I highlight the relationship between narrative and identity and its methodological implications for corporate rhetoric (Scott, Corman & Cheney, 1998; Czarniawska-Joerges, 1994; Cheney, 1983; Polkinghorne, 1988; Currie, 1998; Czarniawska, 1997; Hatch & Schultz, 2000).

The second part of this chapter explains how the methodological issues surrounding the narrative approach to organisations were incorporated into an action plan for addressing the specific aims and objectives of the study. It goes on to describe why The Body Shop was chosen as the subject of this study. How the theoretical and methodological imperatives shaped the choice and use of the methods of data collection and data analysis is then detailed. The advantages and disadvantages of each method are also considered. Finally, a step-by-step account of how the empirical material was collected, analysed, and presented is discussed.

Methodology

Key elements of interpretivism

Interpreting both textual and personal narratives and explaining how these narratives shaped and managed the identity of The Body Shop is central to the aims and objectives of this research. For this reason, the interpretive approach was chosen as the underlying framework for the study. Interpretation, also known as the German term *Verstehen* (Truzzi, 1974), “looks for culturally derived and historically situated interpretations of the social life-world” (Crotty, 1998, p. 67). Generally, interpretivism is the active process of assigning meaning to something. The interpretive perspective is characterised by recognition of the “centrality of meaning in social actions. More specifically, interpretive approaches aim to explicate and, in some cases, to critique the subjective and consensual meanings that constitute social reality” (Putnam, 1983, p. 32). Interpretive research on organisations focuses on a concern for the meanings and interpretations organisational members attach to events (Eisenberg, 1986; Weick, 1983). But it also recognises that “these interpretations are not monolithic, but rather multiple world-views can and do coexist within a single organisation” (Smith & Eisenberg, 1987, p. 367). While interpretive traditions all view the centrality of meaning in social action, the schools that follow this approach differ in their specific treatments of meaning, language, action, and social activities (Putnam, 1983).

Among the historical streams representing interpretivism are hermeneutics and symbolic interactionism (Marshall, 1998). Certain elements from both schools are adopted in this study and are detailed below. Hermeneutics is the science of interpretation and hermeneutic procedures allow researchers to study spoken and written records of human experience. More specifically, hermeneutics maintains an interest in the contents, the form and the contexts of what is being interpreted (Marshall, 1998). When interpreting texts, the researcher must look at the meaning of what is produced in relation to its context, as well as determine how we are to interpret it so that “our understanding is both valid-true to the meaning of the text itself-and relevant to our interest in understanding the text” (Deetz & Kersten, 1983, p. 149).

But most central to the process of understanding, especially that of interpreting action and text, is the hermeneutic circle (Ricoeur, 1981). The hermeneutic circle refers to the notion that one interprets something by moving from part to whole to parts to whole. In other words, “one may look at the *composite* meaning of a text and then examine the *specific* linguistic structures of that text. Then, the interpreter returns to the overall meaning, only to go back to the specifics again” (Littlejohn, 1996, p. 211, emphasis added). As a result, each movement from part to whole increases the depth of understanding. For instance, we can only understand the statements of monetarist economics, in the context of all other cultural phenomena to which they are related. Alternatively, when interpreting company documents, a researcher might begin with an analysis of the common-sense procedures which came to formulate the document in the first place, but her analysis need not end there. The document may be located within the wider social and political context.

In addition, many organisational researchers have followed the ‘linguistic turn’ in the field of organisation studies (Cheney, 2000b). The linguistic turn in the social sciences prompted calls for more complex understandings of organisations that would emphasise language not only as enabling information exchange but also as constructing social and organisational reality (Dandridge, Mitroff, & Joyce, 1980; Pondy & Mitroff, 1979; Heracleous & Barrett, 2001). This linguistic approach has led to increased interest by organisation theorists in such issues as the intimate relationship between language and organisation (Daft & Wiginton, 1979). Take for instance the metaphor for organisations as *texts*. Here, researchers explore the idea of *reading* organisational cultures (Cooper, 1989), *writing* organisations (Calás & Smircich, 1991), *storytelling* organisations (Boje, 1991), and organisational *narratives* (Czarniawska, 1997). Because narratives both explain organisational reality and advocate member actions (Martin & Powers, 1983), and are “vital to sense-making within organisations” (van Riel, 2000, p. 164), the ‘linguistic turn’ in interpretive research creates promising possibilities for narrative research in organisation studies (Cheney, 2000b).

For instance, the linguistic turn has also led researchers actively participating in the ‘language game’ and adopting alternative genres of writing, namely narrative. While hermeneutics originated in the study of written texts, narrative analysis extends the idea

of text to include in-depth interview transcripts, life history narratives, historical memoirs, corporate documents, and creative nonfiction. While this study is not strictly a hermeneutic one, it derives some intellectual inspiration from that tradition, namely its emphasis on interpretation and context, especially in how I treat narratives.

Polkinghorne (1988) utilises concepts from literary criticism, philosophy, and history, as well as recent developments in the cognitive and social sciences to show how to use research information organised by the narrative form—such information as clinical life histories, organisational case studies, biographic material, corporate cultural design, and literary products. For instance, nagged by his concern over the research-practice division, Polkinghorne (1988) discovered that practitioners work with narrative knowledge in that “they are concerned with people’s stories: they work with case histories and use narrative explanations to understand why the people they work with behave the way they do” (p. x). Such discoveries were important because they supported Polkinghorne’s (1988) argument that “the realm of meaning is best captured through the qualitative nuances of its expression in ordinary language” (p. 10).

Barbara Czarniawska (1998) builds on Polkinghorne’s (1988) views by advocating a narrative approach unique to organisation studies. In doing so, Czarniawska (1998) exemplifies Cheney’s (2000b) point by proposing that “narrative forms of reporting will enrich organisation studies themselves, complementing, illustrating, and scrutinizing logic-scientific forms of reporting” (p. 16). In her approach, Czarniawska (1988) employs literary devices to uncover the hidden workings of organisations and contends that in order to understand organisations, local and concrete stories of organisational life should be subjected to abstract and metaphorical interpretation. For instance, in line with a constructionist view of the world, metaphors can be used to create an “alternative image of what is taken for granted” (Czarniawska, 1997, p. 127). Morgan (1986) also advocates the use of metaphors in organisational theory. Czarniawska’s ideas stem from her desire to build a more useful interpretive device for studying meaning in organisations.

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maintained through what I propose are narratives. My proposition is in line with the interpretive assumption that the basis of 'accounts', "the core of the interpretive approach" (Taylor, 1993, p. 82), is narrative. Similarly, much of the methodological focus in narrative studies concerns the nature of interpretation, as in Norman Denzin's seminal qualitative works *Interpretive biography* (1989a) and *Interpretive interactionism* (1989b). In this study, the interpretation of narratives seeks to facilitate an understanding and explanation of the communicative strategies employed by The Body Shop organization. Such a process of understanding and explanation applied in this study then, reflects the hermeneutic circle defined above (Ricoeur, 1981). This recognises that the story that is finally told becomes the researcher's self-fashioned narration of the subject's story (Clough, 1992).

Although critics of constructivism may argue that this view suggests that the world is a collection of subjectively spun stories, Czarniawska (1997) rightfully points out that there are partners in the conversation who actually determine whether or not an organisation's narratives are accepted, rejected, or improved upon by its audiences. Such a view has significant relevance to stories which serve to position organisations through corporate identity and image. Various stakeholders share the task in deciding whether the stories are credible and valid. The quest for meaning and identity then is salient not only for individuals but also for organisations and institutions. Organisations are also "engaged in a quest for meaning in 'their life', which will bestow meaning on particular actions taken" (Czarniawska, 1997, p. 16). I take Czarniawska's point further by suggesting that the communicative actions of organisations are in fact displayed through their narratives of identity. In fact, in the contemporary setting, this is essential (Christensen & Cheney, 2000).

One approach that is useful in the examination of narratives of identity is symbolic interactionism developed by George Herbert Mead. To pursue his interest in the role of language in the creation of meaning, Mead (1934) developed his own brand of interpretivism. Methodologically, and in contrast to hermeneutics, the key implication of the symbolic interactionist perspective is that the actor's view of actions, objects, and society has to be studied seriously (Mead, 1934). Furthermore, Mead (1934) claimed that

people understand things by assigning meaning to their experience and that meanings arise from the exchange of symbols between people. In these terms, reality is mediated through symbols. Kenneth Burke's (1966) position is similar to Mead's in terms of the view that language functions as the vehicle for action and therefore, shapes behaviour.

Burke's (1969b) theory of rhetoric is based on how people communicate in pluralistic societies: Rhetoric must be viewed as identification rather than persuasion because its function is to proclaim unity: "A is *identified* with B. Or he may *identify himself* with B even when their interests are not joined, if he assumes that they are, or is persuaded to believe so" (Burke, 1969b, p. 20). In Burke's dramatistic approach, rhetoric is a symbolic means of creating cooperation. If people use language symbolically in forming attitudes and altering the attitudes of other, rhetors can alter attitudes by creating new patterns of identification, causing audiences to see their interests as joined with those of the rhetor. For example, founders of organisations use passionate and emotional appeals to employees in an effort to persuade employees to adapt the culture of, and identify with, their organisation.

Paradoxically, humans exist in a state of being simultaneously divided and unified (Burke, 1969a). In other words, each person and group has an identity that makes them unique and distinguishes them from all other persons and groups. Burke (1969a) called this uniqueness *substance*. Identification is necessary to overcome substance so that the 'acting together' that is necessary for societies and their attendant hierarchies to survive can occur. Unity is created through rhetorical activity in which "common sensations, concepts, images, ideas, [and] attitudes" are symbolically expressed (Burke, 1969a, p. 21). Thus, an individual rhetor's use of language will reveal the substance (identity) out of which she expects to achieve identification between herself and her audience. This "substance is directly related to the motive and constraints of the rhetorical situation" (Rybacki & Rybacki, 1991, p. 74). The usefulness of the dramatistic approach in criticism relies heavily on the interpretation of the rhetorical act in terms of the rhetorical situation.

Utilising insights from Burke's (1969a) theory of identification, as well as his claim that identification is a rhetorical strategy (Steinmann, 1967), the corporate rhetor must be

understood in terms of who she is, what her problems are, why she acts as she does, and how she moulds the thoughts and concepts of others. For Burke (1969b), the goal of rhetoric is “strategic identification [as] a means of inducing cooperation in others” (p. 22). From Burke’s notions of identification, Cheney (1983a) then identifies four primary rhetorical strategies used to foster organisational identification. These are: 1) the common ground technique; 2) identification through antithesis; 3) the assumed or transcendent “we”; and 4) the use of unifying symbols. Using Cheney’s original category system as a template, Di Sanza and Bullis (1999) examined employee responses to identification inducements in a Forest Service newsletter. They then added four new strategies of identification inducements to Cheney’s original list: 1) global recognition of individuals’ contributions, 2) recognition of individuals’ contributions outside the organisation, 3) invitation; and 4) bragging (Di Sanza & Bullis, 1999).

In this way, the rhetors or speakers, whose attitudes are reflected in their language, will accept some ideas, people and institutions, and reject others; their audiences will to some extent both agree and disagree with them. To the extent that audiences accept and reject the same ideas, people and institutions, that the rhetors do, identification occurs (Brock, 1972). Above all, ‘identification’ seeks to capture how relations between symbols (such as terms) relate to, mirror, or reinforce relations between people. As a critical device, identification is a tool applied directly to a rhetor’s verbal symbols - or in this case, narrative – providing the critic with a key to the speaker’s attitudes, values and beliefs. From a narrative standpoint, the critic is better able to understand the actions and motives of others “because we all live out narratives in our lives and because we understand our own lives in terms of narratives” (Fisher, 1987, p. 66)

In my approach to examining corporate discourse, I follow Polkinghorne’s views on the importance of having research strategies that can work with the narratives people use to understand the human world. I also draw on the narrative approaches as developed by Alasdair MacIntyre (1977, 1981), Walter Fisher (1984, 1987, 1989), Jerome Bruner (1986, 1990, 1991), and especially Barbara Czarniaswka (1997, 1998), to build a conceptual framework for this study. The narrative approach then, views human communication as combining the persuasive properties of argumentation and the aesthetic

properties of literature. Therefore, for the purposes of this thesis, the rhetorical act is examined in terms of both the tale and its telling, and how the story serves an audience in terms of providing good reason for belief and as the basis for behaviour. Such an analysis involves looking beyond a basic understanding of the narrative, an analysis not provided for by the interpretive approach alone.

Limitations of interpretivism

While of considerable value to the organisational narrative researcher, interpretivism can tend toward relativism, preventing the dedicated researcher from making value judgements about meanings, or choosing particular narratives. The central problem is that the interpretive approach, broadly speaking, does not account well for the relations of power that may well produce and shape narratives themselves (Mumby, 1987, 1988; Jameson, 1981). McKinney (1995) suggests that the organisational researcher needs to move beyond mere interpretation of organisational symbolism - or of uncovering the shared meanings that drive organisational actions - to reveal their interests. Therefore, in this thesis narrative texts are also examined from a critical theory perspective in terms of the broader political and social-cultural contexts that influence the social identities that are produced through discourse.

Carragee (1990) claims that “interpretive researchers need to devote far more attention to the properties and structures of...messages, to the symbolic power of texts” (p. 89). He argues that texts cannot be viewed as “empty vessels” (p. 89), and that interpretation needs to account not only for the ways in which texts help constitute meanings and realities for their audiences, but also for the implicit and explicit meanings and values embedded in these texts. For instance, storytelling has traditionally been regarded as largely apolitical in nature (Mumby, 1988), but there was no inherent reason, aside from sheer convention, to presume this. However, several theorists have argued that stories are narrative devices which cannot be viewed independently of the ideological meaning formations and relations of domination within which they are communicated (Culler, 1982; Jameson, 1981; Mumby, 1987, 1988).

Additionally, when examining narratives, the exclusion of certain meaning and values should also be noted and analysed. Organisational narratives, therefore, deserve attention

both because of the pervasive and continuing influence of storytelling on our culture, and “because narrative is an especially powerful vehicle for the dissemination of ideological meaning formations” (Mumby, 1988, p. 102). For example, a seemingly innocuous story told in business can manifest, however subtly, a concern for power and hierarchy. In fact, critical theory accuses interpretive approaches of being “conservative and of failing to recognise their ideological character” (Littlejohn, 1996, p. 223). According to Mumby (1993), interpretive organisational research adopts either a “descriptive hermeneutic approach” which involves interpreting organisational symbolic practices such as stories and myths, and “explicating the link between these practices and the beliefs, values, and meanings that they produce and express” (p. 19), or a “*hermeneutics of suspicion*” approach¹. A hermeneutics of suspicion adopts a *critical conception of organisations* as “discursive and material sites of domination” (p. 19) and control. This body of thought, represented by the work of Alvesson (1985), Deetz (1992), and Mumby (1988), builds on the conception of organisations as “contexts of struggle between competing interests and their respective systems of representation” (Mumby, 1993, p. 19).

It is because the interpretive goal of understanding human action by itself does not go far enough, that this thesis turns to concepts from critical theory to broaden the analysis of corporate discourse. As Deetz (1992) claims: “Interpretive research, to be useful, must become critical” (p. 139). By this, he means that the researcher needs to go *beyond* surface meanings to make good interpretations. In other words, the action level must be related to the broader social, historical and economic level in order to “avoid being trapped by culturally shared meanings” (Alvesson & Schöldberg, 2000, 136) as well as to make sense of the multiplicity of meanings. Through the examination of ‘deep structure’ (Deetz & Kersten, 1983; Frost, 1987; Mumby, 1988; Alvesson & Schöldberg, 2000), the researcher is able to uncover those “unquestioned beliefs and values upon which the taken-for-granted surface structure rests” (Alvesson & Schöldberg, 2000, p. 136). The next section outlines the importance of critical insights in interpretive research in relation

¹ This term was coined by Paul Ricoeur to characterise the hermeneutical philosophy of the more radical followers of Nietzsche, principally Derrida and Foucault (see Caputo, 1987; Caputo, 2000; and Michelder & Palmer (1989).

to the interpretation of multiple and deeper meanings constructed through organisational narratives.

Insights from critical theories

In our careful consideration of all empirical material and our attempt to understand the world, we are all interpreters, even critics (Cheney, 2000b). Indeed interpretation and critique cannot be separated. As Alvesson and Deetz (2000) explain, some insights should be “followed up and deepened by distinctively critical interpretations” (p. 150). By this they mean that the researcher identifies and challenges the underlying assumptions behind ordinary ways of perceiving, conceiving, and acting and recognises the influence of history, culture, and social positioning on beliefs and actions. Thus, the focus of critical interpretation is on deeper structures of meanings. In particular, a critical stance examines how language both influences and is influenced by social beliefs and contexts by addressing issues of power and control (Mumby & Clair, 1997).

Norman Denzin (1992), a sociologist with a symbolic interactionist theoretical commitment, suggests that interpretive researchers must in fact engage in some sort of critique. In this context, the researcher:

aims to always subvert the meaning of a text, to show how its dominant and negotiated meanings can be opposed; exposes the ideological and political meanings that circulate within the text; and analyses how texts address the problems of presence, lived experience, the real and its representations, and the issues of subjects, authors, and their intentionalities. (p. 151)

A critical analysis of organisational texts certainly presents a useful theoretical and methodological approach for understanding the discursive foundations of organisational life. Denzin’s (1992) reformulation of symbolic interactionism also allows the researcher to address issues of ideology and hegemony in the interpretation of texts.

In critical research, there is a clear interest in the level of meaning but it is balanced by “awareness that discourse and ideological as well as structural forces may operate ‘behind the back’ of the subjects being studied, thus calling for broader considerations than just focusing on the ideas and meanings of these subjects” (Alvesson & Deetz, 2000, p. 70).

An ideology is a “set of ideas that structure a group’s reality, a system of representations or a code of meanings governing how individuals and groups see the world” (Littlejohn, 1996, p. 228). Furthermore, ideology is deeply embedded in language and all other social and cultural processes. That is to say, ideology touches every aspect of everyday life and is manifested in our words, actions, and practices (Eisenberg & Goodall, 1997). From a Neo-Marxist perspective, Althusser, contends that ideology actually forms the individual’s consciousness and creates the person’s subjective understanding of experience (Fiske, 1994; Olesen, 1994). By way of example, social institutions such as the media or education, reproduce ideology subtly in everyday activities of communication by making ideology seem normal and natural. For instance, education is apparently neutral because all are equal in front of the examination. But only certain ideologies pass exams. The media are apparently neutral because their representations of the social world are impartial. But only certain ideologies are represented as worthy of impartial treatment, others are not. Ideology can also be seen in our habits or beliefs which, in our day, make it appear obvious that the street-sweeper be paid a fraction of the company director’s remuneration. In this way, also, we see a material basis for and result from an ideological commitment.

The same can be said for organisations. Messages communicated through corporate discourse within organisations to organisational members can also influence the way employees think and feel. A popular example of such pervasive corporate discourse is illustrated by McKinney’s (1995) critical analysis of new employee orientation. Here, the indoctrination rhetoric serves as a “strategic persuasive discourse in which management seeks to foster company identification among new employees and create a desired corporate reality” (p. 178). Thus, we must blur the distinction between information and persuasion. However, the socialisation process presents itself as purely informational and not as a persuasive enterprise. Discourse was designed to promote a sense of identification with the organisation’s primary internal audience, its employees. Furthermore, by adopting Mumby’s “hermeneutic of suspicion” stance, McKinney (1995) demonstrated the link between language and communication, power, and identity formation in the organisation.

Van Dijk (1985) contends that a “powerful way of examining ideological structure is through the examination of language” (p. 30). In other words, ideological processes and structures can be found in texts as meanings are produced by “interpretations of texts and texts are open to diverse interpretations which may differ in their ideological import” (Fairclough, 1996, p. 89). Fairclough (1996) proposes that “ideology is located both in the structures, or orders of discourse, which constitute the outcome of past events, and the conditions for current events and in events themselves as they reproduce and transform their conditioning structures” (p. 89). Closely related to ideology is the Gramscian neo-Marxist concept of hegemony.

Hegemony is best understood as the process whereby one group gains social, political and economic ascendancy through consensus instead of dominance. According to Gramsci (1971), the economic and political ascendancy of a given class is “organically connected with a preparatory achievement of cultural and intellectual hegemony” (Payne, 1996, p. 238). From a discursive standpoint, the process of hegemony is facilitated when “texts are interpreted in a way that promotes the interests of one group over those of another” (Littlejohn, 1996, p. 229). “Ideology plays a central role in this process” (Littlejohn, 1996, p. 229), as it frames the way people understand and interpret their experiences. In organisational communication theory, the use of corporate narratives and storytelling illustrate how certain texts create and perpetuate ideologies and reinforce power relations within companies (Mumby, 1998).

Limitations of critical theory

However, researchers adopting a critical approach may be accused of paying special attention to relations of power in whatever situation is under study (Cheney, 2000b). In fact, Deetz (1992) argues that too strong or biased sensitivity for power, domination and social imperfections may lead to negativity and hypercritique. The negativity of much critical research creates problems, both in terms of how the objects and subjects of critique are represented, and in terms of demonstrating the relevance of its concerns. Critical research must therefore, be careful about the fallacy of hypercritique which is a one-sided and intolerant approach, in which only what is seen as the imperfections of the corporate world are highlighted. For instance, critical research portrays corporations as

sites of relations of power and domination, while the productive outcomes of corporations – to some extent facilitated by pressure for productivity and quality – receive little if any attention (Alvesson & Deetz, 2000).

The critical approach is also charged with having an explicit concern for making value-based assessments or judgments (Cheney, 2000b). Such a limitation may be overcome by refraining from directive statements regarding what people should do (revolt, liberate). Instead, emphasis could be placed on the problematisation of dominating beliefs and values (Deetz, 1992). Researchers in critical theory are also known for the penetrating and ongoing questioning of basic assumptions (both practically and theoretically) (Cheney, 2000b). Cheney (2000b) goes on to suggest that through unceasing questioning, the value claims of the research effort and the claims to a relatively definitive knowledge of power relations by the researchers themselves become suspect or at least expressed with a large measure of uncertainty.

Finally, researchers engaging in critical studies can also unknowingly suppress certain meanings (or forms of ‘evidence’) that counter their view. In an effort to advance the ‘counterfactual’ argument, as many critical researchers do, one incurs both a tremendous burden of proof and a risk of the overzealous pursuit of one’s case (Cheney, 2000b). In this sense, the personal admiration I have for the research subject, Anita Roddick, may also be considered a limitation in this study.

One way to ensure critical research is not perceived as negative and un-constructive is to combine ‘critical and non-critical perspectives (Alvesson & Deetz, 2000). This study responds to such a proposition through the development of a communicative perspective within critical theory. Two such perspectives are outlined below.

Critical discourse analysis

From a communications standpoint, there are several means by which both ideological and hegemonic struggles can be identified in texts. These include critical discourse analysis and certain types of rhetorical criticism. This study pays particular attention to the discursive struggles evident in and through narratives, drawing on certain elements of Norman Fairclough’s (1996) three-dimensional framework for conceptualizing and

investigating political and ideological dimensions of discursive practice. The methodological assumptions of the two techniques are in line with the interpretive approach which seeks to understand how members of communities understand their worlds. However, Fairclough's (1996) theory enables the researcher to further examine "how members' practices are shaped in ways of which they are usually unaware by social structures, relations of *power*, and the nature of the social practice they are engaged in whose stakes always go beyond producing meanings" (p. 72, emphasis added).

Fairclough (1995) conceives of discourse as "use of language seen as a form of social practice" (p. 7). It is the analysis of language within socio-political and cultural context which provide the "critical" element to the analysis. According to Fairclough (1993), critical discourse analysis:

aims to systematically explore often opaque relationships of causality and determination between (a) discursive practices, events and texts, and (b) wider social and cultural structures, relations and processes; to investigate how such practices, events, and texts arise out of and are ideologically shaped by relations of power and struggles over power; and (c) to explore how the opacity of these relationships between discourse and society is itself a factor securing power and hegemony. (p. 135)

In this three-dimensional framework, Fairclough's approach examines both written and spoken text in conjunction with the discourse practices by which it was created and with the social (socio-political, socio-cultural or institutional) practices which shaped its creation. Indeed "the three dimensions are not separate dimensions but must be used integrally" (Roper, 2000, p. 57). In this study, the primary focus of analysis will be at the level or levels most relevant to the research question, which examines the creation of identity through narrative, and will shape the nature of the analysis. Indeed the corporate narratives of both Anita Roddick and The Body Shop will be examined but so too will the personal and organisational influences which shaped these narratives.

In this way, Fairclough's three dimensional approach to discourse is particularly useful in the analysis of corporate discourse because it provides a means and rationale for moving beyond text to the ideology found both in the text and behind the production of the text (Roper, 2000). For example, discursive struggles (for instance, between business and environmentalists) present in these texts are identified. Furthermore, narratives found in

corporate discourse are examined not only for the story in the narrative but also for the rhetor's worldview and intent.

Rhetorical Criticism

The interpretation of texts will also include an analysis of the intentional persuasive features of the organisational narratives collected for this research. For instance, these texts are "situated examples of a corporate rhetor's intentional effort to influence... and to motivate particular actions" (Livesey, 2002, p. 118). Therefore, concepts from rhetorical criticism also aid the researcher in a wider analysis of the narratives formulated by a rhetor to accomplish a particular purpose. The "definition of rhetoric as the use of symbols to influence thought and action suggests that a major function of rhetoric is persuasion" (Foss, 1989, p. 4). In this way, *concepts of rhetorical criticism will be used to examine how the corporate narratives of The Body Shop are constructed as a tool for branding, as a vehicle to challenge the ideological and hegemonic practices of traditional business, and to persuade stakeholders to adopt their worldview.*

The rhetorical communication that takes place between an organisation and its publics and which is expressed through corporate narratives, require that we also examine the role of the corporate rhetor. Rhetorical communication differs from other forms of communication because it is a deliberate attempt to "influence the choices an audience makes" (Rybacki & Rybacki, 1991, p. 2). For my purposes, those who create rhetorical communication are called rhetors, the "rhetorical acts are executed in the presence of the rhetor's intended audience" (Foss, 1989, p. 5), such as a speech, and a rhetorical artifact is the "trace or tangible evidence of a rhetorical act" (Foss, 1989, p. 5). The discourse practices of The Body Shop examined in this study will thus be considered as rhetorical acts and The Body Shop texts as rhetorical artifacts.

Recently, scholars have begun to appreciate the value of applying rhetorical theory and criticism to forms of corporate communication (Cheney, 1992; Cheney & Vibbert, 1987; Putnam & Cheney, 1985; Trujillo & Toth, 1987). However, as Cheney (1992) points out, "rhetorical scholars have not yet come to terms with the nature of *corporate* rhetoric" (p. 178, emphasis added). The critical assessment of the corporate narratives of The Body Shop that is contained in this thesis, aims to help fill this notable gap in contemporary

rhetorical criticism. Not only does a critical-rhetorical approach to organisational communication allow for an enhanced understanding of organisational life, particularly the external corporate messages in corporate identity and image, it bridges the gap between communications inside the organisation and public relations outside the organisation (Cheney & Dionisopoulos, 1989). But in order to appreciate the role of rhetorical criticism in enriching our understanding of organisation studies, it is important to trace its development and acknowledge key contributors who have shaped the critical method of inquiry. Furthermore, it is useful to help contextualise my organic (combining a concept from one approach with a concept from another) approach to criticism.

Studies of public discourse can be traced from Aristotle, Isocrates, and Plato through Campbell in the eighteenth century and Whately in the nineteenth to Kenneth Burke in the twentieth century (Black, 1978; 1992). It was not until the twentieth century that emphasis on the individual speaker shifted. The most dominant mode of rhetorical criticism, one derived from Aristotle's rhetoric, has been neo-Aristotelianism. For neo-Aristotelians, definitions of rhetoric centred around successful and direct instances of persuasion. Aristotle's *Art of rhetoric* named "'persuasion' as the essence and end of rhetoric" (Burke, 1969b, p. 49), which he defined as "the faculty of discovering the persuasive means available in a given case" (Aristotle, 1954a, p. 24). Aristotle's (1991) *On rhetoric* contains two important elements that inform organisational studies from a rhetorical-critical perspective. The first of these is his notion of deliberative rhetoric, or speeches made in political assemblies, where debate occurs for or against a particular kind of future for an organisation-in his case the city state, in mine the values-led organisation. The second element is his constituency-focused approach to communication-that is the centrality of the audience (or organisational stakeholders) to persuasive discourse. Consequently, rhetorical theorists, incorporating the insights from Aristotle, tended to identify the subject matter of rhetorical criticism as persuasive discourse (Black, 1992).

The broadening of rhetoric's concerns to symbolic interactionist theories of rhetoric saw the introduction of the 'dramaturgical perspective' (as discussed in chapter three). Criticism functioning from a dramaturgical perspective holds 'symbol using' to be the

core from which a critic describes, interprets, and evaluates all elements and patterns of human communication. While the specific approaches employed could theoretically vary tremendously, three approaches occupy the attention of rhetorical critics and offer new possibilities for the analysis of organisations. One such approach is narrative inquiry.

Narrative inquiry

Defining narrative

For my purposes, I refer to narrative as a sequential account of events, usually chronologically, whereby sequentiality indicates some kind of causality, and action-accounted for in terms of intentions and deeds and consequences and is commonly given a central place. From an organizational standpoint, organizational identity narratives are not only official historical documents, but all kinds of collective storytelling that attempt to create the organization. Because the “narrative approach views human communication as combining the persuasive properties of argumentation and the aesthetic properties of literature” (Rybacki & Rybacki, 1991, p. 127), critics using this approach are encouraged to examine the story and how it is told, and “to consider how the story serves an audience as a good reason for belief and behaviour” (p. 127). Therefore, in an attempt to understand how Anita Roddick used stories to influence her audiences, specific corporate and organisational narratives of The Body Shop will be described, analysed, and evaluated in terms of narrative, the tale; narrative discourse, the telling; and narrative rationality more generally (Rybacki & Rybacki, 1991).

The Body Shop narratives collected for this study denote “any text that consists of complete sentences linked into a coherent and integrated statement” (Polkinghorne, 1995, p. 6). Because narrative has been employed to signify that “qualitative inquiries are concerned with everyday or natural linguistic expressions” (Polkinghorne, 1995, p. 6), qualitative researchers use the term ‘narrative’ to describe the collected body of data gathered for analysis such as written transcriptions of interviews or speeches (Ely, et al., 1997). Miles and Huberman (1984) remonstrate, “the most frequent form of display for qualitative data in the past has been *narrative text*” (p. 21, emphasis in original).

Narrative Inquiry: Paradigmatic and narrative cognitions

Jerome Bruner's (1986) distinction between paradigmatic and narrative modes of thought was explained in chapter three. In relation to method, the distinction is used to identify two types of narrative inquiry: (a) analysis of narratives, that is, studies whose data consist of narratives or stories, but whose analysis produces paradigmatic typologies or categories; and (b) narrative analysis, that is, studies whose data consists of actions, events, and happenings, but whose analysis produces stories such as case studies and biographies (Polkinghorne, 1995). That is to say, the purpose of narrative analysis is to provide a dynamic framework in which the range of disconnected data elements are made to cohere in an interesting and explanatory way (du Preeze, 1991). In line with the narrative structure of the thesis which presents a story about corporate identity, there is recognition of the role of the researcher in constructing the presented story (Polkinghorne, 1995). The macro-level and micro-level analysis employed in this study reflect both types of narrative inquiry.

Unlike narrative inquiry of the paradigmatic type, the data employed in the narrative analytic type are usually not in storied form. The purpose of narrative analysis is to produce a story (a case study), as the outcome of the research (Polkinghorne, 1995). The paradigmatic analysis results in descriptions of themes that hold across the narratives, characters or settings. In this study, the paradigmatic approach employed is the interpretive method, thematic analysis, which is discussed below. The interpretive process involved in narrative analysis seeks to fit messages into a pattern of storytelling. The storyteller, and in this case, the researcher, use characters and events as symbols to give her interpretation of how things in the world behave and change over time.

The thematic analysis of narratives however, is not enough. A micro-level analysis that identifies the relationships that hold between and among the established categories or themes is required. Here, the researcher looks for more than the identification of themes. Ultimately, this approach to narrative analysis helps configure the data into a plausible and understandable story, my story of The Body Shop. By this I mean that I aim not simply to produce a reproduction of observations; rather I will provide a dynamic framework in which the range of disconnected data elements is made to cohere in an

interesting and explanatory way. The narrative approach to narrative inquiry is employed in the second and third level of analysis, which combine elements of rhetorical criticism and critical discourse analysis. The critical process in the framework of the narrative approach begins by describing the structure of the rhetorical act and artefact in narrative terms (Rybacki & Rybacki, 1991). Therefore, the analysis is organised around two major dimensions of narratives.

The first dimension is the story itself or the content of the narrative. In her approach to narrative criticism, Foss (1989) suggests the critic use the following questions to describe and analyse the content or substance dimension of the narrative. These include: 1) events; 2) characters; 3) setting; 4) temporal relations; 5) causal relations; 6) themes; 7) narrator; and 8) audience. The second dimension is the discourse or the expression and telling of the narrative (Foss, 1989). The questions used in this level of analysis deal with the same elements of narrative covered in the first level of analysis, although here the means by which those elements are communicated is examined. In order to answer the research questions in this study, the story level of analysis examines the actual corporate identity messages. The discourse level of analysis examines how corporate identity messages are communicated to multiple audiences and in terms of narrative rationality (Fisher, 1984). For example, identity narratives will be examined for consistencies and inconsistencies.

Foss's (1989) criteria are combined with another method of narrative analysis. According to Manning and Callum-Swan (1994), the narrative method of analysis offers two alternative ways of proceeding: top-down or bottom-up. In the top-down, or largely deductive approach, the investigator begins with a set of rules and principles then seeks to exhaust the meaning of a text using those rules and principles. In contrast, researchers using the bottom-up approach, which is favoured in this study, look for contextual units and build those units into an argument for the interpretation of the text. To further enhance the analysis, insights from critical theory are adapted in this study. Kozloff (1987) explains the usefulness of such an approach: "because narrative theory concentrates on the text itself, it leaves to other critical methods questions about where the story comes from...and the myriad effects... that the narrative has upon its audience"

(p. 43). Concepts from critical discourse analysis will thus serve to address questions concerning the contextual conditions that help shape, and are evident in, narrative texts.

Narrative rationality

Fisher (1984) argues that problems arise when researchers use *formal* logic to understand communication. In saying this he refers to the historical struggle among disciplines for professional hegemony. Here, he claims that such conflicts have contributed to contemporary confusion by representing realisation of a holistic sense of self, by subverting formulation of a humane concept of rationality and sane praxis, by rendering personal and public decision making and action subservient to ‘experts’ on knowledge, truth and reality, and by elevating some classes of persons and discourse over others. Therefore, scholars should not give philosophical (later technical) discourse a higher status than rhetorical discourse. Instead, scholars are asked to recognise that people use a more informal rationality in telling stories and to use a ‘narrative rationality’ in order to understand communication (Potter, 1996). To view discourse and action as occurring within “the human story” will allow researchers to account for human behaviour in ways that are not possible using the theories and methods of the social sciences, especially those social sciences that attempt to approximate the paradigm of the natural sciences. This narrative logic is based on the principles of coherence and fidelity. Fisher (1984) goes on to explain this idea of narrative logic by suggesting that the persuasiveness of a narrative is determined not by its form but by its ability to be accepted by an audience as good reasons to change belief or behaviour (Fisher, 1984). In other words, a story must serve as a reliable and desirable guide for belief and behaviour. Fisher (1984) explains:

Narrative rationality is its logic. The essential components of this logic are the following. Human communication is tested against the principles of probability (coherence) and fidelity (truthfulness and reliability). Probability is whether a story “hangs together”, is assessed in three ways: by its *argumentative* or *structural coherence*; by its *material coherence*, that is by comparing and contrasting stories told in other discourses (a story may be internally consistent, but important facts may be omitted, counterarguments ignored, and relevant issues overlooked); and by *characterological coherence*. Concern for this third type of coherence is one of the key differences between the concept of narrative rationality and traditional logics. (p. 47)

Fisher's ideas provide insight when examining corporate discourse. Here, the reliability of the characters or rhetors, the coherence or motivations of the messages, and the truthfulness of the messages determine the success of specific corporate identity narratives. The values embedded in a narrative, values that an audience accepts as good reasons to change belief or behaviour, are what make that narrative persuasive. Fisher (1987) describes the logic of good reasons used to test narrative rationality. The goodness of the reasons offered in any story can be measured in terms of the following questions (Fisher, 1987):

1. Questions of fact: What are implicit and explicit values in the rhetorical act and artefact?
2. Questions of relevance: Are the values in the message appropriate to the kind of decision, change in belief or behaviour, asked of the audience? Are values omitted, distorted, or misrepresented?
3. Questions of consequence: What is the result of adhering to the values in the narrative? What happens to concepts of self, behaviour, relationships, society, and the process of rhetorical action? How are the values operationalised? What is the morality of the story?
4. Questions of consistency: Are the values confirmed or validated in the personal experience of the audience and the life stories or statements of credible others? Does the narrative make its appeal to some ideal audience?
5. Questions of transcendent issue: Do the values reflected in the story constitute an ideal for human behaviour?

In testing narrative rationality based on the questions above, the researcher tries to determine why an audience accepts a story as true, a good reason for belief or behaviour, judged on the basis of its completeness. It must also be judged on its competitiveness with other competing or rival (corporate) narratives (Rybacki & Rybacki, 1991). Audience research is not the focus of this study; therefore, I only examine the rationality of selected corporate narratives. For instance, certain aspects of The Body Shop narratives of identity will at times, be contrasted with the identity narratives of its competitors.

Narrative analysis and the study of corporate identity

Christensen and Cheney's (2000) suggestion that: "Identities of organisations are narratives, that is, idealized accounts or stories about organisations and their self-perceived role in the marketplace" (p. 256) has played an important role in guiding this thesis. In line with their perspective, Czarniawska's (1997) approach to organisational identity as narrative provides the underlying theoretical framework for this research. Her approach is adopted and modified to facilitate this study's attempt to examine corporate identity as narrative. The use of narrative analysis in the study of corporate identity facilitates the exploration of the narrative-identity connection as applied to corporate discourse and increases our understanding of how and why both individuals and organisations share narratives of identity.

Polkinghorne's (1998) suggestion that hermeneutically oriented research tools be used to study the expression of identity and the construction of meaning through narrative is also applied in this critical-interpretive study. Such hermeneutic methods are necessary to interpret the texts of human experience and produce knowledge that deepens and enlarges the understanding of human existence. The fact that narrativity emerges only in longer strings of sentences leads to the idea of the hermeneutic circle (Taylor & Van Every, 2000). As Bruner (1991) points out, narrative accounts do not provide a causal explanations but a basis for interpreting why a character acted as he or she did. In particular, Bruner (1991) asserts: "Interpretation is concerned with 'reasons' for things happening, rather than strictly their 'causes'" (p. 7). Thus, the methods of data collection and analysis used in this research serve to examine how narrative texts create and carry meanings of identity, particularly for founders of organisations.

A critical approach to narrative also poses promising directions in corporate identity and corporate image research. As outlined above, the aims and objectives of this study are to examine the use of narratives in relation to corporate identity. More specifically, it seeks to understand and explain how narratives are constructed, communicated, and enacted by organisational founders in their attempt to position their organisation. Such an approach offers insight into how a value-led business, with a strong personalised image, has utilised the power of rhetoric to retain its identity and image in today's pressure-ridden

marketplace. Furthermore, it seems that the corporate narratives of organisations with highly personalised images reflect both corporate and personal identities. Narrative theory provides researchers with the techniques to examine both types of identity and their combined rhetorical/discursive functions in a variety of ways (Jameson, 1981; Czarniawska, 1998, 1999).

The relationship between personal and corporate identity in relation to The Body Shop generates interesting questions surrounding the organisation's identity. The narrative approach allows us to gain deeper understanding into how founders of organisations narratively construct the identity of their organisations while maintaining and managing their own personal identity. Burke's theory of identification also provides a way of understanding how founders use language symbolically in forming and altering the attitudes of both internal and external audiences. This research therefore, seeks to uncover the effects of such a personalized image on newcomers to the organisation, particularly management. The narrative-identity connection as outlined above provides exciting possibilities in corporate identity research because it facilitates understanding and explanation of how narratives of identity are affected during periods of change and even crisis. For example, narratives reflecting identity crises facing organizations can be examined through tests against the principles of probability and fidelity (Fisher, 1984). The principle of probability also facilitates the investigation of characterological coherence, "a key difference between the concept of narrative rationality and traditional logics" (Fisher, 1987, p. 47). Because character is central to all stories, it is important for characters to be reliable, consistent, and trustworthy. Thus, when an organisation is experiencing change or crisis, corporate narratives can be examined for coherence.

Method

The intrinsic case study

Czarniawska (1998) claims that "Narrative forms of organisation studies are easiest to find in case studies: research cases...that use chronology as the main organising device" (p. 14). Narration is a kind of discourse that answers the question, "what happened?" (Zeller, 1995). According to McCorcle (1984), the case study tells a story. McCorcle (1984) goes on to argue that: "its narrative form may be the case study's most compelling

attribute. It is the case's story line that connects and enlivens all the various actors and processes" (p. 207). These views complement both the theoretical framework and research strategy chosen for this study.

A case study typically involves the use of multiple methods for an in-depth examination of an organisation or a community (Stake, 1995a, 1995b, 1988). Case studies usually rely heavily on qualitative analysis, but they may also incorporate some quantitative data. The qualitative case study enables researchers to appreciate the uniqueness and complexity of the case, as well as its "embeddedness and interaction with its contexts" (Stake, 1995a, p. 16). More importantly, the case study is "particularization, not generalisation" (p. 8). However, generalisation cannot be avoided. From a narrative standpoint, "the researcher should not overlook details that differentiate this story from similar ones" (Polkinghorne, 1995, p. 17). Furthermore, the researcher should present the characters with enough detail that they appear as unique individuals in a particular situation. In my view, the uniqueness of the case is best told as a story because as a researcher, I bring to the study a collection of events and experiences that make my story different. For example, my time spent with Anita Roddick when interviewing her enabled me to obtain invaluable insight and information about her and her organisation, all of which are included in this study.

So how then does one decide which story to tell? This research comprises an intrinsic case study. Here, the researcher examines in detail, a single case because one wants better understanding of this particular case (Stake, 1995a, 1995b). The pre-selected case is not studied because it represents, or contrasts with other cases but because, in all its particularity and ordinariness, the case itself is of special interest. The researcher is drawn toward a deep understanding of what is important about the case within its own world, not so much the world of researchers and theorists. Emphasis is placed on developing the case's issues, contexts, and interpretations (Stake, 1995a, 1995b). At the same time, there may well be opportunities for application and generalisation.

This research comprises a chronological case study designed to explore how Anita Roddick constructed The Body Shop's identity through narrative since the company was established in 1976. The Body Shop was pre-selected for the study not for its

generalisability but because of its distinctiveness. Several features of the organisation made it distinctly unique. First, The Body Shop was strongly values based. Not only was it a leader in the Business for Social Responsibility movement; it was one of the first cosmetic companies to publicly challenge the cultural conceptions and dominant stereotypes of femininity that had been traditionally portrayed in the beauty industry. Second, while its identity was very public, it was also linked to a personalised image and leadership embodied in one person, Anita Roddick. Thus, in relation to the uniqueness-generalisability dimension, it is sufficient to focus on Anita Roddick and The Body Shop (i.e. their intrinsic worth) for *their own sake*. On the other hand, the case *speaks beyond itself* in that both Roddick and The Body Shop represent many of the issues of identity facing values-led business organisations in today's marketplace.

Third, both corporate and organisational narratives of The Body Shop are widely available to the public through the organisation's web site which was created in 1995. Consequently, its often-controversial corporate identity has been contested and in flux. In 2001, The Body Shop celebrated its 25th birthday. So, it seemed fitting to examine its identity over a period of 25 years in the context of a conversation between the company and the larger society. I wanted to study the changing narrative and evaluate the significant discursive shifts that have taken place in Roddick's narrative of The Body Shop over the last 25 years. Hence, the primary research question asks, ***How has the identity of The Body Shop been expressed and transformed through an ongoing corporate narrative of which Anita Roddick has been the primary storyteller?***

There are secondary questions that support and extend this primary one:

1. How was The Body Shop identity in large part *created* through narrative?
2. What *rhetorical strategies* did Anita Roddick, the founder of The Body Shop, employ to establish and maintain a position of leadership, both personally and organisationally?
3. What *identity challenges* has The Body Shop faced and how are these identity challenges reflected in The Body Shop's corporate narratives?
4. What *practical* lessons does The Body Shop story provide for other value-based business organisations?

To answer these questions, narratives are analysed in terms of both implicit and explicit values, attitudes and beliefs that contribute to the organisation's identity, the organisation's ideology, leadership, and the role of business in society. Internal elements to the narratives such as the characters in the stories, differences among the characters, power as it is expressed in the narratives, and communicative, persuasive, and leadership strategies are also examined.

The analysis progresses through three distinct levels. It begins with a descriptive thematic analysis and moves ultimately to a critical-interpretive approach, which utilises complementary concepts from rhetorical criticism and critical discourse analysis.

Table 2: Levels of data analysis

Level One:	Thematic Analysis Identify basic descriptors from the perspective of the narrator.
Level Two:	Cluster Criticism Ascertain meaning narrator has for key terms and what those meanings suggest about that narrator's worldview.
Level Three:	Critical Narrative Analysis Examine the story and the linguistic and cultural resources it draws upon and how it attempts to persuade an audience.

Methods of data collection

Company documentation

The collection and examination of documents are often an integral element in qualitative research (Bryman, 1992; Sarantakos, 1993; Manning & Cullum-Swan, 1994). Polkinghorne (1983) emphasises this point further when he claims: "The most exact and accessible form of expression is written linguistic expression...collected by the researcher in the form of personal or public documents" (p. 265). The overall research strategy adopted for this study, the case study, also facilitates the use of document analysis as a method of data collection and analysis (Denzin & Lincoln, 1996). Therefore, Body Shop

documents are analysed in an attempt to understand Roddick's categories and to see how these are used in concrete activities like telling stories (Sacks, 1974).

Company documents come in many forms. Among those collected for this research are (see Appendix 6 for a detailed list of specific documents in each category listed below that were collected and examined in this study):

- Corporate records
- Organisational autobiographies
- Internal publications
- External publications.

As Forster (1994) has stated, the relative lack of scholarly analysis of company documentation is "surprising because it can cast light on many aspects of organisational life" (p. 148). The analysis of company documentation is particularly important for my research as it illuminates the meanings of the life-worlds of certain organisational members. Furthermore, it allows me to investigate patterns and trends in the company's evolution (Potter, 1996). However, Manning and Cullum-Swan (1994) rightfully assert that the paradigms within which certain research approaches are used, such as document research and narrative analysis, are placing more emphasis on codes, paradigms, and explanations for the ordered meaning of a text, rather than on the character, biography, or intent of the writer or subject of the writing. Also changing is the meaning of texts and their role in social research and theorizing because the "social sciences, with the possible exception of content analysis, have not developed systematic evaluative techniques for documentary analysis" (Manning & Cullum-Swan, 1994, p. 463). Today, the analysis of documents allows the researcher greater flexibility in triangulating data analysis methods to conduct a more 'meaningful' interpretation. Furthermore, it supports the perspective taken in this research which interprets documents as a form of self-presentation in which a particular self-identity is narratively constructed. As a macro-textual method, the understanding of distinct, disparate and often contradictory texts evolves upwards through a spiral of understanding (Forster, 1994).

The study of documents is accomplished in a number of successive stages. Sarantakos (1993) provides researchers with a general approach to follow when conducting documentary research. The first step is to *identify what documents are relevant*. The choice of documents depends on “availability, accessibility, relevance, and personal interest of the researcher” (p. 207). The second step is to then *organise and analyse the documents* according the chosen methodology of the research. The third step is to *evaluate the information*, again, in light of the methodology chosen and the purpose of the study. The final step in documentary analysis is to interpret the data in the context of the research topic. Also adapted for this study, is Forster’s (1994) description of the hermeneutic method as applied to company documentation. The spiral of understanding (Forster, 1994), referred to above, involves analysing the meaning of individual texts, relating these to the totality of the life-worlds in which they originated, and then re-interpreting the separate texts anew (Radnitzky, 1970, cited in Forster, 1994). The initial task in the hermeneutic process, is to search for themes within each document and then within clusters of documents. The method of analysis carried out of the company documentation in this study is detailed below.

Advantages of the analysis of company documentation

Document interpretation is especially important when authors or speakers are not available, as “the text itself always speaks to us, and the job of the interpreter is to figure out what it is saying” (Littlejohn, 1996, p. 212). Furthermore, texts have their own meaning apart from what any author, speaker, or audience member might mean by it. However, documents are also important to researchers who have human respondents available as they can provide confirmatory or even contradictory evidence, and strengthen or challenge the credibility of the results of interviews (Potter, 1996). Studying documents also allows the researcher to study past events and issues. One of the most attractive aspects of documentary research to many researchers, particularly students, is the fact that it is “more economical than most other research methods” (Sarantakos, 1993, p. 208). Once obtained, the researcher also has unlimited access to information which can be re-tested and reviewed.

In coverage, data from company documents are often “more comprehensive than the kind of material which a researcher who is new to an organisation could obtain from either

interviews or questionnaires” (Forster, 1994, p. 148). Furthermore, those documents which are explicitly public relations in tone, can tell a researcher a great deal about the kind of image and culture a company is trying to present internally, to its own employees, and externally, to customers or potential competitors (Forster, 1994). This method is therefore particularly useful in corporate identity and corporate image research. Even when these official messages contradict informal ones, their ‘authenticity’ as formal representations is not in question. Rather, when a contradiction comes to light, it may help to sharpen the analysis of organizational identity and culture. Finally, not only is this method unobtrusive, it is also non-reactive and provides another means of triangulating data (Forster, 1994).

Disadvantages of the analysis of company documentation

Document analysis methods do have various limitations. Among the most important of these is the fact that “documents are biased, since they represent the view of their authors” (Sarantakos, 1993, p. 209). Additionally, company documentation may be fragmentary, political, and subjective and may not be an accurate or authentic record of actual events and processes (Forster, 1994). The analysis of documents can also lead to methodological problems such as inconsistencies in coding (Manning and Cullum-Swan, 1994). Another problem is that comparisons between documents are not always possible and generalisations may be limited as certain documents, such as highly idiosyncratic autobiographies, are not necessarily representative of their class or category. Also, it may not be truly representative of life in a particular organisation (Forster, 1994).

Finally, certain documents may not be easily or widely available such as personal letters or historical records, resulting in incomplete or unrepresentative data even while the documents themselves profess to be complete (Sarantakos, 1993). In this study, individual interviews were conducted to supplement the document analysis and to gain insight from more personal narratives. In particular, because the voice of the organisation represented in the organisation’s narrative texts or documents was that of its founder, I interviewed Anita Roddick to complement, and interpret more carefully, the organisation’s written narratives.

Collecting Body Shop documents

In 1976, Anita Roddick opened the first Body Shop. By 2001, she had handed over the day-to-day running of the multi-global company to a new CEO, Patrick Gournay. I bound the thesis to examine the evolution of The Body Shop's corporate identity over this period of 25 years and therefore stopped collecting data in 2001. The Body Shop did not produce or publish documents of any kind in its early years (1976-1986) mainly because it did not have the money to do so (Roddick, 2001a). Unfortunately, what was produced in the late 1980s was not archived by the organisation. However, the organisation loaned me many of the first documents, often original copies, that they had begun to keep which dated back to 1989. Among the first documents to be published and archived by the organisation were brochures distributed in the shops. The first brochure obtained from the organisation was published in 1989. The wide availability of company documents via its communication department in Littlehampton, its shops, and the Internet also aided in me in the collection of secondary data. I personally systematically collected documents over a period of four years (1997-2001).

I began collecting company documents such as company brochures in 1997. I wrote to The Body Shop Head Office in Littlehampton and was placed on their mailing list to receive annual reports and other publications such as magazines. I was also sent a number of documents that had been published before 1997, such as earlier annual reports, The Body Shop *Values Report 1995* and *Values Report 1997* and other corporate documents that were available to the public. In New Zealand, I visited stores regularly and collected brochures and other printed material such as till bags and posters. The Body Shop website, which was established in 1995, also contained full versions of numerous company documents such as press releases dating back to 1996. These were printed regularly and stored as data.

Copies of Anita Roddick's autobiographies and other books published by The Body Shop were also purchased. The Body Shop's public responses to media stories and controversies were also closely monitored. During my visit to Bloomington, Illinois, to interview Roddick in March 2001, I also obtained access to a large number of Body Shop documents that were sent to Professor Dale Fitzgibbons, a personal friend of Anita

Roddick. Professor Fitzgibbons also provided me with many internal documents which he had been given by one of his doctoral students who worked at The Body Shop for a period of time. Such documents included internal newsletters and official memos and letters from both Anita and Gordon Roddick to Body Shop employees.

During my visit with Roddick in Bloomington, she contacted her personal assistant, Karen Bishop, and asked Karen to help me with my data collection. Many original documents that I had not been able to get previously were sent to me on my return to New Zealand. Finally, during my visit with the New Zealand Body Shop Directors, I was also given copies of reports, local audits and in-house videos. I stopped collecting data in July 2001, when The Body Shop celebrated its 25th birthday. A complete list of specific documents examined in this study is attached (see Appendix 6).

Throughout the research process, I monitored media reports on and academic journal articles about The Body Shop as a way of acknowledging that others too, were telling their version of The Body Shop story. These texts, while not directly analysed in this study, served both as a resource for enriching textual interpretation and a form of triangulation with the textual data in order to test, improve, and even challenge the validity of my interpretations. The triangulation of data analysis methods for this study also provided an effective framework built on critical-interpretive underpinnings (Alvesson & Deetz, 2000; Cheney, 2000b; Ricoeur, 1981). I also collected and monitored the extensive media coverage that the organisation has obtained in Great Britain and the United States since its early days. I also examined books and videos produced by The Body Shop which were obtained from the organisation.

Interviews

Of particular interest to organisational research is how organisational members use language. The linguistic turn in organisational studies strengthens the choice of interviews as a method of data collection in organisational research, particularly as interviews are rich in linguistic interaction (see Harré & Secord, 1973). Stories told by interviewees serve as linguistic expressions of their experiences. Polkinghorne (1983) explains: "The face-to-face encounter provides the richest data source for the...researcher seeking to understand human structures of experience" (p. 267). Bruner (1986) illustrates this point

well when he states that the “recognition that people narrativise their experience of the world and of their own role in it has forced social scientists to reconsider how they use their principal instrument of research-the interview” (p. 115). Narrative provides respondents with a means of organising their temporal experience into meaningful wholes and uniting the events of their lives into unfolding themes. Indeed, “for a researcher, the basic source of evidence about narratives is the interview” (Polkinghorne, 1988, p. 163). Narrative is much more than ornamentation of discourse; it represents a fundamental way in which people organize, relate, and restructure their experiences.

Narratives are a recurrent and prominent feature of accounts offered in all types of interviews (Mishler, 1997; Polkinghorne, 1988). “The things that people say about themselves and other people should be taken seriously as reports of data relevant to phenomena that *really exist* and which are relevant to the explanation of behaviour” (Harré & Secord, 1973, p. 7). Harré and Secord (1973) call these reports “‘accounts’: the actor’s statement about why he or she performed certain acts and what social meaning he or she gave to the actions of himself or herself and others” (Tompkins & Cheney, 1983, p. 129). When analysing accounts, Harré and Secord suggest examining ‘episodes’ or segments of human life. Often, researchers produce their own account of the same episode. For example, stories of how The Body Shop first evolved are common in the corporate narratives of the organisation. While certain members of management may have their own account of the story, so too will the researcher. Hence, the negotiation of accounts, and thus, meanings (Bruner, 1990), takes place between the researcher and the participant. Such accounts or stories are indeed rich in meaning and provide the researcher with important insight into organisational life as told by organisational members.

Working from this perspective, Polkinghorne (1988) is right to assert that *oral* stories produced by respondents in an interview are significantly different from written narratives, especially in how they are prompted and recalled. In his attempt to understand and explain the dynamics of interview narratives, Polkinghorne (1988) draws on insights provided by discourse theory:

The story is the result of the total situation: the teller of the story, the codes of the story, and the hearer of the story. The interviewee is the teller

of the story, the interviewer is the hearer. In this context, the story selected to be told can function to present a particular image of the teller; and the kind of interviewer the hearer undertakes can affect the kind of story told. (p. 164)

Polkinghorne's (1988) view supports the notion that narratives are context sensitive, both in their telling and in the meaning they give to events. Therefore, the aims and conditions of the interview situation determine the form and content of the narratives. Furthermore, respondents' stories are only one retelling of many stories they might tell about their lives and work in different contexts and with different interviewers. The shape, structure, and content of the stories they tell the researcher is therefore, interactively produced (Mishler, 1997). If interviewers share similar experiences and builds a context of mutual understanding, Paget (1983) suggests that the interviewee feels less need to tell stories that are primarily designed to present the self in socially valued images.

Interviews may also be seen to involve a degree of identity work (Alvesson, 1994). It is through assessments of the presence of identities that one may better clarify in what sense accounts may "tell us something about a particular chunk of social reality or a person's ideas and beliefs" (Alvesson & Deetz, 2000, p. 126). It is important is to appreciate how actor's accounts may be seen as expressions of their identities. Of further relevance to research on identity is Alvesson and Deetz's (2000) suggestion of not only considering issues of identity through explicit questions, but also in how identities are expressed and positioned in the actual interview. For example, if one interviews somebody as a 'woman', a 'leader', a 'mother', a 'rebel', different identities are invoked and different answers are produced. Researchers thus have to be aware of how language use can affect the interviewee in terms of identity.

In line with the interpretive approach, the principle uses of case study include obtaining the "descriptions and interpretations of others" (Stake, 1995a, p. 64). The type of interview used in this research is the "elite interview" (Sarantakos, 1993, p. 187). Respondents - such as Anita Roddick, founder of The Body Shop and Barrie Thomas and Michel Ogilvie-Lee, New Zealand Body Shop Directors - are well known personalities, prominent, and influential. The elite interview "aims at collecting information that is exclusive and unique to these informants. That information is very valuable because of

the special position of the respondents” (Sarantakos, 1993, p. 187). The interview style used in the research was semi-structured (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe, & Lowe, 1991). Here, the researcher uses a schedule “but recognizes that departures will occur if interesting themes emerge from what respondents say in order to get their version of things” (Bryman, 1992).

Advantages of interviews

There are many strengths of the interview as a data-gathering technique. For instance, it is a highly flexible method, it can be used almost anywhere, and it is capable of producing in-depth data. Also, it is a method that most research respondents are familiar with (King, 1994). Other advantages include the fact that respondents do not have to handle complex documents or long questionnaires. The most important advantage on interviews, particularly in interpretive research, is that interviewers have the opportunity of checking their interpretations with respondents.

The individual interview gives researchers the opportunity to clarify concepts and stories that the interviewee might have used in written narrative (Mann, 1998), and a chance to explore further the issues of identity that they signal are important. Also, the “researcher may get perspectives, information, ideas, and impressions that he or she has not thought of before” (Alvesson & Deetz, 2000, p. 71). More complex questions can be used because the presence of the interviewer means that he or she can assist in answering the questions. Additionally, the possibility of interviewer intervention can help resolve inconsistencies or confusion. Finally, there is space for negotiation of meanings so that mutual understanding is reached and interpretation is made richer (Alvesson & Deetz, 2000).

Disadvantages of interviews

According to Bryman (1992), semi-structured interviews “probably risk not gleaning information about what the subject deems to be important about the issues being examined” (p. 149). However, he does point out that semi-structured interviews do allow the interviewee flexibility and “are more responsive to lines of answering initiated by respondents” (p. 149). Among some of the common limitations of using interviews as a

research method is the fact that it is time-consuming and costly (Easterby-Smith, et al., 1991; Sarantakos, 1993).

Another concern facing researchers is the self-censorship and caution of respondents. Alvesson and Deetz (2000) suggest that researchers should think of interviewees as politically conscious actors, and not necessarily truth-tellers. However, such actors may still provide informative accounts. Of equal concern are issues surrounding deception and the presentation of false identities during the interview process. Indeed interaction in the interview takes place in the context of a relationship. The more comfortable a person feels with the researcher, the more open he or she will be about his or her experiences. On the other hand, as Polkinghorne (1983) reminds us, “the subject can deceive” (p. 267), hold back, or disguise those experiences. A possible solution to such a problem is offered by Easterby-Smith, et al. (1991) who suggest that highlighting the relevance and benefit of the research for the respondents is often a good way to build a relationship. If the interviewers feel they “might gain from the exchange” (p. 77), the “more willing they are to be open” (p. 81).

Conducting the interviews

The opportunity to meet the founder enabled me to conduct an extensive in-depth interview and collect invaluable primary data for the research (the transcript for the interview is attached as Appendix 5). The decision to interview the New Zealand Body Shop Directors also enriched the data and localised the research. Company documents were selected on the grounds of their ability to provide insight into the many aspects of organisational life, in particular, the aspect of corporate identity.

Selection of participants

An additional research tool was used to supplement the empirical data gathered from the document research. Individual interviews were conducted to obtain first-hand accounts of issues relating to The Body Shop’s corporate identity. Hatch and Schultz (2000) argue that to “fully appreciate corporate identity requires taking a managerial perspective” (Hatch & Schultz, 2000, p. 17). Because top management plays a key role in defining corporate identity and shaping organisational discourse, an in-depth interview with the

founder of the organisation, Anita Roddick, was essential. Recording her story provided both valuable and influential data for my research.

The decision to interview the three Directors of The Body Shop in New Zealand was three-fold. First, I wanted comparative narratives to enhance the validity (or credibility) of the interpretation of the interview data. In line with the critical-interpretive perspective, the purpose was to examine the corporate narratives for consistencies, inconsistencies, and contradictions. On the other hand, it was important to ensure the representation of individual perspectives (Zorn & Ruccio, 1998). Second, I wanted to localise the data. Third, the initial concentration on written material denied me the opportunity to engage with people, to become a “fellow traveller on the narrative, engaging with it emotionally, displaying interest, empathy and pleasure in the storytelling process” (Gabriel, 1998, p. 137). The importance of collecting stories and narratives not only personalised the research, it allowed me to gain access to “deeper organisational realities” (Gabriel, 1998, p. 135).

The individual interviews

I had the opportunity to meet, and spend time with Anita Roddick on two occasions. The first meeting was in Auckland on the 7th of November 2000 and the second was in Illinois in March 2001. Our first meeting was not planned. I traveled to Auckland from Hamilton to hear Anita Roddick speak at a formal luncheon hosted by the Auckland Chamber of Commerce. Anita Roddick was in New Zealand for a few days to promote her new autobiography, *Business as Unusual*. After her speech, she held a press conference. I went along to the press conference and found that there were only four journalists in the room. When Anita Roddick entered the room, she sat with us and invited questions from the media. I merely observed the session.

The next meeting took place in Bloomington, Illinois on 6 March 2001. Acting on a suggestion from a personal friend and colleague, I made contact with Professor Fitzgibbons, a personal friend of Anita Roddick. He informed me that she would be visiting him in March 2001. On my behalf, Professor Fitzgibbons asked Roddick if she

would be willing to talk to me while she was visiting with him in Bloomington. She agreed.

I had arrived two days prior to Anita Roddick's visit. Professor Fitzgibbons was hosting a symposia series on 'Globalisation and the Modern Corporation' as part of a year-long seminar series on the human rights and social justice aspects of globalisation at Illinois State University and had invited Anita Roddick to attend as a guest speaker. After exchanging several emails, Professor Fitzgibbons suggested I stay with him for the week that Anita Roddick was visiting with him. So, Anita and I met once again at the airport in Bloomington. We talked in the car on the way to the Fitzgibbons' family home. I told Anita about my research and explained why I had traveled half way around the world to talk to her. She agreed to a formal, taped interview, which lasted for five hours over a period of three days. I spent a total of four days with her.

The time spent with Anita Roddick was invaluable for my research as it allowed me to collect inestimable primary data from the interviews and observations. Over the four days Anita lectured to business students, held a press conference, and delivered a public speech to an audience of 1200. I attended each of these events, tape recorded them, and took notes. Our time together allowed me to check my interpretations and receive important feedback from Roddick as we discussed our conversations.

The other two interviewees were the Directors of the organisation who hold the Head Franchise for all 17 shops in New Zealand. One Director, Mr Barrie Thomas, was contacted by phone. Mr Thomas approached the other two Directors, Mr and Mrs Ogilvee-Lee, and informed them about my request for an interview. Initially, they both agreed to be interviewed. Fontana and Frey (1994) assert that participants should have their privacy protected through the practice of informed consent. Therefore, all participants were sent a Research Information Sheet (see Appendix 1) and an ethics consent form (see Appendix 2) so that they had a clear understanding of what the research was about. A copy of the interview schedule (see Appendix 3 and 4) was also sent to all participants to enable them to prepare for the interview and think about their responses.

Unfortunately, because one of the interviewees cancelled our meeting on the day of the interview, only three interviews in total were conducted for this project.

I arrived at the Head Office of The Body Shop New Zealand in Wellington, at 9am on Wednesday, 25 July 2001. I conducted the first interview with Barrie Thomas. Because Mr Thomas had looked at the questions before the interview, he provided long, detailed answers, many of which were in the form of stories. In addition to taping the interviews, I took notes and frequently checked my understanding of what he said. The interview lasted three hours and fifteen minutes.

The second interview with Mr Ogilvie-Lee took place shortly after the interview with Mr Thomas. The same procedure was followed. Because Mr Ogilvie-Lee also had time to look at the questions before the interview, he too provided long, informative accounts. Again, I took notes during the interview and frequently checked my understanding of what he had said. The interview lasted two hours and thirty minutes. Following both interviews, Mr Thomas took me to visit The Body Shop warehouse. There, I met, and spoke briefly to the staff who worked there. At the warehouse were the products, packaging, and printed material that are supplied to all 17 shops in New Zealand. Mr Thomas also gave me some of the many copies of video newsletters that were sent from Head Office in London.

Interview structure

Interviews were not too highly structured so as to allow the respondents to actively shape the course of the interview rather than passively responding to pre-set questions. In line with the semi-structured approach to interviews, several topics were listed on the interview schedule to help me remain focused (see Appendix 3). Questions were open-ended and there was flexibility to allow variation in the order in which questions were asked as well as to allow latitude for respondents to discuss other issues they also perceived relevant to the question. For example, I asked one of the New Zealand Directors a fairly open question about Anita Roddick's leadership style. He answered my question, but went on to explain his views by telling me about specific problems in the company's history and about mistakes he believed that Roddick made as a leader in times of crisis. As a result, we talked about the company's crisis communication plans, a topic I

had not anticipated covering yet one that provided valuable insight into the relationship between identity and leadership.

In all three interviews, the use of probes and follow up questions were often used to encourage the respondents to continue with, or expand, their answers. Because respondents were able to talk freely about topics they felt were important, many of the answers ended up in the form of stories which provided me with rich data or what Geertz (1973) terms “thick descriptions”. While Brown (1985) states that rich sets of narratives can be obtained through interviews with organisational members, no question, apart from the opening question, called specifically for narratives, but questions were phrased so that respondents would be likely to offer narrative accounts. In fact, the interviews yielded an extensive collection of individual member narratives. The interviews permitted respondents a high degree of latitude in the content of their responses, while providing a comprehensive and consistent format for the collection of narratives.

Data analysis

To assist the interpretive process, some theoretical frame of reference is needed for researchers to manage the complexities of empirical material (Alvesson & Deetz, 2000). Furthermore, researchers need to equip themselves with paradigmatic, theoretical, and methodological skills necessary to make good interpretations. An awareness of the restrictions of research work is also required. Alvesson and Deetz (2000) refer to the full set of aspects and themes that a researcher masters to a sufficient degree as an ‘interpretive repertoire’ (p. 184). The interpretive repertoire brought to this research includes a list of concepts derived from various sources which will be used to distill the data, guide my interpretations, and produce my analysis.

The overall aim of the research is to examine how the identity of The Body Shop has been expressed and transformed through an ongoing corporate narrative of which Anita Roddick has been the primary storyteller. To examine the data collected from interviews and company documentation, I employed a variety of concepts from rhetorical criticism, critical discourse analysis, and narrative theory and criticism. In my analysis, I attended to both micro-linguistic devices and micro-linguistic structures. The micro-linguistic devices

examined included such things as metaphors, anecdotes, value-terms and pronouns. The macro-linguistic structures analysed included the overall plot lines and logical patterns of the selected corporate narratives. A three-level analysis, as outline above, was utilized. First, narratives were examined for themes or plots using Owen's (1984) criteria. Burke's (1966) method of cluster criticism was next employed to uncover the meanings the rhetor has for key terms and what those meanings reveal about her worldview. The third and final level of analysis – a critical narrative analysis- identified micro-linguistic devices, such as value terms, in an attempt to understand how key narratives were constructed.

Thematic analysis

In line with Reissman's (1993) view that "narratives are interpretive and, in turn, require interpretation", this research aims to produce an accurate description of the interpretive narrative accounts individuals use to make sequences of events in their lives and/or organisations meaningful (p. 22). Therefore, *narrative themes* are identified to examine the central ideas illustrated by the key narratives under investigation. For my purposes, themes have been defined as frequently occurring topics in organisational communication (Johnson, 1977). The identification of themes represent the first level of analysis which is employed in an attempt to organise the data collected for the research. Here, the researcher analyses the narratives for specific themes, aggregating information into large clusters of ideas and providing details that support the themes. In case study research, Stake (1995b) calls this analysis "development of issues" (p. 123) such as "problematic circumstances that draw upon the common disciplines of knowledge, such as sociology, economics, ethics, and literary criticism" (Stake, 1998, p. 92).

Numerous models for analysing interviews and written documents for their narrative content center around the identification of narrative themes (Owen, 1984; Labov, 1982; Polkinghorne, 1988; and Mishler, 1986, 1997). Elements of these models will be adapted in this research. Here, "the goal of analysis is to uncover the common themes or plots in the data" (Polkinghorne, 1988, p. 177). Owen's (1984) criteria are used to identify dominant themes, a method useful as a means of initial coding of a large number of texts. While Owen (1984) applied thematic analysis in a study of interpersonal relationships, the method is also suitable for a much wider range of applications. The first of Owen's

(1984) criteria is *repetition*. Here, “key words, phrases, or sentences” (p. 275), which appear explicitly and repetitively in the texts, are recorded. The second criterion, *recurrence*, is identified when the “same thread of meaning” (p. 275) occurs. The final criterion of *forcefulness* refers to “the underlining of words and phrases, the increased size of print or use of coloured marks” in written texts, or “vocal inflection volume or dramatic pauses” (pp. 275-276) in spoken accounts. Combined, these criteria suggest that the multiple occurrence of interconnected ideas constitutes themes.

The analysis of written documents are similarly analysed for themes or point of the story that recur as underlying patterns in the narrative texts. The texts are examined individually and collectively. Intertextual analysis is analysis not only within but, importantly, across texts arising from the hermeneutic concern of searching for emergent patterns through continual movement between part and whole (Barry & Elmes, 1997). While the first level of inference in the analytic work of interviews is what is *literally* in the text, a second level of inference, proposed by Labov (1982), suggests that the examination of interview narratives requires the procedure of expansion, whereby the knowledge about the speakers and their personal and general circumstances needs to be introduced before the proper inferences can be made about the text (Labov, 1982). Such knowledge, while not included in the text itself, results from my presuppositions of the speaker (Labov, 1982). Together with Labov’s suggestions, Mishler’s (1986) view of interviews as a form of self-presentation in which the interviewee is claiming a specific identity is also adapted. Mishler (1986) proposes that “the analysis can be directed to the content of this self-identity and to the various episodes and themes that interviewees selected in support of their identity and to the cultural values presupposed by it” (p. 243).

Bantz (1993) suggests that when examining organisational texts for themes, the interpreter finds stories, metaphors, and themes. Thus, after identifying narrative themes from the empirical material, a closer analysis of the narrative texts are conducted. In a closer analysis of the narrative texts, or what Foss (1989) calls the ‘rhetorical artifact’, various concepts from rhetorical criticism are applied in both the second and third-level analysis, to uncover deeper structures of meanings (both overt and hidden) embedded in the texts. Rhetorical criticism involves the description, analysis, interpretation, and

evaluation of persuasive uses of human communication (Campbell, 1979). Among the many functions of rhetorical criticism, the research seeks to examine the various strategies used by particular participants to impart their ideas to their audience. Therefore, rhetorical criticism exposes the ideology carried by the narrative, as well as other social, economic, political and moral issues surrounding the narrative (Foss, 1989).

Level one: Conducting thematic analysis

An initial exploratory stage involving document analysis allowed for the identification of basic corporate descriptors and values from the perspective of the official organisation, and of its founder and rhetor, Anita Roddick. It was my belief that these kinds of documents, which provided the organisation's official line, would give me a clear idea of the organisation's ideal identity, of what the organisation wanted to be as perceived particularly by Roddick, who authored the majority of the texts. The documents were analysed using thematic analysis. The set of narratives collected from interviews was also subjected to a thematic analysis based on the dominant theme, or moral, of the story. Here, the three criteria of recurrence, repetition, and forcefulness were used to identify the dominant themes (Owen, 1994; Littlejohn, 1996; Marshall & Rossman, 1989) as outlined above.

During the period of analysis, documents and transcripts were read on several occasions over a number of months. Such exposure identified the *repetitiveness* and *recurrence* of those themes relevant to the research questions. For example, the word "learning" was used repetitively as a descriptor in many of the documents examined. However, associated words such as "education" "experiments", "information", "university without walls" were also used to describe the type of learning in the selected corporate narratives; therefore, these words were identified as recurrent descriptors of learning. The analysis of themes was facilitated by careful record keeping of themes as they were identified throughout the research process.

The third criterion of *forcefulness* was identified where words were underlined, capitalized, bolded, or coloured in selected company documents. Because all texts, including punctuation, were transcribed directly from these documents, forcefulness was immediately apparent. In the interview transcripts, forcefulness was indicated by a raised

tone of voice, repetition, pauses or marker phrases. Oral emphasis was indicated by capital letters in transcription. The categorization of narrative themes followed recommended patterns for breaking down large amounts of transcribed conversation described in Glaser and Strauss (1967) and Miles and Huberman (1984).

Once the themes were identified, I proceeded to compare the results intertextually to discover themes that transcended individual texts and were present in several texts derived from diverse sources and produced in different situations. I then analysed the connections among these central themes and their functions in both individual and organisational identity. Lastly, I conducted intertextual analysis, moving from the part (single texts) to the whole (the storied narrative constituted of the totality of single texts) and vice versa, following a key hermeneutic analytical process in an attempt to search for common patterns and examine the commonalities and differences between such patterns. While Owen's (1984) framework was helpful in organising the data, it offered little input into the process of interpretation; consequently I turned to concepts from rhetorical theory such as cluster criticism (Burke, 1966), to ascertain the meaning of words in relation to their contexts.

Cluster criticism

The second level of analysis aims to further organise and manage the narrative themes identified in the first level. Interpretation of the narrative texts containing narrative themes incorporate critical insights. Kenneth Burke (1966) developed the method of cluster criticism to help the researcher uncover the meanings the rhetor has for key terms and what those meanings suggest about her worldview. The method involves the application of four major steps: (1) identification of key terms or symbols in the rhetorical artifact; (2) charting of terms that cluster around the key terms; (3) discovery of patterns in the clusters around the key terms to determine meanings of the key terms; and (4) naming of the rhetor's motive on the basis of the meanings of the key terms (Foss, 1989, p. 367).

The first step in this method will repeat, and thus serve to reinforce, the procedure for identifying narrative themes identified in the first level of analysis. The criteria used for

identifying these are *frequency* or *intensity* of terms (Foss, 1989), and are similar to that used in thematic analysis. The themes and terms from both analyses should therefore be the same. Often, “the terms selected as key terms are *god* and *devil* terms” (Foss, 1989, p. 368). *God* terms represent what the rhetor believes to be ideal, perfect, and good. On the other hand, *devil* terms represent what the rhetor believes to be negative, bad, or evil. The next three steps serve to develop the terms. By charting the clusters around those key terms and analysing the patterns in the clusters, the rhetor’s motive can then be identified and interpreted on a more critical level. The careful interpretation of such motives reveal the special meanings that the narratives have for the rhetor, such as the desire to maintain or challenge dominant hegemonies and ideologies.

Level two: Conducting cluster criticism

In this level of analysis, four major steps set out by Foss (1989) were followed. First, key terms or symbols in the rhetorical artifact were identified. Foss’s (1989) development of *god* and *devil* terms fit well with Levi-Strauss’s notion of binary oppositions described in chapter three. In particular, the identification of binary oppositions served as a means of analysing the fundamental structure of Body Shop narratives. Among some of the *god* terms identified were: “Multi-local corporation”, “trade”, “customer”, and “principles”. The *devil* terms included: “Multi-national corporation”, “business”, “consumer”, and “profits”. These terms, among others, featured heavily in The Body Shop narratives as binary opposites and provided insight into the meanings produced by the organisation and its Founder. Second, the terms that clustered around the key terms were charted. Third, the patterns in the clusters around the key terms to determine meanings of the key terms were discovered and finally, the rhetor’s motive on the basis of the meanings of the key terms were named.

The key terms identified in the first step were compared against the themes identified in the first stage of the research process described above. The key terms and themes were examined closer, in an attempt to look “for theme variations” (Littlejohn, 1996, p. 212). The patterns which arose from the evaluation of the data, allowed me to identify the key narratives to be examined at a more micro-level. This proved to be the most time-saving strategy for managing the large amount of empirical material.

Critical narrative analysis

The methods of thematic analysis and cluster criticism described above aim to examine the role of the rhetor or narrator in the construction and communication of the narrative. The third level of analysis studies the messages or narratives. While the previous methods investigate the contexts surrounding the texts and the rhetor who produced it (Foss, 1989), the third level of analysis examines the content and form of the narrative texts. Manning and Cullum-Swan (1996) remind us that “narrative analysis is rather *loosely formulated, almost intuitive, using terms defined by the analyst*” (p. 465, emphasis added). Furthermore, Czarniawska (1998) acknowledges: “the narrative device does not predetermine in any sense how the material is to be constructed or collected. In more traditional parlance, there is *no obvious connection between the narrative approach and any specific method*” (p. 19, emphasis added). However, for my purposes, I specify links to thematic analysis and cluster criticism. The state of narrative analysis then, allows me flexibility to draw on a collection of notions from narrative theory outlined in the first part of this chapter. In an attempt to construct an analytic framework to examine corporate narratives of identity, both interpretively and critically, and at a micro-level, I will draw on aspects of both narrative analysis (Reissman, 1993; Manning & Cullum-Swan, 1996; Czarniawska, 1997, 1998) and narrative criticism (Foss, 1989).

The purpose of narrative analysis is to see how subjects impose order on the flow of experience to make sense of events and actions in their lives. The methodological approach examines the subject’s story and analyses how it is put together, the linguistic and cultural resources it draws on, and how it persuades an audience of authenticity (Reissman, 1993). This thesis illustrates Reissman’s (1993) view that “nature and the world do not tell stories, individuals do” (p. 2). It therefore supports the argument that interpretation is indeed inevitable because narratives are representations. A critical perspective on the analysis of how human agency and imagination determine what gets included and excluded in narrativisation, how events are plotted, and what they are supposed to mean in light of contextual factors should therefore reveal “what’s really going on” in the narrative (Cheney, 2000b, p. 36). Individuals construct past events and actions in personal narratives to claim identities (Reissman, 1993). Rosenwald and Ochberg (1992) explain further:

How individuals recount their histories, what they emphasise and omit, their stance as protagonists or victims, the relationship the story establishes between teller and audience, all shape what individuals can claim of their own lives. Personal stories are not merely a way of telling someone (or oneself) about one's life; they are the means by which identities may be fashioned. (p. 1)

The thesis puts forward the suggestion that both people and organisations tell stories to make sense of the conversations that they have been in. This is an interpretation of text that “obviously lends itself to narrative analysis. There is now a growing literature that analyses organisational stories and documents and it furnishes many important insights into organisations” (Taylor & Van Every, 2000, p. 61). Creative narratives are dramatic composites of stories gathered from organisational actors that can be used to illustrate key interpretations or organisational life, to educate organisational actors about the experiences of others, and to increase organisational effectiveness.

The approach to the criticism of narratives adopted for this study come from Foss's (1989) suggestions for assessing narratives using critical insights from rhetorical criticism. Three major steps are involved in this method. The first examines the aspects of the substance of the narrative which may include identifying elements of the events, characters, setting, temporal relations, causal relations, themes, narrator, and audience (Foss, 1989). The second step examines the form of the narrative to see how various aspects of the events, characters, setting, temporal relations, causal relations, themes, narrator, and audience are communicated (Foss, 1989). The final step utilizes the information obtained from the analysis to then evaluate the story using criteria from narrative and corporate identity theory that are appropriate, useful, and most likely to generate insights in relation to corporate identity. The analysis will concentrate on answering the research questions designed for this research. In particular, it serves to address the issue of how corporate identity is constructed, effectively communicated, and successfully maintained through corporate narratives.

Level three: Conducting critical narrative analysis

The methods described above examined the role of the rhetor in the construction and communication of the narrative. This level of analysis investigated the substance (*what is*

narrated) and form (*how* the content is communicated) of the narrative texts. The questions used in this analysis served to answer the research questions posed by this study.

Analysis of the substance of the narrative

The following questions were used to describe and analyse the content or *substantive dimension of the narrative* (Foss, 1989, p. 231):

1. Events: What were the major and minor events in the narrative?
2. Characters: Who were the main characters in the narrative? What were the main physical and mental traits of the characters? Did the traits of the characters change over the course of the narrative?
3. Setting: What was the setting depicted in the narrative? How did the setting contribute to the mood of the narrative/ How did the setting relate to plot and character? Did the setting provide only what is minimally required for the action? Was it basically irrelevant to characters and plot? Was the setting like the actions or characters, or does it contradict them?
4. Temporal relations: What were the temporal relationships among the events in the narrative? Did events occur in a brief period of time or over many years or even centuries?
5. Causal relations: What cause-and-effect relationships were established in the narrative?
6. Audience: Who was the audience to whom the narrative is addressed?

Analysis of the form of the narrative

The following questions were used to describe and analyse the *formal dimensions* of the narrative. Here, the focus was on *the means by which those elements were communicated* (Foss, 1989, p. 233):

1. Events: Were they characterised by particular qualities? How fully were the major plots developed by the minor plots?
2. Characters: How were the main characters presented? How was the character's discourse reported?
3. Setting: How was a particular setting created? What kinds of terminology

and metaphors were used by the narrator to describe the setting? Were we seeing with the eyes of the narrator, a character, or the implied author? Was the setting textually prominent? Was the setting consistent or inconsistent?

4. Temporal relations: What was the relationship between the natural order of events as they occurred and the order of their presentation in the telling of the narrative? How was the story that was told located in time with respect to the act of narrating it? Was the telling of the story subsequent to what it tells-a predictive or prophetic form? Was the narration in present tense, simultaneous or interspersed with the action depicted? Was the narration in the past tense, coming after the events recounted? How was the story anchored to the time of its narrating?
5. Causal relations: Was the cause presented prior to effect or after it? How clearly and strongly were the connections made? Which received the most emphasis-the cause or the effect? What kinds of causes were dominant in the narration?
6. Audience: What were the signs of the audience in the narrative? What was known about the audience's attitudes, knowledge, or situation? How well did the audience appear to know the narrator-if at all?

In an attempt to illustrate Fisher's ideas on probability and fidelity, the following set of criteria dealt with the content of the narrative and assessed the message that was conveyed by the substance of the narrative itself (Foss, 1989, p. 236):

1. Did the content of the narrative embody and advocate values that were good, worthwhile, or useful?
2. What ethical standards did the narrative suggest?
3. How readily could the narrative be refuted?

The following set of criteria was used to focus evaluation on the form of the narrative-the means by which the content was expressed (Foss, 1989, p. 237):

1. Did the narrative have a clear and significant point?
2. Was the narrative coherent?
3. Did the narrative demonstrate fidelity?

In sum, the methods of data collection and analysis used in this research were chosen with the sole emphasis of examining how The Body Shop identity was created through corporate narratives. Indeed, the efforts in attempting to answer this question were not focused just on the message; the inquiry included investigation of aspects of the context of the narratives and the rhetor who produced it. My primary interest, therefore, was to examine the corporate narratives selected for this study and understand how these narratives generated a particular worldview or reality for Anita Roddick and The Body Shop. In light of this, the focus of the research was directed to two areas – the content and the formal dimensions of the narrative. The content was the substantive part of the narrative; it dealt with what was asserted about the organisation, the characters and the events. In other words, the content was *what* Roddick communicated about. Form was *how* the content was expressed or presented. It was the stylistic aspect of the narrative and included such considerations as choice and arrangement of words in discursive rhetoric or colours and imagery in non-discursive rhetoric.

Conclusion

This chapter has provided a detailed explanation of the theoretical and methodological assumptions which underpin the study. In line with a critical-interpretive perspective, the research set out to interpret the multiple meanings embedded in the narratives of The Body Shop collected for the study. The second part of this chapter described the broad outline and key features of the research design, and showed how the research strategy addressed the specific aims and objectives of the study. Additionally, it outlined the theoretical issues relevant to the research and explained the theoretical implications of the conceptual framework designed for the study. The third part of this chapter provided a complete account of the steps taken to collect and analyse the empirical data. It also identified the limitations encountered throughout the research process. The findings that were obtained will be examined closely and presented in the three analysis chapters which follow.

Chapter five, the first analysis chapter, examines early company documents in the investigation of the *construction* of The Body Shop identity. The data sources include Roddick's (1991) first autobiography, *Body and soul*, brochures, The Body Shop

Employee Handbook, and interview transcripts. Chapter six, the second analysis chapter, examines the various individual and organisational rhetorical strategies used in the *expression* and *maintenance* of the company's identity. In particular, how the organisation established a position of *leadership* in the field of *social responsibility* is also analysed. Data sources used in that chapter include annual reports, values reports, social audits, speeches and lectures, The Body Shop case study, and interview transcripts. The final analysis chapter, chapter seven, investigates recent *changes*, *challenges* and the *re-construction* of The Body Shop identity. The data used in that chapter is the most current. Such data includes company press releases (announcing changes), Roddick's second autobiography, and interview transcripts as well as transcripts of media interviews.

CHAPTER 5

STORIES OF ORIGIN: THE CREATION OF THE BODY SHOP'S CORPORATE IDENTITY

Introduction

This chapter draws on the critical-interpretive methodology outlined in the previous chapter to examine how Roddick, as chief storyteller, constructed The Body Shop narratives of identity. More specifically, it illustrates how these narratives went on to shape the organisation's corporate identity, in terms of its philosophy, visual style and internal culture. A number of perspectives inform this analysis. From an organisational standpoint, Christensen and Cheney (2000) claim that "identities of organisations are narratives, that is, *idealized accounts or stories* about organisations" (p. 256, emphasis added). Czarniawska (1997) claims that from a narrative perspective, the literary genre of autobiography best illustrates how organisations present themselves to their publics (see also Levitt & Nass, 1994). Roddick's rhetorical strategy of telling and retelling The Body Shop story is one adopted by many organisations. Christensen (1997) points out that today, an increasing number of organisations articulate their identities through corporate autobiographies. Ramanantsoa and Battaglia (1991) go on to explain that companies have now become the subject of their own discourse in an effort to win coherent identities, legitimacy and institutionalization.

The autobiography is explored by Ramanantsoa and Battaglia (1991) who point out that the autobiography of the firm produces the myth of the self, where the ultimate effect is to broadcast an image of the company as autonomous, a central and ideal actor, all at once fully free and ever strategically alert by virtue of a strong and original philosophy. The autobiography as a form of 'autocommunication' (Broms & Grahmberg, 1983) is a text written by and for the organisation itself. Autocommunication is a "set of self-referential communication practices through which the organisation recognises and confirms its own images, values and assumptions; in short, its own culture" (Christensen, 1997, p. 197). This type of

autobiography creates and then confirms corporate ideals, promoting the sacred qualities of the organisation.

The significance of Nietzsche's (1982) finding that narrative *becomes* identity is central to this discussion. His claim that the self is something one constructs has played a key role in my approach to the analysis of Roddick's autobiography in that it embraces the notion of identity as truly *processual* in nature. Czarniawska (1997) builds on Nietzsche's argument by suggesting that from a narrative standpoint, "the autobiography is a self-narrative of identity" (p. 49). Here, "conceptions of...identity are articulated, extended, and developed through an...autobiography" (Bruss, 1976, p. 5). From this autobiographical view of narratives, we can theorize identity narratives as instances of organizational impression management, or self-presentation – that is actions deliberately designed and implemented to influence an audience's perception of an organisation (Elsbach, Sutton & Principe, 1998; Goffman, 1959; Tedeschi & Melburg, 1984).

Through its examination of the creation of The Body Shop's corporate identity, this chapter explicitly assesses how this organisation's identity can be understood in relation to the notion of narrative. Specifically, the chapter examines how as chief author of that identity, Roddick's narrative can be traced across a range of Body Shop texts which were published in 1980s and early 1990s. The analysis also explores how Roddick positioned her company as a values-led organisation through an elaborate narrative historicising of The Body Shop's unique story.

The telling and retelling of The Body Shop story strengthened the organisation's identity, and affirmed its position in the marketplace. What is especially noticeable in that analysis is that the key themes of 'identity', 'language', 'storytelling', 'values', 'frugality', 'family' and 'green' feature prominently in these early Body Shop corporate narratives. The consistent repetition of these themes through the conscious telling and retelling of The Body Shop's original story by its founder, constructed the organisation's distinct identity. In fact, while Roddick's public stories served to shape her organisation's identity, they also reflected key elements of her own personal

identity, which in turn served as a 'unique attribute' for her company. This tying together of Roddick's own identity and that of her company is nowhere more clearly evident in her statement made to me during a personal interview:

It was my canvas. It was a personification of who I was and when I describe The Body Shop it's always a description of myself. You know, I'm sort of 'activist', 'energetic', 'counter cultural', 'fearless', all the words that I use to describe The Body Shop-storytelling, 'colourful'- I can actually use those same adjectives which I use to describe myself. (Roddick, interview with researcher, 2001a)

The corporate discourse examined in this chapter consists of transcripts of personal interviews that I conducted with Anita Roddick and the two New Zealand Directors of The Body Shop, and Roddick's first autobiography, *Body and Soul*, which was published in 1991. Original internal documents driven by Roddick, such as The Body Shop Employee Handbook - which is attached in The Body Shop Charter - (The Body Shop, 1990a) and the organisation's internal newsletter, *LA News* (nos. 1-10, published in 1993/1994), also formed data drawn on in the chapter. Other (external) corporate discourse material used includes associated Body Shop promotional texts, such as brochures and speeches made by Roddick in an effort to obtain free media publicity of the company's policies, positioning, and later, its social and environmental campaign activities. These sources of data were used for the primary purpose of identifying stories of origin which captured how the organisation's identity was initially created. In order to manage the information contained in these sources of data, a thematic analysis (Owen, 1984) was applied in my attempt to paint the 'big picture' of how The Body Shop's identity was created.

In this chapter, section one, *Retrospective narratives on life and The Body Shop*, examines how Roddick *constructed* the corporate identity of The Body Shop. Roddick consciously employed storytelling, largely through her own autobiography, as a means of positioning and managing her individual identity and the organisational identity of The Body Shop. Weick's (1979) theory of retrospective sensemaking is applied in the analysis of how Roddick gave structure and meaning to her life and the life of The Body Shop by selecting the "'main events', 'turning points', 'principle characters'" (p.78), and then recounting these in her story. The chapter turns to

Barthes' (1977) theory on myth to argue that the conscious retelling of these stories, replete with meaning and thick with a mythical discourse, fashioned The Body Shop's identity. Many of the foundational myths that embodied the core values of the organisation and its founder and which went on to become major components of The Body Shop identity are also explored in this section.

In section two, *Strategic identities: The development of The Body Shop's corporate self*, I examine the origin of Roddick's vision for The Body Shop. I also look at the ideological conditions surrounding Roddick's stories and analyse The Body Shop's narrative, as constructed in Roddick's autobiography, in relation to the contextual conditions of its production. In particular, I identify the social-political conditions - most notably environmentalism and feminism - which shaped Roddick's personal identity and organisational narrative. If Roddick used storytelling as a means of shaping and organising The Body Shop's identity, it is important to also consider Roddick's intentions and the settings in which these stories make sense. The Body Shop's philosophy, values and culture was *influenced by multiple discourses* (Foucault, 1977) and later *positioned through specific brand associations* (Davies & Harré, 2001) outside the confines of the organisation itself. Thus, the origins of Roddick's cultural, political, and ethical beliefs and values are examined in relation to McAdams' (1997) theory of identity-formation. McAdam's (1997) theory allows us to better understand the foundation of Roddick's thoughts and ideas which shaped her narrative.

In section three, *The evolution of The Body Shop style and image*, I examine Roddick's retrospective stories surrounding the origins of The Body Shop logo, colour, shop design, and packaging. Here, the theme of frugality is discussed in relation to how The Body Shop style was fashioned through 'affordable aesthetics.' In addition, I explore the *unplanned* development of The Body Shop's green image and how this went on to become a distinguishing trademark for the organisation. The contributions of Freud (1959) and Nietzsche (1954) to understanding of the retrospective use of narrative in identity formation are employed to theorise how Roddick constructed The Body Shop's style and image. The evolution of the *visual*

features of The Body Shop's corporate identity are analyzed in this chapter, together with the actual *discourses* - such as the environmental discourse - which were built around the organisation's foundational myths. Finally, Roddick's adoption of a monolithic identity structure is also analysed in relation to current corporate identity literature (see, e.g., Christensen & Cheney, 2000).

In section four, *The internal organizational use of language: key characters in The Body Shop story*, I carry out a critical-interpretive examination of the internalization of Roddick's narrative. Here, I employ Cheney's (1983b) identification strategies (see also DiSanza & Bullis, 1999), as described in chapter 4, to determine how Roddick *created meaning* for the individual and the organisation as well as how she created an identity for her organisation as one that was committed to the notions of 'family' and 'community.' Strauss' (1977) theory on the social creation of meaning is also used to analyse the implications of Roddick's strategies.

Constructing autobiographies: Retrospective narratives on life and The Body Shop

Roddick as self-conscious storyteller

Roddick's rhetorical construction of The Body Shop's identity was recorded 15 years after the company's birth in her autobiographical narrative, *Body and soul*, published in 1991. This was written in such a way as to enable it to be easily used as a company manual. Every Body Shop library has the book and it is read by all her employees (Forster, Cebis, Matjteles & Mathur, 1999). The epic story - 256 pages in length - is illustrated with countless illustrations which include selected snapshots from The Body Shop 'family album.' It represents a chronological narrative - while offering all the necessary twists and turns of a good plot - of the company's evolution. In this analysis I draw on Bruner's (1986, 1990) perspectives on individual cognition and Weick's (1995) theory of retrospective sense making.

According to Bruner (1986, 1990), the necessary elements for sense making are "something that preserves plausibility and coherence, something that is reasonable and memorable, something that embodies past experience and expectations,

something which resonates with other people and *something that can be constructed retrospectively*" (p. 60, emphasis added). The practical nature of storytelling incorporates theories of the self, showing how coherence is achieved in life stories. If connecting events together in the context of a story is critical for sensemaking, Roddick's ability to think in narrative terms - to look back, retrospectively, and ahead, prospectively, so as to construct an understanding of events - contribute towards a better appreciation of how The Body Shop identity was created.

There is no questioning that Roddick consciously employed language as a tool for presenting "who we are" stories (Czarniawska-Joerges, 1994; Hatch & Schultz, 2000) in an effort to publicise the company's progressive qualities and unique values. Roddick determined what was to be 'preserved' and rendered 'permanent' in her organisation's sense of its own past, of its own 'identity,' by structuring key moments in The Body Shop's development and presenting them as part of a lived narrative. For example, Roddick made story-telling about the early days and the first community projects part of the company's culture. As she explained in her interview with me:

I used to travel a lot, spend time with indigenous groups and every, every community I spent time with, storytelling was the basis of education, completely. So the storytelling was part of the identity. You know, the shops have little cards at the end of each shelf telling a story about the product. And they weren't made up. They were probably: "I saw this when I was in Morocco, and it's the mud from the Atlas Mountain and it was called Rhassoul and blah, blah..." So there were always the stories about travel too and that was like the university without walls. (Roddick, interview with researcher, 2001a)

Roddick not only created The Body Shop identity through narration, but also made it memorable by recording and repeating it. More generally, she used storytelling in a positive way to lead her organisation and to sell its products.

Roddick's stories can be located within a number of different discourses – such as a familial discourse, an environmental discourse, and an activist discourse – and thus vary in terms of the language used, the concepts, issues and moral judgements made relevant and the subject positions made available within them. If we return to Foucault's (1977) claim that different discourses generate particular positions for agency and identity, the multiple subject positions revealed through interview

narratives examined in this study illustrate how Roddick made sense of her life and the life of her company. For example, she tells stories of adventures and interactions with her mother, The Body Shop's trading communities, like-minded activists and Non-Government Organisations (NGOs), and the "rest" of the cosmetics industry. These self-narratives present an identity with multiple subject positions: that of an Italian immigrant deeply inspired by her mother, of a trader, of an activist and an unconventional businesswoman. According to McAdams (1997), these stories reveal a number of ideological conditions (such as Roddick's political and ethical beliefs and values) as well as how those values & beliefs came to be. In numerous speeches, Roddick recounts experiences that have had a fundamental influence in her life. For instance, in one of her Body Shop Lectures presented at The University of Chicago, she states:

To start at the beginning I have to journey from my own place, from landscapes and peoples and experiences that have shaped me. Yet all are kept alive in my soul through the stories attached to them. I am the sum total of all these stories and experiences. These stories shaped the geography of my mind and therefore shaped my thinking in business. (Roddick, 1994a)

Roddick also acknowledges the richly storied world she grew up in. In my interview with Anita Roddick, it became evident that stories of identity recounted about her childhood and her relations with family members, were important to the development of her thinking on issues relating to The Body Shop. Indeed, the stories we tell of ourselves in interaction with others are the essence of identification (Scott, Corman & Cheney, 1998). Childhood stories were often familial moral education, reminding everyone who they were – and were not – and why that identity was valuable. Roddick explained in a media interview:

As a child, life was storytelling...My mother made things magnificent for us: the stories of life on the farm in Southern Italy, the anecdotes of the family, and especially the irreverence to the Church. There was more majesty in those stories than in any organised religion. (Roddick, 2000d)

However, what counted for Roddick was not so much the specific message of a certain story's content, but rather *the sense of the world as a narratable place*; that is, a place that stories can make sense of. In other words, for Roddick, narratability

allowed her to affirm the events in her life as worth telling and thus worth living, implying value and attributing reality. In this way, Roddick clearly demonstrates knowledge about the power of storytelling and the *rhetorical relationship between narrative and identity* (Burke, 1969a). When presented through stories, The Body Shop's identity was seen as having come from somewhere and going somewhere. Roddick also used 'narratibility' to shape the values of the organisation and what it should represent. Indeed such morality was not fixed in the early days of The Body Shop, but constructed in retrospect and constantly revised by Roddick in subsequent stories, including retellings that put different emphasis on old stories. In fact, in what Freud (1959) describes as the persuasive power of a coherent narrative, she explicitly ties her own personal identity to the corporate identity of The Body Shop through the discursive production of the self in autobiography.

Autobiography and the construction of the retrospective narrative

Ricoeur (cited in Valdés, 1991) suggests that we acquire an identity through our attempts to put order on our past and by retelling and recounting what has been. He continues, "To repeat our story, to retell our history, is to re-collect our horizon of possibilities in a resolute and responsible manner." (p. 468). From an organisational standpoint, tales of identity - as portrayed in autobiographies - consist of myths, heroes and legends in the organisation's history, and expresses the philosophy and culture of the organisation. As a verbal symbol, the autobiography constitutes a dramatised history that expresses and legitimises the company's convictions and management. In these terms, Roddick's *Body and soul* can be considered as much a myth of sacred qualities as it is a modern narrative.

Through what Ricoeur describes as a 'narrative excess of order, coherence and unity,' we can theorise Roddick as using her autobiography to sequentially construct a collection of events in an attempt to order her past and the history of The Body Shop. In this way, she provided insight into where her ideas for The Body Shop came from, how she transformed her ideas into reality and why she and her company were so successful. In *Body and soul*, Roddick (1991) wrote:

This is not a conventional autobiography nor is this a conventional business book. But there is a lot of my life in this book because it is, after all, the story of a personal vision. A vision is something you see and others don't. Some people would say that's a pocket definition of lunacy. But it also defines entrepreneurial spirit. Yet entrepreneurs need to be driven. If I had to nominate a driving force in my life, I'd plump for passion every time. My passionate belief is that business can be fun; it can be conducted with love and a powerful force for good. (p.7)

Roddick continuously enriched The Body Shop narrative by revising, selecting, and *ordering* past details in way to create a self-narrative that was *coherent* and justified the organisation's position at that given time. For instance, Roddick (1991) defended The Body Shop's provocative and at times contentious actions and rhetoric in order to maintain its image in the marketplace. She defended her controversial decision not to advertise in an attempt to maintain The Body Shop's progressive company image:

If you don't have an advertising budget, if you don't spend billions of dollars, how do you get the energy in terms of passers-by? And always for me, there had to be a level of not controversy, but topic of talk. If The Body Shop is not a topic of talk, I'm not interested. (Roddick, interview with researcher, 2001a)

In addition to defending her story, Roddick continually set out to strengthen the credibility of The Body Shop's unconventional narrative. Indeed the consistent storyline proved to be a winning strategy for the organisation in that it enhanced its reputation as a company firmly committed to its founding principles. Others, according to Roddick, listened and learned from her accounts:

...it [marketing] learnt that you can tell a story, exalt a product, an idea. You can take all of what you need to say in editorial. You can delight some of the journalists because you had something interesting to say. We stood up for something. That's what they liked about us...we always had a lip. We used to say if we wanted to be quiet we would have opened up a library. (Roddick, interview with researcher, 2001a)

Consequently, Roddick (1991) positioned The Body Shop as a 'role model' in the marketplace:

I think we at The Body Shop have got more vocal in the last few years because we feel we are a role model and are confused as to why other companies do not seem to be getting our message. It is one that can be

clearly stated. There is a better way. You can rewrite the book on business. (p. 249)

What Roddick also did was to consciously use language to manage The Body Shop identity by linking the past to the future. Ricoeur (cited in Valdés, 1991) explains: "The past is not *passé*, for our future is guaranteed precisely by our ability to possess a *narrative identity*, to recollect the past in historical or fictive form" (p. 473).

Roddick constructed future storylines for the organisation because The Body Shop's identity hinged on her ability to keep the narrative going. For example, at the end of *Body and soul*, Roddick (1991) stated:

In The Body Shop, we intend to continue to proselytise our values in the hope that one day the cosmetics industry will wake up and realise that the potential threat of The Body Shop is not so much economic as simply the threat – if that it can be called – of good example. (p. 256)

After all, when Roddick wrote her autobiography in 1991, she was in the middle of her story, and was not sure how the story would end: "It is going to be difficult to cope with this monolithic company, to balance growth with the need to love and care, but we have learned a lot; what we are good at, what our strengths are" (Roddick, 1991, p. 250). It is evident then, that both Roddick's and The Body Shop's identity not only rested on the configuration of personal and organisational events into an 'historical unity' (McAdams, 1985), but also on anticipations of what she and her organisation would *become*. For instance, Roddick used internal newsletters to reflect on past events when guiding The Body Shop and her employees to the future:

Each year at Christmas we have the chance to reflect upon what we have done and re-invent ourselves. It has been an extraordinary year, when we've touched bottom and reached heights we never thought we could. We have to cherish and protect what could easily be taken away from us – our values, our optimism, our bravery, our refusal to be part of the status quo. We stand up for something. Let's stand up and be counted! (The Body Shop, 1994a)

In this way, the *unifying* idea, that which sought to provide 'wholeness' for The Body Shop narrative, was the consistent return to the point that The Body Shop was trying to change the language of business, to act as a force for social and environmental change.

Foundation myths: Storytelling tales of identity

The use of a storytelling approach in the creation of The Body Shop's identity involved communication becoming the framework for combining strategy, organising, marketing, and public relations. For instance, The Body Shop used planned communication, such as name, logo, design, campaigns and public relations activities (Bernstein, 1986), as well as spontaneous and situational actions performed by management. Roddick exercised control over the alignment of corporate messages to ensure legitimacy and credibility of The Body Shop narrative.

However, in an attempt to sustain The Body Shop's identity, Roddick broke with tradition organising along the lines of communication, not organisational core processes, such as operational systems and policies. That is, to use Pondy's (1983) contrasts, Roddick operated at the level of symbolic reality rather than objective reality in her attempt to manage meaning at The Body Shop. She explains: "The duty of leadership is to put forward ideas, symbols and metaphors of the way it should be done, so that the next generation can work out new and better ways of doing the job" (Roddick, 1991, p. 227). Roddick's convictions allowed her to socially construct patterned sets of meanings – the organisation's reality – on an emotional level for those in her organisation.

Barthes' (1977) theory, which centres on the mythical features of everyday narratives, provides significant insight into Roddick's symbolic approach to the construction of The Body Shop's identity. According to Conrad (1990), myths are explanations of events, policies, procedures, and so on that are beyond doubt or argument. Their power stems from their vivid details. As long as myths allow people to make sense of their surroundings, are consistent with other organisational stories, and 'hang together,' that is, the details of the myth seem to possibly have happened; they may be believed (Conrad, 1990). In this sense, stories and myths are influential in everyday conversation and communication and aid our understanding of both personal and organisational life (Barthes, 1977). For example, popular organisational stories which become enduring corporate myths play a key role in how we come to perceive the organisation's identity. As Ricoeur (1984, 1985) states: "Myths relate to events that

happened at the beginning of time which have the purpose of providing grounds for the ritual actions of men [sic] today” (p. 5).

While some argue that the origin of internal organisational stories or myths is often unclear, they do convey a theme that embodies the values of the organisation's founder (Vecchio, et al., 1996). In fact, the original values of an organisation are often found in the stories that organisations have about their birth and development. Such stories take on mythic status within the organisation through frequent retelling (Leitch & Motion, 1998). Schein (1985) explains that myths and stories develop around the founding of the company, times when the company experience difficulties or an unusual growth spurt, or times when the company is faced with challenges and become part of the organisation's culture.

Barrie Thomas, the New Zealand Body Shop Director, explains the role that organisational myths play in relation to employees at The Body Shop in New Zealand:

in staff training the storytelling is fairly important. [It] normally would revolve around Anita's experiences, how she discovered certain products. Sometimes I try to work out the *myth* from the reality. I guess it doesn't matter, they're good stories. I think the staff enjoy hearing about how The Body Shop got started over here and in Australia. (Thomas, interview with researcher, 2001, emphasis added)

Such mythical stories, otherwise known as epic stories (Gabriel, 2000), are distinguished by their heroic character, centering on heroic achievements, such as missions accomplished, contests won, challenges met, or crises resolved. Perhaps the most famous at The Body Shop is the story about “Anita going to the bank and the £4,000” (Thomas, 2001, interview with researcher). This was the story, which I quote at length here for analytical purposes, as recounted by Roddick in 1991:

I made an appointment to see the bank manager and turned up wearing a Bob Dylan T-shirt with Samantha on my hip and Justine clinging on to my jeans. It just did not occur to me that I should be anything other than my normal self. I was enthusiastic and I gabbed on about my great idea, flinging out all this information about how I had discovered these natural ingredients when I was traveling, and I'd got this great name, The Body Shop, and all I needed was £4,000 to get it started. I got quite carried away in my excitement, but I was on my own. I

discovered that you don't go to a bank manager with enthusiasm – that is the last thing he cares about. When I had finished, he leaned back in his chair and said that he wasn't going to lend me any money because we were too much in debt already. I was stunned.

I went home to Gordon absolutely crushed. 'That's it,' I said. 'It's hopeless. The bank won't give me any money.' I was ready to give up, but Gordon is much more tenacious than I am. 'We will get the money,' he said, 'But we are going to have to play them at their own game.' He told me to go out and buy a business suit, and got an accountant friend to draw up an impressive-looking 'business plan', with projected profit and loss figures and a lot of gobbledegook, all bound in a plastic folder.

A week later we went back to the same bank for an interview with the same manager. This time I left the children behind and Gordon came with me. We were both dressed in suits. Gordon handed over our little presentation, the bank manager flipped through it for a couple of minutes and then authorized a loan of £4,000, just like that...(p. 71)

Placing the business history in a human context created a personal and emotional drama. The text introduces the characters, all personifications: The protagonist is Roddick, a metonymy for the company, who is unfairly treated. The antagonist – the bank manager – is introduced and described as one who “did not want to deal with mothers and babies” (Roddick, 1991, p. 72). This antagonist is depicted as a formidable opponent and the Roddicks' are presented as playing him at his own game. The heroes and their weapon, the “business plan”, fought the financial giant and won the battle. The job seemed impossible but the Roddicks' took a gamble. There was another weapon in the Roddicks' arsenal: “If we had not had the hotel to offer as collateral, The Body Shop would have never come into being” (Roddick, 1991, p. 72). What this story does is reify the company values - those traits needed to accomplish the feats - teamwork, financial savvy, commitment, and willingness to take risks. The goal was to get a loan to start the company, by taking a chance and selling an idea. Recounted with echoes of superhuman accomplishments, the events take on mythic or epic proportions.

Roddick's autobiographical stories continually reinforced values of individual achievement in the early days of The Body Shop. Tales of survival, of how times were tough and raising money was difficult continued to strengthen the founding

organisational myth. According to Roddick (1991), "There are two ways of raising money, the hard way and the very hard way!" (p. 73). She constantly talked about the importance of frugality and how "everything was done on a shoestring" (Roddick, 1991, p. 76), again highlighting the myth of 'the self made woman.' As corporate mythologies, these narratives reinforced the organisation's values and strengthened its culture (Bowles, 1989; Ingersoll & Adams, 1986; Kanter, 1983; Martin et al., 1983; Martin & Powers, 1983; Mitroff, 1984; Mitroff & Kilmann, 1976). For example, in line with the stories and myths surrounding Roddick's initial financial constraints and the legendary visit to the bank, frugality was practiced with The Body Shop's policy of refilling, recycling and re-using. Roddick (interview with researcher, 2001a) explains: "the entire identity came by frugality. We only had so little money so we had to find things that we could afford...frugality shaped a lot of it."

While elements of Roddick's own personal identity were constantly affirmed and communicated through organisational myths, they embodied Roddick's vision for The Body Shop and functioned as carriers of the organisation's values, philosophy and culture.

Strategic identities: The development of The Body Shop's corporate self

The story of a personal vision

So how did The Body Shop grow to become a *personification* of Roddick's personal values, philosophy, and style? In March, 2001, I asked Anita Roddick what her vision for The Body Shop was in 1976. This was her response:

This was not a business. This was a young woman with two kids whose husband was not there for two years, thinking, what could she do to create a livelihood? And that's the most important word - a livelihood. It was not an enterprise it was a livelihood. And women are really good at balancing what they're interested in and what they're good at to form a livelihood. If I had called it a business, it would have ended up like a small version of a large corporation. And it was never meant to be that. It was just meant to be 'how do I get some money to pay the bills for two years?' So the vision was survival. The vision was, I guess, well the future for me was not The Body Shop or what that could do. It was no comfort when I started. It was - I have to say - survival. (Roddick, interview with researcher, 2001a)

Perhaps then, no lofty vision was articulated at the outset. But as the company became more and more successful, Roddick (1991) began to envision a higher purpose for her organisation and construct its identity accordingly. Take for instance the opening sentence which introduces The Body Shop Charter:

The Body Shop Charter exists to record what we are and what we do: All individuals are empowered to contribute in their own way, and to help turn The Body Shop vision of making the world a better place into a reality (The Body Shop, 1990a)

In 1994, Roddick extended the purpose of The Body Shop as stated in an internal newspaper titled 'This is The Body Shop.' "I viewed the process of trading in the shop to be not only a matter of survival and about providing a service to people but also as a gathering place for *conversation*" (The Body Shop, 1994b, p. 3, emphasis added).

Her vision was for The Body Shop to act as a force for social change. In order to achieve this goal, the company had to be profitable. Yet Roddick constructed The Body Shop as a company that was *not* concerned with maximising profits: "We don't want to accumulate money, we don't want to accumulate profits. We want to do something with that profit and give it away" (Roddick, interview with researcher, 2001a). What also becomes evident here is a shift in the mythical construction of the goals of the organisation: in 1976, it was about survival – creating a livelihood; several years later, it was still about survival – but by that time the concern was one of *survival in the competitive marketplace*. Consequently, in 1984 Roddick (1991) was rhetorically reframing The Body Shop reality in terms of its goals being those of contributing to the well being of employees, other nations, and ecosystems:

Since 1984, the year The Body Shop went public, as far as I am concerned, the business has existed for one reason only - to allow us to use our success to act as a force for social change, to continue the education of our staff, to assist development in the Third World, and above all, to help protect the environment. (p. 24)

Roddick first formally set down these ideals in The Body Shop's mission statement, written in 1980 (see Appendix 7). Through this mission statement, we can see how Saussure's (1966) theorising of the deeply formative role of language and

representation in the making of identity, is relevant to an official corporate narrative, which set out to highlight the organisation's dedication to the pursuit of social and environmental change:

In line with Saussure's (1966) theory that our identity is shaped by the meanings attached to particular attributes, capacities and forms of conduct, Roddick chose to fashion goals around social and environmental causes instead of building her vision around profitability. These values are operationalised through the training of Body Shop managers to promote environmental causes of concern within their specific geographic locations as well as those – such as animal rights and the rights of indigenous peoples – adopted by the firm internationally (Dechant, Altman, Dowining, & Keeney, 1994, p. 10). The Body Shop develops and publishes an annual eco-audit to report on actions taken in support of its missions and values and in 1989, Roddick documented the company's core values in The Body Shop Charter (See Appendix 8). The first statement in the Charter clearly demonstrated the organisation's commitment to integrate principles and profits: "The goals and values of The Body Shop are as important as our products and our profits" (see Appendix 8, p. 1). More generally, Roddick used the mission statement and the Charter, to articulate the central values which functioned as the basis for the organisation's communication.

But Roddick had to work hard to assure her audiences that The Body Shop narrative was credible and that her vision conveyed 'the truth.' For instance, when first introduced, The Body Shop's eco-based strategy was quite unusual and cynical outsiders who believed that there were ulterior motives, viewed The Body Shop with suspicion (Roddick, 1991). Indeed some argue, rather cynically perhaps, that "a company image is regarded as something manufactured rather than a true reflection of the company" (Bernstein, 1986, p. 14). Roddick worked to rebutt such criticism in relation to her own company by constructing a corporate image that she claimed as based on honesty and a commitment to employees and the community. Roddick (1991) explained:

While other businesses were only talked about in terms of success or failure, when people talked about The Body Shop they talk about our

philosophy, our campaigning, our social and educational policies, and the way we've managed to humanise business practices. (p. 128)

Here, then Roddick claims that her storytelling approach was effective in selling The Body Shop vision because it was understood, remembered, and repeated and it helped people feel good about the organisation. In this sense however, Roddick was not the sole author of The Body Shop narrative, since in every conversation, a positioning takes place, that is accepted, rejected, or improved upon by the partners in the conversation. Roddick's quote above suggests that her narrative had positively influenced public perception of The Body Shop in the 1980s. But besides Roddick, there were other partners in the conversation who had a direct influence on shaping The Body Shop narrative.

Narrative influences: Context and ideology surrounding The Body Shop narrative

So where did the philosophy and values come from and how did they become instilled in The Body Shop's narrative? MacIntyre (1981) and Taylor (1989) argue that the creation of identity through narrative typically involves the establishment of some sort of moral stance – an implicit perspective on the good – from which the individual can judge the quality of his or her own life and the lives of others. In fact, many narrative theorists consider the notion of values and morality – as well as conflict – a key element of narrative (Nietzsche, 1982; Foucault, 1977; Hardy, 1968; Fisher, 1984; and McAdams, 1985, 1997). In line with this idea, Roddick's stories may be viewed as suggesting an 'ideological setting' (McAdams, 1997, p. 67) or a particular backdrop of fundamental beliefs and values. The ideological setting refers to the "person's religious, political, and ethical beliefs and values as they are instantiated in the story, including the individual's accounts of how those values and beliefs came to be" (McAdams, 1997, p. 67). McAdams ideas fit well when applied to The Body Shop narrative and Anita Roddick's stories of identity. After all, Roddick was careful to promote her personal values and beliefs in her corporate narratives and in her quest for both personal and organisational distinctness.

Roddick's corporate narratives are also illustrative of studies on corporate identity which focus on core values and corporate philosophy, as they are stated and expressed by top management (Ouchi, 1981; Selame & Selame, 1988). As chief storytellers, Anita and her husband, Gordon Roddick, shared similar values. Roddick was careful to point out that they both believed that business should have a social conscience. In fact, in her autobiographical narratives, Roddick (1991) presented her marriage as a 'united front.' She explained:

Our personalities were very different, but we shared a great deal in terms of values. We both espoused vaguely left-wing radical politics. We were both members of CND and had tramped the streets on Ban the Bomb marches. We both had well-developed social consciences, instinctively supported the underdog, worked for what we believed were good causes, and raised funds for charities like War on Want and Freedom from Hunger. (p. 56)

In her construction of The Body Shop narrative, Roddick (1991) used the slogan of the sixties and seventies, saying that she and Gordon wanted to get into the "consciousness-raising business" (p. 111). Many of Roddick's stories featured her experiences as a hippie, a United Nations employee and an activist. The understandings derived from such stories allowed Roddick (1991) to assign personal, social and cultural meaning to the outcomes of her stories. As a result, she was careful to ensure that her business practices accorded with her principles. For example, in her autobiography, she stated:

We will compromise on almost anything, but not on our values, or our aesthetics, or our idealism, or our sense of curiosity. These are the qualities drawn from the very core of our being and they are what keep us human in an alienating business environment. (p. 250)

What Roddick also did was to invoke her past as influencing the development of The Body Shop's distinct organisational traits. For instance, as indicated in chapter two, in 1970s Britain, it was practically unheard of for a cosmetics company to be so heavily involved in political campaigns and human rights issues. But Roddick valued her sense of difference and imbued her activist values in the formative years of The Body Shop's identity. Here, Nietzsche's (1982) suggestion that the plot of personal identity is a creative work, a unique construction of the self, can be used to theoretically understand Roddick's creation of her distinct style. For instance, the unique

'emplotment' - to use Polkinghorne's (1988) term - of The Body Shop's self narrative started with Roddick's (1991) personal accounts of early experiences: "My teachers were exceptional. They encouraged me, indulged me, let me get away with murder and didn't try to stamp on my personality. They recognised that I was different and let me be so" (p. 36). Roddick was also passionate about language and explained The Body Shop's use of language as drawing on a number of historically important figures:

What shaped the language?...we had such a reverence for poets. A lot of the language of poetry was part of the language of the company. So we used the language of Walt Whitman, and that film, I mean that poem, *The Leaves of Grass*. We'd have some extraordinary statement or an aphorism or a great quote. We were shaped by great thoughts, great thinkers. Those are who actually gave us the most lessons in life...I remember going into a bank in India and seeing this quote by Mahatma Ghandi about service. So our language was shaped by thoughtful thought leaders. (Roddick, interview with researcher, 2001a)

Roddick's passion for language became an integral part of The Body Shop's identity. In this way, what shaped Roddick's identity also shaped identity of The Body Shop, and gave the organisation a distinct personality. In fact, the organisation's reliance on a personalised identity was also a strategy to stress its inimitable character. Cheney (1992) explains what this means in terms of corporate rhetoric. Some corporate messages "become identified with individuals and those individual speakers become the embodiment of organisations" (p. 178). Thus, for the many stakeholders of The Body Shop, Roddick *is* The Body Shop. In a media interview, Roddick openly acknowledges that "The Body Shop has become such an integral part of my identity, it's my blueprint" (Lewis, 1998, p. 344). Such personalization also makes the organisation's identity difficult to emulate. Barney and Stewart's (2000) suggestion, that an organisation's identity is likely to reflect its unique history such as the unique people, and personalities in the organisation, further illustrates this point. We return now to those partners in the conversation who influenced the construction of The Body Shop narrative. The majority of these characters were found in the social movements and environmental movement organisations of the 1960s and 1970s. Roddick integrated their voices in numerous early Body Shop texts. Many of these

partners were in fact heroes in Roddick's narrative and – on a more strategic level – served to create favourable brand associations for The Body Shop.

Brand associations and related discourses

Roddick also adopted the strategy of co-branding to promote her organisation's identity. Co-branding is a strategy that attempts to capture the synergism of combining two well-known and well-liked brands into a unique branded product (Rao & Ruekert, 1994). Roddick's strategy of co-branding enhanced the values of The Body Shop's brand in that she developed brand associations (see Aaker, 1991; Keller, 1993; Washburn & Plank, 2002; Washburn Till, & Priluck, 2000) and alliances with other like-minded companies and organisations. These interorganisational partnerships and networks served to raise consciousness, share best practice, and co-ordinate action. For instance, through membership in a consortium called 'Act Now: Business for a Change,' The Body Shop, along with Ben & Jerry's, Patagonia and Tom's of Maine, use their stores as distribution centers for literature telling people how to attract the attention of congressional representatives in a campaign to shift the allocation of resources from military to environmental and social problems (Dechant et al. 1994). In this way, she built The Body Shop's differences out of unique combinations of sameness.

Roddick strengthened the links with her co-brand partners over time by telling on-going stories about her joint campaigns - such as her work with Cultural Survival in their rainforest ventures - that consumers could easily understand and even experience. From a narrative standpoint, these links had important strategic consequences for The Body Shop in that the identities of these companies were knitted into the historical identity narrative constructions of The Body Shop. As Schapp (1976) points out, the delicate interdependence of constructed narratives suggests that a fundamental aspect of social life is the network of reciprocating identities. Consequently, from a strategic corporate identity standpoint, many of these companies supported The Body Shop's narrative of social activism in times of controversy and media accusations (these are discussed further in chapter six). Further, it can be argued that Roddick's strategy was also used to gain wider audience

acceptance of The Body Shop narrative and strengthen the image of her organisation. It also served to gain credibility for the organisation as it entered into a new field – environmental activism – with one of the world's leading environmental movement organizations, Greenpeace International.

With a world-wide support base of 2.5 million people and offices in 41 countries, Greenpeace has developed one of the most widely recognized global brands, secured the co-operation of the media, gained the ear of politicians and generated fear among business leaders (Nahan, 2003). Nahan (2003) goes on to describe the movement as “a model for the NGO movement and a job-creating machine for activists” (p. 15). An alliance with Greenpeace lent credibility to The Body Shop's identity position as ‘activist’ by enhancing The Body Shop's image in consumer evaluations as an organisation that ‘talked the talk’ and ‘walked the walk’ (see Keller, 2000; Arnstein, 1994). In relation to corporate identity theory, The Body Shop's relationship with Greenpeace served as a critical point-of-difference for The Body Shop in terms of positioning with respect to competitive product offers (Keller, 2000). The underlying value of Greenpeace as a brand name to The Body Shop was a set of associations or meanings. Through such co-branding, consumers were given the chance to link Greenpeace values to The Body Shop values and thus be more open to accept Body Shop claims of being committed to environmental causes. Roddick explains:

...polishing relationships with people who are your peers like the NGOs. They were supportive to us but we actually worked that. I tell you why. The whole rise of the trust factor with the NGOs. They are trusted beyond marketing groups, government groups. And so when you get an NGO supporting you, that's what worked. That's been the invisible work of The Body Shop. (Roddick, interview with researcher, 2001a)

Gergen's (2001) theory of self-narration in social life provides insight into understanding how The Body Shop's identity in this sense, was never individual. For Gergen, identities are suspended in an array of precariously situated relationships. In this way, Roddick continued to locate The Body Shop in conversations with characters such as Greenpeace and other environmental groups as an observably and subjectively coherent participant in jointly produced storylines. The Body Shop's association with Greenpeace led to the initiation of a joint campaign in 1986 to ‘Save

the Whales.’ The link was a natural one – after all, Body Shop products used jojoba oil, a plant-based product to be substituted for the whale oil used elsewhere in the cosmetics industry. The success of the joint venture led to further initiatives which became a consistent theme in The Body Shop’s narratives of identity, strengthening its position as a cosmetics company with a difference. In line with corporate identity theory then (see Aaker, 1991), The Body Shop’s relationship with Greenpeace acted to create a new, unique perception of the co-branded product.

Another influential character in Roddick’s thinking on the politics of business was Ralph Nader, America’s best-known consumer activist, described by Roddick (2000a) as “the most feared man in corporate America and his obsession is truly frightening” (p. 148). Again, in her quest for difference, Roddick highlighted the *similarities* between The Body Shop and Nader. Reflecting Rao and Ruekert’s (1994) claim that “personalities of a brand, just as personalities of people must not clash” (p. 89), Roddick’s strategy was to have audiences associate attributes of Nader’s personality with attributes of The Body Shop’s personality. Similarly, Rebecca Hoffberger, founder and president of the American Visionary Art Museum in Baltimore, was another strategic association. Roddick (2000a) states that “Her passion is outsider art, the art made by the misfits on society’s margins” (p. 149). What becomes very evident from such statements by Roddick is that, partly by its association with particular types of key social influences, The Body Shop was positioned as a ‘misfit’ in the traditional business community.

As well as operating within an environmental discourse, Roddick positioned The Body Shop narrative within a feminist discourse. From a corporate identity perspective, the inclusion of women’s voices in The Body Shop’s narrative created yet another distinct corporate image association for the cosmetic retailer. Not only were their stories consistent with Roddick’s self-image, they affirmed Roddick’s experiences as a woman and a worker in 1970s Britain. Roddick went further to promote the working woman. In a promotional postcard, Roddick is pictured, in black and white, as a young girl in the 1950s. She is holding a whisk and is surrounded by what seem to be baking ingredients. Placed on the table is a recipe book titled ‘The

Body Shop Cookbook' (see Appendix 9). The text in the postcard reads: 'If Anita can whip up an empire, YOU CAN TOO' (see Appendix 9). The image in the postcard certainly evokes memories of the post-war backlash against feminism in the 1950s. After all, the 1950s saw a renewed emphasis on motherhood and childcare and attacks on the working mother were typical, especially in the pages of women's magazines (Pugh, 2000). But it also acts to demonstrate to women that if Anita could overcome the barriers, they could too. Here, Roddick clearly aimed to encourage women to believe in themselves, to follow their dreams, and to overcome the challenges that still faced many women in the 1990s. In a speech delivered at the University of Chicago, Roddick (1994a) explains:

As a woman and a worker, I share two universal experiences of women around the world. The first simple truth is this: it is still women who carry the double burden. Women...carry the responsibility of caring for the family, worrying about the household, being the one who drops everything when a child is ill. The second simple truth is that...women are victims of either discrimination or disadvantage.

Alliances with characters in the women's movement served to further differentiate The Body Shop and create consumer perceptions of a company as responsive to and caring about its female customers. Roddick worked hard to portray The Body Shop as a cosmetics company that listened to women and was not exploitative. Her strategy served to create a strongly held point-of-difference for The Body Shop and present the cosmetic company with an effective tool to uniquely position its products.

Corporate identity theorists do suggest that organisations should actively seek to distinguish themselves from other comparable organisations (Messick & Mackie, 1989). In terms of The Body Shop identity, Roddick's strategy developed another distinguishing characteristic which set the organisation apart from competitors in the cosmetics industry. For Roddick:

It was the road to revolution, self-activism, self-knowledge, self-worth. And we gave a lot of indicators that show when you don't have high self-esteem this is what happens. And we really pointed a finger at the beauty and fashion industry who are to me, really accountable and challenged the educational system that they weren't doing enough education, enough around how the media is shaping women's lack of self-worth. (Roddick, interview with researcher, 2001a)

But the linkage of The Body Shop's narrative with a feminist discourse not only served to position the organization, it reaffirmed Roddick's personal ambition to revolutionize the beauty industry by selling health rather than glamour. A role model who shaped Roddick's early thinking on the position of women in society was her mother. But it was Gloria Steinem, a passionate advocate of women's rights and Roddick's strongest exemplar, who authenticated Roddick's stories. She spoke respectfully of Steinem's work:

A feminist is usually defined as anyone, male or female, who believes in full social, economic and political equality between the sexes. Gloria adds that feminism is about giving each other the power to make decisions. That formula for freedom can be applied to everything from the global politics of the business world to the personal politics of human intimacy. It isn't just about women. Gloria has written and spoken with great insight about the need to raise boys to be nurturing, to let them know that the so-called 'feminine' traits such as compassion, vulnerability and empathy are not things to be suppressed. These are core self-esteem issues, and that makes them very close to the heart of The Body Shop. (Roddick, 2000a, p. 151)

Roddick used The Body Shop to provide a medium for women's voices to be included in the beauty industry – a very radical move for a cosmetics company in 1970s Britain. However, some saw a contradiction in Roddick establishing a cosmetics company while being so strongly opposed to the beauty industry itself (Brabazon, 2001). Roddick, on the other hand, saw such opposition as an opportunity:

I don't find it a dilemma. I find it exactly appropriate. I've enjoyed the position because the position makes me feel right that I take a stand. I do a distinction between the cosmetic industry and the beauty business. The beauty business – how you make beauty products and some bits of the cosmetics industry, like the perfume industry – is quite interesting. But if the beauty business is shaped around alienating women from their bodies, I have every right to stand up and tell them they're wrong because it's exactly the same old mantra about maximizing profits, trying to sell a product. I love to sell a product but I want to do it with a lot more integrity, more fun and reverence. So, no, I've never seen it as a dilemma. In fact, I think it is a dilemma when I don't challenge it. (Roddick, interview with researcher, 2001a)

Roddick's strategy was to integrate the stories of not only popular women but women who were not represented in society, particularly in the underdeveloped world. She wanted to change the language of business and make it legitimate to talk about love

and care in the workplace. For instance, in 1994, Roddick dedicated an internal newsletter to International Women's Day (The Body Shop, 1994c). On the front page was a feature article of the International Women's Day march to be held on 8 March, 1994. Staff at The Body Shop were informed about the origins of the march and invited to join it. Also on the front page was a story on Roddick launching The Body Shop's Canada campaign against violence against women on International Women's Day. The title of the campaign read: 'In the name of love – stop.' (The Body Shop, 1994c). These highly symbolic and emotionally-charged stories were for Roddick, a means of persuading women and society in general, to *identify with* The Body Shop in its pursuit of difference and of social change.

Roddick's controversial narrative had a profound effect on The Body Shop's image. Indeed many saw the company as a powerful role model for women and the cosmetic industry in general (Brabazon, 2001). While The Body Shop's identity was not an overtly feminist one, it was certainly radical in that it rejected the popular option for many businesses to exploit sexual difference. This identity was portrayed in numerous Body Shop material. For instance, it produced another promotional postcard which featured a well-dressed young woman in the 1960s writing a shopping list. The image, which is black and white, once again evokes a feeling of nostalgia, an era when women did what they were supposed to – run the home and look after the family (see Appendix 10). The image also reflects the controversial nature of The Body Shop narrative. For instance, the text in the postcard reads: 'Dinah makes her list: milk, carrots, bread, sugar, *end misogyny*, tea, and eggs' (see Appendix 10, emphasis added). Certainly, progress was made 35 years after the Women's Movement started; however, the consistent message to women all over the world seemed to be "I know my place and it is here giving female support to a male breadwinner in the kitchen, submissive and unthreatening" (Roddick, 2000a, p. 115). While the postcard reflects and supports women thinking subversive thoughts, it lightens the tone with an element of humour. In this way, Roddick humanised The Body Shop and set out to educate its customers. By doing so, The Body Shop developed a strong, unique bond with its female customers that transcended normal marketplace conditions. Indeed

such actions won The Body Shop credibility and an exclusive position in Britain's beauty industry.

The Body Shop's social practices not only reflected Roddick's personal convictions, but also the changing views on business and the economy, particularly amongst women. Other characters in The Body Shop's plot to change global economics and incorporate 'feminine principles' in the traditional business narrative comprised a collection of women who, like Roddick, challenged traditional western capitalist business practices. Some of these women included: Gloria Steinem, a passionate advocate of women's rights, Naomi Wolf (1990), author of *The beauty myth*, who "was slammed by the press because she was attractive and yet was challenging the cosmetics industry" (Roddick, 2000a, p. 114); Alice Tepper Marlin, one of the authors of *Shopping for a better world* (Hollister et al. 1988), and the first person to research, in depth, the social and environmental impact of corporations; Amy Domini (1988), lawyer and author of *Challenges of wealth*, the bible of socially responsible investing; Vandana Shiva (1989; 1993; 1994), a physicist, philosopher and feminist as well as an active voice in the Chipko movement which began with women responding to forest destruction by physically protecting trees and which is now India's largest grassroots environmental organisation (Shiva, 1989); and Hazel Henderson (1981; 1996), whose books about the way things should be have crystallized the issues for ethical business people of both genders. Roddick promoted the values she identified with and explained their role in the construction of The Body Shop narrative:

I lived a life with feminists. I didn't know how to articulate it... People were articulating what I knew was right. They had a voice for it. They had a treatise, a study, they had the language, the anecdotes and I look back now and it always charmed me. (Roddick, interview with researcher, 2001a)

However, while Roddick (1991) drew on feminist discourses in her narrative construction of The Body Shop, she positioned the company as based on 'feminine principles.' She stated: "I think all business practices would improve immeasurably if they were guided by 'feminine' principles – qualities like love, and care and intuition." (p. 9). This approach drew on Shiva's (1989) work on the feminine principle. For Shiva (1989), the feminine principle is "not exclusively embodied in

women, but is the principle activity and creativity in nature, women and men" (p. 52). In other words, the feminine principle is based on a sense of community, of holism, and of inclusiveness. It is a recovery in nature, woman and man of creative forms of being and perceiving (Shiva, 1989). Not only did Shiva (1989) ask for nature's liberation and for women's liberation, she believed that men also needed to be liberated as in their domination of nature and women, they "have sacrificed their own human-ness" (p. 53).

However, Roddick was careful not to espouse a philosophy of The Body Shop which was separatist or 'anti-man.' Indeed, she claimed that the feminine principle was not exclusively embodied in women:

I'm a great believer in partnership. I believe the most attractive men display female characteristics. The least attractive women don't display female characteristics. So I don't see it as gender specific. The gentleness, the language, the thoughtfulness. It's all to do with language...I'm very much more comfortable with the language of compassion or partnership. (Roddick, interview with researcher, 2001a)

Roddick believed that feminine qualities were vital in business and frequently pointed out that other businesses would benefit from adopting them. She differentiated her company by characterising the cosmetics industry as being exploitative and run predominantly by profit-driven men who played on women's fears of ageing and other insecurities about their self-image. According to Roddick (1991), The Body Shop stood in direct contrast to conventional cosmetics stores:

What is wonderful about the company is that 90% of the people running the shops are female, have no formal business training, and yet are brilliant retailers and brilliant business people....This is a business run by women. Policy decisions are made by women, all the words are written by women, product development is controlled by women. So our customer, our female customer, believes that we have a covert understanding of women. It gives us an extraordinary edge. It's The Body Shop's secret ingredient. (p. 17)

This belief in the role and competence of women provided a significant opportunity for empowerment for Body Shop employees. Roddick engaged in a hegemonic struggle to reject the dominant ideological practices of traditional businessmen, who

she believed dominated the corporate world. Furthermore, Roddick's discourse openly positioned the rest of the business community as belonging to the ideological hegemony that The Body Shop was so strongly opposed to. Roddick (1991) explained:

The reason is that corporations are largely created by men, for men, often influenced by military or public school models. Hierarchical structures built on authority remain unchanged, and many men find it difficult to accept the rise of women to top management positions - perhaps because they have never learned to deal with women other than as secretaries, wives, girlfriends, mothers or adjuncts to themselves. (p. 216)

In line with Fairclough's (1992) claim that political resistance and change are not only possible but continuously occurring, Roddick set out to develop a 'discourse of resistance' (Deetz, 1995) among employees as well as customers. By this I mean she encouraged an internal discourse of resistance to ensure greater participation. Deetz's (1995) claim that "in the corporation as well as in society in general, women have been critical to the beginning point of such a discourse" (p. 173), provides the theoretical underpinning for Roddick's strategy. She plotted to transform so-called 'feminine values' into central organising values which functioned as the basis for The Body Shop's discursive practices and publicly spread her belief that women understood the need for an ethical philosophy to guide international business practice. In doing so, Roddick (2000a) pushed for the need to value women:

We must urge governments and businesses to help women in need by supporting small-scale grassroots initiatives. We have to put them first, as leaders and advisors and active participants. We have to listen to their experience. Globalisation is a mug's game being played in a man's world. I can imagine a day will come when compassion counts as much as cashflow. After all, the challenges that confront the business world already demand a holistic perspective – and women will certainly be best equipped to face that kind of future. (p. 118).

For Roddick, it was women who kept communities together. The endorsement of these values set The Body Shop apart from traditional mainstream business. But what Roddick was actually promoting through her discursive practices, was the celebration of woman and the celebration of the values that women have championed all their lives. For years, The Body Shop's alternative discourses promoted the values for

global health and wholeness. But the global marketplace was always the biggest challenge. *Roddick responded by positioning The Body Shop as an organisation which set out to challenge not only the market story, but also the dominant values that underpinned the metanarrative.* By doing so, she not only reaffirmed The Body Shop's core values, and drew on the organisation's past success stories, she repositioned those values as ones which constituted a new metanarrative, one which feminised the language of business

The paradoxical nature of identity: Managing a sense of 'difference' at The Body Shop

Among the processes of developing one's sense of self and of how the world is to be interpreted from the perspective of who we take ourselves to be is through learning the categories which include some people and exclude others (Davies & Harré, 2001). The inclusion of both environmental and feminist discourses in The Body Shop narrative allowed Roddick to extend the organisation's vocabulary to encompass revised bottom lines. For instance, she claimed that it was not enough to make a financial profit, that business must make a 'spiritual profit'. In the process she categorises competitors with mainstream business beliefs as being "proud to be seen as hard and uncaring and detached from human values" (Roddick, 1991, p. 24). Therefore, in line with Davies and Harré's (2001) theory of positioning, Roddick participated in the various practices through which such subject positions were elaborated— for example, environmental campaigns. As described above, Roddick's strategy was to align The Body Shop with like-minded companies and organisations and distance herself from conventional business. Such identity positioning – once again paradoxical in terms of creating differences out of sameness - was evident in her storylines of identity.

For instance, rejecting the lack of emphasis on humanity in traditional business narratives as she constructs them, Roddick (1991) recounted stories advocating "optimism, humanism, enthusiasm, intuition, curiosity, love, humour, magic, fun, and that secret ingredient - euphoria" (p. 21). The extension of Roddick's value commitments in the workplace such as staff meetings in the family home, warm

exchanges with employees, and an emphasis on love and care, all sought to create the desired identity of a company committed to humanising the workplace. Stories about the integration of work family and children were also included in internal newsletters and added credibility to The Body Shop's narrative: "When children at the Family Centre were invited to trial the new Strawberry Bubbles they jumped at the chance and immediately set to task with water trays and plastic apron" (The Body Shop, 1994c).

Roddick (1991) saw "business as a Renaissance concept, where the human spirit comes into play" (p. 22). She distinguished herself and her company from the negative elements of the traditional business narrative characterising it as alienating humanity in favour of emphasising 'financial success', 'profitability', and 'self-interest'. She actively engaged in discursive struggles which challenged existing practices stating in her autobiography: "My ambition is for our stores to provide the conduit for different vocabulary which will continue to irritate, agitate and get things moving (Roddick, 1991, p. 129).

The process of perceiving business in terms of "them" and "us" is a "fairly prevalent intergroup phenomenon that is consistent with uniqueness theorisation" (Snyder & Fromkin, 1980. p. 70). The Body Shop narrative was used as a means to maintain an identity different from that of the cosmetics industry and conventional business in general. Roddick (1991) positioned herself as an outsider in the world of business, stating that "the vocabulary of business was part of a language I did not speak" (p. 19). She went on to explain her standpoint:

In the eighties, we didn't know the language of business. We used our own language. It's very interesting to have an antenna about the new language and the 'isms' and 'asations' that are coming through in business or the management world. (Roddick, interview with researcher, 2001a)

Promoting an image of The Body Shop as a rebellious outsider that was a threat for the establishment, Roddick made clear distinctions between 'us' and 'them', 'The Body Shop world' and the 'others'. In an attempt to sustain The Body Shop against the outside world, Roddick (1991) emphasised the value of difference and of sharing a

distinguishing identity: "You have to work to preserve a sense of being different, otherwise the time will come when everyone who works for us will say that The Body Shop is just like every other big company" (p. 250).

Roddick's (1991) tale attempts to construct the impression of a company with a unique self, characterised by, among other things, a mentality that the company was a 'family', was 'breaking all the rules', was 'unconventional', and was 'determined to do things differently' (p. 48). But, while the myth of the self involves the notion of being different (Grant et al., 1998), The Body Shop's stories of origin shared common cultural elements with other substantially different organisations. In other words, common or recurrent themes can be found in the mythologies of different organisations. For instance, epic stories, such as those repeated at The Body Shop, come at the micro-level epitomized in the 'Bill and Dave' anecdotes that celebrate the founding fathers of Hewlett-Packard (Peters & Waterman, 1982) as well as the macro-level of the type 'Iacocca saves Chrysler' (Gabriel, 2000). All share the common themes of the hero's perseverance in the face of adversity and courage and dedication to the task. The reappearance of founding organisational myths, legends, and metaphors is what Martin et al. (1983) refer to as the 'uniqueness paradox': What is supposed to make the organisation unique is thus far from unique.

However, Roddick (1991) does admit some of her ideas were not entirely original:

With managers in place running the shops, I wanted to know more about the industry. I thought I could learn from the big boys in the business, so I bought all the trade magazines and started going to conferences and presentations given by people like Revlon and Estée Lauder, always sitting in the back in the hope that I would not be noticed. (p.95)

In fact, Roddick herself is a paradox, someone that Kochan (1997) describes as: "A marketer supreme with an oddly anti-consumerist bent and an antiestablishment whirlwind who has become part of the business establishment she claims to loathe" (p. 46). The trade-off of course, is that her success in business has allowed her to pursue her goals on a global scale. Indeed, such contradictions and discursive

struggles highlight the paradoxical nature of identity. But there were some elements unique to The Body Shop in 1976, namely its style and image.

The evolution of The Body Shop style and image

Fashioning identities through affordable aesthetics

According to Heath (1994), “Stories that account for the origin of something such as a company department, major idea, product or service are totemic. They are devoted to the theme of origination” (p. 72). A re-occurring theme in Roddick’s (1991) stories about the early days of The Body Shop reinforced the idea that, “necessity accorded with philosophy” (p. 54). The consistency of this theme in The Body Shop narrative strengthened Roddick’s positioning of her company as one that was distinctively unique, practical and not-profit-oriented. The origins of The Body Shop name, logo and corporate colours provide some clues about the social practices that underpinned the company’s corporate identity strategy.

Tying in with the stories of survival, Roddick reinforced the theme that pragmatics, such as affordability and economics, determined the aesthetics that initially created The Body Shop identity and image. In developing and maintaining a distinct style for her company, Roddick managed her customers’ perceptions of The Body Shop through the ‘aestheticisation’ of her shops. Aesthetics has been defined as “a concept inherited from idealist philosophy, referring to principles of taste, especially good taste, and hence of beauty” (O’Sullivan, Hartley, Saunders, Montgomery, & Fiske, 1994, p. 6). Goffman’s (1959) dramatic approach provides further insight into Roddick’s tactics, which included using perfumes, potpourri and exotic oils, to beautify her shops.

To better understand Roddick’s approach, we return to Goffman’s (1959) suggestion that one presents a certain image of oneself in an attempt to provide the narrative with a *distinctive feel*. Certainly Roddick’s choice of corporate imagery for The Body Shop suggests a self-conscious attempt to convey a unique corporate style. Roddick (1991) talked about “marketing aesthetics and the importance of theatre in creating atmosphere” (p. 35). Goffman’s (1959) integration of theatre and everyday life can

also be applied to one of Roddick's self-identified earlier mistakes in retailing - making her "shops so beautiful that it overwhelms the product" (Roddick, 1991, p. 41).

However, in the early days, Roddick (1991) claimed that "necessity accorded with philosophy" (p. 74) and tells the story of how the company logo was established. A designer who was paid £25 invented The Body Shop logo. Although it is now a prominent symbol of The Body Shop, it was cheap and economical at the time. The Body Shop's fixed use of its corporate name, logo and colours created a monolithic and distinctive identity structure and character for the organisation (Olins, 1989). From an identity standpoint, the style and design of The Body Shop, comprising the green colour, was widely recognised around the world. It was part of its image and identity and is what formed the company's unique look among its competitors in the cosmetics industry. Roddick (1991) explained:

The Body Shop today is distinctive because you can see the colour and recognise the style regardless of where it happens to be. We have over six hundred shops around the world and there is no dilution of the image in any of them. The look has developed quite a lot since the early hippie 'crunchy granola' feel: nevertheless we have managed to maintain a very strong visual corporate identity, and I believe it is a vital element of our success. It is a myth to think that the bigger a company grows, the harder it becomes to cling to its original style. (p. 101)

Consistent with Steidl and Emery's (1997) suggestion that corporate design "is the way in which the company uses design to express its identity" (p. 74). Roddick's (1991) insistence on maintaining a very strong visual corporate identity is consistent with the position of many corporate identity theorists who argue that the clear and precise communication of a company's identity is essential to a company's success in a competitive environment (Laundy, 1993; Black, 1993; Gorman, 1994; van Riel, 1995; Hornick, 1995; & Bayley, 1995). In fact, Roddick's actions resembled what Christensen and Cheney (2000) now call corporate vanity. Indeed they are correct in their assertion that corporate vanity is not a new phenomenon – The Body Shop, along with many other organisations, have a "long history for investing in their visual style" (Olins, 1989, cited in Christensen & Cheney, 2000, p. 254).

Selame and Selame (1988) claim that a corporate identity can be “accidental, unplanned, and therefore chaotic; or it can be purposeful, planned and structured – the way a corporation wants to be seen by its various constituents: customers, shareholders, analysts, bankers, suppliers, the press and employees” (p. 14). According to Roddick, many of The Body Shop's distinguishing characteristics, particularly its corporate design, formed accidentally and were not at all planned. For example, the green colour would become a symbol of the company's environmental concerns. The fact that such accounts of identity creation were presented in retrospect illustrates McAdam's (1997) argument that “the self is viewed as a reflexive project that the individual ‘works on’” (p. 61). Further, from a narrative standpoint, we can use Nietzsche's (1959) model which states that one – in this case, Roddick – can alter the narrative that is used to connect the past to the present, *even the accidents in our past*. In this way, The Body Shop identity became a developmental rhetoric or product that Roddick fashioned and sculpted into a coherent identity narrative.

Another story recounted by Roddick in her autobiography and which later transformed into a founding organisational myth, concerned the origins of the product containers. “What started as economic necessity became a point of principle” (Roddick, 1991, p. 76). She also described how there was no planning behind the decision to either paint her shops green or introduce the refill service offered to customers:

The cheapest containers I could find were the plastic bottles used by hospitals to collect urine samples, but I could not afford to buy enough. I thought I would get round the problem by offering to refill empty containers or to fill customers' own bottles. In this way we started recycling and reusing materials long before it became ecologically fashionable, but again it was born out of economic necessity rather than a concern for the environment. (Roddick, 1991, p. 76)

It would seem that this service also appealed to a new generation of environmentally conscious consumers. To make her original selection look larger aesthetically, she offered each product in five sizes – creating a choice much appreciated by her customers as well as filling up the shelves. Necessity continued to shape the organisation's philosophy. For instance, detailed labelling information had originally

been necessary because of the products' unfamiliar ingredients, but later seemed totally in tune with a consumer awareness movement. Freud's (1959) contribution to retrospective character of all narrative can be applied to The Body Shop case. For instance, Freud (1959) argued that events that were meaningless and inconsequential when they happened may later become all important. This is especially relevant to the development of The Body Shop's style and image - such as the origins of the organisation's policies on reusing and recycling - in that Roddick used the persuasive power of a coherent narrative to reconstruct unrelated events and in the process, make sense out of previously random happenings in the early life of her organisation.

That is how Roddick (1991) suggests the famous Body Shop style developed-out of a "Second World War mentality (shortages, utility goods, rationing) imposed by sheer necessity and the fact that I had no money" (p. 74). While certain characteristics of The Body Shop style may have come about from sheer practical reasons, Roddick also employed more deliberate tactics that were simply underpinned by a desire to be noticed and to attract potential customers:

Believe me, *I was prepared to try anything in those early days to get customers into my shop*. I wanted to get passers-by to stop, so I put old-fashioned sandwich boards outside and got local art students to make posters promoting one or another of the products. I drenched the front of the shop in the most exotic perfume oils so that it always smelled wonderful as you approached; inside I hung huge branches of dried flowers from the ceiling, and there was fragrant pot-pourri everywhere. (Roddick, 1991, p. 79, emphasis added)

Nonetheless, she repeated the claim that *necessity* guided her actions, not so much the desire to position her company in the marketplace. New Zealand Body Shop Director, Michael Ogilvie-Lee confirmed Roddick's story:

When the company first started, when it was trying to make money, it was trying to get financially successful, I think it made a lot of intelligent decisions in the form of the bottles it chose and its policy towards advertising that were business *necessities* and made common sense and were environmental...I think a lot of the early decisions were like that, they were common sense decisions. Even in the brand as you know if you've read the stuff, the green wasn't because it was environmental; it was because it was cheap. (Ogilvie-Lee, interview with researcher, 2001, emphasis added)

Such myths strengthened the image of a company as one that stumbled upon such innovative and popular ideas by chance. However, Roddick's reporting of these myths may be seen as an attempt to influence consumers' perceptions of The Body Shop through marketing strategies, albeit unusual ones, to promote the company's products. After all, Roddick was fighting hard to survive amongst the competition and needed selling points which would differentiate her company. While some of the original features of The Body Shop, such as the refill service, may have formed accidentally, Roddick saw their potential and continued to nurture these features strategically throughout her stores. For instance, a Body Shop postcard was specifically designed to promote the idea of refilling (see Appendix 11). The image in the postcard is again retrospective and 'unusual' in nature. It features a baby in a bowl of water with text that reads: 'I drink some. I make some. I drink some. I make some' (see Appendix 11). Once again the use of humour is used to promote an important idea - that we can re-use what we produce – in this case, water. The image also reinforces the 'natural' theme through the use of a baby and water. The promotion of these unique characteristics saw The Body Shop lead the way in creating natural products in the cosmetics industry (Hendy, 1996). Indeed, The Body Shop is now commonly "known for its all-natural health and beauty products" (Wehnes, 1996, p. 20). Others write about The Body Shop as promoting:

energy, imagination and eco-friendly attitudes in the products and their packaging. The Body Shop is so serious about the environment's need that it offers a return on empty bottles...The Body Shop's packing material is a vegetable-based starch, puffed into shape with no chemical binders. This material is reusable and also biodegradable, dissolving in water in five minutes. Another option: composting. (Hendy, 1996, p. 28)

As is evident then, many writers have bought into, and endorsed Roddick's narrative to the extent that the company is identified as one of the most environmentally aware companies in the world.

'Green' storylines: A Body Shop trademark

As we have seen, Roddick used storytelling with a green theme to align The Body Shop's corporate identity with an environmental stance. In fact, environmental selling was incorporated into the whole culture of The Body Shop and the company's

campaigns against animal and human rights abuses have won the dedication and support of employees. This was partly achieved by way of Body Shop employees being rewarded for their environmental efforts at work through nominations from fellow staff members. Additionally, The Body Shop monthly newsletter, *LA News*, featured a story on, and photograph of, the 'greenie' of the month. That staff bought into these environmental values was clearly illustrated in the results of a staff questionnaire designed by the Institute for Employment Studies in 1994. This found that:

Ninety-three per cent of respondents expressed agreement or strong agreement with its stance against animal testing and its commitment to environmental responsibility. A high proportion – 92 per cent – also agreed or strongly agreed that 'The Body Shop campaigns effectively on human rights, environmental protection and animal welfare.' (Arkin, 1996, p. 26)

Environmental surveys were conducted regularly in the organisation. Internal newsletters were used to remind staff of up-coming surveys which were attached to pay packets for completion (The Body Shop, 1994d). Internal newsletters were also used to talk about general environmental issues such as the organisation's environmental health and safety policy, updates from The Body Shop Conservation Club, reminders about the availability of The Body Shop's recycling centres for staff and their families, and requests for volunteers for numerous environmental and human rights groups. In this way, the ethical enterprise set out to lead the way for businesses to use their voice for social and environmental change.

It is of note that ethical considerations have played a substantial role in the rising growth of corporate identity (Cheney, Christensen, Zorn & Ganesh, 2004). This was particularly true for The Body Shop in the 1980s. Corporate social responsibility came to define those attitudes and practices which distinguished The Body Shop from organisations which neglected to take heed of the wider consequences of their activities and were motivated by considerations of profit alone. However, any company wishing to follow The Body Shop's policies and strategies was accused of being concerned only with short-term profits. For example, Roddick (1991) declared:

In response, many trading companies are now fighting to clamber aboard the green bandwagon and are loudly proclaiming their brand-

new, shining green products and policies. I would be happier if I thought they were motivated by real concern for the environment rather than, as I suspect, a desire to increase sales. (p. 220)

It would seem then, that for Roddick, the concern was one of preserving corporate social responsibility as a point of distinction for The Body Shop operation, rather than necessarily trying to lead the way, or set examples for business in general.

The 1960s environmental and consumer awareness movement, as well as the 1960s era mantra to “think globally and act locally” (Mirvis, 1994, p. 92), also assisted The Body Shop’s cause in effecting ethical change in business practices. The Body Shop claimed that the energy consumed and the environmental impact caused by a product’s manufacture, distribution, use and disposal, were factors that they were deeply concerned about and intent on changing. Consequently, and as a result of their explicit corporate identity programme, The Body Shop was identified by its various publics as a company that was green and caring. For example, when talking to Body Shop suppliers, Wycherley (1999) reports that The Body Shop:

...was generally seen as a company with a clear and consistent commitment to the environmental cause and good relationships with its suppliers, both of which are critical facilitators of the process of greening their supply chain. (p. 120)

Endorsing green values in the 1970s was rare but well received by a “following of customers who *identified with* the organisation’s commitment to environmental causes and with its belief that companies can be agents of social change” (Lavere & Kleiner, 1997). Roddick’s passionate commitment to the environment and abhorrence of the idea of animal testing gave her cosmetics chain a *raison d’être* way beyond the provision of beauty treatments. Green consumers were not just purchasing efficacious shampoos, nor were they simply acquiring inspirational fashion and image values through colourful and stylish cosmetics. They were voting with their wallets for an ethical approach to business, “satisfying their conscience and sending a signal to both the corporate world and the politicians” (Pruzan, 2001, p. 53). Indeed increases in green consumerism stimulated innovations at The Body Shop (Mirvis, 1994). But some argued - much like Roddick criticized competing businesses which supposedly adopted the same values as The Body Shop - that this ‘trend’ was “grubbily

materialistic and at worst a nonsense which will do more to deflect us from sustainable living than encourage us to achieve it" (Irvine, 1991, p. 23). In defense, Roddick (1991) asserted:

The Body Shop is, and has always been, an unashamedly green company, but for us it was never in any sense a bandwagon; it was a simple expression of our core values and beliefs, values that are *constantly policed* by our customers and staff more diligently than any other organisation I know. (p. 221, emphasis added)

This quote illustrates how Roddick set out to construct staff and customers as key characters in The Body Shop story. Indeed, while support from the ethical consumer ensured the authenticity of Roddick's story, that authenticity also depended on the support of organisational employees. As Mirvis argues:

Innovations in these firms [The Body Shop and Ben & Jerry's] led to more imitators, auditing, publicity and hype that has further raised environmental consciousness among consumers. Employees, too, are in this same sort of loop. They expect better environmental performance from their companies and, according to Roddick and survey data in Ben & Jerry's, internalize these expectations and expect more from themselves in this regard. (Mirvis, 1994, p. 93)

Growth in environmental consciousness also meant that making and announcing large profits could leave a company open to attack from numerous stakeholders. But a strong stated commitment to the environment could make a company's profit seem much cleaner, much more deserved, because they came as a result of green objectives, not as an end in themselves (O'Toole, 1991; Dechant, et al. 1994; Boulton, 1997). Roddick's communicative strategies were effective, as her product attributes were obvious and meaningful to a large number of consumers disillusioned with the capitalist reign of the eighties. Evidence for this is provided by Burlingham (1990) who notes that:

Customers feel that they are buying from a company whose values and business practices they know. The effect is to create a loyalty that goes beyond branding. Customers actually promote the company and its products to their friends, and this word of mouth fuels growth. (p. 38)

But critics (see Entine, 1994a) continued to question the *authenticity* of Roddick's story, suggesting that Roddick highlighted the environmental benefits of her products with the sole purpose of tapping the green market. Roddick (1991) continually

defended her actions: “*I certainly never set out to attract green consumers. They did not exist, at least not by that name*” (p. 249, emphasis added). Roddick told how she set out to sell the kind of products she wanted to buy as a consumer. She found a niche in the market for her products and she marketed those products brilliantly. She also tapped into social and political trends and linked them strategically to the corporate identity of The Body Shop.

The Body Shop's success and creation of its green corporate image set the standard among conventional business to adopt an environmentally-responsible orientation throughout its policies, strategies and operations. For instance, it banned smoking in all its offices and shops and provided bicycles at low prices to employees (Roddick, 1991). Roddick's desire to develop products with less harmful impacts on the natural environment provided valuable lessons to the rest of the business community. At the time, conventional business had not recognised the opportunities and benefits arising from the environmental agenda. As a result, The Body Shop became the leader in the field of environmentally-friendly products and strengthened its financial, strategic and competitive position. For instance, in the 1980s, sales and profits continued to grow “on average of 50% a year. For the 12 months preceding February 1990, pre-tax profits were 14.5 million on sales of 84.5 million, despite the onset of a recession in retailing” (Burlingham, 1990, p, 37). The answer, according to Roddick, lay in natural ingredients.

The ‘natural’ myth

As already noted, The Body Shop claimed that its cosmetics were “natural” and that their products were made from plants. Company brochures included statements such as: ‘there's a fruit product to try,’ ‘many of our colours and fragrances – like carrot oil, raspberry juice, and yucca bark – are natural’ and ‘we conduct on-going research into traditional uses of plants, herbs, fruits, flowers, seeds and nuts’ (The Body Shop, 1991; see Appendix 12). In fact, the theme ‘natural’ was repeated consistently and forcefully in The Body Shop narrative. In one brochure titled ‘What is natural?’ the theme ‘natural’ is mentioned 22 times. The theme is manifested in the idea that

“‘natural’ products are at the heart of every product The Body Shop makes’ (The Body Shop, 1991).

So where did the idea of using natural ingredients come from? When The Body Shop first opened, Roddick was struggling to make ends meet and pay suppliers. Because Roddick had little, if any money, to spend on research and development, natural ingredients were a cheaper option. It was also around this time that public anxiety over animal rights abuses and environmental degradation began to intensify (McDonagh & Prothero, 1997). Whatever the reason, Roddick saw a marketing opportunity. Roddick (1991) recalled: “At that time no one was talking much about the advantages or potential of natural products” (p. 69). However, in the early 1990s, an increasing number of companies recognised the opportunities of marketing green products and a green image. According to The Body Shop, “Natural” had become the marketing buzzword of the eco-conscious 90s’ (The Body Shop, 1991).

However, when talking about ‘copycat businesses’ in numerous Body Shop narratives, Roddick came across as almost as if she was trying to convince the reader that The Body Shop was not threatened by their arrival in the marketplace. In fact, in The Body Shop brochure, ‘What is natural?’ Roddick constructed The Body Shop as being *ahead* of its competitors. Take for instance a paragraph in a section titled: ‘Where we’ve gone’:

We’ve taken the concept of ‘natural’ a step further. In addition to creating products based on traditional recipes and natural ingredients, we’ve established Trade Not Aid programmes in impoverished or endangered areas like India, Nepal, and the Amazon rainforest. These programmes provide secure incomes for local inhabitants in return for both raw ingredients and finished items like our wooden massage rollers and handmade goods. (The Body Shop, 1991)

But this raises other important issues. For instance, Roddick claimed to have discovered all these ‘wonderful natural ingredients’ but they had all come from indigenous tribes of the Third World – her ‘trading partners’ as she called them. In these terms, Roddick can be accused of exploiting the term ‘natural,’ and justifying the exploitation of indigenous people’s by using the term ‘Trade-not-Aid’ (see Appendix 13). After all, Roddick claims that it is ‘hard to ignore the collected

traditions and wisdom of hundreds of years of safe human use' (The Body Shop, 1991). In fact, Roddick justifies The Body Shop's actions of acquiring that knowledge by convincing customers that it was for their benefit. She explains: 'We want to provide our customers with that knowledge and pleasure' (The Body Shop, 1991). The association also allowed Roddick to tell stories and her stories sold products. Entine (1995a) explains: "Its product manual claims its hair gel, a bestseller, is based on ancient custom: Girls in Hamar in South Ethiopia traditionally styled their hair with ochre, butter and acacia gum" (p. 57).

Roddick attempted to articulate 'trade' and 'natural' in an effort to gain acceptance of the new Body Shop discourse. The acceptance of a new discourse is also dependent upon social and cultural conditions (Hall, 1986). While "impoverished" can be considered to be an element of an economic discourse, the term "endangered" cannot (The Body Shop, 1991). Roddick attempted to articulate 'impoverished' and 'endangered' with The Body Shop as a western business operation, suggesting that The Body Shop can prevent impoverishment and endangerment. However, it was clear that she sold products made from natural ingredients to make money. After all, she states: 'All parties concerned receive a direct benefit from these initiatives, which *must be commercially viable*' (Quote from Appendix 13, emphasis added). But she eluded to talk about the effect of such intrusion and capitalist ventures on these communities. For those who could not see the logic in such a connection, the new discourse was not readily accepted. For example, Terence Turner, an anthropologist at the University of Chicago states that:

the firm's work with the Kayapo is a public relations ploy above all which aids The Body Shop in promoting its image while offering the Kayapo little trade in return. The Body Shop has used images of the Kayapo extensively in its stores and its information broadsheets. The Kayapo have not been compensated for these images, which have furthered The Body Shop's corporate image as an environmentally and culturally sensitive company. (cited in Bavaria, Becker & Billenness, 1994, p. 6)

Such statements directly contradict The Body Shop narrative which asserts that its relationships with these communities are 'built on mutual benefit and respect' (Quote from Appendix 13). Consequently, as a multinational company, The Body Shop was

faced with numerous dilemmas such as issues of accountability and effects on nations' economies as a result of its trading activities in the Third World. Those with more radical views towards ecology and commerce questioned the very need for such growth (Hawken, 1994) and questions continued to emerge. How were the locals' lives being affected by the introduction of money and Westerners? Were Roddick's customers told exactly how much money their 'trading partners' received? Such "corporate encroachment" on these local communities had the potential of being perceived unfavourably by many who viewed The Body Shop's discursive practices as just another colonising activity (Deetz, 1995, p. 18).

But there were two sides to the story. Other accounts authenticated The Body Shop narrative:

The company pays the Kayapo well above the market price for Brazil Nut Oil. According to a statement issued by the Kayapo, 'the chiefs are pleased with the business they make with The Body Shop, because it is a way for the community to earn money to buy the things they need without having to work in the city.' (Bavaria et al. 1994, p. 6)

This does indeed raise the question asked by Bavaria et al. (1994), "if The Body Shop with its reputation of social responsibility, does not quite measure up, who can?" (p. 6). While there were inconsistencies in The Body Shop narrative, the organisation was certainly ahead of many in its struggle to conduct responsible business in a complex, global market (Mirvis, 1994). Its proactive stance was significant from a corporate identity standpoint. The Body Shop was clearly attempting to be a responsible corporate but was perhaps rather naive as to its own impacts which were exposed by the developing sophisticated understanding of corporate social responsibility practices.

The internal organizational use of language: Key characters in The Body Shop story

The internalization of Roddick's narrative

Roddick crafted her vision as one that denoted a clear purpose or mission for the organisation as well as one anchored in a set of values. According to Conger and Kanungo (1998), "The leader's articulation of the vision brings to the surface these

deeply held values and makes the members realise that the vision is indeed a representation of their own values” (p. 195). For instance, in her construction of internal Body Shop narratives, she clearly reinforced the requirement that employees had to buy into the organisation's values. Take for instance the picture placed strategically in The Body Shop Charter (see Appendix 14). The image is highly symbolic. Here, a pair of hands is pictured ‘holding’ The Body Shop logo, symbolising that employees embrace the sign and all it represents and internalise the organisation's values. Symbolically, the image clearly states ‘Our values are your values.’ For The Body Shop employee, the image is designed to build loyalty, commitment and pride, believing that ‘The Body Shop's values are *my* values.’ On the next page, are the words: ‘The Body has soul – don't lose it’ (quote from Appendix 14). Once again, the words are highly symbolic. Here Roddick constructs the idea that if Body Shop employees are the organisation and share the same values, they will lose their soul if they let go of their (and the organisation's) principles. Roddick (1991) believed her approach was effective: “The people who come to work for us stay with us because of the way we operate, because our values are their values” (p. 251).

Stories and myths were important ingredients of The Body Shop's internal culture, transforming events in its history into a valued heritage and a source of shared meanings. Furthermore, Roddick told stories in an attempt to shape employee's attitudes, beliefs, values, and to describe The Body Shop's practices and operations. But if one was to consider the ideological functions of narrative, the internalisation of Roddick's narrative actually made issues of control easier for the founder. That is, the cognitive impact of Roddick's narrative had strong persuasive effects in that it enhanced behavioural and attitudinal commitment. In their report on the practices of excellent companies in the retail industry, Lavere & Kleiner (1997) state of The Body Shop:

It attracts and retains employees who identify with the company's values as expressed by its founder and these employees become deeply committed to the organisation that embodies them. Nowhere is the powerful alignment between company and employee beliefs more evident than in this UK-based beauty products retailer. (p. 3).

But certain elements of storytelling made it difficult for listeners to question the narrative's content. By this I mean the implicit rules of storytelling are unlike those of nonnarrative discourse in that there is no norm of 'turn-taking' or of a dialectic of 'claim' and 'counterclaim' (Witten, 1983). Nonetheless, Roddick claimed that her heavy reliance on stories and myths also served to turn her company into a more human place. Recalling visits to some of her stores, she states: "It is chit chat, lots of stories and jokes, lots of laughter and lots of anecdotes" (p. 233). In this sense, the continual reproduction of stories was used in an effort to strengthen staff identification with the organisation.

Identification strategies at The Body Shop

Burke's (1969a) process of identification is useful in helping us understand how individuals identify themselves with their organisation and their founder. Burke's theory also provides a way of understanding how founders use language symbolically in forming and altering the attitudes of both internal and external audiences. Three types of identification strategies, derived from Burke, are used by Cheney (1983a) to study formal communication in organisations. These include the common ground technique, identification through antithesis, and the assumed or transcendent 'we' (Cheney, 1983a). Elements of Cheney's (1983a) identification strategies are evident in Roddick's narrative and provide insight into how she tapped "into the identification process, thereby catalysing the persuasion of individual members" to live the organisation's narrative (p. 149).

The Body Shop was founded on a 'Mother Earth' mythology (Kaye, 1996). The predominant characteristics of 'Mother Earth' are her nurturing nature and her caring for her offspring. For instance, Roddick states: "The company is my baby" (Roddick, cited in Lewis, 1998). The Body Shop draws heavily on the values embodied by the Earth Mother, who is inspirational, nurturing, caring and conscious of her responsibilities. This theme is present in many of the texts produced by Roddick, as well as in the interviews she gave. Take for example, Roddick's reaction to attacks on her employees. In a media interview, Roddick stated: "God help anybody that tries to challenge my darling little cubs in The Body Shop. I was going to fight to the death"

(Lewis, 1998). Furthermore, when Roddick was unhappy with changes at The Body Shop, she said: "It's a huge problem for me to look at the company, my baby, and say, 'is this what I gave birth to?'" (Lewis, 1998).

In constructing herself in the role of 'Mother' at The Body Shop, Roddick used her sense of family to structure the everyday running of the company. This was emphasised in her autobiography as she recounted stories about her staff and the close relationships at The Body Shop. Roddick (1991) explained:

Working with us is also like being part of a family. Despite our size we have desperately tried to maintain a sense of family within the company, a sense that we are all in it together, that it is ours, that we have all helped to make it. (p. 219)

In New Zealand, "all staff were given a copy [of Roddick's autobiography, *Body and soul*]...There was a tremendous enthusiasm and the staff loved reading it. I loved reading it...they could relate to that and put what they were doing into context" (Thomas, interview with researcher, 2001). The internalisation of Roddick's narrative also served to solidify Body Shop employees organisational identification. Roddick (1991) incorporated inspirational and motivational lines in the storytelling of her company. Below are a few examples:

I started with a kind of grace which clung to the notion that in business you don't tell lies (Roddick, 1991, p. 18)

No environmental organisation anywhere in the world had ever achieved such a result (Roddick, 1991, p. 201)

People say to me, 'God, isn't it amazing what has happened to The Body Shop?' (Roddick, 1991, p. 254)

I think the value of money is the spontaneity it gives you. There are too many exciting things to do with it right now to bother about piling it up, and in any case it is ennobling to give it away. It makes you feel better, and if you feel better, you are better, spiritually (Roddick, 1991, p. 256)

Roddick (1991) told stories about saving the world and helping the underprivileged in an attempt to instill a sense of pride among her employees. Further, these stories sought to help employees convey messages that presented the basic values and

meanings housed at The Body Shop. They helped bring value statements issued by the organisation to life in the minds of its members, who - according to Roddick - created their own stories as a result of their experiences. For instance, in her autobiography, Roddick (1991) explains: "Although we made it clear that community projects could be undertaken in the company's time, many girls became so involved and so in love with what they were doing that they spent their evenings too on their projects" (p. 154). The recounting of such stories in Roddick's narrative aimed to build acceptance of this new narrative and contribute to the building of what Roddick (1991) claimed was a strong culture in the organisation.

Roddick (1991) aligned the company's relationship with its employees with her expressed personal belief that people really did make or break an organisation: "People are not merely an asset, they *are* the company. I believe that people, rather than things, will be the focus of business in the future" (p. 251, emphasis added). She presented her employee relationship building as based on 'love' and 'care' – consistent themes in The Body Shop narrative. Roddick (1991) used her autobiographical narratives to strengthen the theme of 'family' by claiming to recruit by looking for passion and common ethical values, to foster their education when they are employed, and to refer to her employees as 'family':

Personally what I am looking for is people like me, because I know that if they're like me then I've got to keep them entertained, keep them informed, keep their minds so exercised that they want to stay. That is my responsibility to them...What I have learned is that people become motivated when you guide them to the source of their own power and when you make heroes out of employees who best personify what you want to see in the organisation. (Roddick, 1991, p. 223)

In these narratives of identity, Roddick's abolition of the distinction between family and staff signifies the most powerful image of a company with a collective soul, a sense of values and a human face. Roddick portrayed the sense of family at The Body Shop as something quite unique to the organisation and used this image to attract employees. From a narrative standpoint, it can be argued that these prospective employees were intrigued by The Body Shop's story, were drawn to the organisation's plot and wanted to become characters in the organisation's story

According to Olins (1994), a corporation will only work properly if the “people inside it have a sense of belonging, if they are proud of their organisation and what it does, if they share some kind of common culture” (p. 23). This, Olins (1994) believes, builds up the “corporate spirit, the corporate identity” (p. 25). Certainly, according to Roddick, word apparently got around that The Body Shop was an unusual company and a good employer. She was careful to repeat these stories in her autobiography and consistently reinforced the theme of ‘family’ in her narrative. Roddick (1991) explained:

‘Our people’ are our staff, our ‘family’. Someone who worked for The Body Shop for many years said to me once, ‘I’ve never felt more responsible, never felt so part of a family, because everybody’s involved. (p. 124)

According to Roddick, Body Shop employees shared systems of beliefs in line with The Body Shop’s goals. Thus, employees shared some degree of attribute similarity (Snyder & Fromkin, 1980). Because their beliefs were often linked to important personal values, Roddick constructed her employees as having positive self regard when they perceived similarity to Body Shop values and attributes. In her autobiography, Roddick (1991) set out to transform the work of her employees into a cause, a cause which was often embedded in the organisation’s environmental campaigns:

You educate ...young people, by stirring their passions. So you take every opportunity to grab the imagination of your employees, you get then to feel they are doing something important, that they are not a lone voice, that they are the most powerful and potent people on the planet. (p. 238)

While Roddick’s corporate culture building intentions were made clear in her narrative, so too were her accounts of that culture’s success. Roddick proudly recollected stories of how the ‘Stop the Burning’ campaign which focused on the protection of the Amazonian rainforest had had an enormous positive impact on Body Shop employees. In fact, such accounts portrayed Roddick (1991) as the ‘human’ heroine in the story:

I went around the stores in those first three weeks and saw the tremendous effect it had on the staff. They were high as kites, charged with a real sense of power and purpose and a belief that they could

effect change. I think everybody felt good about what they were doing.
(p. 200)

But what is more important is that Body Shop employees' similarity with the organisation's cultural attributes also produced a sense of difference to others. Indeed, it may seem paradoxical that similarity to the attributes of The Body Shop served as a means to confirm the uniqueness of Body Shop employees to employees of other organisations. The success of the 'Stop the Burning' campaign described in the quote above, as well as its effect on the identity of The Body Shop, certainly served to bond employees. In fact all Body Shop campaigns had similar effects on staff all around the world. For instance, New Zealand Body Shop Director, Barrie Thomas, claims:

The campaigns were incredibly powerful. They really did excite the staff and bonded the staff to the company. For many staff, it did give meaning to their job. As you know retail can be pretty soulless and soul-destroying at times (Thomas, interview with researcher, 2001).

Such group identification generated a sense of cultural difference and certainly a unique organisational identity for The Body Shop.

Roddick also sought to strengthen The Body Shop's organisational identity through the use of internal marketing. Hornick (1995) identifies internal marketing as the importance of internal messages in projecting a good corporate identity. He states that in order to succeed, "employees must first understand the company's vision and values, be committed to them and then put them into action on a day-to-day basis" (p. 20). Such strategies included recruitment policies, employee communication, education and empowerment. Roddick clearly believed that the common values of employees and the company were the key to the company's success. For instance, The Body Shop Employee Handbook, attached in The Body Shop Charter, states:

We want our staff to come to work free of anxieties about the reliability and quality of their childcare arrangements. We also want to offer help to the local community in widening the options available to parents and in offering their children a fun-filled, creative environment in which to spend their day-time hours. (The Body Shop, 1990a, p. 6)

While Roddick's efforts to look after her employees seem admirable to many, others question whether such behaviour was an attempt to shape external perceptions. After

all, Roddick assumed that if her employees were happy at work, they would wilfully promote the company, through word-of-mouth, to customers, friends, and family. Cheney & Christensen (2000) warn that an organisation's highly publicised treatment of staff can be seen as a manipulative attempt to gain the organisation recognition, stature and visibility. They also suggest that the efforts to respond to needs and wants beyond their worklife with some organisations, in this case, The Body Shop, building kindergartens for employees and families, have the potential of becoming part of the organisation's public relations campaign. However, when I asked Roddick whether The Body Shop's decision to have childcare facilities was used as a means to public relations end, this was her response:

I'm so proud of that! I'm the only bloody one in England! Thatcher didn't want any daycare facilities. Of course, I'm going to promote that. These are things that I see business should be about. I'm not going to put millions into something like that and not tell anyone about it. If you want to change business what you've got is the responsibility to stand out there and trumpet what works. And they think because you're trumpeting or shouting it out from the rooftops, it's self-promotion. Of course it's self-promotion but it's something that works and if you've got something that works and you think it can work on any area at all, that's why it's bizarre. Why don't they fucking copy it? (Roddick, interview with researcher, 2001a).

Roddick's reaction was filled with emotion and her words were supported by The Body Shop's open demonstration of its commitment to its employees. To use Fisher's (1987) criteria for assessing The Body Shop's corporate narratives, the reliability of the rhetor (in this case Roddick), the coherence or motivations of the message, and the truthfulness of the message all served to make such identity narratives 'real.' Additionally, the values embedded in the overall plot provided The Body Shop's audiences with good reasons for belief as demonstrated in official company documents:

We encourage staff to come forward with ideas about improving working methods or products. If your idea covers an area outside your usual job, you may be awarded a prize under our Staff Suggestions Scheme. For further details, please contact the Company Relations Department. (The Body Shop, 1990a, p. 4)

Keller (2000), refers to the internal impact of corporate identity and how a strong corporate identity creates a 'we-feeling' that enables employees to identify with their

company. This identification strategy was Roddick's attempt to achieve unity and collective acceptance of organisational values and unity "against the common enemy" (Cheney, 1983a, p. 148). Narrativists, Propp (1958) and Frye's (1957) theorising on character and fairy tale can be used to identify the 'evil' character in the plot - the cosmetics industry. Indeed, in her autobiography, Roddick (1991) clearly positions The Body Shop community as heroically honest in the face of the evil lies used by the rest of the cosmetics industry:

They were prepared to sell false hopes and unattainable dreams...*we* explained to customers in simple language everyone could understand exactly what a product would do and what it wouldn't do. *They* worshipped profits; *we* didn't. *They* thought packaging was important. *We* happily filled old lemonade bottles with our products if a customer asked. *They* spent millions on market research; *we* simply said to our customers, 'Tell us what you want and we will try and get it for you.' (p. 20, emphasis added)

The conscious use of language: Managing meaning at The Body Shop

As illustrated throughout the chapter, elements of Roddick's own character, cultural background, and beliefs played a key role in the construction of The Body Shop's corporate identity narrative. Hatch (1993, cited in Hatch & Shultz, 1997) explains that identity involves how we define and experience ourselves and this is influenced by our activities and beliefs which are grounded in and justified by cultural assumptions and values. She concludes that: "What we care about and do defines us to ourselves and thereby forges our identity in the image of our culture" (Hatch, 1993, cited in Hatch & Shultz, 1997, p. 360). Consequently, many of the company's values reflected Roddick's values. Roddick (1991) went so far to admit that she had "never been able to separate Body Shop values from my own personal values" (p. 123). She re-iterated her attitude in on-going narratives:

My argument was that people know about The Body Shop, they know what we stand for and what we believe, and if they come to work for us they have to share our values. (Roddick, 1991, p. 244)

Roddick's views bring us back to du Preeze's (1980) discussion on the relationship between language and authority. Her narrative reflected her desire to maintain a certain level of authority and uniqueness in her company. For instance, while *Body*

and soul promotes a coherent, unified, distinguished Self, the managerial voice narrating the story gives voice to the corporate self at the expense of the variety and multiplicity of voices in the organisation. In this sense, Grant et al. (1998) refer to corporate autobiographies as “monologues - managerial monologues that spread the officially approved meanings and definitions” (p. 110). In Roddick's production of the myth of the Self lies an attempt to incorporate organisational members into the official world view as characterised in her autobiography. The managerial monologue is therefore part of Roddick's effort to control the identity of the organisation. For instance, within The Body Shop, the only pronounced ‘I’ in the company seems to be Anita Roddick. The founder writes the autobiography, letters and official documents in the ‘I’ form. Her ‘self’ is exposed in many writings. For example, she states that: “I think all business practices would improved immeasurably if they were guided by ‘feminine’ principles – qualities like love and care and intuition” (Roddick, 1991, p. 17, emphasis added).

In these terms, Roddick's ‘self’ becomes the corporate ‘self’, a symbol for the collective ‘we’. She is the head of The Body Shop family and the spokeswoman for the collective self. Using the collective self can be seen as a way of incorporating all the individual ‘I’s’ into one voice. Multiple meanings and alternative realities are integrated into one coherent voice, thereby producing a corporate self. It can be argued then, that organisational stories are often orchestrated by the managerial monologue. In fact, if we adopt Smircich and Morgan's (1982) view, leaders can be said to define the reality of others.

The spreading of corporate myths and stories can also be understood as “a wish to manage the hearts and minds of the employees in order to control and integrate people” (Grant et al., 1998, p. 112). Roddick's discourse demonstrates the use of stories as a means for defining and managing The Body Shop world:

If a shop didn't have a community project and said, in effect, it didn't give a damn about the community...I often found that I could talk that person round, and when they got converted to the idea they were more passionate than any religious convert; they had forgotten what a buzz one gets out of being liked and wanted. But if a franchisee absolutely refused to become involved, there was not much I could do about it –

other than to make quite sure they did not get another shop. (Roddick, 1991, p. 154)

The intent of such stories highlighted that Roddick, through the frequent re-telling of these stories, sought to assert influence over her organisation and the behaviour of those in it, including management. Such discursive practices were used to structure the organisational life which framed the identity formation and disciplining of organisation members. Take for instance the narrative text featured in The Body Shop Charter (see Appendix 15). Here, the narrative begins with the word 'welcome' in large font. The narrative consists of Roddick's story about how The Body Shop first began, how it has grown and how it is to continue on its road ahead. Employees are given clear instruction on the role they will play in The Body Shop story. Take for instance the following statement: 'It's everybody's responsibility (and it's in all our interests) to keep The Body Shop on track. It needs energy, integrity and commitment – and there's no time for complacency' (Quote from Appendix 15, p. 5). These discursive practices shaped The Body Shop world as Roddick saw it.

Roddick articulated these narratives and oversaw all corporate communication. Her views were clearly stated for all Body Shop employees. In fact, a close look at Roddick's narrative only reveals the ideological functions of organisational discourse. Here, little room was made for employees to challenge the perceptual closure that Roddick's narrative often presented. For example, new employees at The Body Shop were formally told that: "No communication with the Press or any other news media may be made concerning the company without the prior approval of the Chairman or Managing Director" (The Body Shop, 1990a, p. 28).

However, Cheney (1999) warns that internally, this managerial approach can develop an "oppressive regime of organisational values, with attempts to extend managerial control to the prescription of employees' attitudes, identities, and behaviour" (p. 27). This was not widely the case at The Body Shop in its earlier years (and there is some basis to argue that it was not given the evidence of employee satisfaction with the organization as evidenced in numerous internal newsletters and internal audits; see The Body Shop, 1998c). But evidence of such control became more apparent as The

Body Shop grew (as is discussed further in chapter six). Indeed, there is evidence to suggest that Roddick's narrative was not always accepted or understood by her staff.

For instance, New Zealand Body Shop Director, Barrie Thomas explains:

I think of the key things was that the staff didn't understand the decision-making in the company. They just felt that decisions were *imposed* upon them *without their consultation or involvement*. A lot of staff didn't feel valued for the work that they did. It did draw up a lot of issues that needed to be addressed. (Thomas, interview with researcher, 2001, emphasis added)

Conclusion

This chapter examined how Roddick created the identity of The Body Shop. Through the retrospective construction of narrative, Roddick legitimised her role as founder, rationalised existing practices, traditions, and rituals, articulated through exemplars the philosophy of management and the policies which made The Body Shop distinctive. In other words, through the language game of narration, she shaped and managed not only her own identity but the identity of The Body Shop. The examination of her stories about the creation of The Body Shop philosophy and style, the creation of the corporate family and of its environmentally friendly products reflect elements of Roddick's personal experiences, values, and beliefs, thus highlighting the connection between personal and organisational identity.

The unity and uniqueness of The Body Shop's identity was achieved through the process of narrativity as Roddick conceived her own, as well as The Body Shop's existence, as a special story. The Body Shop's identity became intrinsically linked to Roddick's life story, which connected up the events, actions, and even accidents, into an integrating plot. The contradictions and inconsistencies in Roddick's version suggest that The Body Shop's social practices made positioning its innovative narrative - specifically in the cosmetic industry and more generally, in the marketplace, - at times difficult. After all, Roddick swam against the tide of institutionalised self interest and dominant ideologies and openly engaged in hegemonic struggles. She strongly and often controversially resisted the dominant discourse of business, choosing instead to introduce a new business narrative. Nevertheless, The Body Shop story was credible to many as Roddick skilfully

managed a shared vision for the future. Roddick used the power of storytelling to communicate the identity of her company. Roddick's stories of identity-narratives allowed her employees to think about and feel who they were, where they were from and where they were headed.

It is clear then, that Roddick's ability to define a values-based vision, communicate it to followers – or in the case of The Body Shop – employees, and use power effectively to carry out the ideal played a critical role in the implementation and adoption of ethical practices at The Body Shop. Such findings raise important questions surrounding the influence of the founder's values and leadership style on ethical practice in the organisation, and how this might be carried through to succeeding generations. The following chapter examines the relationship between leadership and values and ethical practices in The Body Shop and explores the *role of narrative as a rhetorical vehicle* for both individual and organisational endorsement of ethical performance in business. More specifically, it examines how Roddick *positioned* The Body Shop as a pioneer in the field of corporate social responsibility and thus her identity as chief narrator of a new business and society story.

CHAPTER 6

THE LEADING STORY: A MODEL NARRATIVE OF CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Introduction

The previous chapter examined the *construction of The Body Shop's identity*. This chapter continues to explore the issue of identity and difference for The Body Shop during the 1990s, a strong period of growth for the organisation. It examines the notion of both personal and organisational leadership through an examination of the role of the leader's *value commitments* and *ethics as constitutive of the organisation*, its *position*, and its *distinctiveness*. To do so, this chapter examines, more closely, the actual *rhetorical strategies* Roddick employed to *communicate* The Body Shop's narratives of identity to both internal and external audiences. Key strategies included Roddick's conscious integration of The Body Shop's *core values* in official corporate narratives. According to Culler (1996) to interpret a narrative, one must identify the implied narrator or rhetor and what in the story belongs to her perspective, distinguishing between the action itself and the narrative perspective on that action, for one of the central thematic issues of every story is the relationship between the implied narrator (with her knowledge, values, etc.) and the story which she narrates (Culler, 1996). Rhetorical criticism is a particularly appropriate means for the analysis of Roddick's narratives and more generally, The Body Shop's organisational communication, since the symbolic behaviour creates and influences relationships within and between organisations and publics. Hence, this *critical* analysis closely examines both the internal and external discourse of the organisation, utilising concepts from Fairclough's (1992, 1995) method of critical discourse analysis and Burke's (1969a, 1969b) theory of identification and persuasion.

The corporate discourse examined in this chapter consists primarily of transcripts of personal interviews conducted with Anita Roddick and New Zealand Body Shop Directors, Barrie Thomas and Michael Ogilvie-Lee. Other forms of corporate communication analysed in this chapter include *Body and soul* and Roddick's (2000a) more recent autobiography, *Business as unusual*. The organisation's annual reports

(1990 – 2000), values reports (1995 and 1997), and environmental statements (*The Green Book*, 1992 and 1993) are also included as primary sources of data. In order to manage these vast sets of data, narratives were first surveyed for themes. In line with The Body Shop's core values, the key themes of "commitment," "transparency," "community," "care," "action", "change," "communication," "social, environmental and ethical performance" and "improvement" were prominent in the organisation's discourse which served to promote The Body Shop's once unique, yet still distinct, identity.

Section one, *Language, leadership and values*, explores the relationship between leadership and language and its role in values-led organisations. While some argue that rhetoric is all about using language to persuade (see Watson, 1995; Hackman & Johnson, 1996), I incorporate elements of Burke's (1969b) theory of identification which helps organisational researchers better understand how organisational leaders, in this case Anita Roddick, employ a rhetorical approach to help foster identification with the organisation. Drawing on Foucault's (1970, 1977, 1980, 1984) theories on the relationship between language and power, I also examine the negative implications of power associated with the persuasive nature of leadership on Body Shop employees and franchisees. The findings of this analysis support Livesey's (2002) claim that organisational discourses are dynamic as well as coercive.

The second section, *Narrating a new business story*, outlines the discursive environment in which the alternative The Body Shop narrative operated. It outlines the socio-economic struggle experienced by The Body Shop as it openly resisted the mainstream business discourse. It examines, more closely, the specific rhetorical strategies applied by Roddick – the embodiment of The Body Shop – to frame the organisation's identity and chiefly, its values, within and outside The Body Shop and build a position of both individual and organisational leadership. Roddick did this largely through official corporate narratives, such as yearly annual reports.

Section three, *Challenging The Body Shop narrative*, investigates the conflicting stories in and around the publication of a controversial article published in the

Business Ethics magazine in 1994. The controversy led to the telling of multiple stories both within and outside the organisation as a consequence of intense media scrutiny and questioning concerning the credibility of The Body Shop's identity. The fact that The Body Shop's narrative operated within numerous discourses - such as environmental and feminist discourses - created challenges for Roddick in that these discourses shaped her personal as well as her organisation's identity. As a result, Roddick and The Body Shop held what Foucault (1977) refers to as multiple identities which produced contradictory versions of the Self (for instance, the Body Shop as 'global cosmetics retailer' and 'ethical trader', and Roddick as 'celebrity-founder' and self-proclaimed 'nomad'). These contradictions are analysed in detail according to Fisher's (1987) theory of narrative probability. Further, the rhetorical strategies and hard-hitting storylines Roddick employed to defend the organisation's image to both internal and external audiences are also examined.

Roddick had to assure her audiences that The Body Shop was values-led and committed to its core values and founding principles. One of Roddick's more popular reactions to attacks on The Body Shop's identity was her decision to engage in a new form of corporate measurement, evaluation, and reporting. In section three, *Auditing performances at The Body Shop: A hard act to follow*, I revisit the important role of narrative for organisations in times of crisis (Mumby, 1987) which serve to back up arguments made (Heath, 1994). Davies & Harré's (1990, 1999, 2001) theory of positioning is used to explain how Roddick positioned The Body Shop as a pioneer in sustainability reporting (Livesey & Kearins, 2002). For instance, The Body Shop *Values Reports* served to present an expanded perspective of The Body Shop's corporate identity and success in comparison with the traditional financial accounts and provided multi stakeholder, multi value profiles of the organisation. Furthermore, The Body Shop's social and environmental auditing and reporting presented the organisation with a powerful rhetorical vehicle for premise-building.

Language, leadership and values

This section describes the relationship between leadership, language and values in relation to Anita Roddick and The Body Shop. It outlines the theoretical framework

used to underpin this study and frames the analysis for this chapter. More specifically, it informs the analysis by way of explaining how Roddick used narrative to establish a position of both personal and organisational leadership.

The relationship between leadership and values has long been studied in the management literature (e.g. Barnard, 1938; Selznick, 1957). Selznick (1957) argued that the real task of leadership is to create a social structure of shared values. After this structure has been established, the organisation attempts to maintain the underlying values as the environmental context changes. More recent literature on organisational culture has identified the guiding and directing purposes of values in the functioning of organisations (Enz, 1988; Sathe, 1983; Schein, 1985). It is here that the role of leadership is significant. But leadership is hard to define, and moral leadership is even harder. Leadership, even when defined as a collaborative experience, is still about the influence of individual character (Gini, 1998). Behaviour does not always beget like behaviour, but it does establish tone, set the stage, and offer options. Although to achieve ethical behaviour, an entire organization, from top to bottom, must make a commitment to it, the model for that commitment has to originate from the top (Gini, 1998, p. 43). In this way, the success of The Body Shop and the telling of its story can indeed be attributed to the inspirational leadership of Anita Roddick and her ability to communicate values that people identify with (Kearins & Kljñn, 1999).

Values have been described as the “beliefs about how to behave and what goals are important to achieve” (Feather, 1994, p. 35). Values are central to the self-concept, and reflect our feelings about certain things and events that go beyond our attitudes or beliefs. According to this value-expressive function, “the individual derives satisfaction from expressing attitudes appropriate to his [sic] personal values and to his [sic] concept of himself” (Katz, 1960, p. 170). It is because of our deeply ingrained values that we also believe in taking a particular action. Our values guide us in choosing between alternative courses of action, a powerful source of influence in today’s global marketplace for both consumers and organisations. Take for instance, the rise of the ethical consumer. Inspired by consumer crusader, Ralph Nader and his

seminal work, *Unsafe at any speed*, the consumer movement not only impacted on products, it transformed citizen's psychologically (Wheeler & Sillanpää, 1997). The arrival of a "moral self-confidence" led to a healthy scepticism which spread to government, politicians, and the general public (Wheeler & Sillanpää, 1997, p. 77).

Anita Roddick used narratives to impart her values to employees, to shape behaviour and to lead her organisation. For example, metaphors of 'love' and 'care' frequently incorporated in The Body Shop narrative became shorthand for thinking, discussion and action. Once the language was widely communicated, both internally and externally, it became difficult to probe beneath the surface to unseat assumptions on which the language rested. The value imparted in Roddick's stories thus became The Body Shop-licensed way of seeing: "As we have grown, the stories that have been told and retold about The Body Shop have entered the chronicles of the company" (Roddick, 2000a, p. 82). But it was the ethical orientation of Roddick, in terms of her traits and behaviours, which was a key factor in promoting ethical behaviour in The Body Shop and in creating an ethical organisational culture. In fact, in their work on the search for virtue in marketing, Hartman & Beck-Dudley (1999), apply virtue ethics not only to the marketing strategies of The Body Shop but also to the moral character of Anita Roddick.

In the role of figurehead, according to Mintzberg, the leader acts to symbolise the organisation. It is through 'spoken narrative' (including stories) that the identity of an organisation is formed (Boje, 1991, 1995; Czarniawska, 1997; Gabriel, 1999; Glynn, 2000; Harrison, 2000; Stutts & Barker, 1999; Tracy, 2000). Roddick, a transformational leader (Bass, 1985), inspired others to follow her through symbols or images. Stories serve as symbols, conveying a central theme that typifies the organisation (Wilkins, 1984). These symbols and images provided ideals that employees believed in and aspired to. Roddick provided these aspired to ideals by following her own internal beliefs about what was good and just. In other words, as has been explained in the previous chapter, Roddick's identity narratives shaped the identity of her organisation and its members. She communicated her values-based vision using power and communication effectively to carry out such ideals.

But perhaps most important to issues of identity, is Snyder and Fromkin's (1980) claim that our *values* enable us to maintain a particular self-perception. For instance, in the process of expressing our beliefs about external events or ourselves, we may also achieve a sense of difference. They go on to suggest that one's attitudes appear to be "intimately linked to the self-concept, and individuals may actually change their attitudes in order to maintain some sense of difference" (p. 160). Thus, people may publicly express different attitudes – sometimes to achieve a sense of freedom, or sometimes simply to avoid feeling that their attitudes lack uniqueness. Additionally, people often maintain a state of "pluralistic ignorance or an illusion of uniqueness regarding their beliefs about themselves and other people" (Snyder & Fromkin, 1980, p. 160). That is, we often *believe* that our values are more different than they actually are. Indeed studies strongly suggest that we acquire and maintain a set of beliefs about ourselves that maintain our self-perceptions of difference relative to other people (Snyder & Fromkin, 1980). Overall, therefore, our values seem to serve as an important vehicle for achieving and maintaining a sense of uniqueness. The same is true for organisations.

Visionary companies such as The Body Shop articulated a core ideology, defined by Collins and Porras (1994) as consisting of core values and purposes. But Roddick did more than merely declare an ideology based on her identity; she also took steps to make the ideology pervasive throughout the organisation. By core values, Collins and Porras (1994) mean "the organisation's essential and enduring tenets – a small set of general guiding principals; not to be confused with specific cultural or operating practices; not to be compromised for financial gain or short term expediency" (p. 71). Witten (1983) reminds us, through key aspects of their structure and the language they contain, narrative can unobtrusively and persuasively communicate core organisational values. Indeed "the core values of The Body Shop - honesty, respect and care for people, animals and the environment" (Roddick, 2000a, p. 244) - served as the underlying plot in all Body Shop stories. Parallel to the notion of leadership as rhetorical and specifically as framing values and basic issues in corporate issue management literature – as part of public relations - is establishing values as warrants for future messages and claims (see Cheney & Vibbert, 1987)

The language of persuasion

Roddick used stories to *persuade* audiences to *identify with* the organisation. Cheney and McMillan (1990) state that “Organisations are understood intuitively by laypersons as persuasive enterprises” (p. 93) In fact, the pervasiveness of persuasion within organisation ranges from image making, identity maintenance, and political influence within the wider environment (Cheney & McMillan, 1990). The rhetorical purposes, or goals of organised, organisational persuasion, is significant in this study. Rhetoric is all about using language to persuade (Watson, 1995). We use it to persuade others, not just of the validity of specific arguments we wish to put across but also to persuade them of our personal validity, credibility and worthiness (Watson, 1995). As a leader, Roddick engaged consistently in emotive and unconventional storytelling in an attempt to spread the Body Shop narrative; such messages served to reinforce the organisation’s identity as one that was passionate about its values and different from traditional business, and protect its image. Roddick (2000a) explains:

The people I work with are searching for something more than just doing a job – they also want to learn and find meaning in their life. They are open to leadership that has a vision, but this vision has to be communicated clearly and persuasively, and always with passion. (p. 79)

Roddick chose to clearly differentiate between leadership and management. For instance, she set out to produce change, not stability, she exhibited moral vision and consistently made reference to values. Indeed most definitions of leadership characterise it as an influence process, which is inherently communicative (Cheney, Christensen, Zorn & Ganesh, 2004). Indeed, Roddick used her position as ‘leader’ of The Body Shop to *influence others to create change*. The previous chapter illustrated Roddick’s firm belief in the power of storytelling. Almost a decade later, Roddick held true to the belief that it was her use of storytelling that also made her an effective leader:

Well, as I’ve said consistently, it’s about communication. I’m an immanently good communicator and I communicate in a very personable and a very intimate way. I’m very warm, I’m very funny, I ask outrageous questions. You don’t have to ask the standard questions about being in business or in management. There’s no rhetoric. People have a huge expectation that I walk the talk, that I do

things to surprise...Storytelling as a leader. I keep putting it down to communication. (Roddick, interview with researcher, 2001a)

It is said that the best leaders are the best communicators because they present employees with a consistent, forcefully told story that everyone can understand, accept, and act upon (Hackman & Johnson, 1996; Champy, 1995). Roddick's strategy was certainly regarded as highly successful given Kelly's (1994a) claim that: "Anita Roddick has without doubt been brilliant at telling The Body Shop story" (p. 1).

Stories are especially likely to capture attention if they contain features such as the use of active voice, present tense, repetition, and vivid and concrete details through which plots and episodes are unfurled (McLaughlin, 1984; Wilkins, 1983). Through these linguistic devices, focus is drawn to the exploits of the story's actors, the settings in which action occurs, and the consequences of actors' behaviour (Weaver & Dickenson, 1982). Take the following example from one of Roddick's speeches. Through vivid descriptions, Roddick takes her audience to the places she likes to visit, and details events so that her audience can picture exactly where she is and what she does. She also uses these stories to explain how her through these experiences, she is able to make The Body Shop a 'magical,' more human place – a place where people come together to trade. In fact, such imagery is used to help her customers remember these stories when they enter a Body Shop store:

I travel around the world, really telling a story. Standing on a platform and saying I like being a trader. That's sort of old, noble exchange. I like buying and selling. I like having that magical place where people come together. My place is the shop. I hope they like the products that hopefully somebody gives me some profit for, so that I can do more with it. I love it. I love the energy, I love the way you can go around the world, whether it's in the markets in India or the backs of trucks in Russia. I like going shopping; it gives me a picture of what's going on. (Roddick, 2001b)

Such stories produced an extended and focused text that explained Roddick, as well as The Body Shop's values which – as stated in The Body Shop Charter - include bringing humanity into the workplace' (see Appendix 7). But while the rhetorical situations of Roddick's speeches revealed her personal and political values, they were not always directed at her attempts to build the organisation's culture.

For Roddick, storytelling was also an important way of ‘framing’ and ‘reframing’ the big picture and communicating it to different groups within and outside the organisation (Honig-Haftel, 1996). For instance, Roddick used the podium as an opportunity to lobby against big business, the beauty industry and international trade policies. She crossed borders between corporate organisations and government, disseminating her ideas and values throughout the general culture. Take for instance the opening of Roddick’s speech at the 31st Congress of the Internal Chamber of Commerce, Mexico. In front of an audience – which consisted largely of conventional business people – she reinforces her *point of difference*, her determination to publicly resist the growing dominant ideology of free trade by stating:

I have only a limited time to begin a process of glasnost – a process of free trade in ideas – so I will be blunt. There is a growing global acceptance of one of the economic establishment’s most sacred cows – the unshakable belief in the omnipotence of unfettered free trade. While many celebrate its spread, I wonder whether it is possible that I am the only one with deep reservations about the course of the trade debate? (Roddick, 1994b).

Billig (1987) argues that to understand the meaning of words and sentences, one should not examine merely the words within that discourse or the images in the speaker’s mind at the moment. One should also consider “the positions which are being criticised, or against which a justification is being mounted” (Billig, 1987, p. 91). As illustrated in the quote above, Roddick’s controversial narrative operated within a wider discourse, one of corporate social responsibility. The same theme is found in *Body and soul*:

I have said for years that the responsibility of business is not to create profits but to create live, vibrant, honourable organisations with a real commitment to the community. To do this, business has to become a major educator and nourisher of staff, customers, and shareholders. (Roddick, 1991, p. 252)

Roddick was conscious of the language she used in all situations. Even simple language choices made a tremendous difference to the success of her leadership. Roddick exemplifies Boje’s (1991) point well when she says: “Well...it’s moral *influence*. It’s *persuasion* that I’ve got to have” (Roddick, 2001, emphasis added).

Roddick was aware that her strongest attribute as a leader was her ability to communicate through storytelling and that storytelling allowed her to persuade her audiences to accept her values. The growing literature on leadership and storytelling also proved why Roddick's strategy was so successful as Daft (2001) states: "Storytelling is a powerful means of persuasion and influence" (p. 333). More importantly, the use of stories can be used to significantly *influence* thinking, attitudes and behaviour (Forster, Cebis, Majteles & Mathur, 1999, p. 12). In fact, "Storytelling should be part of any leader's communication repertoire" (Forster, et al. 1999, p. 12). But to be truly effective, leaders should not only communicate stories persuasively, they need to embody them. Organisational leaders are individuals who influence the behaviour, thoughts and feelings of a significant number of other people ('followers') either by word or personal example (Gardner, 1995). Inspirational leaders can make their messages even more powerful by leading by example (Forster, et al. 1999). Indeed, Roddick continually reinforced the theme of 'leadership' and 'communication' by constructing accounts in her narratives of how she actively practiced such behaviour:

I learnt things that actually didn't shape me as a leader but you look back and say that when the shit hit the fan, this is what leaders should be doing. In terms of the instant, intimate communications with your staff and not just waiting to give out news releases to the press. So you gain from them-the story, an ongoing story. The newsletters, *Gobsmack!*, some of the original ones when the media was really fowl to us - how we dealt with it. It was a very interesting way of doing it: audiocassette communications vehicle. It was all about dialogue. Circular dialogue. And also, people always came to me beyond anybody else. Always came to Gordon and myself. They had our ear, we had their ear. We were less frightened about it than some of the top management. That was one of the biggest epiphanies that they would come and talk to us like people on the line, truck drivers, people in middle management, and tell us what was going on. But they would find it harder to talk to their next in line. (Roddick, interview with researcher, 2001).

As illustrated above, Roddick constructed herself as a great communicator and a natural leader, highlighting a perceived link between leadership and communication. In fact, she used stories to form relationships with her 'followers,' to build trust and to establish loyalty. In addition to their cognitive impact, Witten (1983) points out that the unique power of narrative talk stems from its ability to set forth truth claims that

are shielded from testing at the same time as it is persuasive and memorable. According to Habermas (1979) truth claims are implicit assertions contained within speech acts that the propositions that are uttered are true and morally correct. Roddick grabs audience's attention and the one-way nature of storytelling does not allow for listeners to question the narrative's content. However, written narratives are more open to challenges from the audience as shown below.

Controlling values: Governing The Body Shop world

While Roddick was the force and conduit through which The Body Shop's community was established, some found her passion offensive. One staff member who left the organisation explained that she "...just felt that I had to be permanently angelic. I began to hate the face of Anita Roddick telling me it was my duty to save the world" (Brock, 1993, p. 106). A social investment analyst described The Body Shop as a "closed, autocratic company where critics are intimidated and few outsiders are invited to speak to employees" (Bavaria, 1995, p. 105). By her own admission, Roddick neither seeks nor continues conversations with those who do not share her ideologies (Brock, 1993). Thus, only those franchisees, employees and customers who buy into The Body Shop's values and philosophy are likely to be comfortable with The Body Shop's position and remain part of The Body Shop community. New Zealand franchise owner, Barrie Thomas recalls:

...it is a touchy subject. I won't forget that we ran an anti-wood chipping campaign in Australia and in Canberra and in Lancelor in Tasmania, particularly Canberra, it is a franchised outlet, it is a centre of logging activity and forestry and our shop there was barricaded and closed for a couple of days. And the franchisees said, 'oh, this is so exciting. This is why I want to be involved in The Body Shop.' Whereas I heard others saying, 'My shop's closed, what are you trying to do, you're destroying my business!' This is what it was all about and for staff too. And it was tough in the company store in Lancelor and the staff were getting abused by customers but they *believed in the issue*. I hope Anita is right because the activism did make us different in the past, it did make the company what it is. (Thomas, interview with researcher, 2001, emphasis added)

As the above quote illustrates, word choices indicate levels of discomfort and tension at the interpenetration of personal and organisational contexts. The discursive

utterances of the franchise storyteller (Thomas, interview with researcher, 2001) announce the problematic juxtaposition of Roddick's values and the values of Body Shop franchises who were not as sympathetic with the romantic plot. The instability in the storylines revealed discursive struggles in The Body Shop narrative.

While Roddick might be commended for her commitment to social and environmental values, her autocratic manner has been criticised as stifling the ethical motivation of others in her community (Jardine, 1994). The Body Shop's structure in the 1990s was quite hierarchical. The Roddicks', apparently reluctant to share power, maintained relatively tight control over the company and had only recently given in to pressure to adopt a "less autocratic" structure (Jardine, 1994). The company basically worked through a top-down communication process. For instance, there was very little participation in decision-making by franchisees, especially when it came to what they could sell in Body Shop stores. Roddick clearly constructed herself as the leader who controlled The Body Shop brand and openly acknowledged her autocratic approach in my interview with her:

What we control is the product. They cannot sell products outside The Body Shop logo. So they can't bring in any other competitive brand, or any other- even accessories- unless we've checked where they are made, unless they've been accredited as a supplier. So we control the livery of the shop, what it looks like as well. And all the visual art materials, all of the press materials, all the information and point-of-sale material we control as well. (Roddick, interview with researcher, 2001a)

Consequently, the chain became extremely reliant on Roddick's narrative for its direction. This dependence on corporate narratives was fostered - as outlined in chapter five - by Roddick, who assumed her staff would adopt and promote her narrative. While the internal adoption of The Body Shop narrative was successful in its early years, its continued success into the future would depend on Roddick retaining the loyalty, trust and admiration of her staff and franchisees - something which, according to critics - the rhetor might fail to do.

While Roddick remained an inspiration to many Body Shop employees, and some company policies, such as child care and spousal abuse counselling, were worker-

friendly, some argued that Roddick was not anxious to grant workers real power. Once again, Roddick asserted her desire to maintain control in the organisation by dismissing the need for her staff to talk to anyone other than herself about workplace issues or problems. After all, Roddick had constructed herself as the 'mother' figure who prided herself on protecting her 'family,' that The Body Shop was a 'family affair.' She explains: "It was my view unions were only needed when the management were bastards" (Roddick, 1991, p. 157). As discussed earlier in chapter five, Roddick constructed herself as the figurehead of The Body Shop family by making it clear that problems in the organisation should be 'kept in the family.' Indeed by that standard, some would say The Body Shop needed a union! In 1991, David Brook was hired as The Body Shop's first environmental manager in the US. In 1994, Brook was unsympathetic towards Roddick and the company and had this to say about issues of leadership and control:

The company just treated people like crap. There were so many people who were incredibly vivacious, enthusiastic and naïve. They embraced the philosophy in such amazing ways and worked their butts off. Yet the company didn't give a damn about them. Anita would say, 'speak out, question authority, make the company do things we say we do,' and they would do that and get fired...The people who ran the place were extremely ruthless. They have the image of a great extended family. It wasn't, it was one great dysfunctional family. At the time of the move, they just 'displaced' people, because they could hire people cheaper down there [in North Carolina]. What kind of company is...that? (cited in Moberg, 1994, p. 16).

As illustrated in the quote above, counter-stories of the 'family' found their way into The Body Shop narrative, indicating how narratives, as powerful forms of talk, exercise covert control in the workplace. It is in part through the recounting of narratives that the hierarchical relationships in organisations are imaged, workers are taught the parameters and obligations of their roles, and behavioural norms in service of the organisation's end are conveyed (Witten, 1993). In his examination of narrative as a device for the legitimisation of dominant power relationships in organisations, Mumby (1988) argued that narratives, read politically, are ideological forces that privilege some interests over others.

Organisational stories legitimate the power relations within the organisation; they rationalise existing practices, traditions, and rituals; and they articulate through exemplars the philosophy of management and the policies that make the organisation distinctive (Martin & Powers, 1983, p. 97). What Roddick did was to couch her rhetoric within an organisational discourse to ensure that employees lived The Body Shop narrative. Thus, Roddick's rhetoric would appear to fit what Clarke and Newman (1997) consider a key characteristic of managerial discourse given its positing of the management as active agents able to shape employee and customer responses as they deem appropriate. Indeed, Roddick stated in her interview with me that her communicative strategy was driven by an intention to stimulate her audience and inspire them to adopt her values:

But the group of us who were *shaping the communications* were all the values-led people. Not having any money, we just found any blank space to get messages out and we used powerful energy and statements *that moved you and could move others*. (Roddick, interview with researcher, 2001a, emphasis added)

This statement can clearly be interpreted as Roddick displaying was an institutional need for control, motivated by the need to serve the purpose of The Body Shop.

Roddick's need for institutional power was of course derived from her own identification with and commitment to The Body Shop's objectives and interests. Control was therefore the vehicle that she saw as serving the needs of the organisation and its members. However, in terms of how a leader is perceived, this can lead to confusion as to whether actions are taken for the good of the company, or for personal egotistical interest. For example, Barrie Thomas recounts an event where Roddick, as founder of The Body Shop, undermined his authority in a New Zealand store. However, while criticising her controlling style, he does acknowledge the fact that Roddick's end goal was primarily to ensure the accomplishment of The Body Shop's objectives:

...she's got a very, very clear idea of what's right and what's wrong in terms of what The Body Shop should be doing. She's not very good at delegating and that has been a problem in the past and it caused a lot of frustration among staff not so much here but in England...So, I was head of design and I'd brief you to do something and come up with a

poster, she'd come and see you and say 'what are you doing. Oh, that's a load of rubbish! Don't do that. Do this.' So you wouldn't know what to do and I'd be seething. So she's great at managing by interference! She has got a clear idea of what she wants. And it is difficult for staff. When you're in that situation, you're not going to do something Anita doesn't want you to do. It can be very demoralising especially if you spend a couple of weeks doing this design and she comes and says, 'that's a load of rubbish!' It has caused problems. But she can't help herself. It is her baby, The Body Shop. She's got to interfere. So, it's strength and a weakness. (Thomas, interview with researcher, 2001)

As this quotation illustrates, Roddick clearly maintained a tight control on the organisation, and she did this, just as she managed the company's identity through a very conscious use of language which was designed to elicit employee compliance with *her* values and commitment to achieving *her* vision for The Body Shop. Indeed what is particularly interesting about Thomas's quote here is his memory of the effect that language had on the staff and The Body Shop culture.

Narrating a new business story

Probably the best-known libertarian narrative on business written by Milton Friedman. Friedman (1962) sees only one social responsibility of business: maximise profits and stay within the rules of the game. His version of libertarian business ethics rejects business leaders doing anything else as fundamentally subversive and against the character and nature of a free economy (Friedman, 1962). But Roddick rejected his narrative, proposing quite a different story.

Competing conceptions of business can be seen as alternative narratives, as different stories about how to understand business and one's role in it (Boje, 2001). They indicate appropriate standards of conduct and modes of being. Ethical categories take their shape from the narratives-in-use. Thus, business and business ethics are contingent on these narratives, not independent from them. Roddick set out to establish an alternative narrative of business, one that was part of The Body Shop:

One of the most important things is to somehow or other sabotage the language of economics, the language of business and put a new

language in, put new definitions of measurements. Profit and loss isn't the only way. There should be a real re-enchantment in terms of business and not business in terms of maximizing profits. If you wanted to turn the notion of re-enchanting business, making people delighted by business, to be proud to be in business because you were doing something beyond your own self - that would be wonderful. (Roddick, interview with researcher, 2001a)

The Body Shop operated within the discourse of environmentalism and corporate social responsibility and in doing so, it openly resisted the language, behaviour and established economic ideology of traditional business.

Resistance is an essential part of the strategic relationship of power and offers the possibility for change. Resistance may be thought of as “evading or transgressing discursive boundaries and practices which have been stabilised through institutions” (Motion, 1997, p. 127). In Roddick's subject position of activist, she resisted being positioned within a traditional business discourse which “implies a primary concern with the financial health or economic ‘bottom-line’ of the establishment: to maximise profit” (Fine, 1996). In line with Foucault's (1970) thoughts on resistance and power, Roddick chose instead to adopt another set of discursive constituted understandings and experiment with a wider range of identities, a choice also made by like-minded others. Roddick highlighted the ambiguity surrounding identity, as discussed in chapter three (see Mackenzie 1978; Cheney, 1991), by reinforcing The Body Shop's point of difference through a *collective* identity:

What has been remarkable in the last 24 years is the fact that we have been part of a new business agenda, a sort of quirky, group of companies and people who have been thought of as the architects for a new movement and the movement was called Businesses for Social Responsibility. Most of us came out of the sixties, out the anti-war movement. Most of us, thank God, had never been to a business school. Most of us had never read a book on economics and thank God had not ever heard of Milton Friedman! What we were, we were passionate activists. We were entrepreneurs. (Roddick, 2001b)

Roddick's resistance of exclusionary business practices is part of the socio-economic struggle that has taken place over the role of business in society since the early 1990s (see Elkington, 1998; Zadek, 1999; Livesey & Kearins, 2002). In order to overcome

the threat of overrationalisation (Sorell, 1998), business ethics had to tailor its standards not to business as usual but to businesses that manage to be both morally out of the ordinary and profitable at the same time. Thus, Roddick's rhetorical task was to demonstrate that not only was The Body Shop different in terms of integrating values and ethics in its daily operations, it was highly successful in terms of its financial performance. It also served as a strategic point of difference for Roddick and The Body Shop, which was consistently communicated throughout The Body Shop narrative

Using human values as a tool, Roddick differentiated her company from 'other' multinationals, by positioning The Body Shop as a 'global' company. However, by definition, multinationals are partly global. Nevertheless, Roddick made a case for a special usage of the term 'global' to construct a desired image of The Body Shop. Such tactics could easily be interpreted once again, as a selling point, a marketing strategy, to promote her organisation. For instance, she believed that with the word 'global', came responsibility and a multi-cultural, anthropological and spiritual tone. Discursively, Roddick (1991) made the distinction in the following way: "Global companies have values; multinationals just trade, make money and gobble up other companies" (p. 253). Roddick attributed The Body Shop's success to these 'global' values and proclaimed that the company must never lose sight of them if it was to survive and keep its distinctive identity.

As groundwork for articulating her values approach, Roddick also set out to attack several of the popular business myths and metaphors. According to Randels (1998), worldview narratives not only describe particular understandings of business, but have important normative ramifications. They are not merely stories, but construe how we do, can, or should view the world, and how business people and corporations act, can act, and should act (or, who or what they should be). From a narrative standpoint, Alasdair MacIntyre (1981) claims that the question of what we should do depends upon the stories of which we are a part. In this way, whether an individual or corporation should sincerely endorse the Coalition for Environmentally Responsible Economies (CERES) or Valdez principles, for example, depends upon the story one enacts regarding business and its role in the larger society. In a speech to business

students at the University of Illinois, Roddick described her thoughts about the role of business in society, once again highlighting the theme of ‘care’ and ‘family’ in The Body Shop narrative:

The most powerful words are the four letter words: ‘care’, ‘love’ and how does that work within a business context? How do you care for your employees, how do you make the aesthetics of the workplace divine, funny, challenging, charming? How do you keep the spirit of education going on in the workplace, not only for the skills that are needed but beyond the skills? Your training, your guiding-anything to do with not being in business as an employer. How do you protect families, how do you make sure that women’s voices and energy are not being suppressed and their instinct and intuition? (Roddick, 2001c)

Roddick’s narrative can be described as prophetic (Randels, 1998; Morgan, 1986; Senge, 1990), in that she articulated a vision with the goal of changing the listener, or reader, and ultimately society as a whole, or at least one particular corner of it. Her speeches and writing articulated a moral or ethical vision for changing society’s assessment of business, and hence prescribed change in those relations. After all, narratives memorably yet implicitly advocate desired organisational values to members and to the public (Martin, 1982; Martin, Feldman, Hatch & Sitkin, 1983; Mumby, 1987, 1993; Wilkins, 1984). She set out to re-invent business through The Body Shop narrative which incorporated a vision of fundamental change.

Rhetorical strategies: Engaging the audience in The Body Shop stories

Unusually, The Body Shop used its annual reports as public forms of communication. While a detailed analysis of Body Shop annual reports is presented in the section below, this section outlines the relationship between annual reports, narrative and identity and organisational leadership in an attempt to frame the analysis of The Body Shop’s annual and values reports.

While not traditionally considered important to companies – aside from the obvious aspect of the financial bottom line - annual reports *are* narratives in that they are written text giving an account of an event or series of events, chronologically

connected (Evered, 1983). In fact, the narrative portions were shown to be the most important sections of the annual report (Lee & Tweedie, 1975, 1977; Chang & Most, 1985; Day, 1986). Of particular relevance to the rhetorical nature of this study, Adelberg (1979) found that managers systematically shape the way information is conveyed in annual reports. Adelberg's (1979) findings are used to argue that from a rhetorical standpoint, Roddick - as manager or chief storyteller - selected, shaped and manifested the raw materials in The Body Shop's annual reports which served to reflect her own persona, and promote both her personal and organisational identity. Evidence of language and tonal features suggestive of public relations rhetoric has been identified in annual reports previously (Yuthas, Rogers & Dillard, 2002). Yet, despite their economic importance, annual reports as a rhetorical genre have received relatively little attention from scholars interested in the communicative effectiveness of public discourse (Yuthas, et al., 2002).

Recently, annual reports have come to be considered ideal places to look for the kinds of stories companies tell. These "stories have narrative qualities, particularly a drama (a sense of plot), accounts of reality, form that is chronological, characters, and circumstances" (Heath, 1994, p. 72). Stories do more than report details. They are the living of principles. They lead to and guide enactments because they have form and order (Heath, 1994, p. 80). Gaertner and Ramnarayan (1983) have suggested, organisational effectiveness is often more dependent on the success of the story told of an organisation's performance than on the actual measures of profits or outputs. The audience of annual reports insist on seeing the chronicle of events, not least because they want to have an opportunity to make their own emplotment (Evered, 1983). The real interest concerns the plot (e.g. *why* is The Body Shop so successful?)

Reports are viewed as communication documents of symbols selected and ordered to give meaning to a story (Stanton & Stanton, 2002). In fact, some argue that the main purpose of annual reports is to proactively construct a particular visibility and meaning rather than revealing 'what was there'. This argument mirrors the sentiment of Hines (1988) that, in communicating reality, reality is constructed: "We create a picture of an organisation and on the basis of that picture...people think and act. And by responding

to that picture of reality, we make it so” (p. 257). Yet I would also argue that from a marketing communications perspective, The Body Shop, unusually, used its annual reports as an ideological weapon, a proactive tool by which Roddick influenced and shaped what was important to both the organisation and stakeholders in an attempt to create favourable impressions of The Body Shop’s corporate image and identity.

The significance of Roddick as ‘narrator persona’ in The Body Shop’s annual and social and environmental reports highlights yet again the narrative-identity connection examined in the previous chapter. Frequently in those reports, the ‘implied author,’ Anita Roddick, is fully dramatised, with the publication of her name, biography and photographs. While Roddick was chief narrator, she was never the producer of company reports. The Body Shop Design Team was responsible for the production of all reports, incorporating Roddick’s voice, personality, values, biases and goals especially in the narrative sections of the reports.

Like many long documents on complex topics, Body Shop annual reports and social and environmental reports, were divided into sections. The Body Shop reports compiled several smaller, related units of discourse, which in this context can be referred to as subgenres: biographies, lessons, mission statements, financial statements, stakeholder responses, and other highlights. Many of these subgenres are discourse categories in their own rights; however, here they are subgenres only in the sense of their embedding within an overarching genre, the annual or social report.

In The Body Shop’s annual reports, the design features of the narrative sections emphasise ways in which the organisation constructed images and themes that evoked positive organisational myths. In fact, Cash (1997) argues that most organisational ‘stories’ such as mission statements, trading charters, annual reports and so on, and even organisational literature and research are a blend of myths operating within a dominant myth. The application of Barthes’s (1972) theory of cultural myth to The Body Shop’s annual reports, suggests that by presenting themes in annual reports and offering vivid pictorial images, the producers of the report obscure the differences between reporting the company’s yearly progress and depicting the organisation’s

philosophy and Roddick's personal values. Such values, repeated in other media, were intended to reach the wider business community and influence stakeholder attitudes about the organisation and business in general.

Indeed workplace documents have to be considered as reflecting and influencing the wider political, institutional, social and legal policies of the culture (Longo, 1998). In this way, The Body Shop narrative was both influenced by, and contributed to, the advancement of numerous discourses in 1970s and 1980s Britain, namely the social responsibility discourse and the environmental discourse. In the UK, Bartlett and Jones (1994) observed that between 1970 and 1990, total mandatory content increased rapidly as a result of changing demands from several regulatory bodies. However, voluntary disclosures and the amplification of data included in financial statements, expanded as the annual report moved towards being a public relations document. The dominant theme of these voluntary disclosures was corporate social reporting, being largely concerned with a corporation's interactions with the natural environment, employees, communities and customers. Disclosures are increasing, particularly among larger companies within environmentally sensitive industries (Deegan & Gordon, 1996). Not only did Roddick set out to communicate the identity of her organisation as one that was also challenging the dominant traditional business myths of maximising profits and economic development, she wanted to promote new myths, myths that were in line with social responsibility and myths that would strengthen her personal mission to change the language of business.

Scholars in cultural studies (Berlin & Vivion, 1992) stress how document designers guide the production and interpretation of meanings, making a certain range of significances more likely to appear and others less probable. In this way, it can be argued that The Body Shop's artistic narratives sought to create images of a cosmetics company that was different, a company that was 'against animal testing in the cosmetic industry,' 'sensitive,' 'informative,' and 'responsible' (The Body Shop, 1994b, p. 5). Colourful images of posters used in shop windows, often displaying controversial messages and bold type font used to write 'Learn to *love*. Feel comfortable with your *creative intuition*. Make *compassion, care, harmony* and *trust*

the foundation stones of business. Fall in *love* with new *ideas*,' featured in the organisation's 1992 annual report (The Body Shop, 1992, emphasis added). Such design features became a trademark of all of The Body Shop's annual reports (The Body Shop, 1990b, 1992, 1993, 1994e, 1995a, 1998, 1999 & 2000)¹ and were repeated in other company publications.

In the following analysis of Body Shop annual reports and later, its sustainability values reports, I demonstrate how The Body Shop reports used a nonlinear structure, dramatised ideas through narrators (namely Roddick as 'narrator persona'), embedded a variety of subgenres, and complemented verbal and visual discourse in order to make readers active participants in constructing The Body Shop story. I also show how The Body Shop's rhetorical strategies set out to ensure a favourable response from audiences through emotional interaction with Roddick, the narrator persona, and visual symbolism.

Writing values: Reporting The Body Shop narrative

The narrative sections in The Body Shop's annual reports include the Chairman's statement and summaries of operations and contain stylish graphics and artistic photographs that capture attention and designs of text that allow readers to scan the information. The content of the narrative sections are designed to provoke interpretive and emotional reactions that result in The Body Shop's annual reports offering more to readers than data on the company's yearly progress. These sections embed cultural beliefs and values that may affect how readers envision the company, the industry, and even the business practices of the culture.

The length of the narrative sections in The Body Shop's annual reports has expanded consistently over the last ten years. In 1990, The Body Shop annual report contained no photographs and graphics and no colour. As shown in Appendix 16, its cover is unsophisticated in terms of graphics and style and is conservative. Indeed, the font is

¹ The 1996 and 1997 annual reports were substituted for the organisation's first Values Report which was published in 1996. The second Values Report, 1997 incorporated a financial summary.

which '90' is written is bold, but the text which reads 'report and accounts' (quote from Appendix 16), is simple and factual. Its 31 pages consisted of the Chairman's statement, lists of Directors and advisors, notice of Annual General Meeting and tables of financial data. The 1992 annual report also contained no photographs. However, there was colour. Its cover (see Appendix 17), sets the theme for the document which represents 'green' and 'profits.' Profit is indicated in the title of the report 'The black book,' signalling healthy profits. For instance, The Body Shop's "profit before tax for the year ended 29 February 1992 was up by 26 per cent to £25.2 million" (The Body Shop, 1992, p. 3). The text throughout the whole report was written in The Body Shop's green trademark colour on pale green paper, demonstrating the inescapable connection between its profits and its environmental stance. The consistent theme of 'profits with principles' is therefore clearly presented in its official narrative.

After 1992, page designs in the organisation's annual reports have become much bolder, innovative and unconventional – much like the evolution of The Body Shop's identity. Roddick explains such advancement:

We didn't even go to *graphic illustrators* until much later. Seven years later. But once we found that *graphics* and *art* and *illustration* and we suddenly realised (well we didn't realise for years), that we were the only people on High Street using that ancient form of information: graphic and illustrative art to get our ideas across. So we were *breaking grounds* on that-using illustration as a form of identity and making sure that the visual that we put were corralling people to come and see and talk about you. So it would become a *topic of talk*...Very strongly visuals were the major component in terms of identity (Roddick, interview with researcher, 2001a, emphasis added).

Roddick used graphics and design in the organisation's annual reports to communicate the personality and philosophy of The Body Shop. After all, annual reports were viewed as sophisticated marketing tools (Bekey, 1990), that can impart a particular image for relevant publics (Neu, Warsame & Pedwell, 1998). Once established, Roddick also exercised control over The Body Shop's visual identity as communicated in the organisation's annual reports. When I asked if she had a strong influence over the messages sent out by The Body Shop, she responded:

...in terms of public documents, hugely. Such as the annual reports. I'm having a bigger influence now in the visual look. But almost everything, all used to come through me. I would say, 'no you can't have that, yes you can have that' [the annual reports] are fantastic; that I've always had control of. Any public document, where I'm in it for some reason, I control. (Roddick, interview with researcher, 2001a)

Take for instance The Body Shop's 1993 annual report. Its cover page features fireworks exploding with Body Shop products, celebrating impressive growth and success (see Appendix 18). The theme of growth and success begins on the cover and is carried throughout the narrative, even in the Chairman's statement. Photographs capture the theme of growth with seven double-sided pages picturing the storefront of a Body Shop store, the inside of a Body Shop store, its 10 most popular products, its 20-acre site in Watersmead, and its list of world-wide stores, signalling international expansion. Also on a double-page spread is a collection of quotes from head franchisees around the world. Their accounts add truth to Roddick's narrative in that they consistently reinforce both Roddick's personal and organisational values and strengthen the recurrent and repetitive theme of 'family' as constructed in Roddick's narratives of identity. For instance, the head franchisee for The Body Shop in Greece is quoted as saying: "The Body Shop represents being part of a family with real values" (The Body Shop, 1993a, p. 8). The Body Shop's head franchisee in Cyprus also states: "I look on The Body Shop as a second family – everyone is rooting for each other, there's no back-stabbing" (The Body Shop, 1993a, p. 8). The inclusion of these voices in the annual report present a 'united' and 'coherent' organisational narrative.

Head franchisees also reinforced The Body Shop's plot to "make a change" (The Body Shop, 1993a, p. 8). This theme was manifested in the 1993 report through the construction of an alternative business myth – one that was innovative and unconventional. Traditional business myths equated growth and success with the maximisation of profits. What was often omitted were the negative consequences of success such as costs to the environment, natural resources and local communities. The Body Shop constructed the notion of success with a different set of values. For instance, featured on the back cover of the annual report is the recurrent theme of

profits and principles: “The success of The Body Shop proves that profits and principles can go hand in hand, and that business can be a force for social change... We want to put back more than we take out” (The Body Shop, 1993a, p. 7).

Narratives in the 1993 annual report also signalled future goals and storylines for The Body Shop: “The Body Shop’s commercial success and competitiveness can only improve as environmental obligations and awareness increase” (The Body Shop, 1993a, p. 53). Such storylines were unheard of in the cosmetics and beauty industry but they were part of Roddick’s construction of a company with a point of difference. Roddick also served to add credibility amongst The Body Shop’s co-branding partners such as Greenpeace. After all, the organisation’s narratives were in harmony with the rising environmental discourse. In 1992, the environment moved to the top of the global political agenda when, for a few days in June, more than a hundred heads of government assembled at the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro to consider the future of the planet and endorse a new commitment to the environment and economic development. The long-term objective which soon became the buzzword of the 1990s was ‘sustainable development.’

The 1993 report also suggested this alternative myth by ignoring some traditions of page design. The report, like the company, constructed conventions of its own. For instance, at the back of the 1993 annual report, two double-page spreads comprise narratives about The Body Shop’s commitment to social and environmental change. Each spread begins with the title: ‘what we care about’ (The Body Shop, 1993a). One double-page spread is dedicated to the environment. Here, narrative intertextuality is prominent in the text. For instance, The Body Shop continually refers to its *Green Book* and other environmental reports (see below) to reinforce its ‘green’ theme. Another spread repeats its ‘profits and principles’ theme. Here, The Body Shop continues to tell its stories – scattered events throughout the year are unified under the recurrent theme of ‘values.’ Here, accounts of The Body Shop’s success in being a model employer, encouraging empowerment, environmental management, ethical sourcing, campaigning, community projects, lobbying, supporting like-minded

groups, The Body Shop Foundation and socially responsible investing are clearly bulleted in bold font.

Realistic photographs and graphics telling an extended story constitute a documentary style, one that can suggest the standards of accuracy and honesty to which reports are held (David, 2001). Because a documentary style showcases real objects, such as buildings, employees, and products, in supposedly natural settings, it is ideal for annual reports because they persuade readers of the credibility of the reports (Graves, Flesher & Jordon, 1996). The Body Shop's annual report capitalises on the documentary's truth-telling ethos by including photographs of its stores, its employees both in the factory and in the store, its customers, its products, its campaigns and its trading partners in third-world communities. The artistic photographs used in The Body Shop's annual reports elicit emotional responses from its viewers and contribute to constructing memorable images needed for mythmaking. For instance, the theme running through all Body Shop reports is summed up in the following statement: 'Quite simply put, *we walk our talk*' (The Body Shop, 1993a, emphasis added).

In The Body Shop's 1995 annual report, six pages contain coloured photographs of customers signing petitions in Body Shop stores, Body Shop posters displayed in stores around the world, Body Shop lorries featuring pictures and details and missing persons and Body Shop employees and customers protesting in support of the Ogoni people. These images all add credibility to Roddick's campaigning storylines once again, strengthening the theme that runs through the 1995 annual report: *action*. To stress this theme, snapshots of Anita Roddick sitting on the ground, weaving bags with women in Corr show her personal involvement in and commitment to, community trade (The Body Shop, 1995a) (see Appendix 19). Such images also challenge the myth of all CEOs sitting in the boardroom, counting their millions. Here, Roddick, a multimillionaire, is seen 'walking the talk,' engaging with the community and 'getting her hands dirty.'

In line with The Body Shop's decision not to advertise, the narrative sections of annual reports enjoy an advantage that advertising lacks. Blyer and Perkins (1999)

propose that narrative – specifically “narratives in and about professional and public life – is in part, a response to a human need to make meaning and to forge connections between seemingly disparate bits of knowledge and experience” (p. 245). The narrative sections in The Body Shop’s annual reports told stories that organised the company’s yearly history under such unified themes as ‘care,’ ‘values,’ ‘vision,’ ‘action,’ and ‘customers’ (The Body Shop, 1995a), that readers intuit by scanning the document. Once again, narrative intertextuality highlights The Body Shop’s strategic use of language in that by referring to other Body Shop texts (such as the *Green Book* 3 and The Body Shop Trading Charter, it constructs a unified and credible identity. The heavy emphasis on graphic design in the organisation’s reports was ideal for mythmaking because they highlighted selected images and text, emphasising positive aspects of the company.

Three years later, The Body Shop’s 1998 annual report was still shattering traditional business myths and inventing new ones. The report was 69 pages long, with 20 of the 69 pages of the report containing elaborate designs and photographs that double the content of the single pages. The cover of the report is bright orange in colour with a single hemp leaf blown-up in the centre of the page (see Appendix 20). On the top left corner is the boxed caption: ‘Reasons to be cheerful.’ The back cover of the report, which is bright green, also features a full-sized picture of The Body Shop’s ‘best-selling range in the UK’ – the Hemp hand protector (The Body Shop, 1998a) (see Appendix 21). Repeated in the top left hand corner is the same boxed-text: ‘Reasons to be cheerful.’ The phrase is indeed subversive and creative. It grabs the attention of the reader through its association with the image – the hemp leaf. The striking similarity between a hemp leaf and a marijuana leaf easily creates the association of the effects of the plant – one would assume marijuana makes you ‘cheerful!’

The theme set at the beginning of the 1998 report – the hemp leaf on the cover – is one of creativity and attitude. Readers of the report are enticed by the report’s cover which features what seems to be a highly provocative image of an illegal product. The deviation continued: The Body Shop had another stereotype to shatter. A double-page spread is dedicated to hemp. On one page, under a large photograph of a hemp leaf,

The Body Shop states the old myth: ‘Doped. Ganga, bhang, weed, pot, whatever you call it, it is a narcotic drug.’ The myth is boldly challenged on the facing page: ‘Duped. Industrial grade hemp has suffered from a bad case of mistaken identity.’ (The Body Shop, 1998a). Similarly, a photograph of a Body Shop product made from hemp is placed above the statement. The message that The Body Shop is trying to get across is that hemp is not a drug; instead, it is an “environmentally sustainable, economically viable supercrop” (The Body Shop, 1998a). Such symbolism was indeed used by The Body Shop to guide readers’ interpretation towards a particular outcome: that The Body Shop *was* different.

The bold image and creative design features, artistic photographs and boxed captions, make it easy for the reader to interpret the themes and images. The key message of the 1998 report is that The Body Shop continues to be creative, innovative, subversive *and* successful.

It continues to take risks and challenge existing myths, in this case about women and the beauty industry and hemp. The inside cover comprises a full-size black and white photograph, with a 1950s theme, of Anita Roddick and a male both holding a glass of red wine. A caption above the male states: ‘what’s a nice girl like you doing in a place like this?’ Roddick, who is facing the camera, hence the reader, replies: ‘I own it’ (The Body Shop, 1998a) (see Appendix 22). The title of the photograph is placed under the photograph in large font: ‘Sexism’s toast.’ Clearly, Roddick set out to break traditional gender myths and stereotypes that surrounded the role of women in business, particularly, in the cosmetics industry. Our very understandings of terms like ‘power’ and ‘authority’ are located in and dependent on gendered understandings in which male behaviour is constituted in opposition to female behaviour (Butler, 1990). Society has traditionally promoted the view that to be female is to not have authority (Butler, 1990). As Founder of The Body Shop, Roddick resisted presenting herself in stereotypical female ways. She explained: “It’s unusual in the fact that, definitely, a woman was running it and should never be seen to be running it especially in the beauty business. It’s all run by men, all except for maybe a couple now” (Roddick, interview with researcher, 2001a).

In line with the position of women and beauty, self-esteem is another theme that continues to run throughout the 1998 annual report. Another double-page spread features Ruby, Barbie's more voluptuous look-a-like, who appeared in posters, provocatively reclining naked on a chaise lounge under the slogan: 'There are three billion who don't look like supermodels and only eight who do' (see Appendix 23). Ruby, who was the subject of much controversy, was designed to challenge the beauty myth that portrays unrealistic, unhealthy images of women. The message sent out by The Body Shop was to 'Love your body – just the way it is' (The Body Shop, 1998a). Such images supported the consistency and credibility of The Body Shop narrative which relentlessly attacked the cosmetics industry for perpetuating false beauty myths. The campaign also positioned The Body Shop as a 'caring' alternative.

Some would argue that there was a special audience for this message: "By linking her own ebullient personality with the corporation's identity, she appeals to the post-feminist, New Age woman consumer who wants both business power and a 'natural' feminine beauty" (Moberg, 1994, p. 12). *Indeed, the traditional cosmetics industry conflicted with her personal, social, environmental, and political values. Thus, she did not see herself as a member of the established cosmetics industry. What she set out to do was develop a new business paradigm for the cosmetics industry.*

That the 2000 Body Shop annual report reverts to a more conservative design, representing a different stage in the life of the organisation is of course highly significant (see Appendix 24). Among some of the changes at The Body Shop was the hiring of a new CEO, Patrick Gournay (this is discussed in depth in chapter seven). Roddick (interview with researcher, 2001a) explained the reason for the lack of design in the organisation's more recent publications: "Well, I'm a visual, a visual, he's not." It is here that we start to see elements of The Body Shop's unique visual identity under threat. Thus, the report contains two distinct sections: 'Talking business,' and 'Talking figures.' (The Body Shop, 2000). In the first section only, there are nine full-page coloured and black and white photographs of workers in Ghana who supply Community Traded cocoa beans for The Body Shop, a member of the Chepang community in Southern Nepal, the Ogoni people in Nigeria, Co-Chairs, Anita and

Gordon Roddick, and then CEO, Patrick Gournay, products from the new ayurvedic range, Anita Roddick on an elephant in Nepal and the inside of a Body Shop store displaying its hemp range. As explained above, these realistic photographs tell an extended story in that they allow for reconstructions of reality and portray an image of an organisation that is transparent, committed and ‘walks its talk.’

In sum, Roddick used The Body Shop’s annual reports to communicate the company’s identity. Trends to promote profits with principles and integrate values in business practices represented in The Body Shop’s annual reports constructed a company with a point of difference. In the 1990s, these trends took hold in business, applying pressure on other business’s to make them a reality. For instance, large companies such as Royal Dutch/Shell, Boeing, Johnson & Johnson, Xerox Hewlett Packard, to name a few, also began to talk about the integration of values in their business and their involvement in the communities in which they operate in their annual reports. In this sense, The Body Shop’s goal to invoke positive business myths met with some success. It became commonplace in the 1990s to expect business to behave in a socially responsible way and adhere to values in their daily operations, hence the widespread adoption of triple bottom line reporting as discussed below. While wider political, institutional, social and legal issues reflected and influenced acceptance of The Body Shop narrative, The Body Shop served as a role model for many (Garfield, 1992, 1995), proving that re-writing the rules was indeed good for business.

However, by definition, myths conceal details of their subject and omitted details are often overlooked or even lost. Cultural myths, Barthes (1972) argues, are simplified to remove contradictions. But contradictions did exist in The Body Shop narrative and critics of The Body Shop made it their mission to expose the missing details and judge the myths within specific contexts. The “first and biggest attempt to challenge the reputation of The Body Shop” came in 1992, when Channel 4 chose to broadcast a documentary on the *Dispatches* programme that, according to Roddick’s (2000a) version of events, “savaged The Body Shop and effectively accused Gordon and me of being cheats, hypocrites and liars” (p. 215). The day after the programme was

aired, Body Shop shares dropped from 270 pence to 160 pence (Roddick, 2000a, p. 216). A second, more personal attack was delivered by an American journalist, Jon Entine.

Challenging The Body Shop narrative

The harsh realities of the stage

On 1 September, 1994, Jon Entine launched a broadside attack in *Business Ethics* – a UK publication – that dramatically challenged the dominant Body Shop narrative. In the article, titled, ‘Shattered Image: Is The Body Shop too good to be true?’ Entine attacked the company’s socially responsible image. Entine also highlighted wider issues of a discursive struggle present within The Body Shop discourse – the tension between corporate social responsibility and economic growth.

In a discursive attempt to construct him as the ‘enemy,’ Roddick referred to Entine as the ‘corporate stalker’ (2000a; 2000b; 2000c; 2001a). Entine interviewed over 100 current and former franchisees, employees, trading partners, suppliers, cosmetics experts and social researchers. Entine (1994a) questioned The Body Shop’s claim of using natural ingredients asserting: “...Roddick uses petrochemically sourced ingredients such as mineral oil, petrolatum, carbomers, and isopropyl myristate, which some natural cosmetics companies have phased out” (p. 25). He interviewed specialists in natural cosmetics who claimed that: “If you take The Body Shop name off the products and put ‘Payless Drug Store’ on the label, you get an idea of the product’s quality” (p. 25).

Entine (1994a) also accused the company of competing with its own franchisees stating: “The Body Shop appears to be the only major franchise operation in the US which competes with its own franchisees by direct sales through mail order catalogues” (p. 28), and misleading the public with its ‘against animal testing’ policy. He wrote – citing organisational documents as his sources:

More recently, The Body Shop has increased its use of ingredients that at some point have been tested on animals. In an internal memo dated May 19, 1992, the company’s purchasing manager

acknowledged that 46.5 percent of its ingredients had been tested on animals, up from 34 percent the year before. (p. 26)

He also asserted that Roddick copied the name and concept from an existing company in Berkeley, California. Claiming her 'story' as far from original, he argued:

In just one of many examples, the Berkeley Body Shop wrote in its one-page product sheet in 1971, 'All of our products are biodegradable and made to our specifications in Berkeley...Bottles 20 cents or bring your own.' In her price sheet, issued seven years later, Anita wrote: 'All our products are biologically soft and made to our specifications...Bottles 12p, or bring your own.' (Entine, 1994a, p. 24)

Additionally, Entine (1994a) claimed that some of The Body Shop's Trade Not Aid products were not purchased from fair trade sources:

Over the years, The Body Shop has sourced a substantial amount of babassu oil for its 'Rainforest Bath Beads' from the British-based Croda Chemical Company (which makes the oil from nuts that do not grow in the rainforest) and from Cultural Survival Enterprises (CSE), a for-profit trade group in Massachusetts. CSE has said that it has sourced most of its supply from the mainstream commercial markets. (p. 27).

Entine's (1994a) rewriting of The Body Shop story was indeed "salutary and commercially damaging for the company" (*New Consumer Briefing*, 1994, p. 1). In my interview with Roddick she described the impact of the controversy: "Oh, it definitely dented-the reputation. You felt extremely dented by people, because what they read was the 'truth'" (Roddick, interview with researcher, 2001a, emphasis added). By this Roddick meant that people actually *believed* what they read. Once a colleague of Anita Roddick, Marjorie Kelly (1994b), Editor of *Business Ethics*, evidently printed the story with mixed feelings stating in the magazine's editorial that:

I have very mixed feelings about the cover story we carry this issue – a cover story that offers a troubling look at The Body Shop. This British cosmetics maker is a company most of us know as a shining star of social responsibility. But as *our story* shows, it's a company where the reality is very different from the image. (p. 1, emphasis added)

As evidenced in the above quote, Entine's article served as a catalyst for competing stories which were constructed to challenge the substance of The Body Shop story. In fact, Marjorie Kelly set out to add credibility to her magazine's 'story' by

constructing *Business Ethics* as “the voice of socially responsible business” (Kelly, 1994b, p. 3).

Entine (1994a) selected, shaped and manifested elements in his article to create a particular narrative meaning. Among those elements was the inclusion of a multiplicity of voices in *his story*. One way Entine and others set out to persuasively refute The Body Shop narrative was to incorporate characters - ex-employees of The Body Shop – in *their stories*. Each had his or her own story to tell about the “abusive practices” (p. 27) at The Body Shop. Others maintained that the idea behind the organisation was “just a marketing gimmick” claiming to have “seen too many faces of Anita” (p. 25). They professed that the “environmental story presented in its publications is ‘window dressing’” (p. 26), that The Body Shop was “not a very innovative company” (p. 25). Some even went so far as to suggest that The Body Shop was “a gangsterish operation beneath its kindly exterior” (p. 25). The rhetorical strategies of Anita Roddick were also criticized: “Anita is a myth-o-maniac...she instinctively understands the facile nature of the press and plays to it” (p. 24). These characters clearly set out to construct Roddick as a storyteller in their efforts to deconstruct her story.

The plot thickened. Entine (1994b; 1995a; 1995b; 1995c; 1996) continued his attack on The Body Shop after his publication in *Business Ethics*, claiming that the article only represented a sampling of his findings. He continued to invite ex-employees of The Body Shop to tell their story in numerous publications (see Entine, 1994b; 1995a; 1995b; 1996). Annotations were scathing and unsympathetic. According to Foss (1989), one way to test the substance of a narrative is to examine how readily the audience is likely to accept the proposed alternative narrative. Critics of The Body Shop and supporters of Entine in the media, were indeed aware that in order to persuade the public to accept their competing stories, they had to convince consumers. Another American journalist, David Moberg (1994) believed that “if consumers become aware of such exploitation, they are likely to become more cynical about any social claims that business make” (p. 12). Sympathetic to Entine’s cause, Moberg (1994) used similar tactics of incorporating Body Shop characters in his story. For

instance, Moberg (1994) included accounts from David Brook, The Body Shop's first manager of environmental affairs in the US who was extremely critical of the organisation's environmental practices: "They've been able to perpetrate a lot of lies...I haven't seen a shred of evidence they've done anything in this environment that's progressive" (cited in Moberg, 1994, p. 16). As a direct consequence of such criticism, critics declared that "The Body Shop doesn't deserve its image as 'one of the most responsible companies in the world'" (Moberg, 1994, p. 12).

Stories were also constructed to refute Roddick's credibility as a storyteller, to construct her as a fraud, someone not to be trusted. In line with what Foss (1989) refers to as 'devil' terms, Entine claimed that: "The issue is not that Anita Roddick has broken promises but that she's broken trust. It's an immoral company that has lied from the beginning. What she's doing is exploiting people's innocence and idealism. She's a liberal *demagogue*" (cited in Moberg, 1994, p. 16, emphasis added). He also referred to the Roddicks as 'perpetrators' and 'draconian' (Entine, 1995c, p. 100). 'In April 1995, Entine wrote a letter to the 'social responsibility movement,' in which he constructed more 'devil' terms by referring to The Body Shop as a "two-headed *beast*: idealistic and mean-spirited, enthusiastic and reckless, benevolent and vicious" (p. 1). The letter was written as a response to negative reactions to his articles on The Body Shop. The plot of his story remains unchanged - that The Body Shop story is a lie - and *his* storylines remain consistent. However, the tone of his letter was more hard-hitting and forceful. Entine concludes his letter to those in the social responsibility movement on a very harsh note:

This is a story about green washing. This is about money and corruption. This is in danger of becoming *your* story. Honest people cannot be duped. Some of you are on the verge of not only standing for nothing: you stand exposed as hypocrites. (Entine, 1995b, p. 20, emphasis in original)

Not only did Entine's attack on The Body Shop damage the image of the organisation, its shares dropped more than 15 percent on the London Stock Exchange (Royal, 1994).

However, there were wider implications for the corporate social responsibility movement. Clear binary oppositions were emerging in the corporate social responsibility drama, where 'god' and 'devil' terms identified the 'good guys' from the 'bad guys,' the 'heroes' from the 'villains.' Advocates in the movement were mindful of the challenges that lay ahead. Joan Bavaria, President of Franklin Research, a social investment research firm based in Boston, and founder of CERES highlighted the dramatic turn of events by constructing what appeared to be a tragic plotline:

What is going on? Are angels falling and devils finding new ways to deceive us?...I do believe we are entering a new era in the world of socially responsible managing and investing...It's a world of imperfect human beings...If socially responsible managers and investors can't adjust to the crowded landscape with more sophisticated analysis, then we don't deserve to survive. (Bavaria, 1995, p. 8)

But The Body Shop was determined to survive and fought back to defend its reputation as the 'good guy' in the tragedy. In fact, it set out to construct itself as the *protagonist* or *victim* in the tragic story.

Defending The Body Shop narrative

According to Cash (1997), story is intent on resolving paradox. All need the 'other' or 'hidden' story set up in the minds of the listener to have their effect. The hidden story unveils the surprises, twists, revelations and 'epiphanies' implicit in a different way of looking at the story 'facts', thereby surfacing the assumptions on which the 'surface' story rests (Cash, 1997). In this view, we tell stories to resolve or dissolve what might be grandly called the central human dilemmas: life and death, good and evil, power and powerlessness. It also suggests that organisations may resolve their dilemmas by acting out and 'recounting' their story (Cash, 1997). Certainly this was the approach used in The Body Shop's response to the Jon Entine article.

Gordon Roddick revealed the 'hidden story' behind *Business Ethics*' motives to publish the article. Prior to publication of the Entine article, Marjorie Kelly, publisher and editor-in-chief of *Business Ethics*, sent a letter to the financial backers of the

magazine. In her letter she states: ‘*This piece will be talked about,*’ she wrote. ‘*It will create a stir...It’s the best thing we’ve ever done. It could put us on the map.*’ (cited in Roddick, G., 1994, p. 9). He concluded: “The emphasis, I’m afraid, is hers” (p. 9). The point Roddick is making here is that there was a more cynical motive behind Kelly’s decision to publish the article – one that set out to benefit that magazine. In this way, Roddick set out to cast Kelly and *Business Ethics* as the *antagonist* or true *villain* in the story.

In doing so, The Body Shop issued a detailed response which consisted of nearly 100 pages of comment and rebuttal to every single allegation Entine made in his original article and elsewhere. This was made available to all who cared to read it. But in a separate letter to *Business Ethics* subscribers, Gordon Roddick (1994) described Entine’s article as an “unscrupulous attack,” “filled with...many lies, distortions, and gross inaccuracies.” He described Entine’s methods of collecting information for his article:

His technique was literally to harass people until he got something he could use. He called one of our suppliers more than seven times in two days. Whether he got hold of somebody, he would misrepresent what another person had said in an aggressive attempt to elicit ‘on-the-record’ responses from the person he was talking to. These remarks he would then repeat to his next subject, distorting them as necessary. In this manner, he created a maelstrom of misinformation and fear wherever he went. (Roddick, G., 1994, p. 7)

However, Gordon Roddick’s attempt to expose Entine’s own motivations and (un)ethical practices was not accepted uncritically. Many labelled The Body Shop’s response as ‘highly aggressive’:

The Body Shop’s consistent use of character assassination and its habit of assuming motives is offensive and virtually unheard of in our experience. The Body Shop’s bombastic tactics have set back any legitimate attempts by the company to change and seem to be triggering a backlash (Franklin Research and Development Corporation, cited in *New Consumer Briefing*, 1994, p. 5)

In turn, Gordon Roddick constructed both himself and Anita Roddick as victims in a larger drama by stating that Entine’s “obsession became both *unnerving* and a bit *frightening*” and that they were “very protective of the business we have built” (Roddick, G., 1994, p. 7) Additionally, the Roddicks’ admitted to being “over-

sensitive and over-defensive to criticism at times” but account for the history they have had to endure (Roddick, G., 1994, p. 8). Gordon Roddick continued: “in the face of such attacks, I make no apologies for anything we have done to protect ourselves” (Roddick, G., 1994, p. 8). As “the hands-on manager of the company,” Gordon Roddick demonstrated his ability to “keep control”, constructing himself as the hero for The Body Shop (Roddick, 1991, p. 115). While the heroine, Anita Roddick, was much more high profile than Gordon Roddick, both were effective in their roles. In fact, it was Gordon Roddick who officially responded to Entine’s article as he was, after all, “responsible for the strategic direction of the company as Co-Chair with Anita Roddick” (The Body Shop, 2000), and in charge of the daily running of the business (Roddick, 2000a). However, as discussed in chapter five, Anita Roddick - “the creative inspiration behind the company’s style and image” (The Body Shop, 2000), - is careful to consistently construct a ‘united front’ for audiences by stating that “Gordon makes what I mouth happen” (p. 235). But as chief storyteller in the organisation, Anita Roddick continued the dialogue.

For every story of organisational identity, there is a counter-story (Boje, 1995; Gardner, 1995). As The Body Shop battled to repair its image after the Entine article, Anita Roddick engaged in a constant battle against the counter stories of identity. Taylor, Fisher & Dufresne (2002) argue that it seems that good stories dominate bad stories as people connect to and enjoy the good story. In fact, Roddick constructed her own counter stories in an attempt to overpower the negative press. The stories helped shape her strategy in terms of responding to the allegations and helped in getting Body Shop employees on board as they consensually validated each other’s - as well as Roddick’s - apprehensions of the experience:

There was about 50 press in a week, more than any of the stuff going on in Rwanda or floods. We were just hitting the media. And then it jettisoned into Australia, New Zealand, everywhere we were high profile. It was having an effect and so we had to manage that-communicate 24 hours a day with all the franchisees-huge process but it worked. We did it. (Roddick, interview with researcher, 2001a)

The ability of staff to follow Roddick’s counter stories was perhaps governed by their interests, sympathies, prejudices and expectations. It is here that Roddick’s

storytelling approach to leadership paid dividends. In my interview with New Zealand Body Shop Director, Michael Ogilvie-Lee, he explained his understanding of Roddick's approach by stating

There will always be people who want to attack her; there will always people who want to be critical. There will always be people who want to be negative. And she did not make the company successful by letting negativity and criticism get on top of her. It was made successful because she basically said, 'screw you, get out of my way, I'm going to go and do it. (Ogilvie-Lee, interview with researcher, 2001)

As illustrated in the quote above, not only were staff able to relate to her stories, they understood the history and narrative structure of past stories which enabled them to arrive at a narrative conclusion. Roddick's public storytelling also equipped external audiences to follow her plot through its twists and turns, to also judge the coherence of the narrative. Thus, the general reaction to Entine's (1994a) article was that it was the same stale story rejected by other magazines and that it was certainly not the astonishing tale that Entine (1994a) had claimed it would be.

So, The Body Shop weathered the storm and its image remained intact. Eiris, the Ethical Investment Research Service, said that it felt that The Body Shop had been unfairly treated and that the recent attacks on the company's green credentials had been misleading. The Body Shop, Eiris believed, was compared with perfection rather than with other companies (Kearins, & Klÿn, 1999). In fact, Roddick evoked her own heroic accomplices while referring to those who backed The Body Shop story:

What was profoundly helpful for us, at that time, was the support that we had from Greenpeace, from Friends of the Earth, from Jonathon Porritt and Sara Parker. The people whose opinions we really valued were the people who understood the real essence of the values inherent in our company. We were amazed at the support (Roddick, cited in Lewis, 1998, p. 240)

Indeed, The Body Shop's co-branding strategies saw it receive support from environmental groups and funds, other green companies, and investors. Shares bounced back and the company was still acknowledged for its contributions towards environmental and social causes (Kearins, & Klÿn, 1999). Its story then apparently

remained credible in the eyes of those who believed that it was still one of the most ethical companies in Europe.

In fact, The Body Shop did not shy away from its founding ideals, despite the obvious challenges in meeting them in a very competitive marketplace. It continued to generate detailed environmental monitoring data, published in its UK site reports, as required for certification to the European Eco-management and Audit Scheme, for which the company registration remains voluntary. Further, new characters in The Body Shop's community trade stories were introduced, with the value of raw materials and accessories purchased from community trade suppliers totalling nearly two million pounds in 1996/1997 (The Body Shop, 1998b). Internally, The Body Shop also set up the Values and Vision department to integrate the commercial and ethical dimensions of the company. Roddick (2000a) explained:

The aim was to shape the company into a really social responsible entity. We needed to institutionalise it because I was frightened that all this *ad hoc* stuff we did was going to be seen as just an add-on (p. 223, emphasis in original).

By establishing the Values and Vision department, the social reality of the organisation was created and maintained for both internal and external stakeholders through language *and* symbolic action. By 'making' and 'remaking' the organisation for its multiple audiences, Roddick created and maintained systems of shared meanings that facilitated organisation action. In this way, Roddick's extension of The Body Shop's storyline served the ends of strategic management and ensured organisational legitimacy. Thus, whether identity saving or identity serving, The Body Shop's discursive move can be seen as *meaning making as constituting a social reality*.

The story is made more credible with other values-based initiatives such as Roddick's founding of the New Academy of Business in 1995. Incorporated in the Academy's new narrative are themes surrounding socially and environmentally responsible business programmes, self-esteem, and self-authority:

...I came up with an idea, a totally different sort of business education, based on ethical and socially responsible business practice. I helped found The New

Academy of Business in 1995. Its aim was - and is - to change business education for good. (Roddick, 2001d)

Roddick established the New Academy of Business to provide entrepreneurs, managers and organisational leaders with an alternative business narrative which promoted the insights and capacities necessary to respond progressively to the emerging challenges of sustainability and organisational responsibility. Roddick set out to create learning experiences to challenge and support enterprise aspiring to a more just, responsible and sustainable future. “Our education and research programmes focus on the social, ethical and environmental dimensions of business and management practice” (Roddick, 2001d).

The education narrative worked collaboratively, across sectors, developing innovative learning materials and processes which enable individuals and organisations to explore the discursive struggles surrounding corporate social responsibility, business and human rights, future leadership, globalisation, health, safety, gender and diversity in supply chains, socially responsible investment and organisational change. Roddick rejected the traditional curriculum of business schools saying:

It’s not relevant. It’s too much like financial science. Incorporate the action, social justices, the action of civil rights. Incorporate gender differences, women in management. Look at some of the great religions... the Buddhists never spoilt the land, they took out less then they put back. Business shouldn’t be defined as an American business model. I would legislate human rights. Really put ethics as another subject, not just some wishy-washy conversation about who’s stealing what from the teller. Bring out the big issues. Deal with the big questions. The big question: Is corporate behaviour criminal behaviour? How are they allowed to get away with it? Not how they are allowed to get away with it, they are getting away with it and how the public isn’t affected by it. (Roddick, interview with researcher, 2001a)

In this way, Roddick established an additional rhetorical vehicle – education - to spread her message and extend her storytelling network. As pointed out by Boje (2001), “story is intertextual to other stories” (p. 70). Roddick used The Body Shop, the New Academy of Business, and the media to pass on her stories along relational ties, altering storylines depending on the audience and the aspects of the story she elected to accent.

But perhaps the most interactive tool that put The Body Shop on “the leading edge of technology” was the Internet (The Body Shop, 1995b, p. 1). The launch of the organisation’s web site gave Roddick’s narrative exposure to an even wider audience. Sara Tye, Zonal Public Relations Manager in The Body Shop’s Corporate Communications Department explained the significance: “The Internet will give us the international platform for the values and vision of The Body Shop and enhance global awareness of the company” (The Body Shop, 1995b, p. 1). The Body Shop had big plans for its new mouthpiece, as the organisation’s IT Departmental Communicator explained: “We can transmit electronic mail, library, and product information, campaign news, live audio, discussions and video...Many of our friends and suppliers have access to the Internet” (The Body Shop, 1995b, p. 1). From a narrative standpoint, Roddick was now able to extend her conversations with audiences around the world, as she expressed: “We also gain access to about thirty international news and global discussion groups on subjects like the environment and business ethics” (The Body Shop, 1995b, p. 1).

Roddick also opened the business and society debate, extending existing storylines and strengthening original plots. Jerry Gorde, founder of Vutex, a socially responsible promotional apparel firm in Richmond, Virginia, explains: “The Body Shop is an important messenger for us all. And whether I learn from her successes or failures, I am deeply indebted to Anita for getting so far out on the front end of our movement as to invite the greatest level of scrutiny” (Gorde, 1994, p. 4). In light of the social responsibility debate, Bullis (1997) suggests that corporate discourse should be evaluated for its relationship to corporate practices, in this case, The Body Shop’s environmental record. The Body Shop began its environmental record in 1991 with the publication of its first *Green Book*. Roddick went a step further to demonstrate The Body Shop’s commitment to transparency and accountability, to its values and to dedication to continuous improvement. Not only did the decision to audit all aspects of The Body Shop and publish the results - in both print and electronic media - strengthen the moral value of The Body Shop narrative, it proved to be a popular and innovative rhetorical strategy in the organisation’s corporate communications.

The Body Shop's decision to audit its operations and publish its results highlighted the fact that organisations adopt a range of rhetorical strategies to influence public perceptions about criticisms and the firm's relationship to them (Livesey, 2001). The Body Shop can thus be conceived of as managing or controlling its 'publics' by creating, or restoring 'goodwill.' For instance, when asked whether the community trusts The Body Shop, Roddick responded:

They trust that products are safe and are made with care. They trust the environmental audit and the social audit – that we make sure that we clean up our own mess (We have our own wind farm, to put the energy we use back into the National Grid). (Roddick, 1996b)

In this way, The Body Shop's corporate communication which followed the 1994 controversy not only served to defend its identity; it strengthened its relationship with its external stakeholders. Dutton and Dukerich (1991) refer to such corporate public discourse as forms of defense, that when successful, protect the firm against outside pressures and secure its ongoing legitimacy. Their approach has been useful in the analysis of The Body Shop's rhetoric in the wake of the Entine scandal. In line with their theory, Roddick adopted a pioneering approach in the form of The Body Shop's social and ethical auditing.

Through communication, The Body Shop symbolically enacted a particular reality, thus constituting and coming to terms with its own identity and its relationship to the outside world (Cheney & Christensen, 2000). It is here that The Body Shop's corporate identity became an issue for public relations. Issue (here, corporate social responsibility and reporting) and identity became very much intertwined; meanings made became legitimating ideologies, the basis for future narratives.

Auditing performances at The Body Shop: a hard act to follow

The Body Shop approach to sustainability values reporting

Throughout the 1990s there was an increasing emphasis on the need for transparency and especially public disclosure of environmental impacts by industry (DTTI, Sustainability and IISD, 1993). The Body Shop was cited as a *pioneering* early adopter of corporate social reporting (Peattie, 1995). In the early 1990s, The Body

Shop implemented internal audit programmes for environmental protection, health and safety at work, and the monitoring of its Against Animal Testing policy. The Body Shop first committed itself publicly to an active programme of integrated social and ethical auditing and reporting at the beginning of 1994 (The Body Shop, 1996d). That is, combined environmental, social and animal protection auditing. In the late 1980s and early 1990s, The Body Shop had relied exclusively on its own stories about its environmental initiatives as constructed in its annual reports. But by 1995, it was able to construct its credibility and commitment to the environment through its publication of independently verified environmental audit reports. In 1996, The Body Shop and British Telecommunications became founding members of The Institute of Social and Ethical AccountAbility (The Body Shop, 1996d).

The Body Shop's shift to sustainability reporting was consistent with its many-year effort to develop a distinct corporate identity tied to its political character and social commitments. Moreover, the company leadership believed that to be a campaigning company, The Body Shop had to take its supporters along with it...[through] active dialogue and maximum transparency" (The Body Shop, 1998b, p. 3). Reporting was also appropriate to The Body Shop's philosophy that "business has a moral responsibility to be open and honest about what it does, and face up to the things that need to be improved" (The Body Shop, 1998b, p. 3). In any case, because 'values' proactivism had made the company a target for criticism (e.g., Entine, 1994a), the company realised the need to "have its own house in order," and demonstrate its commitment to look at and continually improve in those areas where it wanted to exert its influence (The Body Shop, 1998b, p. 3). Roddick explained that the process of accountability adopted by The Body Shop adhered to strict industry standards:

We have a social and environmental audit process in our company which means every two years all our stakeholders have to report back to us in terms of how they view the company as performing against its standards. We think we are, and are known to be, one of the most ethically-driven, progressive companies in England and still, 9% of our suppliers thought that there was criminal activity going on in the purchasing department...And then we make all of this available to the press. Everything - the stuff that's hit the fan and the stuff that's good. And then we have to put in practice methodology for actually making that statistic better. (Roddick, 2001c)

The fact that Roddick (1991) made this commitment over a decade ago, gave credibility to her current storyline:

I would love it if every shareholder of every company wrote a letter every time they received a company's annual report and accounts. I would like them to say something like, 'OK, that's fine, very good. But where are the details of your *environmental* audit? Where are the details of your accounting to the community? Where is your *social* audit? (p. 252)

Roddick set out to push for such development and believes she has been successful in doing so. In fact, she constructed The Body Shop as "a leader in the trend to greater transparency" (The Body Shop, 1995c). Official corporate narratives set out to institutionalise The Body Shop's practices in the domain of sustainable development through a technical system of accounting:

In the early 1990s, The Body Shop played a significant role in spearheading the move for companies to report on their social and environmental performance. Since that time, a host of organisations ranging from multinational companies to not-for-profit organisations have started to publish regular reports on their social, economic and environmental performance. (The Body Shop, 1995c)

Blurring previously more distinct boundaries between the personal, the political, and the commercial was an unusual step for a for-profit company and perhaps one not obviously well suited to a cosmetics and personal care products company. It could be anticipated to produce not only scepticism among outside critics – such as Jon Entine (see also e.g. Plant & Albert, 1991), but internal tensions. The Roddicks' openly admitted the challenges presented by their approach: "Nearly two years on from our first Values Report and life doesn't get any simpler" (The Body Shop, 1998a, p. 2). "Our fair trade programme...could hardly be more challenging to a commercial company" (The Body Shop, 1998a, p. 2). However, the fact that no sustainability values reports have appeared from The Body Shop since 1998 strongly suggests that internal tensions hindered the company's ability to maintain its sustainability rhetoric (see chapter seven for a discussion of how internal changes threatened the organisation's 'unusual' identity).

Environmental Audits

In the case of environmental audits, The Body Shop elected in 1991 to follow the European Union Ecomanagement and audit regulation as the most rigorous, comprehensive and rational framework available (Wheeler, 1992). The company published three independently verified environmental statements (*The Green Book 1, 2, and 3*) in 1992, 1993 and 1994. The Body Shop's *Green Book*, published in 1992, was designed to complement its annual report and accounts by providing an equally detailed and accurate picture of the environmental performance of the company. In each case the verifiers confirmed that the statements satisfied the requirements of the European regulation (The Body Shop, 1996a).

The public environmental discourse produced by The Body Shop had performative effects. That is, by representing the natural environment in particular ways, it opened the possibility of constructing new forms of relationship between the organisation and the environment. This in turn engendered new forms of corporate environmental behaviour and new relationships with external stakeholders. The Body Shop's eco-talk served as a symbolic platform from which the organisation addressed organisational sensemaking and identity – namely, what The Body Shop was or stood for or wanted to be. What The Body Shop published in its environmental audits, however, was also tied to an existing historically evolved discourse – the discourse of environmentalism.

Particularly useful in this analysis is Wetherell and Potter's (1992) concept of "interpretive repertoires" (p. 89), by which they mean historically evolved discourses that serve as resources upon which subjects draw for sensemaking. The discourses of environmentalism constitute such interpretive repertoires. Also useful are methods of Foucauldian analysis developed by Fairclough (1992), especially his borrowing and extension of Bakhtin's notions of intertextuality.

Intertextuality, as conceived by Fairclough (1992), explicates the dynamics of Foucauldian reactualisation by showing how texts borrow from or reference one another, explicitly or implicitly, both to sustain and alter meaning, as well as the

social relationships they imply. Intertextuality also implies more broadly to the blurring of boundaries between different discursive domains. For instance, discursive forms or conventions usually applied in one discursive order or domain may be carried over into another, as when The Body Shop borrows from environmental discourse (e.g. its adoption of what I call a discourse of care for the environment) and vice versa (e.g. business concepts of market-based environmentalism as opposed to the notion of ecological sustainability). Fairclough (1992) characterises this more general intermingling of discursive practice as “interdiscursivity” (p. 84).

The Green Book 1 which was published in 1992 and *The Green Book 2* published in 1993, were produced and designed by The Body Shop Design Team. The 1994 publication of *The Green Book 3* was designed by external consultants. While I was unable to attain a copy of *The Green Book 1*, I was told by staff at The Body Shop that it was the most conservative in terms of design. After all, this was The Body Shop’s first public account of its environmental policies and practices. The green narrative was endorsed by a growing discourse community which was helping to institutionalise the notions of corporate transparency and caring with respect to environmental responsibility (Zadek, 1999) and the two Green Books that followed reflected confidence and more of The Body Shop’s distinctly unusual style. Both reports (*The Green Book 2* and *The Green Book 3*) were highly visual and very creative. There was a great deal of colour, graphics, bold font and a lot of photos showing Body Shop staff engaged in numerous environmental projects. This de-professionalised, personalised, and made accessible the language of environmental auditing, using language and imagery more familiar to the lay public.

There were two pieces to The Body Shop 1992/1993 Environmental Statement: *The Green Book 2* (1993a) and *The Green Book 2, Part two: The detail* (1993b). *The Green Book 2* consisted of only 17 pages. It was brief, eye-catching and to-the-point (see Appendix 25). The inside cover features a list of targets - ranging from waste management to energy efficiency - for the UK from 1992 to 1994. Next to each target is the stamp ‘Achieved.’ Other targets for 1994 have the stamp ‘ongoing,’ or ‘new.’ The report opens with the organisation’s environmental statement and an

environmental review of 1992. Other sections in the report consist of business activities at the organisation's Watersmead site, environmental policy, environmental management and auditing and 'how we handle the issues' (p. 7). Two-page summaries of The Body Shop's stories on 'energy,' 'water and waste management,' 'product stewardship,' 'the rest' – which reports on the meeting of all targets set in *The Green Book 1*, and 'verifier's statement' follow. The summaries are colour coded and feature documentary-style photos of wind turbines (1993a, p. 8), wastewater systems (1993a, p. 10) to add truth to The Body Shop's claims.

The Green Book 2, Part two: The detail (1993b), is a supplement to the main document, giving details of each department. In line with the theme of transparency and accountability, the publication was made available to both internal and external audiences. The Body Shop further strengthened its commitment by stating on the inside cover:

Thus the targets embrace recommendations made by Environmental Resources Management (ERM) in their verification of *The Green Book 2* as well as other self-selected targets. Undertakings made by departments are supported in each case by signatures of managers and Department Environmental Advisors (DEAS) in order to symbolise their commitment to the targets (The Body Shop, 1993b, inside cover).

The entire report is black and white, symbolising a traditional and 'serious' document. Forty-nine pages in length, the report contains the headings: 'key environmental issues,' 'recent developments,' and 'targets 1993/1994' for 24 departments. At the bottom of the heading 'targets 1993/1994,' are signatures, names and titles of personnel as identified in the above quote. This strategy is designed to give the reader 'proof' of commitment and to legitimise the organisation's stories.

The Green Book 3 (1994g) follows the same structure as *The Green Book 2, Part two: The detail* (1993b); however, with less specific information about targets. Instead, the heading: 'progress towards more sustainable operations,' describes each department's achievements to date. The report is also very visual and colourful. The cover of the report comprises bold colours and the title of the report states assertively: 'No time to waste: Act now to save your environment' (see Appendix 26). Reports on each

department are accompanied with coloured photographs and charts. Additional sections on 'national and international environmental highlights of 1993/1994' and 'review of 1993/1994 at The Body Shop: A busy year for campaigning and lobbying' are included in the report, as well as a brief description of three environmental awards received by Anita Roddick (p. 5). The report is once again 'verified' by ERM.

The Body Shop's environmental reporting presented The Body Shop with a powerful rhetorical vehicle for premise-building. Many consider the organisation's reports to be "pioneering examples of a new genre of voluntary corporate reporting" (Livesey & Kearins, 2002, p. 234; see also Eccles, Herz, Keegan & Phillips, 2001; Elkington, 1998; SustainAbility & United Nations Environment Programme, 1997; and Spencer-Cooke & Elkington, 1996). Furthermore, The Body Shop is often cited as "an international symbol of corporate social responsibility" (Garfield, 1995, p. 5). In 1998, Roddick extended her storyline by including other characters in The Body Shop narrative:

By itself, financial reporting is too narrow. It does not tell half the story of that most basic of human activities called trading. Future public reports will need to show how to unlock the knowledge and the contributions trapped inside employees, customers, suppliers, shareholders and other stakeholders for the benefit of the business and the communities in which it operates. (The Body Shop, 1998c)

Others, however, suggested that The Body Shop narrative was simply operating within an already established social responsibility discourse (Jones, 1994). As discussed in the previous chapter, Roddick strategically constructed The Body Shop narrative as one that was revolutionary, thereby strengthening the image of an organisation that was committed to its core values. Indeed her story of social responsibility was innovative in the cosmetics industry but there were other characters in the social responsibility tale. The socially/ethically responsible business community had longed struggled for success in a conventional economic world.

Values Report 1995

In January 1996, The Body Shop published its first integrated document of its ethical performance called the *Values Report 1995*. The report comprised of three statements

on the company's performance on environmental (60 pages), animal protection (32 pages) and social issues (134 pages). Each statement had an element of independent verification in line with established best practice. The publication also included a paper *The Body Shop approach to ethical auditing* (32 pages) describing the methods underpinning the three reports. In addition to the *Values Report*, The Body Shop published a 48-page summary of the 'highlights and lowlights' of the three statements, titled, *Our agenda*.

The Body Shop anticipated a spread of reactions and was very aware of perceptions regarding its Values Reports. It consciously aligned all of its publications with its identity and corporate style. It also set out to proactively combat any criticism regarding the presentation of its narrative by stating:

Sophisticated design and graphics can help get the message across, but the medium must not obscure the message. It is too easy to subtly construct images, whether deliberately or not, that exaggerate a company's performance. The use of glossy-photographs and over-use of graphics can be off-putting and can sometimes be viewed as a distraction from the information being presented. (The Body Shop, 1996a, p. 30)

Consequently, all three statements were full of statistics, graphs and crowded black and white text on recycled paper. There was no aesthetic appeal (such as photographs or graphics) to distract from the message. The style of each statement is simple and messages are clear, signalling that the organisation takes its commitment seriously (see Appendix 27).

The founder's statement at the beginning of each statement introduces the Theme: 'Think, act, change' which runs throughout the statement. This theme is consistent in all three statements and provides a structure for the sequence of events presented in each of the narratives. For instance, each statement is divided into three sections. In the section 'Think', The Body Shop outlines the issues facing its business and how these have been reflected in its policies. The section 'Act' accounts for the actions taken to act out these policies, the monitoring of these policies and the results of such monitoring. The section 'Change' sets guidelines for future storylines based on the results of such monitoring and sets targets to allow the organisation to achieve

‘continuous improvement.’ (The Body Shop, 1996b, p. 2). Other themes in the report include ‘stakeholders’, ‘compliance’, and ‘improvement.’

The summary statement, *Our Agenda* (1996e) is the opposite. Published in 1996, it was produced by The Body Shop Team but designed by design company, Farrington Associates. The report is very graphical, full of coloured photographs of all aspects of the business (including photos of employees, the factory, and campaign activities and events), creative and distinct. From a design standpoint, it is very eye-catching for readers and creates the image of a funky, creative document that’s actually fun to look at (see Appendix 28). A quick scan through this summary gives readers a good picture of what each three of the statements contains: its highlights and lowlights. Stakeholder responses (a mixture of both positive and negative responses) are printed in bold font, fast facts are bulleted for clear visibility, documentary-style photographs, showing real people – employees, suppliers, customers, Roddick, campaigners, laboratory animals, once again add credibility to the narrative.

Unlike The Body Shop’s annual reports, hardly any emphasis is placed on financial data in the *Values Report*. Consequently, there is little evidence of what Foucault (1970) calls discursive struggles or tensions between an economics or business and environmentalism and social responsibility. Instead the organisation’s narrative is portrayed as fully operating within a repertoire consisting of sustainable environmental and development discourses and sets out to demonstrate the distinctness of its narrative in the business community. In fact, for The Body Shop, the key issue was to stay recognisable as a ‘different’ kind of business while succeeding in commercial terms.

It was through marketing communication strategies used in the *Values Report* that The Body Shop became a role model, especially for other values-led businesses. Although certain elements of The Body Shop’s narrative found their way into a few business storylines, evidence of discursive struggles within the institutionalised business discourse prohibited the wider adoption of The Body Shop’s model narrative. Roddick expressed her disappointment:

Even though things are changing, I am very frustrated at the slow pace of change. The appearance of ethical funds has been very encouraging... There is more talk of empowering staff, of humanising the workplace with childcare facilities, flexi-hours and job sharing... But these are little, little drops in the ocean: the institution of business remains resolutely old-fashioned. If you go into the City most things have not changed at all – you could be stepping back fifty years in time. I cannot understand why people revere the traditions of business when they are so obviously stultified, self-satisfied and selfish. I am convinced it is the constant search for a better way that gives my company its moral strength and sense of purpose. (Roddick, 1991, p. 253)

The 1995 Values Report consisted of what The Body Shop had done (Think), what it was doing (Act) and what it had to do in the future (Change). In this way, the 1995 report acted as a guide for future Body Shop narratives and storylines. For instance written at the end of the summary report (1996e) was: “the story goes on...” (p. 47), indicating that the narrative continued. Indeed, The Body Shop’s future is projected as a continuation of the story as yet unfinished. If life is a way of fashioning identities, The Body Shop was forever telling its own story.

Values Report 1997

The Body Shop published its second integrated values report, *Values Report 1997* (The Body Shop, 1998b), with a summary report, *The road ahead* (The Body Shop, 1998c) in January 1998. A major theme repeated consistently throughout both documents was ‘stakeholder.’ Both the values report and the summary began with a letter from the Roddicks and described the results of the dialogue with its stakeholders, based on information gathered through social, environmental, and animal protection audits (including surveys and interviews). Audit results were verified by outside experts. The main sections of the reports were structured according to stakeholder group interests (e.g. employees, UK and international franchisees, community trade and other and other suppliers, customers, community, shareholders), with separate sections for environmental and animal protection audits. The ‘community involvement’ section included material on corporate commitments to the local community and on company campaigning for the natural environment and human rights, women’s issues and animal protection.

The full version report, which was over 200 pages in length, mirrored the summary but provided more detailed findings related to stakeholder groups (e.g. employees, 40 pages; franchisees, 26 pages; suppliers, including community traders, 28 pages; and shareholders, 5 pages) and environmental and animal protection audits. A 24-page 'progress update' showed company performance against 1995 targets and set future improvement targets (The Body Shop, 1998b, p. 13-36). The report contained additional items, for example, the company's mission statement, its social and ecological milestones, its auditing methodology, and third-party verification statements. There also numerous appendices.

The summary report (1998c) is a miniature version of *The Values Report 1997*, and once again, is designed to give the reader a quick snapshot of results. It is 28 pages long and sections are divided according to stakeholders. Each section contains the headings 'where we are,' 'consultation,' and 'moving on.' However, it is a lot less visual and graphic than the summary report for the *Values Report 1995*, signalling the organisation's maturity and move to a more detailed and 'professional' approach. The cover of both reports - its most visual feature - comprised photographs of people richly diverse in identities and emotion and presumably associated with The Body Shop (see Appendix 29). The fact that this was the first Body Shop report that featured peoples' faces is significant in that it set out to portray an image of an organisation that was inclusive of a broad range of people and distinct in its emphasis on feeling. In line with the key themes of transparency, care and stakeholders, the cover also emphasised the organisation's commitment to its stakeholders.

The Body Shop *Values Report 1997* expressed a corporate intent to become more "transparent," "open," and "accountable" to stakeholders on environmental and social as well as financial dimensions of performance. The Body Shop (1998c) stated, "We want it to be transparent – why we do what we do and how we do it" (p. 3). It claimed that its memorandum of association, its mission statement, and its trading charter expressed the "company's ethical policies and its desire to demonstrate accountability and transparency on ethical issues" (p. 7). Its audits were to test whether The Body Shop was "really a business with a difference" (p. 3).

The Body Shop's (1998c) rationale was that as firms become more transparent, "business behaviour...[is better] understood" (p. 7). This "develops relationships of trust and helps inspire loyalty" (The Body Shop, 1998b, p. 4). The Body Shop also believed that transparency and openness with stakeholders would promote corporate learning and business objectives. In the 'founders' statement,' the Roddicks (The Body Shop, 1998b, 1998c), stated, "In our experience...businesses will not just benefit from the approval of their stakeholders, they will be able to run their businesses better" (p. 2). Reporting was a means to help the company "set targets for future improvements...and [thus] better serve the needs and aspirations of stakeholders" (The Body Shop, 1998c, p. 4). The Roddicks expected future reports to show how to "unlock the knowledge and the contributions trapped inside...stakeholders" (The Body Shop, 1998b, 1998c, p. 2).

The report also explained new techniques, which would move toward a "more genuinely 'eco-centric' approach to business...may borrow from [and extend] existing management theory and practice, including...environmental, health and safety, or quality management and auditing" (The Body Shop, 1998c, p. 7). The acknowledgement that management theory might have some value was indeed a reflection of The Body Shop's attempt to construct a more professional narrative. But The Body Shop encountered practical problems associated with making itself "transparent." For instance, data were incomplete. Its survey data showed response rates of only 25% for shareholders overall and 4 out of 1,306 institutional investors, demonstrating these stakeholders' general lack of interest in the auditing process. The global nature of its operations also created problems for data collection. For example, input from indigenous craftspeople suppliers had to be collected by an outside organisation to compensate for "diverse cultural, geographical and linguistic factors require[ing] different techniques for auditing" (The Body Shop, 1998b, p. 134). The Body Shop also discovered that the internal comparison of results from year to year was made more problematic by the fact that the company's methodologies were being continually refined. Finally, openness and data sharing about sustainability efforts also highlight Mackenzie's (1978) paradox of uniqueness in relation to The Body Shop's identity. For instance, while socially and environmentally conscious leadership

create unique identity niches for The Body Shop, success in persuading other companies to follow its lead would necessarily dilute this competitive advantage. This problem was not addressed in report.

The Body Shop's report contained claims that its "reason for being" (The Body Shop, 1998b, 1998c, inside covers) depended on values other than those encompassed by a narrowly economic rationality. Symbolically, they constituted part of a larger rhetorical effort to demonstrate that The Body Shop "cared" about issues of the natural environment and social well being. This was expressed through rhetorics of passion and caring. Caring suggested an alternative interface between The Body Shop and society and by extension, between The Body Shop and the natural environment. In this discourse, caring constituted part of an underlying ethos that distinguished the company from its competitors and from the commercial model generally. Caring worked on two distinct but operationally related levels. The Body Shop was clearly concerned to construct the company as not only responsible but responsive to its stakeholders, on a wide range of issues. It is here that the stakeholder theme is most prominent. The structure and content highlighted stakeholder commentary (including criticisms as well as praise) and corporate actions taken in response to stakeholder input.

The Body Shop expressed its expanded mission in terms of zeal and passion, constituting for itself a corporate persona with characteristics often recognisably borrowed from founder, Anita Roddick. For example, the company's mission statement ("reason for being") spoke of "making fun, passion and care part of our daily lives" (The Body Shop, 1998b, inside front cover). The company's connection to the natural environment was through its feeling for people and their values. This was quite different than, for example, a Greenpeace ideology which embraced action-centred activism and engaged in aggressive, politically-driven media campaigns (Tokar, 1997), even though The Body Shop also espoused green political activism.

The second level of caring extended the company's social engagement beyond 'normal' commercial boundaries into a political realm. The Body Shop declared itself

to be dedicated “to the pursuit of social and environmental change” (The Body Shop, 1998b, 1998c, inside covers) and comfortable mixing “business with politics, and cosmetics with campaigns” (The Body Shop, 1998c, p. 3). It sought to “play an active part in campaigning for positive change in the way the business world works...[with] the ultimate aim to make a positive impact on the world at large” (The Body Shop, 1988c, p. 4). This required a “political outlook”, meaning not party politics but “the conviction of stakeholders to come together on a common platform to fight for a fairer world” (The Body Shop, 1998c, p. 4). Revealing this blend of conventional and political “caring,” the report described the company’s charitable contributions to local communities, its proactive support of progressive causes, and its campaigning. The list of “Social and Ecological Milestones” in The Body Shop’s “life” (The Body Shop, 1998b, pp. 4-6) demonstrated the scope and character of the firm’s commitments. It included for example, the election of employee representation and consultative councils at The Body Shop and Anita Roddick’s ‘American Dream Award,’ along with national and world events such as the publication of the (pessimistic) findings of the UK Institute of Environmental Management, the execution of Ogoni environmentalists, and the Fourth World Conference of Women in Beijing. By integrating company initiatives, achievements, and recognition awards with national and international events, the report implied their importance to The Body Shop, as well as The Body Shop’s connection to them.

The institutionalisation of The Body Shop narrative

By the late 1990s, a growing discursive community was helping to institutionalise the notions of corporate transparency and caring with respect to social and environmental responsibility. Elkington (1998) and Zadek (1999) were amongst its prominent members in the United Kingdom. They had argued that the late 20th century had seen a shift in corporate values, with companies prepared to assume a more responsible and accountable role in society. Elkington (1998) continues to author on-going UNEP benchmarking studies of corporate sustainability values reporting (Livesey & Kearins, 2002). Many of these publications cite The Body Shop as the best example of the developing genre of integrated reporting (see Spencer-Cooke & Elkington, 1996). The Body Shop itself also sought to serve as a role model:

Report makers should not be afraid to add their weight to calls for mandatory auditing and verification, and public disclosure of environmental and ethical information. In the meantime, hopefully more companies will be encouraged and inspired to open up for sustainable development. (The Body Shop, 1996e)

The common language of transparency and caring among progressive business, business consultants, think tanks, responsible investor groups, academic researchers, multilateral groups such as UNEP, was mutually reinforcing and mutually legitimating. Other promoting sustainability initiatives for business and the cross-referencing among groups working on social responsibility and socially responsible companies further validated the shift towards the new discourse.

As applied to corporations, ‘transparency’ and ‘caring’ represent distinct yet related concepts, each of which offers ostensibly radical opportunities to reshape the interface between business and society, making more permeable the boundaries between public and private decision-making. In fact, these metaphors have been variously taken up within a growing discursive community and suggest the institutionalisation of the new communicative practices associated with sustainable development, including social reporting and stakeholder dialogue (Livesey & Kearins, 2002).

Stakeholder commentary included in The Body Shop reports and on the corporate web site, can be seen as a kind of witnessing to the organisation’s emerging practices of sustainable development. Transparency carries with it the potential to reconstitute reality related to sustainable development in one-sided, arbitrary and manipulative ways. That is, in exercising the mechanics of knowledge production – for example, decisions as to how to categorise and assign value to data - sustainability reporting can be used as a way of imposing form on nature and society. From a rhetorical perspective, it serves The Body Shop’s attempts to construct itself as generally ‘making progress’ toward sustainable development. In this process The Body Shop’s values reports redefined the image of the organisation as well as its stakeholders’ concerns in a manner that served its own interests. Nonetheless, the information yielded in the reports provided The Body Shop with a force for change.

The Body Shop bolstered its claims of transparency with the assertion that it was a company that ‘cared’ and asked its audience to accept its contents as ‘reliable’ and meaningful. To deflect criticisms and delay doubts that they were as yet unable to respond to with ‘science,’ The Body Shop asked that for the time being, they be judged by a seemingly more generous set of criteria, those of human feeling and trust, and that they be given credit for doing reports in the first place. To prove their sincerity, they invited stakeholders, including outside critics, to engage with them in dialogue. This stakeholder dialogue deconstructed the boundaries between The Body Shop and its environment, building relationships through ongoing conversations.

In expressing a sense of caring and emotional investment, these reports paint a portrait of a company with ‘good intentions.’ The reader is encouraged to accept unsubstantiated and often unlikely implicit promises – that a cosmetics company will liberate women – for example, because there are more than just business interests involved. In establishing a framework of common humanity, the reports attempted to off-set resistance by blurring the distinctions between the company and its potential critics. For instance, reports of The Body Shop’s campaigns for women’s rights and for the homeless demonstrated commitment and support to these wider societal issues, issues not often associated with a global cosmetics retailer. In this way, ardent feminists or human rights activists were made aware of the company’s ‘unusual’ efforts. As a financial enterprise, The Body Shop may be pressured to behave in certain technical ways, but as a human enterprise, it is also compelled by values and sentiments that are instantly recognisable.

The Body Shop found that its social auditing led to an increased understanding of the company’s identity, with “massive votes of confidence by stakeholders in its values and mission” (Sillanpää, 1998, p. 1455). Consequently, The Body Shop’s approach to non-financial auditing and reporting has taken a further development over the last year. In December 1998, The Body Shop outsourced its ethical audit team to KPMG who now act as advisors to The Body Shop (The Body Shop, 2000). The company also took a new approach to its public reporting in 2000, with the previously bi-annual publication of a ‘Values Report’ now moving towards a rolling cycle of Internet-

based accounts for each stakeholder group (The Body Shop, 2000). But equally important, in refiguring its identity, the politically overt caring approach of The Body Shop created opportunity for change as well as for discursive control.

Conclusion

The emergence of new discursive forms at The Body Shop, such as its web site and its sustainability values reports, served as valuable indices of institutional and social change. In the case of The Body Shop, whatever the original audience (e.g. of Roddick's speeches, annual reports, Values Reports), the narratives have all been made publicly available on The Body Shop's website. Uniquely, in the name of openness and transparency, The Body Shop has also included on its website responses from stakeholders, broadly interpreted to include not simply the traditional groups (employees, shareholders, customers) but also NGOs or parties critical of The Body Shop. Such discursive practices provide a better understanding of the dynamics and potentially democratising power of what Wittgenstein (1958) terms 'language games' and, in particular, their effect on the public mandate for corporate social responsiveness.

The language-based, new criticism influenced by Burke loosely employed in this chapter was centrally concerned with rhetorical selectivity as exhibited in Body Shop corporate narratives (spoken, visual and written). That is, it considered the purposive use of language by Roddick to facilitate action or shape attitudes that predispose audiences toward action of particular types. Roddick's conscious use of language also highlighted the rhetorical nature of leadership as well as the importance of the leader's values and personal identity in shaping organisational discourse.

Burke's (1969a) theory of language and identification was loosely applied to analyse how The Body Shop narrative was made meaningful in context, and how meaning and identity itself are not fixed, but contextually and relationally derived. Additionally, Burke's (1969a) theories of identification and persuasion informed my analysis of the rhetorical strategies Roddick employed to persuade various audiences to identify with The Body Shop and accept its alternative and at times, controversial narrative. She did

this by employing specific written and visual tactics when constructing The Body Shop's corporate public discourse, in her strategic role as 'implied author' or 'narrator persona.'

In the Foucauldian perspective, as I have interpreted it, a more panoramic approach was used to map the contours of on-going socio-political conflict as evidenced not only in specific texts, showing how such texts are both constitutive of and constrained by the macro-level order. While there was little evidence of such socio-political and socio-economic conflict in official corporate documents such as annual and values reports, The Body Shop narrative did face challenges. Entine's (1994a) attack shook The Body Shop's credibility and tested the coherence of the organisation's narrative. Nevertheless, through what some refer to as pioneering approaches, The Body Shop extended its storylines to incorporate such criticisms and commit to improving its performance through sustainability reporting. The new genre of corporate social reporting proved a popular augmentation to The Body Shop plot, which served to frame future Body Shop stories and preserve its identity as a cosmetics company with a difference.

The next chapter traces The Body Shop narrative as the organisation experienced significant internal and external changes in the late 1990s. More specifically, it examines the impact of discursive shifts and discursive struggles on the identity of The Body Shop specifically, during the period of major management restructuring in the organisation which began in 1998. The relationship between leadership and identity also takes on new dimensions as multiple management voices in the organisation try to instil their version of The Body Shop story in The Body Shop's discourse.

CHAPTER 7

SHIFTING STORIES AND EMERGING THEMES: FROM SPIRITUAL IDEALISM TO MANAGERIAL REALISM

Introduction

The previous chapters examined Anita Roddick as chief storyteller of The Body Shop narrative during the period of 1976 – 1998. This chapter centres on more recent events in The Body Shop's history and demonstrates how after two decades of Roddick's sole authorship, other competing versions of the narrative came to also predominate in the organisation. The changes saw Roddick re-invent her role as founder-entrepreneur of The Body Shop, as well as the company's identity, as the shift to a more traditional business focus emerged under the leadership change necessitated by the appointment of the company's new CEO, Patrick Gournay on 14 July, 1998. With a new CEO, Roddick no longer had 'exclusive rights' to The Body Shop story. While earlier chapters demonstrated how Roddick's original narrative story could be found in a range of texts, this chapter illustrates how, by the late 1990s, Roddick was 'reduced' to promoting her story through her second autobiography published in 2000, *Business as Unusual* and later, through her own website which was established in 2001.

This chapter investigates how, during a turbulent period when the company attempted to hold on to, and extend its core values, Roddick strengthened and expanded her narrative of spiritual idealism to counter-balance Gournay's narrative of managerial realism, thereby addressing the fourth research question: What identity challenges has The Body Shop faced and how are these identity challenges reflected in The Body Shop's corporate narratives? Indeed, Gournay's presence underpinned much of Roddick's revised narrative. Consequently, Roddick shifted stories to reconstruct The Body Shop narrative, in an effort to reinvent its identity. The chapter also highlights the current mix of usual and unusual business at The Body Shop, suggests a blurring of boundaries in Roddick's stories, and identifies some inconsistencies in both Roddick's and The Body Shop's revised narrative.

From 1998, The Body Shop had to handle significant challenges internally and externally. The first section outlines the reasons for the need to shift stories as a result of internal changes and external challenges at The Body Shop. Theories that highlight the narrative-identity connection are also outlined in relation to Roddick's discursive construction of change.

In its second section, the chapter draws on Davies and Harré's (1990, 1999, 2001) theory of positioning to demonstrate how in the late 1990s, Roddick distanced The Body Shop from its competitors during the era of corporate globalisation. In particular, it identifies how Roddick, in an aggressive campaign, positioned the beauty industry, multinational organisations, the World Trade Organisation (WTO) and the market as tyrannical, inhuman, and soulless institutions which controlled and exploited society. In line with Foss's (1989) method of cluster criticism, 'devil' terms, representing the ultimate negative or evil for Roddick include 'corporate globalisation,' 'global poverty,' the 'blind world government,' 'unfree trade,' 'greed,' and the 'beauty industry.' It is here that elements of Roddick's own personal identity as an 'activist' come to the fore. The third section illustrates the importance of myth and describes the emerging themes from Roddick's re-categorisations that cluster around the two poles of reaffirmations of old values and new inflections as constructed in her official narrative of The Body Shop in 2000. Here, 'God' terms such as 'activist,' 'social responsibility,' 'community,' 'feminine values,' and 'spirituality' represent the ideal for Roddick or what, in Roddick's view, is best or perfect. The chapter concludes with a critical evaluation of Roddick's strategies during this final phase of the analysis of The Body Shop story.

Managing The Body Shop: New voices and conflicting stories

The life story of The Body Shop comprises two important phases: namely, the entrepreneurial phase with the strong influence of Roddick, as investigated in the two previous chapters, and after that, the phase of restructuring, which saw the arrival of another particularly powerful new voice in the organisation. The hiring of a new CEO, Patrick Gournay on 14 July 1998, resulted from the growth in size of the company, the need to improve financial performance, and the need for more experience in

conventional business operation. Gournay, an executive vice president for North America at French food company, Groupe Danone, was described by the media as “the French executive [who] has shaken the 23-year old company to its very roots” (Wilson, 1999, p. 104). Roddick decided to cede control of the day-to-day operations in order to allow her company to move forward. In 1999, Gournay has sold or closed Body Shop manufacturing plants and taken it out of the distribution business, established four regional operating divisions, restructured the head office and reduced the number of franchisees in favour of company-owned stores (Wilson, 1999). Global head of media relations and internal communications, Didier Lagae explained the rationale in these terms:

We are great at being creative and generating ideas but we are lousy at translating them into products, and even worse at getting them the hell out of here and into consumer’s hands, that is where Gournay comes in. He will concentrate on process to make us more efficient. (cited in Nicholas, 1998, p. 15)

The key factor in Lagae’s explanation lay in making the organisation “more efficient.” Gournay, as a powerful new force in driving the business of The Body Shop, confirmed and extended the new themes of process and efficiency, strategy and financial performance. Wilson (1999) explains: “This radical shake-up of the world’s pre-eminent ‘green’ retailer is designed to bring the ailing company’s bottom line back into the black” (p. 104). In doing so, he solidified the organisation’s discursive shift to a more conventional business narrative. The media also amplified the shift: “Under his watch, Body Shop will have only one job: retailing. Its resources will be devoted to its stores and product development” (Wilson, 1999, p. 104). Despite the shift towards this more institutionalised business discourses which she had previously attacked, and no longer so clearly at the helm of the Body Shop, Roddick still influenced its course through speeches and writings. But Roddick had to live with the fact that several authorised and unauthorised versions of the corporate story coexisted at The Body Shop, all of them struggling for dominance and recognition.

Plurivocity, the simultaneous existence of various voices that each tell a different story (Thachankary, 1992), imposed significant limitations upon the autonomy of not only the Roddicks but also on the new CEO, Patrick Gournay. Consequently, Roddick

constructed her own version of The Body Shop story to compete with emerging corporate narratives that followed more business-us-usual storylines. While Gournay spoke of “delivering increasing benefits to the overall retail system,” and “continual sales growth” (cited in The Body Shop, 2000, p. 10), Roddick (2000a) challenged such conventional measures of success by asking “how do you institutionalise success and still keep that edge of craziness and wildness?” (p. 274). Roddick’s plot was to balance Gournay’s managerial realism with her stories of idealism. Yet, interestingly, both Roddick’s plot and the plot of the new administration’s stories shared a number of common story elements: Both saw The Body Shop as a powerful retailer that had to respond to marketplace pressures.

However, the appointment of Patrick Gournay as CEO of the organisation unleashed a media attack on Anita Roddick and a raft of stories that did not conform to Anita Roddick’s preferred narrative version of the company. The media claimed that Gournay had “replaced” Roddick who was “being forced to step down because of the pressure of disappointed shareholders” (Roddick, 2000a, p. 253). Other reports told of Roddick “stepping down”, taking “a back seat role” (Newland, 1998, p. 7), “lacking the skills” (Wilson, 1998, p. 118), deserving “much of the blame,” being “moved alongside her husband” (*Economist*, 1998, p. 66). In an attempt to reaffirm her position as the founder of the organisation, Roddick responded: “My job hadn’t actually changed at all – I was still doing what I had always done” (p. 254). Nevertheless, Gournay was referred to as “the man who’s come to save The Body Shop” (cited in Tan, 2000).

Such perceptions would have done little to ease the transition for Roddick and to enhance the hard-earned image of the organisation. Roddick in turn used a variety of mediums, such as her second autobiography, public speeches, and media interviews, to respond to many of the criticisms and assure her audiences that The Body Shop still intended to change the way business was carried out. However, with the introduction of a new executive management team in 1999, headed by Gournay, Roddick was no longer the head spokesperson for the organisation.

Having selected all members of the new administration, Gournay reported: “The team is now well established and working cohesively to develop and manage our global business” (The Body Shop, 2000, p. 10). From this point, an additional narrative found its place in the organisation as a new top management team - often referred to as ‘the new administration’ by Roddick - adopted a professional management discourse within the organisation. This new narrative stood in stark contrast to Roddick’s own very ‘unbusinesslike’ and perhaps ‘unprofessional’ discourse:

I can’t even remember, to tell you the truth, how many shops I’ve got. I don’t know if it’s 1800 or 1830. I don’t want to know. I don’t care about the share price - I don’t want to know. I don’t want to know about the PYE, I don’t want to know anything, I just want to know...have we still got two fingers up at the cosmetic industry? That’s really what I want to know. (Roddick, 2000b)

The restructured senior management team consisted of business professionals who were hired to assist the new CEO in his goal to reposition The Body Shop as a “global retail organisation” (Body Shop news release, 1999b). Consequently, The Body Shop discourse soon featured such industry terms as “strategic plan,” “e-commerce plan,” “sales growth,” “brand,” and “strong internet-based business” (The Body Shop, 2000). The new characters at The Body Shop were not always popular and New Zealand Body Shop franchisee, Barrie Thomas, disliked the notion of conventional business practices in the organisation. In particular, he had strong feelings about Gournay:

...bringing in a lot of Americans when nobody asked him and they depart with huge payouts; and the salaries- £3-400, 000! And then to all intense purposes, not producing the goods anyway! There was a stage where he just seemed to be bringing in people from America he had worked with and who he trusted which I suppose is understandable and is fairly common. But difficult in a company such as this where this has not happened before. Anita is not backwards in saying that she and he don’t hit it off and see eye to eye. (Thomas, interview with researcher, 2001)

There was a clear discursive tension between Roddick’s narrative of spiritual idealism and Gournay’s narrative of managerial realism. However, evidence of serious personality clashes and in-fighting featured as early as 1991 in the organisation.

Roddick (2000a) recounted stories about numerous Directors, in particular, the UK Managing Director:

The prime mover behind the decision to stop the campaign was our then Managing Director. He believed it could damage the company's image and marketability. I believed we were morally obliged to speak out. He had lobbied the other members of the board and persuaded them that we should not be getting involved in issues like the Gulf War. I think it was his stab at trying to make The Body Shop a more 'normal' company. I wasn't about to allow it to happen. (p. 87)

Clearly, the issue was one of control. Roddick asserted that she "wasn't about to *allow* it to happen" to strengthen her position of authority in her organisation. Critics went so far as to suggest that those who did not share Roddick's values and opinions had no choice but to leave the organisation. Roddick (2000a) illustrated these accusations when she recalled:

When the Managing Director took first over I was relieved. But there were immediate problems about control. His first act of professional management was to make the first redundancies in the company's history. It was only 25 people, but it fomented enormous distrust and fear...I was furious. (p. 236)

The end to this story was therefore quite predictable: "After his challenge to my position, the MD had little alternative but to leave himself" (Roddick, 2000a, p. 237). In fact, these were popular endings to many of Roddick's (2000a) stories. Another example was given in Roddick's account of a Body Shop director who challenged The Body Shop's approach to marketing. According to Roddick (2000a), he tried to "fit our marketing into a series of formulas" (p. 145). In her account, Roddick recalled how she responded to the director, telling him that she did not want any part of his thinking in her company. As a result, Roddick (2000a) states: "He lasted another two to three months after that" (p. 146). Roddick was simply not ready to hand over control to anyone else and so it seemed that anyone who challenged her, lost, a view clearly captured by a New Zealand Body Shop Director:

It's so hard to divorce Anita and The Body Shop which is one of the problems obviously...as I said right at the beginning, I think its incredibly difficult that it is Anita's company; it's her baby. To let go is very difficult because she is The Body Shop. It's almost impossible, from my point of view, for someone to come in and run the company

because Anita *is* there and she *needs* to be there because we need her.
(Thomas, interview with researcher, 2001, emphasis added)

It was not until 1998, when she had fully realised her company “was no longer a unique, new, exciting and challenging entry into the market” (Roddick, 2000a, p. 252) that she decided to relinquish control. Yet, Roddick (2000a) refused to acknowledge that her narrative of idealism and desire for control contributed to The Body Shop’s problems stating: “I didn’t understand why I should be classified as ‘part of the problem’” (p. 252). However, Roddick (2000a) was clearly aware of her strong personality and suggested that the hand-over would not be easy. As she said: “We wanted...someone who had enough courage to stand up to Gordon and me” (p. 253).

In contrast with Roddick, a social crusader, Gournay was very much a corporate executive. The Body Shop was no longer a family affair, as Gournay explained: “It’s not a family business, it’s a public company. You can’t do things that are not respectful to the shareholders’ rights for example” (cited in Tan, 2000). Aspects of the organisation’s identity came under intense pressure when the tough restructuring plans involved more job losses for Body Shop employees. However, Gournay admitted that it was a “very painful experience” and claimed to “do it in The Body Shop way by consulting with people” (cited in Tan, 2000). But elements of managerial realism began to appear in Gournay’s narrative. For instance when asked about the redundancies, Gournay reflected elements of a traditional ‘real-world’ managerial discourse, where managers prefer a quick fix often characterised by inevitable downsizing in personnel (Deetz, 1992; Poirier & Houser, 1993). He used such terms as ‘restructure’ in his responses to questions surrounding the hundreds of job losses at The Body Shop. The harshness of the realist narrative was illustrated in the reference to such job losses as ‘elimination.’ Gournay was very matter-of-fact when stating: “...we *had* to *restructure* Head Office and that *translated* into 300 hundred jobs that were *eliminated*” (cited in Tan, 2000, emphasis added).

While these expressions could be interpreted as insensitive and uncaring, Roddick consistently worked to indirectly override Gournay’s narrative. She constructed stories around the “miserable” event, saying that she was “not detached enough to say

‘Oh well, that’s business’ (Roddick, 2000a, p. 260). Additionally, she countered his reference(s) to the organisation as a “public company,” by reaffirming The Body Shop’s original values of ‘family,’ a term that was very much a part of Roddick’s earlier narrative too: “We weren’t like big industries who make people redundant all the time - we were a *family* and offered *wonderful* jobs with *wonderful* conditions” (Roddick, 2000a, p. 260, emphasis added). In fact, it was almost as if Roddick positioned herself as the caring founder who not only stood by her original principles but who also had nothing to do with the harsh management decisions made in her company. In defense of The Body Shop reality, she constructed the whole event as “a messy business, but we knew no other alternative” (Roddick, 2000a, p. 260). In media interviews, both Gournay and Roddick were careful to disseminate messages indicative of internal unity within the organisation. Nevertheless, in her autobiography, Roddick (2000a) distanced herself even further from business as usual:

I will leave The Body Shop when it starts to act and think like a big corporation, or becomes less radical. If we don’t stand for something, we’ll fall for anything – and the anything will be mediocrity. That’s when I’ll be out of the door like a bat out of hell. (p. 275)

From ‘grand’ story to multiple narratives: A rhetoric of change at The Body Shop

Consequently, a strong new set of ideas, a kind of new managerial ideology, started to develop in the company. Changes at The Body Shop presented issues concerning the organisation’s identity and constructed external image. Rhetorically, the comparison might be framed in terms of Albert and Whetten’s (1985) fundamental self-reflective question, ‘who are we as an organisation?’ In the case of The Body Shop, Roddick also was concerned about who she thought The Body Shop *should* be. But Roddick was no longer the chief storyteller of The Body Shop story - the hero had been surpassed. Consequently, in 2001, she constructed an alternative medium - her own personal website - to vent her frustrations:

My biggest failure at the moment is not finding ways to be heard in my own company. It’s to do with how the company that I formed and shaped really doesn’t match up to the company I started. It is big; it is powerful in terms of persuasion. It’s very patriarchal. It has very much

the culture of a company that manufactures and distributes...Often the ideas that I have are not heard. (Roddick, 2001d)

Roddick's narratives illustrated the conventions that constrain which stories we can tell, and how we can tell them, and to show how people can and do resist the forms of social control that marginalize or silence "counternarratives, stories that deviate from or transgress the canonical ones" (Ellis & Bochner, 2000, p. 744). By this I mean the texts produced by Roddick were stories that created the *effect* of The Body Shop reality, showing the organisation embedded in the complexities of lived moments of struggle, resisting the intrusions of fragmentation and incoherence, trying to preserve or restore the continuity and coherence of its identity in the face of unexpected blows of fate that called the organisation's meanings and values into question.

However, Roddick made certain that her voice *was* heard by relying on the 'rhetorical nature of identity' (Burke, 1969a). According to Heath, "narratives have rhetorical power because they can reify structure by eliminating alternative views of social reality" (p. 67). Roddick decided that the identity-image discrepancy at The Body Shop should be resolved and set out to change how both internal and external audiences perceived the organisation. To do this, she adopted several tactics. The most significant of these was to project images that highlighted and emphasised certain socially desirable aspects or themes of The Body Shop identity, thus attempting to influence outsider perceptions through organisational impression management (Goffman, 1971). By this I mean, Roddick used stories to elicit impressions in others. She did this - once again - through the power of stories which served to structure the changes at The Body Shop and (re)position the organisation as one that was *still* unusual.

In line with Boje's (1991) thesis, storytelling is herein defined operationally as a "pattern-finding, pattern-elaborating, or pattern-fitting episode to make sense of wider organisational processes and relationships" (p. 113). Roddick consciously used storytelling to account for evolutionary changes at The Body Shop. Peters and Austin's (1985) assertion that storytelling is significant in turbulent settings where stories and storytelling help make sense of unfolding dynamics in the organisation,

inform my analysis of shifting stories at The Body Shop. Indeed Roddick told her accounts of events as they unfolded at the company through news releases, interviews and speeches; however, she used her second autobiography, *Business as unusual* (2000), to discursively construct The Body Shop's narratives of change. There were other accounts of change at The Body Shop. New Zealand Body Shop Director, Barrie Thomas recounted his version of the changes in the organisation:

When we first got involved, there were the simple beliefs: the no animal testing, the simple packaging, the no advertising. I think we still felt slightly isolated. We would go to franchise meetings, and there were only five of us and there was quite a family feeling and we had good relationships with franchisees around the world, the Canadian franchisees and we knew the European ones. We would go and stay with Anita and Gordon at their house. And it was a sort of maverick company and Anita was saying things like she would never employ a MBA [Master of Business Administration]. We didn't have a marketing department. And these were the days of strong growth and then my perception is that somewhere along the line she lost her nerve. And I think it was the Jon Entine stuff that shook her and the *Dispatches* stuff, not going well in America and it has never gone that well in Japan. I think if she had really kept her nerve, we'd have been stronger but she did employ MBAs, she did employ marketing people. I think she went against what she felt she should be doing and it was to the detriment of the company, that we lost our point of difference. So we did introduce more 'me too' products, and I think that's continued. (Thomas, interview with researcher, 2001)

Change is an ongoing discursive process within organisations and is primarily a function of organisational identity (Faber, 1998). As we have seen, The Body Shop's identity was constructed from Roddick's own narratives. While Roddick's telling and retelling of The Body Shop story shaped the image of the organisation, customers, competitors, interest groups and other stakeholders also helped construct the organisation's image. In its early years, The Body Shop was successful in integrating its narratives and its images; however, as the organisation grew and new characters entered its narrative in the late 1990s, gaps began to appear in its storylines. As a result, Roddick (2000a) initiated changes in an attempt to realign the organisation's images and narratives. In 2000, she used *Business as unusua*, to explain her decision:

The creativity, camaraderie and sense of fun that had marked our early years were seeping away. It used to be that we had no one-, five- or ten-year organisational plans. But by now I had accepted that the massive evolution of the company meant we needed a change in the

very fabric of its leadership and management. (Roddick, 2000a, p. 236)

In 1991, Roddick used the autobiography, *Body and soul*, to establish The Body Shop's corporate identity (as discussed in detail in chapter five). Throughout the organisation's evolution, Roddick continued to think in narrative terms. The final phase of The Body Shop story (1998-2001) builds on Gardner's (1995) claim that leaders use stories to revive neglected or existing themes that need to be communicated. Moreover, the "meaning contained in stories is a fabric of thought, a constellation of symbols by which each organisation exerts its uniqueness" (Heath, 1994, p. 71). It was in this way that Roddick constructed a second autobiography, *Business as unusual* (2000a), to *reinvent* the original Body Shop narrative and preserve the 'threatened' uniqueness of the organisation's identity as it underwent internal changes and external challenges. This process saw Roddick foster the construction of a partially mythological history that modified The Body Shop's previous identity to conform to her image of a desired future state for her organisation. Such images, which included symbolic representations of imagined future states compromised present and past views and forced Roddick to re-examine the current identity of, not only herself, but also of The Body Shop.

In her second autobiography, Roddick emphasized the influence of origin (founding) and the sense of identity she believed was held at a deep level in the cultural surround of The Body Shop. The key plot of *Business as unusual* comprised a relatively fixed notion of the historical development of identity that assumed the persistence of an essential identity, despite changing events, times and perceptions. In this sense, The Body Shop identity as constructed by Roddick in her first autobiography, served as the center anchor that endured and preserved its distinctiveness, despite the need for change.

The Body Shop narratives were ordered according to familiar plotlines. As explained in chapter five, it was through the construction of the epic hero's journey in *Body and soul*, that Anita Roddick created The Body Shop's early identity. To best account for changes in The Body Shop's identity, Roddick followed a 'romanticist plot'

(Jeffcutt, 1994) in her second autobiography. Romanticist plots are enacted when the company is portrayed as recovering from a fall from grace, stemming from excessive growth or divergence from the founder's vision. The romantic plot augers a return to or a rediscovery of a purer self, one obscured perhaps, but there all along (Barry & Elmes, 1997).

Indeed, storytellers can use a plot that highlights only certain elements of a story to display the organisation more favourably in the eyes of the external beholders (Tennyson, 1967). Roddick dramatised and made visible equivocal happenings at The Body Shop and turned them into meaningful stories characterised by a distinctive plot. She retold these stories in an attempt to construct a similar version of the original organisational narrative. However, as pointed out by Heugens (2002), stories can be altered, by highlighting certain historical events while downplaying others or even by introducing new elements in the story that are alien to the original. For instance, my interview with Roddick, she continued to highlight success stories of The Body Shop's franchise operations. She states:

...they are extremely radiant franchisees in terms of everything: their warmth, their personality, the campaigns, the fun, the working alongside colleagues. But they have got a lot of good sense to say about things. And more than Ashley and Mike and Barrie [New Zealand Body Shop Directors], you should go and talk to the most powerful, brilliant franchisee we have, Graham Wise in Australia and Vicky Birkenshaw, Head of Communications. She is stellar! I mean I give my life to those two. (Roddick, interview with researcher, 2001a)

However, Roddick was careful not to detail the negative accounts of franchisees who were not so supportive of Roddick's strategies. But in a personal interview with New Zealand Body Shop Director, Michael Ogilvie-Lee, he shared his frustrations surrounding what she considered to be a lack of strategic direction and uncertainty in the organisation, revealing evidence of discursive struggles in the once coherent Body Shop narrative:

Anita was a lot less decisive in decision-making than Patrick [Gournay]...I hold them both accountable for where The Body Shop is. Their total inability to use common sense and work together to get it where it should be is the total reason why the company is in the situation it is. It's not that Patrick's got a better or worse management style than Anita or Anita's got a shocking or good management style.

Both of them have shown a total inability to sit down and come up with a rational plan to lead The Body Shop to where it wants to go. Now, you blame Patrick to death for that and say he's too pig headed to listen but you also blame Anita to death because she's too impatient and too rushed to get it done. And the one thing they didn't do, the one thing they didn't do was groom a successor. If she had had Patrick as her personal assistant for two years and groomed him as her personal assistant for two years, maybe we would have had a successor in this company. But instead, we got the current situation, where it's a stalemate again isn't it? (Ogilvie-Lee, interview with researcher, 2001)

Barrie Thomas, also a New Zealand Body Shop Director, augmented his partner's claim of poor decision-making in the company:

Anita's got a pretty short attention span, she loves change, and she assumes that everybody else loves change. I believe that a lot of people don't like change when there's so much change going on out there in the world, they like some things they can rely on. My belief is that they like to go to The Body Shop, they know they've got their favourite product there and it wouldn't change. So that when it did start to change, they didn't go to The Body Shop. I always felt we should have our core of the old favourites that were good sellers and okay we can change some percentage. (Thomas, interview with researcher, 2001)

Further, while elements of a more conventional business discourse – such as the focus on “sales performance” and “The Body Shop brand” (The Body Shop, 2000) - were introduced to the original storyline, Roddick (2000a) described the shift as “one individual's attempt to marry the often impersonal wants of a successful business with the very personal needs of a successful businessperson” (p. xi). In other words, Roddick (2000a) set out to assure readers of *Business as unusual* that while The Body Shop had grown “into one of the most successful retailers in the world” (p. x), she continued to resist “corporate greed” and “the seductive comfort of just being a wealthy businesswoman” (p. 9). Roddick (2000a) continued:

Despite the enormous constraints of a global company, despite the general intractability of life, I need to find new ways to push the limits of business, to change its language, to make it a force for positive change. (p. xi, emphasis added)

In this respect, the distinction between ‘story’ and ‘plot’ is crucial (Bakhtin & Medvedev, 1994), especially in the case of alternative storylines that found their way into The Body Shop narrative. While story is a narrative reproduction (or ‘text’,

Czarniawska, 1997, 1998) of an event that once occurred in real time, the “lines of plots are crooked paths of digressions, disruptions, retardations, and evasions” (Heugens, 2002, p. 58) are subject to manipulation. Roddick was not strictly bound to the confines of the original Body Shop story as it occurred in real time. She had the ability to use the corporate story (*Body and soul*) as the raw material for composing a corporate plot in *Business as unusual* that was more persuasive and compelling than the original. Fisher’s (1987) assertion that the narrative paradigm allows people to create “new stories that better account for their lives or the mystery of life itself” (p. 67) offers insight into Roddick’s ‘new’ narrative. For instance, it provides us with a framework for testing the coherence of Roddick’s narrative. By this I mean we can assess whether Roddick’s story “hangs together” by its argumentative or structural coherence; by its material coherence, that is by comparing and contrasting stories told in other (corporate) discourses; and by characterological coherence.

Further, Brown and Kreps (1993) argue that where faced with a problem or difficulty, stories will be used to construct new possibilities for action. These stories were based on different ways of constructing organisational and managerial identities and imposed different types of subject positions upon the central actors: the ‘founder entrepreneur’ and the ‘new administration.’ In this way, when Roddick (re)described the changes, she was at the same time (re)constructing her own and other’s identities and subject positions and thus defined what was important and legitimate in this context. Take the following account from Roddick (2000a):

The company was being organized around geography and territory, which I thought was very male thinking. It was threatening to turn into the kind of company I said I would never be a part of...It wasn’t long before I took against our new managing director. He felt he was installing efficiency. I felt this ‘efficiency’ was leading to an intense system of patronage and power. (p. 237)

Here, Roddick constructs her storyline as *clashing* with the new administration’s plot for the company and she sets out to assert her ‘story’ as the more moral one. Fisher’s (1987) concept of characterological coherence can be used to theorise Roddick’s refusal to give up the heart of her idea – *activism* – as this would have contradicted her core reasons for founding The Body Shop and the logic of her personal and

organisational narratives. In this way, the determination of Roddick's character is made by interpretations of her decisions and actions that reflect her values. Indeed, Roddick behaved characteristically and such predictability confirmed her commitment to the original Body Shop plot – to dedicate the organisation to social and environmental change.

Gardener (1995) argues that leaders are able to “transplant, suppress, complement or in some measure, outweigh...contemporary, oppositional ‘counterstories’” (p. 14). To outweigh The Body Shop's more contemporary narrative, Roddick relied heavily on her ability as leader, to influence and persuade. She explains:

The Body Shop may have been mine in the sense that I started it, but I could no longer make all the decisions and as it grew larger and began to change, that only power I had over it was the force of moral persuasion. (Roddick, 2000a, p. 235)

Focusing on the intertextual properties of the narrative form, O'Connor (2005) defines narrative competence to mean an ability to plot oneself not only as primary, but also as a secondary or minor character. As a primary character, Roddick wrote marketing communications, strategic and financial plots for The Body Shop; and in everyday conversation, she narrated her dreams and her plans for extraordinary personal and organisational success. More elusive, however, was the processual aspect of this narrative activity – a complex subtle sensemaking by which Roddick recognised that she was constantly plotted into storylines authored by competitors, journalists, critics (as discussed in chapter six for example), and the new executive management team at The Body Shop. The construction and piecing together of such plots – for they often appeared fragmentary in form – located the organisation in its industrial, social, economic and other contexts, which can be conceptualized as interrelated storylines.

In these storylines, Roddick played a range of parts, from large to trivial, over which she had little to no control. In fact, Roddick herself was plotted into The Body Shop narrative by the new management team heading The Body Shop. In their construction of the new official Body Shop story, the new administration was careful *not* to construct Roddick as the main character who controlled The Body Shop. For instance,

in The Body Shop's 2000 annual report, they wrote: "There is a *clear division* of responsibility between the Co-Chairs and the Chief Executive Officer and the roles of Board members are clearly defined, so that *no individual* has unfettered powers of decision-making" (The Body Shop, 2000, p. 33, emphasis added). Indeed Roddick's identity, as the key individual behind the organisation, was also being re-plotted, highlighting that amid the appeal of being an epic hero, entrepreneur storytellers must expand their repertoires to position themselves as secondary or even minor characters in plots over which they no control (O'Connor, 2005).

The divergent identities pulling at The Body Shop were indeed causing a great deal of organisational distress and uncertainty, particularly amongst audiences inside the organisation. For example, New Zealand Body Shop Director, Barrie Thomas stated:

I think The Body Shop has tended to become a little less unusual. There are more companies out there who share the same beliefs which is great. We've just become more usual, more traditional. There is a sense for most of the franchisees around the world that we are becoming more traditional than we were, more so than we have been in the past. (Thomas, interview with researcher, 2001)

Roddick, who seemed to be of a similar train of thinking, responded with a familiar rhetorical strategy - the use of myth - to resolve both personal and organisational contradictions that were appearing in The Body Shop story. Levi-Strauss's (1966, 1978) underlying assumption regarding myth can be used to theorise Roddick's approach. He claims that thought processes gain order by interacting with experience in such a way as to render it intelligible. In this way, Roddick aligned her thoughts with past experiences in an attempt to re-instate the original Body Shop story.

Chapter five outlined how Roddick's narrative took on a mythic status at The Body Shop. During these times of change at The Body Shop, Roddick continued to use storytelling as a vehicle for collective centering and collective sensemaking in the organisation. In what McWhinney and Battista (1988) call 'remythologising,' Roddick used her second autobiography, as well as other stories, to bring The Body Shop's identity narratives back into audiences' consciousness and enable organisational renewal. For instance, Roddick summoned back to consciousness both

her personal and organisational founding ideals and values and the oft-told tales that helped establish and maintain The Body Shop identity thus linking the primal energy with present conditions. This was clearly evident in a 'letter from the Co-Chairs' in The Body Shop 2000 annual report:

Campaigning for social environment change continues to be at the heart of The Body Shop. We are encouraged to see how the underlying values of this business are being maintained and nurtured under the leadership of Patrick and his executive team (The Body Shop, 2000, p. 7).

Consequently, foundation myths provided the intertextual link on which Roddick's current narratives built and relied. Roddick not only revived the founding myths of the organisation's very essence, she set out to re-commit to the revitalised myth.

Internal changes

Authorising the change: Roddick's remix of usual and unusual business

In choosing the title *Business as unusual* for her second autobiography, Roddick was able to signal both continuity and change. The phrase was certainly a familiar phrase, but not one commonly adopted by members of the business community who more commonly shared the 'business as usual' mentality. In practice, the last few decades have seen academics, environmentalists, marketers, feminists, and futurists talk more about the end of business as usual in their reflection of future trends (Levine, Locke, Searls & Weinberger, 2000; Welford, 1995). Many believed that the free market had failed to bring about equitable distributions of income, to protect the Third World, and to protect the planet. With the title *Business as unusual*, Roddick signalled her book's attempt to find new ways to reject the free market story, to push the limits of business, to change its language, and to make it a force for positive social change.

Roddick was far from the first to use the phrase, and could therefore lay no claim to its discursive ownership. Nevertheless, her previous efforts had definitely earned the right to use it. Not only did it summarise many of her efforts to differentiate and position her company over the past 25 years, it set out to remind audiences that The Body Shop was still a proud leader in demanding social change and in challenging the

status quo. Roddick's discursive positioning of The Body Shop and of others was a direct result of her promise to keep usual business out of The Body Shop. She had always feared that as the organisation grew, it would threaten to turn into the kind of company she said she would never be a part of. However, her promise presented the organisation with numerous challenges to, and dilemmas for, its corporate identity and image. In line with Fairclough's (1992) assertion that "changes in language use are linked to wider social and cultural processes" (p. 1), changes in The Body Shop's sociocultural practices displayed tensions and inconsistencies in the organisation's discourse. Stories not only shifted, but also conflicted with Roddick's earlier narrative, as elements of more conventional business, such as professional marketing, formed a regular part of The Body Shop's discourse.

The end of a new marketing paradigm: Promoting The Body Shop brand

In the early years of The Body Shop's history, Roddick constructed the image of her organisation as one that was committed to communication on all fronts. In fact, she referred to The Body Shop's ability to communicate as "gob-smacking" (Roddick, 1991, p. 145). Roddick selected key achievements - in terms of the organisation's communication - from The Body Shop's past and presented them as part of a lived narrative. For instance, by preserving and rendering permanent, events in the organisation's past - such as the setting up of Jacaranda Productions, the company's own independent video production company in 1987 - Roddick (1991) presented the identity of her organisation as a "communications company" (p. 145): "We use every available medium to preach, teach, inspire and stimulate, and in everything we do - whether it is a simple leaflet or a full-length video - our single minded passion shines through" (p. 145). But fractures in her story started to appear as the organisation entered a new era, threatening what Fisher (1987) terms the "fidelity" or "good reasons for belief" (p. 48) of Roddick's narrative. By 2001, Body Shop staff had little reason to believe in the organisation's identity narrative, as New Zealand Body Shop Director, Barrie Thomas explains:

That's one of the changes that I've noticed in the company over the years. As far as communications from Body Shop International - *non-*

existent. So that's a big change. I don't believe it's going to change. We used to get regular newsletters. Then when The Body Shop bought the video company we had regular videos. Some wonderful videos Jacaranda put out. We used to get monthly newsletter videos which I found not as good as the written newsletter. But also Jacaranda would put out just good, wonderful videos like the need for clean water around the world. We used to have regular franchise meetings every year and talk to Anita twice a year. And I don't think we have for three years. (Thomas, interview with researcher, 2001, emphasis added)

A source of tension and message diversion among Body Shop employees and Body Shop management personnel developed in company texts as a result of the organisation's growth and shift towards conventional marketing which focused less on relationships and more on promoting The Body Shop 'brand.' As I suggested in chapter two, Roddick claimed to have promoted a new marketing storyline but this was less an extension of its original values than a new, improved marketing with added public relations. After all, some of The Body Shop's early strategies were recognised as classic marketing techniques (Chipperfield, 1988; Kotler, 1999; Ottman, 1993; Svendsen, 1998; Schlegemich, 1998). Nevertheless, Roddick claimed that she rejected advertising and conventional marketing methods and positioned her company through a discourse of resistance (Foucault, 1983) to institutionalised marketing. By doing so, she positioned The Body Shop as a cosmetics company which was more concerned with communication, creating understanding and opposing the traditional discursive tools of the cosmetics industry.

In an attempt to transform consumer attitudes towards marketing, Roddick placed an emphasis of public relations and dialogue in her earlier narrative. Her story seemed credible at a time when markets were more monolithic and businesses were less concerned about establishing relationships. Further, public image, interaction with staff and customers and the association of commerce with conscience issues reinforced the original principles on which the company was founded, a type of ecological anti-greed marketing. However, the consistent philosophy of the company, the way it reinforced the corporate self image through staff training, its careful approach to packaging and willingness to follow its success into untapped markets were all "convincing evidence of a shrewd marketing strategy which few

professionals could improve on” (Chipperfield, 1988, p. 53). In fact, Roddick did not reject marketing completely, but instead selected techniques that she then made distinctive in her story. Such techniques included face-to-face meetings, word-of-mouth publicity, and creative approaches to selling. While Roddick’s original story claimed to reject marketing and its emphasis on selling in her narrative, her selling techniques were clear evidence to suggest that she was out to market her products and she did so successfully.

As a result of such success, Roddick was labelled a ‘marketing maverick’ (Wallace, 1990; Mandow, 1991) and cited in numerous marketing texts (Ottman, 1993; Svendsen, 1998; Schlegemich, 1998; Kotler, 1999; Kearins & Klÿn, 1999; Pringle & Thompson, 1999). It was an ironic paradox that The Body Shop, with no marketing department and no advertising department, developed its own paradigm of selling in the 1990s. By referring to Roddick as a ‘marketing visionary,’ Kotler (1999) acknowledged that she had provided valuable lessons to the business community in how to successfully, and creatively, market her company. Conventional businesses realised that they needed to market an image of being open and create a sense of community. The Body Shop, for example, created some community feeling by allowing customers to bring in bottles for a refill. The Body Shop narrative emphasised communication and tried to establish credibility with its customers by educating them. Conventional marketing and business had indeed listened and learned from The Body Shop’s storytelling techniques. Consequently, The Body Shop narrative was no longer unusual. So, Roddick expanded her boundaries to accommodate the shift to a more mainstream marketing story.

The need for a shift resulted from the increasing pressure and ultimately, if The Body Shop was to survive, the need for a turn to professional marketing. Roddick’s original story eschewed professional marketing, categorising it as business as usual, because of its traditional role in assisting businesses in their pursuit of the single bottom line. Nevertheless, aspects of a professional marketing discourse began to feature prominently in the organisation’s narrative. It was ironic that these changes in the organisation’s story placed traditional marketing practices and discourse at the core of

The Body Shop's operations with specific tales referring to "improving our operating efficiencies and our product innovation," "the power of the brand," (Body Shop news release, 1999a) and "guerrilla marketing" (Roddick, 2000c). These take a decidedly different turn from the early chapters of The Body Shop story.

The expansion of her storyline, to incorporate marketing discourse as a positive force presented Roddick with both an economic and identity challenge. The challenge stemmed from the organisation "embarking on a period of major change to reposition The Body Shop as a more powerful retail player" (Body Shop news release, 1999a). The shift was highlighted by the appointment of the post of a Director of Marketing, in 1999 (Body Shop news release, 1999b). In order to fit the new circumstances, Roddick re-defined the meaning of usual and unusual business as she shifted boundaries in order to acknowledge and incorporate the strength of new storytelling voices at The Body Shop.

From around 1998, aspects of conventional marketing had been incorporated into a new Body Shop narrative which consisted of such industry terms as 'brand strategy,' 'marketing strategy,' 'marketing communications,' and 'visual merchandising'. Roddick (2000a) even went so far as to refer to The Body Shop as a "marketing business" in her own narrative:

As a marketing, product-devising and retailing business, The Body Shop will be free to undertake other projects. We are also looking at expanding into health foods and vitamins. 'Organic' and 'self-reliance' are the new buzzwords, and we will supply the creative people to make these projects work. (p. 256)

This was a revolutionary change for a company that prided itself on never having a marketing department or relying on marketing executives to promote itself and its products. The Body Shop had turned to a more business-as-profit-above-all story in its attempt to reposition itself in the market. Furthermore, Roddick had little choice but to adapt the professional marketing discourse in order to reinforce the consistency and unity of The Body Shop's messages.

While a marketing discourse was eventually incorporated into the organisation's narrative, Roddick continued to resist advertising. From the beginning, Roddick drew on The Body Shop's long-standing position on advertising as it positioned the profession as one that promoted the business as usual ideology. The Body Shop's discursive practices drew on its original values which could be linked to the values of traditional Body Shop customers and supporters. However, many of those customers and supporters had become disillusioned with The Body Shop because it was believed that the organisation "had abandoned [its] 'never advertise' stance and given way to the pressure of the competitive US market" (Roddick, 2000a, p. 228). Roddick (2000a) tried to explain the decision:

To add to our troubles, we were a company that did not advertise. In America, the spiritual home of advertising, that was considered to be completely mad and so we broke our own taboo and dipped a toe into advertising, but we were hopeless. We didn't have the courage or the history. Every time we tried it, it was more pathetic than the time before. (p. 144)

As illustrated in the quote above, Roddick constructed The Body Shop as a company that was not marketing savvy. She also constructed herself as a person who was not naturally manipulative. Rather, she constructed herself as an innocent, naive businesswoman and used this as a virtue, a heroic virtue. In this way, Roddick's portrayal of herself and her company as victims of the powerful US market allowed her to deviate from her anti-advertising stance. After all, the US was not the only market that challenged The Body Shop. In 1997, The Body Shop appointed Bean Andrews Norways Cramphorn to handle the organisation's first advertising campaign to combat the launch of Virgin's chain of cosmetic stores (Sage, 1997).

Critics were quick to accuse Roddick of moving away from her founding principles and towards more business as usual practices (Sage, 1997). But in 2000, Roddick referred to these digressions towards advertising as mistakes of the past and constructed them as part of a learning process. In fact, she positioned the divergence as a valuable lesson which taught her never to deviate from The Body Shop's core values again. She used *Business as unusual*, to set the record straight - from her standpoint - over other accusations of tarnishing the company's image by agreeing to

appear in three high profile American Express advertisements. Roddick (2000a) asserted:

No one thought to ask me about the ads or find out that I had only agreed to do them after American Express had promised me that I could talk about community trade. I subsequently donated my fees to indigenous people (p. 228).

While these lessons and inferences made Roddick even more anti-advertising than she was 20 years before, the inconsistencies led to questions about The Body Shop's credibility and tested its identity as an organisation that was "testimony to the fact that you don't need to waste money on costly advertising campaigns to be successful" (Roddick, 2000a, p. 77).

Internal reflections

The change in Roddick's position was, not unnaturally, accompanied by inner personal, as well as internal company, changes. The changes during the last decade saw Roddick become increasingly self-reflective about her life, global communities, the life of her company, and how they all interacted. Thus, personal psychology through self-reflection was another factor that helped shape her new narrative. In an interview with Susan Wood in Auckland, Roddick explained:

You get reflective, you get reflective of the age spot, you get reflective certainly at the age of every millennium, of every century and I wanted to write it as what I experienced in the last 10 years of The Body Shop . . . I've learnt so many things and I wanted to write my version of it before anybody else did. (Roddick, 2000d)

While Roddick grew more reflective about internal changes in her company, she also acknowledged the external changes which impacted on The Body Shop. These external changes included the fact that others were catching up with the organisation, that the world outside the organisation was changing and that the issue of profitability was becoming increasingly important for the organisation's survival. Indeed these changes forced Roddick to become more reflective of her own position in the organisation. She explained:

If The Body Shop is not a topic of talk, I'm not interested. And I'll get it back, that's not the hard thing. The hard thing is how it can be sustained? You see, it's a really interesting thing for me because do I

care if it stays as it is? No, I don't. Have I done the best I could while I was there so it was mine, shaped my identity? Yes I did. Is the bigger picture out there for me? Yes it is. I hope The Body Shop will remain as progressive but I always said, and I said in the last page of the book [*Business as unusual*]: if it stops being progressive, I'm not interested. I've too short a life to wait worrying about another bloody body bubble bath. (Roddick, interview with researcher, 2001a)

Here, Roddick came perilously close to admitting that The Body Shop was simply a cosmetics retailer, selling "bloody body bubble bath." In doing so, she recognised the need to re-examine her identity as founder of the organisation. In line with Gergen's (2001) theory on self-narration in social life, *Roddick's present identity crisis was not a sudden and mysterious event, but a sensible result of an entrepreneur's life story.*

While acknowledging her own personal predicament, Roddick also presented her thoughts for addressing the image-identity gap at The Body Shop. Roddick's actions once again illustrate the relationship between the founder's identity and the identity of her organisation. After all, Roddick was the personification of The Body Shop. In this way, what threatened the identity of the organisation's identity, also threatened Roddick's personal identity. In an effort to bridge both her own and her personal identity, she expressed her thoughts for future Body Shop storylines with emphasis on a theme from the original Body Shop narrative - community:

I'm having an identity crisis. Peoples' perceptions are much stronger because I'm in the centre; people still have a huge belief that nothing has changed. And in fact, nothing has, its just advanced. That's my identity crisis. Staying put, treading water and celebrating what we've done is fine for exactly a nano-second in my life. And then we've got to know, how can we make this agenda happen-this social responsibility agenda? I've come to a real realisation-it's not just the financial and social auditing which a lot of people in the company wanted to stay with, it's developing the community trade but more of them. Now I understand that, but the campaigns have been lost for a bit, that's got to go back. (Roddick, interview with researcher, 2001)

It was Roddick's early sense of community activism that shaped both her personal identity and the identity of The Body Shop in the 1980s. The emplotment of this original theme in future storylines illustrated her attempt to restore the original characteristic that made both her and her company unusual. In this way, Roddick's

stories served to (re)position her identity, as well as the identity of The Body Shop in the context of The Body Shop's changing narrative.

But Roddick was mindful of competing storylines and attributed the demise of business as unusual at The Body Shop to new voices in the organisation. In fact, Roddick dispelled her authority at The Body Shop as "another great myth...I am a voice in the company. I, too, can get marginalised or be ignored" (cited in Lewis, 1998, p. 243). The marginalisation of Roddick's voice as chief storyteller meant that she no longer had the authority use language to shape the reality of the organisation or to manage meaning in the organisation. She openly declared her struggle stating: "My identity crisis is much more to do with the internal management" (Roddick, interview with researcher, 2001a). She explained the implications of her loss of influence at The Body Shop:

...there's no intent in America as we speak, of actually trying to shape a language of anarchy, or a language of counter culture, visual language; even the details or language of information...I do fear a company completely lost by leadership, by new leadership that cannot have leadership. And that's what hasn't been protected in the last few years is the essential quality of its renegade attitude. Because in reality, The Body Shop is a communications company, or was, with some great products to actually fuel the communications and made you lots of money. Now it's turned around under the new administration into being a product-led company. Well, I don't want a product-led company. There's bloody thousands of product-led companies. I want a company that had a voice, stood up, had an agenda. The Body Shop under the new administration does not have an agenda. The agenda that I had was communicating social and human rights justice and environmental issues. (Roddick, interview with researcher, 2001a)

Although the new 'managers' set out to (re)shape The Body Shop's narratives of identity, Roddick, now less prominent in the organisation, provided counterinterpretations. But Roddick was aware that dominance resided in the themes and meanings portrayed through narratives that were widely accepted and thereby became the basis of shared meaning and identification. For these reasons, Roddick used her own narrative to de-legitimate meanings prescribed by the now dominant group – the new administration. Aware that the competing narratives could produce friction which would lead to an incoherent, uncoordinated voice, Roddick worked to

maintain a consistent and coherent narrative for her organisation, following what Gergen (2001) refers to as a 'heroic saga' plot. After all, the well-formed narrative is typically one in which the characters in the story possess a continuous or coherent identity across time (Gergen, 2001). She did this by introducing causal forces to explain the progressive-regressive phases in her position as founder, weaving explanations into the narrative tissue but was clear about holding on to her identity as chief storyteller of The Body Shop narrative.

For instance, when asked if she would be back in 'control' of The Body Shop language, Roddick made it clear that she would drive communications in the company:

It's about the language we talk, it's about the style, and it's about the graphics. You could go into any office in the old days and it was full of amazing colour, energy. Now, it's all little people stuck behind a desk in little areas...An example is going into the Headquarters as we speak...there are...whole billboards with nothing on them. The identity crisis is that the new group coming in have shaped an identity around the financial business and not around the style and image. So it has been like that I believe for about six months and now *I'm taking it back. I'm going back into communications* and re-focusing on style and image. And it is style and image that is everything. And that's graphics with statements, communications vehicles. It's not difficult. It's just putting the template in and doing it; getting the message out there (Roddick, interview with researcher, 2001a, emphasis added)

As illustrated in the quote above, Roddick engaged in what Heath (1994) terms "the rhetorical contest of power," (p. 65) giving her preferred narrative interpretation of facts for enhancing future episodes in the unfolding drama. Her narrative implied a sense of drama that justified her actions and denied others, namely that of the new administration and favouring her original principles by making others irrelevant or unacceptable. In agreeing to drive the communications of the company, Roddick set out to eliminate alternative views of The Body Shop reality and resume control through active consent rather than through passive acceptance of pre-given social formations:

I tend to want to stay that way until I leave. I've done due diligence. I've stood back, I've been respectful. But now you know, *Thank God, they've said, "Come back in"* And I'm going to come in with a vengeance. (Roddick, interview with researcher, 2001a)

Roddick's return to her role in communication at The Body Shop, allows her to, once again, create narratives for those internal to the organisation. Indeed "those narratives create and disseminate corporate ideology that defines the players and their relationships" (Heath, 1994, p. 68). By determining which facts, principles and roles are appropriate, Roddick would regain her power over The Body Shop narrative. But external forces continued to test Roddick's resolve.

External challenges

Natural copycats and popular values: The growing threat of competition

In the recent past, Roddick had pleaded with the business community to adopt The Body Shop's narrative of social and environmental responsibility. By 2000 however, she complained that "every man and his dog were producing The Body Shop-style products" (Roddick, 2000a, p. 247). The rise of the fashion industry saw everyone selling toiletries and perfumes. Initially, imitation may have been flattering for The Body Shop; however, the increased competition also hurt the organisation in terms of market share. New Zealand Body Shop Director, Barrie Thomas explained:

We never went well in America – there was a lot of competition. So that put a lot of pressure on the company, on the share price. Even though Anita hasn't been too concerned about profits the cities put pressure on and it just seems crazy that we'd announce an increase in profits and the share price would drop. And then you get other companies that sack a hundred or a thousand people and their share price goes up. We often seem to be very harshly treated by the city. (Thomas, interview with researcher, 2001)

The resulting urgency to find new ways to market her company compelled Roddick towards mainstream, conventional business practices, practices to which, she once vowed, she would never resort. As the mainstream discourse increased, so too did the material changes and experiments. Design teams were put to work in the shops, management consultants were contracted, complex organisational structures were put in place, and redundancies became an 'economically viable' solution. According to New Zealand Body Shop Director, Barrie Thomas, the introduction of multiple

characters and new storylines meant that The Body Shop narrative lost its sense of unity, its point of difference. He explained:

...shop design is an on-going issue. It's an issue around the world. They've been experimenting and they haven't come up with something that's definitive as The Body Shop. Now, back in 1991, everyone was clear, this is what a The Body Shop looks like. Again, they've lost faith and felt they were going to change this. We've got to change but we don't know what we're going to change it to. And they came up with lots of designs, spent lots of money trying it out and then they came and said yes, this is the way to go. Then six months later they decided, no, this isn't the way to go. So we've just stuck with our own way of doing things, of design here. (Thomas, interview with researcher, 2001)

This threatened her once distinct corporate identity and Roddick literally had to reinvent The Body Shop because, "Except for our campaigns, we were perceived as boring and mainstream" (Roddick, 2000a, p. 252). The primary characters in The Body Shop narrative preferred the original Body Shop identity and openly rejected the new storylines:

The strength was that they all looked the same. And the first franchise meeting that Graham and I went to, Graham was set up by Gordon because the Canadians were having their own design, or their interpretation of The Body Shop design. It was still the green shelves, but they had red and white floors, slightly different. Gordon asked Graham to give a talk for the need for consistency around the world to maintain the brand image. The Canadians got very upset at Graham over this because they felt he'd been set up to get at them and he had, unwittingly. So back then, 1985/1986, there was this sense of Body Shops do need to look the same around the world and I think that's the way to go. But in recent years there has been this trend and I think it's because they haven't got a clear idea of what a Body Shop should look like. (Thomas, interview with researcher, 2001)

Nonetheless Roddick reworked the visual plot: "The shops and product lines were looking the same and we weren't reinventing ourselves strongly enough" (Roddick, 2000a, p. 253). Part of the reinvention meant revising The Body Shop story once again.

Although the theme of profitability was openly added as a new chapter to the organisation's story, Roddick was careful to point out continuities since it was the

profits that allowed The Body Shop to fulfil its responsibilities to both the local and global community. In doing so, however, she openly positioned rest of the business community as largely *irresponsible*:

...many of our business leaders are not equipped to deal with this new responsibility...they are...hypnotised by the bottom line and forgotten their moral obligations to civil society. The message I have been repeating in every speech I've made and every article I've written on business in the last 15 years is that we must include in our measures of success enough to sustain communities, cultures and families...(Roddick, 2001a, p. 14)

The effect of globalisation on communities was the final factor that impacted on traditional themes in The Body Shop story. Not only was Roddick committed to minimising the impact of economic globalisation around the world, she was intent on exposing 'corporate crime' and increasing the power of the 'vigilante consumer.' Certainly the changing world presented challenges to The Body Shop but it also presented The Body Shop with opportunities, opportunities that Roddick used to reaffirm her familiar tales of activism and good corporate citizenship. For Roddick, the replacement of the term 'citizen' with 'consumer' in public discourse was disturbing and prompted her to support Ralph Nadar's emphasis on the term consumer, to incorporate rights, honesty and respect. However, she went further than Nadar, to advocate an activist stance and to revive what Wexler (1990) refers to as the now "archaic term 'citizen'" (p. 131). These themes featured heavily in Roddick's narrative, as she promised her audience in 2000, an organisation that was still committed to the pursuit of social and environmental change.

E-narratives of The Body Shop: The Body Shop Direct and The Body Shop Digital

The final shift in The Body Shop discourse was one that Roddick did not, and could not, resist. In fact, it was illustrative of how certain aspects of usual business found its way to the core of the organisation's business practices, now determined by Gournay. The globalisation of technology was widely accepted and practiced by conventional business, including The Body Shop. Thus, like many conventional businesses, The Body Shop could not afford to ignore the value of the Internet. They found themselves having to respond to a new generation of shoppers and growing trends in on-line

shopping. Roddick (2000a) acknowledged this new direction and constructed the electronic commerce arm of the organisation - The Body Shop Digital - as an opportunity for The Body Shop to connect with a new generation of customers:

People are going to go into our shops in the future for an experience and the opportunity to handle the products, but I believe that in the next decade 90 per cent of our customers are going to buy either through home-selling or over the Internet. (p. 265)

In this sense, The Body Shop narrative resembled the wider discourse employed by other organisations that were all trying to establish an Internet presence. However, Roddick had positioned The Body Shop as an organisation that practiced *business as unusual*. To reinforce this position, Roddick (2000a) went on to explain how her company would continue to be different, and ultimately, gain a competitive edge over her competitors in the market:

I don't believe that e-commerce will affect trade in our shops because they are not very densely packed geographically. We have fewer than 300 shops in the UK – Boots has well over 1000 – so the Internet should enable us to pick up a larger spread of customers and service their needs much better. The Body Shop Digital will also act as a portal for our campaigns and environmental issues and a launch-pad for new products. (p. 265)

The Body Shop's discursive practices, which were now governed by Gournay, disseminated messages about its e-commerce initiatives, in an attempt to position itself as an organisation with a strong Internet base. For instance, press releases featured Gournay's reports about the organisation's partnership with Softbank Venture Capital in a new e-commerce enterprise (The Body Shop, 2000).

In an effort to remind audiences about The Body Shop's commitment to enhancing dialogue with its various stakeholders, Roddick emphasised the role of communication in an attempt to balance her organisation's e-commerce initiatives and reposition the competition. She proudly recounted stories about The Body Shop's relationships with customers in her autobiography, as she no longer had control over the organisation's texts:

I think there are few companies in the world that can claim to enjoy the strong, enduring relationship with customers that we do. We bring our customers into the heart of the company, we think of them as

family, we invite and encourage them to participate in everything we do. None of our competitors have been able to match us in this. (Roddick, 2000a, p. 86)

Roddick's stories reinforced the original values of the organisation. She was careful not to abandon the organisation's commitment to its customers. Thus, Roddick (2000a) saw The Body Shop Direct - the organisation's direct selling operation - as an opportunity to extend the e-narrative to incorporate human contact. The concept is based on "the old party idea, Tupperware Time," where Body Shop men and women micro-market the organisation's products in people's homes for two hours (Roddick, 2000a, p. 265). She explains the motivation for the initiative:

I think The Body Shop Direct will expand enormously and ultimately go world-wide. It is the other end of the spectrum from e-commerce – an opportunity for human contact in a world in which people are going to be increasingly isolated by computers. (p. 265)

As illustrated in the quote above, Roddick constructed The Body Shop Direct as her attempt to hold on to the organisation's soul. Aware that The Body Shop was moving towards the new age of electronic commerce, Roddick was careful to construct the company's direct selling subsidiary as her answer to keeping 'communication' a consistent theme in The Body Shop narrative. For instance, earlier narratives constructed Roddick as being committed to 'humanising' the organisation. In *Business as unusual*, Roddick builds on her original storylines, stating: "Nothing, but nothing in the history of this company has been more profound or focused as that two-way conversation in people's homes" (p. 86).

In sum, internal changes and external challenges threatened The Body Shop's ability to hold on to its reputation as a business that was different from the mainstream. In the late 1980s and early 1990s, Roddick's narrative constructed her organisation's discursive practices to support social critics and to set trends for unconventional business. In the year 2000, Roddick had to work harder to reinforce the business as unusual plot of The Body Shop narrative. In doing so, she boldly constructed new storylines for business as usual.

The Body Shop's discursive positioning of others: Recategorising business as usual

When change is understood as a language shift, resistance can be seen as an issue of language maintenance (Gergen, 1991). By this I mean, users of a language may feel that there is something to preserve in an existing language. In the case of The Body Shop, core elements of its identity were contained 'in' a language or narrative and the loss of the old language or narrative brought about the loss of those elements of its identity. Just as one's self is located 'in' the language (Gergen, 1991), so too was The Body Shop's self located in Roddick's earlier narratives. Language shifts at The Body Shop therefore threatened the organisation's identity and were resisted by Roddick in her effort to maintain that identity.

The use of language to describe, define and explain The Body Shop world shaped the experience and behaviour of not only Roddick, but of Body Shop employees. It was through language organised into discourses, narratives and stories that The Body Shop identity evolved. As Roddick told her stories, she was able to take up a position (Davies and Harré, 1990) within that story and it was this positioning which determined how a given situation in The Body Shop life was seen. It allowed her to bring particular images and metaphors into her stories. It also allowed her to position others in the story according to the language forms which became familiar to her as storyteller. That is, a version of Roddick's 'commonsense.' In such ways, she developed an emotional commitment to her stories and endowed events with a "moral existence" (White, 1973). However, despite Roddick's positioning, others were just as committed to their stories which competed with hers. It was this tension between stories and the holding of positions which gave rise to the frustrations and challenges relating to The Body Shop's identity during the late 1990s.

Stories and narratives are always unfolding in that one is forever constructing one's story (Davies & Harré, 1990). Roddick had a choice in constructing a new direction and finding a new position in her relationship with others. Not only did Roddick choose to reproduce certain elements of The Body Shop story that stayed faithful to original storylines, she moved the narrative in a direction that was positive for both

her personal and organisational identity. By this I mean she strategically incorporated aspects of the new managerial narrative into The Body Shop's storyline in an attempt to retain a strong position in the marketplace, while still holding onto core values.

The social critics of the new millennium, namely Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and the Direct Action Network (DAN), addressed an issue that closely affected The Body Shop – Globalisation. Globalisation threatened many of the original values of The Body Shop. Roddick could not afford to ignore the negative effects of corporate globalisation, as The Body Shop, in more ways than one, had itself become a global corporation. In order to render credible its own positioning, Roddick had to simultaneously reinvent The Body Shop by modifying, drawing on, and combining those positions that the organisation had taken previously that had proved both successful and compatible with the anti-globalisation movement.

While Roddick aligned The Body Shop strongly with the environment in the early 1980s, the theme of global poverty was featured forcefully in Roddick's new narrative. Many factors led to the discursive shift in The Body Shop story, some which were discussed in the earlier section of this chapter. This section describes how Roddick re-categorised business as usual through the articulation of globalisation with *usual* business.

Numerous themes or terms emerged from Body Shop texts, themes which have been clustered under the following categories: 'corporate globalisation,' 'global poverty,' 'entrenched greed,' 'blind world government,' 'unfree trade,' and the 'beauty industry' because of their intensity and frequency of appearance. All these themes were identified in Roddick's positioning of other 'usual business' which included the cosmetics industry, multinationals and transnationals, governments, and the WTO. The clusters that emerged around these terms were used as the basis for an attempt to understand business as usual from Roddick's perspective and the functions of the discourse for it. The clusters of terms around each key term or theme will be examined in turn. Dominant in each of the clusters identified in Roddick's stories was

the term ‘exploitation,’ as she set out to position her competitors as exploiters; exploiters of women, of the community, and of the environment.

Corporate globalisation and the global market

A major group of terms that formed around the idea of corporate globalisation concerned the market as authority because of its connection with the highest possible authorities – the Multinational Corporations and the WTO. Corporate globalisation accelerated the rate of global ‘exploitation.’ Closely associated with Corporate globalisation and the market in Roddick’s rhetoric were terms which reinforced the prevailing ideology of “survival of the economically fittest” (Roddick, 2001e, p. 13), which also justified Roddick’s discursive positioning of business as “alienating humanity” (Roddick, interview with researcher, 2001a), in so many ways. Roddick talked extensively about how many CEOs had never visited the countries and people directly affected by their practices. From a public relations standpoint, the fact that Roddick spent up to six months of the year travelling to many of these countries helped strengthen the image and the reputation of an organisation that was not like the others, especially those in the beauty business. Such behaviour and its public circulation added credibility to the author of The Body Shop narrative who spoke of “travelling around the world, talking to the victims of globalisation, people like small farmers in the US, scores of whom go out of business every week” (Roddick, 2000a, p. 7).

Roddick recounted stories about her travel to the US and how it was her first encounter with real ‘poverty’ in any western country. A cluster of terms such as “extreme hopelessness” and “poverty” in the midst of “excessive wealth” were used in Roddick’s stories (Roddick, interview with researcher, 2001a). Indeed the impact of globalisation on many societies only proves that the world’s economic problem is far from solved. Roddick aligned “soaring stock markets,” “thriving consumerism” and “marketisation” with “corporate globalisation” (Roddick, interview with researcher, 2001a). In fact, Roddick constructed corporate globalisation as being responsible for this “human catastrophe” (Roddick, interview with researcher, 2001a).

In this sense, Roddick's revised narrative for the millennium reflected the socio-political, economic, and cultural practices surrounding The Body Shop. Not only did her discursive practices reveal ideological as well as hegemonic struggles, it revealed what Fairclough (1992) calls an ideational function, which was to transform society, not reproduce it. The core objective of The Body Shop's discursive practices served to position the organisation as one that put principles before profits. A cluster of terms that directly opposed The Body Shop's philosophy of principles before profits emphasised the global market as a "quasi-religion" and positioned the rest of the business community as "ardent believers spreading the faith" and "clinging to the teachings of traditional capitalist ideology" (Roddick, interview with researcher, 2001a). She explained how "business would continue to alienate humanity:"

The 'global market' is one of the most seductive phrases that we have yet coined. You will hear business urging us to get governments out of the way and let the markets rule. The danger is that, in the end, global markets drive everything that's valuable out of the way too. *The market doesn't have a human face, a mentality or a conscience. It doesn't have a record of sympathy, shame or human endeavour. It knows neither kindness nor loyalty – and those things are essential to life.* (Roddick, 2000a, p. 26, emphasis added)

Roddick's discourse positioned the market as "inhuman." Key terms that clustered around the market described the market as a "machine," a "weapon" that would "destroy all humanity" and ultimately, "destroy the earth" (Roddick, interview with researcher, 2001a; Roddick, 1994b). It was here that Roddick employed a discourse of resistance and challenged the language and action of corporate globalisation, particularly globalisation of the market. Employing what would seem to be a discourse of war, Roddick (2000e) used a cluster of terms to position the market as a "tyrant," a "dictator" which "oppressed, if not destroyed, communities" (p. 20). Roddick reinforced these ideas by writing, telling stories, and delivering speeches which aligned The Body Shop with "protests," "sabotage techniques," "guerrilla tactics," "victims" and a "revolution in kindness" (Roddick, 2000e, p. 21). Roddick justified The Body Shop's own position by articulating trade with the productivity of the human soul as well as a fight for social justice, human rights, community economics and ethics. Intertextuality featured heavily in Roddick's new narrative as she consistently drew on The Body Shop's earlier discursive practices which set out to

position its self as an organisation “at war with the cosmetics industry,” as “an organisation with a soul,” “a sense of values,” and “a powerful source for social change” – as has been discussed previously (Roddick, interview with researcher, 2001a; Roddick, 1994b).

Global poverty

A major group of terms that was closely associated around globalisation concerned the NGOs as God because of their battle with the dominant ideologies, namely the ‘growth ideology’ which “envisioned a rosy scenario of more growth through globalisation, more profits and a healthy corporate planet” (Karliner, 1997, p. 41). Paradoxically, as many have pointed out, the global corporations responsible for many social and environmental problems around the world, were extremely well situated to help resolve the planet’s problems as a result of globalisation (Karliner, 1997; Tokar, 1997; Cairncross, 1991; Hawken, 1994; Roddick, 2000a). Roddick, who consistently advocated the messages of NGOs over the years, added weight to the paradox by disseminating researched facts and figures supporting the growing debate that the accumulated wealth of certain business people would be sufficient to eliminate global poverty.

Roddick worked hard to expose the “corporate criminals” that she felt were evil and responsible for the alarming growth rate of global poverty (Roddick, interview with researcher, 2001a; Roddick, 1994b). She used powerful images and language in whatever medium she could, to illuminate the current state of affairs. She delivered countless speeches to prominent business people to express her anger at the way they were conducting business as usual and maintaining the status quo. For example, she would say things like:

I sometimes wonder why we’re not more outraged by the fact that three billion people live on less than \$2 a day while the wealthy have stashed away \$8 trillion in tax havens. They certainly don’t seem to be picking up the tab on world poverty. (Roddick, 2000a, p. 5)

In an attempt to distinguish The Body Shop’s behaviour from big business, and to counter accusations of being just another multinational company telling the same old

story, Roddick clustered terms which drew on the multiple activities that The Body Shop was engaged in to help alleviate the problem of poverty around the world. Once again, narrative intertextuality (Boje, 2001) - the re-citation of texts or stories (such as those from *Business as unusual*, *Body and soul*, and numerous public speeches) - featured heavily in Roddick's narrative and served to remind audiences of the organisation's original position of being consistently "committed to positive social change" in the global community (Roddick, interview with researcher, 2001a; Roddick, 1994b). One of the organisation's initiatives proudly talked about was the successful weekly magazine, *The Big Issue*, set up by The Body Shop to help the homeless. Such an initiative was exclusive to The Body Shop, as no other business had "ever tried to involve the homeless and the disadvantaged in something like this" (Roddick, 2000a, p. 89).

Roddick's narrative consistently re-cited tales about its campaigns, (as will be discussed further below), such as its community trade, its product sourcing initiatives, the Child Development Centre, and The Body Shop Foundation. That was how The Body Shop was different from normal business. According to Roddick (2000b) it put "25% of its profits back into the community". Roddick's public rationale for differentiation from the practices of businesses conducting business as usual and for detachment from those practices, were therefore presented through the construction of a 'global poverty crisis.' Roddick (2000a) positioned these businesses as those who were 'responsible' for the crisis as a result of their obsessive "race to an ever-improved bottom line" (p. 7).

The blind 'world government'

The problem, as Roddick saw it, was that there was a world trading system that was blind to the kind of injustice brought about by international business pursuit of profits. This world trading system was presided over by the WTO which Roddick also constructed as 'evil' to many global communities and thus an 'enemy' of The Body Shop. Here was a system that, according to Roddick (2000d), acted as the "new, unelected, and uncontrollable world government." Roddick introduced the new 'enemy' in The Body Shop narrative:

We don't check big business. They do become, and are, corporate criminals. And that's the message people don't want to hear. Look at these huge organisations that control us. There's this new world government that you wouldn't know about, that loads of people out there don't know about and it's called the World Trade Organisation and any local law that you have, any environmental law that this country has, can be thrown away if it interferes with international trade. I take that personally. (Roddick, 2000d)

The fact that Roddick took issues personally was evident in many of The Body Shop texts and discursive practices. Earlier chapters have illustrated how Roddick was driven by passion for social and environmental change. She sought to use passion to persuade audiences all around the world about issues that she felt strongly about. However, discursive shifts revealed new stories. In the 1980s, devil terms included "the beauty industry...a monster industry" (Roddick, 1991, p. 9), twenty years later, it included global planning institutions like the WTO, World Bank and The International Monetary Fund (Roddick, interview with researcher, 2001a; Roddick, 1994b). The Body Shop's discursive practices illustrated Roddick's (2000a) zealous fight against these institutions, particularly, the WTO:

It looks at the bottom line, but it can't see anything else. It can recognise profit and loss, but it cannot recognise human rights, child labour or the need to keep the environment viable for future generations. It is a government without a heart, and without a heart you find the creativity of the human spirit starts to dwindle too. (p. 11)

Roddick's positioning of the WTO as "a government without a heart," served to inform and reinforce the public perception of the WTO as inhuman, uncaring and detached from humanity. Again, Roddick used a discourse of war to talk about the destructive nature of the WTO, as she did about the market. Roddick set out to distance The Body Shop from the free market ideology, a term she constructed as a dominant characteristic of globalisation. The campaign against the WTO, therefore, was aggressive. In a media interview, Roddick constructed the WTO as evil and as representing the ultimate negative by stating:

I think it's *evil* – the WTO. I think it's *secretive*, I know it's secretive, we all do. It selects a group of people that have not been elected to make decisions for the rest of the world. It really only just supports multinational corporations. It doesn't give a whit for weaker, frailer communities; it doesn't give a whit for most people in Africa or India

or in this area [Asia]. It has no human rights agenda whatsoever, or sustainable agenda. (Roddick, cited in Tan, 2000, emphasis added)

Roddick (cited in Tan, 2000) also attacked wealthy nations, such as the US, and added them to her list of forces that squashed the human spirit and exploited communities in their worship of free trade. In interviews and speeches, Roddick criticised these nations:

And more importantly the wealthier you are as a nation, it seems not to translate into generosity of spirit. The thing about being wealthy is you can be generous, you can give it away. You can look after the weak and frail. But that doesn't seem to happen in these big nations. (Roddick, 2000d)

The governments of “these big nations” were also targeted in Roddick’s campaign. Roddick created a link between big business and government by drawing on the parallels and the dependent relationship between business and politics. Here, Roddick (2000a) aligned government with the business as usual ideology of the market:

Many governments’ economic agendas seem to take no account of caring for the weak and the frail and the marginalised. If governments are not interested, then I believe that business – rich, powerful and creative – has to take responsibility. If not us, who? (p. 90).

Such an alignment aided Roddick’s attempts to distance The Body Shop from governments that supported multinationals and transnationals. Once again, the theme of exploitation underpins the phrase “economic agenda.” In fact, Roddick established a partnership with NGOs, the new protagonist in The Body Shop narrative, to further position The Body Shop away from the failure of governments to protect societies from the exploitative nature of free trade.

‘Unfree’ trade

However, Body Shop texts revealed a tension between its position as an activist organisation protesting against free trade and its position as a global retailer enjoying the benefits of a free market economy. When asked whether The Body Shop had indirectly profited from the fact that the world is a more open marketplace than it was when the organisation began in 1976, Roddick replied:

Fabulously. And it's great when you talk about globalisation like real world music. But...I want to be penalised if I mess up. I want to be smacked on the head if I'm not being more sensitive. I want a world trading system that brings human rights at the centre, at the core of its trading relationship, as I want the environmental issues. I want social justice. We want businesses to be more thoughtful, more reflective, and more honourable. Now that to me is more Christian than these big bloke sitting around and saying 'we've got to maximise profits.' We wanted to trade; we just wanted it more equitable and fair. (Roddick, 2000b)

Thus Roddick attempted to justify The Body Shop's position by articulating 'trade' with notions of 'equality' and 'fairness' and repositioning the rest of the business community further towards the traditional capitalist values which emphasised the "importance of the bottom line" and "maximising profits" (Roddick, interview with researcher, 2001a; Roddick, 1994b; Roddick, 2000e). Roddick's positioning of other businesses as being "hypnotised by the bottom line" and forgetting "their moral obligations to civil society," served to reinforce the public perception of business as uncaring, detached from human values and engaged in "commerce without conscience" (Roddick, 2000a, p. 14). Here, Roddick aligned The Body Shop with its traditional principles and core objective of good corporate citizenship, and positioned the organisation as one that was committed to sustaining communities, cultures and families against traditional business as usual, profit-maximising practices.

Roddick's discursive practices, which included speeches and articles, were produced in an attempt to obtain media coverage of the worldwide exploitation caused by free trade agreements, in particular, the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). She told stories about how NAFTA had "relaxed regulations to a dangerous extent," resulting in "low wages, spoiled environment and crushed workers' rights" (Roddick, 2000a, p. 10). She continued to disclose alarming facts and figures in an attempt to shock the public and lend weight to The Body Shop's criticisms of the dominant free trade ideology.

Entrenched greed

One of the major criticisms against free trade was its encouragement and legitimisation of greed (Klein, 2001; Deetz, 1995; Roddick, 2000a). One such industry Roddick positioned as greedy was The Body Shop's archrival - the cosmetics industry. She villainised the industry, accusing it of continuing to conduct business as usual, and to sell unattainable dreams and false hopes in the form of anti-ageing creams, in order to maximise profits. Roddick positioned The Body Shop as a much more worthy character, one which openly refused to fulfil the fiduciary duty of business. In an interview on National Radio in New Zealand, Roddick (2000b) explained:

As my duty for my company to maximise profits, I would do one thing fast and furious which is to make anti-ageing creams. That would make my profits soar and these little oil and water emulsions – now more expensive than gold – are the biggest plank in the platform of the cosmetic industry...but it would ruin my reputation which I've earned for 25 years, the reputation of my company, and I have no interest in repeating those lies of the beauty business...Keep your shareholders happy but give back to the community. I am a real believer in that and making sure you develop more emotions than fear and greed, which is what business is about. It doesn't have any more developed emotion than that and it's all being legitimised now by this notion of greed – this ever-increasing wealth.

Roddick's words signal continuity, with variations, amidst change. Earlier chapters described Roddick's disdain for, and fear of, wealth, her desire to give all her money away to charity when she died, and her passion for hard work. Roddick's personal views have not changed over the years. However, according to Roddick, what has changed is the fact that in the business world, "greed has become culturally acceptable" (Roddick, 2000a, p. 8). Roddick talked about capital development and used a casino analogy to describe how the financial system deceived the majority of the world's population. She openly discussed her concern about how this world economic casino was policed by no one, with "central bankers acting as croupiers" (Roddick, 2000a, p. 9). However, only a minority reaped the spoils that were a result of desperately poor people, often children, engaged in forced and bonded labour.

Roddick attempted to put pressure on this privileged minority by challenging them to put back into the community what they took out. She told her audiences that the accumulated wealth of Disney president, Michael Eisner, would be sufficient to eliminate global poverty. Her autobiography was full of revealing stories about entrenched greed in the business community:

In US business today, an estimated \$17 trillion resides in the hands of investment managers, whose only values are in monetary terms – untaxed, hugely insensitive to any social justice or community concern. When Goldman Sachs floated in 1999, after 130 years as a private partnership, the 220 partners each received shares worth around £30 million. CEO Henry Paulson got shares worth £191 million, while departing co-chairman Jon Corzine left with a holding of £206 million. (Roddick, 2000a, p. 8)

Roddick recounted such stories in an attempt to strengthen the association of big business with the traditional business ideology that The Body Shop had long rejected. That ideology was dominated by the importance placed on the bottom line and corporate greed, as described above by Roddick. A discourse of resistance (Foucault, 1970) towards the dominant hegemonic practices of the business community continued to be employed by Roddick who argued that it was these practices, such as the free market economy, that supported the prevailing business as usual ideology.

The beauty industry

Roddick continued to wage war on the beauty industry for its part in its continued assault on women through advertising, and its exploitation of animals and the environment. The beauty business was also positioned as a ‘tyrant’ - a term also used to describe the market in general - a liar, and an offender that promoted “glamour” and the “promise of eternal youth” (Roddick, 2000a, p. 78). The Body Shop positioned itself as the defender and distanced itself far from the practices and principles of the beauty trade. The Body Shop’s discursive practices reflected a ‘we’ versus ‘them’ approach towards the industry, which was in many ways, the enemy. For instance, much of The Body Shop discourse used language that emphasised separatism, competition, and aggression:

We don’t approach the issue of beauty at The Body Shop as an élitist preoccupation with passive perfection. What we have consistently

done is to try to go in the opposite direction to the industry. *We* celebrate women rather than idealise them. *We* sell cosmetics with the minimum of hype and packaging and promote health rather than glamour, reality rather than the dubious promise of instant rejuvenation. Right from the start *we* wanted to be honest about the products we sold and the benefits they promised. *We* will not be tyrannised into going along with the rest of the industry with the usual false blandishments. (Roddick, 2000a, p. 102, emphasis added)

The campaign was indeed aggressive. Once again, Roddick constructs The Body Shop as the protagonist, the honest and brave hero in the story. The Body Shop's discursive practices set out to publicly challenge stereotypes of beauty and counter the pervasive influence of the cosmetics industry. While continuing to reposition the beauty industry as a 'tyrant' and an 'oppressor,' (Roddick, 2000a), The Body Shop attempted to justify its own position by articulating the notions of beauty with health and self-esteem. Roddick (2000a) saw the need to spread a new message:

We need a redefinition of beauty from the beauty business – an endorsement of character and diversity rather than the promotion of a physical ideal. I think it is much more appropriate to take a holistic view, to look at the whole, body *and* soul, spirit *and* character. (p. 105, emphasis in original)

But the message was the same as it was in the 1980s. Furthermore, the dominant hegemonic practices of the beauty industry had still not changed. According to Roddick (2000a), it was still "an industry dominated by men trying to create needs that don't exist" (p. 97) and she constructed The Body Shop as the lonely warrior in the battle against the cosmetics and advertising industry. But what had changed was the fact that Roddick incorporated the issues of diversity in her campaign. Not only was the beauty industry positioned as a tyrant, it was a culturally insensitive tyrant which "rarely celebrated women outside Caucasian culture" (Roddick, 2000a, p. 97). In her discursive reconstruction of the notion of beauty, and an attempt to gain allies, Roddick published information which endorsed the stance of The Body Shop on beauty and justified The Body Shop's position. An example of such information was taken from the results of a Gallup poll in Britain:

Over half (53 per cent) of the women surveyed chose 'a sense of humour' as the most attractive characteristic of a woman. This was followed by 'enthusiasm' (15 per cent) and 'intelligence' (12 per cent). Self-respect, a sense of humour, wisdom, and intelligence all rated

substantially above good looks and a good figure. (Roddick, 2000a, p. 109)

Further evidence existed which strengthened The Body Shop's campaign and added credibility to its positioning of the beauty industry as one which did nothing to understand women. Instead, women themselves often accused the industry of creating feelings of insecurity and low esteem (Buckley & Fawcett, 2002; Faludi, 1990; Hansen & Reed, 1986). Roddick (2000a) recounted statistics to substantiate her claims: "A psychological study carried out in 1995 found 70 per cent of women experienced feelings of depression, guilt, and shame when they looked at photographs of models in magazines" (p. 91).

Perhaps then, The Body Shop had allies after all. Women had certainly become more active at the grassroots level in areas of business, local politics, the environment, women's rights, and many other social issues (Wolf, 1990, Popcorn, 1996; Shiva, 1989; Kurian, 2000). Roddick's (2000a) second autobiography was full of controversial quotes from influential women such as Jean Kerr, Susan Anthony, and Gloria Steinem. These women, among many others outside The Body Shop, also legitimised Roddick's positioning of the beauty industry by speaking out about their concerns over the industry's dishonesty and unrealistic claims.

While some voices helped Roddick justify the discursive positioning of others as the victors of globalisation, she had to construct The Body Shop's position as the defender of the poor and exploited - the victims - suffering at the hands of the global marketplace. The 'Robin Hood' of corporate globalisation, therefore, had to set itself apart from this worldwide phenomenon and position itself as an organisation that ran in the opposite direction from everyone else, and one that conducted business as unusual.

The Body Shop's discursive positioning of itself: How Roddick characterised the body shop as different (business-as-unusual)

But discourses at The Body Shop began to clash or compete with each other. The discursive-positioning framework devised by Davies and Harré (1990) allows for the exploration of the contradictions in the lives of Roddick and The Body Shop or the “discursive production of a diversity of selves” (p. 47). This section outlines Roddick’s attempt to justify her positioning of others, to categorise the distinctive features of The Body Shop, and to add credibility to her narrative of spiritual realism. While some of these features were consistent with the original story of business-as-unusual at The Body Shop, others were not. Some of the themes consistent with the original story included social responsibility, the importance of community, activism, business based on feminine principles, and spirituality in business. These traditional themes featured strongly in Roddick’s tales and strengthened her original storyline. However, Roddick’s discursive practices set out to reposition The Body Shop by reaffirming its core values and by modifying others.

Reaffirmations

Roddick began by first reaffirming the core values that were still distinctive to her organisation since its conception over 25 years ago. The first of these values was positive social and environmental change. This meant reaffirming its position of activist. The second was social responsibility. Here, The Body Shop drew on its past success as a leader in the field of socially responsible business and reaffirmed its position not only as a leader, but also as a pioneer. The third value emphasised the importance of community and thus, The Body Shop reaffirmed its position as nurturer.

Communicating social change: The Body Shop as activist

Roddick’s new narrative on The Body Shop for the new millennium revealed evidence of the organisation’s social practices and of its discursive strategies, particularly its own positioning. Its discursive positioning of others as ‘tyrants’ and

'exploiters' was an important and influential strategy as it enabled the organisation to warrant the necessitation for a "revolution in kindness in the business environment" (Roddick, cited in Tan, 2000). Furthermore, it legitimised The Body Shop's position of activist in its conquest of corporate greed, corporate exploitation, and corporate-controlled reality. On 30 November 1999, The Body Shop walked the talk and was pivotal in helping set up the battle of Seattle (Roddick, 2000e), where more than 700 organisations and between 40,000 and 60,000 people took part in the protest against the WTO's Third Ministerial (Roddick, 2000e). Roddick certainly made no secret of her position and utilised both controlled and uncontrolled media to further publicise its image as an organisation with attitude (see Roddick, 2000e).

Alliance with various societal opinion leaders and prominent voices such as thought leaders, religious leaders, scholars, economists, politicians, activists and non-profit organisations, was essential for lending weight to both The Body Shop's position and The Body Shop's criticisms of corporate globalisation and free trade. Furthermore, the stories written about these various opinion leaders were deemed more credible because of their positions in society. So, The Body Shop joined the war in the opposition to "global corporate rule" (Roddick, 2000e, p. 20). Roddick spoke of "strategic alliances," "no utopia, just a long fight," "rights to democracy," "peaceful assault," "ammunition," "citizen power," and "human blockades" (Roddick, 2000e, p. 20-21), in her narrative of the battle of Seattle. However, she drew on the organisation's earlier discursive practices which also strengthened its position as activist:

Something else happened in Seattle, It has become even more clear to me that The Body Shop has been a living protest against the WTO simply by its absolute belief in community trade. (Roddick, 2000e, p. 22)

Thus the rebel brand upheld its values which were established in the 1970s. It was still anti-establishment, controversial in its ethical positioning and fearless and indeed seems to have been invigorated by finding a new enemy target for attack in the organisation's rebellious narrative. In fact, social action dominated the worldview of both company and chief. The consistent adherence to these principles added

credibility to The Body Shop story. In her research on rebel brands, Richards (1997) explained:

Like any successful brand, anti-establishment ones have to be built on sustainable values, which must be integral to the company's business. If you start out as a revolutionary then you have to remain one. (p. 25)

Richards' (1997) research was truly applicable to The Body Shop's discursive practices, particularly in the last few years. Previous chapters have discussed The Body Shop's position as activist – for the environment, human rights, women's rights, animals, and the Third World. In 1999, Roddick reaffirmed her organisation's position through its involvement in Seattle: "I feel it legitimises the stand I have been making and the platform I have stood on for more than 15 years – that big business has to change" (Roddick, 2000e, p. 20).

The Body Shop's discursive practices advocated other forms of activism. The original Body Shop story told tales of environmental activism; two decades later, in the era of globalisation, the emphasis shifted towards the customer. Campaigns focused on encouraging and supporting the new kind of customer – the vigilante consumer – who acted as an ethical watchdog. Roddick also positioned herself as a vigilante consumer. She explained what this meant at a speech delivered to the Auckland Chamber of Commerce and Industry in November 2000:

I choose not to buy from Total or Shell because of their practices in Nigeria or Burma. That means I'm a 'vigilante consumer'. There are a lot of us - and our activities go a long way beyond simply refusing to buy. We are campaigning, funding, and advocating for change (Roddick, 2000c).

Not only did The Body Shop support the vigilante consumer, it supported "sabotage techniques – fabulous guerrilla tactics like buying shares in a company and then turning up and hijacking the annual general meeting" (Roddick, 2000a, p. 17). This was how Roddick constructed The Body Shop as unusual. It passionately resisted the dominant hegemonic practices of the business community, and it encouraged consumers to do the same. In fact, Roddick continued to co-brand The Body Shop the human rights lobby, ethical investors, and direct action specialists who shared information that they felt ought to be publicly available. But many other businesses

were getting involved in human rights issues and environmental issues. Companies like Levis Strauss, American Express, British Telecom, Avon, Samsung, IBM, Benetton, Kelloggs, and Esprit, all adopted The Body Shop narrative through cause related marketing to build their brands. The Body Shop then, had to reposition itself against these companies as one with a “culture that had legitimised economics to override any other values” and as one that conducted these campaigns, such as the one against Shell, because they had “nothing to do with market share, brand strategies” (Roddick, 2000d). In fact, Roddick went further to claim that:

This was a politics of consciousness and this alone separates The Body Shop from most other companies. Our campaigns are either deemed brave or stupid, and because there is a consistent drop in sales wherever we run a campaign, it has been hard for other companies to work beside us on some of these issues. (Roddick, 2000d)

So, Roddick worked hard to dispel suspicion that The Body Shop’s campaigns were all part of an extraordinarily effective marketing campaign. She defended The Body Shop narrative:

If they thought the way we leveraged our customers, whatever it is, if they had one inkling of a belief that this created customers, every high street would do this, every shop, every international retailer, everybody. They don’t. (Roddick, 2000b)

The campaigns did, however, position her company apart from the others simply because such crusades were not always profitable for the organisation. According to Roddick, the competition was not willing to put principles before profits.

The Body Shop as key player in the responsibility revolution

Roddick also worked hard to find a fresh language in her crusade to set new boundaries in business. Once again, she set out to reaffirm numerous early themes that were once exclusive to the original Body Shop story. For instance, as discussed in chapter five, she re-emphasised the need for ‘frugality’ in business. The word ‘frugal’ was consistently repeated in speeches and interviews delivered by Roddick in an effort to reaffirm earlier tales of The Body Shop, tales of recycling, reusing, refilling. Indeed it certainly became a popular word in Roddick’s new narrative which re-emphasised the need for business to become more responsible.

In 1991, Roddick wrote that it was not enough to make a financial profit, that business must make a spiritual profit. She categorised social responsibility, along with spirituality, under The Body Shop umbrella of idealism, to publicise the distinctive features of her narrative, themes distinctive to The Body Shop story. The values-led organisation worked hard to publicly practice what it preached over the years and its success story, proudly recounted by Roddick over the years, proved popular. This was evidenced by some conventional businesses, such as Royal Dutch Shell adopting similar narratives by incorporating social responsibility in not only their mission statements, but in their long-term strategic business plans (see Livesey & Kearins, 2002).

In her speech delivered to the Auckland Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Roddick told more stories to clarify why she was proud of The Body Shop's unusual business practices. To position her company apart from the others, Roddick told the audience:

I look back over the last 24 years and I see it was remarkable. While many businesses have pursued what I call business as usual, we have been part of a different, smaller business movement - one that has tried to put idealism back on the agenda, and as a result, The Body Shop has been one of the architects of the social responsibility movement. (Roddick, 2000c)

In this speech, and elsewhere, Roddick positioned her company as leader rather than follower, and as an “architect of the social responsibility movement” (Roddick, 2000c). She maintained her association of social responsibility as an early and distinct feature of The Body Shop. While she announced that she was pleased with the general response from the business community, she claimed that there was still more work to be done. But many of these companies were telling the same story as The Body Shop. They, too, told tales of good environmental housekeeping, cleaning up their mess, being kind to their employees, caring for the community and even being transparent about finances. So really, how was The Body Shop any different to other businesses? How was The Body Shop *still* unusual?

Here, another discursive shift is apparent in Roddick's narrative. In 2000, she declared that it was no longer enough for business to be responsible; they had to be *true moral forces, more* feminine in their approach, *more* active globally, not just locally, and *more* accountable, especially to the community. She categorised The Body Shop as unusual because it demonstrated its commitment to its beliefs through its vigorous ethical auditing and because she claimed that the rest of the business community had yet to fully embrace the true concept of responsibility and accept that being responsible did not always equate to being profitable:

The new corporate responsibility is complex because it means changing our basic notions of what motivates us as businesspeople, of what our basic corporate goals should be. Unfortunately this is still a shocking idea for those people who believe it is a radical idea to consider anything other than financial profits. (Roddick, 2000a, p. 65)

Roddick reaffirmed The Body Shop's core values, its beliefs and its distinct identity. In an effort to reaffirm her organisation's position as one than more committed to *being good* rather than *doing good financially*, she explained in an interview with John Campbell:

Four million customers signed up on our animal testing petition and changed the law in England, 12 million customers worldwide on the issue of defending human rights. But that does not automatically translate to customers. I really wish it did but God isn't on my side on this stuff. So what it does is bond you with the community. It keeps your employees so damn proud about what you do...but it does not translate to customers. What it does is more important; it shapes your identity and that really is important. (Roddick, 2000b)

Her strategy fits well with Douglas' (1986) insightful research which suggested that value-related terms, in this case, social responsibility, were used to fix the identities of organisations and position them in the discourses of marketing and public relations.

Cheney's (2000a) work on values also illustrated how values in organisational discourse crystallise corporate tradition and are used as a corporate branding and identity tool. Furthermore, he suggested that values set benchmarks for performance. Roddick's narrative did just that. Not only did she reaffirm The Body Shop's identity as a socially responsible organisation, she *re-emphasised* the role her organisation played as a pioneer in the field. She consistently presented challenges to the rest of the

business community, especially the cosmetics industry, to take a similar position of responsibility, particularly, towards the community.

The Body Shop as community: Nurturing an old view of business

The company had its own fair share of challenges. The Body Shop's definition of a socially responsible company at the beginning of the new millennium was:

Survival by the skin of our teeth, hanging on to values while being pulled apart by internal and external pressure, yet still moving forward into something bigger and braver. We are only a skin and hair care company, but we can't half make waves! (Roddick, 2000a, p. 61)

In her efforts to help her company move "forward into something bigger and braver", Roddick reconstructed her original storyline of business responsibility to encompass an extended notion of community. She believed that business was all about community, and that a sense of community was "absolutely vital to business success" (Roddick, 2000a, p. 56). So Roddick drew on another original value of The Body Shop – that business had a responsibility to give something back to the community. In this sense, Roddick reaffirmed the organisation's position as nurturer, and extended this role to not only the external and internal community of The Body Shop, but to the global community as well. Given the negative effects of globalisation, corporations owe an ever-increasing debt to society, especially argued Roddick, to the poor communities suffering from global poverty.

In her goal to help alleviate this human catastrophe, Roddick revised her notion of community: "There are communities to be nurtured at least at three levels: inside your company, the wider global community to which any company owes certain responsibilities; and the specific communities with which you trade" (Roddick, 2000a, p. 56). The Body Shop was therefore positioned as a nurturer of communities at all three levels. Roddick told stories about community *as the company*. She saw the workplace as a community where people worked for the common good. She spoke of her employees and her commitment to providing an environment where the "hearts and minds of employees can grow" (Roddick, 2000a, p. 60). She told stories about community as the globe and her organisation's initiatives to put idealism back on the

business agenda. Roddick mentioned past hero communities such as the Quakers, the Amish, and the Shakers.

But there were modern day heroes added to Roddick's list. To add credibility and to strengthen its position, The Body Shop aligned itself with the "dynamic" Business for Social Responsibility group. Lastly, Roddick told stories about community as trading partners. In a lecture delivered to the London Business School, she drew heavily on The Body Shop's Community Trade campaigns and how:

In my company we are always looking for fair trading initiatives with local communities. By themselves, these initiatives of The Body Shop will not transform the global economy, but they do transform my company's thinking about our responsibilities as a business. I would rather be measured by how I treat weaker and frailer communities I trade with than by how great are my profits are. (Roddick, 1996d)

Roddick proudly recounted tales about Soapworks, The Body Shop's soap factory, which was located in one of the poorest housing estates in Western Europe. Other projects talked about centred largely around poor communities, reaffirming The Body Shop's position as nurturer and protagonist and legitimising its discursive positioning of other businesses that jumped onto the globalisation bandwagon without acknowledging the responsibilities that went with it.

While Roddick's discursive practices included challenging business as usual, they also included offering solutions to social problems. Continuing on the theme of community, Roddick (2000a) suggested: "I would like masculine-controlled, obsessive notions of the process of management to give way to more inclusive and feminine forms of collaborative and informal networks" (p. 62). Here lay another challenge for business as usual (and one she had constructed in the original narrative of The Body Shop) – to adopt more "feminine" values and take a more holistic approach to business. After all, "a sense of community is one of the so-called 'feminine values' that ethical business thinkers put forward in their quest for new paradigms" (Roddick, 2000a, p. 118).

Not only was this new paradigm one which celebrated feminine values, it was one which celebrated the human spirit. Roddick positioned her feminine company as one that was leading by example. The Body Shop's discursive practices thus set out to prove that people and companies in every category can be responsible, caring, and sensitive to their place in the larger universe.

New inflections

Spirituality at a deeper level

The new paradigm advocated a spiritual dimension in business as the *real* bottom line. The introduction of a spiritual discourse in business was not widely accepted by the general business community in the 1970s and certainly not during the decade of greed. While it remained a major component of Roddick's vision, it did not feature heavily in The Body Shop narrative. By the mid 1990s, it had become one of the organisation's distinguishing features and a 'God' term for Roddick. In her quest to re-invent The Body Shop's identity, she renewed the theme of spirituality and stretched its boundaries to strengthen her narrative of idealism (see Roddick, 1994c). While some may question the motives of including photos with the Dalai Lama in The Body Shop's 1998 annual report (The Body Shop, 1998a), Roddick was indeed committed to honouring spirituality and religious diversity in The Body Shop. In fact, during the organisation's more turbulent times, Roddick was often criticised for openly admitting that she would rather spend time talking to the Dalai Lama instead of worrying about the financial success of her company (*Economist*, 1998). As a new inflection, spiritual idealism became one of the central themes of The Body Shop story:

Predictable and controllable business environments, employees and political structures have become a thing of the past. We should be evolving into a new age of business with a worldview that maintains one simple proposition: that all of nature - humans, animals, the Earth itself - is interconnected and interdependent. This interconnection has to be sacred, reverent and respectful of different ways of knowing and being. (Roddick, 2000a, p. 25)

Such a statement could be interpreted as Roddick's challenge to the dominant story of the market. Not only did she position the market as being responsible for global

economic poverty, it was also responsible for spiritual poverty. Her strategy fits well with Cooren's (1998, cited in Cheney, 1999) suggestion for alternatives to the market story. Roddick (2000a) expanded her original storyline to encompass 'spirituality' and 'reverence' in her narrative and challenged conventional business leaders to also explore alternatives to the market story: "My vision, my hope is simply this: that many business leaders will come to see a primary role of business as incubators of the human spirit, rather than factories for the production of more material goods and services" (Roddick, 2000a, p. 26).

While conventional businesses have only recently acknowledged the role of spirituality in the workplace, they have yet to move beyond the *usual* spiritual masculine traits which emphasised separateness and incorporate the more *unusual* feminine affirmation of life. For instance, many traditional businesses, popular management literature and business schools consistently link spirituality to employee morale, loyalty, performance, and productivity (Delbecq, 2000; Ashmos & Duchon, 2000; Vaill, 2000; Dann, 2000), in other words, to the traditional business discourse.

In her research on Australasian business leaders, Leanne Holdsworth (cited in Dann, 2000), illustrated this trend: "In the end it doesn't really worry me if their motives are totally altruistic or not as long as they are actually doing something to make the world a better place. If they are doing something, then they can market it all they like" (p. E3). In other words, the new ways of thinking still had to generate some form of financial benefit to the company for them to be sustainable. That could be in the form of increased productivity from staff or it could be a positive response from consumers.

For Roddick, such a detachment of the physical from the spiritual was not enough. What Roddick talked about in her narrative was the need for a 'spiritual unity' in business, for an interconnection of physical and spiritual experiences. Mitroff and Denton (1999) illustrated Roddick's vision well when they said: "Just because the idea that the good you do comes back to you is written in the Bible and not in some business textbook doesn't make it any less valid. We're all interconnected" (p. 133). Roddick (2000a) argued that because business was the most powerful force for social

change, people needed to actualise their individual spiritual concerns by fully integrating them into business. This meant transforming the traditional business discourse by making the exchange of love, energy, kindness an everyday part of business life, regardless of whether it benefited the organisation in the way of profits. That was how business at The Body Shop was *unusual*.

Conclusion

During the period of change (1998-2001) at The Body Shop, Roddick continued to tell unusual stories in her narrative but she was no longer the chief storyteller in the organisation. The chapter has discussed how Roddick needed to reconstruct The Body Shop's identity because of the inconsistencies in its messages and because of the socio-economic changes which had occurred not only in the UK, but throughout the western world. As The Body Shop grew into a sophisticated global retailer, elements of more traditional business appeared in the organisation's narrative.

The chapter traced how Roddick had less control over the organisation's official messages in annual reports and press releases. However, through personal interviews, speeches and her second autobiography, Roddick still tried to control The Body Shop identity and image. She did so by categorising usual business outside The Body Shop. By doing so, she (re)positioned usual business as being close to the traditional capitalist ideology that supported globalisation and that The Body Shop had long rejected. Her categorisations were augmented not only by Roddick herself, but by thought leaders, opinion leaders, social activists, environmentalists, feminists, religious leaders, political groups, indigenous communities and human rights groups. Thus, alliances with such groups made credible Roddick's definition of usual business.

When discursively (re)positioning The Body Shop, Roddick. She simply drew on the organisation's past successes, reaffirmed its original values, and modified others to promote a consistent identity. Such positioning served to place The Body Shop as an established leader in the field of responsible business, as an experienced and

successful retailer, and as a mature company leading by example while still presenting challenges to the rest of the business community.

The discursive (re)positioning of The Body Shop was Roddick's attempt to reaffirm who the organisation was. The identity of the organisation was certainly threatened by the controversies, criticisms and contradictions of the past (see chapter 6), not to mention constant change. However, the transformation of The Body Shop was unavoidable if it was to be a fully competitive player in the global marketplace. The market and the shareholders had been looking for signs of positive and demonstrable change at The Body Shop (The Body Shop, 1998b). The period of change was the most difficult time in the history of the organisation, but also the most important. Not only did it mark the beginning of a new phase for the organisation, it also challenged Roddick to release the organisation from her control and to reinvent her identity as founder-entrepreneur.

For decades, Roddick enjoyed complete control over the identity and direction of The Body Shop. As a result, Roddick personified the brand. Elements of The Body Shop's identity mirrored Roddick's personal identity; the two were synonymous. As the voice of The Body Shop, it was Roddick who was unusual. Here lay the cause of the identity risks for the organisation. With Roddick no longer in charge, the identity of the organisation is vulnerable. The organisation will continue to experience an identity crisis as it learns to speak through another, more usual voice, Patrick Gournay. What is certain is that the effective management of The Body Shop's corporate identity will be crucial if it is to maintain its reputation as an unusual business.

Roddick intends to continue to play an influential role in The Body Shop. Both internal and external audiences will still identify with Roddick as the 'face' of The Body Shop, and continue to adopt her values and accept her direction for the organisation. If this should continue, the unique identity of the organisation will grow stronger as the organisation, including Gournay, fights to hold on to its core values, as pioneers do not come along very often. As testimony to Roddick's influence two

years after she handed over control to Gournay, she wrote: “We are proud of our values and how they have shaped the responsibility and care with which we are making this transition” (The Body Shop, 1999, p. 5).

Roddick learned and provided a lesson for the rest of the business community. It was that a company could not afford to not move with the times, but in doing so, it must hold on to its core values to protect its identity and its reputation. Given the unpredictable nature of business and the marketplace, one can only speculate about the future of the value-led business as it embarks on a new journey. The thesis’ final chapter explores the exciting possibilities for future research and examines the potential avenues for conducting unusual business in the future.

CHAPTER 8

CONCLUSION

Introduction

Narrative is a mode of discourse. In fact Jerome Bruner (1990) argues that “one of the most ubiquitous and powerful discourse forms in human communication is narrative” (p. 77). This thesis, is aligned with the view that narratives operate within, and are shaped by, discourse. It has identified how The Body Shop’s narrative identity operated within, and drew on, a range of externally determined discourses, such as those of feminism, environmentalism, and corporate social responsibility. The nature of these external discourses was determined by other ‘agents’, such as the media, activists and the business community. As I have demonstrated through this thesis, it is by engaging with and drawing on these discourses that we can understand the mechanisms through which Anita Roddick positioned the identity of The Body Shop.

This thesis began with the premise that Anita Roddick, the founder of The Body Shop, was the primary storyteller of The Body Shop narrative, particularly during the early development of the organisation’s identity. However, the key findings of this research show that this premise did not hold up throughout the very recent years in the organisation when other competing versions (of the new management team headed by CEO, Patrick Gournay) of the narrative came to also predominate. Indeed, one of the more interesting aspects of this study is its illustration of the extent to which an organisational identity is contested and negotiated through iterative interactions’ between various stakeholders over a period of 25 years. The study also demonstrates how, in this case, The Body Shop’s corporate identity was constructed to reflect Roddick’s very own personal identity. It was not until Roddick, a charismatic leader, relinquished leadership of the organisation that The Body Shop narrative began to lose its coherence. It does have to be acknowledged that this thesis examines the construction of identity from the perspective of the founder, not from the media’s representation and/or negotiation of that identity. Yet as I have argued throughout the thesis Roddick’s managerial discourse was extremely powerful in terms of its apparent dissemination, monopolised communications and made use of strategies of

control to ensure its eminence. To be sure, as was identified in chapter 4, as a researcher, I have contributed to the ongoing dominance of Roddick's managerial perspective. After all, the interpretive perspective recognises that any interpretation is inevitably a product of perspective (Littlejohn, 1996). Yet while recognising this ontological problem, I would argue that this research substantiates the call for a narrative approach to studying *both* personal and organisational identity.

In this concluding chapter, I draw out the key findings of the research and examine the implications of these findings for values-based business organisations as well as the implications for studies of organisational identity and narrative are. The chapter concludes with the identification of opportunities for further research that have arisen from this study.

Key conclusions

Constructing identity: Autobiography

In what Christensen (1997) refers to as 'autocommunication,' Roddick linked her own personal identity to the corporate identity of The Body Shop through the discursive production of the Self in autobiography. Roddick used her first autobiography, *Body and soul*, in 1991, to document the organisation's evolution. The fact that such accounts of identity creation were presented in retrospect illustrates McAdam's (1997) argument that "the self is viewed as a reflexive project that the individual 'works on'" (p. 61). Further, from a narrative standpoint, we can use Nietzsche's (1954) model which states that one – in this case, Roddick – can alter the narrative that is used to connect the past to the present, *even the accidents in our past*. In this way, The Body Shop identity became a developmental rhetoric or product that Roddick fashioned and sculpted into a coherent identity narrative.

While *Body and soul* (Roddick, 1991), promoted a coherent, unified, distinguished self, the managerial voice narrating the story gave voice to the corporate self at the expense of the variety and multiplicity of voices in the organisation. Roddick's production of the myth of the self incorporated organisational members into the official world view as defined in her autobiography. The managerial monologue

(Grant et al., 1998) was therefore illustrative of Roddick's effort to control the identity of the organisation. It also brought to the fore the relationship between authority, control and narrative and raised doubt as to whether The Body Shop Self was constituted by and constitutive of an *internal* community.

Nevertheless, conversations with the external community continued. Roddick's second autobiography, *Business as unusual* (Roddick, 2000a), saw Roddick projecting both her personal and organisational identity against alternative plots, augmenting the existing epic as constructed by Roddick in *Body and soul*. The 1990s saw The Body Shop being positioned vis-à-vis other people (Davies & Harré, 1990) – namely, critics, the media and the new administration at The Body Shop. One franchisee claimed that in *Business as unusual*, Roddick “was having a go at everyone” (Ogilvie-lee, interview with researcher, 2001). The reconstructed narrative represented Roddick's attempt to give *her* version of events and accidents in The Body Shop's life over past decade. But the romanticist plot line wasn't as popular as the epic story as another franchisee recalled:

...*Business as unusual* - there was probably more cynicism *in* that and *about* that and there wasn't such a good feeling about The Body Shop as there was back in 1991. A lot of the changes had taken place. The climate is different, there's more uncertainty about what the future does hold for us now. Whereas in 1991 the sky was the limit and we felt so good. Whereas now there's more uncertainty. And that flows through to the staff. (Thomas, interview with researcher, 2001, emphasis added)

As the above quote indicates, The Body Shop's identity was constantly being constructed and reconstructed in actual conversations, and the publication of Roddick's second autobiography can be seen as a lengthy contribution to a conversation in which the responses are delayed, as the reactions of those who are unhappy with the positioning it describes often show. For instance, some interpreted *Business as unusual* as Roddick's “response to the fact that she wasn't head of the company any more” (Ogilvie-Lee, interview with researcher, 2001). Thus, the title *Business as unusual* allowed Roddick to signal both continuity and change. The focus for Roddick here is what Bruner (1990) describes as “an account of what one thinks one did in what settings in what ways for what felt reasons” (p. 19). These narrated

facts became integrated with, not isolated from, Roddick's values. In fact, what happened and what matters are revealed simultaneously. Such autobiographical acts (Bruss, 1976) occur constantly in organisational life, but perhaps with special frequency and premeditation in times of challenge and turbulence.

The analysis illustrated that both Roddick's and The Body Shop's identity not only rested on the configuration of personal and organisational events into an 'historical unity' (McAdams, 1985), but also on anticipations of what she and her organisation would become during times of change. Indeed, the telling of one's own story, particularly when an identity is challenged or in crisis becomes an important contributor to identity itself (Christensen & Cheney, 1994). Roddick was aware of this and continued to rely on rhetorical power of storytelling to protect The Body Shop's identity. In doing so, she used her influence as founder to present detailed and dramatic tales of both her personal and organisational triumphs.

The autobiography represented Roddick's presentation of a reinvented, and a re-energised, identity for The Body Shop. Her discursive strategy involved reconstructing the original characteristics that set The Body Shop apart from the others and revisiting her original stories which negotiated boundaries for, and with, the rest of the business community.

The narrative-identity connection

One of the key original contributions of this research has been to highlight the significance of the role of narrative in the founder's on-going construction of The Body Shop's corporate identity. More specifically, this study drew together various theoretical perspectives of identity and narrative to demonstrate the power of rhetoric and the influence of individuals in the construction and management of corporate identity.

The collection of identity stories analysed in this research provided a rich insight into the emotional and symbolic lives of Roddick and The Body Shop. As evidenced throughout the thesis, the influence of Roddick's personal identity and values on the

identity of The Body Shop resulted in the organisation personifying its founder. The unity and uniqueness of The Body Shop's identity was achieved through the process of narrativity as Roddick conceived her own, as well as The Body Shop's existence, as a *special story*. The Body Shop's identity became linked to Roddick's life story, which connected up the events, actions, and even accidents, into an integrating plot. Nietzsche's (1982) claim that narrative *becomes* identity was used to theorise Roddick's articulation, extension and development of The Body Shop's identity through narrative.

As chief storyteller, Roddick imbued The Body Shop's narrative with elements of her own personal values such as her belief in the social responsibility of business, the importance of family and community, and the power of communication and language. Roddick built these values into the original Body Shop storyline, and in doing so, fashioned organisational myths that served to plot the organisation's identity in both internal and external narratives.

Weick's (1979) theory of retrospective sense making was used to theorise Roddick's conscious use of storytelling. The analysis revealed that Roddick's ability to think in narrative terms allowed her to construct The Body Shop's identity in the form of life stories. Because the practical nature of storytelling incorporates theories of the Self, Roddick achieved coherence by preserving and rendering permanent, key moments in both her personal and organisational development, and presenting them as part of a lived narrative. Not only did these stories shape Roddick's identity, they attempted to strategically position the identity of the organisation in the minds of internal audiences. In this way, the unassailable connection between Roddick's personal identity and the identity of The Body Shop highlights the relationship between the founder's charismatic leadership and the organisation's identity. However, in light of this connection, internal changes and external challenges pose serious dilemmas for the future for both Roddick and the value-driven organisation as outlined below.

Situating identity: Context

A valuable outcome from the research in this thesis resulted from combining an interpretive and critical analysis of the corporate narratives selected in this study. The significance of this analysis is that it drew together the relevant institutional, socio-cultural and political influences on the production of narratives. In turn, this exposed the ideologies that underpinned the struggle for discursive positioning, thus providing insight into the contexts which shaped The Body Shop's narrative.

The analysis brought to the fore the contested communication that informed the hegemonic struggle between The Body Shop and business as usual, particularly the western beauty industry, as Roddick discursively positioned her company as the most common-sense way of conducting business that was socially responsible. Attempts to shift away from a conventional economic discourse were illustrated in the consistent, and often vehement, language of Roddick, who in a discourse of resistance (Foucault, 1970), set out to "sabotage the language of economics" which persuades people to "buy, buy, buy; measure, measure, measure by what you buy" (Roddick, interview with researcher, 2001a). In doing so, Roddick aspired to change the language of business, to "humanise the issue, stand up for the voices of unrepresented people, grassroots organisations, and the thousands of workers that are abused in the race for ever cheaper consumer products" (Roddick, 1994b). That was business as *unusual*.

A number of contexts contributed to the construction of The Body Shop's 'unusual' identity. The 1960s and 1970s produced an environmental discourse that also supported animal rights, (eco)feminism and social responsibility (Castells, 1997). The Body Shop was born into this 'era of social protest' (Castells, 1997), which fashioned Roddick's thinking and ultimately the organisation's identity. As described in chapter five, the epic story as recorded in *Body and soul*, read like a 'fairytale' for many who bought into Roddick's vision. Roddick, the celebrity entrepreneur, was hailed as a role model for women and progressive business. But competing stories and cynical audiences threatened the once unshakable plot, revealing evidence of discursive struggles within The Body Shop narrative.

Such discursive struggles necessitated an ongoing conversation between Roddick and the larger society, highlighting Czarniawska's (1997) claim that identities are performed in conversations" (p. 44). The analysis of such conversations allowed for a greater understanding of the relationship between Roddick's personal identity and The Body Shop's identity and narrative. This idea of the Self as socially constructed - in interactions between individuals within the social worlds relevant to them - is exemplified through Roddick's storied reactions to those who questioned the authenticity of The Body Shop's identity. Thus, both Roddick's and The Body Shop's Self was produced, reproduced, and maintained in conversations, past and present.

Past conversations were also evoked in the course of present ones. Franchisees recalled how elements of the past were being incorporated into future organisational storylines:

The till bags will be back, the till bags will have messages on them. What we're going to do with the pamphlets, they're also talking of inviting other action groups, like Amnesty and that, to put their pamphlets in there for the public which I think will work. (Ogilvie-Lee, interview with researcher, 2001)

But there were more serious implications. For instance, as new professional characters entered The Body Shop narrative, the inherent values of a more conventional management ideology clashed with Roddick's unconventional approach to management reflecting further discursive struggles in the evolving Body Shop narrative.

Reinventing identity: Change

The analysis of the final phase of The Body Shop's life story revealed important issues surrounding issues of identity in a value-driven company. Since 1976, Roddick's role as chief storyteller at The Body Shop for allowed her to construct the organisation's official documents, imbuing the organisation with elements of her identity. For instance, Roddick expressed her hope that future Body Shop storylines would reflect an organisation that is "cheeky," "progressive," "relevant," "thoughtful," "reflective," and "progressive" (Roddick, interview with researcher, 2001a).

However, the arrival of a new management team at The Body Shop in 1998, threatened not only her position, but also the well-established organisational identity narrative. Consequently, several authorised and unauthorised versions of the corporate story coexisted at The Body Shop, all of them struggling for dominance and recognition. Gergen's (2001) theory of self-narration in social life can be used to better understand Roddick's identity crisis as an understandable result of an entrepreneur's trajectory. While the 'heroic saga' plot allowed Roddick to reaffirm her identity as founder and chief storyteller in the organisation, she was mindful of the challenges that lay ahead.

As discussed, the analysis also revealed a significant change in the style of official Body Shop documents, reflecting a more conventional, business-as-usual discourse. From a strategic, financial standpoint, the new CEO spoke of the "brand" experiencing "continual sales growth" (the Body Shop, 2000); but conversations surrounding the future of the organisation's 'unusual' identity did not feature in the new administration's storyline. What they did have however, was a picture of the past. Indeed, this very point was raised by one of the franchise owners when he was interviewed as part of this research:

The only thing they've got, the only thing they've got, and this is what's interesting for your thesis, is they know *where they've come from*, they know some basic principles the company was founded on. It was founded on these environmental principles, it was founded on these business principles and it was fun. (Ogilvie-Lee, interview with researcher, 2001)

Franchisees also referred to the past in their projections for the future of The Body Shop visual identity:

You're talking about corporate identity; where is the corporate identity in five years and where will it go? Well I think the issues been talked about at the top between Anita and Patrick and the evolution and even the full circle back to where they go retro...The Body Shop will do full circle...in 15 years time, they'll be rolling retros throughout the world. Because they'll do a couple, and they'll go off. Because they're a bit fresh again. And they'll stand out as so different. (Ogilvie-Lee, interview with researcher, 2001)

While the above quote lends strength to Gardner's (1995) claim that stories (in this case, of the *past*), are the most powerful weapon in the leader's arsenal, problems concerning leadership were a prominent theme of the interviews conducted with New Zealand Body Shop franchisees. The analysis suggests that the original official corporate stories as *once told* by Roddick are what will hold the organisation true to its original values.

It is now the future that remains problematic such that Roddick's plotlines for The Body Shop narrative is now not consistent with the storylines of the new management. Indeed there is clear evidence of discursive struggles in internal corporate narratives:

I'm totally confused about what Anita's views are. This company originally believed in Trade not Aid and was very pro free trade. Now, I keep reading about how she's been tear-gassed in Seattle. She's [Anita] really wanting to move The Body Shop towards activism and vigilante consumerism. (Ogilvie-Lee, interview with researcher, 2001)

Ironically, more recent Body Shop narratives actually expose a significant fracture in the relationship between individual and organisational identity. In fact, the irony only confirms the linkage of individual and organisational identity in that as Roddick distanced herself from The Body Shop, the organisation no longer spoke through her voice. Roddick's conversations with the larger community no longer served to affirm the identity of The Body Shop but her own. What was once one, *unified* identity ('Anita Roddick of The Body Shop') became two distinctly separate identities ('Anita Roddick and The Body Shop'). In 2001, I asked Roddick what her plans were. She responded: "publishing and talks and events, public education" (Interview with researcher, 2001). No longer able to rely on The Body Shop as her primary vehicle, Roddick established her own personal website that same year and created her own publishing company two years later in 2003, to reconstruct her own personal narratives of identity. In this way, The Body Shop's identity, as narrated by Gournay, became less 'social activist' and more 'global retailer' while the surpassed hero turned to other rhetorical vehicles to reinvent her personal identity as 'activist' (The Body Shop, 2000).

This thesis has demonstrated that charismatic leadership is key to upholding values in value-based business organisations. The Body Shop is an excellent example of what happens when its (charismatic) leader who once personified the organisation is no longer in control of the organisation's narrative and looks to alternative mediums to express her identity. When discussing the future of the value-driven organisation, Roddick herself acknowledged the need for visionary, charismatic leadership:

What it needs is a leader. Not myself. It needs a new leader that can shepard. You need a visionary leadership that talks about the agenda, is political, is sassy, takes all of these seeds and allows them to grow, to prosper and to double and multiply and think of new seeds to put in place. (Roddick, interview with researcher, 2001a)

Implications for values-based business organisations

The findings from this research also highlight some practical lessons and useful insights for other values-based business organisations. The key implications surround issues of corporate identity, values, and leadership. The fact The Body Shop enjoyed a very public identity offers other values-based organisations the opportunity to listen and learn from The Body Shop story.

The interpretive approach in this analysis illustrated the influence of context on corporate identity. In line with Czarniawska's (1997) assertion, that organisations are forever engaged in conversations which in turn shape their identity, brings to the fore the fact that values-based organisations should be aware of socio-political, economic and cultural conditions impacting their business. Such conditions may either reinforce or threaten evolving identities, as demonstrated by The Body Shop case study. Ongoing dialogue with relevant stakeholders is crucial in determining the effectiveness of corporate identity messages. As Christensen and Cheney (2000) suggest, if organisations are too caught-up in telling their own story, they may lose sight of the 'bigger picture' and become lost in their own self-narrative. Thus, organisational self-reflexivity (Christensen & Cheney, 2000) is important if values-based organisations are to avoid the cynicism associated with a self-absorbed narrative of identity.

Additionally, values-based organisations should also consider the position of their identity narratives in relation to institutionalised discourses. The Body Shop case illustrates the struggle of attempting socially responsible actions in a complex, global market. What is necessary, according to Garfield (1995), is an enlightened partnership between business and society, a partnership in which economic, environmental and social ends merge rather than compete. In this way, discourses can be flexibly invoked in temporal regulations of identity. For instance, different discourses may be drawn upon - speaking to and through the subject - producing different senses of self and identity, contingent upon context (Alvesson, 1994). Such a relationship also optimises the needs of all stakeholders - employees, customers, suppliers, the community and the environment - as well as shareholders.

One way to increase mutual understanding between an organisation and its stakeholders is through the creation and implementation of a corporate story (van Riel, 2000). From a corporate identity standpoint, the quest for distinctiveness in today's saturated marketplace is pertinent. While a key success factor for values-based business organisations is accountability and transparency, such disclosure invites imitators as was the case for The Body Shop. A story can be a powerful tool for differentiating an organisation, its products, and its services. In fact, Larsen (2000) claims that "In a few years, this may even become the primary vehicle for differentiation" (p. 197).

Yet van Riel (2000) calls for organisations to exercise caution when creating the storyline. It is important to take into consideration *who* dominates the process of creating the storyline. The Body Shop provides a valuable lesson, especially for values-driven organisations. The inseparability of Roddick and the organisation posed difficulties and frustrations for new leaders in the organisation. It is often taken for granted that founders will be the symbol of the organisation. The challenge for successors is to somehow also embody the organisation and express the values of the organisation through emotions and attitudes (Larsen, 2000). After all, as pointed out by van Riel (2000), the success of corporate stories is in *telling* them, not so much in showing them in written or audio-visual material. Indeed recording the corporate story

will increase the codification, as demonstrated by the impact of Roddick's first autobiography, but reduce the novelty. However, this requires leaders to master expressions that are associated with the organisation. Herein lies the 'legacy problem' (Kelly, 2003)

It is believed that "companies run on the juice of the magical, visionary founder" (Mager, cited in Kelly, 2003, p. 12). In April 2000, the legacy problem burst into view when Ben & Jerry's board was forced by law to sell the premier socially oriented firm in America to multinational Unilever, against the wishes of CEO Ben Cohen. Since then, Ben & Jerry's has seen its social mission begin to seep away – Unilever has laid off one in five Ben & Jerry's employees, stopped donating 7.5 percent of profits to the Ben & Jerry's Foundation and hired a CEO Cohen didn't approve of (Kelly, 2003). It has been a wake-up call in socially responsible business circles. In 1998, The Body Shop experienced similar problems with the new administration brought in by its then CEO, Patrick Gournay. While not part of the scope of this study, 2002 saw further changes in leadership. Gournay stood down as CEO in 2002 and was succeeded by Peter Saunders, a former director of Body Shop's North American operations.

Indeed, preventing mission loss when a company changes hands has become a serious issue for values-led businesses. Once again, issues surrounding the relationship between founder's identity and the identity of the values-based organisation come to the fore. Skeptical that social values can be engineered into public firms, Gorde (cited in Kelly, 2003), is one of the rare socially responsible founder-entrepreneurs who understands how ownership structures are, and how they can nurture or stifle social mission. As such, Gorde is determined to persevere because it is not enough for him to sell and watch his firm's mission die: "I do not want to walk away with my pocket filled and my soul empty" (cited in Kelly, 2003, p. 11). Indeed the struggles of these two socially-inspired businesspeople signal that socially responsible business is entering a new era. The founder's era is passing.

Entrepreneurs have met the challenge of how to manage in socially responsible ways, but few even recognise the new challenge ahead: how to create the architectural forms

that can hold social mission for generation after generation to come. While some argue for the need for carefully choosing and grooming a successor who shares similar values to that of the founder (Ogilvie-Lee, interview with researcher, 2001), others suggest that the more realistic answer lies in the institutionalisation of values (Kelly, 2003). While Roddick institutionalised the core values of The Body Shop in 1986 in The Body Shop's Memorandum of Association (The Body Shop, 1996e), others were not so visionary.

Thus, not only do values-based organisations have to consider weaving in their social concerns into management practices as well as ownership structure, they will also have to consider both the values and the leadership styles of the top management team in order to ensure that ethical practices are observed within the organisation. Within a relatively short period of time, the concept of values-based leadership (Pruzan, 2001) has become widely accepted in the language of management and there are journals centred around this theme, courses at business schools, and a large number of consultants' marketing tools to enable management to 'implement' values-based leadership.

As companies struggle with the legacy problem, *Business Ethics* plans to collect their stories, to build a library of approaches and ideas. Such a resource will surely prove invaluable for values-led business organisations.

Implications for studies of organisational identity and narrative

Opportunities for theory and method

The examination of The Body Shop brought special aspects of the narrative-identity connection to the fore. The communication of values indicated powerful rhetorical resources and strategies and the development of the study of narrative in organisations provided rich insight into organisational life and in particular, corporate identity.

The everyday use of the narrative form is certainly all-pervasive. The interpretive theories of communication supported the notion that narratives represented the all-

embracing means of portraying human events (Burke, 1961, 1966, 1969a, 1961b, 1973; Bormann, 1972, 1983; Fisher, 1984, 1987). These theories and perspectives of narrative also shaped early theories of identity which were later adapted to address the importance of narrative in understanding issues of organisational identity. This has led to Polkinghorne's (1988) assertion that "the narrative is a basic form of coherence for an organisation's realm of meaning, just as it is for a person's realm of meaning" (p. 123). Consequently, *in the understanding of human existence – both individual lives and organisational "lives" – narrative has a central role.*

In fact, narratives capture social context and relationships, and allow researchers in organisational studies to understand the complex patterns of interaction in which emotional performances take place. In this way, the use of narrative is also a popular way of accessing the more emotional experience of organisational workplace change. Here, researchers can use the narrative approach to better understand the way that emotions are socially constructed within the narratives themselves and in turn, how these narratives impact on the identity of the organisation and its members.

From the perspective adopted in this thesis, narrative knowledge is an attractive candidate for bridging the gap between theory and practice. A narrative is able to produce generalisations and deep insights without claiming universal status (Czarniawska, 1999). A narrative is also able to transfer tacit knowledge without actually verbalising it. Finally it is possible to translate a narrative into a logico-scientific theory.

In these terms, organisational narratives, as the main mode of knowing and communicating in organisations, must become an important focus for organisation researchers. Narrative forms of reporting will enrich organisation studies, complementing, illustrating, and scrutinising logico-scientific forms of reporting. By relinquishing some aspirations to power through the claim of factuality and one-to-one correspondence of theory and the world, organisation studies can open their texts for negotiations and thus enter in a dialogical relationship with organisational practice. Interpretive researchers studying narratives can also enjoy greater autonomy

in developing answers to research questions that are consistent with both the text and their analytic approach (Czarniawska, 1998; O'Connor, 1995). Riessman (1993) notes that the features of a narrative account on which a researcher will focus depends upon a range of idiosyncratic factors, including the investigator's research question, theoretical and epistemological position, and personal background. For instance, this research can be seen as a disciplinary reflection that resembles the literary critique. The interdisciplinary nature of narrative also allows researchers in organisation studies flexibility and opportunities for new applications.

Narratives in organisations provide a potentially powerful focus for empirical analysis. The narrative turn in the social sciences (Riessman, 1993) allows researchers to collect, categorise and analyse organisational stories for insights into aspects of organisational life (see Boje, 1991). Oral histories may also be employed to document and understand organisational members' professional and personal lives (see Gergen, 1992). In addition, the application of literary and discourse analysis techniques, as demonstrated in this study, enables a closer examination of organisational texts. The appeal of narrative for organisational research comes from their ability to capture more the richness and complexity of organisational life than can be expressed through more traditional sources of data, such as surveys or structured interviews (Boje, 1991; Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

In this way, narrative inquiry refers to a subset of qualitative research designs in which narratives are used to describe human action (Polkinghorne, 1995). Narrative offers exciting alternatives for connecting the lives and stories of both individuals and organisations to the understanding of larger human, social, and organisational phenomena (Czarniawska, 1997, 1998). If indeed identities of organisations are narratives (Christensen & Cheney, 2000; Czarniawska, 1997; Ashforth & Mael, 1996), the methods of data collection and analysis used in further research serve to examine how narrative texts create and carry meanings of identity for organisational members and organisational founders. As Clandinin & Connelly (2000) observed, narrative is a phenomenon and a method that names the structured quality of experience, thereby allowing it to be studied. It also names the pattern of inquiry for

its study. This is why organisational stories are of such importance to researchers; in all their different versions, they capture organisational life in a way that no compilation of facts ever could.

Stories offer researchers a powerful instrument for carrying out research. The practical nature of storytelling incorporates theories of the Self, showing how coherence is achieved in life stories. The significance of both organisational and corporate stories in issues of identity is best described by Brown (1990), who claims that “stories reinforce the development of identity” (p. 179) and create meaning for the individual and the organisation. The realisation that strategic stories serve to influence both internal and external publics is also pertinent (Christensen & Cheney, 2000; Dixon, 2001; Shaw, 2000). By collecting stories in different organisations, researchers can gain access to deeper organisational realities. Furthermore, stories enable researchers to better understand how identity, as well as, wider organisational issues, are viewed, commented upon, and worked upon by their members (Gabriel, 2000)

Therefore, the narrative-identity connection offers exciting possibilities in the analysis of corporate discourse in an attempt to better appreciate and understand the power of rhetoric and the influence of individuals in the construction and management of corporate identity.

Opportunities for further research

By providing a perspective on the corporate identity of The Body Shop, this study has given rise to a number of further questions worthy of consideration. The data collected and analysed in this study revealed interesting questions beyond the scope of this study concerning the identity of The Body Shop. This research examined components of The Body Shop’s discourse, namely a selection of corporate narratives, from 1976 to 2001, the year The Body Shop turned 25. However, changes in the organisation continue to reveal significant identity issues which intersect with studies of identity, corporate social responsibility, values-based organisations, values-driven leadership, and business ethics in general.

Recent definitions of identity suggest that the distinction between recipients of identity messages as external and internal stakeholders is increasingly “being muddled by the amount of overlap between these groups” (Hatch & Schultz, 2000, p. 18). Additionally, if organisational members also belong to various external stakeholder groups, organisational members “receive mediated communications of corporate identity just as other external stakeholders do” (p. 19). Thus, it is important in studies of corporate identity to examine the stories of members *within* the organisation. In relation to The Body Shop, further research should consider investigating the identity stories of employees. An innovative method proposed by Boje (2001) pays closer attention to the *antenarrative*, an approach which “considers non-linear, almost living storytelling that is fragmented, polyphonic and collectively produced” (p. 1). This approach may reveal alternative perspectives on The Body Shop’s corporate identity as told by others in the organisation. Beyond sequential and single-voiced case study and one-sided interviews of experience, Boje (2001) proposes the conception of non-linear and even *antenarrative* accounts of experience and disputations of collective memory. Alternatives to the “fiat of the single-voiced, single-authored narrative dictating organisation memory” (p. 9), that looks at “microstories to examine stories of the ‘little people’ telling many histories that were omitted from the conquering hero’s...account” (p. 9). This, claims Boje (2001), would improve narrative in organisations.

Consideration should also be given to the *reception* of the official corporate story as told by Roddick and other management personnel in the organisation. This would enable researchers to test the image-identity gap and also the consistency and coherence of organisational narratives. Indeed the focus of management personnel at The Body Shop in the United Kingdom would yield relevant local data. But with nearly 2000 stores worldwide, The Body Shop’s audience spans a vast array of cultures, values, attitudes and beliefs. Further research on The Body Shop could compare and contrast multicultural narratives of identity. For instance, clear evidence exists to suggest that The Body Shop’s narrative was edited for various audiences:

We also have to, on a global level, be very cognitive of the ethnic and cultural differences...Also, the graphic design which is done centrally usually has two concepts of design. One is the more atmospheric,

lifestyle look of people in the window and another which would be product - a shot of the product. And that's really how it's done. Every country has its own in terms of the real understanding of what The Body Shop stands for, has its own campaigns. (Roddick, interview with researcher, 2001)

Further research could examine these alternative narratives in attempt to determine whether or not they told the same story and reveal consistencies or inconsistencies in the organisation's narrative. Interviews with The Body Shop Community Trading partners could also be conducted to check for consistency of values and unification of The Body Shop narrative. Additional questions surround the issue of values. For example, do The Body Shop values fit with the values of the culture in which the organisation operates? Data analysed in this study showed that The Body Shop struggled to establish its values in the United States:

The people who were running America said that you know, 'this is America, you've got to do things a little differently'. And there was discussion about having to remove 'Against Animal Testing' from the labels because Americans just wouldn't like that. (Thomas, interview with researcher, 2001)

Yet, as New Zealand Body Shop Director, Barrie Thomas explained, The Body Shop was extremely successful in New Zealand:

When we first opened, we were the most successful shop outside the UK. I'm trying to analyse why and I think it's partly because New Zealanders are...a very environmentally aware population. They really responded to the values that The Body Shop was espousing. The campaigns we ran back then, they really responded to those and the petitions and often New Zealand lead the world. (Thomas, interview with researcher, 2001)

While this thesis examined the relationship between the values of the founder and the success of the values-led organisation, additional research should also investigate the cross-cultural relationship between The Body Shop and the dominant values of the country in which it operates. Such research would also benefit other values-led businesses operating in international markets.

Indeed, many values-based business organisations face similar issues and concerns as The Body Shop. In relation to the uniqueness-generalisability dimension, it was sufficient to focus on Anita Roddick and The Body Shop for *their own sake* (i.e. their

intrinsic worth). On the other hand, the case *speaks beyond itself* in that both Roddick and The Body Shop represent many of the wider issues of identity facing values-led business organisations in today's marketplace. Thus, comparative case studies of other value-based business organisation with charismatic founders would reveal further insight into issues of identity. Such research could include collecting stories from founders who have left their organisation and may provide valuable information regarding issues of leadership, succession and identity for other values-based organisations. For instance, one could ask: what happens to these founders? Do they continue to inspire and spread their narratives of identity and if so, through what vehicles? With Roddick no longer the chief storyteller in the organisation, future research could examine new corporate stories as told by new leaders in the organisation. Such a comparison would enable researchers to check for evidence of the original narrative within the organisation. Audience reception of the new narratives could also be conducted to further investigate the narrative-identity connection.

Directly related to the narrative-identity connection is the notion of corporate image associations. Roddick worked hard to associate The Body Shop with other values-led companies, and environmental, feminist, and human rights activists. But interesting questions lie ahead in relation to the strength and future of such associations now that Roddick no longer associates *herself* with The Body Shop. For example, what value associations will remain with The Body Shop now that Roddick is no longer in charge? Will she take such associations with her? Will the public continue to associate these progressive values with The Body Shop under its new management or will they shift their association to Roddick? Recent events beyond the scope of this study previewed below offer a fascinating topic worthy of future research.

In 2002, both Anita and Gordon Roddick stepped down as co-chairmen of the company. Adrian Bellamy, a director of The Body Shop was appointed chairman. But Roddick's personal narratives consistently revealed tensions and fragmentation within the organisation. As the drama unfolds, there are new antagonists in Roddick's story. Disillusioned with The Body Shop, Roddick talked about how it would be impossible,

even now she herself was gone, for the ethical philosophy of The Body Shop to be traduced by her successors; and about “fickle, vain CEOs who lacked the passion of founding entrepreneurs such as her” (cited in Self, 2001, p. 7). Media reports on both Roddick and The Body Shop also described Roddick as being “at loggerheads with Chief Executive, Patrick Gournay” and “has publicly criticised the chain for losing its ethical edge, branding The Body Shop as ‘a dysfunctional coffin’ interested only in profit” (Donnelly, 2001, p. 12). Roddick also claims that “the political edge of the company has gone” and stated: “I hate the mechanical language of business. I hate The Body Shop brand – that’s always a sign of a company that cares about brand equity rather than humanising things” (Donnelly, 2001, p. 12)

Within a year, The Body Shop had a new CEO. Patrick Gournay resigned by mutual agreement in April 2002 and was replaced by Peter Saunders, ex chief executive and president of The Body Shop in North America (The Body Shop, 1995b). In addition to her non-executive role, Roddick struck a two-year consultancy agreement to provide The Body Shop with “essential expertise on product, marketing and values” (The Body Shop, 1995b)

But Roddick continued to pursue her own agenda and in doing so, constructed new storylines and strengthened old plots. After all, “one’s sense of personal continuity is grounded in the continuity created in the self narratives one generates” (Slugoski & Ginsburg, 1989, p. 51). Access to these new narratives would certainly shed light on the relationship between charismatic leadership and the identity of values-led organisational. For instance, what will happen to The Body Shop’s identity as Roddick reinforces her own identity? Further research could examine Roddick’s identity as the constantly evolving product of self reflexive processes.

In fact, she vehemently (re)positioned her identity as activist: “I’m a bloody activist. I’ll go to the grave on that. I wasn’t put on this planet to keep the economy vibrant” (cited in Self, 2001, p. 3). The identity of ‘activist’ tends to imply individualistic action. In this way, Roddick no longer relied on The Body Shop to affirm her identity:

“The Body Shop is no longer for me an answer to my life. I’ve done it, I’ve proven it” (cited in Self, 2001, p. 7)

In this way, Roddick created new associations and worked to have audiences identify with her, not The Body Shop. For instance, when explaining the purpose of her own website, Roddick (2001e) tells readers: “Think of this website as a kind of global travel agency for your heart and mind, with *me* as your humble guide” (emphasis added). She continues: “Take a trip with *me* into the worlds of activism, ethical business, human rights, environmentalism, womanhood, family, and so much more” (emphasis added). Through the conscious use of language, Roddick (re)affirmed her own identity:

...this website is a grab-bag of ideas...join *me*; I want to connect with people who share my outrage over the menace of global business practices, and who, like *me*, are seeking solutions. But I also want to tell – and hear – from *you*, stories that lift *our* spirits, that celebrate how glorious our planet is...let’s run this gamut *together*. (Roddick, 2001e)

In analysing Roddick’s new stories, one could focus on the identities Roddick gives herself in her narratives. Such analysis of narrative identities would provide a useful and rigorous technique for systematically exploring Roddick’s conceptualising of her own identity and the relationship between this and her actions. The focus on narrative identities neither accepts nor rejects the unity of identity, allowing researchers to identify the different narrative identities Roddick and other founder-entrepreneurs adopt.

Roddick continued to construct new narratives of identity. In 2003, she launched a publishing company, Anita Roddick Publications, to reflect her world view. In June 2003, she published two books: *A revolution in kindness* (as editor) and *Brave Hearts, rebel sprits: A spiritual activist handbook* (with Brooke Shelby Biggs). Now free from the discursive struggles which plagued The Body Shop’s progressive narrative, Roddick devotes her own time to social change: “Once I separated myself from The Body Shop, I wanted to get some ideas out. It’s very hard in business to be listened to

when you talk about revolutionary ideas; it's even more difficult to do as a woman" (cited in Batstone, 2003, p. 5)

Other values-led businesses will no doubt continue to face discursive struggles, institutionalised dilemmas and scrutiny from the media in today's pressure-ridden marketplace. As the corporate social responsibility debate continues, the only thing that can be reasonably stated with certainty is that there are no clear-cut answers to the following questions: Can business be classified as completely socially responsible? Can leaders be entirely altruistic? If Anita Roddick with her passion for social change and The Body Shop with its reputation of social responsibility, do not quite measure up, who can? Indeed, more research is needed to begin answering these questions. Hopefully, this thesis serves as a catalyst for such an investigation.

LIST OF APPENDICES

	Page
Appendix 1: Research information sheet	363
Appendix 2: Participant consent form	365
Appendix 3: Interview schedule for Anita Roddick	366
Appendix 4: Interview schedule for New Zealand Body Shop Directors	370
Appendix 5: Transcript of interview with Anita Roddick	373
Appendix 6: Sources of data and company documentation used in this study	413
Appendix 7: The Body Shop Mission Statement	415
Appendix 8: The Body Shop Charter	416
Appendix 9: Body Shop postcard	418
Appendix 10: Body Shop postcard	419
Appendix 11: Body Shop postcard	420
Appendix 12: Body Shop brochure: 'What is natural?'	421
Appendix 13: Body Shop brochure: Trade Not Aid	424
Appendix 14: Extract from The Body Shop Charter	425
Appendix 15: Extract from The Body Shop Charter	427
Appendix 16: Body Shop annual report 1990: Front cover	432
Appendix 17: Body Shop annual report 1992: Front cover	433
Appendix 18: Body Shop annual report 1993: Front cover	434
Appendix 19: Anita Roddick in Corr	435
Appendix 20: Body Shop annual report 1998: Front cover	436
Appendix 21: Body Shop annual report 1998: Back cover	437
Appendix 22: "Sexism's toast": Body Shop annual report 1998	438
Appendix 23: Ruby campaign poster	439
Appendix 24: Body Shop annual report 2000: Front cover	440
Appendix 25: <i>The Green Book 2</i>	441
Appendix 26: <i>The Green Book 3</i>	442
Appendix 27: <i>Values Report 1995: Environmental Statement</i>	443
Appendix 28: <i>Values Report 1995: Summary Report (Our Agenda)</i>	444
Appendix 29: <i>Values Report 1997: Front cover</i>	445

APPENDIX 1

RESEARCH INFORMATION SHEET

March 2001

Title: Narrating The Body Shop: A corporate identity story

This project is for my Doctoral thesis. I am the only researcher involved in the project and it is being supervised by Associate Professor David McKie and Dr Kay Weaver of the University of Waikato.

Overview and goal of the study

This research project examines how corporate identity evolves in a values-led organisation, The Body Shop, over a 25-year time period. In particular, it examines how the organisation has communicated its identity. The Body Shop has been positioned as a role model for conducting unusual business. However, internal (management restructuring) and external (competition, globalisation) pressures consistently present the organisation with identity challenges. I am interested in seeing how successful values-led organisations hold on to their core values as they grow and undergo changes. I am also interested in providing insight into how The Body Shop can continue to maintain an upper hand in the corporate identity game.

Data Collection process:

Data will be collected using the qualitative research interview method. The goal is to see the research topic from the perspective of the interviewee, and to understand how and why he or she comes to have this particular perspective.

The interviews will not be highly structured so as to allow the participants to actively shape the course of the interview rather than passively responding to pre-set questions. Several topics will be listed on the interview schedule to assist me to remain focused on particular issues. Questions will be open-ended and there will be flexibility to allow variation in the order in which groups of questions will be asked. The goal of the interviews is to gain a better understanding of how corporate identity is managed through organisational discourse. Management play a key role in shaping organisational discourse; therefore, participants will be invited to share their experiences and stories to provide an insight into how these discourses shape, and communicate, the identity of the organisation.

Expected Outcomes of the Research

Academically, the main outcome of interest to me is to gain insight into the management of corporate identity within a value-led organisation. Organisationally, the outcomes of interest might provide an insight into how The Body Shop, and possibly

future, values-led organisations, can manage their corporate identity in today's competitive and volatile business environment.

Participants

Recruitment: Participants will be invited to be part of the research. The number of participants will be kept small.

Involvement: Participant involvement will be through interviews only.

Incentives/Compulsion: The only incentive to participate will be that of being involved in a research project. There will be no compulsion to participate.

Right to Withdraw: All participants will have the right to withdraw from all or part of the research, including refusing to answer questions and requesting that part of their responses not to be included in the study. To facilitate this, interview transcriptions will be returned to participants for their continued consent, partial or complete withdrawal. Once participants have agreed to use the material at this phase, it will be used in the research.

Summary of Research: Participants will be given a summary of the research.

Publications and Reports

All the material gathered in the project will be included in the doctoral thesis except where participants have requested information be withdrawn. The doctoral research will be used as the basis for academic publications and conferences. A summary report will be given to each participant.

Storage of Information

All information will be stored in secure premises. Code sheets will be kept separate from the interview and observation material. Material will be kept for five years and then disposed of through the university system.

Additional information or withdrawal of information

If at any time during the research you want more information about the process or the project, or you want to withdraw, please contact me by phone or email.

APPENDIX 2

PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

March 2001

Title: Narrating The Body Shop: A corporate identity story

I have read the 'Research Information Sheet' for this study and have had the details of the study explained to me. My questions about the study have been answered to my satisfaction and I understand that I may contact Sasha Grant and ask further questions.

I understand that the information gathered as a result of this research project will form the basis of a Doctoral thesis, and will be presented in academic journals articles, conferences, and as a summary sheet that will be given to other participants and myself. I understand that information gathered will be kept in a secure place.

I also understand that I am free to withdraw from the study at any time, or to decline to answer any particular questions, or where I have answered questions, have my responses withdrawn. All data will be destroyed after five years in a secure manner.

I agree to provide information to the researcher under the conditions of confidentiality set out in the information sheet.

I wish to participate in this study under the conditions set out in the Information Sheet.

Participant

Researcher

Signed: _____

Name: _____ Sasha Grant

Date: _____

Researcher's Name and Contact Information:

Sasha Grant

Department of Management Communication

University of Waikato

Private Bag 3105

Hamilton, New Zealand

APPENDIX 3

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR ANITA RODDICK (FOUNDER OF THE BODY SHOP)

Interviews will be semi-structured. The following questions are only a guide to assist the interviewer to focus on specific topics. The interview schedule may be modified through use: adding probes or using follow-up questions to gain further insight into a topic which had originally not been included.

Corporate Identity and Image

1. What would you say were the key elements in your vision for The Body Shop in 1976?
2. Looking back from today do you see it any differently?
3. What sort of organisation were you trying to establish? What discourses did you use to communicate The Body Shop identity to various audiences? How did you communicate this?
4. Who influenced you the most in founding The Body Shop?
5. How much did you feel it was up to you alone to make The Body Shop work?
6. Did you think in terms of The Body Shop's identity or image or both?
7. Where did you think the identity and image were closest and where furthest apart?
8. What did you do to project the image/identity of The Body Shop? Were these actions part of a coherent master plan or did you pull them together out of diverse activities? (In other words, was it planned or organic?)
9. Do you think that the organisation's identity gave you a competitive edge?
10. Would you say that The Body Shop became what you've made it?
11. What role do your products play in the identity of the organisation?
12. Your name is synonymous with The Body Shop, what positives and what negatives do you see in this?
13. What made you write your first autobiography, *Body and Soul*, was it personal expression or serving the company?
14. In a recent interview, Gournay said that you were the "personification of the [BodyShop] brand". Do you think this is still true at present and likely to continue into the future?
15. What image do you have of The Body Shop today?
16. What image do you think people have of The Body Shop today?
17. What influence does Patrick Gournay, as the new CEO of The Body Shop, have over the organisation's identity, image and culture? How do you feel about this?
18. What changes do you see The Body Shop going through in the next five years?
19. What identities do you see The Body Shop having in the future?
20. How do you think these identities will affect the organisation's image in the eyes of its stakeholders?

Phases of change

1. How did you define business as usual in 1976?
2. How has business as usual changed?
3. How do you define business as usual today?
4. Where did the title of your latest autobiography, *Business as unusual* come from?
5. How did you define business as unusual in 1976?
6. How do you define business as unusual today? How does The Body Shop continue to conduct business as unusual and position itself apart from the others/competition? (What makes The Body Shop different in 2001?)
7. How do you define business as unusual in the future?

Leadership and modeling

1. How did you develop as a leader?
2. Were there critical incidents that helped shape you as a leader?
3. What lessons did you learn along the way?
4. You use the metaphor of the family in describing The Body Shop. How did your own family resolve tensions and problems?
5. How did The Body Shop 'family' resolve tensions and problems?
6. How do you think it will resolve tensions and problems in the future?
7. Have there ever been any challenges to your authority within the organisation? How did you deal with that?
8. What difficulties did you encounter as a woman? Do you think these have these lessened over the years?
9. Did you discover that your gender was a problem for other stakeholders? How did you cope with this?
10. How do you balance business necessities with care for people?
11. You've been criticized for saying that you would rather spend time talking to the Dalai Lama instead of worrying about the financial success of the company? What would you like to say to those critics? What would you say to your employees who rely on the financial success of the company to keep their jobs?

Feminine principles and Body Image

1. Did feminism influence you in any way in the 1970s?
2. What were the ideas that influenced you? Why do you think they influenced you?
3. Is the 'feminine principle' that you refer to in The Body Shop discourse exclusively embodied in women? Are 'feminine values' exclusive to women, aren't they universal values which are now being embraced by many organisations?
4. Do you see a contradiction in establishing a cosmetics company while being so strongly opposed to the beauty industry?
5. What do you think is an acceptable image for women?
6. What was the aim of the Ruby campaign?
7. Would you agree that Ruby represented the western ideals of western women? (Ruby was white after all)

8. Why did the issue of diversity feature much later in The Body Shop discourse? Why was it not addressed earlier?
9. How does The Body Shop cater for women from ethnic minorities? (with its products)
10. How do you define 'honest beauty' in an industry based on lies?

Values, Ethics and Social Responsibility

1. How do you feel about Business Schools incorporating values and ethics in their curriculum?
2. What would you like to see organisations and tertiary institutions achieve? How do you measure such achievements? Will these students be future employees of The Body Shop?
3. What values do you see them pursuing/leaving behind?
4. What do you see as alternatives to the dominant market story?
5. Do you see spiritualism in business as the alternative to the dominant market story?
6. How do you define spirituality?
7. How does The Body Shop embrace this notion of spirituality?
8. Do you think there is a role for spirituality in business in general?
9. What advice do you have for businesses, particularly value-led businesses, who are struggling to overcome the marketisation of values in professional discourse?

Marketing and Public relations

1. I know you value storytelling as a method of communication. How has storytelling been an effective marketing tool?
2. Many critics call you a marketing maverick, would you agree or disagree with them?
3. How has marketing followed The Body Shop? (Do you think marketing has learned from The Body Shop)?
4. What has The Body Shop learned from marketing?
5. Are you still anti marketing?
6. How do you distinguish marketing from public relations?
7. In 1994, Jon Entine wrote an article critical of The Body Shop. What effect did the criticisms surrounding the negative publicity have?
8. Do you have any crisis or issues management plans in place? If yes, what do they see as having the potential to cause crisis? If not, what do you see as having the potential to cause crisis?
9. What do you do to maintain/protect your image?
10. What do you say to criticisms that The Body Shop's position on social responsibility is used as a means to a PR end (for example, the organisation's childcare facilities)?
11. Do the company's internal managerial practices mirror its outward socially responsible image?
12. With increasing pressure from competitors, how will The Body Shop maintain its distinct identity as a role model for socially responsible business?
13. What do you see as its continuing core values in the future?

Globalisation

1. How do you manage the tension between a global brand and local business?
2. How does The Body Shop manage its relations with Third World communities/indigenous people?
3. Are you aware of any positive impacts that The Body Shop has had on indigenous peoples?
4. Are you aware of any negative impacts that The Body Shop has had on indigenous peoples?
5. Nowadays, everyone's talking about 'community'. How do you measure the level of commitment many organisations make to the community?
6. Do you see the US market as different? If so what do you think makes it so different?
7. You use terms like "corporate greed", "corporate crimes", "guerilla tactics", "sabotage techniques", "vigilante consumers", "tyranny" and "revolution" in your autobiography. Do you accept that warfare influences your images and language? Would you say that The Body Shop is at war with anyone?
8. Who is The Body Shop fighting alongside? Are there allies and/or enemies?
9. How do you position The Body Shop in relation to globalisation?
10. Do The Body Shop franchisers and staff support or share your passion for activism? Do you think this will lessen in the organisation when you leave?
11. What is it like to be a global gypsy?
12. Where does your heart lie?

The future

1. What's next for you? Where will your passion take you from here?
2. What is your dream for The Body Shop in the future?
3. What values do you think will be important to carry into the future?
4. What challenges do you see the organisation facing in the future?
5. Research shows that organisations often suffer when the founder leaves the company. How do you think the organisation will manage without you behind the brand?
6. What has been the most memorable moment for you in the organisation?
7. What do you look forward to most in the future?

APPENDIX 4

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR NEW ZEALAND BODY SHOP DIRECTORS

Interviews will be semi-structured. The following questions are only a guide to assist the interviewer to focus on specific topics. The interview schedule may be modified through use: adding probes or using follow-up questions to gain further insight into a topic which had originally not been included.

Participant's role in the organisation

1. Please explain your role in The Body Shop?
2. How long have you been with the company?
3. What attracted you to The Body Shop? I'd love to hear your story about how it all began.

Corporate Identity Management

1. What is the purpose of the organisation?
2. Is there a 'corporate story'?
3. Do you think there is a relationship between Anita Roddick and the identity of the organisation? Please explain this relationship for me.
4. What is your image of The Body Shop?
5. What was your initial perception of the company?
6. Has your original perception of the company changed? If so, how has it changed and why did it change?
7. What image do you think New Zealanders have of The Body Shop? Why do you think they have this image? Is this the image you want them to have of the organisation?
8. Are you aware of employee perceptions of the company?
9. What (communicative) strategies do you employ to help New Zealander's identify with The Body Shop?
10. What (communicative) strategies do you employ to ensure that employees identify with the company?
11. Anita places a great deal of importance on storytelling. Do you share her opinion on the importance of stories both inside and outside the company? Do you use storytelling as a management tool in the company?
12. What role do you think Anita's autobiographies play both in and out of the company?
13. Did your personal values align with the values of the company? Do they still today?
14. Do you think that the values of the company align with the values of New Zealand customers?
15. What provisions does the organisation have for receiving feedback from its various stakeholders?

Leadership

1. How would you describe your leadership style?
2. What type of relationship do you have with Anita?
3. How would you describe Anita's leadership style?
4. What image do you have of the newly appointed CEO, Patrick Gournay, of the organisation?
5. Do you have plans to meet him?
6. What similarities or differences have you noticed between Anita and the new CEO of the organisation?
7. How will these similarities or differences affect you in your position?
8. Do you think that these similarities or differences will affect the identity of the organisation?

Unusual versus usual business

1. How do you define business as unusual?
2. How is The Body Shop unusual from other value-led businesses in New Zealand?
3. How do you define business as usual?
4. Do you see aspects of usual business in The Body Shop, particularly in 2001?
5. How do you think The Body Shop will continue to conduct business as unusual in the future?

Social Responsibility

1. What role does business play in New Zealand society?
2. What role does the organisation play in the local community? How do NZ employees participate in this role?
3. How does the company's internal managerial practices mirror its outward socially responsible image?
4. How do you ensure that NZ Body Shop employees are happy and enjoy better working conditions by working for The Body Shop?
5. Do you have a relationship with the New Zealand Business for Social Responsibility (NZBSR)?
6. If yes, please describe the relationship.
7. If not, do you have plans to establish a relationship with the NZBSR in the near future?

Globalisation

1. What are your views on globalisation?
2. Do you share Anita's views on globalisation and free trade?
3. What do say to critics who question the company's commitment to minimise the negative effects of globalisation?
4. Has The Body Shop benefited from globalisation? How have these benefits filtered through to NZ communities?
5. Anita has positioned The Body Shop as an activist. Do you support her vision for The Body Shop and its role in the global marketplace? How?

Future of the organisation

1. Where do you see the organisation in five years time?
2. What values do you think will be important to carry into the future?
3. What identities do you think the organisation will have in the future?
4. What challenges do you see the organisation facing in the future?
5. What has been the most memorable moment for you in the organisation?

APPENDIX 5

TRANSCRIPT OF INTERVIEW WITH ANITA RODDICK

6-8 March 2001

Bloomington, Illinois

CORPORATE IDENTITY AND IMAGE

What would you say were the key elements in your vision for the body shop in 1976?

No vision at all except survival. This was not a business. This was a young woman with two kids whose husband was not there for two years, thinking, what could she do to create a livelihood? And that's the most important word- a livelihood. It was not an enterprise it was a livelihood. And women are really good at balancing what they're interested in and what they're good at to form a livelihood. If I had called it a business, it would have ended up like a small version of a large corporation. And it was never meant to be that. It was just meant to be 'how do I get some money to pay the bills for two years?' So the vision was survival. The vision was, I guess, well the future for me was not The Body Shop or what that could do. It was no comfort when I started. It was - I have to say - survival.

Looking back from today do you see it any differently?

Yes of course I see it differently. It's no longer survival. It metamorphosed into something which, on the shining light side, was a reflection of my alter ego. It was my canvas. It was a personification of who I was and when I describe The Body Shop it's always a description of myself. You know, I'm sort of activist, energetic, counter-cultural, fearless, and all the words that I use to describe The Body Shop-storytelling, colourful - I can actually use those same adjectives which I use to describe myself. And that's why to this day, I still refer to it as my company. Because I still see it with its umbilical chord. So that's really how I see it. I know it's appropriated by other people because of the sale of some shares and I know that the new administration coming in... But I'm also like...looking to see what they are going to do. But nobody can touch the central core of that vision and that vision really now is taking an idea, seeing how far it

can go and develop this revolution in kindness in business by running a successful company, showing that you can do it. So, the vision now isn't survival. I've survived as it were. The vision is: can it become mainstream? What do you do to make it mainstream? What do you do to be part of this changing language of business or changing imperative of business?

Do you want to go mainstream?

Absolutely! You know as I said consistently, for me business isn't about private greed, it's about public good. And I cannot understand why mainstream business doesn't think like that. I've never understood it.

What sort of organisation were you trying to establish? What language did you use to try and communicate who the organisation was?

First of all, there was never that until it was much older. In the early stages- the first 10-15 years- even the word 'language' wasn't there which is really the point of the freedom. And that created the language by not having it disciplined business management, organisational behaviour language. It was 'what sort of community did we want?' So we used different words. It was always about the words of family or community and friends, activist friends and where the parent, the child had to be protected. Families had to be protected. And the black side: that could have been considered to be quite protectionist. But we loved the idea or the notion of having this campus and that people would come into this campus not knowing where they're coming. You know, is this a business or is this a political movement? Or is it an educational centre. So we loved that sense of the paradoxes. What shaped the language? I think...we had such a reverence for poets. A lot of the language of poetry was part of the language of the company. So we used the language of Walt Whitman, and that film, I mean that poem, *The leaves of grass*. You know, we'd have posters talking about 'acting the body electric'. So we'd use lines of poets or we'd use quotes on our posters of Christmas. We'd have some extraordinary statement or an aphorism or a great quote from Chief Siaki. We were shaped by great thoughts, great thinkers. Those are who actually gave us the most lessons in life. When I look back, Walt Whitman was our poet, Ghandi was...I remember going into a bank in India and seeing this quote by

Mahatma Ghandi about service. So our language was shaped by thoughtful thought leaders.

Who influenced you the most in founding The Body Shop?

I don't think there was anybody that said, "This is what it must look like." I think it was accumulated like the onion skin. The fearlessness comes from my Mum but also going in opposite directions. There were my teachers who gave me my absolute, from 12-13 years old, sense of social justice by allowing me to read things I wasn't normally allowed to read. There was the activism coming out of just the nature of who I am, always joining, always belonging to a group that was standing up for something. But definitely the writings of the 1930s, Faulkner, Steinbeck, all of those people were really profoundly influential to me. Then there were the visuals. I mean my entire life has been shaped by visuals. So it would be books of photography-Dorothy Alaan-who was one of the great photographers of the 1930s. There was Albert Western. Great photographic images. Probably the most profound influence to me on the visual identity of the Body Shop was this exhibition that was in New York in the Sixties, when I was a student. I picked up this book, it was called 'The family of man' and it was one of the most profound photographic essays in terms of the family of man. And that gave me more inspiration or ideas. Then there was the American illustrator, Norman Rockwell. He fashioned a lot of my thinking. There were lots of influences, visual influences.

Where did you think the identity and image were closest and where furthest apart?

Well, the entire identity came by frugality. We only had so little money so we had to find things that we could afford. So the little bottle, they were the cheapest bottles. We hand wrote the labels, the round labels...£25 we paid for the logo. So, frugality shaped a lot of it. Storytelling, hand written labels, everything was quirky, childlike and had a sort of charm about it. And I think the identity came very strongly in storytelling, very strongly. And that came because I used to travel a lot, spend time with indigenous groups and every, every community I spent time with, storytelling was the basis of education, completely. So the storytelling was part of the identity. You know, the shops have little cards at the end of each shelf telling a story about the product. And they weren't made up. They were probably: "I saw this when I was in Morocco, and it's the

mud from the Atlas Mountain and it was called Rhassoul and blah, blah...” So there were always the stories about travel too and that was like the university without walls. So that came from those I think. And then everything was about frugality. The green was seen as an environmental adjective but it was the only colour that covered the damp patches. Then there was information done in a quirky way. And I guess another part of the identity was smell. You know, we couldn’t afford to put the perfume in the product so we went to the fragrant houses and just bought litres of it and sprinkled the fragrance everywhere. We’d add it to this bottle, and where I’d park my van! So there was much more of a poly-sensuous effect to The Body Shop rather than just the words or the visuals.

What about the image that the public had of The Body Shop, do you think that was in line with what you were trying to present to them?

Well that didn’t happen until about 10 years later because we couldn’t afford to put up any posters. We didn’t even go to graphic illustrators until much later. Seven years later. But once we found that graphics and art and illustration we suddenly realised (well we didn’t realise for years), that we were the only people on High Street using that ancient form of information: graphic and illustrative art to get our ideas across. So we were breaking grounds on that-using illustration as a form of identity and making sure that the visual that we put were corralling people to come and see and talk about you. So it would become a topic of talk. Every poster we had, the aim was to get them all going to The Body Shop every two weeks, get them asking, wanting to know ‘what have they got up now?’ Very strongly visuals were the major component in terms of identity.

Would you say that The Body Shop became what you made it?

Oh yes. There’s almost an inescapable connection between myself and the company. And even finding the right people to bring in to develop its thinking had been really important to me and I’ve only been as good as the people whose vision I think is clear. And it’s not just they saw the vision of The Body Shop, it’s the bigger vision that I’ve been able to corral in and learn from, absolutely.

In a recent interview, Patrick Gournay said that you were the “personification of The Body Shop brand.” Do you think this is still true at present and likely to continue into the future?

No, it can't. Never has. Every founding entrepreneur, founder, never stayed. The best you can hope is that the values or stories get played out. But you can't. It just doesn't work like that. And it shouldn't be personality-led. I mean it worked pretty well for me and I loved it being personality-led because I'm pretty engaging but I hope personality-led in terms of values, the memories of the values of what it stood for. But it's like the Red Cross. Nobody knows who invented the Red Cross but it's what it stands for that should be protected. And I'll move on. I'm moving on as we speak. I'm much more political. My platform is much more than The Body Shop. I don't want to be just known for being the founder of The Body Shop. I want to be known for my political activism.

What image do you have of The Body Shop today?

Very, very conservative -much more conservative than it used to be. In certain countries-not in countries like Canada, Australia, and New Zealand-but definitely in the Mother country, England and America which used to be the most radical, is definitely the most conservative. By that I mean they're doing nothing in terms of...there's no intent in America as we speak, of actually trying to shape a language of anarchy, or a language of counter culture, visual language; even the details or language of information. The Puritanism that I have in terms of product description has now sort of gone in the last two years along the lines of the cosmetics industry. Well thank God I'm going to get back in the UK to get that changed completely. But I do fear a company completely lost by leadership, by new leadership that cannot have leadership. And that's what hasn't been protected in the last few years - the essential quality of its renegade attitude. Because in reality, The Body Shop is a communications company, or was, with some great products to actually fuel the communications and made you lots of money. Now it's turned around under the new administration into being a product-led company. Well, I don't want a product-led company. There are bloody thousands of product-led companies. I wanted a company that had a voice, stood up, and had an agenda. The Body Shop under the new administration does not have an agenda. The agenda that I had was communicating social and human rights justice and environmental issues.

How are you going to change that?

Quite easily. No, it can't really legally be changed because of the legal definition there is under the Articles of Association. So they can't go too terribly wrong. Communication to me is no big deal. If it's boring, I can make it exciting and vital and tremulous with 'My God, what's going to happen next in a nano-second?' The first thing I'm going to do is at the point of communication. How do I communicate to young kids, working part-time on a Saturday in a shop? That is my primary...If I get that communication right, solid and vital and exciting and entertaining. Then I'll go to the franchisees and I'll go into the regions and I'll go outside into how we're doing with the press and things like that. I've got about six different layers.

You're going back to take over communications?

Well, they've asked me to guide it. Well, you know if they'd ask me I'd say, "I bloody told you so." So, that's unfortunate. But the group of us who were shaping the communications were all the values-led people. Not having any money, we just found any blank space to get messages out and we used powerful energy and statements that moved you and could move others.

How do you think The Body Shop employees feel about this change?

They don't know yet. They don't like what's there now. There was a consistent mantra which was the values. Even though behind the scenes, it made them think. But it wasn't being communicated. What they lost-like communications, public relations-they didn't see the value in that; they only saw the value in more and more products. And they said we don't want more and more products we want you to keep good ones, the old ones. We want you to make products that are part of your value-stream and not just another Body Shop bubble bath.

What influence does Patrick, as the new CEO of The Body Shop, have over the organisation's identity, image and culture? How do you feel about this?

Huge, huge. And that's not only him. The most profound guardians at the gatepost were the people coming from marketing and product development. It's actually not the CEO but when I say huge-it's the people he employed. So what comes in...and this is really

interesting. Even though a company is ostensibly as strong as its brand as The Body Shop, a CEO can come in with it's new thinking and actually try and squash all of that and bring in people whose vision of what it should be is the vision of what they want. Well, thank God that didn't happen. I think God was on our side because they proved to be catastrophically wrong. They are now out. There's been a dip in the share prices and all had to say, "We got it wrong." And so it's gone back again. And I think the lesson learned is that we're not going to bring in anybody new from outside and product development. There's so much product creativity in my head and a few other peoples' heads and I'm very excited about what's going on now with products. Now I've got to turn it around. Well, I have turned it around with visual imaging and the communications and the press. I mean I could come back from the most amazing trip in Nicaragua and there's no press about it you know. So, that's the next step.

What changes do you see The Body Shop going through in the next five years?

I think it's going to have an identity crisis-Is it or is it not a retailer? I think there's going to be many more forms of distribution. I think direct selling is going to be phenomenal. Digital will not be as big but it will be coming up; catalogue sales. So there's going to be all sorts of things where you can actually probably have more effect in terms of how you want to communicate what we stand for. I see it soft-splinting off into things like fair travel because we're such a global company and a lot of our staff are actually setting up like an eco-travel, a fair travel, where the communities own the project. I don't think we're going to go into foodstuff. I don't want to. I do definitely see us going into well being, homeopathy, supplements, things like bush medicine or some of the traditional medicine but very interested in homeopathy.

Are you going to continue to travel?

Oh, I think so. That's how I get my information, authentic information.

What influence or control do you have over the messages that are sent out by The Body Shop?

In Canada, in the last year, I've had none because I've not wanted to but in terms of public documents, hugely, such as the annual reports. I'm having a bigger influence

now in the visual look. But almost everything, all used to come through me. I would say, “no you can’t have that, yes you can have that” There hasn’t been anything out, outside of the Human Rights Act two years ago in the annual report and accounts, nothing!

The annual reports are fabulous.

Yes they are fantastic; that I’ve always had control of. Any public document, where I’m in it for some reason, I control.

And will that continue?

Oh yes.

How does Patrick feel about that?

Well, I’m visual, a visual. He’s not.

So he's not discouraged?

Oh he is, very. He did everything that we never did. Huge pay packages, compensation packages. He went very traditional, very hierarchical, everything. And the culture and what screwed him up was that he didn't pay homage to the 23 years of a very strong and very emotional, very relationship-based company culture. The new product development team believe that they could introduce a whole new concept, they would bring in people they never had before, which is ludicrous.

How’s your relationship with high street-the city?

Detached. Share price is terrible. Nearly the worst we've ever seen. It all went up really fast when the new guy came in with the assumption that he'd turn it around. But it didn't need to be turned around. The answer is 400 new products a year, find new customers, new packaging but the answer was not that! So he did a profit warning and he had brought in a very highly expensive product developer from America who wanted everything to look like them, from a department store, middle-classed, middle-aged and wealthy. And there was no great belly-to-belly fun and attitude. Anyway, he got rid of a lot of those people and he had to do a profit warning after Christmas. Most countries,

Australia, New Zealand, Canada are trading well. It's the confusion within the organisation in the UK and the UK sales are just sluggish. So they got to pull out.

What made you write your first autobiography, *Body and soul*? Was it personal expression or serving the company?

It was after about ten years right? We were up to one of those real peaks of The Body Shop-just about ready to hit one of those peaks. It was the time when retailing was the real de rigour. Everybody wanted to do retailing. Our story was getting so well known and it was just a really successful move to write it then. It was never seen as a business book. It was much more a book for women, entrepreneurs, Mums and Dads. And it was sensational. We had it done-it ended up being printed in three languages in China, in Russian in a book that looked like a book of lavatory paper. It was phenomenally successful. In a small country like Holland, I think we did about 50 000 copies, in Dutch. It was fabulous. And it was completely new in terms of a sort of autobiography. It was very graphic, much like a magazine layout. And also, which is very interesting, it was the start of a lot of the ideas. We had just started a project with the Cargo Indians, we had just gone into Romania. And so this one - *Business as Unusual* - now looks back and sees what worked, what didn't. It's retrospective.

But it must have been a mixture of things like personal expression and then also served the company, in terms of identity?

Oh that, much more. The company went haywire with it. I can hardly get any poops in the company on this one. When this book goes into paperback-that's when we make thousands. But it was really good, it was the endorsement of the graphics and the illustrations and the style and the image.

Yesterday you said that The Body Shop would go through an identity crisis. What do you mean by that?

Well first of all, I'm having an identity crisis. Peoples' perception is much stronger because I'm in the centre; people still have a huge belief that nothing has changed. And in fact, nothing has, its just advanced. That's my identity crisis-staying put, treading water and celebrating what we've done is fine for exactly a nano-second in my life. And

then we got to know, how can we make this agenda happen-this social responsibility agenda. I've come to a real realisation-it's not just the financial and social auditing which a lot of people in the company wanted to stay with, it's developing the community trade but more of them. Now I understand that, but the campaigns have been lost for a bit, that's got to go back. My identity crisis is much more to do with the internal management. It's about the language we talk, it's about the style, and it's about the graphics. You could go into any office in the old days and it was full of amazing colour, energy. Now, it's all little people stuck behind a desk in little areas. You know, it's enough to try and get something on the wall. An example is going into the Headquarters as we speak and there are some statements about volunteering. There are some whole billboards with nothing on them. The identity crisis is that the new group coming in have shaped an identity around the financial business and not around the style and image. So it has been like that I believe for about six months and now I'm taking it back. I'm going back into communications and re-focusing on style and image. And it is style and image that is everything. And that's graphics with statements, communications vehicles. It's not difficult. It's just putting the template in and doing it. Getting the message out there.

So you will be back in control of The Body Shop language?

Yes. And I tend to want to stay that way until I leave. I've done due diligence. I've stood back, I've been respectful. But now you know, Thank God, they've said, "Come back in" And I'm going to come in with a vengeance.

What are you going to do? Is there anything you can do for the future before you leave?

Well it doesn't really matter because the things that we've laid in place are so profoundly effective for other communities. It's just my love of design. If you don't have an advertising budget, if you don't spend billions of dollars, how do you get the energy in terms of passers-by? And always for me, there had to be a level of, not controversy, but topic of talk. If The Body Shop is not a topic of talk, I'm not interested. And I'll get it back, that's not the hard thing. The hard thing is how it can be sustained. You see, it's a really interesting thing for me because do I care if it stays as it is? No, I

don't. Have I done the best I could while I was there so it was mine, shaped my identity? Yes I did. Is the bigger picture out there for me? Yes it is. I hope The Body Shop will remain as progressive but I always said, and I said in the last page of the book: if it stops being progressive, I'm not interested. I've too short a life to wait worrying about another bloody body bubble bath.

What identities do you see The Body Shop having in the future?

Responsible, ethical, extremely thoughtful. Huge amount of trust which customers are happy about. That has to stay put. I hope it has an identity where it is counter cultural with the cosmetic industry and plays with that. I hope it becomes a social activist where activism is part of its identity.

And do you think that's going to clash with Patrick's goals for the company?

No, I don't think so. I think he is coming around to it. It's coming around in a hard way. And I don't think it's a problem. It's the language, the language, the style of management. It's so hierarchical, so separate from the grassroots. It is not intimate and there's no understanding of that intimacy. So it will be different. I think- no it's not different. It's only different in the UK. It's not different anywhere else. So it's the UK central that is really a dilemma.

At least you have a little more control there...

Well it's not control, it's moral influence. It's persuasion that I've got to have.

And you've got the right people there?

Yes. They have that. The same people are just now breathlessly excited that we can do something together again. Yes, we'll see. We'll have a look at by the time you finish this, how does it look. Because nobody knows this dilemma. Nobody. The press don't know, the public don't know. It's just people who know me well and know the style of management which has so changed.

Did the body shop have to change its language, shift its discourse from spiritual idealism to managerial realism?

It didn't have to do it. It didn't have to do it. What we didn't do was do diligence in saying that the new people that were coming in to manage the process at The Body Shop actually had huge humility about what we did. But that wasn't their style. It's a very female style, very collegiate, very seamless. It's very, very counter culture. They get so angry when I'm always challenging them. That's how I always used to do it. I used to challenge Gordon. It was never seen to be structured by the 'holier than thou' standpoint of what we say about The Body Shop. It was always publicly, the media, it was always "oh Gordon's so bloody boring" You know, 'I'm always fighting with him'. Did you see the annual report when I showed all my wrinkles? So that was the style.

PHASES OF CHANGE

How did you define business as usual in 1976?

I wouldn't have even known that there was a word 'business'. It was never meant to be a business. It was a livelihood. It was just a livelihood. And I think when you look back on business then... and even entrepreneurship wasn't defined then. It was what you read and what you saw and most things in the business world. But it was the indifference to it. It wasn't the high-profile activity of business as it was. It was the robber barons and hard edge. But the notion of the high profile of business in 1976 just wasn't there.

Did you consider at that stage that you were different?

Yes, because I never saw it as business. I was a mother, a woman earning a livelihood just to survive. And I guess that lasted for about two years than I realised that this was going to be an enterprise, it was going to bring in money, not only to support me. But from day one, I remember looking back and what I think is going to be really interesting for you is to start looking at all the speeches I gave from 1979 and seeing that sort of sneaking theme. I've just come back from Asia... This new movement..., and some crazy person who's talking about social responsibility... and you can see the thread of it getting bigger and the next year's talks and the third year's talks and that's something that will be very interesting. And the influence that so much came from the travels.

And you supported social critics of the time?

And there was an enormous amount of action- the political activism and recognising who were the thought leaders and they were always Greenpeace. They were the ones who were the forerunners of the planet, they were the ones with the antennae. And we just very smartly tripped in with them and they became our advisors. They had more vision than we did. We had no money-that's when we had this alliance and then we let go of them when we had the confidence to do the campaigns faster and more sexy-the way we wanted to do it.

How has business as usual changed?

Well, it has incredibly high profile now. It almost has as much media as celebrity and entertainment-it is celebrity and entertainment. And it's not so much business, it's the accumulation of money, how rich you can get, what you're worth. And then fast business, women in business, and it's always measured by profit. When I got the first Businesswoman of the Year Award that was just starting. So that started the recognition. What has changed in the last few years is there has been a verbal recognition of women's place in business, verbal media recognition of entrepreneurs and that institutionalised the business schools. Remember 25 years there was never any study of the idea of women in management. A lot of this is extremely new. Businesses were seen to be not small scale, little shops. It was always the big corporation. Nobody had any information about them. *Mother Jones* wasn't out there; *The National Monitor* wasn't out there. Big business is really dominated by the car industry or steel industry. It was like national ownership. It was called industry. You didn't really call it business. And then business came into affect when we had a look at, in my case, like the cosmetic industry or the tourist industry. But there was nothing written about the entrepreneurial spirit, the creativity of management in those days. Am I right Dale? Business as reported in 1976? What was going on then 25 years ago? There weren't as many business schools for a start. There were only just a few of the Ivy League ones if at all. When did The Harvard Business School start? When do you get the growth of business schools? 1970s. But in terms of magazines and studies on business and entrepreneurship, that was really the Eighties wasn't it? So what you had was a very barren field. You didn't have analysis of it, you didn't understand behaviour. And I

have no idea what the curricula in the few business schools that were there were teaching. Certainly any business schools that I'm aware of in England at the time; there was accountancy. So, what we saw of business was how we saw it in the movies. That was really it. I don't think people had opinions about business. They had a lot of opinions about real estate owners because they could see the effect of that. Also, there was the excitement of international trade which was really what trade should be about-countries to be able to trade equally with another. So the international rhythm was really exciting but that then took over and became like the multinational. You've got business now with the distribution of goods which was really exciting. No one had ever seen an exotic fruit, even in the Seventies we were just starting and thankful for trade. The words we were using then was 'international', 'trade', 'exchange'. We had an entirely different vocabulary.

How do you define business as unusual? How is The Body Shop unusual?

What is unusual about it is the activist component. What is unusual about it is the standards of behaviour that you have a real management measurement by how you clean up your mess or how you campaign on human rights. Totally unusual, that notion of using the shop to corral customers for social action. It's having a different stakeholder group-not just the financial investors. It's having various stakeholders who have ownership of, an understanding, saying 'we don't want to accumulate money, we don't want to accumulate profits. We want to do something with that profit and give it away.' Hence, the soap factory in Glasgow, hence the windmills that we put up. So you know, there was the notion that there was a responsibility to do what with our profits, but not just to accumulate. That was unusual.

Is this what you envisioned?

Yes. When I look back now, campaigning as a strategy for public education-totally unique. I think business as unusual is taking the platform of the beauty business and turning it upside down. And in a way, being quite nihilistic by saying these things don't work and we were actually shooting ourselves in the foot because there's your major, major profit stream if you wanted it. But that's where trust comes in. How it was unusual-how we made a company so big and so acceptable by not advertising. That is a

definite unusual. In the industry I'm in which is the beauty business, you just did that by a proliferation of shops where people were. So we just said we don't need that, we'll go where people go. A real, real relation with public relations, getting stories out there which we didn't have to pay for-which were editorial. We focus on editorial consistently. It's unusual in the fact that, definitely, a woman was running it and should never be seen to be running it especially in the beauty business. It's all run by men, all except for maybe a couple now. It was unusual in that it had a complete support for the workers in terms of what their needs were. We had money; we set up a Child Development Centre. And I think our auditing process. But mostly I think, looking back outside of the campaigning, it's the language we used. We used a different language. We used a different visual language; we used a different verbal language. We were, I was, obsessed by making sure we had the right word, not the traditional word. Let me go back to your original question-what is usual business-It's financial science. It's the art and the science that make you money. It's not the art and the science of promoting a product.

How do you define business as unusual in the future?

In the future I think we should have to have an absolute obsession with strategic alliances with NGOs so that we cannot put our foot wrong and they become our advisors and our leaders. That's number one. I think we, in the future, businesses have to be penalised. I think they've got to polish their relationship with the community wherever they're in. And I'm not doing enough of that. To be seen as being more beholden to other stakeholders rather than the financial. Somebody's got to have the courage to change that with the financial institutions.

LEADERSHIP

How did you develop as a leader?

Well, as I've said consistently, it's about communication. I'm an immanently good communicator and I communicate in a very personable and a very intimate way. I'm very warm, I'm very funny, I ask outrageous questions. You don't have to ask the standard questions about being in business or in management. Extremely grassroots

action-everything. There's no rhetoric. People have a huge expectation that I walk the talk, that I do things to surprise. And it's a tension because it's a stress. Okay, my kids would do it: "Mum, tell us what you're up to?" You almost feel you have to manufacture, come up with things that keeps them excited. And you think, 'Christ, you're bloody exhausted doing it.' Storytelling as a leader. I keep putting it down to communication.

Were there critical incidents that helped shape you as a leader?

Yeah, I learnt things that actually didn't shape me as a leader but you look back and say that when the shit hit the fan, this is what leaders should be doing. In terms of the instant, intimate communications with your staff and not just waiting to give out news releases to the press. So you gain from them-the story, an ongoing story. The newsletters - *Gobsmack!* - some of the original ones when the media was really fowl to us-how we dealt with it. Very interesting way of doing it. Audiocassette communications vehicle. And I knew then that polishing relationships with people who are your peers like the NGOs. They were supportive to us but we actually worked that. I tell you why. The whole rise of the trust factor with the NGOs. They are trusted beyond marketing groups, government groups. And so when you get an NGO supporting you, that's what worked. That's been the invisible work of The Body Shop.

You use the metaphor of the family in describing The Body Shop. How did your own family resolve tensions and problems?

To start with, it was a family then it metamorphosed into a community. Got to be too big to be a family. Resolve it? It was sort of a dictatorship. I got slapped around the head by my Mum. There was no open dialogue but there was a passion. What we never did, being Italian, we never bore grudges. The bloody Americans and the English are so bad at bearing a grudge. We just re-invent ourselves and move on. And there's so much incredible energy in being negative or cold. So that's what was learnt. Scream everything out, shout from the rooftops and it's forgotten in a second and that's very much my style.

And was that the way it worked in The Body Shop family?

No. We did it in a very different way. It was all about dialogue. Circular dialogue. And also, people always came to me beyond anybody else. Always came to Gordon and myself. They had our ear, we had their ear. We were less frightened about it than some of the top management. That was one of the biggest epiphanies that they would come and talk to us like people on the line, truck drivers, people in middle management, and tell us what was going on. But they would find it harder to talk to their next in line.

How do you think it will resolve tensions and problems in the future?

That's going to be the hardest because a lot of the tensions and problems are being risen now. Letters by the franchisees that are signing a sort-of mass communication about things they're not happy with. And one of the things we've been saying consistently is respond immediately, respond by telephone. They believe that they don't want to deal with this. Franchisees are so strong. They'll insist on getting some of these answers. And it's not an intimate way, it's much more dictatorial: 'This is the way we go.' This is not going to work for The Body Shop let me tell you.

Are there people there that can respond – such as the franchisees?

They could. All of us in communication...That's one of the things I want to talk about when I get back to communications. How do we communicate with the franchisees who are our friends. Not the friends of the new people, but all our traditional friends. We've got a situation on the 25th anniversary of The Body Shop and there's no international franchise meeting because of such tensions. So Gordon and I are going to have a franchise carnival of all our friends of the last 25 years getting together and just celebrating those amazing 25 years.

I'm going to talk to Barrie Thomas and Ashleigh Ogilvie-Lee when I get back

And you should because they are extremely radiant franchisees in terms of everything: their warmth, their personality, the campaigns, the fun, the working alongside colleagues. But they have got a lot of good sense to say about things. And more than Ashley and Mike and Barry, you should go and talk to the most powerful, brilliant

franchisee we have, Graham Wise in Australia and Vicky Birkenshaw, Head of Communications. She is stellar! I mean I give my life to those two.

Do you face any difficulties being a woman?

No. I've never really found it a problem. I've only found it a problem within very hierarchical structured process. It's more about turning off. In our Board meetings which are so operational, so processed, financial accounting, I just completely turn off from that. The style of the conversation isn't about listening, about relating. But I've never found it a problem. Never. And I think it's because I'm disarming, you know. I can go in and just disarm. I've always got the ability to ask the question nobody ever wants to ask. So there's no sacred cows with me. When I go to these very august, business, male associations, I almost take it three steps back and observe it as almost so idiosyncratic it becomes a parody of itself. Almost fatal attraction not to the horrific but how in the hell...It's like the Masonic Society or the Chamber of Commerce pattern and language. Just don't get it. I'm not in awe of it, No God! But I'm incredulous about a lot of this stuff, about this male behaviour, about these standards. But a lot of the time, most people have been extremely respectful, very respectful.

How do you balance business necessities with care for people?

Redundancies-How have we done that? First of all we've looked at that and said, this is what we don't want to do. And the first thing we did, we set up an entrepreneurial club with money so they could access the people leaving. And to our absolute horror, a lot of them wanted voluntary redundancies because they're all young; they're all under 30 or 35. A lot of them weren't married and wanted to travel or set up their own enterprise. We dialogued with every single person before they were asked if they would move their skill base into another structure or organisation. We offered retraining for the whole family, "not just you, who is now redundant but by the way, we'll retrain you in any area you want and if you don't want to be retrained." We offered that to your whole family, every member of your family. That was pretty fantastic. We kept all the services, the day-care facilities, all of the benefits for nine months to a year for them. So they didn't have to- when they leave- immediately have to take their babies out. They had a year. So there were a lot of things we did. We bought in the social services, the

police, doctors, stress counsellors. There was a lot of complaint about the process, that it was too drawn out. A lot of people said we want it fast.

You've been criticized for saying that you would rather spend time talking to the Dalai Lama instead of worrying about the financial success of the company? What would you like to say to those critics? What would you like to say to your employees who rely on the financial success of the company to keep their jobs?

I've never said that because he makes me laugh so much. I said I'd rather spend time promoting human rights than promoting a bubble bath which I would because I think bubble bath is stupid! If I wanted to promote a product, it would be a product where you've got some values which are inherent in a product like community trade. But I'm an activist. That's my soul, that's my DNA, not a businessperson. I just happen to be good at that as well and take the activism and use it. Standing by the product through its efficacy but standing on them, shouting out on a bandbox of issues that I care passionately about. Thank God we've got a product stream and a business that supplies money to these causes. That's my hidden agenda or open agenda. I had an agenda with The Body Shop the day it started. The agenda wasn't about accumulating my money or worth. That's come in with my shares. One year I'm worth £500 million, the next £10 million. I couldn't give a toss. But the agenda of The Body Shop- it is an agenda for change and using business as a template or an experiment to how social change can happen. That was it. And I think any business without an agenda is boring.

FEMININE PRINCIPLES AND BODY IMAGE

Did feminism influence you in any way in the 1970s?

Influence me...not really. I mean, I was influenced by other forms other than the knowledge of feminism. Remember this is England, we didn't have a social movement, a woman's movement. As a matter of fact, we still don't. But in the late 1970s, the female unique was probably my only introduction to so-called feminism. But I lived a life with feminists. So I didn't know how to articulate it. My mother was incredibly powerful. She took control of her life and her family and allowed nothing to come between what her vision for her kids were. I had the most impressive teachers who

didn't play with the notion of the institutions they were in whether a teaching institution or religious calling. The nuns never played their role of what they were supposed to be. They were different. There was Joan of Arc-what bigger influence can you have than that? Then there were movie stars. There was always someone who did something. It was never the passive, the sexy model. It was always someone who wanted to get up and go. The books that I read, whether it was *Little Women* or whatever. No, the movement didn't have an affect on me. What had an affect on me was the culture, my own culture.

What were the ideas that influenced you? Why do you think they influenced you?

People were articulating what I knew was right. They had a voice for it. They had a treatise, a study, they had the language, the anecdotes and I look back know and it always charmed me. The writing of Gloria Steinem. She did it the right way. She was charming, not aggressive. She was incredibly witty and smart and thoughtful, provocative but she was always engaging. I pick an addiction to her as the ideas, the economic independence, the right to be heard-that was it-the right to be heard. Some of the women's writing, poets. Women photographers, Dorothy Lang. When I look back at what I've collected in my library-real dedication to women photographers, especially during the 1930s and 1940s. Not so much women artists because they weren't that many other than O'Keefe. But definitely women writers, women photographers. Some roles in drama, whether it was *Miss Julie*, *Anna Karenina* or *Steinberg and Epsom*. Subjects were influential to a degree.

Is the 'feminine principle' that you refer to in *The Body Shop* discourse exclusively embodied in women? Are 'feminine values' exclusive to women, aren't they universal values which are now being embraced by many organisations?

I'm a great believer in partnership. I believe the most attractive men display female characteristics. The least attractive women don't display female characteristics. So I don't see it as gender specific. The gentleness, the language, the thoughtfulness. It's all to do with language. It's the adaptation of the words and the ideas. And somebody sitting like a macho *Sylvester Stallion* I have no interest in at all. I have no interest in

that hard language, very Anglo-Saxon language. I'm very much more comfortable with the language of compassion or partnership.

Do you see a contradiction in establishing a cosmetics company while being so strongly opposed to the beauty industry?

I don't find it as a dilemma. I find it exactly appropriate. I've enjoyed the position because the position makes me feel right that I take the stand. I do a distinction between the cosmetic industry and the beauty business. The beauty business-how you market beauty products and some bits of the cosmetic industry like the perfume industry- is quite interesting. But if the beauty business is shaped around alienating women from their bodies, I have every right to stand up and tell them they're wrong because it's exactly the same old mantra about maximizing profits, trying to sell a product. I love to sell a product but I want to do it with a lot more integrity, more fun and reverence. So, no, I've never seen it as a dilemma. In fact, I think it is a dilemma when I don't challenge it.

What do you think is an acceptable image for women?

A lot of it is about metaphors. It's really important that we in the West, like America, England, have a raw balance, a distinct balance of incorporating ethnic women, different age groups, different body sizes but probably veering slightly towards Black/Asian culture because that's where America's going to be. The minority is going to be the white community. I find more distressing in Japan because they tend to want to submit to the images of European women. And I'm challenging my own market, the market I should be responsive to. I should say, "What do you want?", "We want white women", "why?", "Because that's what works for us." But I'm saying, "no, no, no, stay with Japanese women and celebrate the beauty of Japanese women." So I would tend at this stage to want to see more ethnic types celebrated in the shops and I think we do it quite well. But we're starting to do it in a way that's making me a bit uneasy. It's Asian women or Black women that have Caucasian features. You know, give me the higher forehead, bigger nostrils, and see how we can do. It's very easy to make somebody look European. All we have to do is take the colour of the skin out and they could be white. Also, imperfections. We have a photograph with a model who had a slight moustache.

Very, very sort of Mediterranean and we got more comments of support from that than anything else.

Would you agree that Ruby represented the western ideals of western women?

We've got the Ruby doll in black as well.

How successful was the Ruby campaign?

It was phenomenally, phenomenally successful. To our real stupidity, we never did anything after it. We should have continued that for another year and we didn't.

Where did the support come from?

Scandinavia. Support came from teachers, the Girl Scouts or the Girl Guides, Australia. Every country, every town, everybody had an anecdote about Ruby. It just came out of a piece of research that we read and said, 'let's do a campaign on self esteem.' We said, 'we don't want a wishy-washy subject.' It was the road to revolution, self-activism, self-knowledge, self-worth. And we gave a lot of indicators that show when you don't have high self-esteem this is what happens. And we really pointed a finger at the beauty and fashion industry who are to me, really accountable and challenged the educational system that they weren't doing enough education, enough around how the media is shaping women's lack of self-worth. It failed as a visual image in Hong Kong and it failed in America. But we launched it in England during Fashion Week. We had Ruby models cut out all over the place. But it worked well. Certainly a defining moment at The Body Shop in terms of its brand and what it stood for and because we covered it.

Why did the issue of diversity feature much later in The Body Shop discourse?

Why was it not addressed earlier?

But it happened because that was the reality of The Body Shop. It started with the travels. Every time I travelled, there was a story. There was story about a woman in Tahiti. So all the stories were collected that way. And remember, travel was like university. Especially when you first started to travel in the 1960s, that's really when you got your profound education in terms of what made up this world. And then every head franchisee in each country was bringing their imperatives, their style, their energy.

At every franchisee meeting they were in national clothes. And there were things we couldn't say and do. We couldn't put certain colours in a poster because it was offensive or we couldn't use this. So we were always being tempered by diversity constraints and then plus the joys of always looking for ingredients. Always going out and finding the best. Coming out of Indian, Pakistani, and Bangladesh communities. They were the true storytellers of what herbs they were using. Then that gave us another added advantage because we grassroots collected the stories. There was me tripping around, sitting with women whether I was in the Middle East getting grandmothers together, or I was in India or in the markets of Ghana. There was always the notion of storytelling. We didn't really collect too many myths at that time, just what did you do with your body. And we took the body and each part of it; how did you clean it, how did you make your eyes brighter, how did you make your hair thicker? And I guess with that type of education or information, it wasn't any wonder we were a company that stood on it, stood for it, stood by it. That's where all our information was coming from anyway.

How does The Body Shop cater for women from ethnic minorities (with its products)?

Well it's really easy because when you're trading in a certain country, lets say, Japarasphari, their formulations have to be absolutely different to the formulation in the Scandinavian countries. They'll need more oil and water because they need the protection of an oil. The Pharis will need less oil and more water gel products. They have Eastern hair like yard brooms, they're so thick. The Caucasians have very thin sort of hair that's like bird's feathers. So it's all to do with formulations. You could open a shop in the Philippines and fill it with foot care products and that's all they wanted and then you haven't got the dry skin attached to the far East as you have to the West. You don't have the hair going white in the Middle East or the Far East. All skin that was oily was less wrinkled. So we cater to that market. But the response really was they didn't buy it, they didn't like it.

How do you define 'honest beauty' in an industry based on lies?

I challenge the term. I think beauty is not about distribution of some bone structures. I like the word in its real definition which is you know, how I define it which is

vivaciousness, curiosity, energy, a sense of passion and compassion. Those are the things because you're going to have a so-called physically beautiful woman but if she embraces none of that she becomes almost, she becomes anonymous in a way. So I keep on trying to encourage people to define beauty in its traditional role. Not visual beauty, not what you look like in a sense of aesthetics but the spirit and the soul.

VALUES, ETHICS AND SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

How do you feel about business schools incorporating values and ethics in their curriculum?

What would you like to see organisations and tertiary institutions achieve? How do you measure such achievements? Will these students be future employees of The Body Shop?

Can the stuff around. It's not relevant. It's too much like financial science. Incorporate the action, social justices, and the action of civil rights. Incorporate gender differences, women in management. Look at some of the great religions, not religions, but the Buddhists never spoilt the land, took out less then they put back. There's so much to learn. I would have a very, very strong perspective of culture. Business shouldn't be defined as an American business model. I would legislate human rights. Really put ethics as another subject, not just some wishy-washy conversation about who's stealing what from the teller. Bring out the big issues. Deal with the big questions. The big question: Is corporate behaviour criminal behaviour? How are they allowed to get away with it? Not how they are allowed to get away with it, they are getting away with it and how the public isn't affected by it.

What values do you seeing them pursuing/leaving behind?

If I defined values in the traditional way, I don't think they should leave any values behind. You don't need to. I think they have to engage in a practice of values. One of the most important things is to somehow or other sabotage the language of economics, the language of business and put a new language in, put new definitions of measurements. Profit and loss isn't the only way. There should be a real re-enchantment in terms of business and not business in terms of maximizing profits. If you wanted to

turn the notion of re-enchanting business, making people delighted by business that you're proud to be in business because you were doing something beyond your own self, which would be wonderful. There should be bigger discussions on the spiritual, the community and how the community manifests itself in a spiritual context. And what does a community of the workplace look like to be spiritual. Is it kinder to employees, more honest, transparent? Is it your practices, how you look after the weak and frail? I think every definition can be different but it's a wonderful exercise to appropriate a word and say you want to live by this. The most powerful words are the four letter words: care, love and how does that work within a business context? How do you care for your employees, how do you make the aesthetics of the workplace divine, funny, challenging, charming? How do you keep the spirit of education going on in the workplace, not only for the skills that are needed but beyond the skills? Your training, your guiding-anything to do with not being in business as an employer. How do you protect families, how do you make sure that women's voices and energy are not being suppressed and their instinct and intuition? So those are the things. And really, how you can break down terrorism. You can only be one thing or another. I love this, you know: 'the terrorism of the "or", the genius of the "and".' I love that, I love that. You know, we are paradoxical as human beings. We do challenge, we are contradictory but that's life and we can juggle both things.

Do you see spiritualism in business as the alternative to the dominant market story?

No. If I could define it in that case it would be a more thoughtful engagement, more respectful, more responsible. And if you take those: respect, responsibility, and thoughtfulness, you've got an entirely new different behaviour, it's skewing business in a different way. I think it comes down to this notion of maximizing profits. I was listening to what Dale was saying. We need to find an idiom or a slogan, a metaphor or a simile to challenge that maximizing profits. And keep finding the contradiction to that and repeating it and repeating it. Not minimizing profits, that doesn't work. I think it's about sloganeering at this stage. You come up with an idea that you keep repeating. Repetition is the modus operandi of a truth that is not a truth but you make it a truth by repetition. It's a myth, you repeat it and it becomes a truth. So looking for a word. And I

wish to God in business schools that are progressive and academics who are progressive like Dale and David who spend more time thinking of examples like that, that work as contradictory to the maximizing of profits. And using a language that doesn't sound like it has come out of the Holy Church of Rome. It's got to be not responsible but there's got to be some word. I think one of the interesting things is how you can corral more people into that by defining it. And if you can find one, solid, raw definition. For me, the way to do it- because there's no value in anybody my age or my gender or in business even trying to reclaim a notion - is take a quote which I've done from Mahatma Gandhi, and use that as how he's defined spirituality which is service, service for the weak and frail. Then you shape the action and definitions around that, always using the spiritual, the big heart like he, as a reference point.

It's certainly a strategy or a tactic in terms-it's like Ralph Nadar said, 'the only true word in Gross Domestic Product is Gross.' You see profit, it's to do with the product, sales and services and the marketing and it goes along very nicely. Then there's another level. It's the human dimension. This is a process of how you get a product out from point A to point B and how you minimise all the possible problems but within that workplace, that geography of space, you've got thousands of people interacting, working, coming in, going out. Now, how do you define that place, making that as the development of the human spirit? How do you bring in more spiritual-based education, like lectures? We have got to stop thinking of spiritual in terms of holy. How do you develop your spirit? How do you develop a spirit of compassion? There's an education system, there's an aesthetic system where everything is instead of bloody white walls, it could be wonderful colours. There's the celebration of the people in the company. Using action stations around the place. I'm just repeating what we do in our company.

And to you that is spiritualism?

Well it's not spiritualism because that's defined by others. If it were an enchantment of the soul then, yes, it would be. Engage in the community and that for me is spiritual endeavor. And also the new measurements that came out of that. People came back with an energy, they feel so good about what they're doing. Much more than the people I think receiving that stuff. It's worked. And people have left The Body Shop-David is a

case in point. I'm sure that sometimes he felt he wasn't doing well, sometimes he felt he was doing terrific. I'm not quite sure now how he feels about it all but it shaped a lot of his thinking-that it could be done. It moved him into a new dimension because there was something in theory that was being done in practice. It affects people. And it's not to do with The Body Shop, it's that they have a chance to be a part of a social experiment, the chance to do something good. To do something they were proud of, to show their power. A lot of people we work with don't see the power that's inherent in numbers. They see power in dreaming or music, or the potential of being a better person. And they could always engage that way in The Body Shop. They could always. Where the community was, they were volunteering or the campaigning, they could talk about it. It legitimized talking about things beyond the product. And we just fashioned that knowledge, we were only interested in certain things. I mean, there are other things but we were interested in human rights and social justice. And it was almost like an epiphany for so many people. They consistently used to say: "I didn't know these things happen" and "how I do want to do something about it". That was a repeated thing. And "I'm here because of the values", "I'm leaving because there's no values", "I've been here 10 years and what's happening?" It's the values. They're not saying, "I'm here because of moisture cream."

Do you think there's a role for spirituality in business in general?

That's the only way they should go. It's the only way they can go because the alternative is so horrendous, horrific. Total despoliation, suppression of whole cultures, the disappearance of cultures, the subjugating of a whole group of people to servitude beyond the working class into a type of official economic slavery. It's too appalling to think of this. If we close our eyes, what will civil society be like in 10 years? We could be attached to corporations. Who says we're not now? You're a big damn box of gifts and everything is a product from a corporation. American television is run by big business. It is a big business. Education-they've got channels in America funded by Channel 3 I think it is, and they are kid's educational programmes! It's been a bit of an eye opener coming to this university because you see these kids and listen to what Dale was saying. They didn't even know the contenders up for the American election! They get just enough information to keep them down if it were and by the way they don't

need information because what we've got them telling them is 'buy, buy, buy. Measure, measure, measure by what you buy.' Maintaining tactics, strategy-it's worked!

Problems in the us?

It's leadership. When the new administration came into America, they weren't interested in the stuff.

When did that happen?

1998? Not that long ago, about three years ago. They just weren't interested. So it's been a great slog, tenacious, trying to get them back in place. And that's why I keep on thinking, the answer is new people coming in as management that are doing a great job and they're going to really help re-shape or control the administration. So the new product person and marketing people are all gung ho about what their vision is and once they're in place, they're going to take the message. Nobody was interested. The new guys weren't interested. They were very mechanistic, very hierarchical; very 'this is the way business should be run.' And they weren't interested in anything. 'No, we've got to be profitable.' Now we are profitable, we want to make sure we do something. So it's very encouraging, what I think is going to happen there. But there's no heart in it. It's because the whole group of people who come in from other companies love The Body Shop and see the vision; whereas the Head Honchos don't see it. Thank God they won't interfere with that.

How are you doing in the US?

Fantastic. Turned around. They're doing well for all the right reasons but sadly, by trimming, but not in terms of style and energy. It's quite authoritarian, it's quite hierarchical and it's not a listening company I can tell you. And it's all process. But you can do that. You can shave away so much but then you got to be able to put something back you know.

What advice do you have for businesses, particularly value-led businesses, who are struggling to overcome the marketisation of values in professional discourse?

You know why they're struggling? They're struggling because they want examples to copy. They want a little booklet that says or tells them how to do the best in HR or the best in communications. And they're all out there. All these ideas are out there. They just don't know where to look for them. Some of the best things they can do is just pick up, go around and see, Oh, and never go to big companies. It's the small Mum and Pop operations that are doing great things in the community or great things in marketing. I've got a book of the best example of social responsible companies. It's a really good book and it just shows examples of what companies are doing and that's a really good trick. And I think what they can do is just look after their employees. They don't have to do anything else but look after their employees. In the Eighties, we didn't know the language of business. We used our own language. Very interesting to have an antenna about the new language and the 'isms' and 'asations' that are coming through in business or the management world.

MARKETING

I know you value storytelling as a method of communication. How has storytelling been an effective marketing tool?

Storytelling - it's another word for marketing. I said to them in the Boardroom the other day, "Ban the word marketing, let's call it storytelling." It's just storytelling.

Many critics call you a marketing maverick, would you agree or disagree with them?

I agree! Probably, probably. But all I know is how to tell stories. They try and put anything, any art of storytelling into a function of business. And if the marketing department tells you it likes what you're doing, it's fine but where they have no argument is the passion for the communication of campaigning. They won't do that. I know that. They won't even go in that territory because it doesn't create the sales.

That's where you'll probably be on your own for a long time?

I think so. I think so. And everything in business must take an economic overview and you can't really put, you know, like the economics of the imagination and of motivation. Everyone wants to know how much you save on that, how much you spent. And you just have to say, 'fuck it! I don't give a damn, I don't know.' But in the end, that becomes a bit disingenuous because there's more persuasion. They want to measure everything.

How has marketing followed The Body Shop? (do you think marketing has learned from The Body Shop)?

I think because it learnt that you can tell a story, exalt a product, an idea. You can take all of what you need to say in editorial. You can delight some of the journalists because you had something interesting to say. We stood up for something. That's what they liked about us. We stood up for something and we never wavered from what we stood up for. We always charmed. We had such fun with our images. It was the images that caused a lot of the controversy and we loved, we courted controversy. We were never shying away from it. And we always had a lip. We used to say if we wanted to be quiet we would have opened up a library. And we had such an energy when we campaigned. So, when you give out public statements or Op Eds on globalisation, child labour, it means you stand for something. And I think we have never ever lost our ability to be interesting. A lot of people say that they wish they had this type of values thing that comes from the heart, that isn't manufactured, not cause-related marketing. And we stand up very, very strongly against that type of cause-related marketing.

Yet you're cited in so many cause-related textbooks!

It's just so pathetic! It's not there to gain sales. It's there because you're putting your human identity up front!

What has The Body Shop learned from marketing?

I think a lot. Some of the great marketing genius', in a way, what they've given to me is they've validated what I was doing without me knowing I needed to be validated. The fact that they often quoted us as an example was really psychologically good. I read a

lot. Looking at my books, I've got guerilla marketing, micro marketing. I was always going into it. I learnt to tell stories of founding people. I always remember thinking that the founding stories of how a company got set up and the vision behind it was always more intriguing, to keep it human. I've learnt lots of negatives. I learnt never to pay for advertising because it's too damn crowded in the market. And you get your message out more securely. In fact, we have 1800 great billboard sites around the world which are the Body Shop's. I've learnt that for me, marketing is an art, it's not a science. So much of marketing is about science: The science of market share, the science of promotion or those terrible expression: promote, produce... whatever those bloody things are! And it's much more about the art, the art of being engaging or disarming, the art of being surprising. I've also learnt, and not from them but from other people who have no money but do a great job. Every blank space is the opportunity for a message. The worst case would be what some of our Annual Reports look like. Having a drunken party and an electrosec catalogue! Sometimes some of the graphic images are great.

I've learnt um, what I've hated about what I've learnt is the word 'brand'. I hate that. I hate all that it embraces. I love just reclaiming words like customer rather than consumer, The Body Shop rather than the brand, human beings rather than customers. It all comes down to how you view the person that's coming into your shop. You know, having an exchange. And that's a magical place for me. It's a place where the buyer and the seller come together. And that magical place for me is the shop and how do you polish that to give it the best example of what The Body Shop is about: great information about the product, campaigns, social justice issues. So it's a learning, educational environment in a bizarre place that is a High Street that's the area of being interesting. Having all this campaign information or social justice information in a shop. They're meant to be there. They should be in schools, in the media. But it seems to be less there. And people loved it. What else did I learn? I learnt that the style of advertising is so, you know, the visual image with the quirky ad line at the end. That you can get more change and more acceptance by delighting an audience. If we had Ruby looking like a big blousy woman. But no, she was animated and had had this sense of fun. That worked.

Are you still anti marketing?

I never was anti marketing. I just marketed in a different way. I love marketing. If marketing means selling and shouting out on the roof top what you do, what your products are about or what you stand for, you know, it's me. I got it. It's the process, the science of it that I never was that interested in. The minute we go to the marketing guru, we start to become scientists. What really bugs me is the language more than anything, the jargon, the notion of market share. And now, it's 'brand company,' 'brand equity.' And I've been trying to ban the word. When I take over back on the communications, we're not going to use 'consumers,' we're going to use 'customers' and 'human beings.'

Not having a marketing department for 18 years. But the irony of this is every time we won an award it was during those first 18 years. We won so many awards for marketing. And we once we started getting people in from traditional marketing companies, we started playing it safe. The instinct started to move out and process started to move in.

In 1994, Jon Entine wrote an article critical of the body shop. What effect did the criticisms surrounding the negative publicity have?

Oh, it definitely dented the reputation. You felt extremely dented by people, because what they read was the truth. That's why we went on and sued the production company, Channel 4- because it was about reputation survival. It was like, 'God help anybody that tries to challenge my darling little cubs in The Body Shop.' I was going to fight to the death with that. But there was definitely a dent and it really didn't get better here [America] for I think five years.

Do you have any crisis or issues management plans in place? If yes, what do they see as having the potential to cause crisis? If not, what do you see as having the potential to cause crisis?

Yes. We've always had that. very strongly. Not so much now because we're not doing much that warrants that but we have to, especially with problems with products but we never expected many. But there was that bit in the book where there was about 50 press in a week, more than any of the stuff going on in Rwanda or floods. We were just

hitting the media. And then it jettisoned into Australia, New Zealand, everywhere we were high profile. It was having an effect and so we had to manage that-communicate 24 hours a day with all the franchisees-huge process but it worked. We did it.

What do you say to criticisms that The Body Shop's position on social responsibility is used as a means to a public relations end (for example, the organisation's childcare facilities)?

I'm so proud of that! I'm the only bloody one in England! Thatcher didn't want any daycare facilities. Of course, I'm going to promote that. These are things that I see business should be about. I'm not going to put millions into something like that and not tell anyone about it. If you want to change business what you've got is the responsibility to stand out there and trumpet what works. And they think because you're trumpeting or shouting it out from the rooftops, it's self-promotion. Of course it's self-promotion but it's something that works and if you've got something that works and you think it can work on any area at all, that's why it's bizarre. Why don't they fucking copy it? Or the Community Trade? Why can't I get Avon or L'Oreal or Unilever to buy from our Community Trade projects? I don't want to be the only person in the friggin' world doing this stuff. The idea is to change the nature of business. Not to be the only one out there screaming from the parapet saying: "Hey, look at me, look at me!" And we can't get them to do it. They'll criticize and we say, "C'mon join us! Let's have a party!" It's paradoxical but you know.

Do the company's internal managerial practices mirror its outward socially responsible image?

For a long time we had a Values and Vision Department. We had some 40 people working on the issue of human rights, social justice, the auditing process, environment, community trade - not community trade that was always different - volunteerism. We then decided, no, we could see it as a whole add-on. So, we wanted to integrate it so the Community Trade went into the purchasing so that every time we purchased, we had to have these disciplines. The new administration wants to take it out and put it aside. Well, no. We're absolutely obsessed with keeping these processes in. We had the Communications Department, the Human Rights Advocacy Group, the Environmental

Group, Social Auditing, oh Social Auditing is independent, that's another area. Human Resources, they're in another area. They're a great group. I think the new guy that's coming in from the States is pretty magnificent but they're not communicators and HR is about communication. What is lost is the openness of like every Friday, we had 8 people from around the company just having lunch. And we'd just talk. And all those little tricks have gone because so many people have come in. But HR, it's quite an anonymous group except through the redundancies. I always like asking the rest of the company: "What do you think of HR at the moment?" And it's a mixed bag. Some respond brilliantly because we've got two major sites. We've got the major Headquarters then we've got the marketing, product development site in London. I think the literature coming out of the HR stuff like employment manual is bloody boring. I'll send you some of when we did our employment manual. I think it was pretty fantastic!

What do you see as its continuing core values in the future?

The core values are community care, human and social justice. That will stay with the company forever. That we'll have. There's no debate. But that's not the point, that's easy. What are you going to do with the new energy? To move the agenda up a bit and what did that bit look like? So it's going to be interesting because they've now decided that they need to incorporate more of this 'stuff' - they call it! So we'll see if this works!

GLOBALISATION

How do you manage the tension between a global brand and local business?

It's not a tension, not a tension at all. We are multilocal, run by lots of independent franchisees, all responding to their community in thousands of shops. Many of them are in shops. So what we control is the product. They cannot sell products outside The Body Shop logo. So they can't bring in any other competitive brand, or any other- even accessories- unless we've checked where they are made, unless they've been accredited as a supplier. So we control the livery of the shop, what it looks like as well. And all the visual art materials, all of the press materials, all the information and point-of-sale material we control as well. So there's very little that they can probably put, about 20-25% of accessories (baskets and things like that). We also have to, on a global level, be

very cognitive of the ethnic and cultural differences. That's a given. You can't put naked women or women showing any part of their bodies, arms or legs in the Middle East. Also, the graphic design which is done centrally usually has two concepts of design. One is the more atmospheric, lifestyle look of people in the window and another which would be product. A shot of the product. And that's really how it's done. Every country has its own in terms of the real understanding of what The Body Shop stands for, has its own campaigns.

How does the body shop manage its relations with Third World communities/indigenous people?

We do it with such intimacy. We bring them together, have meetings with them, regional meetings with them and we're very proud of that.

Are you aware of any positive or negative impacts that The Body Shop has had on indigenous peoples?

There was one which we learnt very fast about and the negative impact was making sure that any of the Community Trade suppliers don't rely on us just as a supplier. It was a really good story and we allowed it to be filmed: The paper making in Nepal and it was really sad because we loved this project and we ordered lots and we couldn't sell it. Nobody was interested in paper. And so they were devastated and they didn't want to fire anybody because they were such a spirited bunch and so we ran around England looking for people to buy their paper and we found it. And we got them to set up a couple of shops in Katmandu and they made great stuff for us.

Are they still going?

Oh yeah, amazing. It's one of our best products. But there was this glitch and everybody got together and said 'how do we deal with this problem?' And solved it within six months. Positive impacts are huge, huge. Mostly health, education, safety, veterinary clinics. Huge. It works. Local economic self-reliance works.

Nowadays, everyone's talking about 'community'. How do you measure the level of commitment many organisations make to the community?

How do they define it you know? Do they have a relationship with their geographic community? Do they open up facilities for the people? Like sports facilities? Do they dialogue with the community? Do they have an auditing process where the community measures you about how you measure up in the community? And I think some companies must do that and do it well. Certainly companies like Ben and Jerry's. Say, when they went onto the stock exchange. They would only sell their shares for \$10, \$20, \$100, to the local community. So, there are a lot of indicators where companies are good citizens within the community. But most of all, it's the auditing, the social auditing where the community tells us how we've measured up.

You use terms like "corporate greed", "corporate crimes", "guerrilla tactics", "sabotage techniques", "vigilante consumers", "tyranny" and "revolution" in your autobiography. do you accept that warfare influences your images and language? Would you say that The Body Shop is at war with anyone?

It's a strategy not a tactic.

But you're at war with someone aren't you?

I think business is always seen as a playground for war and sport. The challenging, the fighting. But I also like the surprise of language. I like it when you are seen as a spiritual endeavor because of the softness, the appropriating of language that wakes people up. Guerilla tactics, and I love guerilla tactics. For me, it's a sort of methodology. You're light-footed, you're smart, you're opportunistic, you can turn in a dime. Take away sabotage techniques in terms of marketing; you take a look at the adjectives attached to business. I think it's really appropriate to take words that are like that when you'd never think appropriate to business. You think appropriate in terms of the politics. But because I believe now business is political, it's appropriate to use those words. That's why I go back to this thing. Because there isn't a pattern in my thinking but there might be a pattern when it's observed and studied in terms of how language has played. There's something really sound there.

Who is The Body Shop fighting alongside? Are there allies and/or enemies?

NGOs, more progressive churches, Human Rights Groups. NGOs embrace all of that. Some very, very good academics, institutions, Fair Trade institutions, World Development Movement. So they would be our allies. Increasingly it's the NGOs.

Number one enemy?

Systems. I think it's more than the WTO. I think it's an idea. I think the enemy is the idea that businesses are allowed to conduct a business life in spite of everything. They're allowed to conduct what I'm saying- this notion that the market controls everything. Yes, it's the ideology. The market has no heart, no sense of wisdom. It has no pity.

Do the body shop franchisees and staff support or share your passion for activism?

Do you think this will this lessen in the organisation when you leave?

More, more support within the franchisees than I have within the current administration here in this country (the US) and in the UK. Also, the UK by nature of being shamed by public rejection of some of the theories, the ideas, products, or having to rethink their stand. Everyday we're on the phone with the Australians, the Canadians, the New Zealanders. They're great because they've fashioned where they believe themselves to be real forerunners, where no one is doing things. No other businesses or franchisers like that. And they want to keep that relationship utterly special. And they see the enemy as the new administration. There's no doubt about that. Doesn't listen to them, doesn't care about the history. The fact that they shaped and sheparded one the greatest brands in the world, companies in the world. They weren't recognised for doing that. Some of the great franchisees have been in Australia, New Zealand, and Canada. They're not letting anything interfere with what they believe is the right way to do business. And so they're the guardians of the gatepost. And it's so ironic when the company talks about being a Shepard of the brand. And they just write back and say, "up your bum, if you think just more shops and visuals is what business is about, well!" That gives me huge comfort, such affection.

So The Body Shop can go in two directions. It can undergo an identity crisis and fall apart when you leave, or it can grow stronger?

But the dilemma in that (and I agree with you) is the age group of the franchisees. We're all in our late 50s. And a lot of them are at the age where they want to pass it on or give it up because they're tired and they want leisure in their lives. When it's no longer fun, people don't want to be around. They loved it. They were so proud of it. They were high profile in their community, they still are. But they loved the sense of camaraderie. It was a disparate group of people, 150-200 around the world on an occasional basis maybe once or twice a year, who got together to show each other what they were doing in terms of social change and show off their greatest ideas and to teach and to learn. And it was bloody dynamic. And it was fun. People fell in love, people made great friendships, traveled with each other. That's what they lost. It's still there but it's not there approved by the new CEO or administration.

What's going to happen when the franchisees go?

I think it will be a big brand that will be like a product brand. It all goes back to the company. The company will buy it back. What it needs is a leader. Not myself. It needs a new leader that can Shepard. You need a visionary leadership that talks about the agenda, is political, is sassy, takes all of these seeds and allows them to grow, to prosper and to double and multiply and think of new seeds to put in place. 25 years, you can't say it's an experiment. I can't say. But we did prove something. Thing that did happen, it was a bit mainstream. But maybe the hurry sickness I started when all this happened. Maybe it takes a decade for an idea to just state. First of all, you've got to create a language for it. Then it's got to be studied. Then it's got to be compared. Then you got to keep putting your toe in the water and seeing if this experiment works. And if it does, then it could be replicated maybe a decade or two later.

But I did say many times by the beginning of this century this is the way business is going to be run. And I was absolutely wrong, absolutely wrong. It won't be run like this unless there is a mass demand. So that's the bit that I was definitely wrong about.

What is it like to be a global gypsy?

I love it. For me, it reminds me of a philosopher, Bourdier, and he talked about 'La Grand me las' which is fear of home and hearth. And I love my home and I love my family but I start hyperventilating after a bit. It's not just traveling to visit a shop, it's not what I want. The stuff that I love is in Nicaragua, going to Bangladesh. It's getting my eternal education in the human spirit. I couldn't live without that.

Where does your heart lie?

I think your heart lies with the paradox of the notion of the sacred place of your home with your family and also the understanding that you haven't got a finite time on this planet. You just want to suck up more information. There isn't enough time. But at the moment, I'm much more...I delight being with my kids and grandkids which should have slowed me down but it actually hasn't.

THE FUTURE**What's next for you? Where will your passion take you from here?**

Publishing and talks and events. Public education.

What is your dream for The Body Shop in the future?

I just hope it remains cheeky and progressive. That's how I measure it. It becomes a relevant, global company that is thoughtful, reflective, and is progressive in its thinking and keeps continuously doing experiments. I don't see it going into fashion or pills, but I mean I'm sure it's still a skin and hair care company.

What values do you think will be important to carry into the future?

Communication of the values: Human Rights, social justice.

What challenges do you see the organisation facing in the future?

When I leave, how will it define itself? Who do you pass the light on to? And maybe, it won't be one person. Maybe the answer is there are hundreds of leaders. I think the challenge for The Body Shop is to keep human and very small. Language and visual. The more it gets bigger and bigger, it should not adopt a behaviour pattern of bigness. It

should adopt the reverse, a behaviour pattern of smallness, local, community, micro marketing. That would be phenomenal: If a really big company was seen to be just a local, small, community shop.

What has been the most memorable moment for you in the organisation?

Everybody wants me to say when the 20 Ogoni were released. That would have to be pivotal. But I don't know if it was anything a little less grand than that. And a memorable moment, let me think. What has charmed me? I think it's stepping back, looking at some of the activities, the staff, and some of the campaigns. When I was in Tasmania and I was doing a book tour there, the first book. We were doing this human rights campaign. And the staff came to my hotel room and they made me hoot with laughter as they were telling me-it's stories like these that are memorable moments-that they had a 24 hour vigil for, they were hoping Peter Gabriel who was doing a concert, and they had this vision that he was and they were all trans signing up. Those are the memorable moments. Or just going into the Woodabe and going and seeing the only male beauty pageant organised by the women watching thousands of men jumping up and down being chosen who were the most beautiful, being chosen by the women. There's these wonderful little vignettes and getting the award from the Queen, getting the award in front of 10 000 people. As a product line, getting hemp against everybody's better judgement. I got industrial hemp and it became the best selling product. Things like that.

APPENDIX 6

SOURCES OF DATA AND COMPANY DOCUMENTATION USED IN THIS STUDY

Corporate records

Annual reports (1990-2000)

The Green Book: The Body Shop 1992/1993 Environmental statement

The Green Book Part 2: Supplement to The Body Shop's 1992/1993 Environmental statement

The Green Book 3: The Body Shop environmental 1993/1994 statement

Values Reports (1995, 1997)

The Body Shop Social Statement (1995)

The Body Shop Environmental Statement (1995)

The Body Shop Animal Protection Statement (1995)

The Body Shop approach to ethical auditing (1995, 1997, 1998)

Stakeholder Report (1997)

Press Releases (1996-2002)

Transcripts of public lectures

The Body Shop Lectures:

- a. Anita Roddick speaks out on "Spirituality and service" (1994)
- b. Anita Roddick speaks out on "Women in business" (1994)
- c. Anita Roddick speaks out on "Corporate social responsibility" (1994)

The Body Shop Mission Statement

The Body Shop Charter

The Body Shop Trading Principles

Employee Handbook

Memorandum of response to the allegations of Jon Entine (1994, 32 pages including faxes, letters, testimonies, court transcripts)

Business Autobiographies

Roddick, A. (1991). *Body and soul*. London: Ebury Press

Roddick, A. (2000). *Business as unusual*. London: Thorsons, Harper Collins Publishers

Internal publications

In-house newsletters: *LA News* (nos. 1-10, 1993-1994)

Interview Transcripts

Personal Interview with Anita Roddick

Founder of The Body Shop

Bloomington, Illinois, USA

6 March 2000

Personal Interview with Barrie Thomas

New Zealand Body Shop Director

Wellington, New Zealand

25 July 2001

Personal Interview with Michael Ogilvie-Lee

New Zealand Body Shop Director

Wellington, New Zealand

25 July 2001

APPENDIX 7

THE BODY SHOP MISSION STATEMENT

mission statement

OUR REASON FOR BEING

TO DEDICATE our business to the pursuit of social and environmental change.

TO CREATIVELY balance the financial and human needs of our stakeholders: employees, franchisees, customers, suppliers and shareholders.

TO COURAGEOUSLY ensure that our business is ecologically sustainable: meeting the needs of the present without compromising the future.

TO MEANINGFULLY

contribute to local, national and international communities in which we trade, by adopting a code of conduct which ensures care, honesty, fairness and respect.

TO PASSIONATELY

campaign for the protection of the environment, human and civil rights, and against animal testing within the cosmetics and toiletries industry.

TO TIRELESSLY work to narrow the gap between principle and practice, whilst making fun, passion and care part of our daily lives.

APPENDIX 8

THE BODY SHOP CHARTER

The Body Shop Charter

The Body Shop's goals and values are as important as our products and our profits.



Our policies and our products are geared to meet the real needs of real people, both inside and outside the Company.



Honesty, integrity and caring form the foundations of the Company, and should flow through everything we do.



We care about each other as individuals: we will continue to endeavour to bring meaning and pleasure to the workplace.



We care about our customers, and will continue to bring humanity into the marketplace.

We care about humanising the business community: we will continue to show that success and profits can go hand in hand with ideals and values.



We will demonstrate our care for the world in which we live, by respecting fellow human beings, by not harming animals, by working to conserve our planet.



We will continue to create products which show that we care: by not testing on animals, by using naturally-based ingredients that are close to source, by making products which work for our customers.



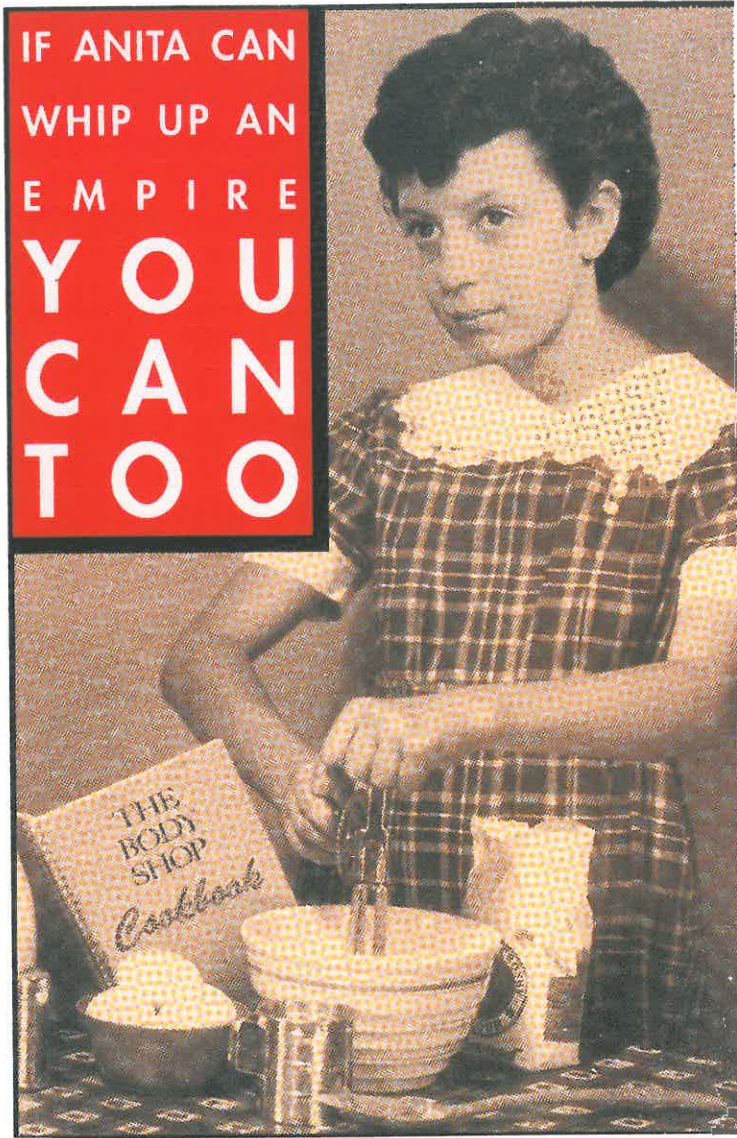
We will continue to search, to challenge, to question, to celebrate life and generate joy and excitement.



We embrace everyone who works for The Body Shop and with The Body Shop as part of our extended family. We are all the Company: it is up to all of us to make it work.

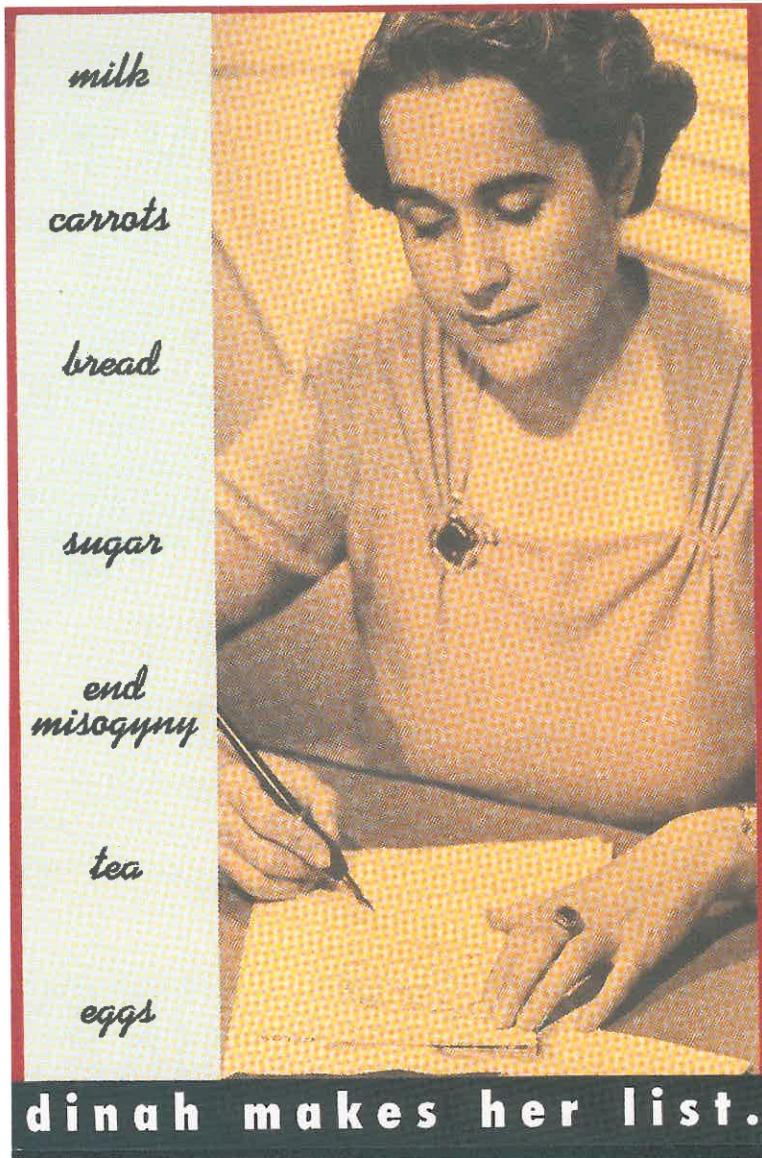
APPENDIX 9

BODY SHOP POSTCARD

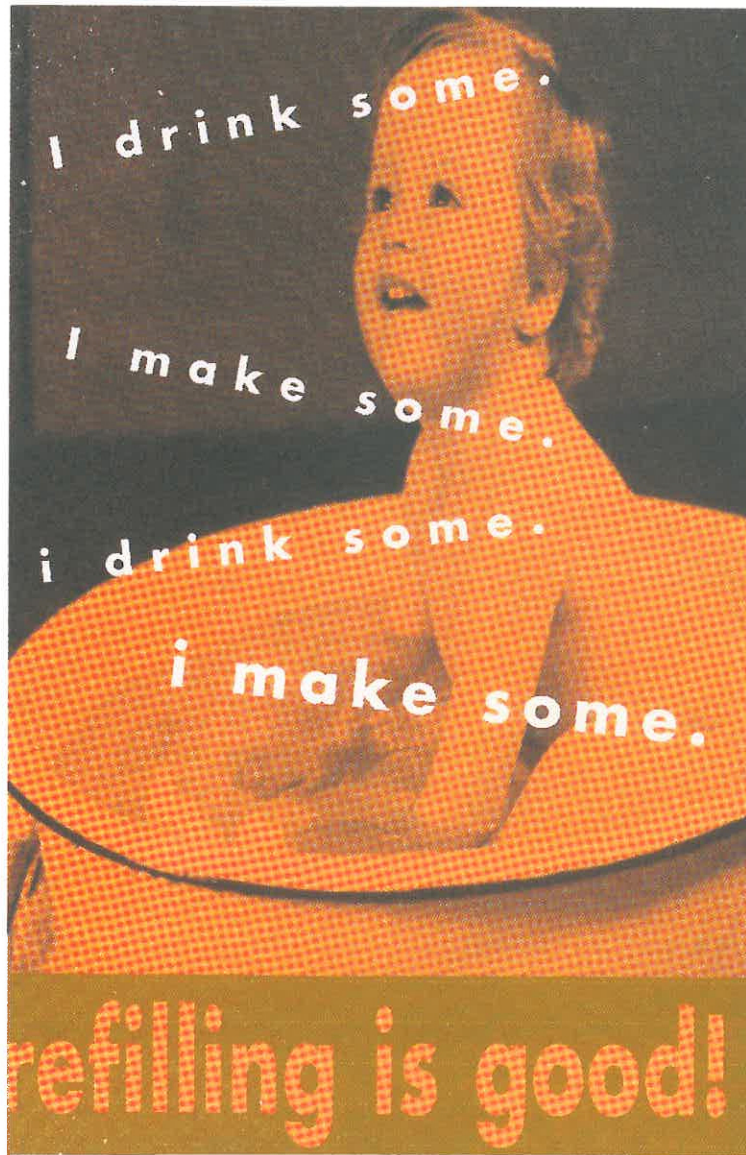


APPENDIX 10

BODY SHOP POSTCARD

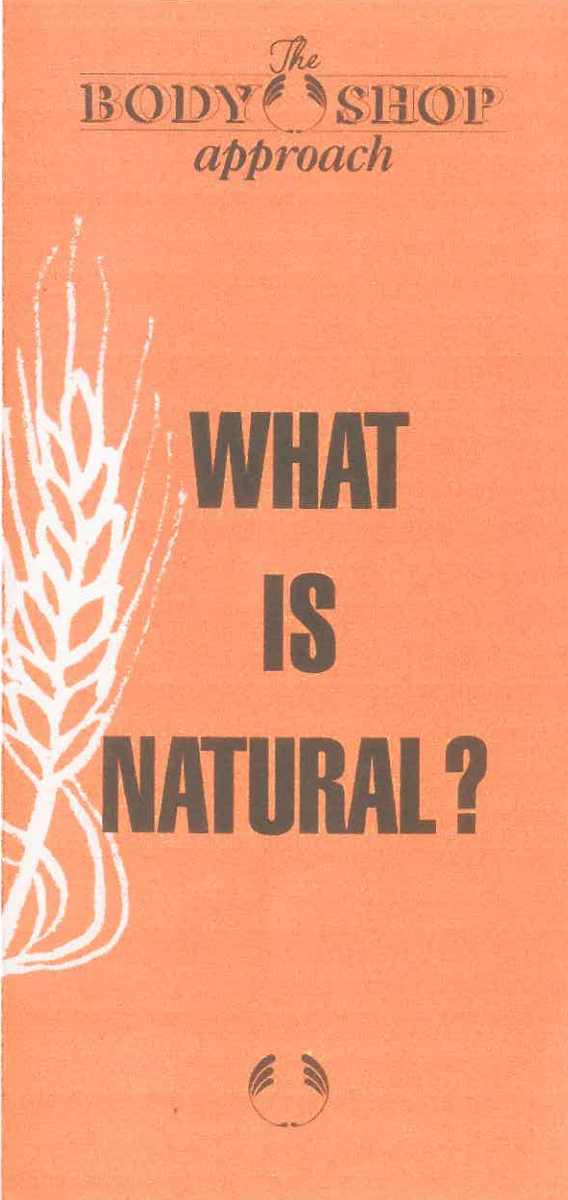


APPENDIX 11
BODY SHOP POSTCARD




APPENDIX 12

BODY SHOP BROCHURE



The
BODY SHOP
approach

**WHAT
IS
NATURAL?**



The dictionary defines “natural” as “existing in or produced by nature.” But if you ask anyone in the cosmetics business, or in the food industry, or anyone out just doing the weekly shopping, what “natural” means, you’ll get answers that are as different from that definition - and one another - as night and day.

WHAT THEY SAY



That's because "natural" has become the marketing buzzword of the eco-conscious 90s. It's used to sell everything from cereal to detergent, blue jeans to holidays. The cosmetics industry in particular has run amok with "natural" claims, compounding them with such industry double-talk as "hypo-allergenic", "dermatology-tested", "100% pure", and even "organic". "Natural" sells.

The thing is, these claims maybe misleading: products may have only a tiny element of "natural" ingredients or they may have been so heavily processed that the original natural ingredients no longer retain the properties for which they were chosen.

WHAT WE SAY



Let's get one thing straight: The Body Shop has never jumped on that bandwagon, and we don't intend to hitch a ride now. That doesn't mean that the claims we have made about our products are false, that there's nothing "natural" about them. Of course there is. (More about that in a minute.) What it does mean is that we can't, and shouldn't, be grouped together with the myriad of other companies crying "natural!" Because, as you probably know, we're not like other companies.

Our products cleanse, polish and protect the hair and skin. That's it. We don't make wild, unsubstantiated claims. We simply make products that work.

WHAT WE MEAN



The Body Shop's corporate philosophy is comprehensive; we are not motivated solely by profit. We are as concerned with people's safety and welfare and the

protection of the natural environment as we are with making good products. Consequently, there are some standard cosmetics practices we simply won't follow - and we have better alternatives at hand.

We endeavor to use only ingredients from renewable sources. Before we commit to producing any new item, we make sure that we can get the raw materials we need without negatively impacting the natural environment.

The Body Shop absolutely refuses to compromise its principles simply to make a "natural" product. We believe that there are always alternatives, be they natural or man-made. So, we will only use ingredients that make our products effective, practical and pleasant to use without harming man, woman, animal or planet.

WHAT WE USE



Natural ingredients are at the heart of every product The Body Shop makes. We conduct on-going research into traditional uses of plants, herbs, fruits, flowers, seeds and nuts. Anita Roddick, the founder and Managing Director of The Body Shop, travels throughout the year exploring the skin and hair care rituals of other cultures, like the Kayapo Indians of the Amazon rainforest and the hill tribes of the Humla region in Nepal. Our Anthropology and Research and Development departments also contribute to this ever-expanding body of knowledge.

Consequently, when we develop a product, we are able to work with comfort that our ingredients are safe for human use. We use as much of each ingredient as is necessary to perform the function for which it has been chosen. For example, our Henna Cream Shampoo contains 50% henna and our Banana Hair Putty contains 10% bananas.

WHY WE USE THEM



The Body Shop bases its products on natural ingredients because we believe that naturally-based products are both beneficial and interesting to use. After all, it's hard to ignore the collected traditions and wisdom of hundreds of years of safe human use. We want to provide our customers with that knowledge and pleasure.

But "natural" is not enough when it comes to product safety and effectiveness. All biochemicals and substances derived from living systems are prone to deterioration when exposed to spoilage organisms such as bacteria and fungi. A product without preservatives would last only a short time before becoming contaminated. In order to keep our products fresh, stable, effective and able to withstand contamination during normal use, we must use preservatives.

Preservatives are not the only man-made substances we use. The Body Shop believes that skin and hair care should be fun (after all, there are many more important things to be serious about). We want our products to be as enjoyable to use as they are to create, which is why we add colors and fragrances. Though many of our colors and fragrances - like carrot oil, raspberry juice, and yucca bark - are natural, we also use synthetics to add variety and spice when appropriate.

WHAT WE WON'T USE



Additionally, some of the synthetic ingredients we use are ethical alternatives to ingredients obtained by means which are cruel to animals. For example, though musk is a popular scent worldwide, we won't use it because it is cruelly extracted from the glands of the male musk deer. Instead, The Body Shop has created a synthetic version that's become the fragrance for our best selling perfume, White Musk.

WHERE WE'VE GONE



We've taken the concept of "natural" a step further. In addition to creating products based on traditional recipes and natural ingredients, we've established Trade not Aid programs in impoverished or endangered areas like India, Nepal and the Amazon rainforest. These programs provide secure incomes for local inhabitants in return for both raw ingredients and finished items like our wooden massage rollers and handmade paper goods.

THE NATURAL CONCLUSION

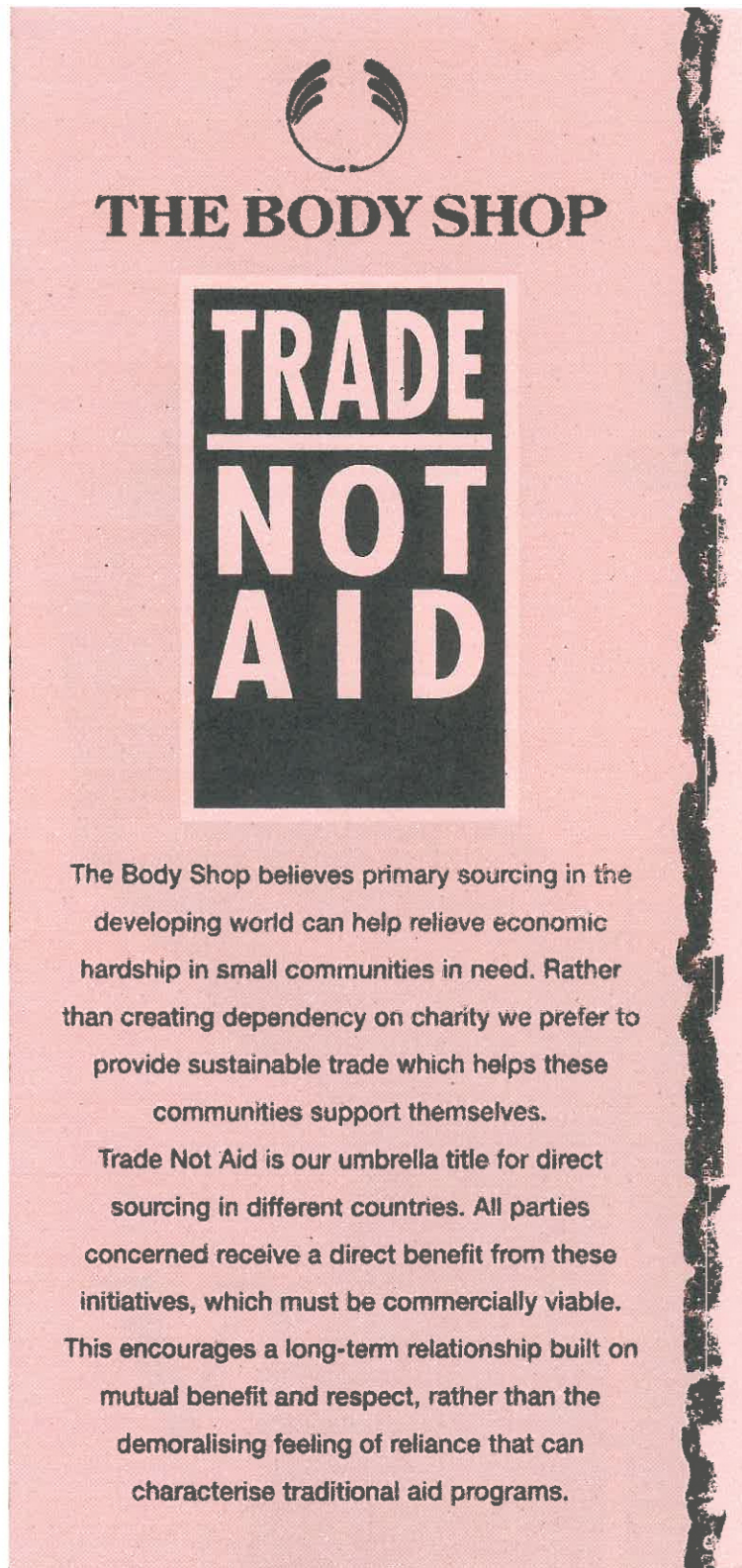


The Body Shop is a company of strong values and clear objectives. When we develop a new item, we take into consideration every element of our Company philosophy. It is The Body Shop's values, not the current marketing jargon or trends, that inspire and fuel the creation of every product we make. Naturally.

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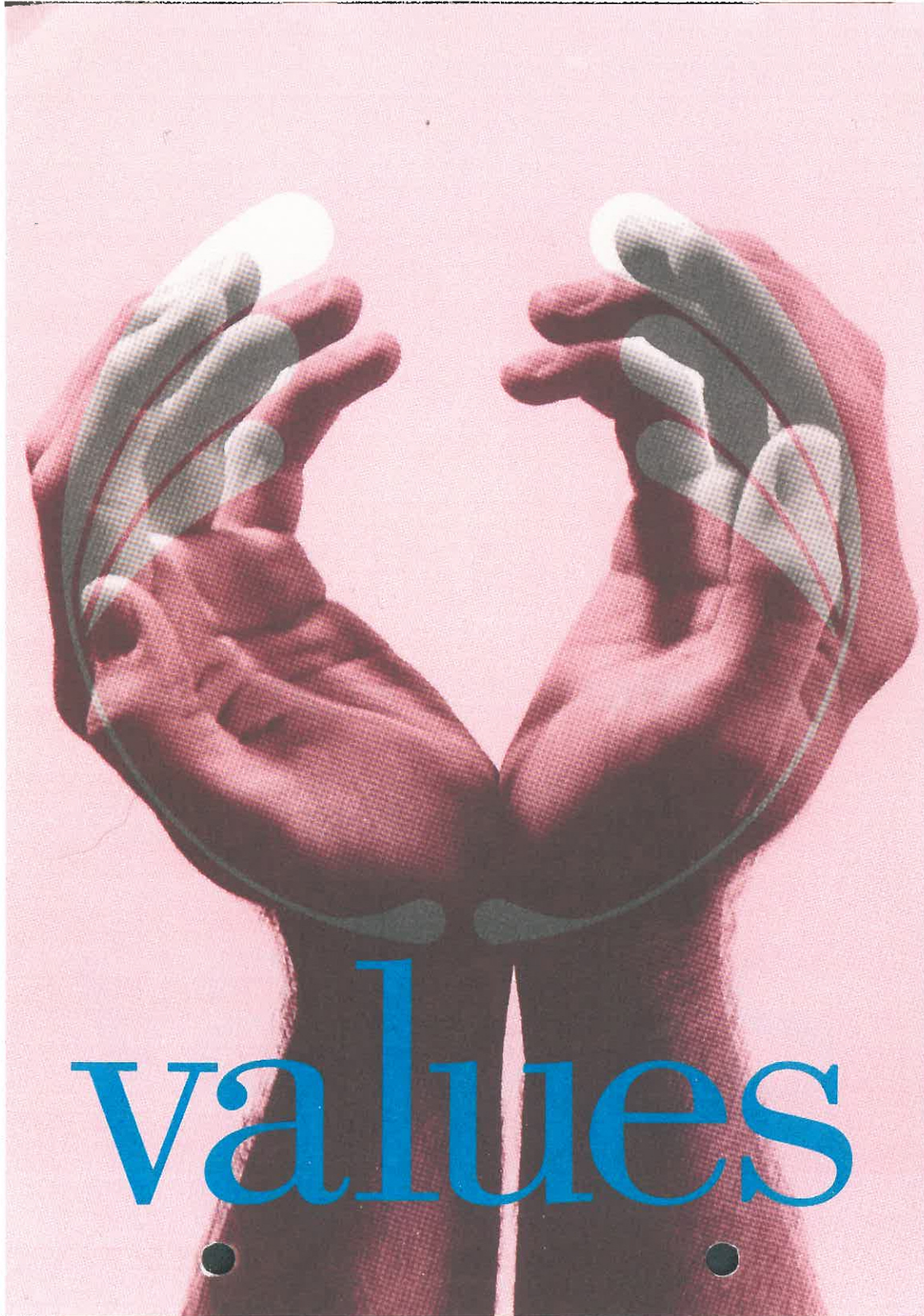
APPENDIX 13

BODY SHOP BROCHURE



APPENDIX 14

EXTRACT FROM THE BODY SHOP CHARTER



The Body Shop's goals and
The Body Shop has soul
values are as important as our
– don't lose it!
products and our profits.

values

APPENDIX 15

EXTRACT FROM THE BODY SHOP CHARTER

Welcome

to The Body Shop. We're glad to have you on the team!

*'Re-examine all you've been told...
dismiss what insults your own soul...'
Walt Whitman*

The Body Shop began in 1976, when Anita and Gordon Roddick opened a small shop in a side street in Brighton, England. Its name was inspired by the automobile repair shops which Anita had seen in America. It sold naturally-based skin and hair care products, in plain bottles, in a variety of sizes... Green paint and plants hid the damp walls, and the labels were handwritten ... Many of its features sprang from necessity, others from the Roddicks' gut instincts of what would work, responding to what people wanted and needed.

And customers flocked to the shop. They loved the smell, the choice, the products, they loved the style, and the approach...

That was the beginning.

Much has changed – we've grown enormously for a start ...

Now, in 1990, there are around 150 Body Shops in the UK, and over 320 across the world, from America to Australia, from Norway to New Zealand. We cover countries and continents, we trade in 17 languages.

Soon we will open our first shop in Japan. The Body Shop is now recognised as a leading retailer, as an innovative business and a financial success...

There are certainly no damp walls in our shops any more (though the plants and green wood remain), and the labels are no longer handwritten (the ink ran in the bathroom) – but a lot has remained the same.

The basic principles underlying The Body Shop continue, yet now we are able to spread them more widely and to have more effect. Our role as a socially responsible business is a crucial one, and we want to extend it as far as we can. We are doing that through information, action, education and communication, both inside the Company and through the shops to the wider world.

'Act quickly, think slowly'

Greek proverb

We are committed to

**valuing our staff
caring for our customers
respecting the environment
avoiding harm to animals
working in the community
trading with The Third World
campaigning for action**

That is The Body Shop way of doing things. It separates us from the rest. Our approach, plus our products, have created a formula for success which works across the world.

Our success is the result of many factors -- creativity, determination, effort, good timing, luck, management, investment, planning... It's hard to pin down (and certainly hard to reproduce, as those who've tried to copy us have discovered!). What is indisputable is the fact that it's been built on people's efforts and hard work.

The Body Shops themselves are the front line. Without them attracting and retaining customers we would be nowhere. And behind the front line? We know that we could not have grown so far and so fast without our franchisees: they are a vital part of the whole Body Shop process.

We also know that the very core of The Body Shop has to be strong: and that's The Body Shop International PLC.

All of us who work for The Body Shop International, (whether directly in Littlehampton, London and the Company Shops, or indirectly in our sister companies – Eastwick Trading; The Body Shop, Inc; Soapworks; Colourings and Jacaranda), have a contribution to make, and we all matter.

It is still a family company, with family values. It incorporates care, support, affection, respect – and sometimes healthy disagreement – like all families! What we do and how well we do it ensures the continuing success of The Body Shop. And by success we don't just mean growth, expansion, and financial security. We have also got to make sure that The Body Shop continues as The Body Shop – that our principles remain uncompromised, that our way of doing things is maintained, that we've still got soul!

It's not always easy to keep that spirit alive while delivering the goods, being hyper efficient, working to deadlines and to budgets... But we have to keep it going, as that spirit is the essence of The Body Shop. And striving to do it all and keep that balance is healthy and helps give The Body Shop its edge.

It is everybody's responsibility (and it's in all our interests) to keep The Body Shop on track... It needs energy, integrity and commitment – and there's no time for complacency.

We're all part of it... At The Body Shop we're all working towards common goals, though our personal ambitions may differ. We need to work to live – but it has to involve play and fun too, and should enable us to develop as human beings and to help make the world a better place.

That is what **The Body Shop Charter** is all about.
We can make it work. It's up to us and it's up to you...

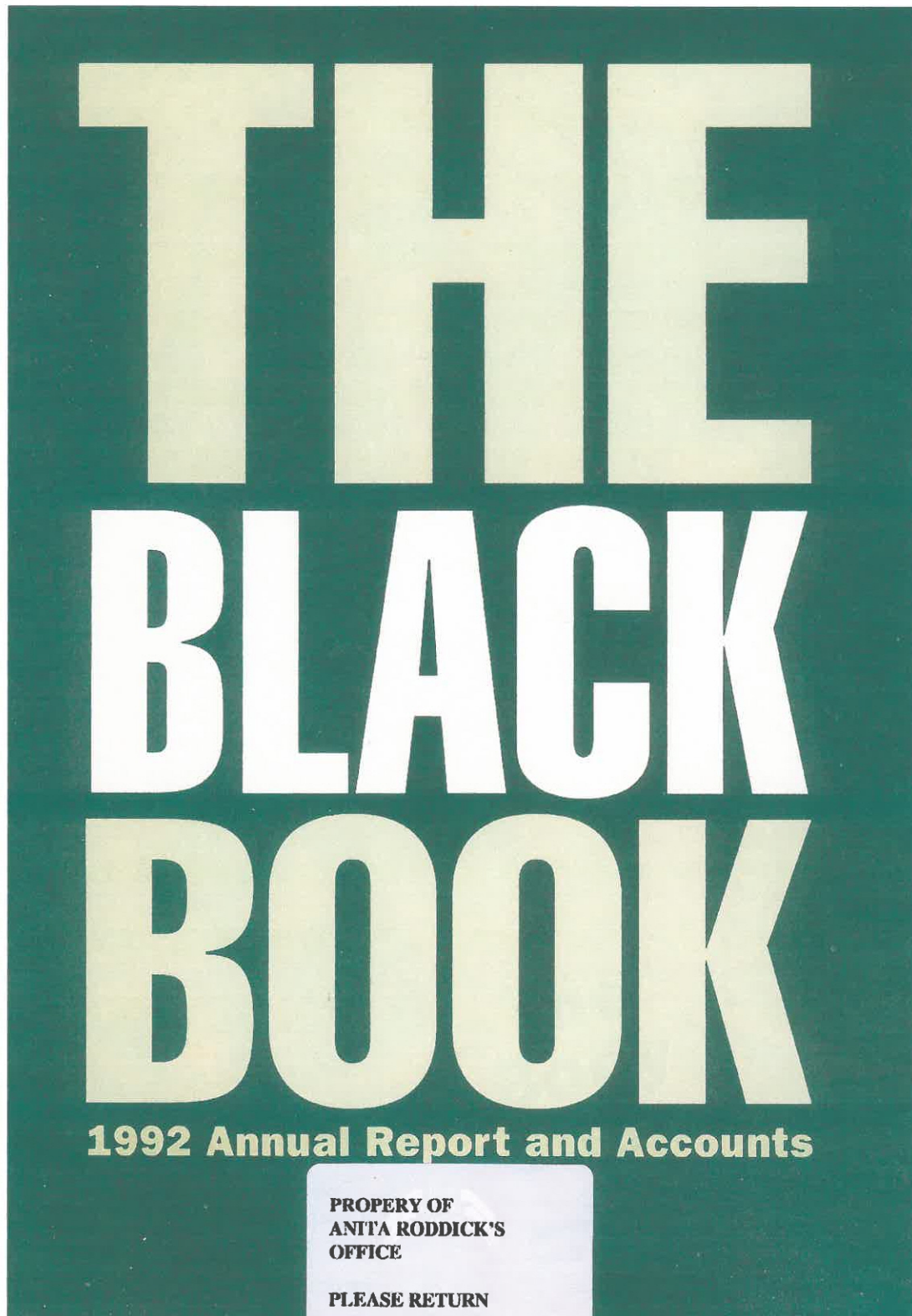
APPENDIX 16

BODY SHOP ANNUAL REPORT 1990: FRONT COVER



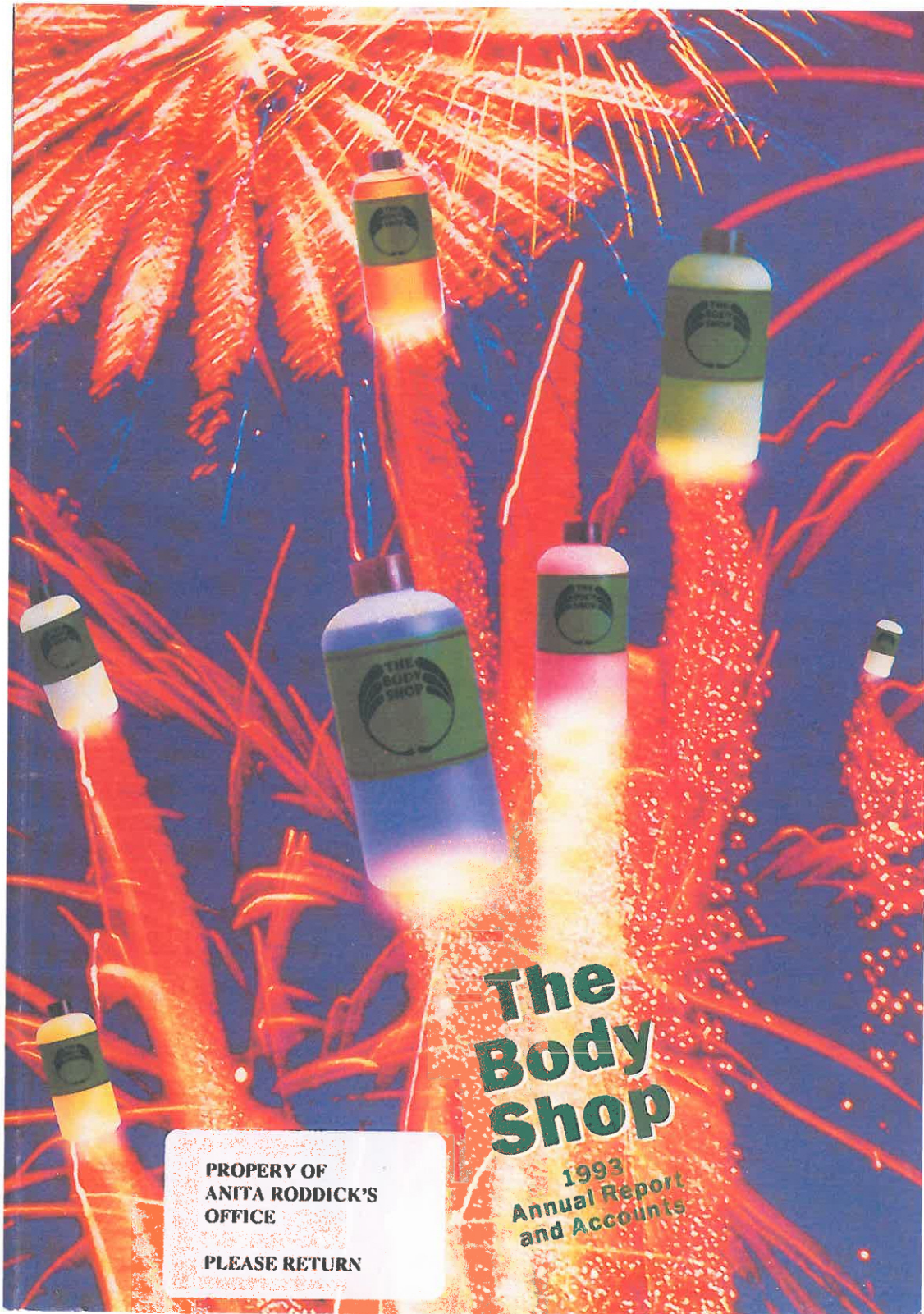
APPENDIX 17

BODY SHOP ANNUAL REPORT 1992: FRONT COVER



APPENDIX 18

BODY SHOP ANNUAL REPORT 1993: FRONT COVER



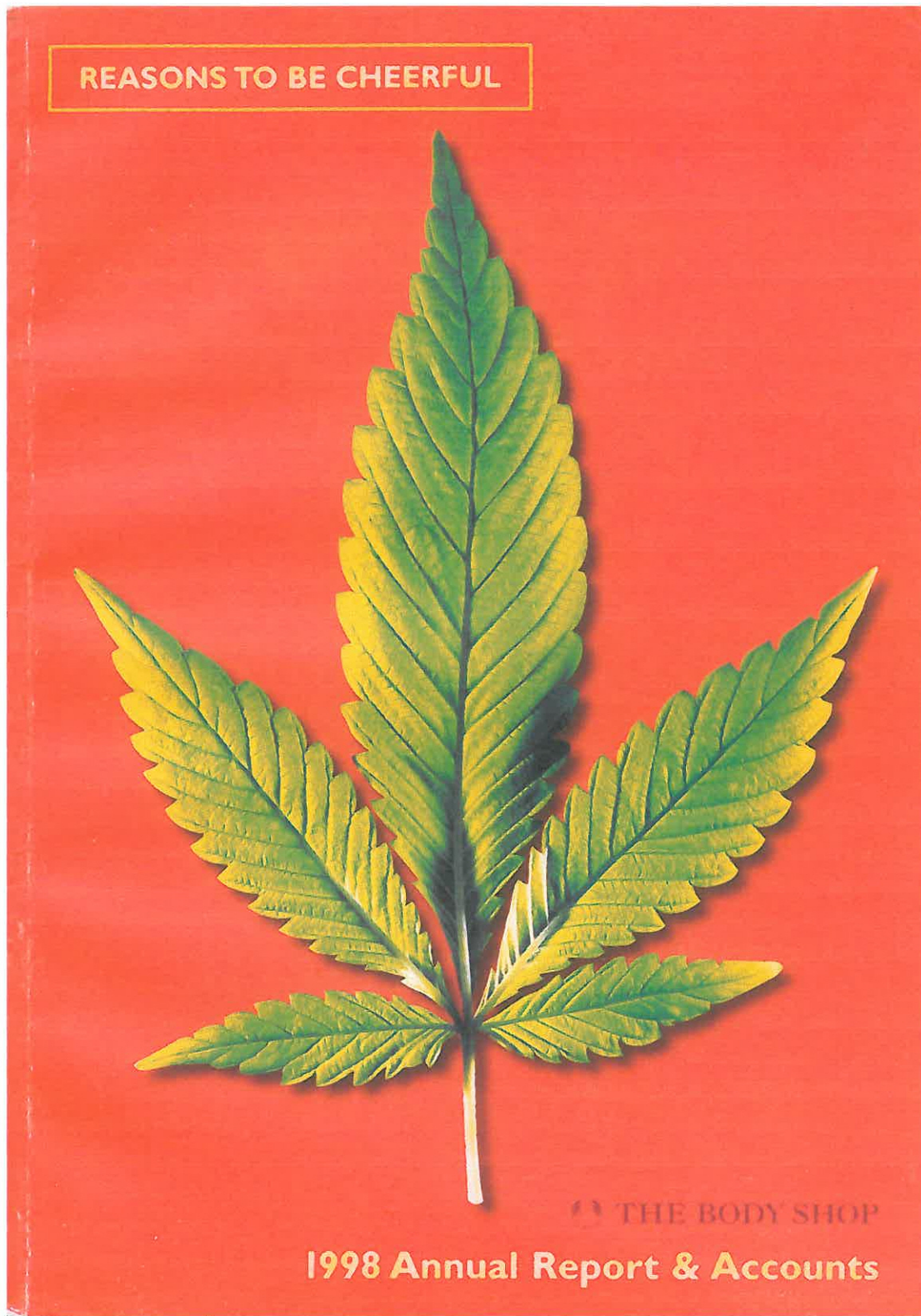
APPENDIX 19

ANITA RODDICK IN CORR



APPENDIX 20

BODY SHOP ANNUAL REPORT 1998: FRONT COVER



APPENDIX 21

BODY SHOP ANNUAL REPORT 1998: BACK COVER

REASONS TO BE CHEERFUL



Our best-selling range in the UK since its launch

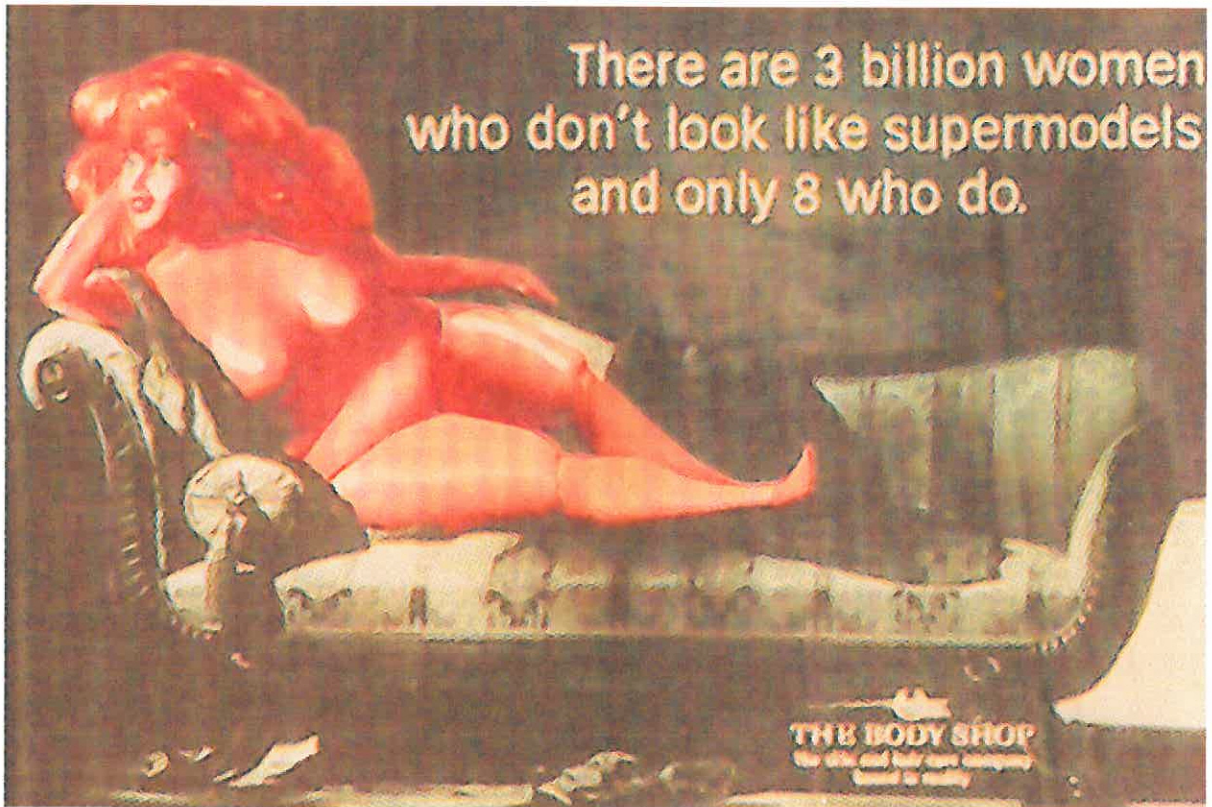
APPENDIX 22

“SEXISM’S TOAST”: BODY SHOP ANNUAL REPORT 1998



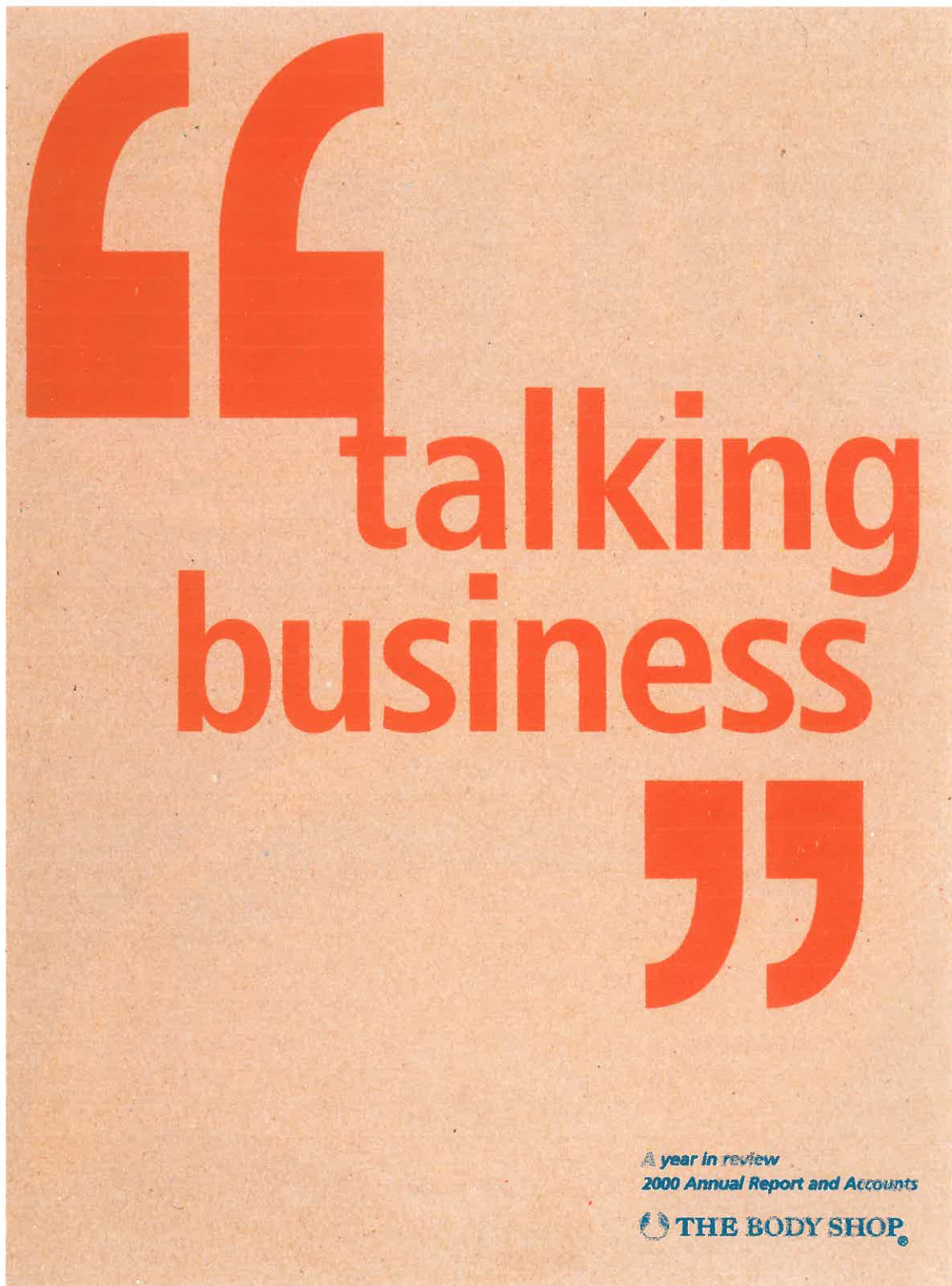
APPENDIX 23

RUBY CAMPAIGN POSTER

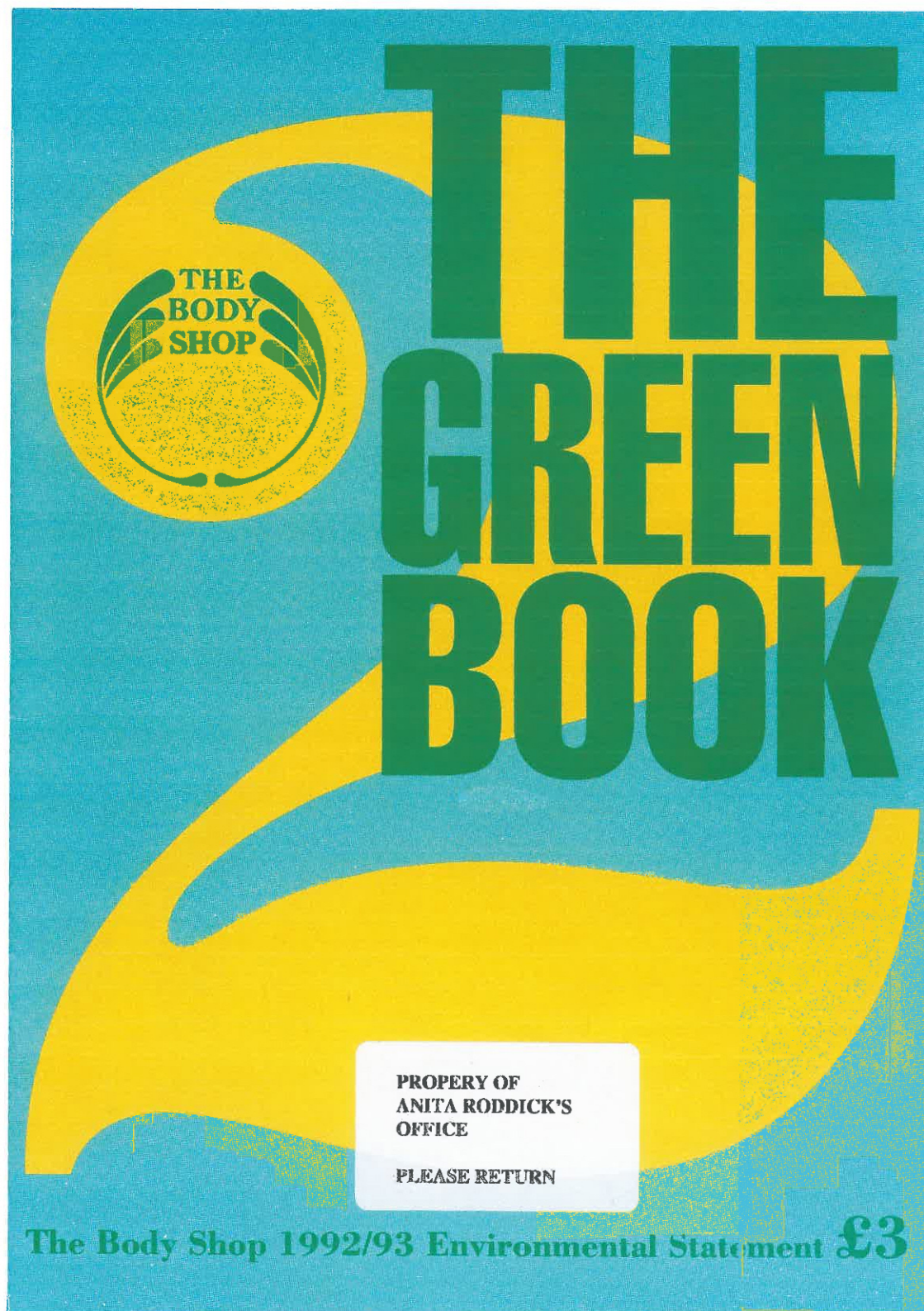


APPENDIX 24

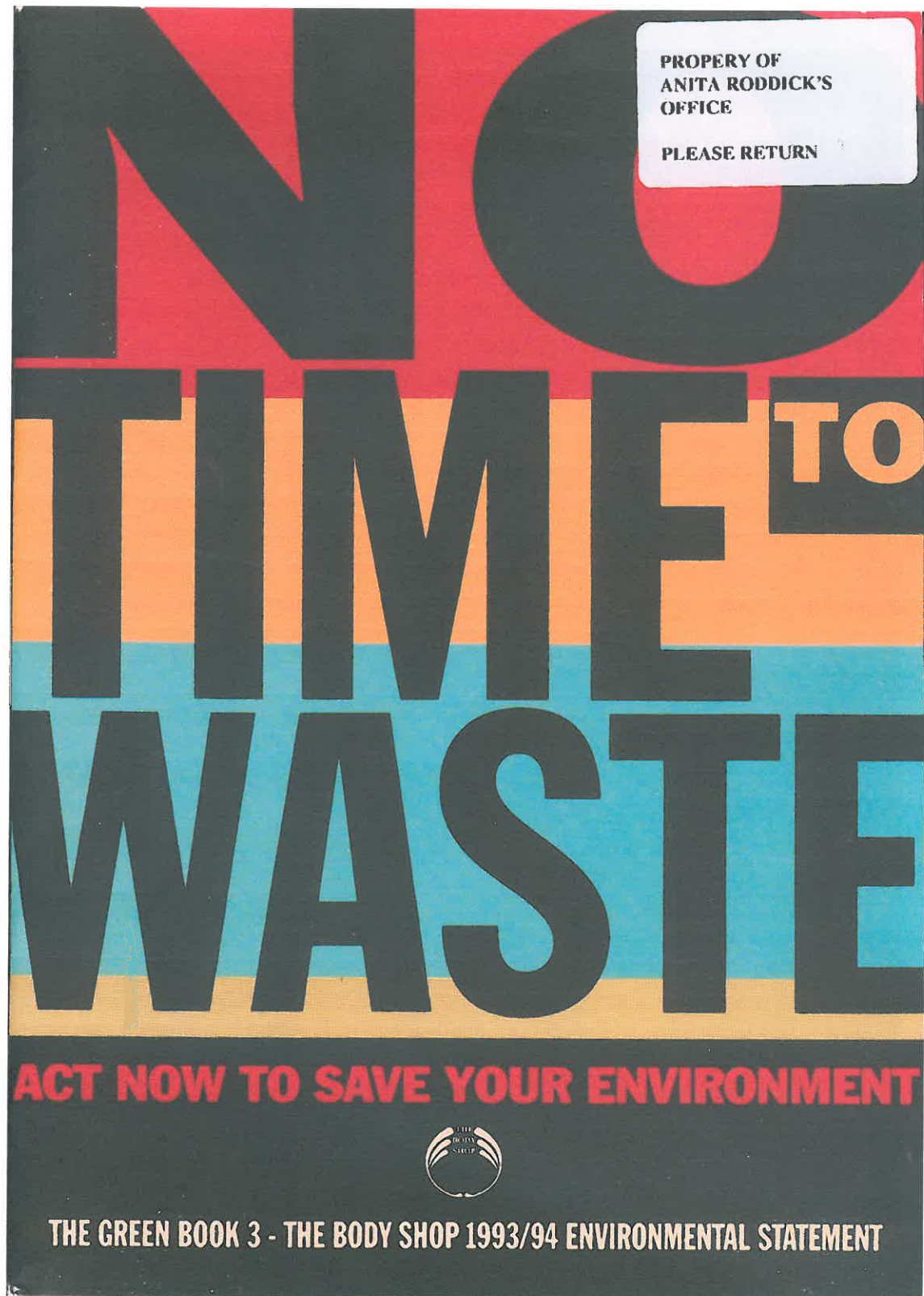
BODY SHOP ANNUAL REPORT 2000: FRONT COVER



APPENDIX 25
THE GREEN BOOK 2

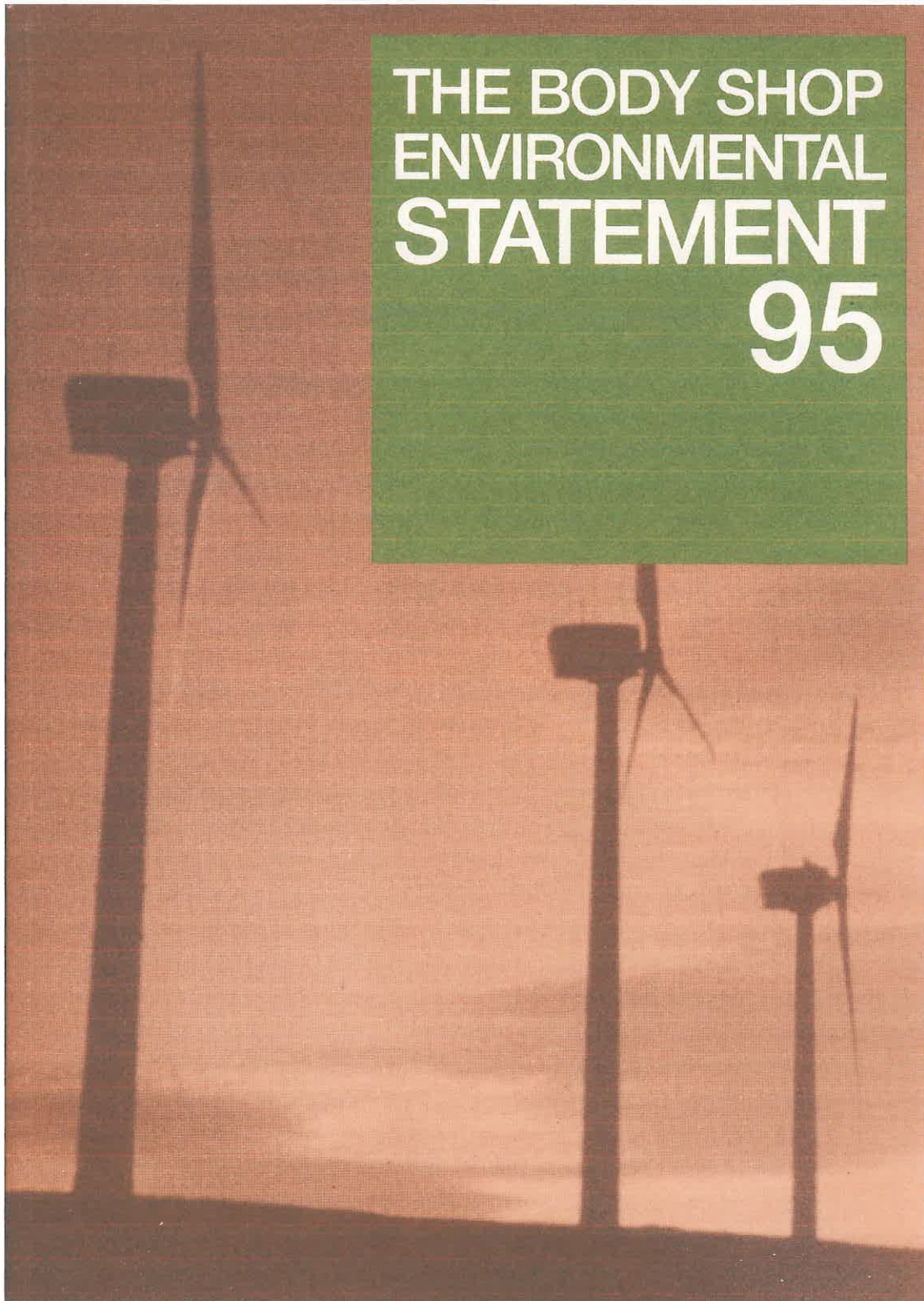


APPENDIX 26
THE GREEN BOOK 3



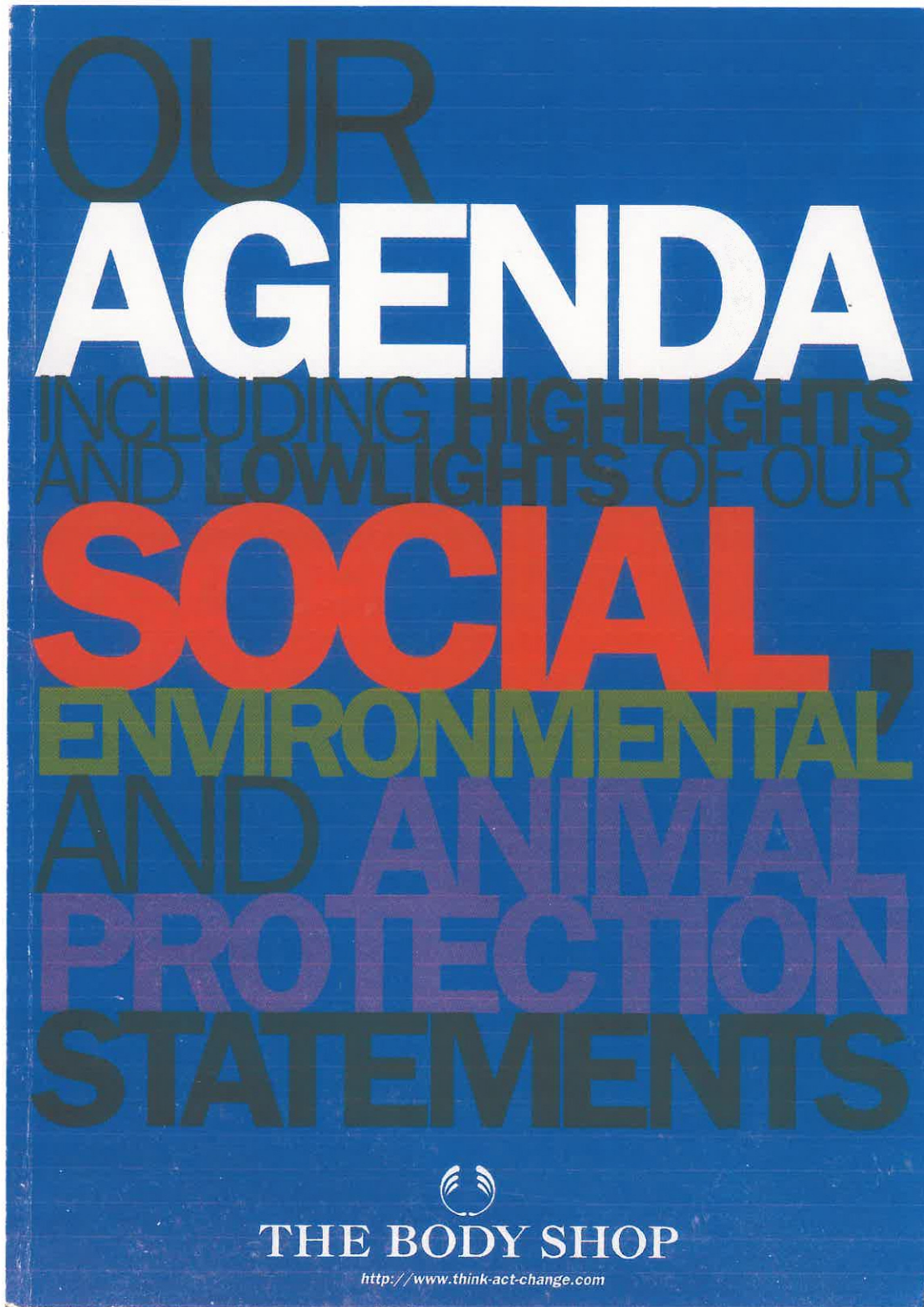
APPENDIX 27

VALUES REPORT 1995: ENVIRONMENTAL STATEMENT



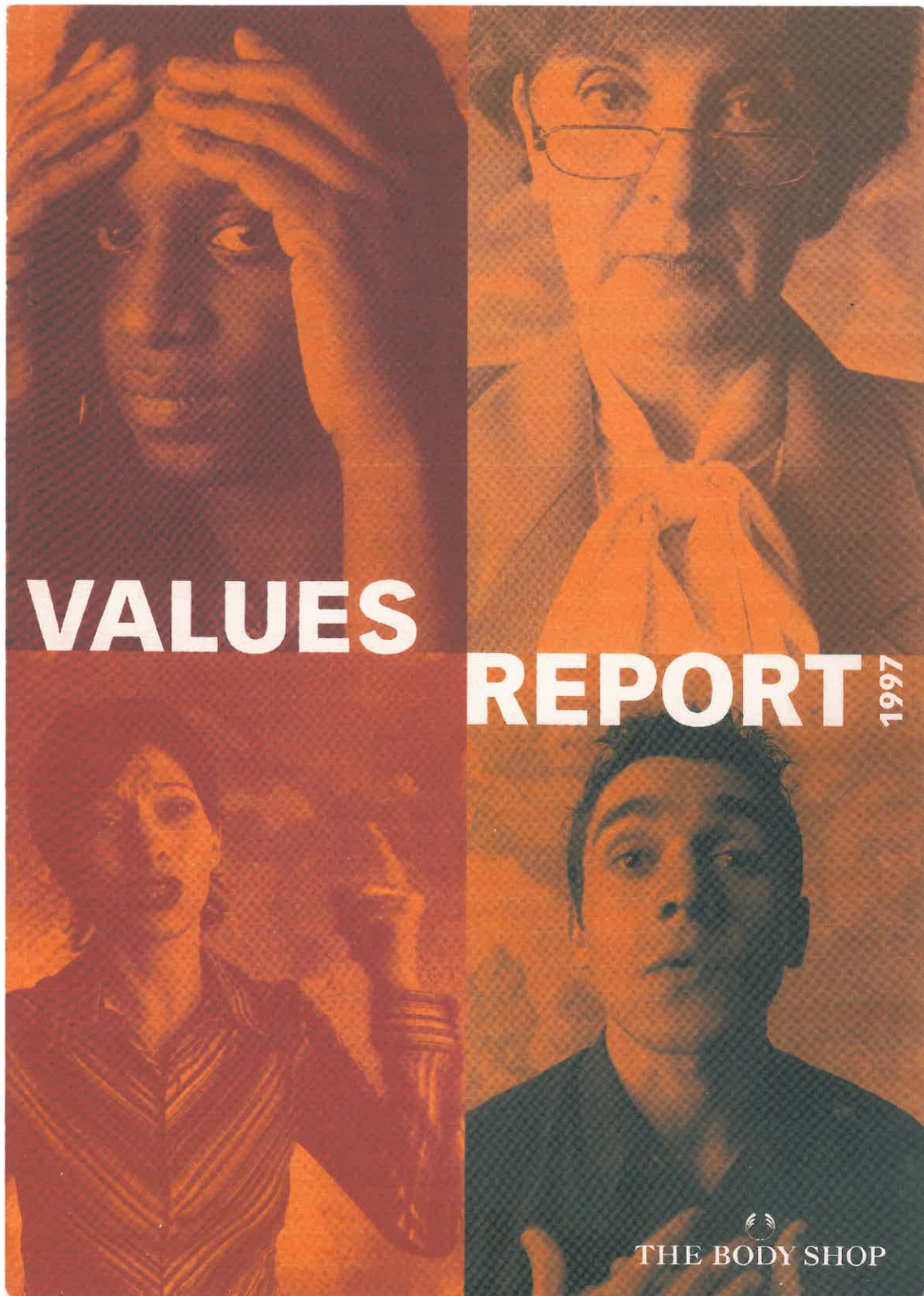
APPENDIX 28

VALUES REPORT 1995: SUMMARY REPORT (*OUR AGENDA*)



APPENDIX 29

VALUES REPORT 1997: FRONT COVER



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