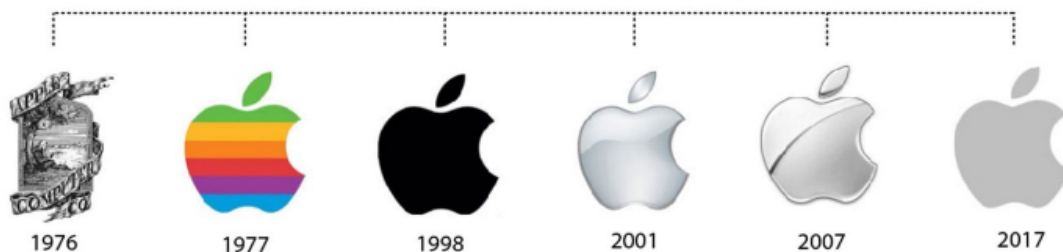


One Identity, Two Storylines

The evolution of Apple's organizational identity in the face of corporate branding through advertisement



Student Name: Maartje van Huijstee

Student number: 540553

Word count: 25.426

Supervisor: Dr. Marco Scalvini

Master Media Studies - Media & Creative Industries

Erasmus School of History, Culture and Communication

Erasmus University Rotterdam

Master's Thesis

June 25th 2020

One Identity, Two Storylines

The evolution of Apple's organizational identity in the face of corporate branding through advertisement

Abstract

Relatively little attention has been given to the process of evolution of Apple from a disruptive brand towards a morally and culturally invested company. Specifically, there are few studies on Apple identity and advertising. Furthermore, how organizational and brand identity interact and how identity change can be facilitated through mediated communication are not yet fully understood. This thesis aims at understanding the evolution of Apple's communication through commercials over the past 36 years. By linking together advertisement and organizational identity change, the thesis investigates how Apple managed its corporate identity through the lens of organizational identity. The goal of this thesis is, thus, to answer the following question: *How and why has the organizational identity of Apple evolved from being a disruptive brand to a moral and culturally invested brand, while preaching the same ideals through advertisement?* The thesis applies semiotic analysis and critical discourse analysis to 14 of Apple's audio-visual commercials, from 1984 till the present day, to generate a detailed overview of how Apple has evolved its corporate identity through advertising. The use of this multimodal methodology uncovers the (in)consistencies in the flow of meaning construction as it allows us to analyse the discursive strategies in the process of identity construction. Accordingly, the visual corpus is first investigated through semiotics to disclose any hidden discursive regimes of meaning, after which the cumulative findings of the overall corpus outline the process of identity construction and change throughout the timeframe of the corpus. The results reveal that the construction and expression of the Apple organizational identity are done through the use of the discursive regimes of utopia and dystopia in two very distinct ways. First, the discursive regimes of technological utopia and dystopia are used as strategies to push the world forward towards technological utopia and technological integration. Second, the discursive regimes of societal utopia and dystopia are used to portray Apple's technology as tools to create a better world, shifting the discourse from technology/innovation driven to humanitarian. These two strategies reflect the shifting social tensions surrounding the technological stigma of personal computing within the domestic sphere. With its focus on the usability of technology, Apple has managed to usher in the era of the technology-infused society as we know it today. Due to their capable advertisement campaigns, Apple has dismantled the anti-technological discourse through the use of technological utopianism and dystopianism as discursive strategies to market their products.

KEYWORDS: *semiotics, visual critical discourse analysis, Apple, utopia, dystopia, discursive strategies, creative industries*

Preface

To Ron, who encouraged me to be better. He cast away my shadows with his light, but lost the battle fighting his own darkness. Forever loved, never forgotten.

Table of Contents

| | |
|---|----|
| Abstract | 2 |
| Preface | 3 |
| Chapter 1 – Introduction | 5 |
| 1.1 Contextualisation of the Problem | 5 |
| 1.2 Aims, Relevance, and the Research Question | 6 |
| 1.3 Synopsis of the Research Method | 7 |
| 1.4 Personal Interest in the Topic and Social Relevance | 7 |
| 1.5 Overview of the Thesis Structure | 9 |
| Chapter 2 – Theoretical Literature and Conceptual Framework | 10 |
| 2.1 Organizational Identity | 10 |
| 2.2 Identity Construction Between Utopia and Dystopia..... | 19 |
| 2.3 Morality, Identity and the Inner Narrative | 23 |
| 2.4 The Theoretical Framework in Brief | 24 |
| Chapter 3 – Methodology | 27 |
| 3.1 Research Design | 27 |
| 3.2 Sampling and Data Collection | 31 |
| 3.3 Operationalization | 33 |
| 3.4 Data Analysis | 35 |
| 3.5 Validity and Reliability | 39 |
| 3.6 The Research Design in Brief | 40 |
| Chapter 4 – Results | 41 |
| 4.1 The Steve Jobs Era – Dabbling Identity Construction and Technological Domesticity | 42 |
| 4.2 The Tim Cook Era – A Shift Towards Moral Responsibility | 52 |
| 4.3 The Results in Brief | 61 |
| Chapter 5 – Discussion and Conclusion | 62 |
| 5.1 Main Findings | 63 |
| 5.2 Theoretical Implications - One Identity, Two Storylines | 66 |
| 5.3 Social Implications | 67 |
| 5.4 The Limitations and Future Implications | 68 |
| References | 70 |
| Appendix A – Units of Analysis | 74 |

Chapter 1 - Introduction

1.1 Contextualisation of the Problem

At the start of the Apple brand, computing was out of the question for the majority of society. At the time, computing was limited to specialists only, creating the tension that technology was complicated and scary and not accessible to just anyone (Burgess, 2012). Apple, however, managed to eliminate the threat of technology by establishing its identity through the ideals of creativity, individuality and rebellions against this common tension within society against technology. With the launch of the *1984* (1984) commercial at the 1984 super bowl, Apple created the narrative of technological liberation through usability, meaning that anyone can use their products, rather than hackability, which meant that a user needed to have extensive knowledge of technology in order to use the product (Burgess, 2012). By doing so, Apple ushered in the era of personal computing, which is still prominent today. In a way, it can be argued that social tensions have shaped the Apple brand and in turn the Apple brand shaped social tensions. As technological empathy grew within society, so did Apple's innovations. Performing a research on how this dual dependence has taken shape through Apple advertisement creates greater insight into the relationship between culture and branding.

Previous studies have focused on the iconicity of the Apple brand and how it manifested itself in selective commercials (Friedman, 1997; Linzmayer, 2004; Grainge, 2000). Furthermore, studies have established that the Apple brand has created a culture in itself (Belk & Tumbat, 2005), which by some is even labelled as a religion (Črnič & Pogačnik, 2014). Furthermore, research, up until now, is focused on how specific advertisements produced by Apple, like the commercial of *1984* (1984) and *Think Different* (1997), have affected the brand identity (Friedman, 1997: Grainge, 2000). The organizational identity, however, has had limited scrutiny in relation to the way advertisements can address and have addressed company narratives, on both the organizational and brand level. Furthermore, none of the existing literature and research on Apple has related advertisement to organizational identity, and related those to cultural influence within the same research. This singular manner of researching the subject lacks links that could be made in order to create a greater understanding of how Apple is manifested in and by society.

It becomes evident that most studies are in alignment with one another in their findings concerning this specific topic on what the Apple brand is and how it has been manifesting itself as such through ideals. The lack of opposition in this field of study might be cause for controversy, as it highlights the lack of scrutiny in all possible angles. The inadequacy of previous studies to provide a wholesome account of the Apple identity is manifested in the fact

that they all focus on a singular aspect of the Apple company, such as the history of the company, a specific marketing campaign or even a specific commercial. These studies, by singling out one specific aspect, fail to create any form of generalization to the Apple company. There is, thus, a need to link the aspects together and broaden the scope of units of analysis, in order to create insight into how Apple is affected by society and by itself over the years.

Besides the lack in wholesome studies on Apple, most research has been focused on Apple during the reign of Steve Jobs. At present, however, Apple is still thriving as a company, regardless of the death of its leader, the Apple Jesus. Very little is known about the impact the Cook takeover has had on Apple, besides his managerial methods being different from Steve Jobs' methods. This change of CEO, along with changes in societal tensions on technology, form an interesting field of study into how they are present in Apple advertisement.

1.2 Aims, relevance, and the Research Question

The focus of this thesis is on linking together these separated aspects of societal tensions, advertisement and organizational identity change in order to fill this gap in the literature and generate insight into how these separate factors are all working together in the construction of Apple as a company throughout the years. Thus, the purpose of this research is to identify what organizational identity Apple had constructed from the start through advertisement and current societal tensions, and how this has shifted over time due to changes in all three elements separately, constructing, perhaps, a new version of Apple and at least mapping out, through the case study of Apple advertisement, how these factors work together in constructing a successful company.

The theoretical relevance of this study lies in better understanding the process of evolution of Apple from a disruptive brand towards a morally and culturally invested brand through the lens of organizational identity. Generally, organizational identity addresses "that which is central, enduring, and distinctive about an organization's character" (Gioia, Schultz & Corley, 2000), in an attempt to understand the interaction between internal and external definitions of the term (Hatch & Schultz, 2002). Studies show that the internal definition of organizational identity is extensively researched, emphasizing strongly the inner actors of organizational identity construction, such as managerial strategy and corporate culture amongst employees (Hatch & Schultz, 1997; Alvesson & Empson, 2008).

However, according to Hatch & Schultz (1997, 2003), there is a shift happening in the ever-growing importance of the dual dependence of internal and external actors in the process of identity construction and expression due to the growing complexity of the market place as a whole. It has proven to be increasingly difficult to maintain credible product differentiation in the growing homogenisation of the market (Hatch & Schultz, 2003). Thus, the intersection of

organizational development and branding has become substantially more important (Hatch & Schultz, 1997, 2003; Schultz & Hatch, 2003). However, the way in which organizational and brand identity interact in this process of development is not yet fully understood (Gioia, Schultz, & Corley, 2000; Hatch & Schultz, 2003). Particularly how this shift can be facilitated through mediated communication is currently lacking in the literature. Therefore, this research poses the following research question:

How and why has the organizational identity of Apple evolved from being a disruptive brand to a moral and culturally invested brand, while preaching the same ideals through advertisement?

1.3 Synopsis of the Research Method

This research is conducted through the use of multimodality, namely visual semiotic analysis and critical discourse analysis. The visual corpus is first analysed through semiotics in order to disclose any hidden discursive regimes of meaning (Choulariaki, 2006), after which the cumulative findings of the overall corpus outline the process of identity construction and change throughout the timeframe of the corpus. Any (in)consistencies in the flow of meaning construction provide the basis for the critical discourse analysis, as it gives the opportunity to analyse discursive strategies in the process of identity construction. Chapter 3 provides a more detailed description of the research design.

1.4 Personal Interest in the Topic and Social Relevance

Because of my background in media and culture, this research is personally interesting for me. I have a keen interest in how culture affects media and vice versa. The fact that I have chosen for advertisement of an iconic brand is due to wanting to expand beyond popular cultural products, on which I have done plenty of research in my academic career so far. What surprised me when I started researching Apple, is that very little is actually known about the role of advertisement after Jobs had left the company even though the company and brand is still at the top of its game.

The social and societal relevance of this study is high, because it seeks to highlight the strong mutual influence of society on organizational identity and of organizational identity expression through advertisement on society. This is seen in how branding through commercials is affected by societal tensions and vice versa. According to Holt (2004), engagement with a product or brand is highly related to identification with the advertisement of the product when it addresses desires and anxieties resonating within a society. By addressing

these societal tensions through advertisement, a brand can establish a strong bond, eventually even creating a community like Apple did. Understanding the construction of these strong ties to a brand is essential to developing future branding campaigns as well as looking into how these ties remain now that the brand is established within its field, in relation to organizational changes. This can, then, create further insight into how a consumer base is maintained in the saturated market of personal computing.

This strong relation between societal input and output and brand input and output is even more relevant today, now that societies are moving towards a more moral consciousness when it comes to buying products. According to Stehr and Adolf (2010), a brand must adapt itself to this moral consciousness in order to remain attractive to the consumer, meaning that the brand must answer to the need of the consumer. According to Kane (2014), Apple has been addressing this moral shift. With Tim Cook replacing Steve Jobs as CEO of the Apple company, the brand shifted from corporate centrism, focused on innovation (Beverland, 2009: p. 98), towards moralism under the reign of Cook. Conducting a research outlining the societal shift towards a more moral consciousness and the organizational shift towards a new CEO creates greater insight into how an iconic brand, such as Apple, has adapted to this moral shift, not only because of societal change, but also because of organizational change.

The problem to be addressed here is the lack of scrutiny of the Apple brand and its impact on the sector of personal computing and our culture and society in general. As one of the founders of the personal computing era, Apple is a benchmark for the intimate relationship between societal tensions and technological innovation in the field of personal computing. Research into this relationship, however, has been lacking, with most research focusing on either shifting societal tensions or technological innovation as separate factors, but never in relation to one another. Especially in relation to how advertisement has played a role in this relationship between the two factors and how this relationship and its shifting character has had an effect of and is affected by a shift in organizational identity has been lacking within the field.

The significance of this study, at this point in time, is that the company of Apple has been market leader for the majority of its existence, even though it had to deal with challenges from both external forces, like negative societal tensions towards technology, and internal challenges, like the illness and eventual death of the heart of the company, Steve Jobs. In order to establish how Apple has managed to establish itself and still keeps itself at the position it's currently in, it is key to document its growth along with societal tensions. Because societal tensions shape advertisement and in turn advertisements have the ability to shape societal tensions, using Apple advertisements over the course of its existence provides greater insight into this process and how these elements are related.

1.5 Overview of the Thesis Structure

The following chapters of this thesis progresses as follows: chapter two provides an extensive overview of previous research on the construction and evolution of organizational identity specifically. This forms the basis for the conceptual framework on which this thesis rests. Furthermore, this chapter dives deeper into the discursive concepts of utopia and dystopia as discursive strategies to communicate the organizational identity constructed in advertisements, highlighting the power struggle present in the discursive strategy used to distinguish the Apple organizational identity from 'the other'. After the establishment of the conceptual framework, chapter three provides a detailed description of the research design. Here, the methods of visual semiotics and critical discourse analysis are explicated in order to provide transparency with regards to the process of qualitative data analysis on this specific corpus. Chapter four, then, provides a detailed account of the results of the analysis, disclosing the different ways in which the discursive strategies of utopia and dystopia are used to communicate the organizational identity of Apple over the course of the existence of Apple, as well as the evolution of the organizational identity in the changing labels of the regimes of meaning. Finally, this thesis concludes with the discussion of these findings and what conclusions can be drawn from them in chapter 5, providing an answer to the question: *How and why has the organizational identity of Apple evolved from being a disruptive brand to a moral and culturally invested brand, while preaching the same ideals through advertisement?*

Chapter 2 - Theoretical Literature and Conceptual Framework

In order to answer the question of the evolution of the Apple identity, we must dive deeper into the sensitizing concepts within the research question. Therefore, in this chapter, a theoretical framework is constructed on which this thesis rests. This theoretical framework clarifies the concepts related to the organizational identity of Apple and the discourse of utopia and dystopia in both societal and technological context, on which the empirical investigation is focused.

The chapter first introduces the wider concept of organizational identity, in which the concept of (organizational) identity is first defined. Following the definition of this key concept, this chapter explicates the process of organizational identity formation along with how it is expressed and the process of organizational identity change. This first section concludes with an exposition of the organizational identity of Apple specifically, as it is defined in previous research. The second section of this chapter then explores the narrower discursive regimes of utopia and dystopia. These regimes are explored on both a sociocultural and technological level as the section progresses, as well as explored within the context of mediation due to the use of advertisements as the vessel of these discursive concepts. The third section of this chapter links the previously mentioned concepts, expressing how the discursive regimes of utopia and dystopia function as strategies to construct, express, change, and interpret the concept of organizational identity. This chapter concludes with a brief overview of these subsections discussed within the theoretical framework.

2.1 Organizational Identity

Defining (Organizational) Identity

In order to be able to conduct a research on the evolution of Apple, it is key to first explore the concept of identity. According to Olson (2003), identity is a construct of different attributes which, when put together, creates a set of specific characteristics that differentiates a person from another unique individual. The key elements of identity construction, thus, lie in the set of characteristics and the way that it sets itself apart from others in relation to those others (Gioia, Schultz, & Corley, 2000; Hatch & Schultz, 2002; Hopkins, 2015).

When we apply this construct of identity to the company of Apple, we must specifically look at the concept of organizational identity. Melewar and Jenkins (2002) argue that defining organizational identity has proven to be difficult, due to the multidisciplinary character of the field of study and the differing practical and academic perspectives on the matter. However, when taking into account the multiple definitions provided by Melewar and Jenkins (2002) in

their article, one can conclude that organizational identity is a simply specified set of interdependent characteristics which creates stability and coherence, thus, making it identifiable and distinguishable from others within the same sector. The key lies in how members within the expression of these identity specific characteristics and the continuity of this expression throughout all organizational actions (Melewar & Jenkins, 2002; Whetten, 2006). Gioia, Schultz and Corley (2000) provide a definition introduced by Albert and Whetten from 1985. This definition defines “identity as that which is central, enduring, and distinctive about an organization’s character” (Gioia et al., 2000: p. 63). Organizational identity can, thus be defined as the collective understanding amongst organizational members on central features of the organization, distinguishing itself through these unique features from others within the same field (Gioia et al., 2000). The three elements of *centrality*, *distinctiveness* and *enduringness* are the three pillars by which one can define the identity of an organization, which Gioia, Patvardhan, Hamilton and Corley (2013) explicate in their article on organizational identity formation and change. In this article, Gioia et al. (2013) argue that for the formation of identity of any kind, these three pillars are essential, because without them, one could hardly speak of the notion of identity.

The first pillar of centrality, according to Gioia et al. (2013), entails all central features, constructing the organizational ‘self-image’. It is often based on the history of the company and shows whether or not there is a consistency in the practice of the company, hereby creating identity in the way it has behaved ‘in character’ over the course of multiple years. The second pillar of distinctiveness entails the ways in which an organization distinguishes itself from others within the same field. As argued, identity is mostly constructed in the way its unique characteristics set itself apart from others, thus, making this second pillar of great importance to the formation and maintenance of organizational identity. The third pillar of enduringness entails the stability of the identity of an organization regardless of characteristic changes over time, in order to preserve the status of identity. These changes can be found in the meaning of certain labels within the identity of an organization. Hereby, the label itself does not change, but the meaning of the label does, creating the appearance of stability, even when there is a change in identity happening (Gioia et al., 2013). According to Gioia et al. (2013), “identity, at all levels, taps into the apparently fundamental need for all social actors to see themselves as having a sense of ‘self’, to articulate core values, and to act according to deeply rooted assumptions about ‘who we are and can be as individuals, organizations, societies’, etc.” (p. 127), emphasizing the ambiguity of the notion of identity in its multiplicity of levels.

Organizational identity formation

In order to conduct an ample research into the evolution of Apple’s organizational identity, we must explore the process of organizational identity formation and organizational

identity changes. Research into the process of construction of the organizational identity has, in contradiction to the linearity of the process, succeeded research into the process of change in organizational structure (Gioia et al., 2013). In their article, Gioia et al. (2013) explore the process of organizational identity formation through two models, the grounded model, which is a four phased model, and the generic model, which is a two-step model introduced by Kroezen and Heugens (2012).

In the grounded model, the action of constant comparison plays a prominent role. The first step into the formation of organizational identity, according to Gioia et al. (2013), is the articulation of initial identity claims by the founders of the organization. These, then, form the guidelines for the company's intentions, ideals and goals and form the groundwork for this culture of comparison within this identity construction process.

After this initial step, the second phase follows, in which all members of the organization experience a void of meanings. This void of meanings entails the mere fact that within conducting business on a daily basis is a struggle with having the exact knowledge of 'who we are' as a company. In order to conduct business following, somewhat, the initial guidelines set in the first step, members then conduct business based on the knowledge of 'who we are not', which is an easier question to answer with a lack of a definitive identity constructed.

In phase three, as the organization starts forming some form of identity, its members mold this still slightly senseless identity in comparison to their previous experiences at other organizations. Here, the culture of comparison to other organizations is crucial. Building upon the previous phases, the final phase is the formation of consensus in what the members believe to be central and distinctive characteristics of the organization. Now, the question of 'who are we' will no longer be cause for struggle, as the identity is clear to all and can be acted upon throughout all business conducted within the organization (Gioia et al., 2013).

Interwoven in the process of identity construction in the form of these four stages, are some recurring themes which help solidify the 'choices' made in the construction of the organizational identity. These recurring themes involve this culture of constant comparison, forming a circle of reflection upon all phases within the process of identity formation through negotiating all identity claims made and structuring business accordingly. Going through these four phases can take years, before a solid and definitive identity is formed. (Gioia et al., 2013).

The generic model, introduced by Kroezen and Heugens (2012), consists of only two steps. The first step is *identity imprinting*. This step involves the formation of suitable identity characteristics from different sources, both internal and external. These suitable identity characteristics, which they call *proto-identity attributes*, are put together in what Kroezen and Heugens (2012) call an *organizational identity reservoir*, from which identity claims can be substantiated. Then follows the step of *enactment*, in which members select proto-identity attributes to construct their own organizational identity. This model involves more outside

influences, drawing upon external factors such as potential audiences and stakeholders in the process of identity formation. The process of this model also involves the culture of constant comparison. However, it is more focused on forming a distinction from others in the field, because of the use of proto-identities, which are similar throughout the field (Gioia et al., 2013).

The process of organizational identity formation is one of a mutually constitutive interplay between claims and understanding in a vicious cycle, with the identity claims making sense of 'who we are' to the outside world and understandings develop alongside of these claims, creating cause for reflection upon the claims made and so on (Gioia et al., 2013). According to Alvesson and Empson (2008), there are four dimensions of organizational identity: 1) knowledge work, 2) management and membership, 3) personal orientation, and 4) external interface. In relation to the start of the Apple company, the fourth dimension is most prominent. As Alvesson and Empson (2008) describe, this dimension implies that identity construction happens in the face of constant comparison and distancing in order to create a distinctiveness on an external visual level. The central question in the construction of organizational identity within this dimension is 'who are we?' in intimate relation to 'who are we not?' (Alvesson & Empson, 2008; Gioia, Patvardhan, Hamilton & Corley, 2013).

Just as human beings are cultural animals, and thus construct their identities in the face of the world around them (either consciously or unconsciously), organizational identity is constructed in the face of the world around it (Watson, 2009). Thus, when specifically looking at the advertisement of an organization, which is a product of a human interpretation and expression of the organizational identity, one must keep in mind the dependence of this construction and expression on the comparative and malleable nature of identity, in both construction, expression and interpretation.

Changing organizational identity

That organizational identity is ambiguous and thus prone to change is substantiated by one of the main arguments made by Gioia et al. (2013). This is done by "imbuing old labels with new meanings or new interpretations" (p. 144), meaning that organizational identity is mostly revised, rather than renewed in the face of external and internal change. Most organizations keep strong ties with the heritage of identities created in past identity construction processes (Hatch & Schultz, 2003). Just as in the process of forming an organizational identity, identity change is instigated by the presence of constant feedback and reflection from both internal and external actors. According to Gioia et al. (2000), how an organization defines its own identity is done in light of how others define the identity of that particular organization. If the perception of the organizational identity by external actors is negative, the internal actors will use the feedback from those external actors to adapt, creating

a bridge between the organization's sense of self and the external image expressing that sense of self (Gioia et al., 2000; Gioia et al., 2013).

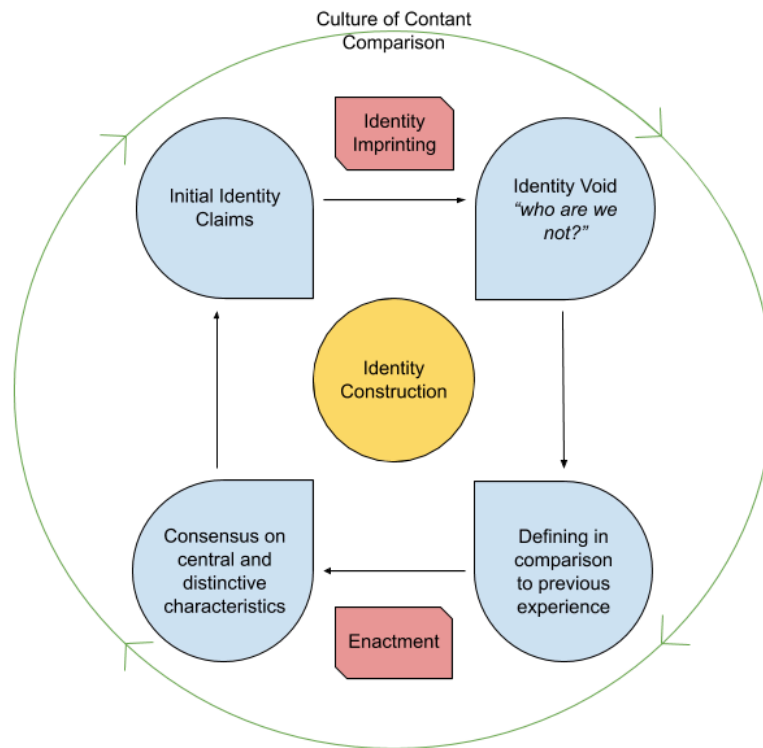


Figure 1. The cycle of identity construction according to the grounded model (Gioia et al., 2013) and the generic model (Kroezen & Heugens, 2012)

Expressing organizational identity

According to Melewar and Jenkins (2002), the review of literature on the concept of organizational identity provides four dimensions of organizational identity, being: communication and visual identity, behaviour, corporate culture, and market conditions. These four dimensions all have subdimensions, influencing the construction and expression of the organizational identity. The four dimensions provided by Melewar and Jenkins (2002) correspond with the four dimensions provided by Alvesson and Empson (2008), who define these four dimensions as *knowledge work*, *management and membership*, *personal orientation*, and *external interface*, of which, for this research, external interface is the most relevant. These dimensions of organizational identity entail the ways in which this identity is expressed within the organization itself, as well as to the outside world, being stakeholders and potential consumers/audiences. According to Whetten (2006) “an organization’s identity denotes the kind of organization that has to this point been formed; organizing is the process by which organizations make themselves known as a particular type of social actor” (p. 224).

The process of organizing, in the context of this research, is the repeated expression of identity claims of characteristics of the organizational identity of Apple through advertisements. Thus, for this research, the dimension of external interface is the most relevant, as it is the dimension in which the identity is expressed to these external actors. Within this research, the external interface that is analysed is the selection of advertisements produced by Apple.

According to Watson (2009), there are two concepts that play an important role in the social construction of reality and the identity work of individuals, which are *narrative* and *story*. These terms seem to have been used interchangeably for quite some time now, but are not completely the same, according to Watson (2009). They do, however, overlap and are not mutually exclusive in the process of identity construction. In his article, Watson (2009) defines *narrative* as the more generic term. He states that the term refers to “accounts of events in the world which are organized in a time-related sequence” (p.429), meaning that it is an element of societies’ common knowledge through the way that it exists as commonalities that have become taken for granted in its repetition. *Stories*, on the other hand, are more complex, referring to narratives that are extensively developed in terms of the interplay between characters with their own “interests, motives, emotions, and moralities” (Watson, 2009: p.429). These stories and narratives are under constant scrutiny of the individuals that make up a society, as well as society at large, as that scrutiny evokes inevitable change in the narrative or story and moves the society forward (Watson, 2009), just as an individual's identity changes as the individual encounters life events that impact their sense of self.

Organizational identity and brand expression

Thus far, the concept of organizational identity has been outlined in both internal and external aspects, following the four dimensions of organizational identity as set out by Melewar and Jenkins (2002) and Alvesson and Empson (2008). However, one of these dimensions has proven to have become more important as a subject of scrutiny in the face of the boundaries that have been breaking down between the internal and external aspects of organizational identities as a whole (Hatch & Schultz, 1997). Where previously there was an ability to disconnect internal functioning and external relations in the environment (Hatch & Schultz, 1997), this has become increasingly more difficult in the growing homogenisation and imitation of products and services within complex markets in general (Hatch & Schultz, 2003).

In order to maintain the distinctive character of identity within these homogenous markets, companies are forced to step up their game of distinctiveness. According to Hatch and Schultz (2003), this is mostly done through corporate branding, which creates the opportunity to use the culture and vision of the company as an explicit and unique selling point over the point of product differentiation. Corporate branding, in the respect of marketing, constructs an inclusive identity through the images formed by all stakeholders, combining the

internal and external actors to create a wholesome construct of identity that flows throughout all levels of the organization (Hatch & Schultz, 2003). In the creation of this wholesome organizational identity, marketing plays a key role, as it is the vessel links the internal and external actors in the communication of the organizational identity (Schultz & Hatch, 2003).

In this shift from product branding towards corporate branding, there is also a shift in managerial responsibility (Hatch & Schultz, 2003). According to Hatch and Schultz (2003), instead of focusing merely on the product of the company, the company as a whole becomes the marketable product, for which the CEO is the lead actor in the managing of this wholesome identity that spans the lifetime of the company. As this wholesome identity now also entails the external actors, such as the consumer, image has become equally relevant to the cause through marketing. According to Hatch & Schultz (1997), organizational image is the “summary of the images held by external constituencies” (p. 359), which intentionally manipulated by insiders (employees) to appeal to outsiders (consumers). But image is not the only factor in the process of forming a successful corporate brand. The success, according to Hatch and Schultz (2003), rests upon the interplay between *strategic vision*, *organisational culture*, and *corporate image*.

These three factors are put together by Hatch and Schultz (2003) in the *Vision-Culture-Image Model* (figure 2). This model demonstrates the interplay between these three factors, which construct a vicious cycle of constant evolution between the three factors. In this cycle, the strategic vision entails the central idea behind the company as expressed by the management’s aspirations for the future of the company. The organisational culture embodies the heritage of the company as expressed by its employees, as they manoeuvre themselves within the culture of internal values, beliefs and basic assumptions. The interplay between these factors creates the opportunity to construct authenticity within the corporate brand in the coherence between the promise the brand expresses and the way the corporation delivers that promise in its performance (Hatch & Schultz, 2003). This cycle creates a flow throughout all levels of identity construction within corporate branding, establishing a coherent identity that runs throughout the company as a whole. This shows, to understand the interaction between branding and organizational identity around Apple, we need to understand the organizational culture in its development better, which is addressed in the following section.

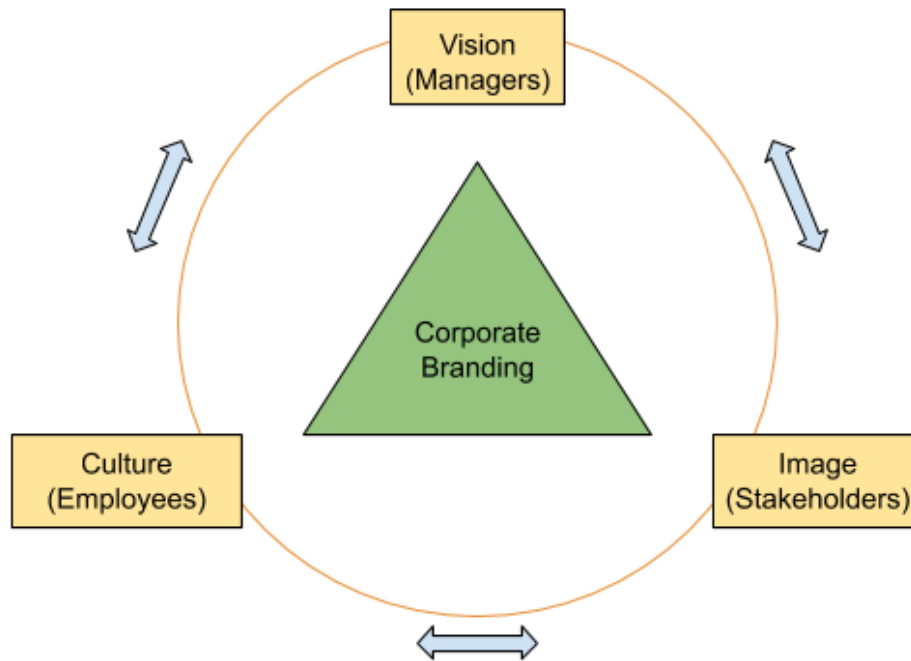


Figure 2. The Vision-Culture-Image (VCI) Model (Hatch & Schultz, 2003; Schultz & Hatch, 2003)

Organizational identity and the case of Apple

This wholesome form of corporate identity construction is characteristic for the Apple brand. From the early 80's, with the airing of the 1984 commercial introducing the Macintosh, shown at the Super Bowl, Apple has been busy setting itself apart from others within the industry. The construction of Apple's organizational identity has particularly focused on setting itself apart from the frontrunner in the business, being IBM. Apple, over the course of the early years, has tried to create an identity which is the complete opposite of what IBM was identified with. According to Burgess (2012), Apple made use of expressing qualities such as creativity, non-conformism and innovation in order to express this distinction. Friedman (1997) and Grainge (2000) have specifically focused in their research on the way Apple has established its identity in contrast to others in the field. According to them, Apple created a stand-out-from-the-crowd image as both the *1984* (1984) and *Think Different* (1997) campaign promoted non-conformist attitudes, calling upon the individuality, creativity, non-conformity and genius of its users, and implying that, for those who have none of these qualities, they can acquire these qualities through the Apple products (Burgess, 2012; Friedman, 1997; Grainge, 2000).

According to Burgess (2012), the Apple myth started with catering to the *success narrative*, which meant calling upon the consumer to be the best self they can be and implying that Apple is giving the consumer that power over their own success story through their vision of personal computing. Apple, thus, established itself within the world of personal computing by swaying the public into thinking about new conceptions and cultural implications of personal

computers in contrast to culture of technology that was already established (Friedman, 1997). This established culture of technology was one of oligarchic proportions in the sense that the computing technology was available and understandable for technical savants only (Burgess, 2012).

Apple, from the start, has focused its attention on 'the rest of us', being those who had no prior knowledge of the field of technology. Burgess (2012) argues part of addressing this mass-market audience involved the feminization of the product by softening the image portrayed to the masses. With the goal to domesticize computers, the product needed to have a less intimidating image, drawing attention away from the technological phobia which dominated societal tensions around computing (Burgess 2012).

With this goal in mind, according to Burgess (2012), "Apple focused on this very particular and deliberate construction of human-centred and populist usability above all else" (p. 34). The expression of this plan is especially visible in the campaign of *1984* (1984) at the Super Bowl, which formed a critical moment in the perception of cultural implications of personal computers within society (Friedman, 1997). The use of the dystopian look and feel from George Orwell's book, *1984*, established Apple as the saviour in a world where technology is taking over the un-savant consumer, since at that time technology was an elitist concept accessible to specialists only (Burgess, 2012). *1984* (1984) created the narrative of the underdog, preaching for personal empowerment of the individual through usability, rather than hackability (Burgess, 2012; Ceruzzi, 2003). Apple "dumbs down" technologies to the extent that even "your mom" can use them" (Burgess, 2012: p. 30), undermining the ideology of exploration, which belonged to the first computers. This ideology of exploration showed that the first computers were extremely demanding of its users in handling the product (Claeys, 2010). With the focus on usability, rather than hackability, Apple ushered in the era of personal computing as experienced today.

From 1984 onwards, Apple has managed to obtain quite the following. Črnič and Pogačnik (2014: p. 7) explore the idea of the Apple brand community as a religion, with Steve Jobs being Jesus, bringing technological freedom and power to his flock, the Macheads, in what they call iReligion (p.2). With *1984* (1984) being politically charged as a concept on its own, it is only logical to address the statement Apple makes here. This statement, however, is more an establishment of power by Apple itself, setting itself apart from other tech conglomerates like IBM and Microsoft, hereby not focusing solely on societies cry for individual power, but focusing on the establishment of its own power through creating a culture of 'us', the creative rebelling individual, against 'them', the restrictive tech conglomerates (p. 4). Hereby, Apple advertisement serves both its own and the current sociocultural needs, establishing and evolving its own identity in the process.

2.2 Identity Construction Between Utopia and Dystopia

Defining utopia and dystopia

The Apple myth briefly discusses the concepts of utopia and dystopia in relation to the field of personal computing. In the process of setting itself apart from others in the field, Apple has made extensive use of these concepts in order to establish its own identity as the saviour of the underdogs, the populist revolutionary providing usability over hackability, burning the bourgeoisie image of personal computing to the ground in order to address 'the rest of us', the masses.

In order to be able to use these two discursive regimes, we must first define what they mean. Kling (1996) argues that the first description of utopia has been made by Plato over 2500 years ago, but the term utopia was first introduced by Thomas More, who published a story about an ideal society where people, supposedly, would be happiest. In this story, the term utopia literally means 'nowhere', emphasizing the unattainable character of such a societal ideal.

According to Levitas (2010), utopia has been defined by many scholars, including Marx, Mannheim and Engels, with all of them defining utopia differently, specifically in its function within our societies. In his book, *The Concept of Utopia*, Levitas (2010) gives two colloquial definitions of the concept of utopia: 1) "a good, but non-existent and therefore impossible, society" (p. 2), and 2) "utopia is the expression of the desire for a better way of being" (p.9). From these two definitions we can conclude that utopia is an ideal of unfeasible perfection which is impossible to obtain. It is a vision to strive towards, but never to be obtained, since then the concept of utopia becomes redundant. Levitas (2010) argues that "utopia is seen as presenting some kind of goal, even if its details are not all realizable" (p. 6), underlining this characteristic of unattainability that was introduced by Kling (1996). Kling (1996) argues that utopian ideals are quite difficult to put to practice and that this difficulty can be seen by how American society was built upon utopian ideals, but never accomplished to implement those ideals. As proof of this failure, one only has to look at the history of America and how its number one ideal of equality has not been reached, ever (Kling, 1996).

A point that can be made here is that utopia is relative in the eyes of the beholder. What seems utopian to one might not seem utopian to the other. What becomes clear in the context of opposites, utopia is the counter image of dystopia and could even be seen as the instigator for change in a dystopian world or ideal. Claeys (2010) argues that, where utopia equals the good place, dystopia equals the bad place, identifying the two concepts as intrinsically connected opposites. The concepts of utopia and dystopia are not mutually exclusive, because if one says to strive for a utopian ideal, it automatically implies that the world we live in is its counterpart, a dystopia. Just as utopia is an ideal only to be strived for and can probably never

be implemented, dystopia is an ideal we strive to avert at any cost (Claeys, 2010). The concept of dystopia, thus, can be seen as an incentive for people to strive for utopia.

Utopia and dystopia in relation to technology

Due to this interdependent meaning of both concepts, they are highly abstract and subjective. They can differ in meaning and function depending on the moment in time and the society or person it's applied to. Furthermore, the concept of utopia can be applied to different parts of a society, as well as society as a whole. For this specific research it is inevitable to define utopia in the context of technology. This brings us to the 1960's hacker community described by Kirkpatrick (2004). This hacker culture had a highly paradoxical ideal. Kirkpatrick (2004) argues that in the 60's, the hippie culture intended to overthrow the machine. However, the hippie hacker culture felt that everybody having access to the knowledge found online, people could educate themselves more, giving them the power to overthrow whatever suppressive power would be present, creating a stronger sense of democracy through the use of technology. According to Kirkpatrick (2004) "they saw the possibility of giving computer power to ordinary people as a weapon that might actually undermine the authority of the expert and the hold of the monolithic system" (p.34). Steve Wozniak, member of the Home-brew computer club and co-founder of Apple even categorized himself as one of those hippies who were going to change the world through democratic technology (Kirkpatrick, 2004). In this, however, lies another paradox highlighted by Zittrain (2008) and Ceruzzi (2003). Both argue that Apple's user interface beat the purpose of democratic technology, because it restricted any form of hackability, which would safeguard this democratic form of computing. Yes, Apple made computing accessible and usable for the majority of society, however, it is democracy within the parameters set by Apple. In a way, this makes Apple one of these monolithic systems they were so eagerly fighting in the first place. It is in this paradox that the concepts of utopia and dystopia come into play.

In terms of technological dystopia, Claeys (2010) refers back to the critical work of Feenberg, in which he criticizes technology through Marxist eyes. He forms a technological dystopia by providing three main criticisms, which contradict the stance of the hacker hippie culture discussed before. First of all, technology can be seen as negative in the way that they can be produced to do bad things. For example, to create weapons for war. Second, technology, when implemented in certain sectors of our societies, can have a negative effect, like replacing workers in factories, putting people out of jobs. Third, technology can be used as a tool for oligarchy, serving the needs of a specific small group in society and, hereby, neglecting the majority of society (Claeys, 2010). These three criticisms on technology form a narrative for technological dystopia, portraying it as the enemy to the common people in its

exclusion. It creates a sense of greed in the way that technology only serves the need of the few who have the power over it, instead of all.

Furthermore, Kling (1996) argues that the connectivity, praised by technological utopianism, has a downside in the way that it demises physical human interaction. Thus, meaningful conversations and life experiences, which would normally be encountered during this physical contact or interaction, are lost in a paradox of technology versus humanity. While technology bridges time and space, bringing societies and its inhabitants closer together, it simultaneously pushes everybody further apart in the paramount loss of human contact that obstructs the creation of personal life experiences and emotional value that would normally occur through personal physical contact and interactions (Kling, 1996).

This fear of dysconnectivity has grown with the rise of mobile technology, especially in relation to the development of the social skills of adolescents, according to George and Odgers (2015). George and Odger (2015) describe a number of concerns regarding the connectivity/dysconnectivity paradox. The biggest concern is the digital divide between both parent and adolescent, and adolescents amongst each other. Because of this divide, adolescents are more prone to cyber bullying, lack certain cognitive and social skills because of lacking physical contact, and struggle with identity construction as the digital archive might influence the future sense of self (George & Odger, 2015). These are but a few concerns that have arisen with the integration of mobile technology that support the dystopian view on technology and form the base for technological dystopian fears that range wider than the adolescent age group.

Utopia and dystopia in the context of mediation

For the purpose of this research, it is relevant to explain how the discursive regimes of utopia and dystopia are related to mediation, because in this research we analyse the mediation of the Apple identity throughout its years of existence. When it comes to the mediation of the discursive regimes of utopia and dystopia, the article of Chouliaraki (2006) is of essence. In her article on the analytics of mediation, Chouliaraki (2006) discusses the ethical role of television in the construction of social life. Specifically, she emphasizes how television “creates a new connectivity between the spectator and the distant ‘other’ (Chouliaraki, 2006: p. 155). Just as television plays a big part in the construction of our social lives, so does advertisement. In a way, advertisement works the same as television in the construction of social ideas, making spectators, which in this case are also consumers, think, feel, and act in a preferable way, meaning that they get attached to a brand and buy its products. In order to enforce these actions upon spectators, the brand must be mediated, just as, in the case of Chouliaraki (2006) the suffering of the distant other is mediated.

This mediation, Chouliaraki (2006) argues, can be observed in two distinct ways, presenting us with two different visions, being the dystopian and the utopian vision. In her article, she emphasizes the constructiveness of both visions, meaning that in both the dystopian and utopian vision the medium manipulates the audience into thinking, feeling, and acting a certain way towards the topic addressed. The topic of discussion in the article of Chouliaraki (2006) is the spectacle of suffering, and she explains both visions in accordance to this topic.

The dystopian vision, according to Chouliaraki (2006), is a paradox in itself, which she explains by the term opted by Kevin Robins (1994): *intimate detachment*. This term indicates the 'danger' of technology in the sense that it creates a sense of connectivity towards the world, but at the same time cuts off all ties with it, because it is all done from the comfort of your own home. As Chouliaraki (2006) explains "the spectator lives in the illusion of a collective existence that is simply not there; she inhabits an inauthentic reality" (p. 156). People, thus, don't experience actual connectivity, but a form of counterfeit connectivity as they simply listen to and watch what is happening in the world around them through the constructed reality of television rather than going out and experiencing it themselves. The dystopian vision underlines the paradox of both the connecting and disrupting power of technology in the creation of social coherence. It is this paradox that positioned Apple in the paradigm of personal computing over the years, for example, in the way that Apple has managed to construct a sense of community in something that is highly soloistic in character, being computing itself, by addressing current fears of technology in its 1984 commercial, portraying Apple as the utopian saviour in the dystopian world of personal computing and hereby trying to persuade the spectator to join Apple on the side of technological utopia.

This utopian vision of mediation, according to Chouliaraki (2006), argues that the immediacy of television's images creates a sense of the world being smaller than it actually is, linking it to McLuhan's concept of the *global village* in the way that it constructs a version of utopia called the *celebration of communitarianism*. This view resides upon the idea of people feeling connected, not through the reception of the same message of communication, but through the act of simultaneous viewing. In the case of Apple, this would be established in the like-mindedness of the Apple users in their choice of product, as they choose Apple over the more established companies like IBM and Microsoft.

Chouliaraki (2006) also argues that the constant flow of messages through mediation should increase the spectator's awareness of the distant other, and as a result, increases the spectator's concern for this other and their suffering, opening up the local to more global experiences and concern in the *democratization of responsibility* vision. In terms of Apple, this of utopia can be seen in the way that Apple often contrasts itself to corporations like IBM and, especially, Microsoft. Like how in the commercial of 1984 Apple was the saviour in the

dystopian world of IBM, Apple literally juxtaposes the dystopian world (IBM) to the utopian world (Apple).

As Chouliaraki (2006) aims to investigate how television narrates instances of human suffering within these dystopian and utopian visions on mediation, this thesis aims at how Apple constructs its identity through the dystopian and utopian narration of technology, specifically their own technology in relation to others, by identifying the *regimes of meaning* applied by Apple. Chouliaraki (2006) defines regimes of meaning as “the bounded field of possible meaning relations that obey a certain regularity in the ways in which they combine and circulate and, as a consequence, in the forms of knowledge and identity they constitute in the medium where they appear” (p. 157-158). In the case of Apple, for instance, we can speak of a regime of individualism as Apple sets apart its users as progressive individualistic beings, which is in accordance with the characteristics Friedman (1997) and Grainge (2000) ascribed to the Apple identity in their analysis of the ‘1984’ and ‘Think Different’ commercial discussed earlier.

2.3 Morality, Identity and the Inner Narrative

“We have, each of us, a life-story, an inner narrative – whose continuity, whose sense, *is* our lives. It might be said that each of us constructs and lives a ‘narrative,’ and that this narrative *is* us, our identities” (Oliver Sacks, quoted in Hopkins, 2015: p. 25).

With this quote by Sacks, I would like to link the previously discussed theoretical concepts of organizational identity, utopia and dystopia together, and delve deeper into the concept of morality, which, according to Hopkins (2015), is intrinsically linked to one another in the field of marketing.

Just as the construction of identity, whether individual identity or organizational, is done within social context through the constant comparison of oneself to another (Hatch & Schultz, 2002; Olson, 2003; Hopkins, 2015), the discursive regimes of utopia and dystopia are also constructed within social contexts. Hopkins (2015) argues that advertising and the narratives they portray, too, are constructed within these social contexts. Linking this to moralization, Hopkins (2015) explains that marketers do not portray moralizing narratives with the intent to teach the audience a moral lessons, but because they believe that the audience likes to see moral guides and find them appealing if they tell a story that speaks to values and emotional attachment which we identify with, because they matter to us on a personal level. Identifying with the moral narrative of an advertisement tells us something, both, about ourselves and the company in terms of identity, linking back to this culture of constant comparison in defining

who we are (Alvesson & Empson, 2008; Watson, 2009; Gioia, Patvardhan, Hamilton & Corley, 2013; Hopkins, 2015). It is, thus, key for marketers to be aware of any social tensions within the zeitgeist of a society, since a lack of identification to the narrative portrayed and, thus, the identity expressed by the organization can have negative results on the customers association with the organization.

The discursive regimes of utopia and dystopia fit into this in the way that they, too, are social constructs. As Hopkins (2015) describes in his book, people like to be reminded of what matters, especially if what we are reminded of falls within the spectrum of values and ideals we identify with. Identifying with a moral narrative portrayed is a reassurance that what we value is right. When it comes to identity and the values we have, there is a strict sense of right and wrong, morals to strive for and morals to avoid, just like one could strive for utopia and will try to avoid dystopia. This is what Apple has done in its '1984' commercial, according to Friedman (1997). The organization saw the negative societal connotations toward computers and the dystopian image of technology in general and used it to establish itself as the utopian opposite, portraying a moral narrative of inclusion and empowerment to counter the culture of exclusion oligarchy associated with computing at the time (Friedman, 1997).

When specifically focusing on advertisement, it is key to highlight how advertisements produce and manipulate social signifiers, it influences the construction of both the organizational identity of the organization producing the advertisement as well as the identity of the audience of such advertisements (Schroeder & Zwick, 2007). Therefore, with the notion of identity, both individual and organizational, being a social construct, it is essential to investigate how social constructs, such as utopia and dystopia, are used as discursive strategies to construct, express, change, and interpret identity, where the narrative, as defined by Watson (2009), of utopia and dystopia aid the construction of the story that defines the organizational identity of Apple.

2.4 The Conceptual Framework in Brief

In this theoretical chapter, my aim was to clarify the concepts that are taken up in the empirical investigation. First, a brief overview of identity work was presented, with specific focus on organizational identity construction, change, and expression in order to grasp its basic process and its ambiguous character. Furthermore, this first section illustrated the relevance of this specific research to the theoretical field of organizational studies, as it attempts to fill a gap in the literature with regards to the intersection between organizational identity and corporate branding. Second, this chapter offers some relevant clarifications about the discursive regimes of utopia and dystopia, touching upon both societal and technological context. Additionally, as this thesis is centred around the analysis of mediated advertisements, the discursive strategies of utopia and dystopia are explored within the context of mediation,

providing an overview of the concepts from an exhaustive number of angles, which are useful in the interpretation of the data at a later stage of this research. Third, this chapter explored how the two previous sections on organizational identity processes and the discourses of utopia and dystopia are linked in the way that the discursive regimes of utopia and dystopia are strategies to communicate the identity construction and change of the organizational identity of Apple.

In this respect, the next chapter frames the methodology to assess how this interplay between the concept of organizational identity and the discourses of utopia and dystopia works over the course of the existence of Apple, ranging from 1984 until present time.

| Term | Definition | Source |
|-------------------------|---|---|
| Identity | A construct of different attributes which, when put together, create a set of specific characteristics that differentiate a person from another unique individual. | Olson (2003) |
| Organizational Identity | A simply specified set of interdependent characteristics which creates stability and coherence, thus, making it identifiable and distinguishable from others within the same sector. | Melewar and Jenkins (2002) |
| Centrality | All central features, constructing the organizational 'self-image'. | Gioia, Patvardhan, Hamilton and Corley (2013) |
| Distinctiveness | The ways in which an organization distinguishes itself from others within the same field. | Gioia, Patvardhan, Hamilton and Corley (2013) |
| Enduringness | The stability of the identity of an organization regardless of characteristic changes over time, in order to preserve the status of identity. | Gioia, Patvardhan, Hamilton and Corley (2013) |
| External Interface | The fourth dimension of organizational identity, which implies that identity construction happens in the face of constant comparison and distancing in order to create distinctiveness on an external visual level. | Alvesson and Empson (2008) |
| Narrative | Accounts of events in the world which are organized in a time-related sequence, seen as societies' common knowledge through taken for granted commonalities due to repetition. | Watson (2009) |
| Story | Narratives that are extensively developed in terms of the interplay between characters with their own interests, motives, emotions, and moralities. | Watson (2009) |

| | | |
|------------------------|---|--------------------|
| Utopia | The expression of a the desire for a better way of being. A good, but non-existent and therefore impossible society. | Levitas (2010) |
| Dystopia | The counter ideal of utopia. An ideal we strive to avert at any cost and the incentive to strive for utopia. | Claeys (2010) |
| Technological Utopia | The ideal that technology can facilitate a more democratic and connected society. | Kirkpatrick (2004) |
| Technological Dystopia | The oligarchic idea that technology is the enemy to the common people in its exclusion, causing dysconnectivity rather than connectivity. | Kling (1996) |

Table 1. Overview of the main terms and concepts used in the conceptual framework

Chapter 3 - Methodology

The previous chapters have outlined the problems and gap within the field of research and established the context in which this research is conducted. This next chapter presents the methodological design of this research, elaborating on the methods used in order to answer the research question. This chapter consists of five sections outlining the methodology, being the research design, data collection, operationalization, data processing and interpretation, and the legitimization of the research.

In the first section of this chapter, a brief introduction to the research design is given, followed by an argumentation of the methodological decisions of the use of semiotics in combination with critical discourse analysis. The second section focuses on sampling and data collection and gives a detailed description of the process. The third section reintroduces the key concepts that were discussed in the conceptual framework and explains how they are operationalized in the current study. This section is followed by an explanation of how the analysis is designed and conducted and how the credibility of the study is ensured.

3.1 Research Design

For this research it is necessary to make use of qualitative methods. According to Boeije and Hodkinson (2009), “the purpose of qualitative research is to describe and understand social phenomena in terms of the meaning people bring to them” (p.11). With regards to this thesis, the social phenomena it is trying to identify in terms of meaning is the Apple identity and how it is constructed and expressed through advertisement. This creation of meaning is done through the use of language (Silverman, 2011; Machin & Mayr, 2012; Wodak & Meyer, 2001), which can be both textual and visual (Machin & Mayr, 2012). In terms of this research, this means that the social context of personal computing is just as relevant as the Apple identity in the interpretation of the visual analysis of the media texts within this research.

Machin and Mayr (2012) argue that the communication through text and image “both shapes and is shaped by society” (p.10), as language is seen as a social phenomenon constructed and used on both individual and institutional levels (Wodak & Meyer, 2001). This argument highlights the importance of integrating social context in the interpretation of the data within this qualitative study. Silverman (2011) corroborates this notion and argues that qualitative methods create the opportunity to move beyond research into issues of subjective meaning only, towards research into “issues of language, representation and social organisation” (p.4). Within this research, this elaborated notion of qualitative research is

central, as the research aims to answer the question of how organizational identity is represented through visual images portrayed in Apple advertisements and how organizational and social change over time have affected this representation throughout the existence of the Apple brand.

As Mokhtar and Hossain (2019) argue, advertisements are vessels that can “reflect a company’s vision, image and world view as a backdrop across products and services” (p.866). Adding onto this notion, Bezuidenhout (1998) argues that advertisements with the purpose to inform and persuade, often go beyond merely selling a product, but also sells the organizations ideas, norms and values, hereby constructing and communicating its organizational identity in the same process. This means that visually analysing the media texts produced by Apple reveals the unspoken Apple identity embedded within its advertisement. With the research focusing on ‘how’ Apple’s organizational identity is constructed and expressed through media and ‘why’ it has changed over time, highlights the explorative nature of this research, Hereby, the need for qualitative methods is highlighted once again.

Most previous research into Apple and its identity have also focused on the creation of meaning. However, these researches have exposed how meaning was created by Apple users rather than Apple itself. With the advertisements being a product of Apple, just as much as an iPhone or Mac are Apple products, and, thus, are a vehicle of meaning from the Apple perspective more than from the perspective of the audience. The concluding findings on what entails the Apple identity according to these researches, then, can be seen as interpretations by consumers. By going to the source of the communication of the Apple identity, through advertisement, the interpretation of what these advertisements communicate are bound to be more wholesome and reliable in defining the Apple identity.

Thus, this research is conducted with a qualitative methodological approach.

The methodology of this research is twofold. In order to answer the question of shifting organizational identity represented through Apple advertisement, it is key to do a visual analysis of the audio-visual units of analysis. As stated by Bezuidenhout (1998) and Schroeder and Zwick (2004), advertisements are carriers of cultural value and identity, which are communicated through images. When it comes to analysing media textual images in order to establish the message they carry, this research must use the semiotic method established by Stuart Hall (1997).

By combining the method of semiotics with critical discourse analysis, this research moves beyond the mere establishment of meaning through the recognition of patterns in the media text, by interpreting these patterns within different contexts, hereby creating the possibility to establish and explore how the Apple organizational identity is represented and examine how the established discursive power relations affect and are affected by socio-

cultural contexts. Both methods will now be elaborated on in order to be able to justify methodological choices made within this research.

Visual semiotics

According to Babbie (2013), “the meanings that you and I ‘know’ today are socially constructed” (p. 394). The theory of semiotics is concerned analysing these meanings that are unintentionally and unintentionally linked to the signs with which we communicate (Babbie, 2013). Semiotics, thus, analyses of the communicative exchange between two actors through the use of signs, in which both the sender and receiver perform the active role of encoding (from signified to signifier) and decoding (from signifier to signified) in order to establish meaning within the communicative text (Hall, 1973; Kress, 2010). Eco (1979) defines the sign to be “implicitly regarded as a communicative device taking place between two human beings intentionally aiming to communicate or to express something” (p.15), hereby establishing the purposeful act of communication and active role of both sender and receiver in the creation of meaning.

Signs, or semiotic resources as introduced by Van Leeuwen (2005), consist of a signifier, which is an observable communicative form, and a signified, which is the embedded meaning attached to the signifier (Van Leeuwen & Kress, 2006; Oswald, 2015). Signs are the means of our communication and therefore are the main resource in the making of meaning (Van Leeuwen, 2005). The making of this meaning through the use of signifier and signified lies within the vacuum of cultural and linguistic codes that, together, form representation in the way the signifier and signified are arranged in our communication (Hall, 1997), meaning that the signified attached to the signifier can differ depending on cultural and historical ambiguities, as well as personal preferences or habits (Van Leeuwen & Kress, 2006).

For the purpose of this specific research, the practice of social semiotic theory of communication described by Machin and Mayr (2012) is central. Within the theory of social semiotics, Machin and Mayr (2012) argue, research moves beyond describing the grammatical systems used to communicate, towards trying to understand the purpose of certain grammatical choices made by the communicator in order to realize their purpose of communication. Signs can be communicated in a number of ways to create different meanings, which Rose (2016) defines as signs being polysemic. With the use of social semiotics these grammatical choices are explored in order to understand them better in a broader context of reaching a certain goal in a communicative exchange (Kress, 2010).

It is argued in social semiotics that, because of the visual communicative choices made to obtain a preferred reading (Rose, 2016), that these visual features do not just represent, but constitute the world as the sender would like the receiver to see it (Machin & Mayr, 2012). Within the social semiotic approach, close attention is paid to the concepts of denotation and

connotation, as they influence the interpretation by the receiver, going from preferred meaning in denotation to preferred reading in connotation (Rose, 2016). Van Leeuwen (2005) discusses the Barthesian view on these concepts with great emphasis, as Barthes has defined denotation and connotation in the context of communication through images, rather than text. In this perspective, images have two layers of meaning, the denotative layer and the connotative layer. The visual denotative layer is a concrete person, object or place to which is referenced, the visual connotative layer is an abstract concept to which is referenced. The concepts of denotation and connotation, here, are not seen as individual and subjective links with what is referenced, but rather shared meanings which are culturally dependent (Van Leeuwen, 2005).

According to Kress (2010) “makers of representations are shapers of knowledge” (p.27), which indicates that the patterns found in audio-visual texts have a broader function. The benefits of using social semiotics in this research is that it creates the possibility to establish linguistic patterns found in the unit of analysis and placing them in a wider social context, rather than simply establishing that the patterns are there. By assuming that the arrangement of these patterns is done purposefully by the sender creates room for a more extensive interpretation based on social and historical theory, which would have been left untouched with thematic analysis. As this research aims to establish the Apple identity constructed and expressed within its advertisements, this research calls for this form of broader interpretation, taking into account social and historical structures with regards to personal computing and the power struggles within the market space of personal computing.

Critical discourse analysis

Machin and Mayr (2012) argue that in discourse analysis, language is a form of social practice in the way it is interwoven with the way our societies are constructed in behaviour, maintained and regulated. It is used by individuals to communicate their world views, naturalizing them as more individuals have these mutual views (Machin & Mayr, 2012: p.2). Discourses “not only represent what is going on, they also evaluate it, ascribe purposes to it, justify it, and so on, and in many texts these aspects of representation become far more important than the representation of the social practice itself” (Van Leeuwen, 2008: p.6). Here, discourses are defined as social cognitions and, thus, provide the possibility to analyse what is being communicated and implicated with these discourses on a broader sociocultural level as they are used in media texts as resources to represent social practices (Van Leeuwen, 2008).

According to Van Leeuwen and Kress (2006), critical discourse analysis aims to disclose how the use of language can convey power and status within social interaction. In this sense, discourse influences social practices and social practices influence discourse (MacDonald, 2003). Intrinsically connected to this statement is the concept of ideology. According to Van Dijk (2000), “ideologies consist of socially shared beliefs that are associated

with the characteristic properties of a group, such as their identity, their position in society, their interests and aims” (Van Dijk, 2000: p.12) in relation to other groups or individuals, hereby creating a strong sense of ‘us’ versus ‘them’ (Van Dijk, 2000; Chouliaraki, 2006).

This brings us to what is most central to the method of critical discourse analysis, according to Jäger (2002): the uncovering of struggles in power relations, mainly in the context of ideology construction by means of discourse (Van Dijk, 2000). Fairclough and Wodak (1997) confirm this statement by arguing that power relations are discursive, meaning that, with critical discourse analysis, one can study how these “power relations are exercised and negotiated in discourse” (p.272). This indicates that discourses are not mere expressions of social practice, but that in the way they are used they can exercise power in order to reach a certain goal to be obtained by the reception and interpretation of the media text (Jäger, 2002). Thus, advertisement, in the context of critical discourse analysis, can be seen as a strategic vessel in order to obtain and extend brand equity over others within the same field (Oswald, 2015), as the specific choices made in the linguistic construction of the message are meant to boost the dominant ideological stance and weaken the opposed ideological stance (Machin & Mayr, 2012).

According to Fairclough (2010), to be critical in research such as critical discourse analysis, means to make visible the interconnectedness of things. To be more specific, Fairclough (1992) argues that in critical discourse analysis the priority lies in “understanding how changing practices of language use (discourse) connect with wider processes of social and cultural change (p. 269). This means that over time, as societal and cultural structures change, so do the discourses used to portray a certain message (Van Leeuwen, 2008) This relates strongly to the aim of this specific research, as it focuses on the interrelation between the construction and expression of Apple's organizational identity and the changes occurring on society, as well as the changes occurring within the organization itself over the existence of Apple. Thus, for this research, critical discourse analysis is an appropriate method, as aims to disclose the Apple identity in relation to its discursive expressions in Apple advertisements and interpreting this in a wider sociocultural context as it changes over time.

3.2 Sampling and Data Collection

The corpus of this research consists of twelve audio-visual clips from different Apple advertisements, which have run over the years starting from 1984 until 2019 promoting different Apple products. The Apple Computing Company was officially founded in 1976, from which time Jobs, Wozniak and Wayne started selling their first products (Linzmayr, 2004). The choice to start the timeframe of this research in 1984 is based on the fact that this is the

first significant audio-visual commercial produced by Apple, which had major consequences for the societal implications of personal computing (Friedman, 1997).

The choice to include advertisements marketing different Apple products is made based on the fact that Apple has not been promoting one single product over this long time-span. This is because as technology evolved, so did the products Apple was producing. Apple is known to be one of the frontrunners in a number of the products they provide, such as iPod, changing the music industry in its tracks (Burgess, 2012), and the iPhone, which was one of the first smartphones to be developed in the mobile phone branch (Goggin, 2012). By using advertisement clips from 1984 until present, this research covers the beginning of Apple, and thus the construction of the Apple organizational identity from the start, up until the era of Tim Cook, including the shift of CEO in 2011, possibly causing the Apple identity, or at least the expression of this identity in advertisement, to change.

The units of analysis are selected based on their narrative structure. This means that all units tell a story that reaches beyond the mere selling of a product. The advertisements vary in length, but all tell a story nonetheless, through image as well as narration. They include characters portraying the narrative shown. Audio-visual material solely based around the product with music accompanying the visuals are therefore excluded, as there is no obvious narrative to be found in such units. Based on this criterium, it can be concluded that the data collection is done in a purposive manner. Furthermore, some units of analysis were selected based on the obvious representation of the power struggle between Apple and its competitors. These units showed obvious signs of othering, such as literally naming one of the two characters 'PC' and the other 'Mac' (*Get A Mac*, 2006).

The selected units were collected through the platform of YouTube. The units dating from 1984 up until 2012 were collected from random YouTube channels based on the quality of the clip. This is due to the fact that the official Apple YouTube channel did not start posting their advertisements on this channel before October 2013. Units selected dating from after October 2013 were collected through the official Apple YouTube channel.

Furthermore, the selection of units was based upon the criterion of being produced for the Western market. This choice was made due to the company's origin being in America. The identity of the company and the advertisements, made during the process of identity formation, were based on the American market. Thus, Apple commercials targeting any other cultural market would not suffice, as they would not provide American, or Western, identity from which Apple originated.

In order to reach the criterion of saturation, the selection of the units of analysis has been expanded and shifted. At first, a selection was made of ten initial units that would fit the above-mentioned criteria. Two more units were added in order to have an equal spread of the units over the timeframe chosen. Then, after careful consideration of the equal distribution of

the units over the CEO eras analysed additional to the equal distribution of the units of analysis over the time period chosen, five units were added and one unit was eliminated. This new selection of units created an equal distribution of the units over both the timeframe and over the CEO eras of Steve Jobs and Tim Cook.

3.3 Operationalization

The question to be answered in this thesis is twofold: 1) how is the organizational identity of Apple constructed and expressed through its advertisement? and 2) why has this identity and its expression changed over time? To begin this process of exploring the construction, expression and change in Apple's organizational identity, the first step is to conduct a social-semiotic analysis. This semiotic analysis helps to uncover the meanings and discourses 'hidden' in the Apple advertisements. As argued by Oswald (2015), discourse and the language used to communicate discourse in advertisement are strongly connected to the formation and maintenance of identity, both in general and in the marketplace (Oswald, 2015). Thus, uncovering the discursive patterns displayed in the selected advertisements creates the possibility to deduce the organizational identity expressed by Apple through its advertisements.

In order to make this deduction of identity and why the organizational identity has changed over time, it is key to establish a solid theoretical framework exploring the sociocultural context in which these processes occur. The main concept used in relation to semiotic analysis in this theoretical framework is the concept of organizational identity. With the concept of organizational identity clearly outlined in the theoretical framework, from construction to evolution, the process of interpreting the stylistic and discursive choices made in the units of analysis runs more smoothly. In the establishment of the organizational identity within this research, the semiotic analysis highlights the discursive patterns which are *central*, *distinctive* and *enduring* in the multitude of Apple advertisements.

Just as is defined to be characteristic for ideological expression (Van Dijk, 2000; Chouliaraki, 2006), the distinction of the self in contrast to the other is key in the construction of organizational identity (Gioia et al., 2013). According to Choulariaki (2006) this distinction is done through mediation, which can be observed in a utopian or dystopian vision. These discursive regimes are used in this research in two ways. The first way is the use of utopia and dystopia as the base for organizational identity construction in the way that it is used to differentiate the organizational identity of Apple from the organizational identity of others within the field of personal computing. The second way is the use of utopia and dystopia in the sociocultural context, specifically focused on the role of technology within our society. Since organizational identity, just as meaning, shapes and is shaped by society, the shifting socio-cultural tensions of technological utopia and dystopia will affect how the organizational identity

shifts. By combining the two different uses of utopia and dystopia, these strategies function in the answering of both sub questions posed in this research.

The discursive strategies of (technological) utopia and dystopia arise in the semiotic analysis through the contrast of semiotic modes, such as colour, contrasting bright and dull, dark and light, and mise-en-scène, for example through the contrasting the uniformity of a restricted group to the standoff free individual. These semiotic choices, confirming the culture of constant comparison in the process of identity construction and expression, expose the discursive message underlying the unit's narrative. Where signs of a utopian discourse are expressed through bright colours, strong and independent characters, and positive verbal text, a dystopian discourse is expressed in contrasting modes, such as dull and dark colours, insecure and dependent characters, and negative verbal text. It is key to understand that the discourses of utopia and dystopia mainly exist within the vacuum of this contradiction, meaning that within a single unit, both discourses can be present, though one will dominate over the other, depending on the goals of the message sent through this unit.

The concept of organizational identity is analysed through the findings of the semiotic analysis. Specifically, the construction is exposed through the culture of constant comparison present in the use of utopian and dystopian discourse within single units, as well as the exponential summation of the identity claims over all units. The evolution or change of the organizational identity can be derived from this exponential summation of identity claims over all units, as the progression of the whole exposes changes that would not be noticeable through the analysis of single units separately. A flowchart of the operationalization of the theoretical concepts in the analysis of the units can be found below (Figure 3).

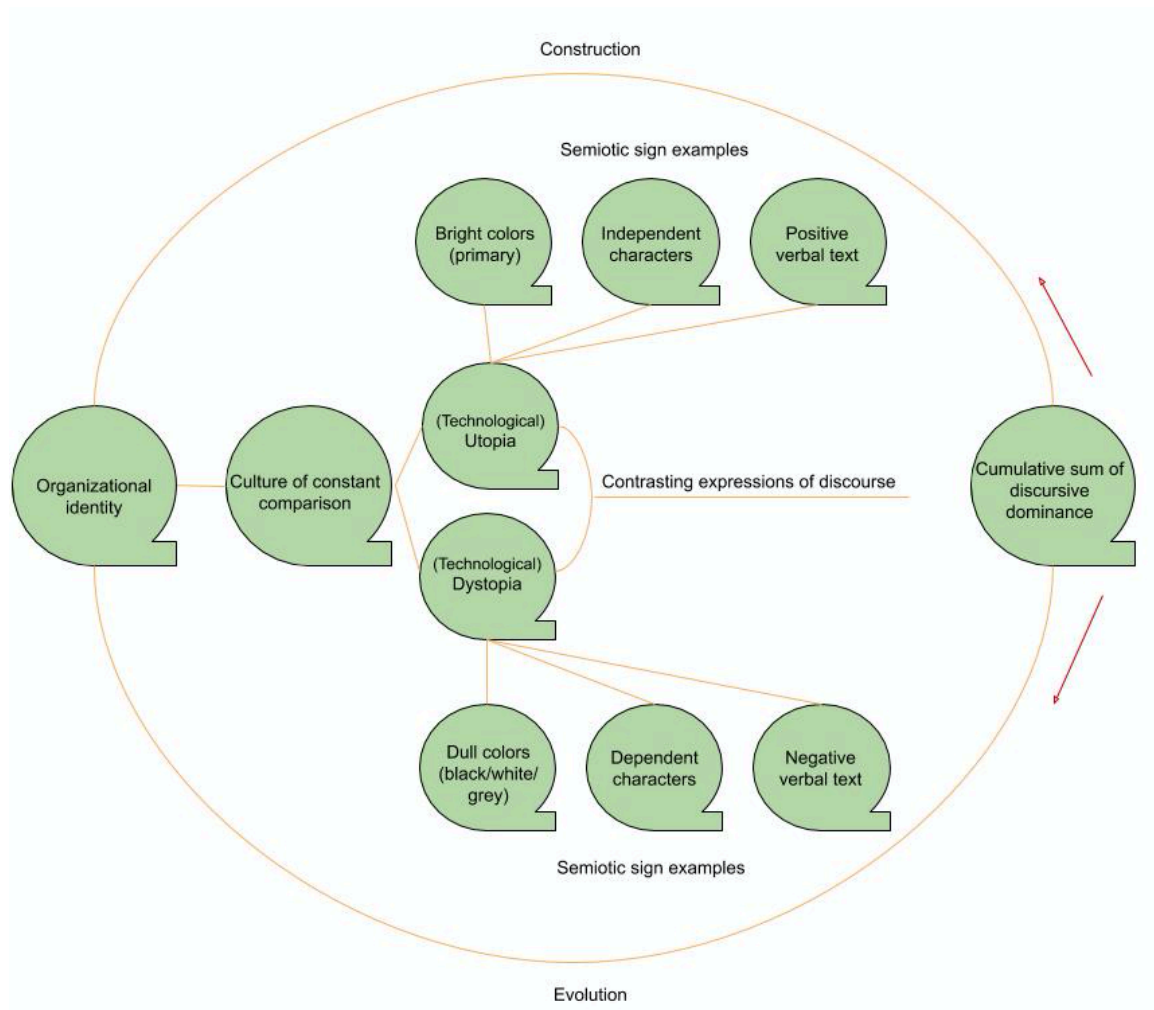


Figure 3. Flowchart of operationalization

3.4 Data Analysis

After the corpus was constructed with the selected sample units, the process of analysing the units could start. The units were all first analysed on an individual basis, meaning that all units were individually analysed, first through semiotic analysis and second through critical discourse analysis with the discursive patterns found in the semiotic analysis. As the process of analysing the units individually progressed, the results from each individual video were used in the successive unit analysis in order to adhere to Silverman's (2016) rule of constant comparison within analysis. By comparing the findings of the individual units progressively, the differences between them become clear, which creates the opportunity to find and address potential deviant cases (Silverman, 2016) or changes in the findings in further interpretation of the Apple organizational identity and its lifecycle.

It is important to mention that the unit of '1984' and the unit of 'Think Different' were analysed based on pre-emptive knowledge of the Apple narrative. This is due to the fact that

these units have been extensively analysed and linked to the Apple identity in previous research. Nonetheless, during the analysis of these specific units, an open mind was kept in order to not dismiss alternative narratives than those based on theoretical findings. All other units were analysed without any prior theoretical knowledge from previous research on the same subject matter.

Finally, after all units were analysed individually in an exponential manner, the findings of the individual units were compared in order to identify similarities and irregularities. The findings of the discursive narratives and how they have changed over time were analysed and interpreted within a wider socio-cultural context, linking the progression of technological utopia and dystopia within society to the findings in order to find connections in the progression of both the identity and the socio-cultural technological narrative. These last steps created a cohesive overview, from which conclusions could be drawn and the research question could be answered.

Data Analysis of the footage

The main focus of this research is the analysis of an audio-visual corpus, done through semiotics. In social-semiotics, it is argued that meaning is made in a wide range of modes, which are things such as (moving) image, music, speech, and gesture (Kress, 2010). As the sample of audio-visual units consist of the combination of multiple modes, this research takes the multimodal approach, in which all individual modes are seen as integral to the construction of meaning in their combination as a whole (Rose, 2016). Choulariaki (2006) argues that analysing mediation, in her case news reporting on television, is done on two different levels of semiotics, in which these modes construct meaning: difference within the semiotic and difference outside the semiotic. With difference, in the context of her research, Choulariaki (2006) refers to the distinction between the spectator and the distant other referred to through the medium of television. In the context of this research, difference can be seen as Apple's efforts to distinguish itself from others within the field of personal computing.

In order to disclose the organizational identity of Apple through analysis of its advertisements, the first step of semiotic analysis is to be done by the strategic semiotic approach introduced by Oswald (2015). This semiotic approach is specifically linked to the visual research of advertisement. Oswald (2015) defines advertisement as "a vehicle sustaining the brand positioning over time, maintaining competitive distinction, and aligning the brand message with cultural change" (p. 35). By use of the strategic semiotic approach it becomes possible to identify normative dimensions of advertising meaning (Oswald, 2015), which are aesthetically structured by the discursive codes within the media texts. Furthermore, these discursive codes form a structure of meaning within the competitive organizational and cultural context (Oswald, 2015: p.40). Thus, the strategic semiotic approach creates the opportunity

to identify the organizational ideology through the recurrence of the same discursive patterns throughout its advertisements (Oswald, 2015). It is, thus, key to analyse advertisements from all stages of the organization's existence, as is done in this research.

The first step into the strategic semiotic approach is the tracking of recurring patterns of discursive codes within the corpus, both individually and in the corpus as a whole (Oswald, 2015). This is where the multimodality of mediation becomes key. As the image itself is seen as a semiotic code, the way this image is constructed through the use of different modes (Rose, 2016) influences the formulation of the meaning the semiotic code, or sign, represents, as well as the interpretation of the semiotic code by the receiver (Choulariaki, 2006). Since images tend to not have such fixed meanings as words express through language (Machin & Mayr, 2012) and ideological realism is constructed through the association between image and the concurrent abstraction (Choulariaki, 2006), it is key to start the analysis with looking at what is denoted, forming a description of what is directly visible and hearable in the audio-visual text. This phase is still highly descriptive. Then, to identify the discursive narrative, what is denoted in the audio-visual text is translated to what is connotated in the audio-visual text, meaning that what is denoted communicates a more abstract idea than what can simply be seen (Machin & Mary, 2012). What is connoted in an image can become apparent by looking at how the image is constructed through what is denoted. Here, special attention is paid to attributes of the image, such as iconography, objects and settings (Machin & Mayr, 2012).

This is where Choulariaki's (2006) 'difference' is constructed through visual codes. The way these codes are represented form a narrative structure, which in this case is a discursive narrative. One of those narrative structures Choulariaki (2006) emphasizes is the narrative of ideological realism, which speaks to the deep-rooted ideas of what the world is or should be like. In the case of this research, this relates to the narratives of technological utopia and dystopia represented in Apple advertisement. through the process of open coding, axial coding and selective coding (Babbie, 2013), these narratives are highlighted, which creates the ability to map the similarities and differences over time in a more structured fashion (Babbie, 2013).

After the identification of the recurring codes within the dataset, it becomes possible to identify specific discursive codes that conform or break with the recurring performance of the semiotic codes (Oswald, 2015). A brand's discourse or identity can only be identified "in terms of its legacy over time and its distinction from competitors" (Oswald, 2015: p. 40). This specific approach of strategic semiotics, thus, identifies the recurring semiotics codes, which together compose the organizational identity of Apple, and identifies divergent semiotic codes, which point out where in the existence of Apple the organizational identity started to change.

Analysis of the discursive strategies

Since (organizational) identity is constructed through the distinction of the self from the other (Van Dijk, 2000; Choulariaki, 2006; Oswald, 2015), a critical discourse analysis is supplementally key within this research. According to Choulariaki (2006), the concept of discourse connects the first step of difference within semiotics, through the analytics of mediation, with the analytics of power relations presented both within and outside of semiotics. She argues that every semiotic mode, language and visual has multi-functionality, in the sense that it both creates meaning inside the text, as well as in the structures of society (Choulariaki, 2006).

Choulariaki (2006) argues that critical discourse analysis is needed to analyse how media communicate the world to the world, classifying the world into categories of 'us' and 'the other' and hereby orienting the spectator towards this 'other' in a negative way. In combination with the notion that advertisement from an organization serves the intent to establish that organization within society, this othering is a way to establish the organizations own identity in contrast to it. With the use of critical discourse analysis in combination with the above explored semiotic analysis, the discursive patterns found help place the utopian and dystopian tropes from the theoretical framework into an organizational context, as well as a socio-cultural context.

Furthermore, the regimes of utopia and dystopia are discourses in their own right, as they are social cognitions that shape and (r)evaluate our societies, to the extent that they are seen as normative to members of society. Within the context of this research, however, the discourses of utopia and dystopia are used to dismember the normative character of the hackability of technology and shift it towards a usability character and hereby promoting domestication of personal computing. The power struggle is, thus, not only present in the way Apple is trying to establish itself in the market of personal computing, but also on the perspective of potential buyers of the product on the use of technology in the domestic sphere. The semiotic modes analysed through the semiotic analysis steer the discursive interpretation of the data, highlighting the distinction between these power struggles and what purpose they serve within the context of identity construction.

Thus, the methods of semiotics and critical discourse analysis, within this research, are not used subsequently, but rather interwoven throughout the process of analysis. Both methods complement each other in the way that the semiotic method lays bare the discursive codes used to express the power relations analysed through critical discourse analysis. A change in power relations, both in the organizational and socio-cultural context, becomes apparent through the exponential manner of the semiotic analysis, which can then again be analysed through critical discourse analysis to establish the implications of these new power relations.

3.5 Validity and Reliability

With regards to the credibility of qualitative research in general, Noble and Smith (2015) argue that “qualitative research is frequently criticized for lacking scientific rigor with poor justification of the methods adopted, lack of transparency in the analytical procedures and the findings being merely a collection of personal opinions subject to researcher bias” (p.34). In order to safeguard the validity and reliability within qualitative research, Noble and Smith (2015) opt for different terminology for the concepts of validity and reliability. Rather than calling for validity, they argue that researchers in qualitative research should strive for ‘truth value’, in which the researcher accounts for personal bias in the interpretation of the data, as well as recognizes the multitude of alternative interpretations possible (Weiss & Wodak, 2003; Noble & Smith, 2015). Within this research, this form of truth value is safeguarded through the act of constant comparison opted by Silverman (2016).

Furthermore, this research is closely involved with the analysis and interpretation of discursive meaning and ideology. According to Wodak and Meyer (2001) one of the main criticisms of CDA is that the method is highly interpretative, meaning that most critics have an issue with its results being constructed in a vacuum of human subjectivity. Furthermore, Rose (2016) argues that the interpretations made by the researcher are just as ideologically loaded as the subject of research, therefore calling for reflexivity of the researcher upon her own viewing practices in order to safeguard the validity of the research. This gap with lacking objectivity can be bridged, however, through multimodality, in which a triangulation of techniques aims to circumvent the bias of the researcher and makes the findings more valid and reliable.

With regards to the reliability of the research, Noble and Smith (2015) opt for the term ‘consistency’, which entails extensive transparency in the conduction of the research. In order to safeguard the reliability as defined by Noble and Smith (2015), the methodology of this research is laid out step by step, disclosing and explaining all methodological and interpretational choices made during the process of analysis. Through the use of extensive transparency, another independent researcher should be able to conduct the same research and find similar results (Noble & Smith, 2015). Here, however, should be taken into account the cultural bias of the individual researcher, because different cultural backgrounds might lead to different interpretations of the same ideologically loaded text (Van Dijk, 2000; Machin & Mayr, 2012). With this research focusing specifically on the organizational identity of Apple, this research is not generalizable. This is due to the fact that the identity of a specific person, object or organization is not mutually applicable to any other person, object or organization, because that would defeat the concept of identity as it exists only in the distinction of one thing from another (Van Dijk, 2000).

3.6 The Research Design in Brief

This chapter proposes an investigation of the visual and discursive strategies used in Apple commercials between 1984 and present time. More specifically, the research design aims to systematically investigate the semiosis and discursive articulation in relation to organizational identity within the corpus. The first goal of the present analytical framework is to identify the semiotic elements used in the selected sample of 14 advertisements. The second goal is to identify the discursive strategies within these campaigns for the underlying ideologies in relation to the social context. The third goal is to understand why these ideologies might have shifted throughout the years in advertising of the Apple products, specifically within the social context of technological integration. At the core of this methodology is the combination of a visual social semiotic analysis with a critical discourse analysis in order to examine the representation and meaning of the taboo of personal computing as well as the discourses accompanying Apple in defining and expressing its organizational identity.

Finally, section 1 of this chapter presents the research design and argues the methodological decisions as to why they are appropriate for the objectives of this research. Section 2 describes the sampling and data collection strategy, taking into account saturation for the derived findings. In section 3, the operationalization of the concepts from the conceptual framework are explained in terms of how they contribute in making sense of the data. Section 4 presents the steps taken in the data analysis of the visual corpus. Finally, section 5 considers the specific questions of validity and reliability and outlines how the limitations of visual social semiotics and critical discourse analysis are overcome. In the following chapter, the present research design is applied and the results presented.

Chapter 4 - Results

This chapter elaborates how certain ideas, values and discourses are brought to the attention of the audience in order to establish and express the organizational identity of Apple. This section of the thesis focuses on the question of what narrative is being created with what elements of the story depicted? This entails highlighting the salience of certain signals, the use of colours and characters to distinguish one from the other, composition of the image (like the *mise-en-scène* used to tell the story), and the text spoken by either characters or the narrator.

What becomes evident through the semiotic analysis of all units is that the discursive regimes of utopia and dystopia, are used in two specific manners to construct the identity of the Apple organization: 1) in technological context, making use of the discourse of utopia and dystopia as categorical code, in which Apple is portrayed as the utopian way of interacting with and using the technology of personal computing and any other brand to be the dystopian way of interacting with and using personal computing, and 2) in sociocultural context, focusing on creating the ideal representation of the Apple user as a utopian role model, someone who values freedom, independence, creativity, is slightly crazy and is not accepting the status quo for the purpose of improving the world.

Furthermore, it also becomes evident during the analysis that, over time, there is a shift in the prominence of use of these two contexts. More specifically, during the Cook era, the sociocultural context is used to express values, focusing on socio cultural forms of utopia and dystopia, rather than technological forms of utopia and dystopia. Here, there is less evidence of promoting the benefits of technology, specifically Apple technology in order to integrate it in society. This will be explored in the second subsection of this chapter.

It is important to state that these two different uses of the discourse of utopia and dystopia are not mutually exclusive within the units of analysis. Both uses can be present within the same unit, however, the degree of use may vary, causing one to be more prominent than the other.

The two different uses of the discourses of utopia and dystopia during the different CEO eras are discussed in this chapter, first addressing the Jobs era and secondly addressing the Cook era.

4.1 The Steve Jobs Era - Dabbling Identity Construction and Technological Domesticity

The use of utopia and dystopia as categorical code in a technological context

The construction of any form of identity is done within the vacuum of constant comparison. With regards to the construction and expression of organizational identity, this act of distinguishing oneself from others is often done through portraying this constant comparison in advertisement, hereby making the distinction visible through the visual story told.

Apple does this in a clever way in two units specifically. In the advertisement of *1984* (1984) and *HAL 9000* (1999), Apple makes use of categorical code, indicating one product or brand to be better or worse than another (Oswald, 2015), through the use of references to popular culture. The popular cultural texts provide existing contexts, which are transferred to the narrative of the advertisement by association. The entire *1984* advertisement, called *1984*, is a reference to George Orwell's book with the same title. This book tells the story of a dystopian world where democracy is lacking and a technology driven dictatorial regime is thriving. The advertisement makes use of this dystopian world specifically through the use of dull colours and a static mise-en-scène, portraying its inhabitants as mindless and dependent zombies by dressing them in grey uniforms (figure 4a) and making them march in line (figure 4b), as though they are prisoners of this dictatorial world. Through the use of this dystopian world, Apple creates the idea that, currently, computing is seen as something for the elite who knows how to hone its powers, inadvertently causing the people outside this elite to be powerless.



Figure 4a. Subjects of the dictatorial regime in uniform



Figure 4b. Subjects of the dictatorial regime marching in line

Then, through the use of a female hero character, athletically built, dressed in red shorts and a white top, a contrasting utopian option is provided, functioning as the saviour of all who are powerless. Again, colour and mise-en-scène are used to indicate an alternative narrative. The female is alone, in contradiction to the large number of male subjects of the

regime. She wears bright colours (figure 5ab) and instead of walking mindlessly in line (figure 4b), she runs. This saviour, according to the tagline narrated by a voiceover at the end, is Apple. The voice dictates: “On January 24th, Apple Computer will introduce Macintosh. And you’ll see why 1984 won’t be like “1984” (1984, 1984), suggesting that Apple will provide the world with a tool that will safeguard a democratized world through usability, rather than hackability (Burgess, 2012).



Figure 5a & 5b. Female hero stands out from the uniform crowd, running through the hallway in bright coloured clothes

This same concept occurs with the use of HAL 9000 (Heuristically programmed ALgorithmic computer) as the main character of the Macintosh advertisement of 1999. In the original story, *A Space Odyssey* by Arthur C. Clarke, HAL 9000 is the antagonist of the story, the super villain in technological form. HAL is such an advanced computer that he is able to speak, recognize faces, and can even read lips and interpret human emotions, which makes him a powerful villain. In the original story, HAL takes over the spaceship, from which he is the board computer, indicating that the technological being has his own free will and can use it in a negative way.

Over the past 15 years, since 1984, personal computing has become more integrated into domestic and office life, causing the stigmatized image of computing to be out of our leagues to become more redundant, moving from a hackability centred stigma to usability centred stigma. However, as technology became more integrated within domestic and corporate life, because now anybody could understand and use the technology, the fear of personal computing didn't disappear, it merely shifted. This shift was moving towards a fear of technology, now settled within the homes and offices of our society, becoming too powerful and taking over the lives of domestic and corporate America as it embedded itself in their daily routines.

With the commercial of *HAL 9000* (1999), this fear is communicated through the use of popular culture, a narrative that was known to many, and used to promote the abilities of the

Macintosh. In the clip, HAL states: “Only Macintosh was designed to function perfectly. Saving millions of monetary units. You like your Macintosh better than me, don’t you, Dave?” (*HAL 9000*, 1999). With the commercial, Apple touches upon the habit of technological utopianism and dystopianism to speculate about and form ideals around future possibilities. While the commercial aired in 1999, HAL speaks of a worldwide computer crash in the year 2000, which, according to HAL, happened because of a bug (*HAL 9000*, 1999).

Furthermore, HAL emphasizes that it was not the fault of the technology, as the engineers that designed the technology had not thought about teaching the technology to recognize the year 2000. Here, HAL tries to put the blame of such an event on the engineer, rather than on the technology, but with the knowledge of HAL being a technological super villain, this rational blame of human incompetence for the crash becomes moot. By stating this, HAL suggests that computers are some form of living organism, with the ability to be taught skills, have emotions, and make compliment (figure 6), rather than passive constructions to be programmed. This, again, confirms the dystopian fear of computers being more than a human controlled object. Thus, through the use of this fictional character, the audience is misled into fearing any technology but the Apple computer.

Rather than addressing the character of the Apple user, and hereby inherently portraying the Apple organizational identity, these advertisements make use of the culture of constant comparison to others in its field through the use of technological utopia, the Apple products standing strong in a time of potential technological crisis, and technological dystopia, in which other computing brands fail to control their own technological creations.

“Hello Dave. **You’re looking well today.** Dave, do you remember the year 2000, when computers began to misbehave? I just wanted you to know, **it really wasn’t our fault. The human programmers never taught us to recognize the year 2000.** When the new millennium arrived, we had no choice but to cause a global economic disruption. It was a bug, Dave. **I feel much better admitting that now. Only Macintosh was designed to function perfectly. Saving millions of monetary units. You like your Macintosh better than me, don’t you, Dave?**” (*HAL 9000*, 1999).

Figure 6. Highlighted in green: signs of emotional capabilities of technology. Highlighted in red: in text referenced sections

This form of identity expression through utopian and dystopian discourse can also be seen in the *Lemmings* (1985) advertisement, in which the same dystopian world is portrayed as the one in *1984* (1984), depicting lines of people dressed in corporate attire marching through a desert while being blindfolded. Blindly they march towards a cliff, falling down one

by one until one stops as a God-like voice calls upon him to take his blindfold off and stray from the common path in order to avoid the horrible fate of the ones that have gone before him (figure 7abc). Even though the *1984* (1984) and the *Lemmings* (1985) advertisement seem very similar in their mise-en-scène, they differ in the way they both represent a different form of contextual use of the discourse of utopia and dystopia. Where *1984* (1984) makes use of the utopian and dystopian discourse in the technological context through the use of categorical code, *Lemmings* (1985) makes use of the utopian and dystopian discourse in the sociocultural context, addressing the identity of the user, rather than the identity of the technology. This will be explored more extensively in the next subsection.



Figure 7a, 7b, 7c. (from left to right) A line of generically dressed business people walk blindfolded towards their demise, until one stops, takes off the blindfold, and choses a less generic path.

Within the corpus, there is one unit that specifically stands out in the way that it makes strong use of the technological utopian discourse without the implication of the power struggle with the technological dystopian discourse, while at the same time dictating the sociocultural value of community. In the 2010 commercial for FaceTime, Apple makes perfect use of the ideal of technological utopia as described by Choulariaki (2006), in which new technological innovations create the opportunity to connect everybody in the world through the immediacy of the device. In her case it was the TV which created a sense of community in the idea that millions formed a community in the act of watching and experiencing the same thing

simultaneously. The telephone raised this connectivity to a higher level by providing the possibility for people to actually interact and now FaceTime has combined these two modes of connectivity, the visual and vocal interaction, bringing the use of technology in mediated communication even closer towards the utopian ideal of connectivity.

Furthermore, this advertisement makes use of the ideal of technological utopia as described by Kirkpatrick (2004), in which technology and the use of it is seen as a democratic tool, creating freedom for all who use it in the way that they can educate themselves both politically and socially. Specifically, this commercial focuses on the social aspect of the democratic use of technology by including a character with a hearing disability who uses the app to communicate with someone who he'd normally would not be able to communicate with over the phone for the obvious reason that he needs to see someone in order to communicate. With FaceTime, Apple eliminated this obstacle for people with a hearing disability, hereby making the iPhone a more democratized technological device.

What is also communicated with this commercial, is the cultural value of connectivity. The advertisement tells a story of some important and some general life events that are shared with the ones that could not be there in person. For example, we see a father in a hotel room, FaceTiming his wife and kids to keep in touch, we see a girl on the day of her graduation, FaceTiming her grandparents to share this important life event face-to-face even though their presence is lacking, we see a pregnant woman sharing the moment of having an ultrasound with her husband over FaceTime, because her husband is soldier on a mission (figure 8). As these events would normally be shared with each other in person, FaceTime creates the opportunity to share these moments is personal attendance is not possible for whatever reason, making the importance of visual communication and presence in personal life very clear. This advertisement, hereby, communicates the cultural value of community, which is embedded in the Apple identity, as well as the technological utopian ideal strived for through the invention of this new technology.

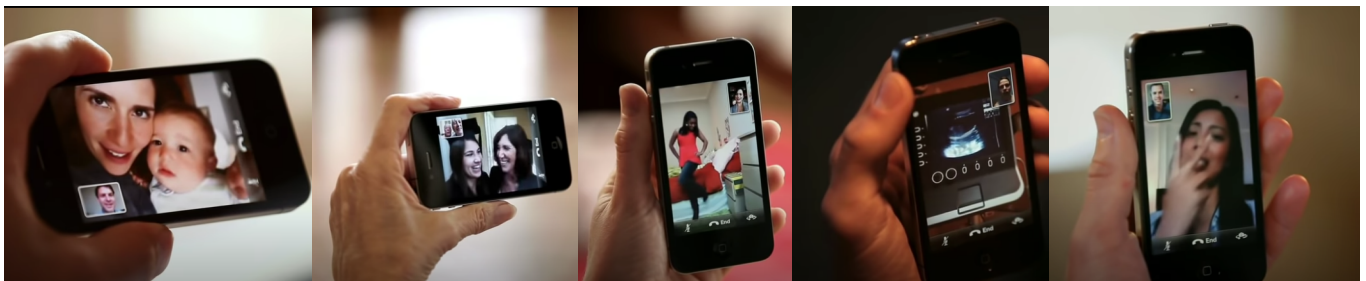


Figure 8. Sequence of moments made possible by facetime.

In a way, this value of community is paradoxical to another prominent value embedded in the Apple identity, being individualism. As portrayed in the *Think Different* (1997)

advertisement, individualism ranks high on the list of values of the Apple identity. It has created a culture of rebels, of people who dare to be different in order to move the world forward, pushing the limits of what the common mind deems impossible, because “the people who are crazy enough to think they can change the world, are the ones who do” (*Think Different*, 1997). With this line Apple sells the ultimate dream of misfits and rebels saving the world with their standoff-ish character, proving that being different is good, not bad. However, in creating a community of rebels and misfits, a new norm arises. Thinking and being different becomes the new norm, making the concept of individualism, intrinsically connected to the idea of being different, redundant.

The use of utopian and dystopian discourse in a sociocultural context

The second context in which the utopian and dystopian discourse is used to construct the organizational identity of Apple in advertisements, is the sociocultural context. Within this context, the Apple advertisements construct the organizational identity of Apple by dictating the preferred identity of its users, hereby mirroring its own identity in the identity of its users. This act of mirroring is prominently present in *Lemmings* (1985), *Think Different* (1997), and *Beat* (2001). These advertisements tell us nothing about the special abilities of the product itself, for example on what aspects the Apple products are an improvement from other computing products. Instead, these advertisements speak to the sense of the user to not be generic, to not fall in line with the norm, but be someone who breaks with what is known and creates his/her own success.

In the *Lemmings* advertisement this is done through the use of the success narrative as described by Burgess (2012) in the theory chapter. This narrative calls upon the consumer to be the best self they can be and that Apple products will function as tools to safeguard that successful evolution of the self. This calling upon the consumer is done quite literally by the narrating God-like voice at the end of the advertisement, which disrupts the normative action of people dropping off the edge of the cliff by making him aware of other options. The choice to act upon this message and disrupt the norm is left up to the character, as well as the consumer, addressed in the advertisement by the voice stating: “you can look into it. Or you can go on with business as usual” (*Lemmings*, 1985). The voice does not pressure the addressed in any way, but in combination with the timing of speech and the images shown, the message is highly suggestive towards the addressed choosing a different path, as the choice is made clear. The addressed can choose to either be a sheep and follow the normative path, or be different and excel on his own path with the Apple products. The characteristics ascribed to the Apple identity, here, are individualism, independence, rebellion and freedom, which are contrasted to the generic PC identity of uniformity, dependence and restriction.

These characteristics are ascribed to the Apple user very specifically in the *Think Different* (1997) advertisement. With a sequence of images of famous scholars, scientists, philosophers, musicians and artists, accompanied by a narrating voice telling the story of these people breaking the norm in order to make the world around them evolve, creates the aesthetic of heroism that comes with thinking outside the box through nostalgic associations with the hero's shown in the sequence. This advertisement dictates the Apple users, in a very suggestive manner, to not be limited by the norm, but break the boundaries of the norm in order to further evolve themselves and the world around them, just like those shown in the image sequence did before them and just as Apple is doing it now. Because, "while some may see them as the crazy ones, we see genius. Because the people who are crazy enough to think they can change the world, are the ones who do" (*Think Different*, 1997), mirroring the identity of the Apple user, as well as the organizational identity of Apple to those who have been thinking differently and have hereby changed the world.

In contrast to the use of technological utopia and dystopia in order to promote the superiority of the Apple products and the Apple identity, *Beat* (2001) puts emphasis on the characteristics of the Apple user in order to express the identity Apple stands for. Through the use of mirroring, Apple expressed its own organizational identity through the identity of the user expressed in their advertisements.

Beat (2001), just as *Think Different* (1997) described the ideal Apple user identity, is a solid example of this mirroring through visuals rather than text. The first thing that catches the eye is the ethnicity of the 'protagonist' of the commercial. The character seems to be of Indian descent. With the use of a non-white character, emphasis is put on the inclusivity of the Apple identity, portraying a disregard for ethnicity in the use of Apple products and, thus, detaching the Apple identity from any race or ethnicity.

The setting of the commercial is in the apartment of the protagonist (figure 9a). The apartment is fairly cluttered with all kinds of personal items, amongst which are a multitude of paintings and several instruments. The strong presence of art, in the form of paintings and music, create the suggestion of a creative spirit, as brings both colour and playfulness to the apartment. The apartment seems to have a lack of styling due to its clutteredness, which seems to indicate a free spiritedness of the inhabitant, rather than strictness. The owner of the apartment, thus, seems to be someone who lives a colourful and creative life. He does have a job, which is indicated by his desk with the desk having a prominent position in the apartment and the statue of Lady Justice on it. His job as a lawyer or judge, which is known for its rule led character, however, doesn't seem to restrict him from being a bold and creative person.

This can also be seen in the way the character is dressed (figure 9b). He's wearing beige slacks with sneakers and a grey long sleeve shirt with an oversized, unbuttoned blue blouse over it, adding a brown suede jacket as he gets ready to head out the door. The close

create a sense of leisure and playfulness, as these are not clothing one would wear to any form of work obligations. The outfit in total, thus, creates a sense of freedom.

Furthermore, the frantic and crazy dance moves fit perfectly into the image of the user created in the *Think Different* (1997) commercial. The dance moves are not choreographed or very well executed. It seems as if the character is just goofing around, making up the dance moves as he feels the rhythm of the music. He is completely free to dance around with his headphones in, because that freedom is granted to him by the iPod. He can even take that freedom out of his house and into the world, as listening to music is no longer restricted to a limited number of songs on a cassette or cd, which were all quite large devices. The iPod, as the commercial expresses, is for the crazy characters who see an opportunity for freedom, appreciate it and make use of it in their own crazy ways and push themselves beyond the limits of the norm in order to achieve greatness.



Figure 9a (left) cluttered apartment with cultural attributes & 9b (right) character styled in leisure clothes

Combining the contextual uses of utopian and dystopian discourse

The third and final way of using utopian and dystopian discourse to express the organizational identity of Apple is through the application of both contextual uses. The *Get a Mac – Better* (2006) commercial uses a combination of the constant comparison of the Apple product through technological utopia and dystopia and the portrayal of the Apple (user) identity. This portrayal of the Apple identity through character use, in this specific unit, is done by literally personifying the PC and the Mac in two characters. The visual distinction made through the appearance of the characters shows how Apple is a complete contrast of what Apple interprets to be the PC persona.

First of all, this contrast is visible in the clothes and overall look of the two characters (figure 10). The PC persona is dressed fairly formal and a little dull, wearing grey slacks with brown shiny shoes, a blue shirt and a brown jacket. He has glasses, his hair brushed to the side and has a shaved face. The character is slightly chubby and looks a bit nerdy and dull, which is in complete contrast with the portrayal of Mac. Mac is portrayed as a laid back, cool

guy, standing there in his jeans and t-shirt with a hoodie, holding his hands in his pockets. His hair is a bit tousled and he has some facial hair in the form of a goatee and a moustache, giving him a scruffier look. The contrast made here creates two complete opposite persona, being uptight versus relaxed, formal versus playful, and restrictive versus freedom.



Figure 10. The two contrasting characters side by side (PC on the left, Mac on the right)

This contrast is expanded on in the conversation the two characters have. It is mentioned that they both use a lot of the same programs, indicating that they might seem the same. However, they continue to explain that they have significant differences, distinguishing one from the other. What is significant in this particular unit, is that there seems to be no 'hard feelings' or competition between PC and Mac. In fact, Mac even compliments the abilities of PC with regards to the use of spreadsheets (figure 11). This complimenting of the other creates the sense that Mac is a super nice and non-competitive guy, disguising any form of power struggle present in this particular advertisement.

However, he continues to acknowledge the major difference between them two in describing himself to be 'better' at all features pertaining to "life stuff, like music, pictures, movies" (*Get a Mac - Better*, 2006). When PC asks him to elaborate on that because he doesn't understand how Mac is 'better', Mac explains how some tasks within these 'life stuff' features are easier for him to perform than for PC. One could argue that, here, Mac is selling a lifestyle, rather than a tool for work, which makes the Mac the obvious choice for general domestic use. At the same time, this particular part of the conversation is a jab at the failings of PC, in the way he seems obtuse to the skills he lacks. With the line "oh that kind of better. I was thinking

of the other kind”, PC is portrayed as less intelligent than Mac, as there obviously is only one kind of better. Furthermore, this line makes PC admit defeat in the battle of their strengths.

MAC: “Hello, I’m a Mac”

PC: “And I’m a PC. You know we use a lot of the same kinds of programs...”

MAC: “Yeah, like Microsoft Office...”

PC: “But, uhm... We retain a lot of what makes us, us”

MAC: “You should see what this guy can do with a spreadsheet, it’s insane”

(gestures towards PC with his thumb)

PC: *(chuckles modestly)* “haha, shucks”

MAC: “Yeah, and he knows i’m better at life stuff, like music, pictures, movies... stuff like that”

PC: “Wow, wow, what, what exactly do you mean by better?”

MAC: “By ‘better’ i mean, making a website or photobook is easy for me and for you it’s not.”

PC: “Oh... oh THAT kind of better”

MAC: “Yeah”

PC: “I... I was thinking of the other kind”

Image of iMac

MAC: “What other kind?”

Figure 11. Script of *Get A Mac* (2006). Highlighted in red: in text referenced sections

Through the use of the PC persona, it is suggested that the battle between PC and Mac has been fought and that Mac has won by being, first of all, a cooler and more laid back device for the free spirited looking for a lifestyle rather than a mere tool, and second of all, it is a more intelligent device in being able to tell strengths from weaknesses, where PC can’t even recognize that there is only one kind of better. Here, Apple makes use of humour, rather than popular culture (as done in the *1984* (1984) and *HAL 9000* (1999) commercial), place the discursive regimes of utopia and dystopia in both the technological context, where Mac thrives in certain abilities that PC can’t handle with the same ease, and the personal context, where Mac and its users are portrayed as the cool and free person everyone wants to be and PC and its users are portrayed as the formal and restricted character nobody wants to be.

4.2 Tim Cook Era - A Shift Towards Moral Responsibility

From human to human, creating a community in difference

In the analysis of the advertisements aired during the Tim Cook era of Apple, from 2011 until present time, it becomes clear that the Apple organizational identity has taken a moralistic turn. Instead of the advertisements dictating what the Apple identity 'looks like' both physically and characteristically, the Cook advertisements build upon this previously constructed identity, and expands it by adding humanitarian values, such as environmentalism, inclusiveness, and diversity. These values and how they are expressed in the advertisements will be elaborated on in the coming paragraphs.

Environmentalism

First of all, when analysing the *Perspective* (2014) advertisement, it becomes clear that there is a striking similarity between this advertisement and the 'Think Different' advertisement from 1997. The *Perspective* (2014) advertisement tells a story about what Apple stands for, who its users are, and how Apple and its users have inspired one another to push the boundaries of the norm, just as the *Think Different* (1997) advertisement. One line specifically stands out in the text, which is: "so, keep seeing things differently" (*Perspective*, 2014). This line refers to the *Think Different* (1997) campaign, which has been a key factor in establishing the Apple identity, both for the user and the organization. *Perspective* (2014), hereby, seems to be an ode to those who have been loyal to the Apple identity and the Apple products, thanking them for helping Apple change the world with its technological innovations.

Instead of the text being narrated over stock images of famous people, the *Perspective* (2014) advertisement is a visual rollercoaster of optical illusions. The text of the advertisement, which tells the story, is shown in the flow of the camera as it flows through a white industrial room. In the process of going around the room, the image frames different optical illusions, telling the story in the changing illusion with the movement of the camera. This creative way of telling the story captures the essence of the message perfectly, which is that thinking, looking and acting different can open doors to a more creative world than one would have found if they had not dared to change their perspective in unexpected ways.

Where the *Think Different* (1997) advertisement functioned as the establishment of the Apple identity, *Perspective* (2014) redefines it. The main characteristic remains the same, which is being different and challenging the status quo in order to move forward. This time, however, the focus of pushing those boundaries does not lie on the technology of personal computing, but on the healing world in general through the use of technological innovation. At this point in time, technology is completely embedded in (most of) the world's societies, creating room for other societal tensions, such as environmental issues. The text of the

advertisement seems to refer to these societal tensions by stating:

“Keep trusting there is always another way, a better way, a bigger way. One that lifts up humanity. Breaks down our barriers. And heals the landscape. You are the difference between the world as it was and the better place it will become” (*Perspective*, 2014).

When paying specific attention to the choice of words, some of them jump out, like “humanity” and “heals the landscape”, which put emphasis on the way we can use technological innovation to heal the world and evolve as mankind, rather than using mankind to push technological innovation forward. This reversal of perspective indicates a shift in the use of utopian discourse, moving away from technological utopia as practiced by Jobs, towards a sociocultural utopia to be obtained with the help of technological innovation.

Inclusion and diversity within the community

Second of all, four out of seven advertisements in the corpus of Cook advertisements encourage the value of inclusion and diversity. Where during the Jobs era the majority (four out of three) of the advertisements is based around white people, the majority (four out of three) of the Cook advertisements makes use of an ethnically diverse cast. The advertisement that is the best example of this is *Inclusion & Diversity - Open* (2017), in which the narrator describes what Apple stands for and believes in. At the beginning of the advertisement line reads “welcome to a portrait of Apple” (*Inclusion & Diversity - Open*, 2017), after which a sequence of images of different people commences, as if showing portraits of the different kinds of people within the Apple community and the world as a whole, while a voice narrates:

“Open. Open a door and it opens all the others. Open a mind and see what happens next. No great thing, no beautiful invention was created in a vacuum. It happens when we leave our comfort zone and come together. Embrace faiths, cultures, disabilities, differences. Embrace races, ages, ideologies, personalities. Creating a tool or device nobody saw coming. Humanity is plural, not singular. The best way the world works is everybody in, nobody out. So, who we’re made of is everyone. Differences not just celebrated, but essential. Many more women in charge, equal pay for equal work, for everyone. A new generation of Apple, more diverse than the one that came before. Open is not just who we are, but what we believe as a company. Because humanity isn’t singular, it’s plural. The truth is, we don’t see things the same. The power is, we don’t see things the same” (*Inclusion & Diversity - Open*, 2017).

This story narrates the identity of Apple as being open to all. It creates the sense of community, even though the participants in the community are different. In fact, this advertisement marks these differences to be the strength of the community, as the differences in us creates the opportunity for different perspectives to come about, which could help the community, as well as technology, thrive.

The cast is a diverse bouquet of 'real people' (figure 12). They have different nationalities and ethnicities, different ages and lifestyles, abled and disabled bodies, different genders and different religions. What binds them together is the Apple identity, in which the values of inclusion and diversity rank highest on the scale of characteristic priorities. This form of diversity is also present in the *Accessibility – Sady* (2016) and *Dear Apple* (2017) advertisements. All people represented are different, but there seems to be one thing that they have in common: the Apple Watch made their life better, in various degrees, helping them overcome disabilities that would normally exclude them from doing certain activities or even saving their lives.



Figure 12. Sequence of diverse bouquet of 'real' people from the Apple community (not in order of appearance)

Similarly, *The Underdogs* (2019) advertisement has a diverse cast for the four colleagues who struggle to create a pitch together. The cast consists of two males and two females, varying in age, lifestyle, and ethnicity (figure 13a). What is striking in this particular advertisement, is the use of the original Apple identity of the underdog as constructed by Jobs in the *Think Different* (1997) advertisement. The project that the group is working on is the production of a round pizza box. In the advertisement, a mind map is shown on which the sentence "not square" is underlined. 'Square' in this sense, means the norm, but also refers to the characteristic of creativity and freedom attributed to the Apple identity, as 'square' is often associated with simple, rigid, and restrictive like a box. Thus, this project quite literally refers

to the out of the box thinking characteristic of the underdog (figure 13b).



Figure 13a. Diverse cast in 'The Underdogs' (2019)

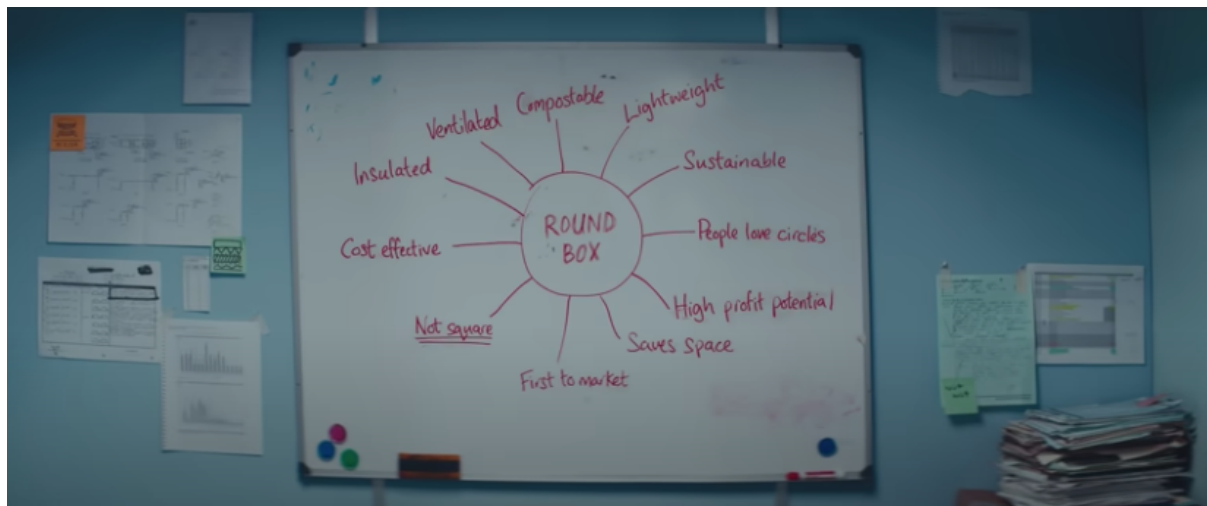


Figure 13b. "Not square" is the highlighted feature on the mind map of the round pizza box (bottom left)

Furthermore, the process of the four going from insecure to confident as their creative process progresses, shows that the misfits of the office (or society) are free to push themselves through limits due to the incentive to evolve, to break boundaries and not be generic. The pressure that the characters feel as they tackle this project is reflected in the quick montage of the images, shifting from character to character in their different tasks while working on the project. The high speed portrays the chaotic and stressful atmosphere the characters are in. As the advertisement progresses, so does the project. In this progression the montage slows down more and more, mirroring the sense of calm and confidence growing amongst the characters. As the team is finished with the project and ready to pitch it, the montage slows down, emphasizing their confidence as they head towards the pitch they feared at the beginning of the advertisement.

From technology to human and vice versa, a relationship of mutual thriving

One of the ways in which technological utopian discourse is expressed, is through the portrayal of technology and humanity thriving off of each other in a mutually dependent relationship. This becomes evident in the way that the Cook advertisements highlight the ways in which technology, specifically the technology of Apple, has helped humanity to thrive. Great examples of this portrayal are the advertisements of *Accessibility – Sady* (2016), *Dear Apple* (2017), and *The Underdogs* (2019). They all have in common that they highlight the way Apple technology has helped them in their daily lives, making it better in the creation of new opportunities for people such as Sady.

The advertisement of *Accessibility – Sady* (2016) focuses specifically on the inclusion of disabled people in the use of technology. Technological innovation creates the ability for these people, who would normally be excluded from certain activities due to their disability, to partake in society just like anyone else. In the commercial, certain disabilities are shown in their interaction with technology, like a hearing disability, blindness, dyslexia, paralysis and muscular dystrophy, amongst others. Seeing the way technology makes them partake in society expressed the value of inclusiveness, creating a community accessible to all forms of human life, because “when technology is designed for everyone, it lets anyone do what they love. Including me” (Sady, in *Accessibility – Sady*, 2016).



Figure 14a (right) & 14b (left). Having a disability should not get in the way of someone reaching their goals, like Sady (right) editing this specific advertisement herself.

Likewise, the *Dear Apple* (2017) advertisement addresses the way technology has improved the lives of all kinds of people through the use of personal testimonials of ‘real’ Apple users. What is portrayed here is not only the sense of community created through Apple technology, but also the great importance of the integration of technology in our daily lives. In the advertisement, a number of different characters recite a letter that was written to Apple by a ‘real’ Apple user. The characters are cast based on what is described in the letters. For instance, a blind marathon runner or a swimmer with an amputated leg, who testify to the Apple

Watch keeping them motivated to do what they love in spite of their limitations. Likewise, another letter tells the story of someone who was involved in a car crash and who managed to call 911 through the use of his Apple Watch (figure 15c). In the visual aspect of the advertisement, we see a man sitting in the driver's seat of a tipped over car as he reads the letter: “my car rolled over three times and my phone landed far out of my reach. Once I collected my thoughts, I remembered that my Apple Watch had the SOS feature” (*Dear Apple*, 2017).

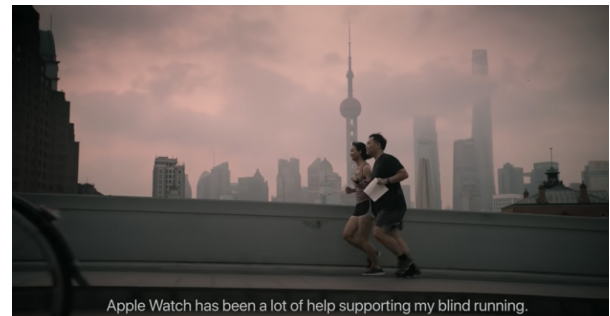


Figure 15a, 15b, 15c, 15d (left to right as if reading) former overweight man at a mud race, a blind marathon runner doing a lap, a man in a car accident, an Olympic swimmer with an amputated leg

Though the letters are not recited by the actual person who wrote it, by making visual the stories they tell, using type casted actors, the stories come to life. The advertisement suggests that if some of these people didn't have an Apple watch, they might have died, highlighting the necessity of technology in our lives. The emphasis is put on the benefits of this integration of technology, as it able to help all human beings to live a healthier life and be the best self they can be, which is in accordance with the technological utopian ideal in which the use of technology can be a life improvement, which outweighs any technological dystopian fear.

A similar argument is through technological utopian discourse in the advertisement of *The Underdogs* (2019). The advertisement tells a hypothetical story of a group of office

employees in the design department of a company. They are the underdogs, who manage to get a meeting with the boss to pitch an idea, but the problem is that they have not got a pitch ready. In order to tackle the nearly impossible task of creating a pitch within two days, they make use of Apple at Work features, giving them the possibility to share documents and ideas and work on them in real time, while being at different locations, creating an effective workplace online.

The advertisement shows that if humanity and technology collaborate, anything is possible, like producing a sales pitch in a limited amount of time with four different colleagues working on different locations. Furthermore, the advertisement shows the smooth flow between the different Apple devices, making the work experience run seamlessly and more efficient. There is a strong contrast visible in the characters of the story from the beginning to the end of the advertisement. The characters start out as feeling intimidated and limited by their status as underdogs within the workspace. As the story progresses, the characters gain more and more confidence in themselves and in the project, as it moves from a sketch to a prototype. In the end, the four characters head towards the meeting feeling confident as they strut down the aisles of office cubicles towards the elevator with determined looks on their faces. All thanks to the helpful features of the Apple products.

Using technological dystopia in order to promote the technological utopia

Though the technological dystopian discourse as used in the Jobs advertisements, creating a narrative of 'us versus them', is not seen in the Cook advertisements, the Cook advertisements do make use of technological dystopian discourse. This technological dystopian discourse is used to promote the technological utopian ideal as propagated by Apple. This specific use of the technological dystopian discourse can be seen in two specific advertisements, being *Have Yourself A Merry Little Christmas* (2013) and *Simple As That* (2019).

The advertisement of *Have Yourself A Merry Little Christmas* (2013) shows the paradoxical nature of technology, being both connecting and disconnecting at the same time, which highlights the current technological dystopian tension of technology having too much control over our lives. This is what Chouliaraki (2006) describes as intimate detachment. In the utopian ideal of technology, connectivity becomes instant, giving people the power to connect with more people on a bigger scale at a higher speed. Contradictory, the dystopian view of technology argues that due to technology, people are losing touch with the community around them, as they harbour a false sense of community online.

The boy in the advertisement is judged by his family around him for not being present and only paying attention to his phone. The boy cast for the part seems slightly older than the rest of the kids in the family, automatically separating him from his peers. He has a crooked

posture and seems a bit shy or uninterested even. In contrast to the boy always being on his phone, the other family members never seen using a phone during the advertisement. Here, being different from the others is portrayed as negative, as the boy seems to intentionally seclude himself from his family during Christmas time.

However, the plot twist near the end of the advertisement reveals quite the opposite. The boy has used his phone to create a personalized gift for his whole family, in the end bringing them closer together. This plot twist, going from dystopian discourse to utopian discourse, shows how Apple is highly aware of the shortcomings of technology and the fears of society towards the extensive presence of and dependence on technology nowadays. Apple then uses these fears, first confirming them, but then turning them around in showing that technology, even though it can be time consuming, can bring the world closer together. Apple, hereby, creates the assumption that there is a form of balance in the power struggle of technological utopia and dystopia. Though, leaning more towards the utopian ideal in order to still sell the product.

Another technological dystopian fear is the disappearance of privacy, as more details of our personal lives are stored online. In the advertisement of *Simple As That* (2019), Apple addresses this fear, highlighting it as legitimate due to our extensive online presence. In acknowledging the shortcomings of current technology, Apple creates the sense of understanding the legitimacy of the fear, while at the same time reassuring that Apple, as a company, values the need for privacy. In reassuring the user of the importance of battling this fear of disintegrating privacy, Apple creates the sense of being a safe space for its users, valuing their fears and addressing those to make the world a more pleasurable and safer place for all.

The advertisement consists of images of a camera flying through the air over a large city (figure 16a). As the camera flies between tall apartment buildings, secretly creating the ability to look inside, a voice narrates: “right now there is more private information on your phone than in your home. Think about that. So many details about your life right in your pocket. This makes privacy more important now than ever” (*Simple As That*, 2019). The combination of the images, putting the audience in a voyeuristic position (figure 16b), with the text narrated creates a sense of unease. It confirms the fear of losing one's privacy. However, just as the plot twist in *Have Yourself A Merry Little Christmas* (2013), the advertisement ends with the camera ‘flying’ into the living room of an apartment, where a girl is sat on the sofa with her phone held in both hands, smiling at her screen (figure 16c). As the camera enters through the sliding doors of the balcony, the voice narrates: “they should belong to you. Simple as that” (*Simple As That*, 2019). The camera then holds still on a medium close on the phone in the hands of the girl, with text appearing on the screen: “Privacy. That’s iPhone.” (*Simple As That*, 2010). The movement from outside to inside, in combination with the text narrated, shifts the

mood from uneasy to reassured, as the voice tells the audience that Apple will safeguard the value of privacy.



Figure 16a. Overview of a metropolitan city



Figure 16b. A sense of voyeurism is created as the camera slides past windows, giving us a look inside

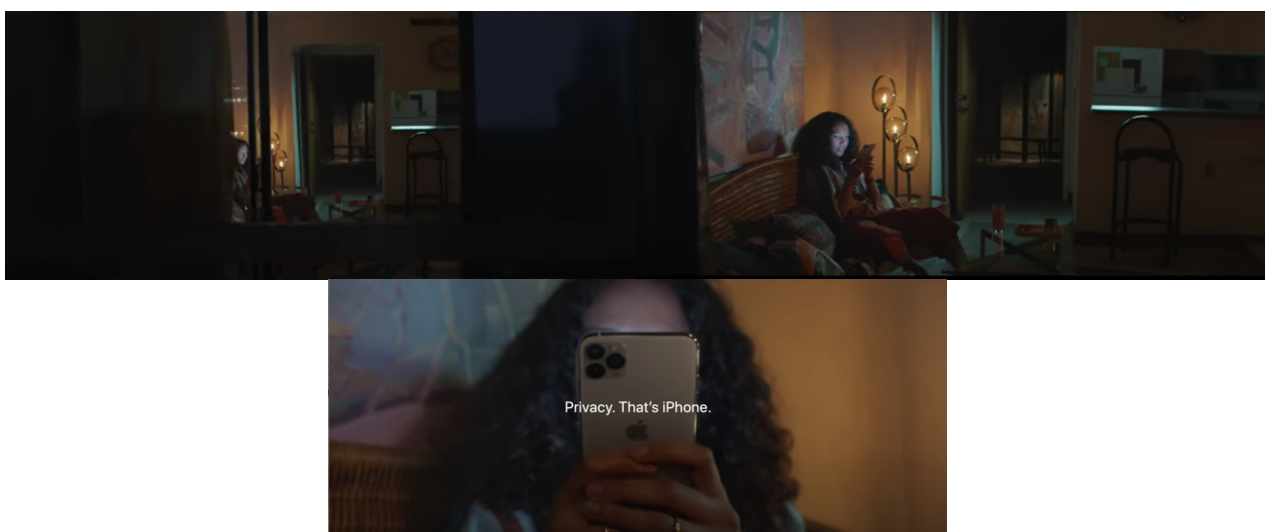


Figure 16c. Sequence of the camera movement into the home as a safe space, creating sense of security in contrast to the outside world shown before.

4.3 The Results in Brief

In this chapter, the aim was to present the findings of the semiotic and critical discourse analysis of the units. The main focus, here, was on the way semiotic modes, such as choice of characters, use of colours and montage flows, and choice of diction, have affected the interpretation of the contextual use of utopian and dystopian discourse. The first section illustrated the strong emphasis on technological utopianism and dystopianism, with a strong sense of dictation on what the Apple identity is for the organization as well as the user. This is done through the depiction of contradictory identity claims, separating Apple from the other in its characteristics of independence, creativity, and rebellion, in opposition to the characteristics of dependence, restrictiveness, and sheep-like uniformity. Furthermore, the fear of technological dystopia, used in existing popular culture, is used to depict 'the other' as the enemy through association, creating the space for Apple products to be depicted as the hero or saviour.

The second section illustrates the strong emphasis on sociocultural utopianism and dystopianism, promoting the identity of Apple as an organization and the user as individual to be one of moral value and community in difference, rather than dictating a set of personal characteristics. These characteristics are still present, yet they are used to express the inclusiveness of the individual within a community, rather than setting the individual apart from everybody else. Furthermore, this section presents a second angle on the use of technological utopianism and dystopianism, which aren't dominant perse, but do play a role in the changing identity of the Apple organization. Rather than using technological utopianism and dystopianism to differentiate one (Apple) from the other (not Apple) on technological grounds, this form of use emphasizes the moral superiority of Apple over the other.

Now that this chapter has illustrated the manner in which semiotic modes have portrayed different forms of expression of the utopian and dystopian discourse, the next chapter elaborates on what these different contexts and manners of expression imply for the construction and change of the organizational identity of Apple, while looking back on the theory discussed in chapter two, in order to formulate an answer to the research question of this thesis.

Chapter 5 - Discussion and Conclusion

This thesis set out to answer the following research question: *How and why has the organizational identity of Apple evolved from being a disruptive brand to a moral and culturally invested brand, while preaching the same ideals through advertisement?* For the analysis of the units, the main research question was divided into sub questions: 1) how is the organizational identity of Apple constructed and expressed through its advertisement? and 2) why has this identity and its expression changed over time?

This chapter discusses how the results of the analysis help answer these two sub questions in relation to the theoretical framework. In doing so, this chapter addresses the theoretical implications of the research findings. Furthermore, this chapter addresses the limitations of this research and provide suggestions for further research into the subject of organizational identity construction and expression through advertisement.

Upon the analysis of the 14 units of Apple advertisement over the course of 36 years, I have concluded that the construction and expression of the Apple organizational identity has been done through the use of the discursive strategies of utopia and dystopia in two very distinct ways, which are characteristic to the phases of organizational identity construction and the phase of organizational identity change. These two phases can now be linked to what will be referenced to as the Jobs era and the Cook era. The first way, applied in the Jobs era of Apple during the construction phase of the organizational identity of Apple, is the use of technological utopia and dystopia. In the context of these technological utopian and dystopian regimes, the users of the Apple products are mere tools to push the world forward, towards technological utopia. The second way, applied in the Cook era of Apple, is the use of societal utopia and dystopia. In the context of societal utopia and dystopia, the technology of the Apple brand is the tool for the creation of a better, utopian, world, shifting the discourse from technology/innovation centred to humanitarian. The following sections will elaborate on these findings.

5.1 Main Findings

Centrality and Distinctiveness - (Organizational) Identity Under Construction

Within the Jobs era, the discursive regimes of utopia and dystopia are used within two different contexts, which cause the identity of the Apple organization to be defined as technology/innovation centred and individualistic. While making use of the discursive regimes of utopia and dystopia as categorical code, Apple is portrayed as the utopian way of interacting with and making use of the technology of personal computing. In contrast, any other brand is portrayed to be the dystopian way of interacting with and using personal computing. In this culture of constant comparison, using the success narrative of categorical code to promote one over the other, technological dystopia is used as a strategy to promote technological utopia.

The analysis emphasized that, at the time of Steve Jobs as CEO of the Apple organization, the brand was not merely concerned with the construction of its own identity, but also with the deconstruction of the hackability stigma that rested upon personal computing at the time. Looking closely at how technological utopian and dystopian discourse have served the purpose of constructing the Apple identity, while at the same time destigmatizing and neutralizing the fear of domestic technology like personal computing, it can be argued that these two elements were in service of each other. This means that without the contradictory identity constructed by Apple in the face of the hackability stigma, the integration of personal computing into the domestic sphere might not have taken off like it did.

In his efforts to make personal computing go from a hackability stigma to a usability stigma (Burgess, 2012), Jobs has been organizing the organizational identity of Apple through the repeated expression of identity claims, establishing the Apple organization as a type of social actor (Whetten, 2006) in the world of domestic technology. Apple took what was intimidating and hardly accessible (hackability) and made it usable and accessible (usability) for the masses. However, its advertisements did not promote any form of community, at first. Quite contradictory to their goal of mass accessibility to personal computing, Apple advertisement advocated for an identity that is highly individualistic, out of the box, and rebellious.

The first signs of an evolving identity

During the Jobs era of Apple, a shift can be seen in the use of utopian and dystopian discursive strategies. As the Jobs era approaches the turn of the century, the emphasis moves away from the technological success narrative, towards the lifestyle narrative. Within this narrative, Apple establishes its own identity through the dictation of the identity of its users as individuals. This narrative was already present in the previous advertisements, focusing on

one individual breaking free from the generic rest. But now, with the *Think Different* (1997) advertisement, the emphasis is put on the superiority of the Apple lifestyle, with Apple products as tools to obtain it, rather than the superiority of the Apple technology over any other brand.

This narrative calls upon the consumer to be the best self they can be and that Apple products will function as tools to safeguard that successful evolution of the self. The advertisement of *Think Different* (1997) gives the audience the opportunity to become the rebel or saviour that has been portrayed in the earlier advertisements of *1984* (1984) and *Lemmings* (1985), shifting the power of the brand over the consumer to personal power of the consumer over the brand and. Hereby the consumer is asked to be active, rather than passive. The addressed can choose to either be a sheep and follow the normative path, or be different and excel on his own path with the Apple products (*Lemmings*, 1985). The characteristics ascribed to the Apple identity, here, are individualism, independence, rebellion and freedom, which are contrasted to the generic PC identity of uniformity, dependence and restriction. In the advertisement of *Think Different* (1997), however, this contrast is implied, rather than portrayed. In the description of what could be, it is the lack of the description of what is that suggests the breaking of the norm and the heroism in doing so, as it is those who break the norm who change the world for the better (*Think Different*, 1997).

Enduringness -The Hidden Evolution of the 'Same' Identity

This inclusion of sociocultural value through the discursive regime of utopia is characteristic for the Cook era of Apple advertisement. The sociocultural utopia, prominently represented in the Apple advertisements post Jobs, can be detected in the way that these advertisements emphasize the importance of certain values that express a form of moral responsibility. This moral responsibility works on two different levels: 1) from human to human, creating a community in difference, and 2) from technology to human and vice versa, to push both humanity and technology forward in order to safeguard mutual thriving.

In the Cook era, there is no distinct flow visible as in the Jobs era. This can be argued to be due to the fact that the construction phase of the organizational identity has already passed. At this point in time, the identity shows mere signs of adapting to internal and external change as explained by Gioia et al. (2013). In the Cook era, Apple uses the central characteristics of the organizational identity established during the Jobs era as stepping stones. Though the characteristics don't necessarily change, their meanings do change. This is especially visible in the way the Cook advertisements create a community in difference. The central characteristic of individualism is still present; however, it does not have the same meaning as it did during the Jobs era. For example, the characteristic of individuality in the Cook era, rather than meaning one person standing out from the crowd, now means one

person strengthening the community of diversity and inclusion in the celebration of differences of all individuals.

The emphasis in the advertisements is put on the internal characteristics of both the organization and its users. It is suggested that they value certain things, such as inclusion, diversity, family, tolerance, and environmentalism. In contrast to the Jobs era, the exterior of the user is not dictated at all. In fact, the exterior of the user is portrayed as diverse as possible, emphasizing that aspect of inclusion and diversity. This, in turn, gives humanity as a whole the power to evolve as our differences give us the tools to strive forward: “the truth is, we don’t see things the same. The power is, we don’t see things the same” (*Inclusion & Diversity - Open*, 2017).

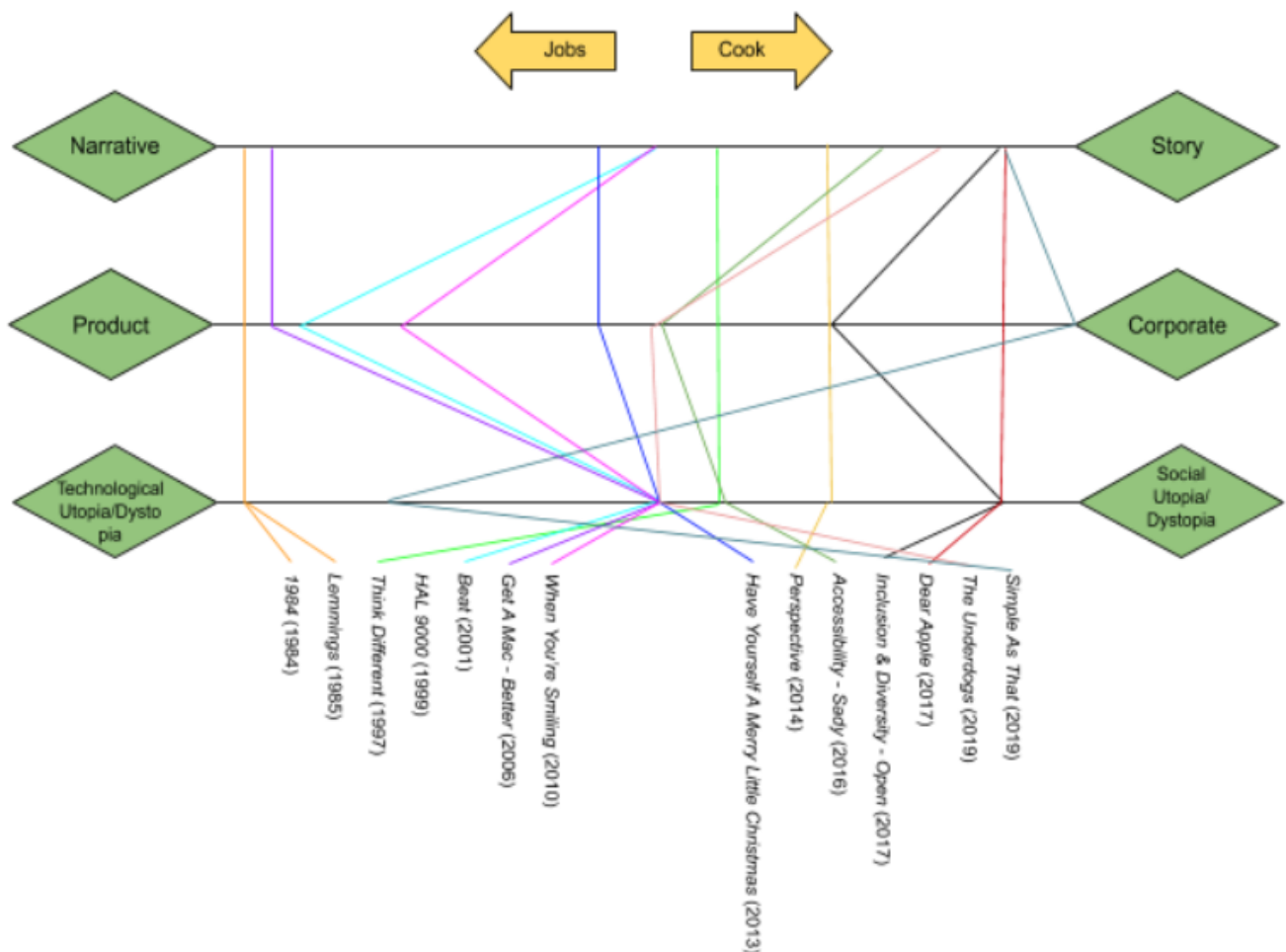


Figure 17. Schematic summary of main findings: 14 units of analysis from left to right in chronological order, far left: 1984 (1984), far right: Simple As That (2019)

5.2 Theoretical Implications - One Identity, Two Storylines

When examining the results in a chronological order of advertisement appearance, it becomes evident that there is some sort of natural flow happening, which spans both the Jobs and Cook era. It is most present in the Jobs era, which makes sense given the fact that that era is specific to the construction of the organizational identity. This phase causes the identity to be prone to change as the organization tries to navigate itself towards an identity that distinguished itself from others. Furthermore, as discussed by Gioia et al. (2013), the identity of any organization is sensitive to changes in its surroundings, as well as internal changes. This means that, as the position of technology within society changes, so does the identity and the expression thereof.

It becomes clear that the organizational identity of Apple follows a natural flow in the process of identity construction. Jobs makes use of the technological dystopian narrative as described by Watson (2009), that has already become well known in society through popular culture, such as George Orwell's book and the HAL 9000 franchise. Whereas Cook uses the story (Watson, 2009) of Apple created by Jobs in the construction phase. Cook uses this story of independent and creative underdog culture and elaborates on those features to promote values that will not only help technology forward, but will also help our society strive to be better than it is. He creates a community in difference, which entails that we will find community in the way that nobody is the same and that is what will make the community stronger. Cook, hereby, makes more dominant use of the sociocultural context of utopianism and dystopianism, instead of the technological context of these two discourses.

The natural flow present in both the Jobs and Cook era of Apple advertisement is one that moves from *distinctiveness*, to *centrality*, to *enduringness*. Though a flow is visible, it is key to keep in mind that these pillars are not mutually exclusive as being part of a three-step plan to construct and maintain an organizational identity. Rather, during the process of identity construction and expression, one pillar might show dominance over the others, but does not exclude their presence.

First, Apple distinguished its organizational identity from 'the other' through categorical coding (Oswald, 2015), which categorizes Apple as technological utopia and 'the other' as technological dystopia. This can be seen in *1984* (1984), *Lemmings* (1985), *HAL 9000* (1999), and *Get A Mac - Better* (2006). Second, Apple defines both the organizational self and the self of the Apple user by dictating the central characteristics of rebellion, creativity, individuality, and innovation. This pillar is most present in the advertisement of *Think Different* (1997), *Beat* (2001), and *Get A Mac - Better* (2006). These characteristics will remain central throughout the organizational identity of Apple, even though the expression of these central characteristics might change over time. This is what brings us to the third pillar of enduringness, which

dominant throughout the Jobs era in the way that there is a consistency in the characteristics specific to the organizational identity of Apple, expressed throughout all advertisements. The central characteristics established during the Jobs era endure throughout the Cook era in the way that these characteristics are celebrated throughout most of the advertisements in the Cook era. However, these characteristics are used as stepping stones to extend the Apple identity towards a more humanitarian version of the Apple identity.

This brings us to a second flow that is present within the extent of the Apple organization and its advertisement. This is the flow from technology centred and individualistic identity to a humanitarian and communal identity. Where the Jobs era was centred around promoting technological utopia in the face of the social fears of technological dystopia, the Cook era is centred around striving for social utopia, evolving the organizational identity of Apple from technology/innovation centred towards a humanity centred identity.

What becomes increasingly clear as we look at these flows present in the construction and expression of the Apple organizational identity, is that Apple has shifted from product branding towards corporate branding as described by Hatch and Schultz (1997, 2003), Schultz and Hatch (2003) and Gioia, Schultz, and Corley (2000). In the early years, when there was little homogenization of the market due to the non-domestic character of computing, Apple set itself apart through the usability of its products (Burgess, 2012). However, as computing moved towards personal computing within the domestic sphere and technology became more integrated within society, Apple adapted to navigate the complex marketplace of saturated technological product offer. What we can learn from this, is that the shifting meaning of identity labels was no mere effect of the ambiguous character of identity, but is also a necessity within the market space in order to maintain distinguishable from competitors within the same market (Hatch & Schultz, 1997, 2003; Gioia, Schultz, & Corley, 2000; Schultz & Hatch, 2003). It can, then, be concluded that the formation, maintenance, and expression of the Apple organizational identity forms a role model of corporate branding done right, as the brand not only adapted to the demanding market place, but also adapted to changing social tensions, taking into account the cultural evolution and the role of technology in it.

5.3 Social Implications

What stands out, though the expression of the organizational identity of Apple is clearly very distinctive for the specific era it was expressed in, is that, in both the Jobs and Cook era, the different narratives work towards the same ultimate goal. This goal is to sell a lifestyle, rather than a mere product, persuading the audience that life is, in fact, better with Apple technology integrated in it, guiding the user in obtaining the best life possible.

The specific focus of the Jobs era on technological utopia and dystopia in the expression of its organizational identity and the shift of the Cook era towards societal utopia, can be explained by the changing role of technology within our society as time progressed. The emphasis could shift from being technologically specific to socially specific due to the fact that, as time progressed, technology got more integrated within our society. At the start of the Apple company during the Jobs era, personal computing was in its infancy and thus in dire need of promotion in order to get computing domesticated. During the Cook this domestication had been complete, and then some. Personal technology, in general, has been so integrated into our society, that very little aspects of our personal lives can be seen separate from the use of technology at all.

The identity claims to individualism, creativity, and rebellion have become central throughout the Apple identity, as they have proven to be the most enduring. However, the results as a whole show that, even though these identity claims remain the same, their meaning changes over time, just as described by Gioia et al. (2013). The central characteristics have remained equally important, as the need for lobbying technological integration and innovation faded, though not disappeared. Thus, in the years after Tim Cook took over the position of CEO from Steve Jobs, a shift can be seen in the prominence of the use of utopian and dystopian discursive strategies in the technical and sociocultural context. Specifically, a shift within the use of utopian discursive regime in the sociocultural context can be detected. Where Jobs' advertisements dictated a certain persona that fit to the Apple identity, Cook's advertisements do not dictate the exact persona. Rather, they express sociocultural values that add to the creative underdog persona constructed by Jobs.

Now that technology is completely integrated within the world's societies, it becomes evident that there is very little need for the culture of constant comparison in the creation and maintenance of the organizational identity of Apple anymore. Where Jobs used this prominently, showing both the dystopian and utopian discursive regimes in order to portray the 'us against them' narrative, utopia versus dystopia, Cook only uses this specific power struggle very little. Now that the Apple identity is solidly established, Cook's advertisements show an expansion of that Apple identity in relation to moral responsibility, because there is no longer a need to convince people of the benefits of technology. Therefore, there is a strong emphasis on the sociocultural context of the utopian and dystopian discursive regimes.

5.4 The Limitations and Future Implications

A limitation of this research, that would call for further research in the future, is the limited amount of time and resources to perform it in. The interpretation and discussion of the units of analysis could be extended and deepened with more time to research the process of

technological integration within Western society, as it has been a lengthy and complex process with several cultural and organizational implications. In this thesis, mere general notions of technological integration within society were used in order to keep the thesis feasible. Future research, however, could be more extensive on the link between technological integration within society and the changing organizational identity of Apple, or any tech company for that matter.

Furthermore, this thesis is limited to the theory of utopian and dystopian discourse due to the presuppositions of previous research highlighting this specific power struggle. A more extensive sample, including advertisements that were lacking the element of an obvious narrative, could possibly exposed a wider variety of discourses and more or different characteristic traits of the Apple identity, that would make the description of the organizational identity more complete.

Most importantly, the organizational identity identified through an organization's advertisements in merely one way to measure or illustrate the identity constructed by an organization. In order to get a complete picture of the organizational identity of Apple, or any organization for that matter, one must also look at the other three dimensions stated by Melewar and Jenkins (2002) and Alvesson and Empson (2008). These dimensions, however, demand research into the corporate culture within the organization, which calls for a more hands-on research method in the form of interviews and surveys and possibly personal observation within the organization itself. For future research, it will, thus, be interesting to see if the organizational identity presented through the advertisements of Apple, as outlined in this thesis, upholds in all dimensions of the of the organizational structure.

References

- Alvesson, M., & Empson, L. (2008). The construction of organizational identity: Comparative case studies of consulting firms. *Scandinavian journal of management*, 24(1), 1-16.
- Babbie, E. R. (2013). *The basics of social research*. Cengage learning.
- Belk, R., & Tumbat, G. (2005). The cult of Macintosh. *Consumption markets & culture*, 8(3), 205-217.
- Beverland, M. (2009). *Building brand authenticity: 7 habits of iconic brands*. Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Bezuidenhout, I. (1998). A discursive-semiotic approach to translating cultural aspects in persuasive advertisements. Retrieved from <http://ilze.org/semio/015.htm>
- Boeije, H., & Hodkinson, P. (2009). Introduction to qualitative research. *Analysis in Qualitative Research*, 1-18.
- Burgess, J. (2012). The iPhone moment, the Apple brand, and the creative consumer; From "hackability and usability" to cultural generativity. In L. Hjorth, J. Burgess & I. Richardson (Eds.), *Studying mobile media; cultural technologies, mobile communication, and the iPhone* (pp. 28-42). New York: Routledge.
- Ceruzzi, P. E. (2003). *A history of modern computing*. London: The MIT Press.
- Chouliarakis, L. (2006). Towards an analytics of mediation. *Critical discourse studies*, 3(2), 153-178.
- Claeys, G. (2010). The origins of dystopia: Wells, Huxley and Orwell. *The Cambridge companion to utopian literature*, 107-134.
- Črnič, A., & Pogačnik, A. (2014). iReligion: Religious elements of the apple phenomenon. *Journal of Religion and Popular Culture*, 26(3), 353-364.
doi:10.3138/jrpc.26.3.353
- Eco, U. (1979). *A theory of semiotics* (Vol. 217). Indiana University Press.
- Fairclough, N. (1992). Intertextuality in critical discourse analysis. *Linguistics and education*, 4, 269-293.
- Fairclough, N. (2010). *Critical discourse analysis: The critical study of language* (2nd edition). London: Routledge.
- Fairclough, N., & Wodak, R. (1997). Critical discourse analysis. *Discourse studies: A multidisciplinary introduction*, 2, 258-284.
- Friedman, T. (1997). Apple's 1984: The introduction of the macintosh in the cultural history of personal computers. Paper presented at the *Society for the History of Technology Convention*.

- George, M. J., & Odgers, C. L. (2015). Seven fears and the science of how mobile technologies may be influencing adolescents in the digital age. *Perspectives on psychological science*, 10(6), 832-851.
- Gioia, D. A., Schultz, M., & Corley, K. G. (2000). Organizational identity, image, and adaptive instability. *Academy of management Review*, 25(1), 63-81.
- Gioia, D. A., Patvardhan, S. D., Hamilton, A. L., & Corley, K. G. (2013). Organizational identity formation and change. *The academy of management annals*, 7(1), 123-193.
- Goggin, G. (2012). The iPhone and communication. In L. Hjorth, J. Burgess & I. Richardson (Eds.), *Studying mobile media; cultural technologies, mobile communication, and the iPhone* (pp. 11-27). New York: Routledge.
- Grainge, P.D. (2000). Advertising the archive: Nostalgia and the (post) national imaginary. *American Studies*, 41(2/3), 137-157. Retrieved from: <https://www.jstor.org/stable/40643234>
- Hall, S. (1973). Encoding and decoding in the television discourse. Retrieved from: http://epapers.bham.ac.uk/2962/1/Hall_1973_Encoding_and_Decoding_in_the_Tele_vision_Discourse.pdf
- Hall, S. (1997). The work of representation. *Representation: Cultural representations and signifying practices*, 2, 13-74.
- Hatch, M. J., & Schultz, M. (1997). Relations between organizational culture, identity and image. *European Journal of marketing*, 31(5-6), 356-365.
- Hatch, M. J., & Schultz, M. (2002). The dynamics of organizational identity. *Human relations*, 55(8), 989-1018.
- Hatch, M. J., & Schultz, M. (2003). Bringing the corporation into corporate branding. *European Journal of marketing*, 37(7/8), 1041-1064.
doi:10.1108/0309056031477654
- Holt, D. B. (2004). *How brands become icons; the principles of cultural branding*. Boston: Harvard Business School Publishing Corporation.
- Hopkins, P. (2015). *Mass moralizing: marketing and moral storytelling*. Lexington Books.
- Jäger, S. (2002). Discourse and knowledge: Theoretical and methodological aspects of a critical discourse and dispositive analysis. In R. Wodak & M. Meyer (Eds), *Methods of critical discourse analysis* (pp. 32-62). London: Sage Publications.
- Kane, Y. I. (2014). The job after Steve Jobs; Tim Cook and Apple. *Dow Jones* Retrieved from: <http://search.proquest.com/docview/1750608477>
- Kirkpatrick, G. (2004). *Critical technology: A social theory of personal computing*. Hants: Ashgate.
- Kling, R. (Ed.). (1996). *Computerization and controversy: Value conflicts and social choices*. Elsevier.

- Kress, G. R. (2010). *Multimodality: A social semiotic approach to contemporary communication*. Taylor & Francis.
- Kroezen, J. J., & Heugens, P. P. M. A. R. (2012). Organizational identity formation: Processes of identity imprinting and enactment in the Dutch microbrewing landscape. *Constructing identity in and around organizations*, 2, 89-127.
- Levitas, R. (2010). *The concept of utopia* (Vol. 3). Peter Lang.
- Linzmayr, O.W. (2004). *Apple confidential 2.0: The definitive history of the world's most colorful company*. San Francisco, California: No Starch Press.
- MacDonald, C. (2003). The value of discourse analysis as a methodological tool for understanding a land reform program. *Policy Sciences*, 36(2), 151-173.
- Machin, D. & Mayr, A. (2012). *How to do critical discourse analysis. A multimodel introduction*. London: Sage.
- Melewar, T. C., & Jenkins, E. (2002). Defining the corporate identity construct. *Corporate reputation review*, 5(1), 76-90.
- Mokhtar, A., & Hossain, S. A. E. (2019). Advertisements shape our social reality: A study of apple advertisements on promoting PWDs and inclusion. *Intellectual Discourse*, 27(special issue), 855-888.
- Noble, H., & Smith, J. (2015). Issues of validity and reliability in qualitative research. *Evidence-based nursing*, 18(2), 34-35.
- Olson, E. T. (2003). Personal identity. In S. P. Stich, & T. A. Warfield (Eds.), *The blackwell guide to philosophy of mind* (pp. 352-368). Malden: Blackwell Publishing Ltd.
- Oswald, L. R. (2015). *Creating value: the theory and practice of marketing semiotics research*. Oxford University Press, USA.
- Rose, G. (2016). *Visual methodologies: An introduction to researching with visual materials*. sage.
- Schroeder, J. E., & Zwick, D. (2004). Mirrors of masculinity: Representation and identity in advertising images. *Consumption Markets & Culture*, 7(1), 21-52.
- Schultz, M., & Hatch, M. J. (2003). The cycles of corporate branding: The case of the LEGO company. *California management review*, 46(1), 6-26.
- Silverman, D. (2011). *Interpreting qualitative data: A guide to the principles of qualitative research* (4th edition). London: Sage.
- Silverman, D. (Ed.). (2016). *Qualitative research*. Sage.
- Van Dijk, T. A. (2000). Ideology and discourse: A multidisciplinary introduction. *Pompeu Fabra University, Barcelona*.
- Van Leeuwen, T. (2005). *Introducing social semiotics*. Psychology Press.
- Van Leeuwen, T. (2008). *Discourse and practice: New tools for critical discourse analysis*. Oxford University Press.

- Van Leeuwen, T., & Kress, G. (2006). *Reading images: the grammar of visual design*. Oxon: Routledge.
- Stehr, N., & Adolf, M. (2010). Consumption between market and morals: a socio-cultural consideration of moralized markets. *European Journal of Social Theory*, 13(2), 213-228.
- Watson, T. J. (2009). Narrative, life story and manager identity: A case study in autobiographical identity work. *Human relations*, 62(3), 425-452.
- Weiss, G., & Wodak, R. (2003). *Critical discourse analysis: Theory and interdisciplinarity*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Whetten, D. A. (2006). Albert and Whetten revisited: Strengthening the concept of organizational identity. *Journal of management inquiry*, 15(3), 219-234.
- Wodak, R. & Meyer, M. (Eds.) (2001). *Methods of critical discourse analysis* London: SAGE Publications Ltd doi: 10.4135/9780857028020
- Zittrain, J. (2008). *The future of the internet--and how to stop it*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Appendix A - Units of analysis

| Unit | Title | Date | Product | Duration | Description | Link |
|-------------|---------------------------|---------------|------------------|-----------------|--|---|
| 1 | 1984 | January, 1984 | Macintosh | 00:01:03 | Introducing: Macintosh | https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2zfqw8nhUwA |
| 2 | Lemmings | January, 1985 | Macintosh Office | 00:01:03 | Introducing: Macintosh Office | https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dGJ0mp4kRVo |
| 3 | Think Different | 1997 | Apple General | 00:01:09 | Think Different campaign launch video Campaign run: 1997 - 2002 | https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5sMBhDv4sik |
| 4 | Hal 9000 | 1999 | Macintosh | 00:01:00 | Re-Introducing: Macintosh | https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nHJkAYdT7qo |
| 5 | Beat | 2001 | iPod | 00:01:00 | Introducing: iPod | https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mEbDNaYAr8 |
| 6 | Get a Mac - Better | 2006 | Mac | 00:00:31 | 'Get a Mac' first campaign video Campaign run: | https://www.youtube.com/watch |

| | | | | | | |
|----|---|----------------|------------------------|----------|---|---|
| | | | | | 2006 - 2010 | h?v=48jlm6QSU4k |
| 7 | When you're smiling | June 2010 | Facetime | 00:01:52 | Introducing: Facetime | https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cKoLp_IGo14 |
| 8 | Have yourself a merry little christmas | December 2013 | iPhone | 00:01:31 | iPhone Christmas Campaign | https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v76f6KPSJ2w |
| 9 | Perspective | September 2014 | Apple General | 00:02:54 | Expressing Apple | https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TJ1SDXbij8Y&t=4s |
| 10 | Accessibility - Sady | October 2016 | Apple general products | 00:01:42 | Expressing the freedom technology provides for everyone | https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XB4cjbYwqg |
| 11 | Inclusion & Diversity - Open | November 2017 | Apple identity | 00:02:03 | The power of people in the world of technology | https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cvb49-Csq1o&t=55s |
| 12 | Dear Apple | September 2017 | Apple Watch | 00:02:38 | Testimonials of Apple users on | https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cvb49-Csq1o&t=55s |

| | | | | | | |
|-----------|---|--------------|----------------|----------|--------------------------------|---|
| | | | | | the Apple Watch | .com/watch?v=N-x8lk9G5Dg |
| 13 | The Underdogs | April 2019 | Apple Business | 00:03:00 | Introducing: Apple Business | https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G9TdA8d5aaU&t=112s |
| 14 | Privacy on iPhone - Simple as that | October 2019 | iPhone | 00:01:08 | Safeguarding privacy on iPhone | https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Py0acqg1oKc |